

Euphemism in Lexical Choices: Reuters' Headlines on Charlie Kirk's Death

Candrika Galaska^{a,1,}, Jessica Maria^{b,2*}, Debora Anriyani Simamora^{c,3,}, Rahmadsyah Rangkuti^{d,4}

^{a,b,c,d} Universitas Sumatera Utara, Sumatera Utara, Medan and 20155, Indonesia

¹galaskacandrika@gmail.com;

²jcamaria00@gmail.com*;

³deborasimamora04@gmail.com;

⁴rangkuti@usu.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study used Allan and Burridge's theory of euphemism and Entman's framing theory to examine how Reuters' news headlines on Charlie Kirk's death use euphemism language to influence public opinion. Finding the types and purposes of euphemisms and analyzing how these linguistic devices create ideological framing in global media discourse are the primary objectives. This study examined the linguistic choices that soften or substitute harsh language in fifteen Reuters headlines published between September 11 and September 25, 2025, using a descriptive qualitative methodology. The findings revealed that Reuters employs various forms of euphemism—such as substitution, distortion, and analogy—not only to maintain journalistic neutrality and politeness but also to frame events in ways that influence audience interpretation. Euphemism terms like right-wing, political violence, death penalty, and authorities serve to downplay negativity, legitimize institutional actions, and neutralize ideological tension. The study concludes that euphemism in media is not merely a linguistic device for politeness but also an ideological tool that sustains objectivity, reinforces authority, and subtly guides public discourse within global journalism.

I. Introduction

Media play a crucial role in shaping public perception by framing events through language. Rather than functioning solely as conveyors of information, media outlets actively construct narratives that influence how audiences interpret social realities. This framing process entails selecting and emphasizing particular aspects of events to promote specific interpretations or moral evaluations. The fundamental objective of mass media extends beyond reporting facts; it encompasses the formation of public opinion, which inevitably influences collective ideology [1]. In this regard, linguistic strategies, particularly in the representation of sensitive issues such as death, conflict, or political controversy, serve not merely communicative but also ideological functions. Through the use of euphemistic expressions, journalists often seek to soften distressing realities, maintain ethical decorum, and align with institutional editorial norms.

Within this framework, lexical choices in news headlines hold substantial influence. Headlines operate as micro-texts that encapsulate the essence of a story, guiding readers' attention and shaping their initial interpretation of events. Newspapers, in particular, employ language as an instrument of persuasion, where editors and writers strategically select words to engage readers and subtly direct their perception [2]. The use of euphemisms, mild or indirect expressions that replace harsher or potentially offensive terms, illustrates how lexical selection can alter the tone and implied meaning of a headline. Such linguistic adjustments serve pragmatic and ideological purposes, blurring the boundary between objectivity and persuasion. In a similar vein, headlines are not neutral linguistic units but purposeful constructs designed to capture attention, frame understanding, and influence readers' interpretation of news discourse [3].

A soft or pleasant expression used in place of a direct or hostile one is called a euphemism. It is a group of words or phrases that are used as a substitute for unpleasant words or phrases. This excessively negative word may be forbidden, frightening, repulsive, or have too

many negative connotations to effectively express the speaker's message at that particular moment [4]. Euphemisms can take sixteen different forms, each serving to soften or disguise harsh expressions in communication [5]. These include figurative expressions and metaphors, which use imagery to convey milder meanings (e.g., "pass away" for "die"), and flippancy, which downplays seriousness with humor (e.g., "kick the bucket"). Re-modeling, clipping, acronyms, and abbreviations alter or shorten words to sound less offensive (e.g., "darn" for "damn", "flu" for "influenza", "PMS", or "WC"). Circumlocutions and omission rely on roundabout phrasing or leaving out offensive parts (e.g., "a man of advanced years" for "old man"; "the F-word"). Meanwhile, one-for-one substitution, general for specific, and part-for-whole euphemisms replace direct terms with softer alternatives (e.g., "sanitation worker" for "garbage man", "condition" for "cancer", "mouths to feed" for "children"). Euphemism can also rely on hyperbole and understatement, exaggerating or minimizing reality (e.g., "the greatest nation" or "not very bright"), while jargon uses technical terms to neutralize unpleasant realities (e.g., "collateral damage" for "civilian deaths"), and colloquial forms employ everyday language to make harsh ideas sound more acceptable (e.g., "passed on" for "died"). Altogether, these forms demonstrate the many ways euphemism works to avoid offense, manage taboo, and maintain politeness in communication.

In *Lexis: Journal in English Lexicology*, the three primary linguistic techniques of borrowing, distortion, and analogy are frequently used to create euphemisms. Through analogy, speakers produce euphemisms by substituting a softer or more acceptable term for a direct or taboo one, such as passed away for died, or by employing figurative language like metonymy, metaphor, general-for-specific, or understatement. Distortion is the process of changing a word's sound or shape to cover up its disagreeable meaning. Examples of this include circumlocution, phonological remodelling, acronyms, and abbreviations (e.g., the F-word, gosh for God). In contrast, borrowing uses other languages or dialects to create a tone that is more sophisticated or less unpleasant, such as when lingerie (French) is used in place of underwear [6].

To define it simply, euphemism is a communication technique that softens and socializes language, especially when talking about sensitive or taboo topics like sexuality, death, or social issues. Even though the original message might have been harsh or unpleasant, its main goals are to prevent humiliation, maintain social harmony in communication, and prevent the audience from being offended or insulted. Euphemism is employed to preserve "face," minimize discomfort for both the speaker and the listener, and break taboos by employing softer language [7].

Reuters is a global news organization watched daily by billions of people worldwide and published in 16 languages. Paul Reuters founded the news organization in 1851, and Thomson Reuters currently owns it. Its headquarters are in London. Reuters is a highly respected news organization with a strong reputation. It frequently ranks among the top in media trust surveys, has an extensive global network of journalists, and is one of the largest distributors of multimedia news content worldwide [8]. According to the Reuters Trust Principles, which form the cornerstone of its journalism practice, Reuters' reputation is based on the values of independence, speed, and accuracy [9]. These guidelines stress that all stories must be presented impartially, without political prejudice or special interests, and in a way that is understandable to a wide range of people. Because of these qualities, Reuters is a model for many other media outlets, and its linguistic choices and style are frequently cited in international reporting standards.

Furthermore, Reuters' strength lies not only in its ability to disseminate news around the world, but also in its capacity to shape reality through language. For example, news headlines are one of Reuters' most strategic ways of communicating information. Since headlines serve as readers' first point of entry, they need to be succinct, understandable, and considerate of various cultural settings. This stance makes it intriguing to conduct further research on Reuters, particularly in regards to the choice of language when discussing sensitive topics like death. The use of euphemisms in headlines is a significant linguistic event in this context because, in addition to demonstrating an effort to maintain sensitivity, it demonstrates how Reuters' language standards can impact how events are reported internationally [10].

The death of well-known American conservative figure Charlie Kirk received a lot of attention from the world's media because of his divisive opinions and remarks, which made his

passing more than just a death announcement but an occasion with political, social, and ideological significance. Since death is typically discussed using euphemisms out of respect for the departed and their families, this situation is especially delicate. However, Kirk's reputation as a divisive figure presents a challenge for the media in striking a balance between accuracy, neutrality, and civility in a contentious political environment. This linguistic dilemma highlights the importance of examining how the media reported Kirk's death, especially through headlines, which not only serve as readers' entry points but also reveal the strategic use of lexical choices and euphemisms in shaping interpretation.

This research seeks to investigate the use of euphemism in Reuters' headlines reporting Charlie Kirk's death. The first problem concerns the forms of euphemism employed in these headlines, examining how language strategies such as substitution, metaphor, or circumlocution are used to soften or reshape the news. The second problem focuses on identifying the functions of these euphemisms, particularly how they operate to avoid offense, maintain politeness, or downplay the severity of the event. Finally, this research also addresses the effect of euphemism on media framing and public perception, exploring how the choice of euphemistic language influences the audience's understanding of Charlie Kirk's death and shapes their attitudes toward the event. Unlike previous studies which have mostly examined euphemism as a language or stylistic issue, this study makes a unique addition by combining euphemism analysis with media framing theory and audience perception. By combining Allan and Burridge's euphemism framework with Entman's framing model, this study showed how euphemistic lexical choices not only soften sensitive language but also determine ideological interpretation in international news discourse.

Many studies have examined euphemism in the mass media, but each study has limitations that open up opportunities for this research. However, despite the growing amount of study on euphemism, euphemism in international political death reporting is understudied, particularly in the context of global news organizations. Most existing research focuses on local media settings or linguistic classification alone, without specifically investigating how euphemistic language functions as part of larger media framing processes in affecting public perception of politically sensitive deaths. Previous research examined the use of euphemism in CNN Online news and found that euphemism serves to soften sensitive issues [11]. In contrast, other study emphasized the role of euphemism in language literacy through Indonesian media, focusing on how the public interprets censored or softened language [12]. Furthermore, other research analyzed euphemism in Haluan Newspaper and showed how euphemism was used in local news headlines in West Sumatra, which is important for understanding language practices in regional media but not yet relevant to global news issues and political framing [13]. On the other hand there is also previous study examined the role of euphemisms in English-language Pakistani newspaper headlines and found their function in maintaining politeness, criticism, and social evaluation [14]. In the meanwhile, linguistic-based research primarily categorizes euphemism kinds without considering the pragmatic or ideological consequences of international news framing [7]. In contrast to previous studies that tend to focus on local media or only describe the types of euphemism, this research places euphemism in the context of international media while linking it with a framing strategy that affects the formation of public discourse.

II. Method

A descriptive qualitative approach is used in this research. Qualitative research also recognises the presence of additional qualitative techniques that do not cleanly fit into the five main categories of qualitative approaches—narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study [15]. The idea of a fundamental qualitative study is introduced as an approach that aims to comprehend how people make sense of their lives and interpret their experiences [16]. As such, descriptive qualitative research aims to present a thorough, rich synopsis of occurrences or phenomena in language that are relatable to the general public without relying much on theoretical or interpretive frameworks. This method works well for research projects that prioritise participant voices and viewpoints while remaining true to the facts.

To support the analysis, data were collected by scraping news headlines from the international news portal Reuters.com. The researcher selected at least 15 news headlines published between September 11 and September 25, 2025. This timeframe was selected based on the

relevance of emerging issues during that period, ensuring that the collected data would represent actual conditions and support the accuracy of the descriptive analysis.

In this study, data scraping was used as the major data collection technique and was done manually. The researcher accessed Reuters.com and carefully looked for headlines about Charlie Kirk's death throughout the specified time period. Manual collecting was used to verify contextual accuracy and to prevent including repeated or irrelevant headlines that could emerge from automatic scraping procedures. All collected headlines were captured in a computerized data sheet and sorted by publication date, headline content, and contextual notes. To verify data reliability, each headline was cross-checked against the original Reuters webpage to ensure wording accuracy and publication time. Only headlines that specifically mentioned Charlie Kirk's death were included in the final dataset.

In analyzing the data, this study utilized the theory of euphemism to identify the forms and functions of euphemisms appearing in news headlines. This theory is considered relevant because it reveals how the use of language—particularly euphemism—functions not only as a linguistic strategy, but also as a social tool to disguise, soften, or redirect certain meanings in media discourse. Euphemism serves to avoid offense, show politeness, and manage taboos through substitution strategies that make unpleasant realities more acceptable [5]. Moreover, euphemisms are formed through various linguistic strategies such as analogy, distortion, and borrowing, which reflect the creative ways speakers manipulate language to obscure harsh or controversial meanings while maintaining social harmony [6]. In addition, this study also utilizes Robert N. Entman's framing theory to examine how news headlines shape public perceptions of reported issues. Framing is a process in which the media frames a reality by selecting and highlighting certain aspects of an issue, while ignoring others, so that the audience's interpretation is directed according to the desired perspective [17]. This framing model includes four main elements, namely: define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and provide treatment recommendations. By combining these two theoretical approaches, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of linguistic strategies and the construction of meanings built by the media through news headlines.

To apply these theoretical frameworks in practice, data were analyzed in a series of systematic processes. First, the gathered headlines were analyzed to find lexical terms that could serve as euphemisms by comparing the language used in the headlines to their more direct or literal alternatives. Second, the detected euphemistic expressions were categorized based on a euphemism framework focusing on their forms (e.g., substitution, distortion, and analogy) and communicative functions [6]. Third, each headline was analyzed using a framing model to determine framing features such as problem characterization, causal interpretation, moral judgment, and treatment suggestions. Finally, findings of the euphemism and framing analyses were combined to explain how euphemistic language choices impact public perception in international news discourse at both the linguistic and ideological levels.

The limitations of this research must be acknowledged. First, this study exclusively looks at euphemisms in Reuters news headlines on Charlie Kirk's death, applying a euphemism framework and a framing model [5], [6], [17]. The investigation is limited to language and framing qualities discovered in selected headlines, and it does not look at visual, multimodal, or audience reception factors that may influence meaning development. Second, this study takes a qualitative descriptive method and uses a small selection of headlines as data, limiting the findings' generalisability to different media outlets or news situations. Furthermore, the interpretation of euphemism and framing is dependent on the researchers' perspective, which may change between readers or sociopolitical circumstances. Future research is expected to expand the scope by comparing multiple international media and using multimodal analysis, resulting in a more thorough knowledge of how euphemism affects public perception through news discourse.

III. Results and Discussion

The discussion of this section covers the findings derived from the analysis of Reuters' news headlines on Charlie Kirk's death. The research findings from the qualitative analysis of 15 Reuters headlines gathered between September 11 and September 25, 2025. The identification of euphemism expressions and their categorization according to Allan and Burridge's theory are the main topics of these results. The discussion is then followed by an interpretive analysis that makes

use of Entman's framing theory to illustrate how the identified euphemisms have an ideological purpose in influencing public opinion and media framing. The following are the results of the classification analysis of the 15 Reuters headlines about Charlie Kirk's death.

Table 1. The findings of the research

| No | Utterance | Euphemism | Regular Words | Date/ Time | Type of Euphemism |
|----|--|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Reactions to the fatal shooting of US right-wing activist Charlie Kirk | right-wing | far-right, extremist | September 11, 2025 8:01 PM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 2. | Nation on edge: Experts warn of 'vicious spiral' in political violence after Kirk killing | political violence | murder, terror | September 12, 2025 1:03 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 3. | FBI Director Kash Patel faces scrutiny for inaccurately saying Kirk killer had been caught | innacurrately saying | lying, misinforming | September 12, 2025 9:57 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 4. | Nasdaq fires employee over social media posts on Charlie Kirk shooting | shooting | murder, killing | September 13, 2025 1:40 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 5. | Kirk backlash, UK anti-migrant protest, EVs, Emmys and Life on Mars? | backlash | madness, uproar | September 14, 2025 4:43 PM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 6. | Trump adopts messenger-in-chief role after Charlie Kirk's death | messenger-in-chief | propagandist, agitator | September 15, 2025 9:51 AM GMT+7 | Figurative expression, Analogy |
| 7. | Charlie Kirk shooting suspect not cooperating with authorities, Utah governor says | authorities | police, federal officers | September 15, 2025 9:20 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 8. | After Charlie | dismantling | destroy, erase | September 16, | One-for-one |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Kirk's death, Trump team calls for dismantling leftist groups | | | 20257:08 AM GMT+7 | substitution, Distortion |
| 9. | Prosecutors to seek death penalty for Charlie Kirk's accused assassin | death penalty | execution, state killing | September 17, 20258:52 PM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 10. | Unresolved questions hang over case against Charlie Kirk's accused killer | accused killer | killer, assassin | September 18, 20255:35 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 11. | US House panel asks online forum CEOs to testify after Charlie Kirk assassination | panel | committee | September 18, 20255:56 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 12. | US House passes bipartisan resolution honoring Charlie Kirk | bipartisan resolution | political compromise, negotiated deal | September 19, 2025 11: 02 PM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Analogy |
| 13. | Trump White House scrambles to save Kirk's young voter machine after his death | scrambles | panics, rushes | September 22, 202512:06 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 14. | At Charlie Kirk memorial, Trump rallies MAGA against political opponents | political opponents | enemies, adversaries | September 23, 20254:54 AM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |
| 15. | Fact Check: Man who debated Charlie Kirk in April misidentified as shooting suspect | misidentified | incorrectly charged, mistakenly identified | September 25, 20259:16 PM GMT+7 | One-for-one substitution, Distortion |

The presented data will be analyzed and classified based on the types of euphemism proposed by Allan & Burridge. The researchers explain the data findings related to the types of euphemism strategies and their classifications. The data were analyzed by observing the word choice used by Reuters and how they framed the headlines on Charlie Kirk's death.

Data 1

The phrase “right-wing” functions as a euphemism that softens the extreme or radical conservative connotations associated with Charlie Kirk. According to euphemism framework, it exemplifies a one-for-one substitution, replacing harsher terms such as “far-right” or “extremist” with a more neutral and publicly acceptable expression. This phrase categorized as a distortion because it downplays ideological extremity to preserve neutrality and avoid moral judgment. This euphemism helps maintain objectivity, reduce bias, and present political identities in a balanced tone. From Entman’s framing theory, the use of “right-wing” reflects a framing strategy that positions the event as the shooting of a political activist rather than an ideological clash. The frame defines the issue as a social and political incident, evaluates it neutrally, and implies public awareness as the solution without attributing blame to any ideology. Thus, “right-wing” operates both linguistically to neutralize extreme labels and ideologically to guide public perception toward viewing the event as a general political matter rather than an expression of radical conflict.

Data 2

The term “political violence” is a euphemism that softens the harsh reality of acts like murder or assault driven by politics. According to euphemism framework, it exemplifies one-for-one substitution, replacing strong words such as murder or terror with more neutral, institutional terms. In their later classification of euphemism, it is considered a distortion because it downplays physical violence by emphasizing the political context. This euphemism reduces emotional impact, maintains journalistic neutrality, and shifts focus from victims or perpetrators to political issues. In line with Entman’s framing theory, the phrase frames events as political crises rather than violent acts, shaping public perception and moral evaluation in line with the media’s preferred narrative.

Data 3

In the headline, the phrase “inaccurately saying” serves as a euphemism to minimise the accusation of misconduct or lying by a public figure. This expression involves a one-for-one substitution, replacing negative phrases like “lying” or “misinforming” with a more neutral and respectful phrase. According to the euphemism classification, it falls under distortion because the meaning changes from “delivering false information” to just “speaking inaccurately.” Its primary aim is to minimise the moral weight and accountability of the news subject in this case, the FBI Director, while preserving the institution's image by avoiding direct accusation. According to Entman's framing theory, the word choice represents a framing method that slightly describes the issue, shifting the focus away from moral violation and towards administrative or professional incompetence. This euphemism serves both linguistic and ideological functions, shaping public perception of the act as a technical mistake rather than a moral fault.

Data 4

The term “shooting” functions as a euphemism that softens the reality of fatal acts such as murder or homicide with firearms. According to Allan and Burrige, it represents a one-for-one substitution, replacing emotionally charged words like murder or killing with more neutral ones. In their later classification, it is considered a distortion because it downplays the fatal nature of the act by focusing only on the action, not the consequence. This euphemism helps maintain journalistic objectivity and reduces emotional impact. Based on Entman’s framing theory, the term frames the event as a violent incident rather than a moral or ideological crime, shifting public perception from moral judgment to social concern. Thus, “shooting” serves both as a linguistic strategy to soften meaning and as an ideological tool to shape how audiences interpret violence involving political figures.

Data 5

The word “backlash” is used in the headline as a euphemism to reduce the confrontational tone of public displeasure against Kirk. Euphemism framework describe it as a one-for-one substitution, replacing more negative adjectives such as madness or uproar with a more neutral expression. This word classified as a distortion since it reframes emotional conflict as a mere

"response." The primary function is to reduce emotional intensity while maintaining balance in reporting. According to Entman's framing theory, "backlash" describes public reaction as a natural social response rather than aggression, allowing audiences to interpret the event as a rational political dynamic rather than mass anger.

Data 6

The phrase "messenger-in-chief" is a euphemism that positively redefines Donald Trump's political role after Charlie Kirk's death. According to euphemism framework, it exemplifies a figurative expression or metaphor, comparing Trump to a leader who delivers messages rather than using terms like propagandist or agitator. In Allan and Burrige's updated classification, it falls under analogy because it borrows a respected title, commander-in-chief, to replace potentially negative descriptions. This euphemism enhances Trump's image, portraying his actions as strategic communication rather than manipulation. In line with Entman's framing theory, the term frames Trump as a symbolic communicator or moral leader, not a divisive political actor. Thus, "messenger-in-chief" serves both as a linguistic device to soften meaning and as an ideological tool to shape public perception of Trump as a unifying and authoritative figure.

Data 7

The phrase "authorities" is used in the headline as a euphemism for law enforcement agencies such as police and federal officers. In euphemism framework, it is a one-for-one substitution, replacing potentially tense or emotive expressions with neutral and impersonal ones. Conceptually, this word classified as a distortion because law enforcement's coercive power is reframed as abstract legitimacy. Its purpose is to maintain the institutional image and establish emotional distance. According to Entman's framing approach, "authorities" present the issue as lawful compliance rather than conflict, emphasising legitimacy and leading readers to see state institutions as rational and proper actors.

Data 8

The term "dismantling" is a euphemism that softens the meaning of aggressive or destructive actions toward certain groups, such as left-wing organizations. According to Allan and Burrige's euphemism theory it represents a one-for-one substitution, replacing harsh words like destroy or erase with more neutral, institutional language. In their later classification, it is viewed as a distortion because it reframes destruction as something administrative or constructive. This euphemism gives political actions a logical and measured tone, making the Trump team's call for dismantling seem like reform rather than repression. In line with Entman's framing theory, the term frames the issue as a need for political reform rather than ideological opposition, presenting it positively as restructuring instead of aggression. Thus, "dismantling" functions both linguistically to soften meaning and ideologically to legitimize political action and shape public perception.

Data 9

The phrase "death penalty" in the headline is a euphemism for state execution. According to Allan and Burrige's euphemism framework it is a one-for-one substitution, switching harsher phrases like execution or state killing with a more formal and neutral phrase. Conceptually, according to Allan and Burrige's later classification, it falls under distortion because the act of ending someone's life through law is reframed as a legitimate and lawful operation. Its primary goal is to neutralise the act's emotional and moral significance while committing it. By embracing the death sentence, the media emphasises legality over violence, leading readers to see it as justice rather than murder. In Entman's framing theory "death penalty" identified as a framing technique that prioritises legality and state justice over ethical or humanitarian concerns. The frame identifies the issue as a legal procedure, assesses it positively as state justice, and indicates that extreme punishment is a just reaction to serious offences. Thus, the euphemism not only softens the connotation linguistically but also ideologically, showing capital punishment as legitimate and moral rather than violent.

Data 10

The phrase “accused killer” is a euphemism that softens the reference to a murder suspect by combining accused (legally charged) with murderer (a morally loaded term). According to euphemism theory, it reflects a one-for-one substitution, replacing direct and judgmental words like killer or assassin with a legally neutral form. In the later classification of euphemism, it is considered a distortion because it downplays guilt by emphasizing legal uncertainty and avoiding moral judgment. This euphemism supports journalistic ethics and the presumption of innocence, preventing defamation and emotional bias. In line with Entman’s framing theory, the phrase frames the event as an ongoing legal process rather than a confirmed crime, promoting objectivity and expecting resolution through the court. Thus, “accused killer” serves both as a linguistic tool to neutralize meaning and as an ideological tool to shape public perception toward a fair, legal perspective.

Data 11

In the headline, the word "panel" functions as a euphemism for a political or investigative body within the United States government. In euphemism framework, it is a one-for-one substitution, replacing more formal or authoritative phrases such as committee or investigating body with a neutral, collegial expression. Conceptually, it is a distortion since it minimises the authoritative or political nature of institutions. Its primary function is to reduce the perception of power and political pressure by portraying the organisation as professional and advisory rather than investigative or partisan. According to Entman's framing perspective, "panel" frames the event as a procedural and rational process rather than a political or punitive act, characterising it as an administrative endeavour for clarification and accountability. Thus, this euphemism not only softens the phrase "investigative committee" but also shapes public opinion of the government's operations as professional and respectable rather than politically determined.

Data 12

The phrase “bipartisan resolution” is a euphemism that softens political dynamics between the Democratic and Republican parties by emphasizing unity over conflict. In the euphemism theory, it represents a one-for-one substitution, replacing terms like political compromise or negotiated deal with a more positive, inclusive expression. In classification, it is an analogy because it draws on positive associations of cooperation to mask the underlying negotiations and competing interests. This euphemism highlights harmony and national unity while concealing ideological tension. In line with Entman’s framing theory, the term frames the event as a success of cross-party cooperation rather than political struggle, portraying it as evidence of political maturity and collective morality. Thus, “bipartisan resolution” functions both linguistically to present political compromise as cooperation and ideologically to promote a narrative of unity and legitimacy within political institutions.

Data 13

In the headline, the word "scrambles" is used as a euphemism to describe the feeling of panic or chaos in Trump's political response to Charlie Kirk's death. In euphemism framework, it is a one-for-one substitution, replacing harsher words like panics or rushes with a more neutral and dynamic word. Conceptually, it is categorised as a distortion since its initial meaning, an unexpected or anxious action, has been reframed as active and responsive behaviour. Its primary goal is to minimise the perception of political instability and portray Trump's team as reactive rather than chaotic. According to Entman's framing perspective, "scrambles" creates a frame that characterises the incident as a political problem demanding immediate action rather than a crisis or failure, illustrating Trump's response as strategic and adaptive. Thus, this euphemism serves to neutralise negative connotation while also shaping the public impression of Trump's acts as legitimate and controlled, rather than messy or desperate.

Data 14

The phrase “political opponents” is a euphemism that softens references to ideological enemies or hostile groups opposed to Trump and his supporters. In the euphemism framework, it represents a one-for-one substitution, replacing harsh terms like enemies or adversaries with a more

neutral, diplomatic expression. This phrase classified as a distortion because it downplays hostility, reframing conflict as simple disagreement. This euphemism reduces the sense of confrontation, presenting politics as rational debate within a democratic framework. From Entman's framing theory, the term frames political conflict as normal competition rather than ideological warfare, portraying the actions of Trump and his supporters as legitimate democratic participation. Thus, "political opponents" function both linguistically to neutralize aggressive meaning and ideologically to shape public perception of political tension as healthy democratic contestation rather than hostility.

Data 15

The term "misidentified" is a euphemism that softens the concept of errors in identifying a shooting suspect. Semantically, it replaces more negative phrases like incorrectly charged or mistakenly identified. In euphemism theory, it is as a one-for-one substitution, in which a word conveying a major defect is replaced with a neutral, impersonal adjective. According to Allan and Burridge's conceptual theory, it falls under distortion because the negative meaning of institutional mistake is reduced to a technical or human error. The euphemism decreases perceptions of irresponsibility while maintaining a professional image among involved authorities. According to Entman's framing approach, "misidentified" creates a frame that frames the issue as a correctable error rather than an institutional failure, evaluates the act in morally neutral terms, and suggests resolution through explanation or correction. As a result, the euphemism serves both linguistically to minimise blame and ideologically to shape public opinion of the incident as a small administrative error rather than a significant act of failure.

The results of this study are in line with earlier empirical research on euphemism in media discourse, especially when it comes to how euphemism serves as a tactic to soften delicate subjects and preserve journalistic objectivity. Previous finding discovered that euphemism in CNN Online news helps to lessen the emotional impact of delicate political and social events. This conclusion is consistent with the current findings, which show that terminology like political violence, shooting, and the death penalty is employed to neutralize harshed reality [11]. This align with the study that showed how euphemisms in English-language newspaper headlines serve to strike a balance between politeness, criticism, and ideological positioning [14]. Reuters' vocabulary choices that minimize disagreement and validate institutional authority also exhibit this pattern. However, this study expands the discussion by using Entman's framing theory, demonstrating how euphemistic phrases actively frame political events and influence public interpretation rather than just softening language, in contrast to other research that only focuses on detecting euphemism types. This result validates the argument that news language is essential to the construction of ideological meanings, especially in transnational media contexts [10]. Thus, by showing that euphemism in international media serves as a linguistic, pragmatic, and ideological framing device at the same time, this study adds to larger scholarly discussions.

IV. Conclusion

This study indicates that euphemism in Reuters headlines announcing Charlie Kirk's murder is not simply a linguistic approach, but also an ideological instrument that influences how people view political events. Using Allan and Burridge's euphemism theory and Entman's framing model, the analysis of 15 data points shows that euphemisms like right-wing, political violence, shooting, authorities, panel, death penalty, scrambles, and misidentified function differently across substitution, distortion, and analogy. For example, authorities and panels serve as substitutions, replacing direct references to specific actors in order to maintain neutrality and authority; shooting and the death penalty represent distortion, softening the harshness of violent or fatal acts; and right-wing and scrambles serve as metaphors, reframing political and social tension through less confrontational expressions. By using euphemisms like substitution, distortion, and analogy, the media softens unpleasant truths, maintains impartiality, and creates a more acceptable narrative about sensitive problems. Entman's framing theory demonstrates that euphemisms influence how problems are framed, moral judgements are made, and remedies are inferred in public discourse. This study fills a research gap left by previous studies that focused euphemism analysis to local or

descriptive levels, emphasising its strategic framing significance in the global media context. Thus, euphemism not only reflects politeness or decorum, but it also strengthens power dynamics, legitimises authority, and subtly steers public perception towards specific moral and political interpretations. Future study could expand this analysis to include other international media platforms and use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate how euphemism maintains institutional power and ideological control in transnational news narratives.

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