Framing the Contemporary Education Issue: Analysis of News Stories from Selected Malaysian Daily Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

The policy of teaching and learning of Mathematics and Science subjects in English was decided in 2002 and implemented in the following year. After five years of using pupils' second language in learning these two highly cognitional subjects, the policymaker attempted to reconsider the medium of examination for the 2008 Primary School Achievement Test. On 27 October 2007, the then Prime Minister made a surprise announcement that the test for these two subjects would continue to be set in dual languages, namely, English and the respective mother-tongues. The main objective of this framing study was to explore the frames dominantly portrayed by policymakers, movements, and other parties involved. A content analysis on daily newspapers of the four languages was conducted for a period of one month after the above-mentioned announcement was made. This research adopted the format of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) in scrutinising framing from "responsibility," "conflict," "morality," "economic consequences," and "human interest" perspectives. The research findings met the objective of establishing the source frames. The policy frame is more responsible in nature, while the movement frame is more confrontational and the editorial frame tends to highlight the morality aspect of life. The reader frame is deemed to be somewhat close to the movement for its aggressiveness.

Keywords: Frame building, generic frame measures, news frames, source frames, education issue, and content analysis

INTRODUCTION

Framing in communication, according to Reese (2001), "refers to the way events and issues are organised and made sense of, especially by media, media professionals, and their audiences" (p. 7). Sociologist Erving Goffman is often credited with

introducing the framing approach in social and economic studies for decision-making. In his classical work on framing, Goffman (1974) elaborates on how new information could be successfully processed by people in applying human interpretive schemata to organise information and interpret it meaningfully.

Frames, be it published on media or submerged in human mind, are thus the cognitive shortcuts that people employ to understand the complex world. Frames help journalists to describe or explain the happenings of an event and thereon audience interprets them in order to understand the world which may be far from his/her reaching. They help people to organise the multifaceted occurrences into simple, consistent, and understandable categories. In other words, framing involves both constructing the interpretive frames and then representing them to others in mediated communication processes. Framing studies in communication are seen as lacking the distinctness in meaning and require comprehensive nature of the term (D'Angelo, 2002; Scheufele, 1999, 2000). This could be the reason why framing has become more popular than agenda-setting and priming in the past decade (Weaver, 2007).

According to Scheufele (2000), McCombs has earlier attempted to apply the framing theory in order to expand and develop the existing agenda-setting theory. In a paper presented in Chicago in August 1997, McCombs further defines framing as "the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed" (quoted in Scheufele, 2000, p. 297-298). In his argument, framing together with priming should be adopted into the family of agenda-setting paradigm and regarded as the second-level agenda-setting. If the original theory, i.e. the first-level agenda-setting, concerns with the salience of issues, then the extended second-level agenda-setting study emphasises on the salience of issue attributes.

Although there are efforts to absorb these two approaches under the broad concept of agenda-setting, Scheufele (2000) believes that the integration of agenda-setting, priming, and framing into a single model is inappropriate. The attempts to combine them as one entity have largely ignored the differences among the theoretical premises of these three models. Despite some similarities, framing is indeed a distinctive by-product of the agenda-setting model. Scheufele (2000) asserts that agenda-setting and priming are based "on the notion of attitude accessibility" (p. 309), while framing assumes "subtle changes in the wording of the description of a situation might affect how audience members interpret this situation" (p. 309).

The 2007 special edition of *Journal of Communication* has fruitfully reified these three models of communication effects. The guest editors, Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), stated that the emergence of these three models has signalled a paradigm shift in the political-communication research. The agenda-setting emphasises on the

transfer of news salience by media, while both priming and framing are based on the notion that media have potentially strong attitudinal effects. Nonetheless, these effects depend heavily on audience's schemata or human frames. In this respect, Scheufele (1999) is of the view that framing is deemed as both macro- and micro-level constructs. In understanding the macro-construct, communication scholars are at ease to scrutinise the presentation approaches of news reports, in which journalists and news sources usually advocate a frame in such a manner as to resonate the audiences' existing underlying schemata. Whilst micro-construct is vital in the framing process, the psychological indulgence of information within human interpretive schemata plays an important role, too.

This research study has limited the scope to scrutinising the frame-building aspect of print media on a predetermined education issue in Malaysia. Hence, the frames in the news coverage on teaching and learning of mathematics and science subjects in English are the emphasis of this study. Many media studies have examined news frames from the journalistic perspective. Some researchers interpret the frames from the issue-specific perspectives (e.g. Entman, 1991; Norris, 1995), while others measure the frames in the generic manner (e.g. Hallahan, 1999; Iyengar, 1987, 1991; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). There seems to be a gap where the source frames have been neglected in all those research studies. We could see the sources of news stories having their preferred views highlighted by media. They may attempt to project the frames that are in favour to their positions. Nevertheless, it is also up to the journalists to decide how to frame the sources' views. In this respect, journalists may assign certain frames that reflect the sources' images while constructing the news stories.

The lack of research in examining the source frames by itself is indeed a problem that has been overlooked. The shortage of framing studies on source frames has triggered the authors' interest in trying to understand the media allocation of prominent frames to respective news sources. In studying the announcement on the examination format pertaining to the languages used in setting papers for the Mathematics and Science subjects for primary school achievement test (UPSR) in 2008, the authors attempted to explore the dominant frames portrayed by the respective news sources in selected daily newspapers.

THE CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION ISSUE

In 2002, the then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad announced that the government might revise the education policy to bring back the English medium schools in order to elevate the standard of English language in Malaysia (*Utusan Malaysia*, 2002, May 7). Nonetheless, the Cabinet deferred this plan as the re-introduction of English medium schools as not in line with the spirit of the national education policy in promoting Bahasa Malaysia (*Berita Harian*, 2002, May 9). Two days after the Cabinet shelved the said idea, Mahathir suddenly made

another announcement that English would be used as the medium of instruction for the Mathematics and Science subjects for all Standard-One pupils effective the following year (*Berita Harian*, 2002, May 11; *Utusan Malaysia*, 2002, May 11; *New Straits Times*, 2002, May 11). Subsequently, the then Education Minister, Musa Mohamad reaffirmed Mahathir's claim by saying that a special committee had been established to determine how and when to implement this new education policy (*New Straits Times*, 2002, May 12).

Most ethnic groups in the country felt threatened of the possible changes in the mother-tongue education. This issue became intense and was heatedly by policymakers, policy-support groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), opposing political parties, media, and the general public. On 19 July 2002, Musa officially announced that from the year 2003 onwards, all students in Standard-One, Form-One, and Lower-Six would have to learn the Mathematics and Science subjects solely in English. In line with the effort to promote this language, the medium of examination for these two subjects would be in both English and Bahasa Malaysia. From 2008 onwards, all the examination papers on Mathematics and cience subjects would be set in English only (*Utusan Malaysia*, 2002, July 20). While revealing this education policy, however, Musa did not make any firm decision on whether the national-type schools would follow the same ruling.

The news coverage on the teaching of Mathematics and Science subjects in English became a controversial issue in the mid of 2002. With the demands from Chinese NGOs and appeals from Chinese-based ruling political parties, a resolution was finally made among the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties in October 2002. The pupils of Chinese primary national-type schools would be allowed to learn these two subjects in both English and Chinese (Mandarin) languages. The 2-4-3 Formula that served the said purpose was eventually declared by Musa on 31 October 2002. Three years later, another formula for the second phase was announced by another Education Minister, Hishammuddin Hussein, on 23 December 2005. The 4-2-2 Formula was designed for Standard Four to Standard Six pupils of Chinese schools from 2006 onwards. The first digit in these formulas denoted the number of periods of English language subject, the second digit for the number of periods of Mathematics in English, and the third digit for the number of periods of Science in English.

This issue dragged on and with no definite decision on the language to be used for the 2008 UPSR examination as the second-half of 2007 was approaching. The Malaysian Chinese education movement, Dong Jiao Zong, widely recognised as the guardian of Chinese vernacular education in Malaysia (Tan, *et al.*, 2005; Tan, 2005), had once again taken the lead on 8 July 2007 to launch a campaign in appealing for the return of mother-tongue to be the language for teaching these two subjects. Subsequent to the above campaign and the pressure from various NGOs, Malaysian Chinese

Association (MCA) as the leading Chinese-based ruling political party had to respond to those voices reflected in the news coverage. Consequently, a motion was passed by MCA Youth Wing to urge the government to continue using Chinese language as the medium of examination for Mathematics and Science in the forthcoming 2008 UPSR. Hishammuddin, who was also the chief of United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) Youth Wing, eventually informed that he would announce the examination format by the end of 2007 (*Sin Chew Daily,* 2007, August 20). On 27 October 2007, the then Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi made an announcement on retaining the exam format. He declared that all the primary schools could use two languages, namely, English and their respective mother-tongues, in answering the Mathematics and Science subjects in 2008 UPSR (*China Press*, 2007, October 28; *Guang Ming Daily*, 2007, October 28; *Nanyang Siang Pau*, 2007, October 28; *Oriental Daily*, 2007, October 28; *Sin Chew Daily*, 2007, October 28).

From this contemporary education issue, the news coverage revealed that different actors in their respective organisations attempted to portray different frames or certain aspects of the controversial issue. Under the frame-building aspect of the typology illustrated by de Vreese (2005), framing in the newsroom must undergo the test of both the internal and external factors. Besides the internal factor of newsworthiness and editorial policy, frame sponsors being the external

factor play an important role, too. Frame sponsors are described by Gamson (1984) as media sources who make efforts to frame information in news stories. They will make sure that the stories are slanted and framed in a way that is consistent with their preferred framing (Hallahan, 1999).

FRAMING LITERATURE

It has been widely accepted that frames help organise human central ideas in debates, which incorporate symbolic devices to characterise the nature of a controversy. Moreover, frames help to simplify complex controversial issues by highlighting certain dimensions of a topic. The frame advocates will always strive for greater visibility of their preferred frames than the alternative frames promoted by their competitors. Advocates and their competitors engaged in debates are all players of the scene. They are also the sources of information in the news reports. They utilise frames to strategically define issues in favour of their preferred outcomes, and also to affect audience to act according to their expectations. In this respect, news sources can be defined as an individual or an organisation associated with direct or indirect quotes in news reports.

Many researchers have studied news framing by content-analysing the news coverage of a particular issue in a stipulated period. Among other, Entman (1991) examined the contrasting frames on the news reports of Korean Air Lines versus Iran Air incidents. Another event-specific framing study was conducted by Norris (1995) in outlining the network news framing for three

different periods of cold war, transition, and post-cold war. On the generic perspective, Iyengar (1987, 1991) named the television news format of covering an issue in terms of individual event as the episodic frame and in terms of a larger historical social context, thematic frame. On the practitioner aspect, Hallahan (1999) listed down seven generic frames and pragmatically applied them in public relations practices. These distinct types of framing are situation, attributes, choices, actions, issues, responsibility, and news. Recently, Chyi and McCombs (2004) applied a two-dimensional measurement scheme in analysing the media frames on the tragic issue of Columbine school shootings. The two dimensions under study were space and time.

Meanwhile, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) content-analysed the generic frames of printed and broadcast media news on European politics. There were five news frames being investigated by the two scholars, namely, responsibility, conflict, morality, economic consequences, and human interest. These five generic frames with their attribute statements are further explicated in this study. In operationalising the source frames, the authors have adopted the five frames with 18 attribute statements

TABLE 1
Generic Frames with Attribute Statements

Frames	Attribute Statements
Responsibility	The story suggests that a certain level of government/organisation (source of information) has the ability to alleviate the problem.
	The story suggests that a certain level of the government/organisation (source of information) is responsible for the issue/problem.
	The story suggests solution(s) to the issue/problem.
	The story suggests that an individual (or a group of people in society) is responsible for the issue/problem.
Conflict	The story reflects disagreement between parties, individuals, and/or groups.
	Party, individual, or group reproaches one another.
	The story refers to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue.
Morality	The story contains moral message.
	The story makes reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets.
	The story offers specific social prescriptions about how to behave.
Economic consequences	There is a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future.
	There is a mention of the costs or degree of expense involved.
	There is a reference to economic consequences or pursuing or not pursuing a course of action.
Human interest	The story provides a human example or "human face" on the issue.
	The story employs adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy caring, sympathy, or compassion.
	The story emphasises how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem.
	The story goes into the private or personal lives of the actors.
	The story contains visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion.

developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) in the subsequent analysis. These attribute statements have been validated in the study and are listed in Table 1.

Instead of looking at the frames associated with media organisations, this research emphasises the five distinct generic frames portrayed by or assigned to the respective news sources. To be more precise, the authors have grouped the news sources into five main categories, namely, policy, movement, opposition, editorial, and reader.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed the methodology of content analysis in scrutinising the frames portrayed in news stories. This method is an objective and systematic procedure that examines the content of recorded information (Babbie, 2004; Walizer & Wienir, 1978). In understanding the source frames, two key variables are measured by this procedure, i.e. the sources of news and the projected frames. Research framework plays an important role by providing a structure in detailing the linkages among the variables in this study. Fig.1 depicts the work to be carried out in content-analysing the news reports. Source frames are established consequent to the measurements of the news sources and the attributes in news frames.

In looking for the sampled newspapers for various language categories, the authors had decided to select those with the highest circulation in their respective language categories. Four daily newspapers, together with with their selected circulation figures are outlined in Table 2.
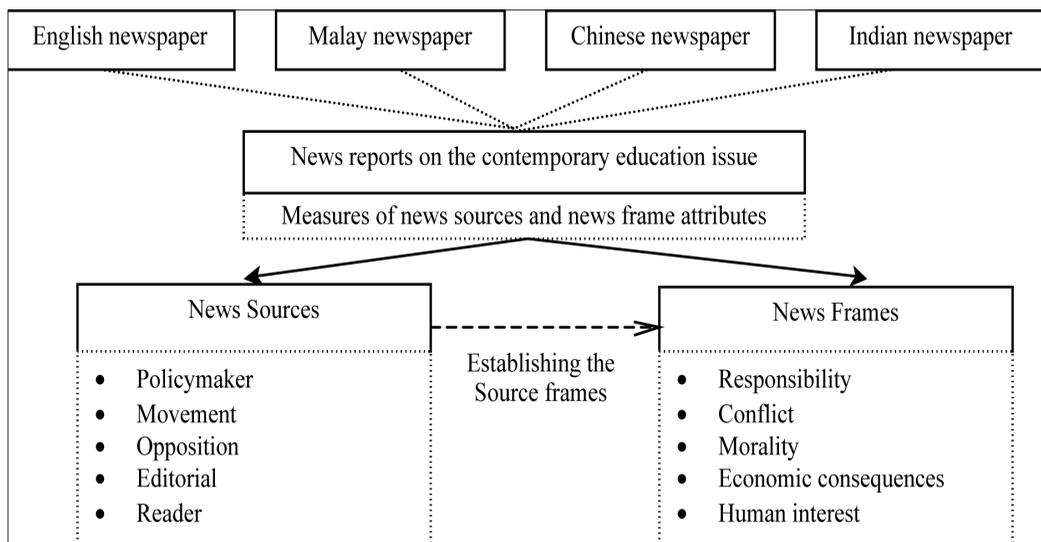

Fig.1: Research Framework

TABLE 2
Circulation of the Sampled Daily Newspapers for the Study

Language	Sampled Daily Newspaper	Circulation
Chinese	Sin Chew Daily	336,401
English	The Star	309,181
Malay	Utusan Malaysia	197,033
Tamil	Malaysia Nanban	60,000

Note: Circulations for the three former dailies are audited figures for 2007; while Malaysia Nanban is claimed figure for 2006.
(Sources: ABC News, 2007; Media Guide, 2007)

The sampling for the study duration of thedaily newspapers has various choices. Chyi and McCombs (2004) conducted a study on a tragic school shooting which took a month to study the media frames immediately after the incident first appeared in the news. In the attempt to understand the framing process which built the salience of the contemporary education issue, the news coverage was content-analysed for a period of one month. Hence, the study started on 28 October 2007 and ended on 27 November 2007. In other words, it was a 30-day period commencing a day after the then Prime Minister Abdullah's official announcement of the examination format for 2008 UPSR.

Two pairs of coders were engaged to carry out the coding of data from the selected newspapers. Prior to coding, all coders had been trained for important concepts and procedures in content analysis. The instruction in choosing a unit of analysis had also been made clear to all coders. Musa and Ezhar (1999) emphasised the importance of the unit of analysis as the key element for content analysis. All the coders were told of what was to be studied after which they could only determine on the unit to be recorded. The recording unit could be measured by word count, area of coverage for print media, or duration of broadcast time for electronic media. Many scholars (e.g. Berelson, 1952; Weber, 1990) listed down some common choices of units, such as word, word sense, sentence, theme, paragraph, whole text, character, item, space, and time. In this study, paragraphs contained in related news story were taken as units of analysis for measurements.

Other than training the coders in determining the units of analysis and recording them into a standardised coding sheet, they were also instructed to focus on the main paper and the regional section for the relevant news stories. At the same time, they were also trained to use the coding book which defined each and every observation that was fitting and could be put into a particular category. The coding scheme for the news sources in this empirical study was derived from the players who were involved in the issue. As mentioned above, there were five categories under this construct of initiator of news story. Generally, the office-bearers in the government and the politicians in the ruling political parties were those with the authority to decide on a public policy. Meanwhile, the activist groups or the NGOs, who were deemed as interested parties, had given their views and comments on the policy executed by the authority. There were some other news sources, such as the opposing political parties, media workers for constructing the news, and readers for voicing their concerns.

All the coders were given a list of possible wordings or expressions used by the news sources and a coding book for their frequent references. This coding book contained detailed instructions on how these elements or the variables to be analysed were to be recorded. As for the sources of news, the coders were required to specify whether the individuals or the groups fell under a specific category as per Table 3.

TABLE 3
Categorisation of News Sources

News Source	Representation in Organisation
Policy	Policymaker and policy-support groups: government and ruling political parties (e.g. UMNO, MCA, MIC, etc.).
Movement	Non-governmental organisation (NGOs) and education movement (e.g. Dong Jiao Zong, etc.).
Opposition	Opposing political parties (e.g. DAP, PAS, PKR, etc.).
Editorial	Editorial write-ups and spot news.
Reader	Letters to editors and comments or views from readers.

As mentioned above, the authors had adopted the five generic frames applied by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) in their study of European politics. The scheme for coding the source frames applied the format of taking the marks by ticking "yes" or "no" if the attribute statements corresponded with the unit of analysis. The construction of the scale to measure the source frames applied the same procedure as in the studies of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), as well as Valkenburg *et al.* (1999). The simple yes-no categories were chosen to measure the occurrence of the frames portrayed by the news sources. For an answer of "yes" in corresponding to the statement, the coders recorded "1" score, while "0" score was used for answering "no." The scale for each of the five frames was constructed by averaging the scores on the statements that were placed under the factor that they had been predefined. The values ranging from "0" indicated that a particular frame was not present at all to a perfect "1" which indicated that the frame was fully present.

Human interest frame had five attribute statements, in which each affirmative answer to the attribute statement contributed 0.2 score to the frame. If all the five statements were ticked "yes," it indicated the human interest frame was fully present. The four attribute statements in the responsibility frame carried a weight of 0.25 score each, while the three attribute statements in conflict frame, morality frame, and economic consequences frame gave 0.33 score each. In every unit of analysis, five scores were to be obtained and high scores on any frames would reflect the scenario as exhibited in Table 4.

To ensure a high level of consistency, inter-coding between the two coders was conducted for reliability test. The coders conducted the intercoder reliability test in two stages during the process of data collection. The reliability test determined the extent of agreement between the two coders in the following: (1) identifying the items with their news sources and (2) measuring the frame attributes. About one-third of the whole sample had gone through the test. The coders' decisions were checked

TABLE 4
Explanation of High Score on Respective Frames

High scores on:	The scenario:
Responsibility frame	High degree of the attribution of responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group.
Conflict frame	High degree of conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest.
Morality frame	High degree of putting the event, problem, or issue in the context of moral prescriptions.
Economic consequences frame	High degree of reporting event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will economically have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country.
Human interest frame	High degree of bringing human interest or emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem.

against each other and Holsti's (1969) percent agreement index was applied in this statistical procedure.

Firstly, in examining the reliability level in identifying the items with their news sources, the percent agreement indexes for four types of newspapers achieved more than 0.916, a level higher than 0.7, i.e. the acceptable value by convention. For the second stage, the coders compared their measures of the 18 frame attributes. All the indexes achieved more than the required 0.7, except for the agreement index for the Chinese newspaper which was quite close to the said value. Reconciliation was conducted between the two coders of Chinese newspapers. Recoding had been done and the coders eventually acquired the indexes within the range of 0.781 to 0.874, which met the obligatory level.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Due to the Deepavali festival which fell on 7 November 2007, there were no publications on 8 and 9 November 2007 for *Malaysia*

Nanban (Tamil), and on 8 November 2007 for *The Star* (English) and *Sin Chew Daily* (Chinese), whereas, *Utusan Malaysia* (Malay) published the papers everyday throughout the research period. From Table 5, a total of 95 news stories were shown to be related to the issue undertaken in this study. *Sin Chew Daily* contributed 60 items (63.2% of the total), while 20 items (21.1%) came from *The Star*, 11 items (11.5%) from *Utusan Malaysia*, and another 4 items (4.2%) from *Malaysian Nanban*. Looking at the main sources of the news, 46 items (48.4%) were quoted from the policy source. It was followed by movement source with 26 items (27.4%), reader source with 16 items (16.8%), editorial source with 6 items (6.3%), and opposition source with only 1 item (1.1%).

As the sample size for the news from opposition source is too small, it was excluded from the subsequent analysis. This sole news from the opposing political party had only three paragraphs. The contribution from the Tamil daily was also considered

TABLE 5
Crosstabulation of Sampled Daily with Main Source of News for News Items

Main Source of News	Sin Chew Daily	The Star	Utusan Malaysia	Malaysia Nanban	Overall
Policy	30 (31.6%)	6 (6.3%)	7 (7.4%)	3 (3.2%)	46 (48.4%)
Movement	25 (26.3%)	-	1 (1.1%)	-	26 (27.4%)
Reader	2 (2.1%)	11 (11.5%)	3 (3.2%)	-	16 (16.8%)
Editorial	2 (2.1%)	3 (3.2%)	-	1 (1.1%)	6 (6.3%)
Opposition	1 (1.1%)	-	-	-	1 (1.1%)
Overall	60 (63.2%)	20 (21.1%)	11 (11.5%)	4 (4.2%)	95 (100%)

Note: Values in the parentheses represent the overall percentages.

TABLE 6
Comparing the Mean Paragraph (Unit of Analysis) by Newspaper

Newspaper	Sin Chew Daily	The Star	Utusan Malaysia	Overall
Unit of Analysis	409 (49.6%)	260 (31.6%)	155 (18.8%)	824 (100%)
News Items	59 (65.6%)	20 (22.2%)	11 (12.2%)	90 (100%)
Mean	6.93	13.00	14.09	9.16
Standard Deviation	3.478	8.909	6.363	6.244

Note: Values in the parentheses represent the overall percentages.

as small, and it had been decided that all the four news items (or 4.2% of total) from *Malaysia Nanban* be taken out from further analysis. There was a total of 26 paragraphs in the four Tamil news stories. After the deduction of these five news items, a total of 90 items were measured for their paragraphs to be applied as the unit of analysis.

In counting the unit of analysis for this study, there was a total of 824 paragraphs being scrutinised. Of which, 409 units (or 49.64% of total) were from *Sin Chew Daily*, 260 units (31.55%) from *The Star*, and 155 units (18.81%) from *Utusan Malaysia*. As exhibited in Table 6, the paragraphs contained in a news item from *Sin Chew Daily* are significantly smaller than that of its two counterparts. Comparisons were also made between the three daily newspapers.

Sin Chew Daily obtained a mean score of paragraphs in a news item or $M = 6.93$ ($SD = 3.478$), *The Star* with $M = 13.00$ ($SD = 8.909$), and *Utusan Malaysia* with $M = 14.09$ ($SD = 6.363$). Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with Post Hoc test produced a result of $F(2, 87) = 14.838$, $p < .001$ had significantly proven the differences. This shows that on average, *Sin Chew Daily* has lesser paragraphs in a news article as compared to its counterparts.

In relation to this, a tabulation of the units of analysis according to the daily newspapers by the main sources of news is displayed in Table 7. This table should enhance the understanding of the contribution of units for the analysis from the various sources of news in the respective daily newspapers. The policy source in

Sin Chew Daily contributed the most units of analysis, with an overall percentage of 26.0%. This was followed by movement source in the same newspaper (18.3%), reader source in *The Star* (15.0%), policy source in *Utusan Malaysia* (10.4%) and *The Star* (9.5%), etc. Nonethless, there were no contributions from movement source in *The Star* and editorial sources in *Utusan Malaysia*. Overall, policy source contributed 45.9%, followed by reader source overtook movement source (19.5%) with 24.0% contribution, and editorial source (10.6%).

The main objective of this study was to ascertain the different weights of the five generic frames assigned by the daily newspapers and also as portrayed by the news sources. Table 8 on the following page reveals no significant differences for transferring the salience of responsibility, conflict, morality, and economic consequences frames among the daily newspapers of different languages. The mean score of human interest frame for *Utusan Malaysia* was significantly lower than that of its two counterparts. ANOVA tests with the following results proved similar trends of attributions of frames by

these different newspapers: $F_{\text{Responsibility}}$ (2, 821) = .860, p = .423; F_{Conflict} (2, 821) = 1.775, p = .170; F_{Morality} (2, 821) = .637, p = .529; and F_{Economic} (2, 821) = 2.844, p = .059. However, the test result for human interest frame tends to be different: F_{Human} (2, 821) = 8.734, p < .001, in which the mean score for human interest frame for *Sin Chew Daily* with M = .059 (SD = .10) and *The Star* with M = .050 (SD = .09) are significantly greater than that of *Utusan Malaysia*, with M = .025 (SD = .07).

To further explore the source frames, the independent variable had been changed from daily newspaper to news source in terms of examining the weights of visibility of the five generic frames. In the ANOVA tests of the five frames by news sources, the results show an obvious emphasis in the portrayal of frames by different players involved in this social discourse. Table 9 illustrates this scenario and the different weights of visibility which will be explained later in the next section.

In terms of the responsibility frame, the test result of $F_{\text{Responsibility}}$ (3, 820) = 10.475, p < .001 ascertained the significant differences between the news sources. With the Post Hoc test, it was found that the policy source

TABLE 7

Crosstabulation of the Sampled Daily with Main Source of News for Units of Analysis

Main Source of News	Sin Chew Daily	The Star	Utusan Malaysia	Overall
Policy	214 (26.0%)	78 (9.5%)	86 (10.4%)	378 (45.9%)
Movement	151 (18.3%)	-	10 (1.2%)	161 (19.5%)
Reader	15 (1.8%)	124 (15.0%)	59 (7.2%)	198 (24.0%)
Editorial	29 (3.5%)	58 (7.0%)	-	87 (10.6%)
Overall	409 (49.6%)	260 (31.6%)	155 (18.8%)	824 (100%)

Note: Values in parentheses represent percentages of overall.

TABLE 8
Mean Scores of the Visibility of Five Generic Frames in Daily Newspapers

Daily	Responsibility		Conflict		Morality		Economic		Human		N
Sin Chew Daily	.083	(.12)	.110	(.17)	.024	(.09)	.008	(05)	.059 [a]	(.10)	409
The Star	.073	(.12)	.091	(.15)	.021	(.08)	.019	(.08)	.050 [a]	(.09)	260
Utusan Malaysia	.071	(.11)	.086	(.15)	.015	(.07)	.009	(.05)	.025 [a]	(.07)	155
Whole Sample	.078	(.12)	.100	(.16)	.021	(.08)	.012	(.06)	.050	(.09)	824

Note: Values in parentheses represent standard deviations.
[a]   There is no significant difference between Sin Chew Daily and The Star at 95% confidence level. Utusan Malaysia is significantly lower than the other two dailies at 95% confidence level.

TABLE 9
Mean Scores of the Visibility of Five Generic Frames by News Sources

News Source	Responsibility		Conflict		Morality		Economic		Human		N
Policy	.101 [a]	(.13)	.058 [b]	(.13)	.013 [c]	(.07)	.009	(.05)	.048	(.09)	378
Reader	.066 [a]	(.11)	.120 [b]	(.17)	.014 [c]	(.07)	.015	(.07)	.052	(.09)	198
Movement	.042 [a]	(.09)	.168 [b]	(.20)	.035 [c]	(.10)	.015	(.07)	.046	(.09)	161
Editorial	.072 [a]	(.13)	.107 [b]	(.16)	.046 [c]	(.12)	.012	(.06)	.060	(.10)	87
Whole Sample	.078	(.12)	.100	(.16)	.021	(.08)	.012	(.06)	.050	(.09)	824

Note: Values in parentheses represent standard deviations.
All the ANOVA tests are at 95% confidence level or .05 level of significance:
[a]   Policy is significantly higher than Movement and Reader but not Editorial. Movement and Reader are significantly lower than Policy but not Editorial. Editorial is neither significantly lower nor higher than other sources of news.
[b]   Policy is significantly lower than other sources of news. Movement is significantly higher than other sources of news. Both Editorial and Reader are at the middle level in between Policy and Movement.
[c]   Policy and Reader are significantly lower than Editorial but not Movement. Movement is neither significantly lower nor higher than other sources of news. Editorial is significantly higher than Policy and Reader but not Movement.

with $M = .101$ ($SD = .13$) revealed more responsibility frame than the movement source with $M = .042$ ($SD = .09$) and the reader source with $M = .066$ ($SD = .11$). Nonetheless, it was not able to claim that the policy source depicted the said frame more than the editorial source with $M = .072$ ($SD = .13$). Neither could the editorial source claim to be greater than the other two sources in portraying this particular responsibility frame (see Table 10 for the differences).

While looking at the conflict frame, the greater F-ratio indicates a greater difference among these news sources. The test result of $F_{Conflict}$ (3, 820) = 20.228, $p <$ .001 had separated the four sources of news into three groups. In Table 11, the mean

TABLE 10
Post Hoc Test for Responsibility Frame

	Group 1		Group 2
Policy:	M = .101 (SD = .13)		
Editorial:	M = .072 (SD = .13)	Editorial:	M = .072 (SD = .13)
		Reader:	M = .066 (SD = .11)
		Movement:	M = .042 (SD = .09)

TABLE 11
Post Hoc Test for Conflict Frame

	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3
Movement:	M = .168 (SD = .20)				
		Reader:	M = .120 (SD = .17)		
		Editorial:	M = .107 (SD = .16)		
				Policy:	M = .058 (SD = .13)

TABLE 12
Post Hoc Test for Morality Frame

	Group 1		Group 2
Editorial:	M = .046 (SD = .12)		
Movement:	M = .035 (SD = .10)	Movement:	M = .035 (SD = .10)
		Reader:	M = .014 (SD = .07)
		Policy:	M = .013 (SD = .07)

score in portraying the conflict frame by the movement source with M = .168 (SD = .20) was significantly greater than any other news sources. On the contrary, the mean score for the policy source, M = .058 (SD = .13), which was very much lower than any other sources and significantly alienated from the others. Meanwhile, the reader source with M = .120 (SD = .17) and the editorial source with M = .107 (SD = .16) were in between these two confronting players in this issue.

The ANOVA test for morality frame also displayed a significant difference among the news sources. The outcome of F_{Morality} (3, 820) = 6.238, p < .001 with Post Hoc test depicting that the editorial source was significantly greater than the reader source and the policy source. However, it was not the case when these were compared with the movement source. As outlined in Table 12, the editorial source with M = .046 (SD = .12) and the movement source with M = .035 (SD = .10) could not establish a significant difference between them. The movement source could not claim to be greater than the reader source with M = .014 (SD = .07) and the policy source with M = .013 (SD

= .07). The editorial source was found to be significantly greater than the two latter sources in portraying the morality frame.

The ANOVA test on human interest frame carried out for the three different daily newspapers exhibited a significant difference within the said independent variable. However, once the independent variable was substituted by the news sources, no significant difference could be established. The outcome of F-ratio was small with $F_{Human} (3, 820) = .534, p = .659$ and hence no claim of significant difference could be made. A similar case was found for the economic consequences frame where the test result of $F_{Economic} (3, 820) = .595, p = .618$ failed to determine the significant difference between the news sources in portraying this particular frame.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

From the above analysis of the daily news contents on the coverage of teaching and learning of mathematics and science subjects in English, it is confirmed that the Tamil newspaper does not seem to have paid sufficient attention on the said issue, unlike its counterparts, the Chinese newspaper, which dominated in reporting this contemporary education issue. Although the size of content (measured by counting the number of paragraphs) is relatively smaller than that of the Malay and English newspapers, this vernacular daily still contributes the most units of analysis for the study. It has managed to create an impression that the Chinese educated group pays most attention to this issue. It is

reported in the Chinese newspaper that this unpopular policy may affect the practice of mother-tongue education in the country, and in particular, the Chinese education system.

Besides allocating the most space for the coverage on this particular issue, the Chinese newspaper is the only one which has given room to the opposing political party to participate in media discourse. However, this opportunity is rather small or limited as members from this news source category were not given enough space to voice out their views on the issue. Although the Chinese newspaper has little space for the opposing political party, it has allocated the most space to the movement groups and NGOs. There is no news story attributed from this news source category in the English newspaper and only one reported in the Malay newspaper, which is sourced from Yayasan Karyawan. Meanwhile, the news stories attributed from the movement source in the Chinese newspaper are mainly from Dong Jiao Zong. In this respect, the Chinese newspaper appears to be more accommodating to the education movement in terms of counter-framing.

Comparing the weights assigned to both the news sources of policy and movement, the Chinese newspaper produced a ratio of 30:25 or 1 to 0.83 in terms of the news item count. However, the ratio is relatively smaller if the news paragraph count is taken into consideration, in which 214:151 or 1 to 0.71 is the comparison. As can be seen from the above ratios, the policymaker and its supporting groups are given the most media space vis-à-vis other sources of news. This

is apparent for both the Chinese and Malay newspapers but not in the case of the English newspaper. On the other hand, the English newspaper received the most news stories from the readers' views. As this education issue involves the usage of English language for two highly cognitional subjects, the English daily newspaper has given the most space for its readers to debate on both the pros and cons of the policy. Similarly, the other two newspapers have also allocated some room for their readers to discuss the issue. In addition, the editorial boards of both the English and Chinese newspapers have assigned ample space to deliberate on the impact brought upon by the said policy. Nonetheless, their Malay counterpart does not seem to have such interest. There is no editorial write-up, except for the hard news and letters from the readers in the Malay newspaper on the discourse of teaching and learning of Mathematics and Science subjects in English.

As for the framing of the news stories in the print media, all the newspapers do not purposefully differentiate each other on the five predetermined frames. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and Valkenburg *et al.* (1999) reveal in their studies that media with different natures of business and targets at disimilar audience tend to portray varied frames in the same issue. In this study, it is noted that in the human interest frame, the Malay newspaper tends to provide less emphasis on it as compared to the English and Chinese newspapers. In other words, the Malay newspaper touches the least in bringing human interest or

emotional angle to the presentation of the said issue. Overall, all the three newspapers undertaken in the current study do not establish significant differences for the other four frames, namely, responsibility, conflict, morality, and economic consequences. This could be attributed to the same nature of business for the three newspapers but a slight diverse readership from different cultural backgrounds.

It became a different scenario when the frames of the the main sources of news information were compared. Hence, it is obvious that the policymaker and its supporters portray a very strong responsibility frame vis-à-vis other news sources. This communicative behaviour through media intends to frame the mind of the readers for what the policymaker does, i.e. to demonstrate the accountability of the government for solutions on the issue. The editorial source is also inclined to add weight in portraying this particular responsibility frame but no significant differences can be found when it comes to comparing the same with the movement and reader sources.

The editorial and reader sources indeed score higher in the portrayal of the conflict frame. However, their scores are not as high as the frame attributed from the movement source. The education movement and NGOs, being the champion in challenging the implementation of this education policy, have performed counter-framing by confronting the actions and decisions made by the policymaker.   On the contrary, the policy source is seen to be the least offensive

body. Its score for the conflict frame is much lower than that of the editorial and reader sources. Both the editorial and reader sources are at the middle level among all. The research finding has ascertained that the movement source emphasises the most on conflict frame in capturing audience attention.

Thus, it is clear from the above outcomes that the policy source is linked closely with the responsibility frame, while the movement source is associated itself with the conflict frame. From the statistical test in finding the significant difference in the portrayal of the morality frame, the editorial source attains higher scores than the policymaker and its supporters, and also the readers' views. Although the education movement and NGOs display a certain level of importance on this morality frame, no significant difference was found when the movement source was compared with the policy and reader sources. As a result, this finding puts the editorial source in the perspective of trying to put the issue in the context of moral prescriptive.

In line with the objective of this research, i.e. to establish the source frames for the issue under study, some conclusions can be made from the interpretations of the analysis of the statistical tests. The frames portrayed by the sources of news information may not be solely their personal thoughts on the issue but more of their positions or representations in the organisation. Thus, it can be concluded that the policy frame is more responsible in nature. Unlike its counterpart, the movement frame is more

confrontational in capturing attention when counter-framing the policy source. Meanwhile, the editorial frame tends to highlight the morality aspect of the issue. The reader highlights less on morality but comparitively more on human interest and economic consequences. The statistical tests, however, could not establish that the two latter frames portrayed by the reader were significantly greater than that of the other news sources. Hence, the reader frame was found to be only relatively close to the movement for its aggressiveness.

As mentioned earlier by Reese (2001), framing in communication is indeed how media, media professionals, and their audiences make sense of a particular issue or event. Symbolic forms of expression plays the role to entail patterns or categorisations of pictures in their heads and then to represent them to others. It is apparent that all news sources applied such symbolic forms of expression through mass communication. The source frames encountered in this study such as policy frame, movement frame, editorial frame, and reader frame, have their own unique pattern of salience of news attribution. This particular strategic action in communication is regarded as "an ideological contest…in which participants manoeuvre strategically to achieve their political and communicative objectives" (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 40).

News sources as frame sponsors much highlighted by Hallahan (1999) always ensure their expressions are consistently framed and slanted to their preferences. In framing their news stories, the news

sources "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993, p. 52).   The present study had successfully observed what had been made salient in media text by the news sources. However, how they communicate in describing the news stories is beyond the scope of this study.

The present research is confined to the news coverage on a contemporary education issue.   It has thus caused the limitation to scrutinise various types of issues, such as economics or political issues, which might help to make a better generalisation of the findings. Hence, the inferences made in the analyses of this research are narrowed to the scope within the issue of teaching and learning of Mathematics and Science subjects in two languages for Chinese primary schools only. Other education issues beyond this boundary were not examined and therefore no further inference is to be made on the whole education policy. Besides that, the analysis was conducted on only four, and subsequently three, daily newspapers at a specific time and hence, no representation of all media in the country is to be made on their stands in evaluating this specific education policy. The authors have to highlight that no broadcast media had been studied in this research. Another perspective of the media frames projected by radio and television has not been examined. Alternative media, such as online news and blogs, were also not examined. Furthermore, the study of print media was limited to only selected newspapers. The authors have no doubt that these limitations can be overcome in future research.

In this study, it is not the authors' intention to rule out the significant role of the people in the media organisation to frame an issue. However, the contribution of the news sources is very much greater in determining how an issue is to be framed. In this respect, the framing process of selection, exclusion, and emphasis of a particular aspect of an issue happened on both the media workers and sources of news. Nonetheless, the sequence of the framing process should begin with the sources' choices before going to the hands of the media workers to decide on what and how news stories are to be written.

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