Investigating the Role of Conceptual Metaphor in the Representation of the Syrian Human Crisis in British Newspaper Articles: A Cognitive Approach

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Abstract

This paper investigates the representation of the Syrian human crisis through the conceptual metaphor of the "Other". It particularly examines how conceptual metaphor plays a role in the representation of the Syrian human crisis in British Newspaper Articles. It also highlights the use of "Us" vs. "Them" dichotomy in the representation of both groups in the selected newspaper articles. Utilizing Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and cross-domain mapping, along with Van Dijk's (1995) Ideological Square (IS), the paper examines the use of conventionalized and novel conceptual metaphors in the representation of the Syrian human crisis in British newspaper articles. 100 newspaper articles about the crisis are collected from three British newspapers (The Guardian, The Daily Mail and the Daily Telegraph) between 2014 and 2016. The paper concludes with a discussion of how these newspapers make use of conceptual metaphor to portray Syrian refugees as THREAT, OBJECTS, WATER, ANIMALS and ILLNESS/DISEASE. Moreover, the use of "Us" vs. "Them" dichotomy indicates social distance and contributes to the representation of Syrian refugees as the "Other". Words like "immigrants" and "asylum seekers" are also used in addition to "refugees" to refer to Syrians. The oscillation between these labels highlights the strategy mainstream media follows to strip Syrian refugees from the official rights identified by the United Nations.

Keywords: *conceptual metaphor, cross-domain mapping, Syrian refugees, immigrants, the Other*

Introduction

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) was introduced to the field of cognitive linguistics in 1980 as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson published the first edition of their book *Metaphors We Live By*. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain that CMT, unlike the traditional

view, considers metaphor to be mainly a part of thought and action and partially a part of language (p. 153). They also stress that the nature of the human conceptual system is profoundly metaphorical and that metaphor defines and structures human thought processes (p. 3). Similarly, Johnson (1987) emphasizes the pervasiveness of metaphor as a structure of human thought used to understand the world figuratively. In this perspective, metaphorical concepts are omnipresent in our lives often without us ever recognizing their ubiquitous influence. Metaphors are lurking inconspicuously in the discourse of all kinds of human interactions.

Lakoff (1993) notes that metaphor, in CMT, is defined as "a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system" (p. 203). He explains that metaphorical expressions refer to a set of linguistic expressions (a word, a phrase or a sentence), which form the surface structure of cross-domain mapping. A typical conceptual metaphor involves two domains, namely, a source domain, which is concrete in nature; and a target domain, which is abstract in nature. The correspondences formed between the domains are known as mappings. The mappings are constructed in the mind first, and then they are directed from the source domain to the target domain. Metaphor's meaning is constructed by transferring features from the source domain, which embodies coherent knowledge or experience to the target domain through linguistic expressions. Conceptual mappings have a fixed structure as: "TARGET-DOMAIN IS SOURCE-DOMAIN or TARGET-DOMAIN AS SOURCE-DOMAIN" (p. 207).

Conceptual metaphors are embodied in physical experiences as a means to describe and explain abstract concepts by mapping two semantic domains. To help us understand abstract concepts in terms of concrete ones, metaphors suggest an inexistent equation between the target and source domains. These mappings are partial and create gaps making metaphor particularly susceptible to ideology. Deignan (2005) argues that it is through these gaps that ideology percolates into metaphor, making it a subtle but powerful means of conveying ideology. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) stress that a metaphor is only partial in

nature because comprehending one concept in terms of another one only highlights the aspects that correspond with the topic and inevitably hides other inconsistent aspects of that concept (p. 10).

The core of cross-domain mapping is that when language users use more than one source domain to comprehend one single target domain, they interrelate different source domains. Some source domains map some specific aspects on the target domain of a metaphor, and other source domains map some other aspects on the same one. Thus, the choice to use one metaphor over the other depends on the aspects of a certain topic we wish to highlight. Deignan (2005) notes that the metaphorical gaps resulting from partial mappings are filled with the biased and shared knowledge of a given community. Also, the partial picture frequently used metaphors presents can contribute to a shared, biased perception of reality. Thus, simultaneously highlighting and hiding aspects of reality from group members limits their vision and view of that reality. (p. 24).

Conceptual metaphor has an ideological function that makes realities simpler and creates feelings of unity and belonging (Kövecses, 2002, p. 90). Van Dijk (1995) stresses that ideologies are socially shared and used by groups and their members, and that they are extensively present in language. Accordingly, they should not be perceived in terms of 'right' and 'wrong;' instead they should be evaluated and understood in terms of effectiveness in promoting a particular group's interests. The term ideology does not have one definitive or inclusive description. However, there are components of ideology that seem to be prevalent. Group ideologies, for example, are often polarizing, which creates a strong sense of 'self' versus 'other' and of 'us' versus 'them' and are often shared and distributed through mass media and national rhetoric. This is referred to as by van Dijk (1995) as the ideological square.

The polarization between "Us" and "Them", according to van Dijk (2006), is done by designing the discourse by establishing two opposing groups: the 'Us' group and the 'Them' group. This can be further enhanced by

simultaneously assigning good qualities to the former and bad qualities to the latter which establishes 'positive self-presentation' and 'negative other-presentation'. The former emphasizes morality, power and superiority, while discrediting the opponent (i.e. the other) simultaneously by throwing the blame on them for the bad conditions. Moreover, 'implicit-fallacious-argument' (P. 378) is a strategy employed to relate the opponent (i.e. the other) to the enemy in order to discredit the opponent and represent them negatively. Similarly, the latent ideology hidden in the metaphorical gaps enables newspapers to use pejorative language in the representation of immigrants and refugees.

Analyzing British newspaper articles about the Syrian crisis reveals metaphorical structures that are used to amplify fear of migrants and highlights the ways metaphor promotes a destructive ideology that frames refugees as the 'Other'. Reinforcing and strengthening deeply-rooted and exclusionary stereotypes help to construct in- and out-groups that define communities in terms of "us" vs "them". This is particularly effective in communicating the idea that "they", in this case immigrants and refugees, are a threat to "us" and "our" way of life. Both groups are under the spotlight and being presented under similar circumstances. Given the universality aspect metaphor enjoys, as evidenced by corresponding linguistic metaphors, it is safe to say that groups, which share conceptual metaphors (and therefore social practice) are also likely to share knowledge, beliefs and bias.

The representation of the Syrian refugee crisis in the media depends mainly on the ideological views of the newspaper, news reporters, journalists and media agencies, who frame events according to their political agendas. Describing refugees in the media as "flooding", "flocking" and "swarming" to Europe can have political ramifications on whether a country will support and accept refugees or not and can influence the public's perception of Syrian refugees. Moreover, the topic of refugees as part of the broader discourse on immigration can be perceived as an issue of "Us and Them" dichotomy. In this respect, the image of refugees can be associated with the image of the cultural/religious "Other".

Refugees seek shelter and financial support; thus, they are attributed the features of a public enemy, who disrupts peace and social homogeneity. Thus, psychologically, in order to uphold the better image of the in-group and foster positive self-esteem, locals provide the image of refugees with negative qualities enhanced by images distributed and reflected by the media. Newspapers, for instance, perpetually use 'migrants' instead of 'refugees' to describe Syrians implying that they may have had the choice to freely leave their country. Kushner (2003) points out that most western countries, who are opposed to refugees entering their societies have adopted the strategy of classifying them as something different "to have a linguistic tool to legitimize the control of the scale of influxes" (p. 265).

If media chooses to portray Syrians as migrants, then politicians and the public may become less motivated to offer financial support or otherwise. This portrayal may also lead the public to believe that Syrians are not leaving Syria out of fear but rather in search for a better life or a better paid labor. They may also lead the public to feel threatened by refugees who need to find jobs and homes. The fear of refugees adds more pressure to the country's economy, politics and social standing. These feelings contribute to the discourse relating to giving Syrians the attributes of the "Other" creating a sense of "Us vs Them". Newspapers amplify this fear by distributing images of refugee camps on the border, reporting on refugees' attempts to cross the borders and using pejorative language to portray refugees as a threat.

Recently, several studies investigate the ways in which immigrants and refugees are represented in newspapers, news stories and media shows. The topics they focus on vary between immigration policy, national security, social and economic stress and racism. The methods of investigation and analysis also vary between content analysis (e.g. Esses, Medianu & Lawson 2013; Medianu, Sutter & Esses 2015), visual analysis (e.g. Wright 2010), critical discourse analysis (e.g. Teo 2000; Erjavec 2003; KhosraviNik 2010; Wright 2014;

Lippi, McKay & McKenzie 2017) and corpus based analysis (e.g. Baker & McEnery 2005; Gabrielatos & Baker 2008; Baker et al 2008). Some investigate the metaphors sustaining media discourse on immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees to outline patterns of racism, prejudice and xenophobia (e.g. Kitis & Milapides 1997; Santa Ana 1999; El Refaie 2001; Parker 2015).

Based on the exploration of the previous studies on immigrants and refugees, there is a lacuna in studies investigating the conceptual metaphors underlying the mainstream media discourse on Syrian refugees in British newspaper articles. Combining the cognitive approach with a critical discourse approach to highlight the politics of the media representation of the Syrian refugees as the "Other" has been a recurrent topic in recent studies conducted on the issue. Still, examining that topic in terms of conceptual metaphor has been limited. Therefore, this study addresses this lacuna by carrying out an investigation of the conceptual metaphors underpinning the media representation of the Syrian crisis in terms of immigrant, asylum seeker and refugee as the "Other".

Methodology

The dataset comprises 100 newspaper articles collected from 3 British newspapers: *The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph* and *The Daily Mail* from 2014 to 2016 as presented in table (1) below.

Table 1: The 3 selected British newspapers

Newspaper	Ideological orientation / type	Number of articles	Word count
The Guardian	Liberal / broadsheet	50	53747
The Daily Telegraph	Conservative / broadsheet	33	53815
The Daily Mail	Conservative / tabloid	17	27911

The three newspapers hold ideological tendencies ranging between liberal and conservative to highlight the politics and strategies of representing Syrian refugees as the "Other". They are published daily and are available both in print and online versions, which allows for the retrieval of articles from the newspaper's website. The selected articles are published between 2014 and 2016. Although the crisis started in 2011, it reached a peaking point towards the end of 2014. Thus, the volume of the newspaper articles covering the crisis, condemning the atrocities of the war and/or offering analyses and solutions began to increase. The articles are collected through searching the newspapers' website. Key words 'Syrian', 'refugees', 'crisis' are used to search for the articles.

Newspaper selection also depends on readership statistics done by the Publishers Audience Measurement Company (PAMCo), which manages audience measurement for the published media industry. The (2017) monthly readership of UK's newspapers both in print and online in millions are illustrated in table (2) below:

Table 2: Pamco monthly reach for (2017) UK's newspapers in millions.

Newspaper	Monthly Readership (print and online) in millions
The Daily Mail	31,215
The Guardian	24,823
The Daily Telegraph	23,692

Procedure

To build the corpus for analysis, the text for each of the 100 articles is converted to plain text, and uploaded onto the concordance software, *AntConc* to create a 100-file corpus for quantitative analysis to identify instances of metaphoric constructions associated with migrants and refugees. Three distinctive data sets are created to separate the articles collected from each of the three newspapers (*The Guardian* 50-file, *The Daily Mail* 17-file *and The Daily Telegraph* 33-file). Several queries are run for the analysis including: **Word List**, **N-Grams and Collocates.**

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory and cross-domain mapping are applied to find the superordinate and subordinate source domains that are mapped onto the target domain REFUGEES. Van Dijk's (1995) ideological square is also applied to

identify positive self-representation and negative other-representation instances.

Data Analysis and Results

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) find that domains are realized at different levels based on taxonomic relations as superordinate domains and subordinate domains. For example, conceptual metaphors like: PROBLEMS ARE OBSTACLES, STATES ARE LOCATIONS and PEOPLE ARE TRAVELERS, are all subordinate metaphorical domains to the superordinate metaphorical domain LIFE IS A JOURNEY. A phrase like 'We are going our separate ways' also conceptualizes LOVE as a JOURNEY and falls within the superordinate metaphorical domain JOURNEY. This shows that JOURNEY is highly pervasive and conventional in language and is involved in diverse conceptualizations of target domains. Thus, users quickly grasp how JOURNEY conceptualizes various target domains and quickly pick up and understand the reference or mapping.

Kövecses (2010) uses the term "conventionalized" to refer to a metaphor that is deep-rooted in language use (p. 34). Metaphor is used subconsciously in everyday interactions, which permits us to assume that conventionalized conceptual metaphors or mappings are easy to grasp. Mappings in novel metaphors can still be conventional but the linguistic expressions used to convey the idea are unconventional. Novel metaphors are extensively used by those who seek to find new, creative and innovative ways to manifest their ideas. Conceptual metaphors, being conventional, deeply rooted and well established in the mind are not conceived or thought of as metaphors, and thus they have the potential and ideological advantage of affecting and shaping beliefs and actions without being recognized.

Conceptual Metaphor of the "Other"

In the 100-file corpus, five conceptual metaphors emerged. All five metaphors appeared in all three newspapers. This shows how conventionalized and widespread they are. Each conceptual metaphor comprises a number of linguistic expressions, which indicate its conventionality. Table (3) below shows the count for each of the five conceptual metaphors based on the number of the linguistic expressions they comprise. It also shows the prevalent framing of each conceptual metaphor.

Table 3: Five conceptual metaphors found in the 100-file corpus.

Conceptual Metaphor	Count	Frames refugees as:
REFUGEES ARE A THREAT	45	A security hazard
REFUGEES ARE OBJECTS	40	Less than a human
REFUGEES ARE WATER	32	Uncontrollable, destructive force
REFUGEES ARE ANIMALS	30	Sub-human
REFUGEES ARE AN ILLNESS/DISEASE	27	A problem

In table (3) above, the count for each conceptual metaphor is based on the occurrence and presence of the linguistic expressions in the dataset rather than their frequency. A linguistic expression (a word, phrase, sentence) is the surface realization of cross-domain mapping (Lakoff 1993, p. 203). They are considered the path across the source domain to the target domain. The presence of the linguistic expression indicates the presence of the conceptual metaphor, regardless of how many times it is repeated. The same expression can be mapped onto several metaphors, which is the core of cross-domain mapping. Also, some subordinate conceptual metaphors are generated from the cross domain mapping of the superordinate metaphors.

REFUGEES ARE A THREAT

This metaphor frames refugees as a threat to national security. It generated the subordinate conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE A SECURITY CONCERN, which compares refugees to and identifies them with real-life

threats and dangers like terrorists, criminals, rebels ... etc. This serves to highlight the aspect of danger refugees pose to the hosting countries they enter. Using this metaphor forms a connection between refugees and what is known and experienced by the public.

In excerpts (1) and (2) below, using the words "state of emergency", "growing tension", "clashes" serve to paint a vivid picture of what sorts of threat refugees pose to the country in the mind of the reader. Reporting the arrival of "riot squads" and "police officers" to where refugees are serves to amplify the sense of fear and threat in the minds of the public.

> *Ex (1):* "Our main goal is **to maintain public life and order**," he said. "A hundred metres from the train station one should not notice that **we have a sort of state of emergency**." (Samaa, 2015).

> *Ex (2):* "Amid **growing tension** and two nights of **clashes** between police and refugees, two extra **riot squads** arrived on the island while 60 more regular ordinary police officers were also sent." (Hall, Squire & Holehouse, 2015)

Excerpts (3) and (4) below focus on showing how refugees can have terrorists among them who take advantage of the state of panic and the large number of refugees. Frequently writing about how they are trying to break into the country and threaten its safety and security establishes it as a fact that security agencies need to counter and stand against. In these excerpts, refugees are compared to and identified with real-life threats and dangers like terrorists, criminals, rebels ... etc. This serves to highlight the aspect of danger refugees pose to the hosting countries they enter. Using such metaphors establishes a connection between refugees and what is known, experienced by the public.

> *Ex (3):* "'We have repeatedly seen that **terrorists** ... have **slipped in camouflaged or disguised as refugees**. This is a fact that the **security** agencies are **facing**.'" (Wilkes & Akbar, 2016)

> *Ex (4):* "More than four in ten (44%) Britons now believe that the UK should **close its borders to refugees entirely**." (Nardelli, 2015)

The number of linguistic expressions generated in the conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE A THREAT indicates how conventional it is in the dataset. The frequent emergence of this metaphor suggests that it is a conventional way to perceive, think and talk about refugees and the current Syrian refugee crisis. It also suggests that by viewing refugees as a threat and showing that they are a danger to the safety and security of the country, they are being represented in a negative light. Explicitly likening refugees to criminals who break into places and terrorists who attack people and destroy countries or rebels and riots who create a state of emergency contributes to the use of pejorative language to represent refugees. This in turn feeds back into the representation of Syrian refugees as the "Other". Refugees are the threat which targets "our" borders and "our" countries.

REFUGEES ARE OBJECTS

When refugees are framed as objects, they become much easier to dismiss. Referring to refugees as objects completely strips them of minds, personalities and desires. They are no longer classified as people; they are merely physical and material objects which need to be dealt with. This metaphor reduces refugees to a less than human status. It generated two subordinate conceptual metaphors. The first one is NATIONS ARE A CONTAINER / A WAREHOUSE. The following excerpts exhibit that the conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE OBJECTS is constructed primarily through the use of words that represent movement.

> *Ex (5):* "Since the beginning of the conflict, the UK has **received** about **3,800 Syrian asylum seekers**. The next group of refugees are expected to **arrive** in April." (Press Association, 2014)

> *Ex (6):* "Home Office reveals **1,602 people** have been **resettled** so far under plan to **accept 20,000**, with only **33 housed** in London." (Addley, & Pidd, 2016)

Ex (7): "… council **housing** and stepping up **removals** would **tackle** the crisis." (Holehouse, 2015)

The linguistic expressions representing movement and transport suggest that refugees are perceived as less than human beings. They are stripped of the "human" element and are thought about and talked about in terms of physical objects. These objects are taken, received, expected, moved, removed, coming, housed, handled, tackled and dealt with. OBJECTS as a source domain is exceptionally concrete and rich in its linguistic expressions. A conceptual metaphor with OBJECTS as its source domain is considered to be highly conventionalized and deeply rooted in our conceptual system. The pervasiveness of this source domain in everyday life is a major factor that establishes its conventionality in everyday language. Still, viewing refugees as objects and dealing with them accordingly also contributes to the use of pejorative language to represent refugees in a negative way.

An aspect that can also be mapped onto the conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE OBJECTS is the fact that objects are countable and can be assigned a definite number. In this way, refugees, since the word is a countable noun, are perceived in terms of numbers and figures as illustrated in the excerpts above. This contributes to the framing of refugees as less than a human as well; they are reduced to numbers and figures. In doing so, countries, officials, and politicians strip refugees of the "human" element when they talk about them as mere numbers and figures. In the excerpts sampled above, each time refugees are mentioned, a number or a figure is also mentioned.

This dehumanizing strategy serves to paint a picture in the readers' mind about the magnitude of the crisis at hand which adds to the burden, fear and pressure. This, in fact, puts the refugee crisis under a magnifying glass by assigning big numbers and figures.

A different aspect that can also be mapped onto the conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE OBJECTS is the fact that objects are transported and moved over time and distance. This aspect can probably give rise to a subordinate metaphor that can be expressed as SEEKING REFUGE IS A JOURNEY suggesting that refugees share the aspect of movement over time. The word "journey" appeared 85 times in the 100-file corpus. This, in fact, is significant as it indicates that the conventionality of the JOURNEY source domain in language has not been excluded from the debate and discussion about the Syrian refugee crisis. The excerpts below illustrate this metaphor

Ex (8): "… opening the door to more refugees could act as an incentive to more people to try to make the **perilous journey** across the Mediterranean." (Chorley, 2015)

Ex (9): "… a move some fear will encourage more to **attempt** the **journey** to Europe." (Tomlinson, 2016)

Ex (10): "… it was important to discourage them to make the **dangerous journey** across the Mediterranean in the first place." (Akkoc, & Wilkinson, 2015)

Ex (11): "**Hundreds** marched through farmland and waded chest-deep across an icy river, **desperate** to continue their **journey** before the weather got even colder." (Graham-Harrison, 2015)

Ex (12): "The **perils** of this **journey** have been recently illustrated by boats that have **sunk in the seas** of southern Europe." (Gentleman, 2015)

Since the mapping between the source and target domains is only partial in nature, the only aspect that can be highlighted in this subordinate metaphor is the dangers and risks journeys entail in reality. This can actually give rise to yet another subordinate conceptual metaphor expressed as REFUGEES ARE TRAVELERS highlighting the hardships travelers encounter during a journey. Words like "perilous," "dangerous" and "desperate" act like linguistic expressions which often collocate with the conceptual metaphor

REFUGEES ARE WATER

The third conceptual metaphor that emerged in the 100-file corpus is the conceptual metaphor REFGUEES ARE WATER. WATER is a widely productive source domain. This conceptual metaphor compares refugees and the Syrian refugee crisis with water, which is a highly conventionalized source domain in language with many mappings. This metaphor frames refugees as an uncontrollable and a destructive force. Four subordinate conceptual metaphors are generated, making it the most productive conceptual metaphor when talking about and discussing refugees. Syrian refugees cross the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe. They came in "waves" that cannot be stopped or controlled. The following excerpts illustrate how the highly conventionalized conceptual metaphor REFGUEES ARE WATER is used by the media to incite fear.

> *Ex (13):* "The **flow of migrants and refugees** through Slovenia continued **unabated** as drone footage shows **hundreds of migrants crossing** farmland on foot near the border with Croatia [...] Slovenia has complained it lacks manpower and equipment to handle **the influx of tens of thousands of people crossing through** the country." (Shahrestani, & AP, 2015)

> *Ex (14): The Guardian: Still **the refugees are coming**, but in Europe **the barriers are rising***
> "... to ward off **disaster** last week, but the number of **refugees flooding into** the country. Hopes that winter would slow down the **flow of refugees** and allow Europe to plan a response." (Graham-Harrison, 2015)

> *Ex (15): The Daily Telegraph: Hungary says **migrant influx** to Europe **must be stopped altogether***
> "Hungary's prime minister on Friday said that the **flow of refugees and migrants pouring into Europe** must be **halted altogether**, not just reduced, and called for new **border fences to be built** in northern Greece. [...] against the unprecedented **influx**, called for **the building** of what he called a European

defence line on Greece's **borders** with Bulgaria and Macedonia." (Squires, 2016)

> *Ex (16): The Daily Telegraph: Britain 'failing to resettle Syria refugees'*
> "Thus far the **overwhelming burden** of the refugee crises has fallen on countries neighbouring Syria [...] who are now struggling to cope with an **influx** of more than **four million people**." (Sherlock, 2014)

In the excerpts above, the uncontrollable aspect of water and the inevitability with which it moves from one place to another are mapped onto refugees. This aspect creates a subordinate metaphor REFUGEES ARE AN UNCONTROLLABLE MOVEMENT OF WATER. The only way to stop water or control it is by interfering with its movement by building dams or diversions. Similarly, the only way to stop the "influx" of refugees, who are "pouring" into Europe is by building a "border" or a "defence line". Like water, refugees are an unstoppable "flow" and irregular "waves" that keep moving. Also, the magnitude with which water is measured is also used to measure the flow of refugees. Refugees are presented with numbers counted in hundreds of thousands and millions, which is an "overwhelming burden" for hosting countries.

The second one is WATER AS A THREAT TO THE NATION in which water itself is refugees as shown in examples (17) and (18).

> *Ex (17):* "Turkey has said it is **bracing itself** for a **wave** of **tens of thousands of refugees**. What was initially a **trickle** turned into a **flood** last summer." (Wilkes & Akbar, 2016)

> *Ex (18):* "We will not allow Israel to be **submerged** by a **wave** of **illegal migrants** and terrorist activists." (Tait, 2015)

The above examples view refugees as a threat equal in power to tides or floods. The destructive power floods of water possess is mapped onto the refugees coming across the Mediterranean Sea. Mapping this aspect onto refugees portrays them as a threat that needs to be stopped and confined.

The third subordinate metaphor consists of two parts: A NATION IS A CONTAINER THAT HOLDS A FLUID and A MASS OF PEOPLE IS A FLUID.

> *Ex (19):* "… **the UK is 'full'**, and that **those arriving on our shores** are a **drain** on our economy." (Press Association, 2016)

> *Ex (20):* "Among the **thousands of migrants pouring into Europe**, he added, are criminals, terrorists and foreign fighters." (Sandbrook, 2016)

These excerpts illustrate the threat by expressing that the container is becoming full or is spilling its content as fluid is insistently "pouring" into it. In the first example, the nation/container – in this case, the UK – is filled with fluid/refugees beyond its limits. Interestingly, refugees overflow and drain the nation in the same sentence, which stems from mapping two ironically contradicting aspects of water.

REFUGEES ARE ANIMALS

This metaphor also reduces refugees to be sub-human, who are stripped of their rights. Words such as "flock" and "flee" are often used when referring to the numbers and behavior of refugees as shown in ex (21) below:

> *Ex (21): The Guardian: Europe has turned its refugee crisis into a morally disastrous Hunger Games*
> "If **refugees and migrants flock** to the capital or the main cities and the situation becomes visibly unsustainable, no national government would **allocate them** to specific districts with a prohibition to cross district boundaries." (Maes, 2015)

Two subordinate conceptual metaphors are generated. The first one is REFUGEES ARE JUNGLE-ANIMALS. This subordinate metaphor is quite interesting considering the fact that refugees are foreigners who inhabit a foreign place and a foreign notion to France and Britain who do not have any jungles.

> *Ex (21):* "**Refugees and migrants in the Jungle** … impossible to **sneak** onto a truck in or near Calais." (Mulholland, 2016)

This example indicates that the jungle represents refugees, and therefore, all the inferences of jungles are mapped onto refugees. The jungle metaphor refers to the actual physical space that is perceived as dangerous and uncivilized and also refers to the refugees inhabiting it.

The second subordinate metaphor is REFUGEES ARE A SWARM. This one is used by British Prime Minister David Cameron in a speech from 2015 in which he called the refugees entering Britain a "swarm" that needed to be stopped, as shown in excerpts (22) and (23) below:

> *Ex (22):* "Prime Minister says working with French will help **dissuade 'swarm of people coming across the Mediterranean'** to reach Calais." (Holehouse, 2015)

> Ex (23): "Britain will **deport** more **migrants** to **deter the swarm of people** who **crossed the Mediterranean** to reach Calais, David Cameron has said." (Holehouse, 2015)

These examples indicate that in Mr. Cameron's statement, refugees are described as a "swarm" of insects that is crossing the Mediterranean to Europe. This particular linguistic expression was instantly criticized for being dehumanizing because this use of the word is not conventionalized. This makes this metaphor a truly novel metaphor as shown in examples (24) and (25) below:

> Ex (24) "The Refugee Council said the phrasing was awful, **dehumanising** language from a world leader, while Labour leadership candidate Andy Burnham called it nothing short of **disgraceful**." (Taylor, Wintour & Elgot, 2015)

> Ex (25): "Cameron calling Calais migrants a "**swarm**" is nothing short of **disgraceful**." (Taylor, Wintour & Elgot, 2015)

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Here, "swarm" is used by the British Prime Minister, a man of power and authority. Moreover, unlike "flock", there is no example in which "swarm" is used positively. All examples highlight its negative and pejorative use. Looking at the differences between "swarm" and "flock", a swarm is something that cannot be contained or controlled.

REFUGEES ARE AN ILLNESS / DISEASE

This metaphor views refugees as a problem that requires fixing. In this metaphor features of illness and disease are mapped onto refugees. The media frames the crisis as a contagious disease that is spreading, and infecting countries as shown in excerpts (26) and (27) below:

Ex (27): *The Guardian: The Guardian view on the Syrian crisis: if we can't **tackle** the **cause**, at least we should **deal with symptoms***

Ex (28): "No one wants, or seems able, to **deal with** the root of the Syrian **problem** the Assad regime but now we are not even **dealing with the symptoms**." (Editorial, 2014)

The conceptual metaphor generated the subordinate conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE AN INCURABLE DISEASE as shown in excerpts (29) and (30) below:

Ex (29): For example, "And in all this **toxic** mix, Islamic Fundamentalism is **spreading like a cancer**" (Sandbrook, 2016)

Ex (30): "What appears on our TV screens as a sudden emergency is really the culmination of years of failure to confront Syria's bloody **collapse**. This, sadly, is **symptomatic** of a more profound myopia in European security policy. Not only Britain is responsible for European **paralysis**." (Editorial, 2015)

These examples indicate that the disease is infectious and toxic; therefore, drastic measures need to be taken to stop it from spreading. One of these measures, is to try and confront the source of the disease – Syria – and relief it.

"Us vs hem"

In the representation of *"Them"* in the 100-file corpus, two aspects emerged as means of representation. The first is what each newspaper uses to refer to Syrians. Table (4) below lists the labels used in newspaper articles to refer to Syrians. Each one of these labels has its own definition according to the UN. The oscillation between them is a strategy employed by politicians and newspapers to represent Syrian refugees as what they are not. Referring to them differently is problematic since international laws in the (1951) Geneva Convention protect refugees and it distracts people from the legitimate protection refugees need.

Table 4: frequency of the labels used to refer to Syrians in the 100-file corpus.

Word	Total Count	The Guardian	The Daily Telegraph	The Daily Mail
Refugee(s)	1667	744	604	319
Migrants(s)	587	179	245	163
Asylum Seeker(s)	437	177	162	98
Immigrant(s)	58	35	15	8

In table (8) above, the oscillation between the labels is clearly shown by the frequency of the words in the dataset. *The Guardian* uses "refugees" more to refer to Syrians in an attempt to establish their status and rights. Holding a liberal ideological standpoint, *The Guardian* approaches the crisis primarily in terms of "refugees" and adopts more of a humanitarian discourse. *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Daily Mail*, on the other hand, use "refugees" less in an attempt to revoke the status and rights refugees are entitled to by the UN. *The Daily Telegraph* extensively uses the word "migrants" to label Syrians in its discourse. This is probably to promote a depiction in which Syrians are

viewed as opportunists who are taking advantage of the crisis to enter the EU and the UK in search for a better life and improved living conditions. Given the fact that the *Daily Telegraph* is a right-wing conservative newspaper, it primarily views Syrians as "migrants" and thus ingraining the view into the readers' mind and justifying the ways in which the government handle the crisis.

The second aspect of the representation of "*Them*" is the use of pronouns and determiners to refer to the in-group vs the ones used to refer to the out-group following the 'in-group-out-group division' (Van Dijk, 2000). Tables (5) and (6) below list the frequency of out-group and in-group pronouns and determiners that are found in the dataset.

Table 5: frequency of out-group pronouns in the 100-file corpus.

Pronoun	Total Count	The Guardian	The Daily Telegraph	The Daily Mail
They	772	273	383	116
Them	291	98	145	48
Those	234	102	75	24
These	113	62	27	57
Their	521	238	178	105

Table 6: frequency of in-group pronouns in the 100-file corpus.

Pronoun	Total Count	The Guardian	The Daily Telegraph	The Daily Mail
We	782	299	362	121
Us	130	47	71	12
Our	234	87	90	57

While the words "we" and "our" might routinely go unnoticed due to their frequent use, when analyzed in these newspaper articles, the power of these unassuming words can be observed. Words like "we" and "our" are used to construct a demarcation – a line between us and them favoring the in-group. This construction is particularly well suited for stoking fear of particular groups. Van Dijk (1995) asserts that ideologies are "socially shared and used by groups and their members" (p. 22), and that group ideologies

are often polarizing, creating a strong sense of "us" vs "them."

the higher frequency of "them" and "us" in *The Daily Telegraph* indicates that stronger polarization is created in the discourse about the Syrians standing at the border and attempting to enter the country. *The Guardian* comes second in the use of both words. The difference lies in the fact that the context in which the polarization is created is more positive and takes the tone of sympathy and compassion. Moreover, the higher frequency of the determiner "those" in the articles collected from *The Daily Telegraph* is also significant in showing social distance according to van Dijk's (1995) ideological square.

Conclusion

All the linguistic expressions underlying the five conceptual metaphors found in the dataset seem to be highly conventional, and thus can be overlooked. The only exception is the use of "swarm" as a surface structure in the conceptual metaphor REFUGEES ARE ANIMALS, which makes it a novel metaphor. Metaphors simultaneously highlight and hide elements of the source domains in an attempt to eliminate individual experiences of refugees. They dehumanize them, and turn them into what they are not. This dehumanization process refutes the human rights, individual experiences, and feelings of refugees and defends and possibly justifies the cruel treatments they encounter.

These metaphors play on people's fears and emotions. The metaphors analyzed in previous studies are still being used and have become even more conventionalized. They are racist, dehumanize refugees and give them a less-than-human position. Metaphor serves as a strategy to convey subtle yet powerful messages about certain events and individuals. The conceptual mappings created in the mind through cognitive processes help reveal a lot about the ideology and politics media outlets, especially newspapers, wish to establish, convey and spread to the public. The ideological standings and orientations in the media seep through metaphor and find their way into the public's minds influencing their

acceptance and perception of events and the people involved in them.

Racist, biased language in the media, even if it is scrutinized and criticized openly, can still be employed to validate and reinforce existing racist views. Describing refugees in terms of the source domains of threat, objects, water, animals and illness or disease, means that we also think about refugees in terms of these source domains. The representation of Syrian refugees in the media is accomplished through both positive and negative framing of us, positive and negative framing of them, and metaphorical constructions that equate refugees with danger, objects, animals, floodwaters, and illness/disease.

Politicians already know that the most effective way to make people cooperate and function like a group is to single out an enemy and claim that this enemy 'they' is a threat to 'us'. That is why, if it is left unchecked, media power leaders could potentially reach hegemony – complete command over what people see, read, hear and eventually think. Language, both in the media and in everyday life, alters mind structures and when links are created they can become unbreakable. It is unlikely that audiences will find an ulterior motive behind words such as "we" or "our", and yet, these serve as building blocks for a metaphor that constructs refugees as dangerous "others" threatening "our" country and "our" way of life.

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