

*The Portrayal of Iraqi Refugees in BBC  
Online News Reports (2012):  
A Critical Discourse Analysis*

*Assist. Prof. Dr. Sawsan Kareem Zghayyir Al-Saaid  
College of Education/ University of Al-Qadisiyah  
sawsan.alsaaidi@qu.edu.iq*

*Dua'a Taher Matrood  
College of Education/ University of Al-Qadisiyah  
duaataher1994@gmail.com*

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**ABSTRACT**

The continuous unstable political, social and economic conditions have urged a number of Iraqi people to flee their homes to neighboring countries and Europe seeking refuge for safety and well-being. This situation has placed Iraqis in the focus of Western media news reports and how they are portrayed. Thus, media discourse plays a salient role in the representation of Iraqi refugees in the different political predicaments that Iraq has passed through. This paper aims at identifying the strategies and categories that are used to represent Iraqi refugees in selected media news report along with the ideological viewpoints in terms of the dichotomy in-group and out-group. To achieve these aims, the researchers analyse

one news report taken from British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2012 from the perspective of critical discourse analysis. Accordingly, the researchers adopt van Leeuwen's (2008) *sociological categories of actor representation* and van Dijk (1998) *ideological square*. The researchers select some categories from van Leeuwen's (2008) approach such as genericisation/specification, assimilation, individualisation, aggregation, dissociation, activation/passivation, nomination. Moreover, ideology also analysed in terms of in-group and out-group. The study concludes that generic references represent most of the social actors in active roles in describing the main events related to the representation of the social actors. Ideologically,

the Dutch government ،Hague court ،Dutch policemen and the Iraqi government are negatively represented and this shows the neutrality of BBC news reports in the التخميل، والترشيح. وعلاوة على ذلك، حللت الأيديولوجية أيضا من داخل المجموعة وخارج المجموعة. واستندت الدراسة إلى أن المراجع العامة تمثل معظم الجهات الفاعلة الاجتماعية في الأدوار النشطة في وصف الأحداث الرئيسية المتعلقة بتمثيل الجهات الفاعلة الاجتماعية. ومن الناحية الإيديولوجية، فإن الحكومة الهولندية ومحكمة لاهاي ورجال الشرطة الهولنديين والحكومة العراقية ممثلة سلبا وهذا يدل على حياد التقارير الإخبارية التي تقدمها هيئة الإذاعة البريطانية في تمثيل اللاجئين العراقيين.

representation of Iraqi refugees. **Key Words:** BBC Online News reports ،Critical discourse analysis ،Refugees ، Representation ،Ideology

### الملخص

ان هجرة العراقيين الكبيرة الى الدول المجاورة ودول اوربا، بسبب الظروف السياسية والاجتماعية والاقتصادية غير المستقرة، دفعت وسائل الاعلام الغربية الى الاهتمام المركز على اظهار صورة اللاجئين وتأثيرها عبر تقاريرها الاخبارية المختلفة. وقد كان هذا سببا في سعي الدراسة الى تبيان طبيعة الموضوعات التي اهتمت بها تلك التقارير الاخبارية، فضلا عن فحص الاستراتيجيات والفئات المستعملة في وصفهم، وكشف الرؤية الايديولوجية التي ضمن ثنائى الجهات الداعمة والجهات غير الداعمة. قامت الباحثة، تحقيقا لاهداف وفرضيات الدراسة، تقريراً أخبارياً مختلفة قدمتها هيئة الإذاعة البريطانية في مدد زمنية مختلفة (2002-2017) ثم تحليلها من منظور تحليل الخطاب النقدي مطبقاً نظرية فان ideological square 1 (1998) وفان لـ sociological categories of social actor representation (1996,2008).

اختار الباحثون بعض الفئات من نهج فان ليوين (2008) مثل التعميم، مواصفات، استيعاب، الفردية، التجميع، التفكك، تفعيل،

## 1. Introduction

News has become increasingly significant to many people as they want to know what is going on in the world (Barker 2004). The significance of media in the contemporary world is indisputable. In fact media have basically replaced elder institutions such as trade unions and the church which are considered as the principal source for understanding the world. The majority of the world populations are recently affected by media discourse (Macdonald 2003; Talbot 2007). At the time of political crisis it is apparent that media play a crucial role in the representation of minority groups such as refugees and constructing different ideological positions (Becker 2007). These groups are the prominent core in media news reports because the number of refugees globally has grown at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As an unstable country Iraq passed with several difficult events which accentuate to show that Iraqis are more frequently perceived a problem. Thus the influx of Iraqi refugees has attracted the attention of British media news reports.

The representation of refugees in media discourse has been studied by many researchers such as Baker et al (2008) Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) Saniotis and Sobhanian (2008) Cartner (2009) Goodman (2010) and KhosraviNik (2009 2010). These studies indicate that refugees are represented in an undesirable manner (Abid 2015). The refugees may have been discursively constructed and this reflects the ideology of some media news reports towards them a case with highlighting the dichotomy of in-group and out-group. With the continuous influx of refugees worldwide and particularly Iraqi ones and in line with Fowler's (1991a) call for more work to be conducted on the media discourse in order to find out how language works in the news media the researchers of this study are motivated to critically study the media discourse about the Iraqi refugees. To this end the researchers of the present study have found that the representation of Iraqi refugees in British BBC news reports has not been studied; therefore this has necessitated this study. Therefore this study can fill the hiatus in the literature; and

because the case of refugees is one of the most common and controversial issues since 1991 it deserves a close investigation of the discourse topics linguistic strategies and ideology. Accordingly this study aims at representing the Iraqi refugees in media news reports from linguistic and ideological perspectives. Such scrutiny necessitates the employment of critical discourse analysis to examine the BBC's English news reports depiction of Iraqi refugees.

Therefore the researchers focus on the following questions:

1. What are the categories such as generalization specification nomination dissociation activation and passivation used to represent Iraqi refugees in the selected news report from BBC?
2. How do these representations imply different ideologies of the social actors? To answer these questions the researchers employ van Leeuwen's (2008) sociological categorisation of actor representation and van Dijk's (1998)

ideological square. These two CDA approaches are chosen because of their relevance to the topic of the representation of Iraq refugees in media news reports in BBC. Thus the amalgamation of these two approaches is to show the important linguistic elements along with the ideological viewpoint of in-group and out-group.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Refugee and Migrant

The terms *Refugee* and *Migrant* are frequently used to mean the same thing. However each term has a different potential meaning and highlights a different commitment and consequences (Travis 2015). Thus the researchers present a brief explanation to the differences between these terms in order to make the scope of study clearer and limited. Political upheavals wars religious strife ethnic discrimination and extensive range of extra human rights abuses lead Iraqi people to become refugees. According to Loescher Betts and Milner (2008 p.1)

the term refugee means "people who have suffered human rights violations and

who have fled across the borders of their home countries to seek protection elsewhere". However "refugees are protected by the international law of 1951 refugee convention "which defines what a refugee is and highlights the basic rights afforded to them. The convention's basic principle is that refugees should not be forced to return to where their life and freedom would be under threat. They need to be helped to find a job and integrate into society (Travis 2015).

The term *Migrant* means a person who chooses to flee not because of a direct danger of death or persecution "but chiefly to develop their lives by finding work "or for family reunion "or in some cases for education "or other reasons. Contrasting refugees who cannot securely return home "migrants face no such obstruction to return. If they decide to return home "they will persist to receive the guard of their government (UNHCR "2016).

In the second half of 2015 "Europe witnessed a huge increase in the number of

migrants and refugees arriving by sea. Thousands of individuals embarked on a risky journey "passing the Mediterranean Sea to arrive to Europe in order to find safety. Generally "over 1 million people arrived via sea in 2015 (UNHCR 2015).

According to Smith (2015) "in Summer 2016 "about 100 migrants from Syria "Afghanistan "Iraq "and other countries landed each day in Greece's shores. Nevertheless "the annual number of refugees allowed into the U.S was fewer than 30,000 refugees in 2002-2003 "and more than 70,000 refugees in 2016 "more than half of them are Muslims. After November 2015 Islamic State's attacks in Paris "53% of American state that they do not want to accept any Syrian refugees at all "while only 11% state that they should accept only Christian refugees.

## 2.2 Previous Studies

Chen (2008) examines fifty-five news reports on Sino-Japan Conflict in the *New York Times* (2001-2006). The *New York Times* portrays the Chinese government as aggressive "dominant and

repressive and the Chinese as frightening and a violent group of people. This is done through the use of van Dijk's (1998) theory of *Ideological Square* of positive-self representation and negative-other representation. Hence Chen concludes that there are fifty-one ideologically-loaded reports and four relatively neutral news reports in the depiction of Sino-Japan Conflict.

Kandil (2009) studies the discourse of terrorism in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is regarded as one of the longest and most violent conflict in modern history in selected media news reports such as *Al-Jazeera Arabic*, *CNN* and *BBC* adopting van Dijk's (1998) *Ideological Square*. Thus,

The study aims at showing how power and ideology affect the use of language in certain social and political contexts. The main contribution of this study is the addition of an important multi-cultural and bilingual dimension to the analysis of CDA by analysing data from three different cultures (Arab, American and British) in two

different languages (Arabic and English). Ideologically Kandil concludes that terrorism is usually used in the news to refer to acts of violence by Palestinian groups but rarely to refer to Israel acts of violence particularly in *CNN* and *BBC*.

KhosraviNik (2009) analyses the discourse media employing van Dijk's (1991; 1995; 2000) *socio-cognitive approach*, Wodak's (2001) *discourse-historical approach* and van Dijk's (2001) *socio-cognitive approach* and van Leeuwen's (1996) *sociological categories of actor representation*. He studies the representation of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrant (RASIM for short) during the Balkan conflict (1999) and the British election (2005) as represented in British newspapers.

The study concludes that the refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants are negatively represented in the British press through a number of topoi such as numbers, threat (threat to community values and threat to cultural identity) and danger.

Žižková (2012) examines the British press in his study on the new racism that has been created in the daily talk and media. The aim of this study is to examine the representation of immigrants ‘refugees ‘and asylum seekers in the British press by providing a clear view of how the new racism is represented on various levels such as the level of meaning ‘linguistic representation ‘and argumentation strategies depending on Wodak’s (2001) *discourse historical approach* and van Leeuwen’s (1996; 2008) *sociological categories of actor representation*. Moreover ‘two newspapers were studied such as *the Guardian* representing the liberal left wing press and *the Telegraph* as the agent of the right wing ‘conservative press. In this study ‘it is obvious that the representation of RASIM in the *Telegraph* is more racist and negative as opposed to the *Guardian*.

Using van Dijk’s (1998) theory of *Ideological Square* ‘YaYlaci and Karakus (2015) analyses the representation of Syrian refugees in *Hurriyet* ‘*YeniSaFak* ‘and *Cumhuriyet*

newspapers in 2014. The findings of this study show that the political standards of the newspapers and their attitudes toward the Turkish government strongly affect the ways they shape the news about Syrian. As far as ‘the representation of the Ezidi theme is concerned ‘*YeniSafak* ignores the humanitarian aspect of the Ezidi issue whereas *Cumhuriyet* and *Hurriyet* represent the news with photographs depicting the tragedies as well as the sufferings of Ezidi refugees. Furthermore ‘they criticise the government for not equally help all the Syrian refugees. Thus ‘these three newspapers do not show any tendency toward Al-Assad’s regime.

Reitmanova ‘Gustafon and Ahmed (2015) utilise a critical discourse analysis to examine 273 articles from 10 major Canadian dailies and their role in framing certain social and health issues of Chinese and south Asia immigrants. The researchers argue that the negative representation of non-white immigrants includes physical attacks on immigrants and their business in Canada. Similarly ‘Chinese women in

Canada are regarded as prostitutes. The press also characterises immigrants as gamblers and opiate addicts. Thus the researchers highlight the issues of power and social injustice in representing health issues. This study concludes that immigrants are described as health threats to people walking in the streets using subway street cars bus and visiting shops.

Furthermore Gartrell (2016) studies the portrayal of Muslims in general and the Syrian refugees in particular in the British press. Gartrell focuses on how Syrian refugees are depicted whether as Muslim refugees fleeing from conflict or as migrants. She chooses forty-five articles published in September 2015 by *The Daily Mail*.

*The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* because they are within the top four most-read British national newspapers as mentioned by the National Readership 2015. Gartrell adopts van Dijk's (1992; 2002) socio-cognitive approach in depicting the themes and the ideological discourse. The refugees are negatively

portrayed as tragic victims and as a source of danger on the British society. In *The Daily Mail* three articles argue that the Syrian refugees have a different culture which may damage British values. This study includes one article which believes that if Syrians are allowed to settle within UK they may become the next generation of 'jihadists'. In addition the term 'barbaric' is used to refer to Syrian refugees that contrasts the characteristics of refugees as innocent men women and children.

In a further application of critical discourse analysis Darweesh (2016) studies the case of Syrian refugees by analysing three political speeches delivered by Barack Obama John Kerry and Hillary Clinton employing van Dijk's (1995; 2000; 2001; 2006) socio-cognitive approach. He examines the use of compassion disclaimer implication national self-glorification polarisation presupposition vagueness generalisation negative and lexicalisation. He concludes that the American politicians'

speeches are not neutral. In fact they attempt to express negative ideology towards the political crisis in Syria and use different strategies such as negative lexicalisation, polarisation, compassion, implication and argumentative moves in order to show positive self-representation and negative other-representation.

The findings from earlier studies have highlighted the study of media discourse in relation to ideology, society, culture and language. Thus, the present study differs from the cited studies and considers four main aspects: scope, perspective, approach and methodology. The corpus in this study differs from those previously undertaken, the nature of the language structures analysed along with the application of qualitative procedure applied. Through a linguistic analysis that links ideological affiliations with language structure and form, this study employs a CDA as a multidisciplinary approach that designed to fill the hiatus in the existing literature.

### **3. The Media**

Mass media is a form of human communication practice which allows humans to communicate messages through media to a large number of people (Abdullah, 2014, p.1). Danesi (2009) states that with each year the mass media as well as the different means of communication start to have more direct impact on societies, cultures, economies and everyday lives. Media discourse depends on intertextual relations with many other fields, whether diachronically or synchronically (Wodak & Busch, 2004, p.106). Media discourse becomes then an essential part within critical discourse analysis framework (Pan, 2002, p.50).

Ceulemans and Fauconnier (1979, p.50) argue that whether media is a mirror or a creator of culture, such question remains as one of the most debated issues in studying the relation between mass media and society. Accordingly, Malkawi (2012, p.28) explains the function of media text as a window through which we can view the world and live the events as real. It has the power

to influence readers by all means since it is an effective mechanism for affecting individual perceptions of reality. By analyzing the media text ideologically we are able to see the debates in society through text.

That is discourse constitutes the social identities situations belief systems and interrelationships between groups and individuals. Thus it helps enhance and reproduce the social reality and transform it (Fairclough & Wodak 1997). In this regard Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) viewed discourse as socially constructed knowledge of reality.

In his study of case studies of international and national news in the press van Dijk (1988 p. 211) states that media in general and news production in particular play a dominant role in the production of racism and ethnic attitudes. Interestingly they may not always explicitly tell the public exactly what to think. Thus many people in everyday talk associate crime and violence with minority-group member. Popular press particularly gives

essential attention to crime in general and to minority crime in particular. The incidence of murder in the press is higher than the actual murder in society.

According to Fornas (2008) media is a form of entertainment and a mean of communication that shape public opinions (p.3). Moreover Fairclough (1995) states that there is a close relationship between media and ideology where for him media is defined as the power "to shape governments and parties (...) the power to influence knowledge values social relations and social identities" (p.2).

#### **4.Critical Discourse Analysis: Background**

CDA is a critical approach because it is based on the ideas of the theories of Western Marxism and especially of the social and political thoughts of different scholars as Althusser Gramsci and Frankfurt which take into account the historical contexts of discursive interactions and link the linguistic and social structures (Titscher Wodak Meyer & Vetter 2000; Fairclough &

Wodak (1997). In this regard (Wodak (2001) mentions that the notion of 'critical' inherent in CDA should be understood as an extension from the analysis of texts to the social and political contexts in which the texts emerge. Another clarification was provided by Fairclough (1992) who argues that 'critical' implies the hidden and the implicit meanings in the text. Therefore (CDA mainly deals with the analysis of the opaque and evident structural relationships of dominance and power as exhibited in language (Fairclough (1989; Wodak & Meyer (2001; 2009). Thus (CDA is a critical approach focusing on the multidimensional role of language in the production as well as the challenging of power relations and ideologies.

Ultimately (CDA is not only concerned with language and linguistic structure (but also with the relationship between language use and the social contexts in which it occurs (Machin & Mayr (2012). Accordingly (language is a social practice (that is (language shapes society and shaped in return (Fairclough (1995a; Fairclough & Wodak (

1997). Moreover (critical discourse analysis attempts to relate language to social and political contexts (van Dijk (1995a; 2001). This is so because the aim of CDA is explicitly political (Johnstone (2002). Thus (CDA draws particular attention to the discursive relationship in text and talk and the wider socio-political contexts and changes in society (Fairclough (1995a; Wodak (2001; 2009). This is also stated by van Dijk (2001) who defined CDA as "a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse (dominance (and inequality are enacted (reproduced (and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (p.352). In the same vein (Wodak and Richardson (2013) contended that critical discourse analysis takes into account detailed analysis of the social (political and cultural factors as well as the significance of ideas and arguments. In addition to the study of these factors (it is also necessary to recognise what the discourse relates to in the past (Titscher et al. (2000).

Therefore CDA analysts also viewed discourse as historical. Thus CDA aims not only to facilitate a better understanding of social life and socio - political and historical issues but also to investigate these issues from a critical perspective (Fairclough 1992; Fairclough & Wodak 1997).

### 5. Van Leeuwen's (1996; 2008) Sociological Categories of Actor Representation

This study includes some categories such as genericisation/specification, assimilation, individualisation, aggregation, dissociation, activation/passivation, nomination from the sociological categories of discourse that van Leeuwen's approach offers. The distinction between *Genericisation* and *Specification* is essential in the representation of social actors. Genericisation may be realised by the plural without article or the singular with definite or indefinite article (van Leeuwen 2008 p. 36).

However there are two kinds of specification if the social actors are represented as individuals they are known as *individualization* while if they

are represented as groups they are named *assimilation*. Actually there are two types of assimilation which are *aggregation* and *collectivization*. While aggregation quantifies social actors and portrays them as statistics, collectivization does not (van Leeuwen 2008 p. 37).

Association; on the other hand; are groups formed by participants or groups of participants who have never been labeled in the text for instance the relation between *Mandy and Mark* in (1) is never labelled under any term such as 'friend' (van Leeuwen 1993 p.141). However van Leeuwen (1993; 2008) does not deal with *dissociation* which is the opposite of association.

(1) Mandy and Mark followed the teacher into a large airy room.

According to van Leeuwen (1993 p.163) nomination means that the participants are represented in term of their unique identity. Van Leeuwen (1996 p.53) mentions three types of nomination first, *formal nomination* (surname only with or without honorific),

second *semi-formal* (given name and surname) third *informal nomination* (given name only) (Amerian & Esmaili 2015 p.91). Stimulatingly nominations may be represented either in the form of a *honorification* or *affiliation*. In honorification one adds ranks and titles of the participant such as *Dr.* while in affiliation one adds the personal or kinship relation between nominated participant and some other participant as *Auntie Barbara* in (2) (van Leeuwen 2008 p. 41).

(2) They started out Auntie Barbara pushing Debbie in her pram.

Moreover activation and passivation are two types of inclusion. In activation the social actor is presented as the one who performs the activities but not as one who affected by them. In passivation social actors may be participants who work as objects affected by the activities (in this case it is named *Subjective*) or as participants who benefit from the activities (and in such case it is known as *Beneficialization*) (Bortotuzzi 2010 p. 518).

## 6. Theoretical Framework

The researchers of this study adopt van Leeuwen's *sociological categories of actor representation* (1996; 2008) and van Dijk's (1998) theory of *ideological square*. Van Leeuwen's (2008) sociological representation of social actor approach to discourse analysis represents that socio-semantic classification need to be taken as the preliminary point of discourse analysis and the exemplifications of various social actors are to be considered by connecting these socio-semantic divisions with their linguistic realisations.

Van Dijk's (1998) theory of ideological square focuses on the dichotomy of positive-self presentation and negative-other presentation emphasising the good features of in-group and bad features of out-group and deemphasising the bad features of out-group and good features of out-group. Thus the two key forms of analysis are explicated: linguistic and ideological. Linguistic analysis focuses on various categories including genericismation/specification assimilation individualisation aggregation dissociation activation/passivation

nomination. On the other hand , ideological analysis explores the ideologies professed by the selected text.

## **6. Methodology**

This paper provides a qualitative analysis of one news report entitled *Iraqi refugees arrested in Hague tent Camp eviction* delivered in 2012 prior to escalation of violence and the sectarian war. In constructing a sample set relevant to the research topic explored ,van Dijk (1997) contends that a research website is needed to find texts and talk as dataset. The most relevant and readily accessible archive is that of the Internet which has acted as a key form of storage and collation of documents and data since 1990. This news report is selected to represent the major political situation in the world in general and Iraqi in particular and how it affects the Iraqi refugees directly or indirectly. Furthermore ,BBC is selected as being one of the top British newspapers (Chen , 2008 ,p. 143). However ,more than 46 million British citizens use the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) daily. BBC is the cornerstone of one of the most prosperous

media in the world. In addition , BBC's news services are international ,admired and trusted (Hall ,2015 ,p. 5-7).

## **7. Data Analysis and Discussion**

In this section ,The BBC article is selected and analysed linguistically and ideologically. In 2012 ,a group of Iraqi refugees whose asylum claims have been rejected in Netherland set up in tents outside the central railway station in Hague ,the administrative and political capital of the Netherlands ,for almost three months from 18 September to 13 December. This is considered as illegal settlement by the Dutch government which released an order to evict those refugees from the camp. Therefore ,they protested in their camp demanding that they have the 'right to exist'. As a result ,the rapid and forceful destruction of a refugee protest camp has been taken in 11 December following court hearings through which judges declared eviction orders and turned down the demonstrators' objections. This inhumane treatment affects all

undocumented people; especially those who refuse to go home 'voluntarily' because they fear the consequences. This is due to the declaration of the Iraqi government that they are not welcoming any force returnees and this put the Iraqi refugees in a very critical situation with both sides refusing to give them their simple choice to live safely.

There are a number of categories that are used in this article. Among them is genericisation as shown in the example below.

Example (1.1): Genericisation

- A) *Iraqi refugees* arrested in Hague tent camp eviction
- B) *Dozens of Iraqi refugees* have been forcibly removed from a camp in the Netherlands.
- C) *The refugees* whose asylum claims were rejected had lost their legal battle to remain in tents outside the central railway station in The Hague.
- D) Asked by BBC News where *the refugees* had gone, Dutch police spokesman Wim Hoonhout said: "I don't know they have gone to other places but they

cannot go back to the camp, the camp is also gone."

- E) As Police moved in to empty the camp during the afternoon *the refugees* chanted protest songs and refused to leave the BBC's Anna Holligan reports. "No man no woman is illegal," they chanted"
- F) *Demonstrators* at the site accused officers of adopting aggressive tactics.
- G) They used special equipment to slice through the chains and metal tubes *the refugees* were using to bind themselves together.
- H) *The Iraqis* who had been staying at the camp no longer had valid visas for Netherlands but said that returning to their home country was too risky.

This article was about deportation of the undocumented Iraqi refugees who acted illegally through their camping and protesting in Hague camp. The representation of the social actors in the above extracts (A-H) is varied such as *Iraqi refugees*, *dozens of Iraqi refugees*, *the refugees*, *demonstrators* and *the Iraqis*.

From the title of the article ‘the nationality of the refugees who are Iraqi has been mentioned via the depiction of the plural noun without definite article to indicate the generic reference of refugees such as *Iraqi refugees* in (A) and (B).

These Iraqi refugees were considered as illegal residents according to the Dutch government and then treated them as criminals and arrested them. However ‘the reference to Iraqi refugees in the lead as in (B) is merged with the use of quantifier “Dozens” to show the high number of refugees participating in the protest.

Although the first two representations of refugees are combined with the noun *Iraqi* ‘the reference to the refugees in extracts (C ‘D ‘E ‘F ‘and G) is minimised to the plural noun with definite article *the refugees* as the nationality has already been indicated in (A and B) and thus ‘it is understood from the context. However ‘the reporter prefers the term *the refugees* in order to add the humanitarian touch to his news ‘as if he wants to say in spite of their nationality they are homeless people ‘without any support or

warm home to secure them ‘and they are struggling in a foreign country. Thus ‘he wants the reader to sympathy with the case.

Finally ‘the use of the term *the Iraqis* shows that the reporter blames to the Iraqi government for not helping its citizens ‘and for not showing any willingness to figure out a solution to their dangerous situation in Netherlands as shown in (H). The in-group member represented by Iraqi refugees is depicted as oppressed people and the out-group member represented by the Dutch government is described oppressor who use violence against the homeless people and consider them as ostracised persons as if they are not humans. Thus ‘Iraqi refugees are represented as powerless and helpless due to the harsh rules of residency and thus ‘they have no right to live in Netherlands. Accordingly ‘they are evicted from their camp because the Dutch government has rejected their asylum claims. Although the right to asylum ‘which is a human right ‘is something one could forfeit. In addition ‘the

use of the term of *demonstrators* as shown in (F) stands for both the protest Iraqi refugees and the sympathisers ‘ thus ‘accusing the police in adopting this aggressive attitude from a mixture of in-group and out-group represent the validity that strength the accuracy in depicting the scene.

Example (1.2):  
Specification

A specific reference is shown through the precise identity of the social actor. As far as specification is concerned ‘ there are two types to be analysed in this section: individualisation and assimilation as shown in the following extracts:

- A) Asked by BBC News where the refugees had gone ‘ Dutch police spokesman *Wim Hoonhout* said: "I don't know ‘they have gone to other places ‘but they cannot go back to the camp ‘ the camp is also gone."
- B) As police moved in to empty the camp during the afternoon ‘the refugees chanted protest songs and refused to leave ‘the BBC's *Anna Holligan* reports.

The reporter uses *individualisation* as he wants to be very precise in mentioning the sources of his information. Therefore ‘he takes the Dutch police spokesman as an in-group eyewitness to describe what happened after the day of eviction. However ‘the second eyewitness is an objective observer who only describes the scene as it occurs in reality. Interestingly ‘the reporter uses two eyewitnesses from two different genders ‘nationalities ‘ and groups to represent two different perspectives about the case of Iraqi refugees.

The Dutch police spokesman is basically cruel and cold toward the homelessness of the Iraqi refugees and he considers them as criminals and outsiders. Meanwhile ‘the BBC's *Anna Holligan* reports the event that the protest calls for their simplest right as human. In this way ‘the spokesman *Wim Hoonhout* is represented in a negative way whereas the protestors are described as unified seeking for their human rights.

- Example (1.3): Aggregation
- A) *Dozens of Iraqi refugees* have been forcibly removed from a camp in the Netherlands.
- B) police moved in to evict those who refused to leave and *28 people* were arrested *all of whom* were later freed.
- C) *Some of the refugees* had chained themselves together to prevent the camp from being broken up.
- D) The camp has been in place for almost *three months* housing more than *50 people* in an area of parkland near the station
- E) Our correspondent estimated that at least *100 police* were at the scene. *Some* were on horseback.
- F) Those arrested were *21 failed asylum-seekers* and *seven sympathizers*.
- Aggregation is realised by the presence of definite or indefinite quantifiers which either function as the enumerative or as the head of nominal group. In extracts (A , B ,and C) ,the social actors are represented with the use of quantifiers *dozen* ,*all* ,and *some* ,while they are aggregated in extracts (D ,E , and F) through the use of statistical numbers. The latter is used to provide the reader with accurate information about the number of Iraqi refugees ,and the period of their residency in the tents camp as seen in (D). In (E) ,the information about the Dutch preparation for the eviction are given ,thus ,about 100 policemen are equipped and ready to remove the camp. Meanwhile ,extract (F) provides detailed information about the arrest of those refugees and their supporters who are about 21 failed asylum-seekers\_\_and seven sympathizers. Interestingly ,the participants in the protest are not only Iraqis but also seven Dutch citizens who rejected their government's cruelty against those refugees. This support reflects the basic values and beliefs of the Dutch society and culture through calling for human rights for all the people regardless of their nationality ,color ,and ethical background. Hence ,those seven Dutch sympathisers are depicted positively due to their virtuous support.
- Example (1.4) Dissociation

A) Those arrested were 21 failed asylum-seekers and seven sympathizers.

Representing two groups of people and labelling the relation between them is what van Leeuwen (1993 p. 141) calls *dissociation*. In (A) the reader is provided with not only the number of arrested people (aggregation) but also with the nature of the relation between these two classes as both of them were arrested after they had protested against the Dutch police determination in removing the camp.

Example (1.5): Nomination

A) Asked by BBC News where the refugees had gone, Dutch police spokesman *Wim Hoonhout* said: "I don't know they have gone to other places but they cannot go back to the camp, the camp is also gone."

B) As police moved in to empty the camp during the afternoon, the refugees chanted protest songs and refused to leave, the BBC's *Anna Holligan* reports.

As far as *nomination* is concerned, *semi-formalization* and *honorification* are used in this article. The social actors

such as *Dutch police spokesman Wim Hoonhout* and the BBC's *Anna Holligan* in extracts (A) and (B) are nominated respectively. Accordingly, the social actor *Wim Hoonhout* is represented through the use of his first name and surname and this is called a *semi-formalization*

*nomination*. Furthermore, other social actors are represented with honorifics preceding their names such as *Dutch police spokesman* and the BBC's *Anna Holligan* and this is another type of nomination which is attached with *honorification*. In doing so, the emphasis is on the individuals' occupation in order to show great respect to their jobs.

Example (1.6): Activation

A) The refugees, whose asylum claims were rejected, had lost their legal battle to remain in tents outside the central railway station in The Hague.

B) Police moved in to evict those who refused to leave.

C) Some of the refugees had chained themselves together to prevent the camp from being broken up.

- D) Asked by BBC News where the refugees had gone ‘ Dutch police spokesman Wim Hoonhout *said*: 'I don't know ‘they have gone to other places ‘but they cannot go back to the camp ‘ the camp is also gone.
- E) The city authority had *argued* the tents should be *removed* because of the potential health risks during winter.
- F) Hague court *turned down* a last-ditch appeal against the eviction on Wednesday.
- G) Police *moved* in to empty the camp during the afternoon.
- H) The refugees *chanted* protest songs and *refused* to leave.
- I) The BBC's Anna Holligan *reports* "No man ‘no woman is illegal," they *chanted*.
- J) Our correspondent *estimated* that at least 100 police *were* at the scene. Some *were* on horseback.
- K) Demonstrators at the site *accused* officers of adopting aggressive tactics.
- L) They *used* special equipment to slice through the chains and metal tubes the refugees *were using* to bind themselves together.
- M) Those arrested *were* 21 failed asylum-seekers and seven sympathizers.
- N) The Dutch government *said* individual assessments were made in each case ‘*based* on evidence from local agencies and its own embassy in Baghdad.

There are various actors in this article such as *the refugees ‘ the city authority ‘Dutch police spokesman ‘Wim Hoonhout ‘ Hague court ‘our correspondent ‘demonstrators ‘ the Dutch government and the Dutch police* and their actions indicating material processes as in (A ‘B ‘C ‘E ‘G ‘H ‘and L). A closer investigation of those actors and their role will enhance the ideological motivation. The main actors in this article is the refugees and the Dutch government and its followers represented by dominate the majority of clauses in the material world. The Dutch government and its followers represented by are the sole doers of the main developmental processes done in Hague camp. Thus ‘the use of the material process representing by the verbs *move ‘remove and used* as in

extracts (B ,E ,and L) indicate that the cruelty of the Dutch government and this is considered as a consequence for the verbal processes given by municipal authorities through the use of the verbs of *argued* ,*turned down* and *said* as in extracts (E ,F and N). Hence ,the reporter portrays the Dutch government ,police as active actors who apply the rules and are regarded as the sole responsible of developing the nation and provide the legacy of residence in the country. The Hague court regards itself as responsible with legal credentials and thus delegates certain key responsibilities to its subordinates and other people and institutions to adopt the eviction decision against the Iraqi refugees.

On the other hand ,the Iraqi refugees are also the main actors whose actions are represented in active voice to show that they have the right to seek refugee as humans. As a reaction to the decision of eviction ,the Iraqi refugees protest and chain in their camp because they have lost their settlement. Thus ,their actions

are associated with the use of the material processes through the utilisation of the verb such as *lost* and *chained* in (A and C). The reporter uses the material processes to show the reaction of the refugees towards the Dutch government's unhumanitarian act and to get support in stringent and austere measures the government will take against the demonstrators.

Moreover ,verbal processes are also used through the use of the verbs *chanted* ,*estimated* and *accused* in the extracts (H ,I ,J and K). The Iraqi refugees have rejected the decision of their deportation from the tent and consequently 21 failed asylum-seekers and seven sympathizers have been arrested and this is an indication of their refusal of this eviction. Thus ,the relational and behavioral processes are used using intensive verb of *were* as in (L and M) and the verb *refuse* in (B) respectively. Lastly ,the majority of the sentences in the above extracts are active through the dynamic forces of activity ,except (A ,M ,and N) ,which is activity

through premodification and (J) through the use of the possessive pronoun *Our correspondent*.

Example (1.7): Passivation

The representation of the actors and their actions and events are also analysed according to the category of passivation which is analysed in reference to two types: *Subjective* and *Beneficialisation* as shown below.

- A) Dozens of Iraqi refugees *have been forcibly removed* from a camp in the Netherlands.
- B) The refugees *whose asylum claims were rejected* had lost their legal battle to remain in tents outside the central railway station in The Hague.
- C) Police moved in to evict those who refused to leave and 28 people *were arrested* all of whom *were later freed*.
- D) They *cannot be deported* back to their home country because Iraq refuses to accept forced returnees.
- (E) The Iraqis who *had been staying* at the camp no longer *had* valid visas for Netherlands but *said* that

returning to their home country was too risky.

The use of passive form in the above extracts is to have the agency and particularly the reference to the execution of the eviction of the Iraqi refugees from the camp. All the examples above are associated with the material processes. The title (A) and the lead (B) are subjective as both are affected by the action not benefit from it thus the emphasis is on the object "the Iraqi refugees" as well as on the action of forceful removing and arresting rather than on the doer of that action which is later known as the Dutch police. In (C) the Iraqi asylum claims had been rejected by the Dutch government and the reporter seems to feel shameful from their non-humanitarian act that why he did not put the Dutch government in subject place but rather as hidden doer which is a smart strategy for hiding the negative representation of 'in-group' (Dutch governments) against the 'out-group' (the Iraqi refugees). However beneficialisation is used only in (E) as this is the first time in which the Iraqi refugees who

are arrested benefit from the Dutch police as the latter set them free which is in fact only to allow them to return back to their homeland. Moreover all the above extracts are passive by the dynamic forces of passivation as the social actor is clearly foregrounded; except (C) which is passivity as well by prepositional circumstantials with *of*.

### 8. Conclusions

The categories such as *genericisation* (*specification* and *assimilation* and *individualisation*) *aggregation* *dissociation* and *nomination* are explained in this paper. The reporter uses different generic references to represent the Iraqi refugees; each has its own significance.

The generic reference *Iraqi refugees* in the title are a *genericisation* while in the lead he uses *dozens of Iraqis* which is *aggregation*. Accordingly the reporter has represented the Iraqi refugees by different references such as *Iraqi refugees* in the title and the lead and *the refugees* (three times) *they* (four times) *those* *some of the refugees* *50 people* *demonstrators* *themselves* (twice) *those arrested* *21 failed asylum seekers* and *the Iraqis* in the article. Therefore the use of the pronoun *they* four times refers to the Iraqi-refugees and only once it stands for the Dutch police indicates that the Iraqi refugees is clearly considered as 'out-group'. Moreover within the passive and active sentences and Halliday's six processes the majority of sentences are in active voice which amalgamates with the verbal and material processes whether they represent the Iraqi refugees' reactions or the Dutch government's cruelty. Within passivation subjective form used four times and *beneficialisation* is used only once. Accordingly the Iraqi refugees are associated with negative impact on the Netherlands society that explains why the Dutch government did not approve their asylum claims. Nevertheless this does not prevent the reporter from mentioning the negative points against the Dutch policy and the Iraqi government as well. Hence the article gives several

pictures for the aggressive eviction of the refugees from the camp as if the government does not consider them as peaceful refugees who ask for safety after facing sequences of violent in their homeland. In conclusion the different categories that are used in this

article open a gate to the reader to understand the suffering that the Iraqi refugees went through in general and their shock and persecution in one of the finest countries in applying human rights in particular.

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