

The Discursive Strategies Used in Representing Refugees in the British News Media: A Critical Discourse Approach

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Abstract

This study examines the discursive strategies employed in some British newspapers concerning their reports on Ukrainian refugees. While prior research has shown that news media has adversely portrayed non-European refugees, this study is distinct in that its research sample is exclusively European refugees. The basic goal was to show how the mainstream media depicted the Ukrainian immigrants arriving in the UK. The data was gathered from 64 articles about Ukrainian refugees, released in four UK mainstream news outlets between April 2022 and August 2023. The data was analyzed into six analytical categories within the Discoursal Historical Approach (DHA) framework: discourse references, subject-predicate combinations, argumentations, perspectivising discourses, repair strategies (mitigation), and intensification. The study findings showed that all four media outlets, irrespective of their respective ideologies, regularly utilized the discursive techniques of individualization and humanization, thereby establishing a widely accepted and constructive arguing strategy regarding Ukrainian refugees. Prevalent approaches portray Ukrainian refugees in a favorable light. Despite the country's media's generally negative representation of third-world refugees, the results of this study show that the British press purposefully depicted Ukrainian migrants in a positive and sympathetic light. This sets the study's findings apart from those of previous studies. It is believed that the media's ideological stance toward Eurocentrism and warped racial ideas constituted a major role in shaping how European and non-European migrants were portrayed in news reports.

Keywords: refugees' discourse, discursive strategies, discoursal historical approach, perspectivising, repair strategies

1. Introduction

With so many people fleeing war-torn countries like Iraq, Somalia, and Ukraine, immigration and refugees have been major topics of discussion since the dawn of the twenty-first century. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that by 2022, conflict and other human rights violations will have forced 89.3 million people to flee from their homes, the highest number ever recorded. In the meantime, there are expected to be more than 27.1 million refugees worldwide, and 108.4 million internally displaced people (IDPs) by the end of 2023 (Abdulaal, Sadek, Ageli, Al-Hawamdeh, & Hal, 2022).

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (2020) reports that as of halfway through the year, 136.913 migrants were residing in the UK, while 84.488 refugee claims were pending evaluation. This amounts to a meager 0.25 percent of the UK's total population (67.4 million, according to estimates made in mid-2020). The media's focus on these communities has increased in tandem with the global increase in refugees. Because of this, for the past 50 years, refugees have received more media attention in the UK (Clyne, 2005). The Times carried more than 178 stories regarding forced migration in 2001. The immigration issue became more contentious in the 2021 presidential race after a few years of relative tranquility (Baker & McEnery, 2005).

Meanwhile, in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, late February 2022 has come to be seen as the beginning of Europe's ongoing refugee crisis. By May 3, an estimated 7.5 million individuals had been forced to flee the country; in all, there were around 6.8 million documented Ukrainian refugees in Europe. By 2022, Ukrainian refugees entering the UK alone were projected to be 83.150. Since then, images of Ukrainians entering the UK have been in UK headlines (Abdulaal, Sadek, Osman, Hal, & Saleh, 2022).

As evidenced by several research studies, discourse and refugees have been the focus of in-depth research. Since 1996, several studies on the representation of refugees have been conducted in the UK. This set of studies focused on the ideological differences between newspapers by examining some of the most well-known discursive strategies used to portray refugees from third-world countries like Afghanistan and Iraq. According to Parker (2015), the British media has been portraying recent refugees as unwanted invaders, which has created a climate of

hostility towards them. Nevertheless, Plotnikov (2019) portrayed the British media's stance on the refugees as the presumption that permitting more individuals to enter our region will jeopardize European citizens and their identity. He went on to say that these discursive constructions portray refugees as the architects of disaster, marginalizing the instability and threats they face in conflicts.

Basok and Benifand (1993) effectively illustrated another unfavorable picture of migrants in the British press by pointing out that when reporting on refugees, right-leaning media prioritized lawbreaking and chaos. They asserted that these discursive strategies portray refugees as the architects of disaster, marginalizing the instability. By looking at how European migrants, namely Ukrainian asylum seekers, are portrayed in the media, this study seeks to fill a gap left by previous research. It is posited that the narrative around Ukrainian refugees will be constructed differently by British news outlets compared to those in third-world countries. This theory is based on some in-depth expert evaluations of the European media's brave coverage of the influx of Ukrainian migrants into Europe.

Arif and Hayat (2018) noted that the press in the UK humanely covered Ukrainian asylum seekers, pointing out that certain presenters revealed the refugees are 'just like us' and extolled the virtues of women using Kalashnikovs to fight Russian attackers. Another example comes from Kuznetsova (2020) pointed out that the European media's portrayal of Ukraine was disgraceful and racially biased. Nevertheless, Kalyango (2011) denounced the prejudice that the Western media has created when covering Ukraine.

Furthermore, by clearly detailing how the European media in the UK discursively depicted the Ukrainian migrants in the media, the current study aims to advance the discipline of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Since the refugee crisis has become a global issue, it is grounded in reality and opens the door for future academics to conduct comparable studies globally, particularly in third-world nations. For instance, a study was conducted to investigate how Turkish media portrays Syrian refugees (Secen, 2022) or how the press in Malaysia portrays Rohingya refugees (Cheung, 2011; Van Dijk, 1993).

Within the context of the CDA framework, the current study focuses on a few chosen newspaper snippets to answer the following queries:

1. Which discursive techniques are used by the British media while covering the Ukrainian refugees?
2. How do discursive techniques get used by the British media to portray the Ukrainians arriving in the UK?

The study suggests that the way Ukrainian migrants are portrayed in the media may be biased and framed. When covering Ukrainian migrants, the British mainstream news media frequently uses dominant narratives and discourses, which the CDA's findings might illuminate. This suggests that to guarantee fair and accurate portrayal, media organizations must reassess their reporting procedures. Furthermore, the study indicates that public opinion may be significantly impacted by how Ukrainians are portrayed in the press.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Refugee Discourse in Previous Analyses

Some recent studies on migrant stories in the media have largely depended on discourse analysis of newspaper texts about refugees (Vollmer & Karakayali, 2017) and linguistic investigation of article corpora to identify often-employed utterances. Nevertheless, historical discourse analysis has also been employed in research. Discourse analysis is thought to have developed in reaction to cognitive views that distinguished discursively produced acts from internal representations (Baker et al., 2008; Gunawan et al., 2023; Pandanwangi et al., 2020).

Furthermore, manufactured out-groups including immigrants, refugees, and various racial minorities in contemporary liberal states have received a great deal of attention from critical discourse theory. Many research projects with various sociopolitical objectives have been started. That is to say, studies on how refugees are portrayed in the media in Australia by Hussein, Natta, Yehya, and Hamadna (2020) on young immigrants from Sudan. Parker (2015) is one of many studies on media critical discourse about asylum seekers conducted in the United Kingdom alone. However, Kyriazi (2022) exposes the marginalizing practices of the British media towards refugees. Martikainen and Sakki (2023) present another unfavorable depiction of migrants in the British news media. Finally, three unfavorable media repertoires on refugees were put forth by Baltov (2022) in their most recent study on asylum seekers in UK media.

A few studies examine the rhetorical production of migrants in UK print media, despite increased media coverage. Weber, Grunow, Chen, and Eger (2023) observed that research projects frequently have a variety of goals and concentrate on different facets of issues on refugees. Although several studies may discuss how refugees are portrayed in UK media, they might not specifically focus on how their depiction is constructed rhetorically. This more focused emphasis necessitates a unique study methodology. Furthermore, when it comes to literature, the majority of research on Western media has been on how non-European refugees are portrayed. This study aims to examine these emerging phenomena.

The most startling finding from earlier research mentioned above was that the media's employment of water metaphors (i.e., floods, waves, tides, or lakes) characterizes migrants negatively (Hartmann, 2010). These kinds of comparisons were common in tabloid publications. Phillips and Hardy (1997) examined public correspondence that touched on the subject of refugees to examine how refugees are constructed rhetorically in UK media. They illustrated how refugees were frequently portrayed unfavorably in these popular discourses. To move refugee populations outside of civilization, the social structures of various distinct social groups have to be modified.

2.2 Discourse-Historical Approach

The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), developed by Reisigl and Wodak (2009) and Forchtner, (2011), is a set of analytical instruments within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Five discursive strategies are identified by this strategy: nomination, prediction, perspectivation, and mitigation. Moreover, a criterion for the primary argumentative outgroup discourses was developed by Forchtner (2011). These topoi

consist of the following: law, topoi of abuse, authority, danger, interpretation, culture, and advantage/usefulness. This method has influenced several refugee discourse studies and contributed substantially to the organization of methods for assessing outgroups in speech. Specifically, research was conducted by von Stuckrad (2013) and Boukala (2016). These studies employed the DHA framework as their analytical tool and concentrated on how news media portrays refugees. Their research exposed the inaccurate portrayal of refugees. These studies and this research project are similar in that they use the DHA technique to examine texts connected to refugees and look for media representations of them. Consequently, the methodology is rather helpful for assessing the outgroup discourses, such as those related to refugees, discrimination, racism, nationalism, and xenophobia (Reisigl & Wodak, 2008).

Referential techniques, particularly pertinent to self-representation, are the first strategy in the DHA theoretical framework. They name people, processes, or events, either positively by exhibiting respect for them or negatively by treating them with low regard (Clancy, 1992). The strategies are found by investigating the terms that are employed to identify and describe different social actor groupings when the formation of in-groups and out-groups is encouraged. A range of membership classification techniques, including deictic and literary devices like metonymies, metaphors, and synecdoche, are used to do this (Dittmar & Forsthoffer, 2006).

Second, after something is formed or identified, all subsequent (physical or abstract) objects are described or linguistically characterized using predicational techniques. Later identification describes all that comes later (Forchtner, 2011). According to Reisigl and Wodak (2008), predicational processes can be verbally articulated as positive or negative evaluative attributes or attributes in the form of implicit or explicit predicates. These strategies aim to assign positive or negative, derogatory, or complementary labels to people, events, and procedures. References cannot be easily separated from referential strategies since they already possess the prediction quality. But further examination reveals nuanced differences that can improve our comprehension of how language is used (Otten & Van Berkum, 2008).

According to Reisigl and Wodak (2008), textual argumentation methods are commonly seen as the cornerstones of argumentation, utilizing referential and predictive strategies. Stated differently, the process of classifying and assigning attributes to people, things, events, and processes employing referential and predication strategies is often presented as accepted knowledge, concealing a significant portion of the political and ideological goals that these classifications of attributes serve. A deeper comprehension of discourse and power dynamics in the language requires dissecting these underlying interests (Boer, Ter Huurme, & Taal, 2006).

Third, perspectivization entails analyzing the numerous discursive and linguistic devices employed to convey diverse points of view. Lexical selections, rhetorical devices, and discursive structures are some of these tactics. Researchers can infer whether particular viewpoints are emphasized or marginalized in a discourse by examining these components (Frawley & Lantolf, 2005; Reisigl & Wodak, 2008).

Fourth, according to Reisigl and Wodak (2008), mitigation in the discourse historical approach refers to the discursive and linguistic techniques employed to minimize or lessen the significance of specific incidents, deeds, or remarks inside a discourse. It entails analyzing the words used to minimize or lessen accountability, blame, or unfavorable assessments. CDA's linguistic perspective of language as a center of ideology and power is linked to mitigation. Hence, mitigation is a discursive technique that can be used to control or shape how people perceive certain actions or events, frequently advancing the agendas of particular players or social groups.

Methods of reasoning make up the last part. Argumentation strategies require premises that can be stated explicitly or inferred. According to Reisigl and Wodak (2008) and Rhee (2013), argumentative processes are the conclusion systems or content-based premises that connect a set of reasons to a conclusion or assertion. The shift from the argumentation to the conclusion is justified by it. This strategy is essential for categorizing arguments that appear convincing and is frequently used in prejudiced speech directed at marginalized groups.

3. Methods

3.1 Research Design

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used in this study. To reveal the social, political, and ideological components ingrained in language and discourse, CDA is a multidisciplinary method of analysis (Beaugrande, 2004). CDA acknowledges that language is imbued with power dynamics and is therefore not neutral. It recognizes that diverse power dynamics and ideologies impact media discourse and can mold how social groups like refugees are portrayed. Through the examination of language and discourse employed in news stories, CDA seeks to reveal implicit prejudices, preconceptions, and ideological frameworks that could sustain either favorable or unfavorable depictions of refugees. As a result, this methodology is appropriate for this study, which aims to identify the ingrained ideology that influences the creation of news texts about Ukrainian migrants.

According to Hill and Cole (1995) and Reisigl and Wodak (2008), the Discourse Historical Approach is a particular paradigm within critical discourse analysis that concentrates on the historical aspect of discourse. It integrates linguistic research with an investigation of the social processes and historical background that influence discourse over time. Discourse Historical approach primarily seeks to understand how discourse reflects and reproduces historical events, ideologies, and power dynamics. DHA's analysis focuses on exposing the beliefs that are ingrained in conversations about security, nationalism, refugees, and cultural identity. DHA can clarify how such ideas could affect how migrants are portrayed and sway public sentiment. Because this study used a book about refugees for analysis, the DHA framework made sense to use in this investigation.

3.2 Data Collection

Four significant UK daily newspapers—The Times, The Sun on Sunday, Metro, and London Evening Standard — were specifically picked

to provide the data. These publications were chosen to represent some political stances in the UK: political neutralism is favored by Metro, while conservatism is supported by The Times and The Sun on Sunday. London Evening Standard sits on the center-left of the political spectrum. The selection is also based on how widely popular they are in the UK and how widely read they are. DHA was used to evaluate the 64 articles collected during the search. To identify the common discursive sources, 16 articles from each newspaper, were used to characterize Ukrainian refugees. Table 1 provides an overview of the publications, including the number of articles and their ideological positions.

Table 1. News media political stance and number of articles

News media	Political alignment	Articles
The Times	Conservative and Eurosceptic	16
The Sun on Sunday	Conservative	16
Metro	Non-partisan	16
London Evening Standard	Center-left	16

3.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis methods were applied to the news extracts from the chosen news outlets. To grasp how Ukrainians are portrayed in the news media in Britain, not only the themes but also the rhetorical patterns were found and analyzed. Discursive strategies and argumentative strategies were the two analytical methods employed in the data analysis. By analyzing and interpreting discursive behaviors, the discursive approach reveals the ideologies, power dynamics, and social structures ingrained in language use. These resources aid in the examination and dissection of how language both represents and changes social reality. On the other hand, argumentation strategy describes how arguments are developed and used in discourse to uphold or refute particular stances, ideologies, or hierarchies of power. It entails examining the patterns of reasoning, rhetorical devices, and persuasive strategies employed to support a specific viewpoint or sway the audience's views and attitudes.

4. Results

Following data analysis, the researchers discovered three discursive techniques used by British news outlets while covering refugees from Ukraine. These three tactics sought to create a favorable perception of migrants from Ukraine. Prediction and Nomination were the first two tactics. The former implies the situation and need for support that Ukrainian refugees face in Britain, while the latter deals with the humanitarian qualities that are associated with Ukrainian migrants.

As seen in Table 2 and in contrast to other types of discursive techniques, the main themes noticed in the discourse of Ukrainian migrants were both humanization and individualization as remedies to the dominant spirit of collectivization. In every given researched news report, it was higher than 50%. These processes meant that the migrants were depicted as functioning naturally in a normal situation (Humanization) and that the discourse focused on the misfortune of people (Victimization). This generalized individualization rhetorical device gave voices to different people. It emphasized how different these people were from one another in terms of their political beliefs, ages, sexes, jobs, and lifestyles.

Table 2. The distribution of humanization and individualization techniques

News media	Number of clauses	Percentage
The Times	481	74%
The Sun on Sunday	435	69%
Metro	489	66%
London Evening Standard	532	78%

Excerpts from The Times, The Sun on Sunday, Metro, and London Evening Standard show how the migrants' terrible circumstances were used to their advantage. By presenting each person's identity and occupation, the articles humanize the parties involved. If the Predictive approach portrays people in the characters' everyday situations, readers will find it easier to relate to and sympathize with the characters.

- (1) A mother's miracle: after seeking safety in the UK, a Ukrainian migrant who survived a brutal massacre gives birth to a son. (The Times, April 2022). (Humanization)
- (2) Several women and their children from Ukraine are forced into the United Arab Emirates as sex slaves. (The Sun on Sunday, June 2022). (Humanization)
- (3) The UN claims that 75,000 children are compelled to leave their nation every day. (Metro, 25 May 2022). (Humanization)
- (4) Nine-year-old migrant from Ukraine, very shocked by the fighting, she was mute for six weeks. (London Evening Standard, June 2023). (Humanization)
- (5) A family who is unable to keep their cats with them is thinking about returning to Ukraine. (The Times, August 2022). (Humanization)

Additional Individualization and Humanization techniques were applied by naming and relating to the social actors:

- (6) Mother of two Sofiia Karkadym, a Ukrainian refugee who fled Lviv at the beginning of the invasion, moved into the Garnett family. Tony Garnett is helping her build a new life. (London Evening Standard, July 2023). (Humanization)
- (7) After a police search, a family of refugees from Ukraine reunites with their seven-year-old Yorkshire Ellie, who was taken five days

after they landed in the UK. (The Sun on Sunday, July 2022). (Humanization)

(8) After escaping a conflict zone, Tetiana and Anna, two Ukrainian sisters, are pursuing their aspirations of becoming well-known skaters. (Metro, May 2023). (Humanization)

(9) Louisa, a mother, and her 12-year-old daughter said that, despite her initial expectations of considerate hosts, she "did not feel secure" after just a few weeks. (Metro, April 2022). (Individualization)

In addition, exposing horrific events is another way to achieve humanization (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). For example, this approach goes beyond labeling a horrible event as a "bad tragedy" and instead concentrates on its details and myriad aspects. One example of this can be found in the text in the way the attack victims explained how the incident started:

(10) You can notice them heading their way into rooms, taking bicycles and scooters, and lazing around the chief's office raiding his cabinets and sipping whisky. All of this is captured on camera. (London Evening Standard, July 2023)

(11) Electric shocks were used to torture and beat people. The torment would go on, sometimes for several hours, if no one spoke up. (The Times, May 2022)

(12) Metro was told by Mr. Sychevskiy, "They threatened us with weapons, killed my cat, and oppressed my family." (Metro, June 2022). (Individualization)

(13) The unreleased video depicts a gang of individuals dressed in Russian camouflage holding a soldier down while they cut his genitalia with a box-cutting knife and present them to the camera. (The Sun on Sunday, June 2022). (Individualization)

Nonetheless, another technique for developing humanization and individualization tactics is to emphasize a victim as a regular, innocent person (victimization):

(14) A common Ukrainian peasant whose family had been living there for a long time was handcuffed by Putin's troops (The Times, July 2022). (Humanization)

Other victimization stories were introduced by describing the terrible conditions of individuals who were lucky to escape to spotlight the Humanization and Individualization accounts. Additionally, it offers a sympathetic explanation and a dramatic portrayal of the migrants, as shown in the excerpts that follow:

(15) Her mother carried him in her arms through a dark forest full of dangerous wild animals to preserve his life. (The Sun on Sunday, April 2023). (Individualization)

(16) His uncle was able to escape the cherished nation following the Russian shelling. Sergey held Bruce in her arms and led the way. His three other daughters and their grandmother Maria Audrei were behind him. (Metro, May 2022). (Individualization)

(17) A few guys gave up in a muddy way, unable to go the remaining distance to the Polish borders. Their friends were too weak to support them. (London Evening Standard, July 2022). (Individualization)

Gordon (2009) defines topos as components of argumentation that belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises. Martin (2002) defined Topos as reservoirs of generalized notions from which given arguments can be produced about critical discourse analysis. Topoi is frequently employed when writing or speaking about the "other," particularly refugees, were further classified into the following categories: concept, interpretation, threat, humane aspects, justice, liability, weighting, finances, numerals, law and rights, culture, and usefulness.

The researcher discovered that the topoi of humanity were the most prevalent and consistent in the 27 excerpts chosen after a thorough analysis. The news media used the humanitarian argumentation technique to present the Ukrainian refugees in a positive light. This tactic was implemented as an argument. The study came to the definitive conclusion that "refugees desperate for support" constituted the most prevalent arguing style. Table 3 shows the distribution of this arguing technique.

Table 3. The numerical distribution of 'the migrants seeking support' topoi

News media	Number of total clauses	Percentage of 'the support'
The Times	582	67%
The Sun on Sunday	541	74%
Metro	595	75%
London Evening Standard	643	63%

The argument that refugees are needy for help was made repeatedly throughout all excerpts. In this instance, refugees were portrayed as victims in need of defense. The following news extract samples will look at different discursive structures that were used in the investigated newspaper stories to achieve this argumentation.

(18) According to Mrs. Javid, the administration is helping Ukraine in every possible way. (The Times, March 2022)

(19) The international world must welcome the influx of refugees from war-torn Ukraine with open arms, not just kind words. (Metro, July 2022)

(20) The administration has to provide a secure way for refugees from Ukraine to the UK. (London Evening Standard, April 2023)

- (21) Twenty-one thousand visas have been granted to Ukrainians thus far, and the leveling-up secretary, Michael Gove, has stated that "tens of thousands" more are anticipated. (The Sun on Sunday, April 2022)
- (22) Regardless of whether they have ties to Ukraine, the "Homes for Ukraine" program enables migrants, organizations, corporations, and community groups throughout the UK to provide rent-free rooms or homes to Ukrainians fleeing the conflict. (The Times, June 2022)
- (23) Plans to be revealed this weekend will seek the British taxpayers to provide houses to thousands of Ukrainians escaping the Russian massacres. (The Sun on Sunday, April 2023)
- (24) To expedite the process, charities like Save the Children and the Refugee Council have lobbied governments to suspend the visa requirements. (Metro, March 2022).
- (25) According to Michael Gove, thousands of Britons are open to taking in Ukrainian migrants in exchange for £380 per month. (The Times, May 2023)
- (26) There is a significant backlog of thousands of British households who are willing to provide refuge to Ukrainian refugees. (Metro, June 2022)
- (27) The Health Minister promised a significant increase in the rescue programs. (The Sun on Sunday, March 2022)

The news media's use of persuasive methods, as previously noted, centered around the refugees' need for support. It strengthened the already favorable portrayal of refugees that Humanization and Individualization had previously established. The basic objective of this tactic is to create a favorable stance in the minds of the European readers besides fostering the belief that refugees from Ukraine should be welcomed and assisted when they arrive in British territory.

5. Discussion

According to the results stated in the section above, there has always been an issue with refugees trying to reach safe countries. Due to the large number of refugees—mostly from non-European countries—who have attempted to enter Britain since the 1990s, the British government has implemented more stringent immigration laws (Marrington, 1987). According to the research findings, the necessity for secure borders and the media's image of immigrants as deviants backed these policies (Becker, 1994). In 2015, there were similar media discourses surrounding the so-called "refugees in Europe" (Mammadbayli, Dominguez, & Bond, 2017). That being said, there weren't many Ukrainian immigrants coming to the UK until lately. By concentrating on refugee coverage in the UK, this paper makes a novel contribution to the body of research on the media construction of refugees.

British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, declared that the UK and other European countries will support Ukrainian immigrants in whatever way possible when the crisis between Russia and Ukraine first broke out and thousands of migrants came to the UK. How politicians discursively entwined the "Ukrainian refugee crisis" is demonstrated by this speech, however, its impact on the public's willingness to assist the refugees remains unclear. Similarly, the leading UK news outlets consistently present a positive image of Ukrainian refugees. This case illustrates how the Ukrainian refugee was presented by UK news media as "a crisis" rather than as a predicament and a moral duty to the people of Britain and Europe.

It was clear from the frequent usage of the phrase "folks and fellows" that the UK citizens and government only stood in favor of individuals attempting to enter the country legally. According to the study, the main strategies used by the British media to fabricate a "humanity tragedy" around Ukrainian refugees were humanization and individualization. These approaches were applied in many articles using positive nomination and prediction. The use of persuasion techniques known as *topos* served to reinforce this positive view of refugees. Almost every British news outlet that conducted the investigation stressed how desperately Ukrainian refugees needed assistance.

The argumentative strategies the news media aimed to cultivate were exemplified by the statements, "The British administration must protect our fellow Europeans; we must open our houses to our Ukrainian friends; and it is our duty as Christians to assist our fellow Europeans." By utilizing linguistic instruments like the humanist metaphors (i.e., folks or fellows) news media discursive structures have the power to influence listeners. This finding thus goes against the conclusions of Zittoun (2015) and Kamimura (1998), who claimed that the use of narratives that set apart 'them' from 'us' helped migrants create a deviant group.

Similarly, discourses surrounding immigration and socioeconomic difficulties created a distinct "us" vs. "them" divide; Verkuyten (2005) reframes these issues in terms of "race" and refugees as outsiders who need to be kicked out. The study samples show how migrants are depicted in British news media in two different ways.

The results of this study supported the theory that the UK media, particularly the right-wing media, purposefully or unintentionally embrace biased/racial ideology while covering global migrants because CDA is designed to probe ideology beneath discourse. A system of ideas or beliefs that support or encourage discriminatory perspectives and behaviors relying on race is known as biased racial ideology. It entails having unfair prejudicial opinions about people or groups because of their racial or ethnic heritage (Van Dijk, 1993). This ideology is repeated in the evaluated mainstream media of the United Kingdom as "us versus them" and the "othering" argumentative technique.

Several studies, including those by Basok and Benifand (1993) and Mammadbayli, Dominguez, and Bond (2017), revealed how poorly the British media portrayed colored refugees from developing nations. Non-European refugees were painted in a bad light by the media, which referred to them as "boat refugees," "unwanted nations," and "illegal refugees." Conversely, the results of this study show how the

mainstream media in the UK positively portrays white Ukrainian migrants. The media humanistically and amiably portrayed Ukrainian refugees, calling them "fellows" and "people desperate for help."

The double standard and prejudiced racial attitudes toward migrants that persist today are remnants of the lengthy history of racism within the British Empire (Frawley & Lantolf, 2005). The British produced media throughout the colonial era to uphold "white systems" across their territories. Similarly, Weber, Grunow, Chen, and Eger (2023) demonstrated how the British press marginalized the voices of immigrants by characterizing them as either a threat to national security or the economy, perpetuating "the age-old hierarchies of the colonial system, which divided humans into superior and inferior species."

6. Conclusion

To demonstrate how Ukrainian migrants are discursively constructed in the British press, this study was conducted. Along with the argumentative techniques of "refugees seeking support," humanization and individualization were the main discursive techniques. The ideological application of these techniques was best illustrated by the need to aid and shield Ukrainian migrants. Additionally, the UK publications stressed how important it is for all Europeans to use reasoned reasons to lend support to their Ukrainian neighbors.

There was proof that immigrants were portrayed as desperate people. These articles painted a picture of a compassionate country that respects the human rights of those who have suffered losses by emphasizing the human side of the conflict as a justification for political activities. As previous research has shown, the British news media negatively portrayed migrants from non-European countries. Therefore, the results of this study highlight the need for additional research to understand why the news media in the UK depicted refugees from several countries in different ways and to uncover the ideology underlying this position.

The study's restricted applicability stems from its exclusive focus on mainstream British news media, which limits the findings' generalizability. The chronological scope of the study may not adequately account for the dynamic character of media depictions, and the sample size and selection may not adequately reflect the range of discourse. Moreover, the existence of linguistic barriers placed limitations on the integration of media in languages other than English, which could lead to the possible omission of important viewpoints.

Subjectivity in conversational reading is a constant source of concern, and the employment CDA may introduce further inherent biases. The study might not have looked into every contextual factor that affects media coverage in detail. To overcome these constraints, future research initiatives may incorporate multilingual analysis, mixed methods approaches, audience reception studies, policy impact assessments, editorial decision-making investigations, intersectionality considerations, and stakeholder interviews. Together, these initiatives would help provide a deeper understanding of how European migrants are depicted in the media in Britain.

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Authors' contributions

All authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the work. The interviews and the analysis were conducted by the first author. All authors participated in the interpretation of data. All authors drafted the work and revised it critically for important intellectual content. All authors gave final approval of the version to be published and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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