

# **The Portrayal of Iraqi Refugees in Media Discourse and its impact on EFL Cultural Awareness**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Media discourse plays a salient role in the portrayal of Iraqi refugees who fled Iraq because of the continuity of war and violence which creates political, social and economic crises. The aim of this paper is to look critically at the most prominent strategies that are utilised by media news reports in representing Iraqi refugees along with the ideological viewpoint. This clarifies the significance of the language of media in developing the EFL cultural awareness and identifying the ideology-laden structures. Thus, the researchers examine the representation of Iraqi refugees in BBC News Reports from the perspective of critical discourse analysis. Accordingly, the researchers adopt Wodak's (2001; 2009) *discourse-historical approach* and van Leeuwen's (2008) *sociological representation of social actors*. The selected news report is analysed at two levels of analysis: linguistic and ideological. The researchers conclude that investigating the language of media can be implemented to promote the students' awareness about issues connected to victimisation, abuse, reality and authority. By doing so, the students improve a deep insight of the global and cultural awareness in education relating to curriculum, hegemony, Eurocentric ideology in media discourse involving news reports and TV programs.

**Key Words:** BBC News reports, Critical discourse analysis, Refugees, Representation, Cultural awareness

## **1. Introduction**

Media discourse is one of the salient genres of discourse that has a great interest in cultural studies, critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis, linguistic anthropology, psychology, sociolinguistics, sociology, cognition, pragmatics and tourism studies (Talbat, 2007, p.2). According to O'Keeffe (2006, p.1), media can be conventionally known as a broad term to show how reality is printed or broadcasted to a large number of people from television to newspapers. Media provide people with an enormous news about what is happening in the world (Barker, 2004). The significance of

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media in the contemporary world is indisputable. The majority of the world populations are recently affected by media discourse (Macdonald, 2003, p.1; Talbot, 2007, p.3). At the time of political tribulations, 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, p.161). These groups are the prominent core in media news reports because the number of refugees globally has grown at the start 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. Therefore, the study of the interconnected role of language and media is needed to be studied and focused on from the perspective of critical discourse analysis and to show its impact on the cultural awareness for English learners (Yanar & Tütüniş, 2016. p.3). Thus, the researchers address the following questions:

1. What are the macro-topics that are associated with the representation of the Iraqi refugees in the selected news media?
2. What are the micro-strategies and categories that are used to represent Iraqi refugees in the selected news media?
3. How do the macro-topics and micro-strategies uncover the ideology of the participants?

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Critical discourse Analysis**

A critical approach to the study of discourse was developed in 1979 by a group of linguists and literary theorists such as Gunther Kress, Robert Hodge, Roger Fowler, and Tony Trew. This approach is called Critical Linguistics (henceforth CL) (Al-Shaibani, 2011). This approach is based on the concepts of Halliday's theory of Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL). SFL is a linguistic theory that associates language with aspects of social life (Fairclough, 2003). Accordingly, CL sought to show how language and grammar can be utilised as ideological instruments for the categorisation and classification of the world (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

Interestingly, the term *critical* is central in both CDA, and Critical linguistics (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p.5). It can be traced back to the work of the Frankfurt School and Jurgen Habermas and their *Critical Theory* (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p.2). The Critical Theory is extremely important in understanding the notions of *ideology* and *critical* (Wodak, 2011). In addition, the aim of *Critical Theory* is to improve the perception on society by connecting the main social science, involving sociology, history,

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economics, political sciences, psychology and anthropology (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p.6).

Critical linguistics has been criticised because it lacks the link between language, power and ideology (Fairclough, 1992). That is, practitioners of CL attempted to synthesise language studies and social theory without discussing social theory and the concepts of ideology and power. Thus, this link could be better captured by the critical discourse analysts who sought to develop methods and approaches to describe the practices and conventions in texts that uncover political and ideological speculation (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Hence, the theory of critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) emerged in the early 1990s. CDA is seen as an approach that contains different methods and perspectives for studying the connection between discourse and social context (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). This indicates that there are different approaches and methods such as Fairclough's dialectical-relational approach, van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach, and Wodak's discourse-historical approach. They represent instances of theoretically and analytically miscellaneous approaches in the analysis of discourse (van Dijk, 2001). However, CDA does not have a unitary theoretical framework (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Thus, CDA has evolved as an interdisciplinary branch of linguistics, composed of a range of approaches with the basic ideological assumptions and orientation that constitutes social relations.

### **2.2 CDA studies on media discourse**

This section presents a review of previous studies related to media discourse and refugees. Such a survey enables the researchers to find the gap in these studies and to provide justification in conducting this research. For instance, Chen (2008) examined fifty-five news reports on Sino-Japan Conflict in the *New York Times* (2001-2006) using van Dijk's (1998) *Ideological Square* of positive-self representation and negative-other representation. The *New York Times* portrays the Chinese government as aggressive, dominant and repressive whereas the Japanese government is depicted as more rational and courteous. Chen concluded that fifty-one ideologically-loaded reports, and four relatively neutral news reports.

Adopting van Dijk's theory of ideology, Kandil (2009) studied 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*. Thus, the study aims at showing how power and ideology affect language in certain political and social frameworks. The chief input of this study is the adding

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of a significant bilingual and multi-cultural aspect to the study of CDA by examining data from three various cultures (American, Arab, and British) in two diverse languages (Arabic and English). Ideologically, Kandil deduced that terrorism is frequently represented in the news to stand to the acts of violence committed by Palestinian groups, but scarcely to stand to Israel acts of violence, principally in *BBC* and *CNN*.

KhosraviNik (2009) analysed the discourse media employing van Dijk's (1991; 1995; 2000) *socio-cognitive approach*, Wodak's (2001) *discourse-historical approach* and van Leeuwen's (1996) *sociological categories of actor representation*. He studied 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) examined the British press in his study on the new racism that has been created in the daily talk and media. This representation favors the majority through highlighting their positive deeds and backgrounding their negative deeds, on the other side, positive deeds of the minorities are backgrounded in time their negative deeds are foregrounded. The study aims at examining 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 various newspapers were studied: *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*.

Studying news reports from multi-cultural backgrounds is not only used by Kandil (2009) but also adopted by Ghazal (2015) in his analysis of subtitles and headlines taken from the Arabic Syrian channel *SANA* and the English Channel *Aljazeera's* coverage of Syrian's uprising. Additionally, this study emphasises the importance of ideology concerning the Syrian uprising. The data of this study consists of eight headlines and subtitles. The purpose from this study is to discuss the investigation of how power

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use via language in the political discourse. Ghazal employed Faircough's (1997; 2003) approach that emphasises the importance of ideology in influencing discourse. Hence, Ghazal concluded that the ideology of every channel represents the news from its own viewpoint as Kandil (2009) stated, but the difference between them is in the theorists, news media and the case study as well.

Using van Dijk's (1998) theory of *Ideological Square*, YaYlaci (2015) analysed the representation of Syrian refugees in *Hurriyet*, *YeniSaFak*, and *Cumhuriyet* newspapers between 1 January and 31 December 2014. He studies themes, styles, and photographs used in the selected newspapers. 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, these newspapers 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.

Sajjad (2015) studied the representation of Arabic and Muslim world in Barack Obama's Political Speeches. This is done through the analysis of Obama's policy towards the East and the Muslim adopting Fairclough's (1989; 1992; 1995). The aim of this study is to emphasise the ideological norms of Obama concerning the East and the Muslims. However, Barack Obama emphasises the relation between Islamic countries and the USA and he also states that the cooperation is the only strategy for achieving global peace. He disheartens the use of violence against any country excluding those who are planning to use nuclear weapons. Barack Obama frequently warns many Muslims countries such as Syria, Iran against the use of chemical weapons, and unclear programs. In addition, he attempts to win the favorable impressions of Muslim world by citing ayahs from the Glorious Quran. Thus, he gives many evidences of loving and respecting all religions and philosophy.

Reitmanova, Gustafon and Ahmed (2015) utilised 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

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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. Hence, the negative images of immigrants promote fear and hatred within the native-born population of host countries, and this increases the existing social distance between the natives and non-native born groups. 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) studied the portrayal of Muslims and the Syrian refugees in the British press. Gartrell focused on how Syrian refugees are portrayed, whether as Muslim refugees escaping from struggle or as migrants. She chose forty-five articles published in September 2015 by *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Daily Mail*, as they are among the top four well-read British newspapers, as mentioned by the National Readership 2015. Gartrell adopted van Dijk's (1992; 2002) approach in depicting the themes and the ideological discourses, to conclude that the Syrian refugees are primarily identified as migrants. Besides, the refugees are mainly depicted negatively, whether as victims without procurement or as a source of danger on the British society.

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. Moreover, 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 results from previous studies have emphasised the study of media discourse in relation to society, culture, ideology, power and language. Additionally, the previous studies have motivated on different related subjects such as ideology, historical and linguistic strategies. The existing studies neglect the representation of Iraqi refugees at political, historical, and linguistic levels. Thus, the present study differs from the cited studies and considers four main aspects: approach, methodology perspective, and

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scope. The corpus in this study varies from those previously undertaken, the application of qualitative technique applied along with the type of the language structures analysed. Through a linguistic study that associations ideological connections with language, form and structure, this study uses a multidisciplinary approach intended to fill the gap in the existing literature.

### **3. The Text**

This research provides a qualitative analysis of one news report entitled *World 'ignoring Iraqi refugees'* (2007) prior to the period after the US-led invasion of Iraq, stability and peace remain out of reach for the people of Iraq. The extreme violence and instability propelling people to flee Iraq has resulted in the largest population movement in the Middle East. This transcript of the selected news report is taken from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and particularly from the internet website archive. Furthermore, *BBC* is selected as being one of the top British newspapers (Chen, 2008, p. 143) and it is 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).

### **4. Methodology**

There are many theories and approaches of CDA such as Fairclough's (1995) dialectical-relational approach, van Dijk's (1980; 2004; 2009; 2011; 2015) Socio-Cognitive Approach (SCA), Wodak's (2001; 2009) Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), and van Leeuwen's (2008) Sociological Categories of Actor Representation. Relevant to the objectives and scope of this study are Wodak's (2001; 2009) DHA and van Leeuwen's (2008) Sociological Categories of Actor Representation. Wodak's (2001; 2009) DHA is significant to provide the salient macro-topics (topoi) which can be amalgamated with the arguments along with the linguistic and non-linguistic levels of analysis. This is done through the depiction of the referential, predication, perspectivisation and intensification/mitigation strategies that are associated with the representation of the social actors. Hence, these five strategies are:

- 1- Referential depicts how social actors, events, objects, and phenomena are named and referred to linguistically.
- 2- Predication observes which features and characteristics are attributed to the actors, phenomena, and objects.
- 3- Argumentation depicts claims of truth and usually it depends on topoi, which are part of argument schemes which able to link the premise of an argument to its conclusion.
- 4- Perspectivisation represents the perspective of the producer of a text.

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5- Intensification or mitigation modifies the force and status of utterances. (Lawton, 2013, p. 105-106)

These five discursive strategies are adopted to attain particular political, social, and linguistic goals. However, discursive strategies are operated at various linguistic levels of complexity (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 94).

On the other hand, van Leeuwen's (2008) approach draws up a *sociosemantic* record of the techniques in which social actors can be characterised and recognised the critical and sociological relevance of each category. Van Leeuwen's (2008) approach functions in this study on the micro (local) linguistic level and it is integrated within Wodak's DHA referential and predictional strategies. Thus, the representation of the social actors in this study is to be accounted for by these socio-semantic categories with their linguistic realisations. Therefore, categories including: Genericisation/Specification, Aggregation, Nomination have been chosen to be analysed in this study. Then, the researcher offers an in-depth clarification of the basic views of each approach focusing on the most applicable aspects to examine media discourse.

### **5. Data Analysis**

#### **5.1 Topics and Argumentation**

On the macro-topic level of analysis, the *BBC* news report is sympathetic by depending on topos of victimization as it depicts the Iraqi refugees as helpless, victims powerless and desperate. The Iraqi refugees are associated with the topos of *victimisation* because of their anguish and tribulations of lacking the humanitarian aids from the international community as shown in extract "There has been an abject denial of the impact, the humanitarian impact, of the war, the huge displacement within Iraq of up to 1.9 million people who are homeless because of the war, and those people who are homeless and never got back to the homes after Saddam Hussein was overthrown." In addition, many of them experienced the violence so that they need psychological therapy. Apart from all these economic and psychological damages of the sectarian war, many people die, however, the majority of them are men, who left their families without breadwinner and this put the women in great suffering as seen in most of the people killed in Iraq's violence are men. Accordingly, this also indicates *topos of reality*, as all of them reflect the reality of the situation in Iraq in 2007. Starting from the title that emphasises the worldly ignorance for all the suffering that the Iraqi refugees went through, this is a negative



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representation for the central power, especially those who allied with America to topple Saddam Hussein.

This can also be associated with the topos of authority represented by *UNHCR (The UN)*, *the international community*, *Damascus*, *UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler* and *the BBC's Jill McGivering* which have positive and negative roles in the assistance of Iraqi refugees. The *UNHCR* is extremely used because it is an organisation that responsible for the asylum seeking and its members have to assist refugees to live in a safe and good life. Therefore, they are in contact with the needs of refugees and their hardship and indigence they have faced. However, UN agencies face considerable difficulties in mounting an effective emergency response from the international community. Under such conditions, Damascus, the Syrian government, which host about 1.2 million Iraqi refugees declares the need for help. *UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler* comments on the case of 1.9 million displaced people inside Iraq, whose livings is worse than that of the refugees who are homeless and threatened after Hussein was overthrown. He also adds that the numbers of displaced people are increased steadily. Finally, the third authority is *the BBC's Jill McGivering* who provides the reader with detailed information about the situation of Iraqi widows and their surviving after their husbands' death.

The critical political situation in Iraq since 2003 afterwards encourages a massive influx of migrants exceeded 1.2 million from Iraq into its neighboring countries such as Syria. This is due to the historical connections between these two countries and because the Syrian regulations did not force on the refugees an entrance visa. In spite of the limited material recourses of Syria and with a population of 18 million, it has hosted and offered those refugees succor, funding and patronage. Thus, the Iraqi refugees become a *burden* on Syria. This status of difficult situation induces Syria to call for an aid of provide safe life and funding to those refugees. Consequently, UNHCR asks for the Western countries and international community assistance because they have to provide financing for UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies working to help migrants and refugees in the neighboring countries. Ideologically, there is a negative representation of the Western countries and the international community which do not respond for the call of human rights to remedy this crisis.

### **5.2 Micro-Level Analysis**

#### **5.2.1 Genericisation and Specification**

The most prominent social actor incorporated into this text is the Iraqi refugees, directly addressed in the title of the article "*World 'ignoring Iraqi*

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*refugees*". Consequently, the use of *Iraqi refugees* is also mentioned in other extracts in the article to elucidate the influx of refugees to Syria and Jordan. Because this article deals with both Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons (the movement of Arab Iraqis such as Sunnis and Shias to the autonomous Kurdish area). However, the Iraqis are generalised via using the mass noun *people*. The reference to *Damascus*, the capital of Syria, indicates another type of *genericisation* as it refers to the Syrian Government. This is due to the huge number of Iraqi refugees who fled to it. This influx of Iraqi refugees to Syria causes a crisis which led the Syrian Government to make a plea for assistance because Syria cannot provide the humanitarian aids for those refugees. In addition, the term *refugee* without definite article is used only without reference to the nationality, as it refers to the internal displaced people who move from one area to another. Finally, the consequences of the sectarian war in which the majority of men die "the main breadwinner" leaving the *women* struggling to survive and ensuring food for their children. In fact, it is generalisation via mentioning the role of each gender during this period. Thus, Iraqi women are represented in a positive image as survivors who take the household responsibility.

The article contains a single *assimilation* as represented by the noun phrase *those people* as in which refers to a group of displaced people escaping from Saddam Hussein's persecution and never returned to Iraq after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. In addition, Two specific individual actors are Peter Kessler in (A) and (B) and Jill McGivering in (C) respectively. The first one is the UNHCR spokesman who emphasises the main impact of war which is displacement. He also adds that those displaced people are homeless and they live in acute poverty as there is no job opportunities. On the other hand, Jill McGivering who is one of BBC's reporters is the second individual who describing the Iraqi women's survival after war tribulations and particularly after their main winners' death. Ideologically, the displaced people are represented as victims of the difficult situation after the US invasion of Iraq and their tribulations in refuge. This is supported by quoting the UN spokesman's speech twice to indicate the active role done by the UNHCR and to highlight the crisis that Iraqi refugee have inside and outside Iraq. Furthermore, Iraqi women are depicted in a positive image; hence, they are described as survivors. This is indicated by the following extracts:

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- A) *Mr Kessler* said: "Food aid needs as well are becoming vital because the population is becoming further and further impoverished since they cannot work".
- B) Their deaths leave households headed by women who struggle to survive the loss of the main breadwinner, says the BBC's *Jill McGivering*.

### 5.2.2 Aggregation

In aggregation, the groups of participants are statistically treated. In fact, recent estimates prove that the flow of Iraqi refugees constitutes the highest refuge crisis worldwide with the number of internally displaced people reached to 2 million and more than 1.2 million refugees outside Iraq. The influence of such mass movement gives an increasingly climacteric situation for host communities, particularly Syria and Jordan that no longer can be ignored. Thus, the reporter invokes the accurate number of Iraqi refugees depending on UNHCR reports about the Iraq refugees at that time to express the credibility of the news given. Moreover, another linguistic means used to express aggression is the utilisation of definite or indefinite quantifiers that act as numbering or as cores of nominal groups. Thus, the quantifiers of *many, some, most, a number of*, and an expression of a *quarter of them* are used. In this case, the measures are quantified, even if not in exact numbers. Aggregation is very common used in this article to quantify and strengthen the nature of the representation of the Iraqi refugees. The above extracts highlight the political context in Iraq after Hussein was overthrown and the impact of this as a consequence on the social and religious aspects. As a result, millions of people displaced, thousands of men die, thousands of women become widows, and the children become orphans.

### 5.2.3 Nomination

The reporter uses both *formal nomination* and *honorification* in terms of activity and occupation. The social actor in this article is represented through the use of proper nouns and formal nomination such as *UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler, Mr. Kessler*, and the *BBC's Jill McGivering* in the above extracts respectively. Obviously, the reporter uses the formal nomination with honorification of a person through mentioning his occupation as a UNHCR spokesman and then the representation of the same social actor is done with a reference for his surname as his full name has already mentioned for the readers. The reporter also amalgamates the use of *formal nomination* and *honorification* to represent the reporter of BBC Jill McGivering. However, the reference to the institution and the reporters shows a significant validity and reliability of the information

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given in representing reality, and a positive representation for their institution's offer in helping and depicting the Iraqi refugee crisis to the worldwide.

### 5.2.4 Metaphor

The reporter uses a flood metaphor – huge influx of Iraqi refugees – and supports his argument with topos of victimization as in "The UN faces an enormous task in helping countries such as Jordan and Syria cope with the huge *influx* of Iraqi refugees, a spokesman said". Such a type of metaphor is commonly used in the context of refuge. Metaphors such as *influx* and *flow* are used by sympathetic press to express the large-scale terror. The use of *flood* metaphor is purposefully employed in this article to show the negatively-evaluated reaction of the international community towards the huge number of Iraqi refugees and to describe people who have been displaced from their homes, often after going through unimaginable hardship. Nevertheless, the words that the reporter selects have direct and extensive political divergence on whether a country will aid those who have fled dreadful conditions in search of protection for themselves and families. Therefore, the outcome of such a language show that refugees become statistics, not people and this is stated in extract "*That number, too, is steadily growing, the UN says, with some provinces feeling overwhelmed and attempting to close their boundaries to refugees from other areas.*"

### 5.2.5 Quotation marks

Both quotations in UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler said: "*There has been an abject denial of the impact, the humanitarian impact, of the war, the huge displacement within Iraq of up to 1.9 million people who are homeless because of the war, and those people who are homeless and never got back to the homes after Saddam Hussein was overthrown.*" And "*There's a need for governments to come in and address the health, the education, all the needs,*" Mr Kessler said have the same reporting phrase with the verb *said* as the sayer who is the UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler to. However, the reporter quotes the UNHCR spokesman's statement about the humanitarian impact of American invasion 2003 on Iraqis and its consequences of the sectarian war and violence which pushed about 1.9 million Iraqis to be displaced and became homeless. Meanwhile, the second quotation for the same speaker representing his view about this crisis as he believes that the only solution for such problem is through cooperation between different governments in order to address all the refugees' needs. As usual, political news reports are often backed with

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statements that are quoted from the interviewee (s) in the form of reactions or opinions about the event. Therefore, the BBC writer has selected the above excerpts to match the event that is in progress and to show that the Iraqis are experienced hardship and they need an aid to resume their lives. These quotations are mostly used to report the abject denial towards the crisis of the Iraqi refugees and the consequences of this crisis as those people are in need for assistance, healthcare and education respectively and thus emphasising a bad action of the out-group members (the international community).

### **5.2.6 Reported Speech and Free Direct Speech**

The extract " He said the international community had to step in to help address their food, health and education needs" is the only reported speech in this article, in which Peter Kessler's view is reported about the Iraqi refugees' crisis, representing that the only available solution is through the international community's support. The two clauses gained by the omission of conjunction (that). The deletion of 'that' does not change the meaning since it is optional, particularly when it occurs next the reporting verb *said*. Moreover, the sub-clause needs more information to answer the question of "said what?" and only the sub-clause and the main clause together create full meaning.

The lead of the article "The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) says there has been an "abject denial" around the world of the humanitarian impact of invading Iraq" is considered to be a *free direct speech* as it delivers the UNHCR speech without using quotation marks and only introduces the speech by using the verb of saying *says* in which the UN refugee agency states that there is an "abject denial" about the humanitarian impact of invading Iraq. The same strategy is also used in which the same agency states the exact number of refugees in both Syria and Jordan reaching to almost 1.2 million in Syria and 800,000 in Jordan. Moreover, free direct speech can also be achieved by using quotation marks without reporting clause as seen in "Food aid needs as well are becoming vital because the population is becoming further and further impoverished since they cannot work" and "So clearly in every area, there's a need to support what the main host governments are doing and then to gird ourselves for what could be, if the war is prolonged, an increasing movement further westwards." These extracts emphasise the need for international cooperation in order to support what the host countries are doing. On the other hand, the number of Iraqi displaced are steadily growing which push some provinces to close their boundaries and not allowing displaced from other areas to enter their

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provinces. The distribution in the security system that this period witness because of the sectarian war, make Iraq insecure place to live in with death of thousands of Iraqis, majorly men. Obviously, this is a negative representation for the Iraqi government at that time which is unable to show any positive outcome for the new democratic system which established after 2003.

### 5.2.7 Hyperbole

Hyperbole is utilised with reference to the statistical data for the number of refugees and displaced people and the use of adjectives and adjectival phrase such as *huge*, *enormous* and *further and further impoverished* respectively as in:

- (A) Syria says it is home to *1.2m Iraqi refugees*, with up to *800,000* in Jordan.
- (B) UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler said: "There has been an abject denial of the impact, the humanitarian impact, of the war, the *huge* displacement within Iraq of up to *1.9 million people* who are homeless because of the war, and those people who are homeless and never got back to the homes after Saddam Hussein was overthrown."
- (C) The UN faces *an enormous task* in helping countries such as Jordan and Syria cope with the *huge influx of Iraqi refugees*, a spokesman said.
- (D) On top of that, almost *two million* more people are displaced inside Iraq - people who have fled their homes to escape the violence.

From ideological perspective, a positive representation is given for all the offers that have been done by UNHCR and by the host countries as well in helping the Iraqi refugees. As it is well-known that both Syria and Jordan are relatively unfortunate countries, (if one compares them with other neighboring countries to Iraq such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia), and suffer a lot as far as availability of job opportunities, but they still managed to help the Iraqi refugees to a great extent.

## 6. Conclusion

It is clear that the media has had a crucial role to play in the depiction of social actors in particular to the case of Iraqi refugees. Thus, the analysis of media discourse has the effect on the development of the EFL cultural awareness and identifying the ideology-laden structures. This will develop the learners' awareness of the Western societies and ideologies towards Iraqis abroad. This is shown through the BBC news report which is neutral in representing its news as it shows a negative representation for the Dutch government's cruelty and the Iraqi government against the Iraqi refugees.

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## Appendix

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World 'ignoring Iraqi refugees'



Some two million Iraqis  
are estimated to have fled



## **The Portrayal of Iraqi Refugees in Media Discourse and its impact on EFL Cultural Awareness .....**

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sawsan Kareem Al-Saaidi , Dua'a Taher Matrood

**The UN refugee agency the country (UNHCR) says there has been an "abject denial" around the world of the humanitarian impact of invading Iraq.**

The UN faces an enormous task in helping countries such as Jordan and Syria cope with the huge influx of Iraqi refugees, a spokesman said.

He said the international community had to step in to help address their food, health and education needs.

Syria says it is home to 1.2m Iraqi refugees, with up to 800,000 in Jordan.

Damascus has repeatedly called for help to deal with the problem.

UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler said: "There has been an abject denial of the impact, the humanitarian impact, of the war, the huge displacement within Iraq of up to 1.9 million people who are homeless because of the war, and those people who are homeless and never got back to the homes after Saddam Hussein was overthrown."

Many of the refugees need considerable support, and about a quarter of them are children who need education.

Many need food and healthcare, some need counselling because of the violence they have experienced or witnessed, while others need jobs.

"There's a need for governments to come in and address the health, the education, all the needs," Mr Kessler said.

**“ There's a need for governments to come in and address the health, the education, all the needs ”**

Peter Kessler  
UNHCR spokesman

[Exiles in deportation fear  
Doors close on fleeing  
Iraqis](#)

"Food aid needs as well are becoming vital because the population is becoming further and further impoverished since they cannot work.

"So clearly in every area, there's a need to support what the main host governments are doing and then to gird ourselves for what could be, if the war is prolonged, an increasing movement further westwards."

### **Displaced inside Iraq**

On top of that, almost two million more people are displaced inside Iraq - people who have fled their homes to escape the violence.

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That number, too, is steadily growing, the UN says, with some provinces feeling overwhelmed and attempting to close their boundaries to refugees from other areas. Many Sunni Arab and Shia people have been forced to flee from mixed areas to districts where their respective communities are in the majority.

A number of Arab Iraqis have moved to the autonomous Kurdish area in the north, where the security problems are less severe.

Most of the people killed in Iraq's violence are men.

Their deaths leave households headed by women who struggle to survive the loss of the main breadwinner, says the BBC's Jill McGivering.

The public distribution system within Iraq is no longer providing a safety net for these people in the way it used to.

All these factors encourage the flow of people into other countries.



**“ Jordan has an interest in stopping Iraq from disintegration, for fear that the already high number of refugees going to Jordan will increase substantially ”**

[Iraq neighbours' interests](#)