DIVIDED WE STAND, UNITED THEY FALL: A FRAMING ANALYSIS OF THE
U.K. PRINT PRESS'S COVERAGE OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

by

Johnny Oliver

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Major Subject: Communication

West Texas A&M University

Canyon, Texas

December, 2016

ABSTRACT

The way news outlets report and frame stories has a profound impact on the public; they have the power to sway how we interpret events and can affect public opinion. This study examines how the British print press reported the Syrian migrants before and after September 2 2015 - the date 12 Syrians made global headlines after they drowned attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea. This incident received global attention through the images of one of the victims, three year old Aylan Kurdi.

A content analysis of four separate newspapers, varying in political leaning and style was conducted. The purpose of the study was to identify valence and frame of newspaper articles pertaining to the Syrian migrants, to analyze how this varied across different newspapers, and to observe potential changes from before and after the incident. Newspaper articles were retrieved from the database LexisNexis.

The study employed a quantitative content analysis and tested the differences in reporting between right and left leaning newspapers in regards to frame and valence. Also, the difference between tabloid and broadsheet newspapers in regards to frame and valence was tested.

Primary results showed that in the two weeks before and the two weeks after the incident, newspapers reported the incident more commonly using an episodic frame. Additionally, right-leaning newspapers were more likely to use a thematic frame when covering Syrian migrants. The study also concluded that U.K. broadsheet newspapers were more likely to report Syrian migrants positively than tabloid newspapers were.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank both of my committees for their support throughout this journey. It

has taken far longer than I would have liked, but they have guided me through when I

have needed them. Not only my committee, but all my professors at WTAMU were

fantastic, and they have helped me get to the point where I can submit this piece of work.

I will be forever grateful for my time in Texas and the people who taught me so much.

APPROVED:

_____ Date: _____

Chairperson, Thesis Committee

_____ Date: _____

Member, Thesis Committee

_____ Date: _____

Member, Thesis Committee

     _____ Date: _____

     Head, Major Department

     _____ Date: _____

     Dean, Academic College

     _____ Date: _____

     Dean, Graduate School

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On January 4, 2011, Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian man, died after setting himself on fire as a form of protest against restrictive, oppressive laws in his country. This act sparked a chain of events in Northeast Africa and the Middle East which would come to be described as the Arab Spring. Protests and violence engulfed many areas in these countries; not least affected was the nation of Syria.

Furthermore, in March 2011, four people were shot and killed by government forces in Syria after protesting the arrest of 15 schoolchildren. The children were arrested for writing anti-government graffiti on a wall and were, reportedly, tortured as punishment. This sparked outrage throughout the country. Like citizens from other nations in the affected area, their people demanded improvements in freedom and democracy, and many Syrians called for the resignation of the president, Bashar al-Assad. After the president refused to step down, the violence worsened. This civil unrest – which started in Daraa – began to spread throughout the country, igniting violence and ultimately a civil war. Since the conflict began, eight million people have fled their homes, with an additional four million fleeing the nation altogether. Most departed to neighboring countries for refuge; however, many have also made the journey across the continent to western European countries with stronger economies, such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom ("Migration Crisis," 2015).

The mass migration of the Syrians has contributed to what has been labelled by the western press as the "migration crisis," and the issue has become increasingly salient in the U.K. press since the port of Calais, France, has become a dwelling for migrants (many also from other war-torn countries such as Eritrea, Somalia, and Afghanistan) seeking entry into England. The matter came to a head when, on September 2, 2015, 12 Syrian refugees died while crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Among the deceased was three year old Aylan Kurdi, who perished along with his brother, who was five, and his mother. The images of his body lying face down on the beach made global news. In the United Kingdom, these images were on the front pages of national newspapers, and they brought the discussion of the immigration crisis into the media and public spotlight. As the Arab Spring and the Syrian civil war are relatively recent events, the area of research is small. The research there is on the subject leans towards the commencement of the revolution rather than focusing on how they are reported as a displaced group of people.

This study will, therefore, use framing theory to analyze how the Syrian migrants were reported before and after the death of Aylan Kurdi by the U.K. press. The media are relied upon to effectively report news around the world. However, framing theory argues information can be presented, discussed and perceived in different ways. Tettah and King (2011) state that "how an idea, issue or personality is presented (framed) in the media influences how people think about that issue or personality" (p. 505). Therefore, the way the U.K. press frames the issue of the Syrian migrants can influence how the public interprets the issue. Framing has become a large area of study with differing abstractions, opinions, and classifications. Iyengar (1991) proposed a dichotomous system of thematic and episodic framing to understand how the media frame events.

Thematic framing reports an incident with context and is more likely to consider societal conditions and public policy, whereas episodic framing considers issues on a more individual basis, using a narrower lens.

The study comes at a time when the modern press has a wider scope and a bigger audience than ever before. This, coupled with one of the most serious humanitarian crises we have seen since the end of WWII, warrants an investigation into how a large groups of migrants are represented by media elites within national discourse. As mass communication scholars, there is a duty to probe contemporary trends in the media and analyze the efficacy and behavior of media outlets. The U.K. media represents one of the oldest and most extensive press systems in the world. This paper, therefore, seeks to examine how the U.K. press, and specifically print media, reported and framed the Syrian migrants during two seperate two-week periods immediately before and after the death of Aylan Kurdi. A quantitative content analysis will be utilized to investigate how four newspapers – the Daily Mail, The Guardian, The Telegraph, and The Mirror – and their Sunday equivalents framed the Syrian migrants, and also how they reacted to the images of Aylan Kurdi. This research will add to the literature on how the media.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The question of how to respond to migrants arriving on European shores has existed for many years; however, with recent wars and politically repressive regimes forcing people from their countries, migration into Europe has become a significant problem. This has often been characterized as the "Migration Crisis" in Western media (Pallister-Wilkins, 2016). Much of the unrest stemmed from a civil uprising, the Arab Spring, which occurred throughout the Arab world at the start of the decade. These revolts, in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, have led to a large number of fatalities and have been widespread enough to cause civil wars. The Middle Eastern country of Syria has been entrenched in civil war since 2011 and has over four million registered refugees ("Syrias Refugee Crisis," 2015). As of October 2015, over 428,000 Syrians have applied for asylum in Europe (Weise et al., 2015). In addition, many others are fleeing to Europe, illegally, through dangerous transportation routes. For example, in April 2015, hundreds of migrants were thought to have drowned when a boat carrying up to 700 people capsized in the Mediterranean Sea ("Mediterranean Migrants," 2015)

Nonetheless, the incident that really captured the attention of the Western media was when 12 Syrians drowned, and several of the bodies were washed up on a Turkish beach. The event occurred on September 2, 2015, and among the fatalities was Aylan Kurdi. Aylan, along with his mother, brother, and other passengers, perished after the inflatable boat they were travelling on capsized. Nilüfer Demir, a professional Turkish

photojournalist, captured several photographs of the dead bodies washed ashore; two photographs of Aylan Kurdi spread rapidly around the globe. The story, and images of the boy's body lying lifeless on the shore, sparked a reaction among the global media. This incident evoked significant debate and brought the plight of the Syrian migrants evermore into the public and media spotlight. El-Anany (2016) suggests it was the photos of the boy that galvanized the European public in the debate surrounding the refugee crisis. This opinion is shared by Baldacchino and Sammut (2015). They state the sheer figures and images of the anonymous arrivals tend to foster fear, but it took the image of Aylan Kurdi's limp body to mobilize public sympathy.

In the United Kingdom, although the migration crisis was covered before this incident, it did not capture the same attention as after the images were printed. Many of the national newspapers ran the images of the boy, and the story sparked unprecedented interest in the migrants (Vis & Goriunova, 2015). The story compounded a national and political debate which centered on migrants seeking entry into the country via the port of Calais and discussion on immigration and national security, which was considered integral to the country's 2016 referendum on European Union membership. This paper will examine previous literature covering U.K. immigration and its press system, as well as analyzing the theory of media framing.

Immigration

The body of immigration literature is ever-expanding. Many studies in the U.S. have centered on immigration from Mexico (Grimm, 2015; Mastro et al., 2014; & Zuniga, Correa, & Valenzuela, 2012). These articles can be conceptually informative; however, as immigration is largely relative to context, reviewed literature in this paper

focuses mainly on immigration within the U.K. The majority of studies within the U.K. have covered immigration following E.U. expansion and immigration of Muslims, and how these groups are reported in the national press (Cheregi, 2015; Croucher, 2013; Drzewiecka, Hoops, & Thomas, 2014; Polson & Kahle, 2010).

Polson & Kahle (2010) found that the term "immigrant" is often used interchangeably with "asylum seeker" and "refugee," which channels discourse of immigration to migrants from backgrounds which are seen as ethnically "other" and from areas of political and economic instability. Additionally, Gabrielatos & Baker (2008) identified confusion in the media of definitions and legal implications of migration-related terms. The obfuscation of these terms in the press often leads to a negative construction of immigration, even when the story may, in fact, be positive. Research has found the press has portrayed immigrants negatively through confusion of these terms.

Polson & Kahle (2010) further add that media and policy discourses in developed regions continue to draw national and temporal boundaries around immigration issues. This prevents a transnational discussion of immigration and limits conversation in a national realm. Often, immigrants are described as invaders of national space, and subtle forms of racism are contained in reports that are ostensibly objective. These are merely masked as language of the nation (Polson & Kahle, 2010). Baker and McEnery (2005) echoed these claims, finding immigrants were often negatively portrayed in British newspapers through dehumanizing language, and equating refugees with water, packages, an out of control mass, pests or potential invaders, and natural disasters. An earlier study by H'Haenens and de Lange (2001) discovered that as news focuses on sensational conflict and conspicuous incidents, a negative image of immigrants is created. By

omitting features of their daily lives, they are seen as a threatening, alien force. Lynn and Lea (2003) described Britain as being in a state of post-colonialism, linking discriminatory constructions to an "identity crisis" and claiming politicians and sensationalized media reports encourage the notion migrants are laying siege to British coasts.

All of these claims converge on the view that migrants are subject to unfair descriptions in public discourse. Drzewiecka et al. (2014) & Cheregi (2015) detail how, specifically, newspapers in the U.K. portray immigrants. Cheregi (2015) found both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers were guilty of "constructing a stereotype reinforced by the fear of invasion." (p. 21). Also, they found broadsheets and tabloids used immigration stereotypes with descriptions and comparisons to beggars, murderers, criminals, fraudsters, and corruption, which affect the discursive construction of immigration. Drzwiecka et al. (2014) found that in British tabloids, explicitly xenophobic discourse was used to describe immigrants, and in broadsheets, a cosmopolitan discourse, nominally appreciative of multiculturalism, legitimated lower pay for migrants. These papers highlight an anti-immigration bias inherent in the British print press.

Also, immigrant groups considered ethnically "other," or of a different culture may threaten the dominant group. Croucher (2010) asserts if the host culture feels threatened, they are more likely to believe the immigrant group doesn't want to assimilate. Furthermore, Croucher states, the dominant group, when threatened, will intensify in ethnic and/or linguistic pride to protect themselves, which can lead to conflict. Additionally, migrants from Muslim nations bring another perceived threat: religion. As the official religious institution of the U.K. is Anglicanism, the dominant

culture may see Muslim immigrants as a symbolic or real threat to their religious

supremacy as Croucher, Appenrodt, Lauwo, & Stojcsics (2013) remark, Islamophobia, or

hostility towards Muslims, in Western society has increased with their growing

population.

Press Systems

A fundamental principle and right in the western world is to have a free,

uninhibited press system. Since its birth, the free press of the Western world has become

a powerful enterprise, and although it is not a monolithic entity, values throughout the

Western world are shared. Additionally, all but one of the four main global media

agencies are based in Western nations. Vanderbush & Klak (1996) state this has led to

cultural hegemony of the non-west, which leads to a misunderstanding of Eastern nations.

Turan, Colakglu, and Colkoglu (2009) believe this can lead to negative portrayal of other

nations. This idea is in direct contrast to one guiding principle in Western press:

objectivity – although, still, this varies between nations. However, news bias can emerge

when stories are written or developed. Journalists can contaminate the story even if they

are not consciously doing so. Hackett (1984) states this can emerge through favoring one

viewpoint over another and the distortion of reality.

Moreover, Philo and Berry (2004) highlight how news information may be

distorted or misleading to the public. After conducting a study, it was shown that British

people had a false idea of many facts relating to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The same

study inspected information presented by the BBC, the public broadcasting company in

Britain. As they are publically funded, they have an additional duty, beyond the norm, to

produce balanced content. However, the study found the BBC largely produced content

that leaned toward a pro-Israeli narrative. Israelis spoke twice as much on camera as Palestinians did, and Palestinians were more often characterized as "terrorists," whereas Israelis were often described only to be people responding to violence.

United Kingdom's Press

The printing of newspapers is a well-established practice in British life, one which dates back to the 17th century (Cranfield, 1978). Newspapers offer an invaluable window into popular culture and play a significant role in setting the agenda for public and private discussion, and in providing interpretative frameworks through which readers make sense of the world (Bingham, 2012). Newspapers are a pervasive medium and both regional and national publications are offered throughout the United Kingdom.

Newspapers in the U.K. differ slightly, in tradition, to their American counterparts. Despite impartiality being a supposed field-norm in journalism, British newspapers do not claim political objectivity; rather, they operate along more partisan lines (Sparks, 2006). The levels at which this occurs is debated among scholars; however, they are in accordance that partisanship among the press has, in general, waned since the end of World War II. Despite this, bias still exists, and a tradition exists of newspapers declaring their support for a party during general elections and over significant political decisions (Wilks-Heeg, Blick, & Crone, 2013).

The term "press-party parallelism" was first used by Colin Seymour Ure (1974) to describe the phenomenon of partisan affiliations of British newspapers to political parties. Butler and Butler (2006) highlight that this is, for the most part, in support of the conservative party. And Wright (1999) suggests many businessmen and corporations

owning the major newspapers have interests that coincide with conservative policies, and there editorial standpoint reflects this.

While it is unclear how much influence British newspapers have on public opinion, Linton (1995) believes they have the capacity to affect voting behavior, stating The Sun's anti-Labour 312 Paul Baker campaign was held to be responsible for Labour's defeat at the polls in 1992. While Baker (2010) states newspapers can and do influence readers' attitudes, the relationship becomes a circular process: newspapers must position themselves in ways that appeal to and confirm the attitudes of their existing readers, otherwise readers may shift allegiance to another newspaper.

Furthermore, the British press, due to several controversial incidents, has a questionable moralistic reputation. Their handling of the Hillsborough tragedy, an incident where 96 people died after too many fans were let into a football stadium, and the phone hacking scandal, where many celebrities and members of the public (including family of murdered schoolgirl, Milly Dowler) had their phones hacked by media elites are just two examples of occasions where the U.K. press has been widely condemned for their actions (Boyle, 2015). Newey (2011) described British newspapers as "a torrent of celebrity drivel, xenophobia, materialism, kitsch jingoism, and bullying of the vulnerable." This reprimand, while not universally applicable to British newspapers, is indicative of the focus on celebrity and sensationalist coverage in tabloid newspapers (Altikriti & Al-Mahadin, 2015). Despite areas of criticism, the spectacular heterogeneity of their content ensures that newspapers are a rich source of information on a wide range of subjects (Bingham, 2012).

In addition to political leaning, another area where British newspapers diverge is in their style. Broadsheets produce higher quality, more in-depth coverage and maintain profitability through advertising, whereas tabloids offer more superficial, sensationalistic coverage, appealing to a broader demographic, competing financially through sales (Baker, 2010). Newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Times* are considered broadsheet newspapers, whereas the *Daily Mail* and *The Mirror* are tabloids.

Framing

This study is based on the mass communication theory of framing. Media framing is an extremely well-covered area of academic research; it describes how news media report and portray the news. Goffman (1974) was the first to discuss 'framing' as a concept. Goffman theorized that framing was the way in which we understand what is happening around us and how we give salience to certain aspects of experience. Goffman's work offered insight into this theory from a perspective deeply-rooted in social sciences, and he laid the foundations for how we have come to understand framing theory today.

Since its inception, framing theory has grown and evolved in numerous ways, many of the most significant will be discussed in the chapter. Countless academics have discussed framing theory and offered their interpretation of this dynamic discipline. However, the attachment of the theory to media stems from McCombs & Shaw's (1972) study of the 1968 presidential election, which showed if the news media give higher levels of attention to certain topics, the public will perceive those as being more important. This phenomenon was described by McCombs & Shaw (1972) as "agenda-

setting," the assumption that news media can guide the public in what topics they should discuss and think about.

Media framing theory furthers the ability to set an agenda. Entman (1993) tied Goffman's framing theory and mass communication. To frame a story is to "select some aspect of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (p. 52). Therefore, the media are able to select certain issues within a story and, through emphasizing or omitting certain aspects, they can alter the way they appeal to an audience. This differs from agenda-setting, as, through agenda-setting, it is possible to affect what an audience may perceive as important, whereas framing is able to subtly affect how the audience perceives and interprets a story.

Additionally, media framing is not a one-dimensional, rigid theory. Several academics hold varying beliefs on how media framing theory should be understood, and over the years it has become a multi-faceted area of study, with several authors discussing it in different ways. For example, Entman (1993) initially offered four ways in which frames function in the media: they

> "*define problems* - determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; *diagnose causes* - identify the forces creating the problem; *make moral judgments* - evaluate causal agents and their effects; and *suggest remedies* - offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects." (p. 52).

Although Entman (1993) follows these definitions by concluding that not every frame consists of all these functions. Many sentences in a text may contain none, but his definitions do contribute a lot to the area of study, as he was able to outline and describe how framing in the media works.

Furthermore, in the following years, augmentation of the theory has led to different directions and interpretations. Knight (1999) adds, through framing a topic, we are able to "define and solve problems, shape public opinion, increase the productivity of interpersonal negotiations, and serve as a foundation of public discourse, such as negotiation, on a mass-communication level" (p. 383). Following Entman (1993), Knight discusses framing theory's utility in defining problems; however, Knight also discusses the profound impacts on the audience, and media framing's persuasive ability. The suggestion that framing in mass communication can affect public opinion and discourse makes mass media an influential platform. This definition, therefore, implies media have the ability to control what the public discuss and assist how they discuss it. Tankard (2001) defined the theory as "a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration" (p. 100). Here Tankard (2001) articulates the ability media have in selection of content. Therefore, whoever sets the frame, and/or writes the content, has the power to direct the reader in what, and how, to think about the topic. They are able to select and choose different aspects of the story, and omit or emphasize them, to fit a certain agenda or narrative. This clouds objectivity in news media, and whether certain frames find their way into stories consciously or through the unconscious assumptions of

the writer or media outlet, they are able to affect how the receiver interprets a story (Tankard, 2001).

Since the inception of media framing, and even more significantly in recent years, media framing theory has diversified. Due to extensive utility of media framing theory, the area has been studied and used in research in different ways. For example, DeVreese (2005) discussed media framing as a process comprised of two elements: *frame-building* and *frame-setting*. *"Frame-building* refers to the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames" (p. 52). This corresponds to factors both internal and external to journalism: journalistic practices and norms (internal factors) and journalists' constant relationship and negotiation with elites (external factors). "*Frame-setting* refers to the interaction between media frames and individuals' prior knowledge and predispositions" (p. 52). Frame-setting, therefore, is concerned with how the frame affects the viewers' interpretation and evaluation of the story or subject. Through studying frame-setting we can better understand the conditions under which an audience, or society, begins to accept or imitate the content they receive.

Human interest frame. As discussed, over the years different conceptualizations of frames have proliferated. These exist at different levels of abstraction. For example, distinctions have been made between generic frames and emergent or more specific frames. Specific frames are created in relation to the research subject and are often fixed for the study (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Matthes (2009) states generic frames have a composition which can be applied to certain features across a variety of topics. The human interest frame is a popular generic frame which has been applied to a variety of political issues including immigration. As the title suggests, a human interest frame is

considered reporting in which a person is central to the story or where they are used to represent an issue. Cho and Gower (2006) define a human interest frame as "a human face and emotional angle" (p. 42). Luther and Xiang (2005) define a human interest frame as a report where "individual lives are featured to personalize the story, with affective dimensions accentuated" (p. 859-860). Scholars are in accordance with the definition: a report which confronts a topic using a person or somebody's personal life as an illustration can be considered a human interest frame.

The market for news outlets has become more competitive, and the emergence of digital media and social networking has shifted the dynamic of news reporting, making it easy for members of the general public to both stay in constant contact with the news, and with easy access to the internet, they can report events themselves. Due to these developments, organizations have to work harder to draw people to their content. Aalberg and Beyer (2015) believe a human interest frame can help achieve this.

> Framing news with a human interest perspective is said to be one way to achieve
> this [capturing audience attention]. Individual cases that offer a personal and
> emotional story are not only easier to cover, it is also assumed to be a more
> efficient way to attract audience attention and engagement. (p. 860)

This technique of news presentation would, furthermore, be considered an episodic frame (see Iyengar, 1991). The dichotomy of thematic/episodic news frames is a concept highly utilized in framing literature. Aalberg and Beyer (2015) identified a human interest frame in relation to immigration.

> Issues are covered as individual instances with a focus on personal struggles and
> responsibilities. These news frames are typically constructed around a particularly

telling story of an individual, and often include perspectives that take the

immigrant's own viewpoint, focusing on emotional aspects of human tragedy or

(more seldom) stories with happy endings. (p. 862)

This episodic frame from a human standpoint has been used in a considerable amount of

framing studies. Braziunaite (2011), for example, inspected the coverage of British and

U.S. troops and their abuse of Iraqi forces. They evaluated news reports about this topic

which employed a human interest frame, finding they were often used to construct a

"them vs us" abusers and victims.

Bruce (2014) looked at how frequently a human interest frame was used by Arab

broadcasting stations when reporting the Arab spring violence. The study examined how

frequently Western and liberal networks utilized a human interest frame and how often

they utilized a political frame. Bruce's results, however, showed there was no significant

difference between the frequencies of human interest frames.

 Rather than observing frequency, Cho and Gower (2006) analyzed the effects of

human interest frames. Through examining the effects of a human interest frame in a

response to a crisis, they found the human interest frame influenced participants'

emotional response to the crisis more, and the emotional response influenced by the

human interest frame was a predictor of responsibility in a crisis.

Thematic and episodic frames. Iyengar (1991) considered framing through two

divided classifications: thematic and episodic. He states thematic framing tends to

influence individuals to hold societal conditions and public policies responsible, as

opposed to episodic framing, which tends to influence them to think in terms of the

individual. Iyengar and Simon (1993) add that thematic coverage tends to be broader and

can include policy debate and trends. It is employed more often after some time has passed. Gross (2008) further states,

> "Episodic coverage is narrower and is often used immediately following the event. Journalists often use episodic frames because they believe them to be more compelling and more likely to draw the reader or viewer into the story. Put another way, episodic frames are thought to be more emotionally engaging. Partisans also use what might be considered episodic frames for much the same reason" (p. 171).

The two frames, however, are not mutually exclusive in news reports.

> An article or news story can, and often does, contain a mixture of these framing techniques, but Iyengar (1991) states most will contain a dominant frame type.

> In practice, few news reports are exclusively episodic or thematic. Even the most detailed, close-up look at a particular poor person, for instance, invariably includes lead in remarks by the anchorperson or reporter on the scope of national poverty. Conversely, an account of the legislative struggle over budgetary cuts in social welfare programs might include a brief scene of children in a day-care center scheduled to close as a result of the funding cuts. For most stories, however, one frame or the other clearly predominates. (p. 14).

Iyengar & Simon (1993) add that thematic coverage tends to be broader and can include policy debate and trends. It is often more evident after some time has passed. Episodic coverage is narrower and is usually evident immediately following the event. Moreover, Iyengar (2012) considers the effects of these two frames on audience attribution: "Through thematic framing viewers tend to assign responsibility to general societal

factors including social norms, economic conditions, and the action or inactions of public officials" (p. 43). Through this type of framing, the audience is more likely to direct responsibility toward society. Episodic framing is more likely to provoke its audience into attributing responsibility to specific individuals or groups. In addition, Gross (2008) found that episodic frames are more emotionally engaging. Articles which employ an episodic frame are more emotive; however, thematic frames were found to be, on the whole, more persuasive.

Kim, Shanahan, and Choi (2012) echo this sentiment, adding that there are two main ways in which media frame events: individual responsibility and societal responsibility. Individual responsibility frames an act as a deficiency in the culprit, whereas a media frame of societal responsibility will frame the act in terms of the larger context of why such a thing might have occurred. The latter frame will look at political, social, and economic reasoning when discussing the event, but a frame of individual responsibility will not.

Scholars have completed research into how and why these frames are used, and in what occasion, and they have also studied the effects of these frames. Springer and Harwood (2014) studied how thematic and episodic frames affect attitudes towards elderly people and social security. Participants were exposed to messages about abolishing social security. They found that people exposed to the message through an episodic frame were more likely to endorse the message than the participants who were exposed to the message thematically.

Aaroe (2011) assessed the strength of effect between thematic frames and episodic frames. The author found the strength of the frame type was dependent on the

intensity of emotional interest in the subject. When there is little emotional interest, thematic frames are stronger, whereas this is reversed with an emotional interest: episodic frames have a stronger impact.

Also, Dimitrova (2006) found after examining the *New York Times*'s coverage of the Iraq war that over time the newspaper framed the war more thematically. Initially there was an episodic frame used, but this shifted as time went on. Dimitrova (2006) declared that it shows framing is not a static within a topic, but over time, how it is thought about and covered can change.

Frame valence. An additional classification system of framing is valence. Frames can be categorized by having positive or negative valence. Essentially, frames will stress more positive or negative aspects of the given subject. As de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003) add, "news frames can be expected to influence public support for various policy measures" (p. 362). It is clear that these frame types can have a profound effect on their viewers, and a bias or slant in a story or article can shape public opinion in regard to policy. Also, if the valence frame is not clear, they are categorized into unclear or neutral. A frame with positive valence may emphasize beneficial or high-worth aspects, solutions, or treatments. A frame with a negative valence may emphasize unfavorable or low-worth aspects, solutions, or treatments. A frame containing neutral valence presents statements of fact without assigning positive or negative value (de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2003).

Due to the possible effects valence can have in news framing, there have been many studies analyzing how different stories have been framed. For example, Dimitrova, Kaid, Williams et al. (2005) conducted a study which showed news websites which were

based in countries that supported the war in Iraq framed the outset of the war more positively than countries who were not in support of the war.

Kaid, Postelnicu, Landreville et al. (2004) looked at how different European Union member states framed the 2004 European elections. They found, generally, across Europe, the elections were framed neutrally or positively. However, in Spain and Ukraine, they found the EU elections were more likely to have a negative frame. Ireri (2004) analyzed how Barack Obama was framed during his presidential election campaign in 2008. He compared different nations' newspapers (Britain, China, U.S.A. and Kenya), and found, although some of the countries framed stories pertaining to him in different ways, all countries were found to generally report him positively.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Through analysis and information obtained through the literature review, a series of Hypotheses and Research Questions have been formulated. The objective of the research is to measure what effect the images of Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi, had on the way British newspapers framed stories pertaining to Syrian migrants.

H1: British newspapers' coverage of Syrian migrants will become more episodic following the event**.**

H2: Left-leaning British newspapers will report the Syrian migrants using an episodic frame more than right-leaning newspapers.

H3: Left-leaning newspapers will report more positive coverage of Syrian immigration into the U.K. than will right-leaning newspapers.

RQ1: Will the overall coverage be more positively or negatively valenced toward Syrian migrants?

RQ2: Will there be a difference in valence (positive, negative, or neutral) of coverage of Syrian immigration into the U.K. between broadsheet and tabloid style newspapers?

RQ3: Will there be a difference to framing (episodic or thematic) of coverage of Syrian immigration into the U.K. between broadsheet and tabloid style newspapers?

H4: The frequency in number of articles about the Syrian migrants will increase following the death of Aylan Kurdi.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

To reach the objectives of the study, a content analysis was utilized. This covered news articles printed in four selected newspapers in the U.K. in which the migration of the Syrian people was a subject. Krippendorff (2004) defines content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 19). This paper analyzed text from four U.K. newspapers and made inferences from these. Specifically, this study investigated coverage of politically-leaning newspapers (both left and right), different newspaper format styles (broadsheet and tabloid), date of publications (before and after the death of Aylan Kurdi), type of framing used (episodic or thematic), and the valence of the article (positive, negative, or neutral).

Sample

Newspaper articles about the Syrian migrants were analyzed. Four U.K. newspaper outlets were subject to inspection: the *Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday* (*The Mail*, henceforth); the *Daily Mirror/Sunday Mirror* (*The Mirror*, henceforth); *The Times/Sunday Times* (*The Times*, henceforth); and *The Guardian/The Observer* (*The Guardian*, henceforth). These four newspapers will be used as they are a fair representation of the U.K. newspaper industry (Drzewiecka et al, 2014). In political position, there are two right-leaning papers, the *Daily Mail* and *The Times*, and two left-leaning papers, *The Mirror* and *The Guardian*. Also, in regards to style, there are two

tabloids, the *Daily Mail* and *The Mirror*, and two broadsheets, *The Times* and *The Guardian.*

The study examined reporting before and after the printing of the story concerning the drowned Syrians and the content analyzed included articles printed within two weeks of the event, before and after. The analysis was able to examine how, and if, the reporting of Syrian migrants was affected by the incident. News articles were collected through a Lexis-Nexis database search. Articles were gathered using key-word searches for immigration, immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, Syrian, and Syria. Articles in which these words are mentioned but did not pertain to the topic of Syrian migrants were excluded.

Coding Categories

The unit of analysis was the headline and lead paragraph of each article. Smith (1999) states lead paragraphs and headlines give the main idea and summarize the main information in the article. This method has been used in many articles as a representation of the article content (Kräussl & Mirgorodskaya, 2014; Youssefi, Baghban Kanani, & Shojaei, 2013; Taylor-Clarke, Mebane, SteelFisher, & Blendon, 2007). Furthermore, through analysis of articles in the *New York Times*, Althaus, Edy, & Phalen (2001) suggest headlines and lead paragraphs adequately represent the article as a whole; therefore, although valence and frame may not be constant through the entirety of every article, the headline and lead are a sufficient generalization of the rest of the content. Additionally, each article was identified as relating to the subject under investigation.

Content was then coded for the following features: publication – The *Daily Mail*, *The Mirror*, *The Times*, and *The Guardian*; publication's political leaning – right or left;

date of publication – within two weeks prior, and two weeks following; type of frame – episodic, thematic, neither; valence – positive, negative, and neutral; and style – broadsheet and tabloid.

Intercoder Reliability

To examine the articles, two coders were used. A high level of intercoder reliability was sought through thorough coder training via the coding scheme. Coders inspected the text for type of frame and valence. Measures were taken to protect intercoder reliability. This is "the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion" (Lombard et al., 2002, p. 589). Coders, one other person in addition to the author, were trained in how and what should be evaluated in the newspaper articles. As the primary coder, I discussed what we were looking for in the content, and I issued the co-coder with examples and definitions of what to code and how to code data.

For example, articles describing the Syrian migrants as victims, a group in need of aid, or describing Britain/Europe as having a duty to help were coded as positive. "Kind-hearted Syrian refugees build flood defences in their new Northern hometown 'to give something back'" (Fitzgerald, 2015) would be coded as positive. Articles which described them as problematic, a burden, or a threat to Europe and British borders or society would be coded as negative. For example, "How many more can Kos take? Holidaymakers misery as thousands of boat people from Syria and Afghanistan set up migrant camp to turn popular Greek island into 'disgusting' hellhole" ("How many more," 2015) would be coded as negative. Additionally, in line with previous valence studies, there was an

additional category: neutral. These were articles which presented both positive and negative descriptions of the Syrian migrants.

In regard to framing, content was coded into Iyengar's (1991) generic frame types of either episodic or thematic. Additionally, for articles which are unclear or absent of a frame, a neutral category was used. Dimitrova (2006) states "Episodic news frames are references to isolated news events, focusing on discrete cases or episodes" (p. 80) Therefore, articles which included these characteristics were coded as episodic. For example, "The truth about the boy on the beach Aylan Kurdi," (Lee, 2015) was coded as episodic. Contrastingly, "thematic frames provide broader societal context to issues and events" (Dimitrova, 2006). Therefore, articles which provided context were coded as thematic. For example, "How Aylan Kurdi's death changed the world," (Kingsley & Timur, 2015) was coded as thematic.

Training helped to ensure consistency in clarifying certain terms and frames and reduced the opportunity of contamination in the data. Initially, both coders coded sample articles together. This is was to ensure uniformity in coding. Following this, coders covered sample content separately to test whether they are achieving agreement in their coding. Once a sufficient level of agreement had been reached, coders covered study material. Wimmer and Dominick (1991) state coders should overlap between 10% and 25% of material to calculate overall inter-coder reliability. Coders, therefore, overlapped 20% of the content. Content which overlaps was then tested for an appropriate level of agreement.

To calculate intercoder reliability, Holsti's (1969) formula, 2M/N1+N2, was applied to coding outcomes (M signifies the number of decisions the coders agree on; N

signifies the number of decisions made by each respective coder). Articles were coded for frame type (episodic/neutral/thematic) and for valence (positive/neutral/negative). After overlapping content was examined, coders reached an agreement coefficient of 0.86 for frame type, and an agreement coefficient of 0.89 for valence. As Neuendorf (2002) states, "percentage agreements "of .90 or greater are nearly always acceptable, .80 or greater is acceptable in most situations, and .70 may be appropriate in some exploratory studies for some indices" (p. 145), so the level of coder agreement is considered acceptable.

RESULTS

This study examined the coverage of Syrian migrants within four daily, national British newspapers. It aimed to analyze how the Syrian migrants were covered before and after the image of Aylan Kurdi was published, how different styles reported the group, and how newspapers of different political positions reported the Syrian migrants. Each article collected was coded depending on date, newspaper, political position, and style, and they were then examined for frame type and valence. The data were then tested for frequency and chi-square significance. The following results have been gathered after quantifiably testing the data. Each research question is matched with the corresponding set of data.

In the research, Pearson's chi-square test was utilized to test against the null hypotheses for significance. If the chi-square test yields a p-value smaller than .05, the results can be considered statistically significant and the null hypothesis will be rejected. If so, we can, therefore, accept the alternative hypothesis. Data tables supplement written findings to illustrate results.

Table one illustrates the results of the first hypothesis: British newspapers' coverage of Syrian migrants will become more episodic following the event. As shown, H1 was not supported. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between political leaning and framing. Although the use of an episodic framing

increased slightly from before the event (N = 25; 48.2%) compared to after (N = 93; 48.2%) The relation between these variables was not significant, $\chi 2$ (2, N = 249) = 0.56, p =.75. British newspapers' coverage of Syrian migrants did not become more episodic following the event.

Table 1. *Newspaper Frame Before and After Event*

Date of Publication	Thematic	Episodic	Neutral
Before	25 (44.6%)	25 (44.6%)	6 (10.7%)
After	85 (44.0%)	93 (48.2%)	15 (7.8%)

Note: N=249; $\chi 2$ = 0.56; df = 2; p = .75

Table two illustrates the results of hypothesis two: Right-leaning British newspapers will report the Syrian migrants using a thematic frame more than left-leaning newspapers. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between newspapers' political position and frame type. As shown, H2 was supported. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between political leaning and frame type. The relation between these variables was significant, $\chi 2$ (2, N = 249) = 12.71, p <.05. As predicted the test shows that of the articles coded (N = 249), right leaning newspapers (N = 57; 54.3%) used a thematic frame more than left leaning newspapers (N = 53; 36.8%). Right leaning newspapers reported Syrian migrants using a thematic frame more than left-leaning newspapers.

Table 2. *Newspaper Frame by Political Leaning*

Political Leaning	Thematic	Episodic	Neutral
Left	53 (36.8%)	82 (56.9%)	9 (6.3%)
Right	57 (54.3%)	36 (34.3%)	12 (11.4%)

Note: N=249; $\chi 2$ = 12.71; df = 2; p<.05

     Table three displays the results of the third hypothesis: Left-leaning newspapers will report more positive coverage of Syrian migrants than will right-leaning newspapers. H3 was supported. A Chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between political leaning and valence. Results show that the relation between these variables is significant, $\chi 2$ (2, N = 249) = 26.20, p <.05. Left leaning newspapers reported more positive coverage of Syrian migrants (N = 80; 55.6%) than right wing newspapers (N = 35; 33.3%).

Table 3. *Newspaper Valence by Political Leaning*

Political Leaning	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Left	80 (55.6%)	5 (3.5%)	59 (41.0%)
Right	35 (33.3%)	24 (22.9%)	46 (43.8%)

Note: N=249; $\chi 2$ = 26.20; df = 2; p<.05

     Table four shows the results of research question 1: In regard to valence of coverage, will the overall coverage be more positive or negative toward Syrian migrants? Once again, a chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between newspaper style and valence. Results show that the relation between these

variables is significant, χ 2 (2, N = 249) = 53.30, p <.05. The overall coverage of Syrian

migrants was more positive (N = 115; 46.18%) than negative (N = 29; 11.65%).

However, neither positive nor negative frames were found in a large number of articles

(N = 105; 42.17%).

Table 4. *Overall Valence*

Valence	Positive	Negative	Neutral
	115 (46.18%)	29 (11.65%)	105 (42.17%)

Note: N=249; χ 2 = 53.30; df = 2; p<.05

The second research question asked whether there will be a difference in regard to

valence (positive, negative, or neutral) of coverage of Syrian immigration into the U.K.

between broadsheet and tabloid style newspapers? A chi-square test of independence was

performed to examine the relation between newspaper style and valence. Results show

that the relation between these variables is significant, χ 2 (2, N = 249) = 8.79, p <.05.

Broadsheet newspapers were more likely to frame news articles positively (N = 73; 49%)

than tabloid newspapers (N = 42; 42%). Also, tabloid newspapers were more likely to

frame Syrian migrants negatively (N = 19; 19%) than broadsheet newspapers (N = 10;

6.7%). Furthermore, broadsheet newspapers were more likely to use a neutral frame

when reporting Syrian migrants (N = 66; 44.3%) than tabloid newspapers (N = 39; 39%).

Table 5. *Newspaper Valence by Newspaper Style*

Newspaper Style	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Tabloid	42 (42%)	19 (19%)	39 (39%)
Broadsheet	73 (49%)	10 (6.7%)	66 (44.3%)

Note: N=249; $\chi 2 = 8.79$; df = 2; p<.05

The third research question asked there will be a difference in regard to framing (episodic or thematic) of coverage of Syrian immigration into the U.K. between broadsheet and tabloid style newspapers? A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between newspaper style and frame type. Results show that the relation between these variables is not significant, $\chi 2$ (2, N = 249) = 4.11, p >.05. There was not a significant difference, in regard to framing, between broadsheet and tabloid style newspapers.

Table 6 illustrates the results of hypothesis 4: The frequency in number of articles about the Syrian migrants will increase following the death of Aylan Kurdi. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between frequency of articles in the two week period leading up to the event and the two week period after the event. Results show that the difference in these variables is significant, $\chi 2$ (1, N = 249) = 75.37, p <.05. There was a significant increase in the number of articles printed after the event (N = 193; 77.51%) than before it (N = 56; 32.49%).

Table 6. *Frequency of Articles*

Frequency of Articles	Before	After
	56 (32.49/%)	193 (77.51%)

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the way U.K. newspapers reported Syrian migrants before and after the photos of the young Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi, were printed. Data were collected from a two week period leading up to the event and during a two week period immediately after the event. Collected content was analyzed for the containing newspaper's style, the newspaper's political affiliation, the frame type of the article (episodic/thematic/ neutral), and article valence (positive/negative/neutral). The content analysis highlighted the interest surrounding Syrian migration. The analysis yielded not only a large number of articles after the publication of the images of the Syrian boy but also a substantial amount during the time leading up to the event. Each of the selected newspapers proved to be a rich source of material. Furthermore, the study analyzed the newspapers comparatively, examining the differences within both newspapers' political leaning and their styles. Through testing the hypotheses and answering the research questions, a rich area of discussion has been revealed.

Frame Type

The classification of episodic and thematic frame types is used prolifically in framing literature and often in content analyses. This study made predictions and posited questions about how these frames (episodic and thematic) were employed before and after the publication of images of a lifeless Aylan Kurdi.

Although episodic frames were hypothesized to be used more commonly following the images of Aylan Kurdi, this was not the case. Frame type remained constant before and after the event. The images and the story were personal to a very small number of Syrian migrants; however the event represented the plight of thousands struggling to flee safely across Europe. Several articles focused on the Syrian boy from a human interest standpoint. For example, "Shocking images of drowned Syrian boy show tragic plight of refugees" (*The Guardian,* article no. 36), exemplifies a theme of articles following the event. However, these stories were evenly balanced by thematically framed reports. As this opened the world's gaze to perils these people are going through, the U.K. press equally considered what the photo and the event represents.

Frame type was additionally tested between U.K. newspapers' political leaning. Newspapers which were more right-leaning were found to write articles using a more thematic frame overall. As episodic frames are more likely to a have an emotional impact on the reader (Aaroe, 2011), a possible explanation for right-leaning newspapers' frame type could be that they negated a more personal, episodic frame due to their more conservative political allegiance. However, further testing would need to be done to investigate this more rigorously. Despite differences in content between newspapers in regard to political leaning, when testing use of frame type between tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, no significant difference was found.

Valence

Due to de Vreese & Boomgaarden's suggestion "news frames can be expected to influence public support for various policy measures" (p. 362), it was predicted that, as U.K. newspapers operate along partisan lines. As opposing political parties have

opposing agendas, valence of the articles would also be contrary, especially when considering political leaning. This hypothesis was supported. Colin Seymour Ure's (1974) term "press-party parallelism" seems to ring true today among the British press. Testing showed left-leaning U.K. newspapers reported Syrian migrants more positively than right-leaning newspapers.

Although left-leaning newspapers were more likely to report on Syrian migrants positively, it is not necessarily true that right-leaning newspapers reported on them negatively. In fact, through additional testing, the study found that, overall, Syrian migrants were reported more positively than they were reported negatively. These data are, of course, offset by left-leaning newspapers as they are a significant proportion of the overall coverage, but to discover, solely, how right-leaning newspapers reported Syrian migrants, additional examination would have to be undertaken.

Previous literature indicated that there would be a difference between how newspapers from different political positions would frame articles in terms of valence, but there was little to suggest that newspaper style had an impact on framing. This was tested, and broadsheet newspapers - newspapers with higher a higher quality of reporting - were found to report Syrian migrants more positively than tabloids. As an area of research, there is very little covering the topic of valence within broadsheets and tabloids. This, therefore, is an area of study that should be investigated.

U.K. Newspapers

The results supported previous research on newspapers in the U.K., which found a clear divide between news reports and frames from different newspapers in the country. As was suggested in the literature, newspapers align themselves with a political party or

position. The results showed this to be true in the four week period during which the data were collected. There is clear subjectivity inherent to these newspapers and their editorial positions. To better understand how and why these newspapers operate the way they do, there should be a more in-depth inspection into partisanship of U.K. newspapers.

Through examination, newspapers' political positions were found not to be concurrent with previous literature. Butler and Butler (2006) discuss how U.K. newspapers generally side with the conservative party, a right-leaning political party, and Wright (1999) believes many corporations and businessman who own press organizations have a vested interest in viewpoints synchronous to conservative policy, and, therefore, more right-leaning opinions would be carried by the national papers. However, when covering Syrian migrants in this period, findings show newspapers, overall, reported migrants more positively. Notwithstanding, this does not show a swing in political allegiance of newspapers; it could be a reaction to the emotive images of Aylan Kurdi.

Also, a final hypothesis predicted a rise in the number of articles published by U.K. newspapers. This was to empirically ensure there had been a noteworthy change because of the images of the Syrian boy. This was, of course, confirmed. The interest and number of articles concerning Syrian migrants spiked after the incident involving Aylan Kurdi.

Limitations

Despite a keen desire to reduce limitations and flaws in the study, there are, nonetheless, areas where the research could be improved and/or changed to potentially encounter different results. The sample of newspapers was used as it was considered a fair reflection of the U.K. daily, national newspaper industry in previous research

(Drzewiecka et al, 2014). However, U.K. newspapers do not *always* affiliate themselves with a traditional liberal/conservative standpoint; they have autonomy to make decisions on a subject. Therefore, it is not certain that this sample would find a perfect balance of opinions, representative of the entire nation. Also, there was only one newspaper from each classification (right-leaning tabloid, left-leaning tabloid, right-leaning-broadsheet, left-leaning broadsheet). Although, as stated before, these newspapers represented the U.K. press, a larger sample group might have yielded more reliable results.

Newspapers were the sole source of investigation in the study. To better represent U.K. press/news media as a whole, a study that includes other media should be developed. This would give a broader picture of what the U.K. public has access to, and is subjected to through news media.

Terms immigration, immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, Syrian, and Syria were used to collect articles, and only articles which were explicitly talking about Syrian migrants were examined in the study. Although keyword searches such as these are commonplace in content analysis studies, there is still opportunity for articles to have slipped through the net. As the European migration crisis is not exclusively Syrian migrants, many articles did not express they were the sole subject of the report; these were not included in the study. Many articles were not used as, oftentimes articles do not and cannot report citizenship of large groups of migrants. Furthermore, as there are legal differences between the terms "migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker," a more concise and accurate study might look only at migrants. The reason this was not done was because previous research shows these terms are often used interchangeably, blurring the lines between classifications.

Included articles in the sample were printed within a four week window. Although an aim of the study was to determine the differences in reporting before and after the event (this being the reason for the time frame), if it was possible to look at reporting over a more sustained period, more fruitful results might be procured. For example, if another sample of articles was examined from two months after the event, it might show how the images changed how Syrian migrants were reported by the U.K. press beyond the visceral reaction.

Finally, the event occurred in the lead-up to a referendum on whether the U.K. should remain in or leave the E.U. Immigration was a topic at the heart of discourse surrounding the decision, and as the U.K. press exercises political partisanship, it is conceivable that events like this could be used to score political points, which could affect reporting and skew results.

Future research

Through a thorough review of the literature pertaining to this thesis along with hypothesis testing and research question examination, further questions and areas of investigation have arisen. Primarily, as this study only examined newspapers, which some believe to be a dated news medium, an investigation in to the same subject could achieve a more updated, modern result if it were to examine news reports and activity from a variety of media, including modern platforms such as online print and social media.

The study found that there was unequivocally a reaction to these images by the press. Further study should investigate how impactful images such as the ones of Aylan Kurdi have the capacity to impact people and shape opinion and discourse on topics.

Also, a different could study should use images of as a unit of analysis. This would capture how the refugees are presented visually, which is a very powerful medium.

Additionally, as this research employed a content analysis, it is an empirical investigation into *what* was reported about Syrian migrants by U.K. newspapers. However, from these results – thematic framing being favored by politically right-leaning newspapers, for example – we can now pose the question, and investigate, what the implications of these results would be: do politically right-leaning newspapers employ a more thematic frame to support political allegiances? Is valence affected by newspaper style? There should also be in-depth analysis into partisanship of U.K. newspapers and its effects.

Conclusion

This study offers a contemporary insight into how U.K. newspapers covered Syrian migrants in a time-frame surrounding the death, and published images, of Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi. After a thorough review of literature pertaining to immigration, U.K. newspapers, and framing theory, hypotheses and research questions were developed to analyze how U.K. newspapers framed the subjects before and after the event. A quantitative content analysis of four U.K. newspapers was decided upon as the method of study, and after thorough forethought into sampling, coding, and coder training, data were collected. After a high yield of articles, hypotheses and research questions were revisited, and data were analyzed through a series of chi-square tests.

Results showed, overall, episodic frame types were more commonly used than were thematic frames in U.K. newspapers. However, right-leaning newspapers were more likely to employ a thematic frame than were left-leaning newspapers. There was no

significant relation between tabloid and broadsheet in regard to frame type. Also, in relation to frame valence, it was found that left-leaning newspapers reported the Syrian migrants than did right-leaning newspapers, and broadsheets were more likely to cover Syrian migrants more positively than tabloid newspapers.

These results proved fruitful in many ways: we were able to recognize a clear-cut bipartisanship among U.K. newspapers. This was not a groundbreaking discovery, but it does highlight the constant need to understand the implications of newspaper bias, especially in a country where newspapers have a tradition of having significant political clout. Additionally, this evokes new questions such as why are there frame valence differences between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers? Does the right-leaning press intentionally negatively frame migrants negatively, and do U.K. newspapers have an obligation to be more objective when reporting the news.

REFERENCES

Aalberg, T., & Beyer, A. (2015). Human interest framing of irregular immigration:
An empirical study of public preferences for personalized news stories in the
UnitedStates, France, and Norway. *American Behavioral Scientist. 59*(7) 858–875

Aaroe, L. (2011). Investigating frame strength: the case of episodic and thematic frames.
Political Communication, 28(2), 207-226. doi:10.1080/10584609.2011.568041

Altikriti, A., & Al-Mahadin, S. (2015). Muslim 'hate preachers' in British tabloids:
Constructing the British self and the Muslim other. *European Journal of Cultural
Studies, 18*(6), 620-638. doi:10.1177/1367549415572322

Baldacchino, G., & Sammut, C. (2015). The migration crisis: No human is illegal. *The
Round Table, 105*(2), 231-233. doi:10.1080/00358533.2015.1112092

Baker P. (2010). Representations of Islam in British broadsheet and tabloid newspapers
1995-2005. *Journal of Language and Politics. 9*(2), 310–338. doi
10.1075/jlp.9.2.07bak

Baker, P., & McEnery, T. (2005). A corpus-based approach to discourses of refugees and
asylum seekers in UN and newspaper texts. *Journal of Language and Politics*,
4(2), 197-226

Bingham, A. (2012). Reading newspapers: Cultural histories of the popular press in
modern Britain. *History Compass, 10*(2), 140-150. doi:10.1111/j.1478-
0542.2011.00828.x

Boyle, C. (2015, June 11). *British phone-hacking scandal was a low point for Rupert Murdoch*. Retrieved from http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-british-scandal-murdoch-20150611-story.html.

Braziunaite, R. (2011). Them versus us: Human interest frame in the media coverage of prisoner abuse in Iraq by American and British soldiers. *Conference Papers – International Communication Association*, 1-35

Brinson, M. E., & Stohl, M. (2012). Media framing of terrorism: Implications for public opinion, civil liberties, and counterterrorism policies. *Journal of International & Intercultural Communication, 5*(4), 270-290.

Brinson, M., & Stohl, M. (2010). *From 7/7 to 8/10: Media framing of terrorist incidents inthe United States and United Kingdom, The faces of terrorism: Cross disciplinary explorations*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bruce, M. D. (2014). Framing Arab Spring conflict: A visual analysis of coverage on five transnational Arab news channels. *Journal Of Middle East Media, 10*, 101-26.

Butler, D., & Butler, G. (2006). *British political facts since 1979*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cheregi B. F. (2015) The media construction of identity in anti-immigration discourses: The case of Romanian immigrants in Great Britain. *Romanian Journal of Journalism & Communication, 10,* 5-25

Cho, S. H., & Gower, K. K. (2006). Framing effect on the public's response to crisis: Human interest frame and crisis type influencing responsibility and blame. *Public Relations Review, 32*(4), 420-422.

Conway, G. (1997). *Islamophobia, a challenge for us all: Report of the Runnymede Trust Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*. London: Runnymede Trust.

Cranfield, G. A. (1978). The press and society: From Caxton to Northcliffe. London: Longman.

Croucher, M.S., Appenrodt, J., Lauwo, G., & Stojcsics. A. (2013). Intergroup contact and host culture acceptance: A comparative analysis of Western Europe and the United States. Human Communication. *A Publication of the Pacific and Asian Communication Association, 16*(4), 153 - 169.

Croucher, S. (2010) Integrated threat theory and acceptance of immigrant assimilation: An analysis of Muslim immigration in Western Europe. *Communication Monographs 80*(1), 46-62.

De Vreese, C.H., and Boomgaarden, H. (2003). Valenced news frames and public support for the EU. *The European Journal of Communication Research, 28*(4), 361-381.

Dimitrova, D.V. (2006). Episodic frames dominate early coverage of Iraq war in the NYTimes.com. *Newspaper Research Journal, 27*(4), 79-83.

Dimitrova, D.V., Kaid, L. L., Williams, A.P., & Trammell, K. D. (2005). War on the web: The immediate news framing of Gulf War II. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics (10)*1, 22-44

Dong, Q., Kenneth, D., & Collaço, C. (2008). Overcoming ethnocentrism through developing intercultural communication sensitivity and multiculturalism. *Human Communication, 11*(1), 27-38

Drzewiecka, J., Hoops, J., & Thomas, R. (2014) Rescaling the state and disciplining

workers in discourses on E.U. Polish migration in U.K. newspapers. *Critical*

Studies in Media Communication, 31(5), 410-425

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of*

Communication, 43(4), 51-58. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x

El-Ananay, N. (2016). Aylan Kurdi: The human refugee. *Law Critique, 27*, 13-15.

Doi:10.1007/s10978-015-9175-7

Fitzgerald, T. (2015, December, 31). *Kind-hearted Syrian refugees build flood defences*

in their new Northern hometown 'to give something back.' Retrieved from

http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/kind-hearted-syrian-refugees-build-

7099224

Gabrielatos, C. & Baker, P. (2008). Fleeing, sneaking, flooding: A corpus analysis of

discursive constructions of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK Press 1996 -

2005. *Journal of English Linguistics, 36*(1), 5-38

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. New

York: Harper & Row.

Grimm, J. (2015) Tenacity of routine: The absence of geo-ethnic storytelling in

constructing immigration news coverage. *Howard Journal of Communications,*

26(1), 1-20

Gross, K. (2008). Framing persuasive appeals: Episodic and thematic framing, emotional

response, and policy opinion. *Political Psychology, 29*(2), 169-192.

doi:10.1111/j.1467-9221.2008.00622.x

Hackett, R. (1984). Decline of a paradigm? Bias and objectivity in news media studies.

Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 1(3), 229–258.

How many more can Kos take? Holiday makers misery as thousands of boat people from

    Syria and Afghanistan set up migrant camp to turn popular Greek island into

    'disgusting' hellhole. (2015, May, 27). *Daily Mail.* Retrieved from

    http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3099736/Holidaymakers-misery-boat-

    people-Syria-Afghanistan-seeking-asylum-set-migrant-camp-turn-popular-Greek-

    island-Kos-disgusting-hellhole.html

H'Haenens, L. & de Lange, M. (2001). Framing asylum-seekers in Dutch regional

    newspapers. *Media, Culture, & Society, 23*(6), 847-860

Ireri, K. (2014). Four-country newspaper framing of Barack Obama's multiracial identity

    in the 2008 US presidential election. *African Journalism Studies, 35*(3), 23-38.

    doi:10.1080/02560054.2014.955867

Iyengar, S. (1992). How television news affects voters: From setting agendas to defining

    standards. *Notre Dame Journal of Law Ethics & Public Policy, 6*, 33

Iyengar, S. (1994*). Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues.*

    Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Iyengar, S., & Simon, A. (1993) News coverage of the Golf crises and public opinion: A

    study of agenda-setting, priming, and framing. *Communication Research, 20*,

    365-385

Joppke, C. (2009).Limits of integration policy: Britain and her Muslims. *Journal of*

    Ethnic and Migration Studies, 25, 453-72.

Kaid, L.L., Postelnicu, M., Landreville, K.D., Williams, A. P., Hostrup-Larsen, C.,

    Urriste, S., Fernandes, J., Yun, H.J., & Bagley, A. (2004). Campaigning in the

new Europe: News 56 media presentations of the 2004 European Union

Parliamentary elections. In C. HoltzBacha (Ed.), *Europawahl 2004:*

Massenmedien im Europawahlkampf (European Vote 2004: The Mass Media in

the European Election Campaign) Wiesbaden, Germany: VS-Verlag. 228-251

Kim, S., Shanahan, J., & Choi, D. (2012). TV news framing supports societal poverty

solutions. *Newspaper Research Journal, 33*(1), 101-112.

Kingsley, P., & Timur, S. (2015, December 31). How Aylan Kurdi's death changed the

world. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/31/alan-

kurdi-death-canada-refugee-policy-syria-boy-beach-turkey-photo

Klaussen, J. (2008). *The Islamic challenge: Politics and religion in Western Europe*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Knight, M. G. (1999). Getting past the impasse: Framing as a tool for public relations.

Public Relations Review, 25, 381-398.

LeVine, Robert A., and Donald T. Campbell. 1972. *Ethnocentrism*. New York: John

Wiley.

Linton, M. (1995). *Was it the Sun wot won it?* Nuffield College Oxford.

Luther, C. A., & Xiang, Z. (2005). Within the boundaries of politics: News framing of

SARS in China and the United States. *Journalism & Mass Communication*

Quarterly, 82(4), 857-872.

Lynn, N., & Lea, S. (2003). A phantom menace and the new Apartheid: The social

construction of asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom. *Discourse and Society,*

14(4), 425-452.

Maass, A., Corvino, G., & Arcuri, L. (1994). Linguistic intergroup bias and the mass media. *Revuede Psychologie Sociale, 1*, 31–43.

Mastro, D., Tukachinsky, R., Behm-Morawitz, E., & Blecha, E. (2014). News coverage of immigration: The influence of exposure to linguistic bias in the news on consumer's racial/ethnic cognitions. *Communication Quarterly, 62*(2), 135-154

Matthes, J. (2009). What's in a frame? A content analysis of media framing studies in the world's leading communication journals, 1990-2005. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 86*(2), 349-367.

Mccombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 36*(2), 176. doi:10.1086/267990

Mediterranean migrants: Hundreds feared dead after boat capsizes. (19, April 2015). Retrieved November 11, 2016, from http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32371348

Migration Crisis: Migration to Europe explained in graphics. (22, December 15). Retrieved January 18, 2016, from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/europe-34131911

Miller, K. (2005). *Communication Theories: Perspectives, Processes, and Contexts*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill

Neuliep, J. W., & McCroskey, J. C. (1997a). The development of intercultural and inter-ethnic communication apprehension scales. *Communication Research Reports, 14*(2), 145-156

Neuliep, J. W., Chaudoir, M., & McCroskey, J. C. (2001) A cross-cultural comparison of

    ethnocentrism among Japanese and United States college students.

    Communication Research Report, 18(2), 137–146.

Philo, G., & Berry, M. (2004). *Bad News From Israel*. London: Pluto Press.

Polson, E., & Kahle, S. (2010) Limits of a national discourse on transnational

    phenomena. *The International Communication Gazette, 72*(3), 251-268

Richardson, J. (2004). *(Mis)representing Islam the racism and rhetoric of British*

    broadsheet newspapers. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins.

Semetko, H., & Valkenburg, P. (2000), Framing European politics: a content analysis of

    press and television news. *Journal of Communication, 50*, 93-109. doi:

    10.1111/j.1460-2466.2000.tb02843.x

Seymour-Ure, C. (1974). *The political impact of mass media*. London: Constable.

Smith, T. W., & Dempsey, C. R. (I983). The polls: Ethnic social distance and prejudice.

    Public Opinion Quarterly, 47, 584-600

Smith. E. J . (1999) Leadlines may be better than traditional headlines. *Newspaper*

    Research Journal 20(1), 55.

Sparks, C. (2006). Contradictions in capitalist media practices. *In Marxism and*

    communication studies: The point is to change it. New York: Peter Lang. 111-132

Springer, S. A., & Harwood, J. (2014). The influence of episodic and thematic frames on

    policy and group attitudes: Mediational analysis. *Human Communication*

    Research, 41(2), 226-244. doi:10.1111/hcre.12045

Sumner, W. G. (1906) Folkways. Boston, MA: Ginn.

"Syrias Refugee Crisis in Numbers" (2015). Amnestyorg. Retrieved 12 February, 2016, from https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/09/syrias-refugee-crisis-in-numbers/

Tankard, James W. (2001) 'The Empirical Approach to the Study of Media Framing', 95-106 in S.D. Reese, O.H. Gandy and A.E. Grant. *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Tetteh, D.A. & King, J.M. (2011). Newspaper coverage of the U.S. healthcare reform debate: A content analysis. *Business Research Yearbook, 18*. 503-510. Retrieved from http://blue.utb.edu/lfalk/BRY2011v2.pdf

Lee, A. (2015, September 15). *Migrant crisis: The truth about the boy on the beach Aylan Kurdi.*

http://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/604590/Migrant-crisis-the-truth-about-the-boy-the-beach-Aylan-Kurdi

Turan, A.H., Çolakoğlu, S., and Çolakoğlu, B.E. (2009). Perceptional differences of international news: Western media influence on non-Western media, *China Media Research, 5*(2), 55-63.

Vanderbush, W., & Klak, T. (1996). Covering Latin America: The exclusive discourse of the summit of the Americas (as viewed through The New York Times). *Third World Quarterly, 17*(3), 537–55.

Vis, F., & Goriunova, O. (2015). *The Iconic Image on Social Media: A Rapid Research Response to the Death of Aylan Kurdi**

Vreese, C. H. (2005). News framing: Theory and typology. *Information Design Journal, 13*(1), 51-62. doi:10.1075/idjdd.13.1.06vre

Weise, K., Sink, J., Merrill, D., Abu-Nasr, D., Cerni, B., Filipovic, G., & Penz, B. (2015). The U.S. is taking on larger numbers of Syrian refugees from the crisis sweeping through the Middle East and Europe. The costs are high, and there are security concerns. But the influx has potential benefits as well. *Business Week,* (4444), 26-27.

Wilks-Heeg, S., Blick, A., & Crone, S. (2013, December 21). The political affiliations of the UK's national newspapers have shifted, but there is again a heavy Tory predominance. (Web log post). Retrieved November 11, 2016, from http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/the-political-affiliations-of-the-uks-national-newspapers-have-shifted-but-there-is-again-a-heavy-tory-predominance/

Wimmer, R. & Dominick, J. (1991). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction.* (3rd ed.). Belmont, California: Wadsworth.

Wright, A. (2000). *The British political process: An introduction*. London: Routledge.

Zúñiga, H., Correa, T., & Valenzuela, S. (2012). Selective exposure to cable news and immigration in the U.S.: The relationship between FOX news, CNN, and attitudes toward Mexican immigrants. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media 56*(4), 597-615.

APPENDIX

Coding Scheme

Unit of analysis:

The purpose of the study is to examine articles in the Daily Mail, The Guardian, The Telegraph, and The Mirror, which pertained to Syrian migrants. To retrieve articles, the words "immigration, immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, Syrian, and Syria," were entered into the Lexis-Nexis database. Articles which didn't directly discuss Syrian migrants were excluded.

Variables

Independent:

Newspaper: 0 – the Daily Mail; 1 – The Times; 3 – The Mirror; 4 – The Guardian

Publication date: 0 – before event; 1 – after event

Political leaning: 0 – left-leaning-; 1 – right-leaning

Newspaper style: 0 – tabloid; 1 – broadsheet

Dependant:

Framing: 0 – thematic; 1 – episodic; 2 – unclear

Valence: 0 positive; 1 – negative; 2 - neutral

To help answer the research questions/hypotheses two trained coders coded the text for these items. Following this, the accumulation across categories will be compared. As some of the terms which are being coded are fairly subjective, operational definitions will be given. Operational definitions:

Framing: frames which are references to isolated news events, focusing on discrete cases or episodes will be coded as episodic. For example, "The truth about the boy on the beach Aylan Kurdi," was coded as episodic. Contrastingly, thematic frames provide broader societal context to issues and events. Therefore, articles which provided context, were coded as thematic. For example, "How Aylan Kurdi's death changed the world," was coded as thematic. Any articles in which a dominant frame cannot be discerned, will be coded as unclear.

Valence: articles describing the Syrian migrants as victims, a group in need of aid, or describing Britain/Europe as having a duty to help were coded as positive. "Kind-hearted Syrian refugees build flood defences in their new Northern hometown 'to give something back,'" would, therefore, be coded as positive. Articles which described them as problematic, a burden, or a threat to Europe and British borders or society will be coded as negative. For example, "How many more can Kos take? Holidaymakers misery as thousands of boat people from Syria and Afghanistan set up migrant camp to turn popular Greek island into 'disgusting' hellhole," was coded as negative. Additionally, in line with previous valence studies, there was an additional category: neutral. These were articles which presented both positive and negative descriptions of the Syrian migrants