

SHAPING OF THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON REFUGEES IN SOCIAL MEDIA: “REFUGEES WELCOME LITHUANIA”

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Abstract

Social media websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, are starting to become places, where people present and evaluate various events in the world: terrorist attacks in London, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels. What is more, these websites influence values of their users and readers. Technologies allow people to exchange views at the very moment of the event. The time zone, area, or other physical aspects of the platform participants do not matter. However, this ability might cause negative impact on the discussed social groups. The aim of this article – to analyse the discourse formation in media regarding refugees’ integration and humanitarian crisis in Europe. The goals of this study are: to figure out how the practices of public participation evidences in the context of communication through social media; to form a methodology according to up-to-date communicational concepts and analyse how the images of refugees are formed in social media; to reveal the main actors, involved in the formation of the discourse on refugees in Lithuania, by analysing the content in Facebook pages “Priimsiu pabėgėlių” (eng. “Refugees Welcome”) and “Visuomeninis komitetas prieš priverstinę imigraciją” (eng. “Public Committee against Forced Immigration”).

Keywords: refugees, asylum seekers, terrorism, discourse, social media, facebook, “refugees welcome”, “public committee against forced immigration”.

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1. Introduction

There are still ongoing debates in Europe how to deal with immigrants, who are constantly coming from Asia and Africa. The European Migrant Crisis or the European Refugee Crisis [1] is the greatest humanitarian crisis over the last 60 years. Harsh living conditions and questionable legal status of refugees in countries like Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, etc. encouraged Syrians to look for shelter in Europe [2]. However, many countries were inhospitable for refuge seekers. For past few years the European Refugee Crisis has become one of the most complicated issues in the world, thus leading to create campaigns such as “Refugees Welcome“. Campaigns create various initiatives, that help refugees in full, and what is more, they educate society about integration of refugees.

The photograph of Alan Kurdi has become the leitmotif to the situation of Syrian people and it encourages EU citizens to take serious political initiative in solving this European Refugee Crisis [3]. D. Courpasson (2016) [4] claims that “Civilised indifference“ prevents users to click on links related with issues about refugees, it protects them from all information, and social media leaves people behind the closed curtain.

The main problem of the research is that refugees in the media are often portrayed as a threat for the existent status quo. Some subjective, politically engaged statements in the social media do not reflect reality, but, on the contrary, promote marginalization, hatred and violence in society. Visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers is used not only to strengthen negative attitudes in order to justify the policy of borders reinforcement, but also inciting hatred or confrontation between members of society [5] by representing refugees as unable to speak, helpless and passive [6]. This tendency promotes the idea that host society of refugees takes scouting position with exclusive rights, while refugees are considered as the object which requires the supervision [7, 8]. It could be assumed that this pattern will strengthen the demarcation between “we” and “they”.

The number of refugees in Italy remains constant (in comparison with 2015): According to the data, taken on August 2016, there are 115,000 refugees and 116,000 migrants in Italy. During 8 months, 281,740 refugees tried to move to Europe. However, 4,176 of them are thought to be dead due to unsuccessful passage through the Mediterranean Sea [9]. This proves that Mediterranean

Sea is the most dangerous passage of all. In 2016, 425 refugees made requests for asylum in Lithuania, unfortunately only 181 permissions were given. However, on April 2017, 73 requests were submitted, but only 30 were given [10]. According to regulations of European Union, Lithuania is obliged to take 1,105 refugees during two-year period. Unfortunately, this process takes time. The media and other sources of information create negative opinion about refugees in Lithuania. However, there is not much research related to how social media helps to form the image of refugees.

The quantitative and qualitative research methods are used in order to analyse the content of *Facebook* pages, to analyse the formation of refugee discourse in Lithuania, to compare how various representations affect social discourse, and to set refugees' self-representational possibilities. The Qualitative content analysis is based on five categories of discourse **Referential / Nomination; Predication, Argumentation; Perspectivization; Intensification / Mitigation** described by Austrian linguist Ruth Wodak [11].

Although the role of media and the extreme right-wing groups by promoting negative attitudes in society have been widely debated, not much attention has been paid to the role of social media in shaping individuals' attitudes, creating and maintaining negative images of refugees in Europe. Therefore this study deconstructs the representation of refugees, reveals the role of socio-cultural context, and makes an assumption that Facebook users are involved in the stigmatization of refugees or even Islamophobic discourse.

Results of the researches show that these minority groups are systematically discriminated and considered as a threat to the security and economy of the country. Host societies often use the "burden" metaphor in order to describe Syrian refugees in a negative way and to emphasize that it is a problem affecting economy, environment and society [12]. The flow of violent actions directed towards refugees has encouraged discussions about the violence of right-wing extremists. Recently xenophobic attacks against refugees in Germany led to the political and academic debate on causes and consequences of right-wing violence [13], as well as the issue of refugees' integration in Western society.

After the beginning of the Syrian civil war and a huge flow of refugees in Europe since 2011 most studies [14, 15] confirmed that negative attitudes towards refugees has become a prominent feature in many Western countries, whereas refugees are condemned, demonized and considered as the main object of discrimination. Research shows that their identity remains highly differentiated and controversial, which is related to the politics of labelling [16]. Currently, refugees are not only the main focus of the media but also the main players, which means that their identity is closely linked to different forms of representation.

Many scientists pay attention to the specifics of the news media [17, 18] but mainly focus on traditional media, while little researches are connected to the analysis of social media. It is important that recent "news" are understood in a broad sense including not only news media and professional journalism but also alternative platforms such as social networking websites in order to spread the news. Due to social media the concept of the main players is also changing, whereas citizens are involved, contrarily traditional media, where professional journalists are participating in the creation of media product and dissemination of news stories.

[19] studies focus on social media, which enables a consumer to provide photos, videos or to share news icon. This kind of news media is feeding, covering and effectively involving society. In addition, the Internet access has become extremely easy, and selection of news – very difficult since the browsing and communication moved to mobile phones.

The analysis of public discourse in social media (its interactivity, as well as quality) which transforms media capabilities, news dissemination and public engagement, change the power between different actors and the balance of ideological provisions is still neglected in the communication and other social sciences. Expert of public communication [20] argues that the picture speaks for itself because of the opportunities provided by new technologies – the pictograms or news icons become an integral part of everyday life in society. The picture of 3 year old boy from Syria Alan Kurdi who was found dead in the coastline is described as one of the popular images. The image has shocked many users and due to social media has travelled all over the world. Such internet constructions (photos, videos) are low-controlled and unpredictable, since it includes more actors, various media platforms and have a wider geographical spread.

The amount of photos and videos also proves that the depiction of death as a result of border crossing is rarely published in the media, as well as the analysis of such representation and the potential impact for politics are ignored in the literature regarding European migrant crisis [21]. It is likely that the portrayal of refugees may lead to a sense of compassion or outrage, while the anonymity could reduce the chances of audience consolidation with the events or tragedy.

Analyzing researches, carried out by foreign authors, it is important to highlight such communication scholars as [22] and her publication “Refugee Integration and Social Media: a Local and Experiential Perspective”. The author states that the refugee crisis has encouraged the development of mobile applications in order to solve the issue of refugee integration. The results showed that it was particularly important in order to improve linguistic and cultural competences. The role of government, the host society and other institutions is also important on purpose to identify opportunities offered by new media in the context of refugees’ integration. New challenges appear because social media provides more opportunities, enlightening and effectively engaging the public.

Researches on the representation of refugees related to the new communication technologies, as well as social media in the context of the humanitarian crisis in Europe are not developed in the field of social sciences in Lithuania. Therefore it is assumed that the analysis of social networking websites can be useful for explaining the communication models of online initiatives and their opportunities for shaping attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers in the society.

It is recognized that refugees suffer from discrimination in Lithuanian labor market since employers are not inclined to employ a foreigner who have been granted by temporary protected or refugee status, whereas the attitudes towards refugees are very negative, dominating hatred or xenophobia [23]. Media and other information technologies contribute to the negative attitudes toward refugees in the Lithuanian society but not many studies related to images of refugees formed by social media, as well as opportunities of public discourse in social networking websites and problems of refugee integration while analyzing such social initiatives as “Priimsiu pabėgėlių” (eng. “Refugees Welcome”) and “Visuomeninis komitetas prieš priverstinę imigraciją” (eng. “Public Committee against Forced Immigration”) are found.

2. Aim of research

The aim of this research is to analyse the discourse formation in media regarding refugees’ integration and humanitarian crisis in Europe. The goals of the study are: to figure out how the practices of public participation evidences in the context of communication through social media; to form a methodology according to up-to-date communicational concepts and analyse how the images of refugees are formed in social media; to reveal the main actors, involved in the formation of the discourse on refugees in Lithuania, by analysing the content in Facebook pages “Priimsiu pabėgėlių” (eng. “Refugees Welcome”) and “Visuomeninis komitetas prieš priverstinę imigraciją” (eng. “Public Committee against Forced Immigration”).

3. Materials and Methods

The Representation of Refugees in Social Media

The quantitative research method is used to analyse the content on social platforms. This is the reason why it is done before the qualitative analysis. The goals of the quantitative analysis – to compare and find out how the images of refugees are presented in completely different *Facebook* pages “Priimsiu pabėgėlių” (eng. “Refugees Welcome”) and “Visuomeninis komitetas prieš priverstinę imigraciją” (eng. “Public Committee against Forced Immigration”) and how those images affect opinions of users. Quantitative and qualitative research methods are applied to the content of these social pages. The comparison of the content in both *Facebook* pages allows to draw out differences and similarities.

Quantitative research: the content in social websites is analysed according to given quantitative criteria:

- The number of wall posts (positive, negative, or neutral retotics);
- The text as the main or additional information;
- The number of comments;

- How many times like or share buttons were pressed;
- The number of photos, videos, and links.

Qualitative research: the content in social websites is analysed according to given qualitative criteria:

- Rhetorics of wall posts and comments;
- Characteristics of photos, videos (visual aspect).

This criterion is analysed according to five categories of discourse analysis described by R. Wodak [11]: Referential / Nomination; Predication; Argumentation; Perspectivization; Intensification / Mitigation ([24] appendix 1). This criterion is common to all texts but it has a set of theoretical points that are designed to analyse empirical details in communication, such as speech or text elements. According to these sets, text and visual information is formed, and they allow to get deeper insights out of information and then to interpret it.

Period of the research: 2 years (December of 2015–January 2018). The first family of Iraqi refugees was moved to Lithuania on December 2015 [25]. According to the agreement with European Union, Lithuania had to accept 1105 refugees till September 2017 [26]. According to SADM, 70 % of 468 refugee seekers left Lithuania to seek a better place for their refuge [27].

It is thought, that results of this research are influenced by international events such as terrorist attacks near Paris national stadium and concert hall in 2015 (130 victims) [28]; explosions in Brussels metro and airport in 2016 (32 victims) [29]; tragedy of Nice in 2016 (84 victims) [30]; attack in Berlin Christmas fair on December 2016 (12 victims) [30]; attack in London on July 2017 (17 victims) [32]; attack in Barcelona on August 2017 (13 victims) [33].

All above mentioned attacks, which happened during the duration of the research and were widely discussed among Lithuanian media, have suggested a hypothesis that they made negative impression on Lithuanians about refugees and their representation in *Facebook*.

Research platform: *Facebook* was one of the most popular social websites in the world in 2017. There are over 2,2 billion active users [34]. There are 1,4 million *Facebook* accounts in Lithuania – 1,1 million were active [35]. It is thought that in 2022, there will be more than 1,81 million active users in Lithuania [34]. However, in Lithuania the other social media website *Twitter* is not as popular as *Facebook* – there are only 1000 active users [36]. In Estonia and Latvia, only 600,000 people use *Facebook* [35].

Taking into account all presented data, *Facebook* has the largest audience in Lithuania and has more effective communication than other social media websites. The analysed data are gathered according to criteria listed below:

1. The frequency of keyword “pabėgėlis” (eng. refugee);
2. The number of likes on *Facebook* pages;
3. The accessibility of *Facebook* pages (content restrictions):
 3. 1. Language. Content (wall posts) of *Facebook* pages is in Lithuanian, English, or Russian;
 3. 2. Analogue. When choosing *Facebook* pages, keyword “pabėgėlis” is accompanied with another word “imigracija” (eng. immigration);
4. Additional criteria. The number of wall posts, likes and shares in *Facebook* pages.

Using the mentioned criteria, some pages of *Facebook* are taken for deeper analysis. These pages are created with the reference to humanitarian European Crisis and refugee issues in Lithuania.

1. “Priimsiu pabėgėlių” (eng. “Refugees Welcome”) [37], all content is in Lithuanian; high popularity (3,762 likes);
2. “Visuomeninis komitetas prieš priverstinę imigraciją” (eng. “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” [38], all content is in Lithuanian; high popularity (4,172 likes).

4. Research Results

Results of Quantitative Content Analysis in Social Website *Facebook*

After performing the quantitative and collective computer analysis, texts are grouped to 5 main categories: photos; videos; average number of comments; likes, and shares. The quantitative

analysis allowed to set common aspects of rhetoric in *Facebook* pages “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ and “Refugees Welcome“.

The 200 newest posts (100 posts from each page) have a positive, negative, and neutral tone of information (Fig. 1). 81 posts (out of 200) have negative aspects towards refugees. 79 posts (out of 100) have negative aspects in *Facebook* page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” contrary to 85 (out of 100) posts with a positive aspect in “Refugees Welcome“. To sum up, negative information can influence the discourse on refugees and create the image of refugee as a threat.

It is thought that repetitive words, collocations might be the link to particular rhetoric, e. g. creating anti-immigration provisions in the context of accepting refugees. The quantitative and computational analysis allowed to classify posts to the main groups (categories) and to find main repetitive words and collocations. This led to the analysis of common aspects of rhetoric that form positive and negative opinions towards refugees and asylum seekers. Because of this, the quantitative analysis of the text content shows the frequency of 18 words and their combinations in photos, shares, and comments (Fig. 2).

According to the results of the quantitative analysis in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, words “teroristas“ (eng. terrorist) (102 times in photos, comments, and links), “nusikaltėlis“ (criminal) (85 times), “musulmonas“ (eng. muslim) (72 times), and “prievarautojas“ (eng. rapist) (65 times) are found. This renders the impression that refugees are a threat. Words such as “imigrantas“ (eng. immigrant) (62 times) and “našta“ (eng. burden) (59 times) are often used with collocation “pašalpų prašytojas“ (eng. beggar) (45 times). Words such as “ekonominis migrantas“ (eng. economic migrant) (32 times) or “kultūriniai skirtumai“ (eng. cultural differences) (26 times) are not used as widely as previously mentioned examples. To sum up, the formation of the discourse depends on certain expressions that might lead to the hostility of Lithuanians or forcing anger towards refugees in Lithuania.

The results of the quantitative analysis revealed that words such as “pabėgėlis“ (eng. refugee) (98 times), “auka“ (eng. victim) (92 times), “pagalba“ (eng. help) (69 times) and collocation “preiglėsčio ieškotojas“ (eng. asylum seeker) are widely used in posts of page “Refugees Welcome“. On the other hand, words and collocations such as “integracija“ (eng. Integration) (59 times), “tolerancija“ (eng. tolerance) (55 times), “Sirijos piliečiai“ (eng. Syrian citizens) (28 times), “pabėgėlių vaikai“ (eng. children of refugees) (21 times), and “priimsiu pabėgėlių“ (eng. refugees welcome) (19 times) are used more in photos, comments, and shares than in posts. A discourse like this creates less tense environment for page followers towards refugees, it puts an emphasis to help refugees’ need. However, more negativity is found in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, it presents a negative meaning of the word “auka“ (eng. victim).

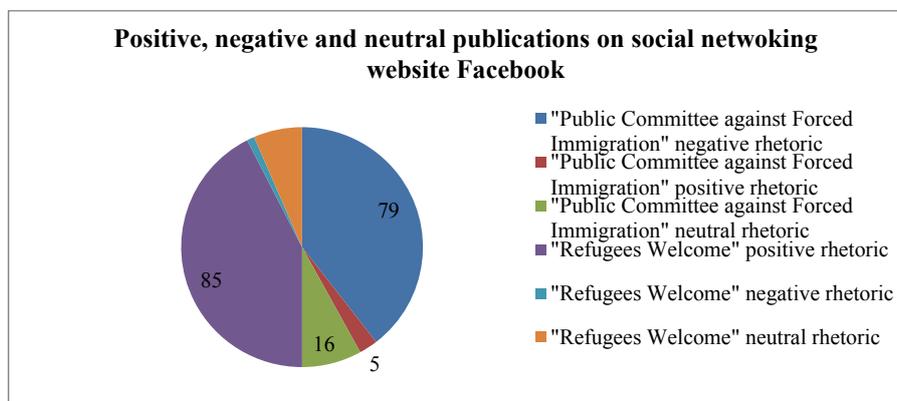


Fig. 1. Publications that have positive, negative or neutral rhetoric on social networking website *Facebook*.

Source: made by the author according to the data gathered during the quantitative research

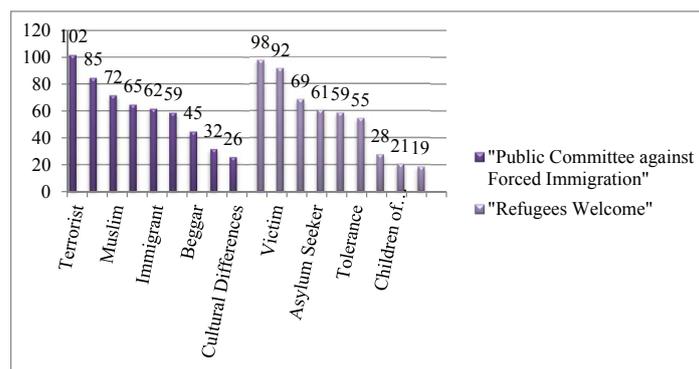


Fig. 2. The frequency of words, combinations of words in *Facebook* pages.

Source: made by the author according to the data gathered during the quantitative research

The results of the quantitative research lead to the qualitative research. Taking into account all quantitative content analysis data, the qualitative content analysis is based on 2 main categories in *Facebook* pages

- 1) Refugee as a victim;
- 2) Refugee as a threat.

There are some tendencies that contribute to the formation of the refugee discourse in *Facebook* pages and can influence a negative opinion about migration in society.

Results of Qualitative Content Analysis in Social Website *Facebook*

This chapter presents results of the qualitative content analysis. 25 posts from two different pages “Refugees Welcome“ and “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ are analysed according to criteria presented by R. Wodak (2015) **Referential / Nomination; Predication; Argumentation; Perspectivization; Intensification / Mitigation** (annex 1) [24].

According to the content analysis of *Facebook* page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, refugee is considered as a threat. The main stress of the topic goes to the terrorist attacks and how refugees are unwilling to integrate to the accepting society, while posts in the page “Refugees Welcome“ are positive. Many posts state that fear during humanitarian European crisis is unreasonable.

The portrayal of refugees as a threat

Referential / Nomination

Refugees are considered to be terrorists or rapists in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“. This is the reason why they are put to the category of criminals. The topic of mostly shared posts is about refugees who committed crimes: 14 videos (out of 20) are related with refugees’ violence in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, etc. The comment below one shared post of violence in Germany “Disrespect and ungratefulness – these two words perfectly describe the behaviour of refugees. Don’t be fooled, good hearted people: they do not respect us and think us as a stupid. How else it could be if all we do is just warn and say *don’t do it* after all these crimes. Sometimes refugees don’t understand even this. They are given shelter, food, clothes, money” ([24] example. 1) [38].

Refugees are shown not only as criminals, but also as representatives of different culture. It is noted that newcomers have different values that are usually not comparable with European. This is the reason why newcomers from the East are usually called *the wild ones* ([24] example. 2). The newcomers from the East are indicated as *the ones with different religion* in 29 posts – this gives the hint that they are Muslims. The quote under one shared article titled “Europe will die like Constantinople if conquered by Islam”: “Yes, integration is gone. It is impossible to integrate millions of people. Muslim migrants wanted to keep their roots and traditions meanwhile discarding the culture and traditions of the country where they are. There are people who successfully integrated into society, unfortunately, not many“ ([24] example 3). However, there are a lot of offensive words

in comments such as “barbarians, cheaters“ ([24] example 4), “monkeys“ ([24] example 5), “Alibaba and Muslim freaks“ ([24] example 6). Words such as “jihadists and Islamists“ are grouped to categories of criminals and people with different religion.

The presentation of such categories is the form of social categorisation dichotomy – it is something between *us* and *them*. People usually see the inner group of people (*us*) more positive than outsiders (*them*). Society values the inner group of people more than the outside one [39]. This happens because of long-term cultural and social relations and when the conflict between the inner and the outer group of people (outsiders) appears, then perception of an outsider turns into negative. Conflict interactions between two above mentioned groups are often characterized with negative emotions towards outsiders [40]. Pronouns such as “they, their, that people“ are widely used in comments, for example “Come today, so they won’t come tomorrow“ ([24] example 7). Comments like these can be the result of pre-justice or discrimination, because one person is considered as a whole minority (refugees) and one refugee is described with negativity that is later assigned to all groups of refugees.

Predication

Refugees are depicted as a threat in the accepting country because of their representation in social media. Their actions are described as sinister and crimes such as terrorist attacks or rapes are emphasised. As an example, one picture (**Fig. 3**) [41] shows the protest and the text below it: “This is how German police treats Muslim gangs. This is how German police treats patriots who are against Muslim gangs“. Police does not take any actions against refugees’ crimes. Picture shows policemen trying to suppress the protest against refugees. However, Germany still has a lot of crimes related with immigrants.



Fig. 3. How the German police treat Muslim rape gang

The qualitative content analysis revealed that the discourse of terrorism dominates in most posts. In some posts, it is mentioned that terrorism comes along with immigrants, for example, “Explosions in Paris are terrible but this is what happens, when you let outsiders in. France, like many West European countries, has an illusion to expand human rights, but this illusion makes people blind to what is happening in reality. It is reasonable to say that explosions in Paris were not the last. Some people say explosions will come to Germany even though immigrants (as well as terrorists) were greeted with funfairs. / Each Muslim must talk with his conscience. / Explosions in Paris, restrictions of free press and other forms of terrorism in the name of Allah, yes, Muslims are for actions like this” ([24] example 8). In this case terrorism is related with religion because, as written in posts, comments, or shares, it is “attack of Jihadists“. Jihad is the holy war against the real or imaginary evil [42]. The jihad warrior should be called *mujahid*, not the Jihadist. “Prime minister of Poland Beata Śzydło claims that Warsaw will not accept refugees assigned by EU after seeing terrorist attacks of Jihadists which killed 31 people <...>“

([24] example 9). Lithuania is encouraged to decide not in favour of immigrants and 227 users of *Facebook* support this idea.

The threat of terrorism is emphasised in comments as well. Some comments “reveal“ the main intention of refugees – the destruction of Europe. For example, “It is not enough just to destroy mosques. We need to stop accepting Muslims when they tell no surname or name. This is a complete destruction of Europe but it seems no one is taking any actions against it“ ([24] example 10). Other descriptions of refugees are found in comments: *Islamists, fanatics, religion fundamentalists* ([24] example 11). These words are used to show that refugees want to destroy not only Germany but the whole Europe. To sum up the analysis of the predication, fear and threat is created when refugees are described as criminals (rapists, terrorists), the representatives of other religion. As it is presented, the whole Europe is in danger because the main goal of refugees is the destruction of Europe.

Argumentation

The analysis of the discourse in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ provided information that negative aspects related with crimes are based on statistics, examples of other countries or predictable arguments about possible threat to Europe as well as to Lithuania.

In order to claim refugee as a threat, statistics is provided (**Fig. 4**) [43]: Since Muslims are blamed for terrorist attacks, the picture shows different percentage of Muslims in different European cities. Text below: “Europe after terrorist attacks in Paris. 10 % of Muslims in Berlin, 20 % of Muslims in Brussels, 15 % of Muslims in Paris, 0,1 % of Muslims in Warsaw”. There are 4 different photos in the background and 3 of them are related with terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, and Berlin. To be precise, terrorist attack in Paris nearby national stadium and concert hall in 2015; explosions in Brussels airport and metro in 2016; terrorist attack in Berlin’s Christmas fair in 2016. There are plenty of security guards who are going to protect civilians from a new wave of terrorist attack. In contrast, the fourth photo is depicting calm and relaxing Christmas fair in Warsaw. The hint behind all photos – terrorist attacks are directly related with the number of Muslims in the biggest capitals of Europe – there are no terrorist attack in Warsaw because the number of Muslims reaches only 0,1 %. Information given in posts of *Facebook* page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ is based on statistics carried out in Sweden and possible outcome: “The parliament of Sweden decided to change Sweden from homogeneous to multicultural country in 1975. After 40 years of multiculturalism, the outcome was clear – the rate of violent crimes increased by 300 %“ ([24] example 12). It is important to note that this survey was carried out by the Gatestone institute which is famous for support of right-wing parties and anti-Muslim ideas in the West. Because of this, the provided data might reflect only a subjective opinion and be in favour of anti-immigration.



Fig. 4. Europe after the terror attacks in Paris

Main ideas and information are based not only on statistics but also on the experience of other countries. Terrorist attacks in countries, which are multicultural, are the main topic point in the posts. One photo shows how summer was in Hungary, while other – in Germany. Two photos perfectly depict the differences between the country which is for and which is against refugees. Hungary chooses not to accept refugees according to EU shelter regulations, while Germany ac-

cepts refugees with open arms “Refugees Welcome“. In contrast, another two photos show how New Year is celebrated in Hungary and in Germany: Happy New Years feast in Hungary and terrorist attacks, rape in Germany ([24] example 13). According to the argumentation, the analysis of the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, there is a hidden meaning discourse “Refugees Welcome“. Events such as terrorist attacks, rapes, feeling of insecurity in society are related with campaign “Refugees Welcome“ which was created on September 2015 in Germany. This is the reason why some words in photos gives the hint that the campaign “Refugees Welcome“ is the result of all terrorist attacks ([24] example 14). One example ([24] example 15) “They deserve what they get“ goes along with photo of armed terrorists standing in front of “Sveiki atvykę, pabėgėliai!“ followers.

The risk of Islamism is also indicated in one photo of the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ – people are invited to join the campaign “International campaign against forceful immigration and Islamisation of Europe“ ([24] example 16). Arguments related with Islamisation are not based on any statistics or data, there are no references that link arguments with particular data. To sum up, comments are not based on any proven facts.

Perspectivization

The image of refugee as a threat is formed by people who are against refugee acceptance and politicians who are not in favour of refugee migration. All given examples contain anti-refugee rhetoric which emphasises that refugees should “behave” in Lithuania.

Photos, videos and shares are based not only on the opinion of Lithuanian people and government but as well as opinions of foreign leaders or their actions against refugees. However, comments are following the ideas of the right-wing party ideology. For example, the text below a share of Hungarian prime minister’s V. Orban decisions “Hungary is a safer place. It is safer there because they do not agree with EU laws. Hungary has Victor Orban, who is not afraid to tell that the present amount of Muslims in Europe threatens its safety and religion” ([24] example 17). It gives a hint – Lithuania is passive about protecting its identity and religion. It is Hungary that is the real example how to build borders against refugees.

The discourse of “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ actively encourages not to follow asylum rules, offered by EU. French minister of internal affairs Bernard Cazeneuve speaks up for strengthening border control because “The level of terrorism threat is extremely high” ([24] example 18). The Prime Minister of Poland also rejected the request of EU to accept refugees ([24] example 19). The source idea of refugee as a threat comes along not only from quotations of foreign leaders (it is usually right-wing politicians) but as well as actions of Lithuanian politicians. For example, Lithuanian politicians who wanted to make an amendment for “About the legal status of foreigners” are condemned because this might be the result of the growth of terrorist in Lithuania <...> quote “The ones who voted for this amendment probably haven’t read the amendment itself. Nation cannot understand what representatives of country just did...” ([24] example 20). The threat is felt in most of posts constantly mentioning future chaos, Muslim countries, threat of Islamism to Lithuania and future terrorist attacks.

Refugees themselves are not shown in videos but page followers quite often post what damage refugees caused to the country – followers always emphasise terrorist attacks, crimes, demonstrations. Given the fact that refugees do not speak for themselves in video, this gives an impression that refugees cannot express their opinion; they stay as passive viewers or mute. All things considered, there are two types of people who influence the discourse, the way that society sees refugees: the first – other nations’ leaders who oppose the EU idea to accept refugees; the second – Lithuanian politicians and other powerful people who see the need of implementation of the EU shelter initiative and forceful immigration.

Intensification / Mitigation

The qualitative analysis of the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ also gives a hint of refugees as a threat. Videos contain shocking images of apparent terrorist crimes of refugees or immigrants. The main goal of these videos is to show how cruel people can be and prevent refugees and immigrants coming to Europe, as it is said “Europe will fall down like Constantinople if Islam conquers there” ([24] example 3). The hidden meaning of the given

example is present. According to the example, Europe belongs to ethnical European people so migrants and refugees should be deported. Videos of terrorist attacks in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands are posted in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, even though these countries are called the refugee accepting societies ([24] example 21). Exclamation marks are used to put an emphasis on the main facts related with the number of refugees coming to the country. This number is the most important data in order to indicate the results and consequences of crimes.

The negative language is emphasised by repeating the same sentence / word twice or more. Example 22 [24] gives a photo with one foreigner and text “I WANT to have your house, your woman, your country“. The repetitive pronoun “your” creates a feeling of threat that newcomers are planning to take over what does not belong to them. Capitalised words “I WANT” put the stress on negative intentions of refugees. Moreover, capitalised words refer to semiotics that gives more negative meaning to traditional meaning of the word. What is more, capitalised words and sentences are also found in comments: “WE DON’T STAND A CHANGE IN FRONT OF THEM. News ALREADY mentioned that they ALREADY raped a woman. It is just a beginning” ([24] example 23). The same message is repeated couple times in order to put an emphasis on refugee crimes against a German woman. The last sentence of the comment is considered as a warning because it is thought that refugees will escalate with their actions in the future.

The qualitative analysis of the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ proves that there is an alternative discourse that opposes the idea of refugees as a threat. This alternative discourse adds up to the assurance category. One of the page followers (not a Lithuanian) comments “I am one of those non-Lithuanians who does not belong in Lithuania according to the law. But where did I make a mistake? Learning Lithuanian? Working in Lithuania and not wanting to go back to England? Taking charities’ initiative for Lithuania?” ([24] example 24). This comment comes along with a photo with the title “Lithuania – for Lithuanians“. The title proves that not all refugees are related with crimes, have lack of desire to integrate, (meaning, learning the language or having a job). Moreover, some followers of the page comments that immigrants should fear more than Lithuanians – Lithuanians are tolerant but only to certain extent. Another point to add, some followers mention that Lithuanians are immigrants in other countries too and described how Lithuanians would feel if local people engage in racism, hate, xenophobic ideas towards them. However, comments and posts related with the alternative discourse do not make most part of discourse.

To sum up the qualitative analysis of *Facebook* page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ refugee as a threat, the peculiarities of refugees which are assigned by other people create negative opinion of refugees. These opinions draw the strict line between locals and outsiders. According to the analysis, the local ones who support refugees or ideas of EU shelter directives are the “enemy of the nation“. Refugees are presented as a threat to the nation and to local people because of their violence, crime, rapes, and terrorist attacks. The reason of all violence stays inside of refugees’ religion and culture.

The portrayal of refugees as victims

The qualitative content analysis of Facebook page “Refugees Welcome“ shows that refugees are considered as a victim. In contrast with the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, “Refugees Welcome“ tries to deny the opinion of refugees as a burden or beggars. This page is considered to be an alternative discourse that claims refugees should not be condemned and should be suitable for Lithuanian society. Thus, the emphasis of the page “Refugees Welcome“ discourse is on helplessness of refugees and possible benefits that they can bring to an accepting society.

Referential / Nomination

Posts, comments, shares of the page “Refugees Welcome“ present refugees as people who endured **physical and mental hardships** and who need psychological help. That is the reason why refugees are put to a vulnerable category. There are a few posts that mention psychological traumas of refugees “German guild of psychotherapists claims that at least a half of refugees, who reached Germany, is suffering from psychological traumas in their home countries and/or trips to Europe.

1 out of 5 children has post-traumatic syndrome (PPS) <...>” ([24] example 25). Despite the fact that the post describes events in Germany, it is considered that urgent psychological help is necessary for all refugees.

In order to deny the stereotype of refugee as a beggar or economic migrant, refugees are described as people of working age who are searching for a new job in an accepting country but still remains as unemployed in the page “Refugees Welcome“. Example “<...> It is not difficult to help. Refugees are lacking so little right now. Communicate with them. Help them check job opportunities, find / help them to find the accommodation. Show our city. Smile. Accept them in the same way you would have liked our grandparents and grand-grandparents would be accepted by neighbour countries from persecution” (Fig. 5) [44]. This photo depicts that **not all refugees are related with crimes**. The text below the share of the video “Just a refugee or a terrorist? What do you choose to see? The authors of this video are the last year students of Westerdals Oslo ACT school. They perfectly showed how stereotypes in society make an obstacle for refugee integration” ([24] example 26). However, the analysis revealed that refugees have no voice in press discourse. As example shows “People think only press can give all the answers but it is mixing honey with poison. It would be good and fair if people who are asking for asylum participated in debates“ ([24] example 27). This is the reason why refugees become an object of discrimination in Western society and belong to the **category of marginalized group**.



Fig. 5. Just a year ago, the world was shocked by the death of Alan Kurdi

All content in *Facebook* page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“ is related with adult refugees but there is not much talk about one of the most vulnerable groups – children. In contrast with *Facebook* page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“, posts, comments, videos, shares are about the help for refugees and their children in the page “Refugees Welcome“. As statistics of United Nation states, there are 21,3 million refugees in the world and half of them are children (UN. 2017). Children are the most vulnerable group and they need psychological and material help. To sum up the referential analysis, “Refugees Welcome“ opposes the opinion of refugee as an economic burden or a homeless person, which is strongly stated in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration“.

Predication

According to R. Wodak's categories of discourse, the goal of prediction is to define refugees and what peculiarities of character they have ([24] appendix 1). The content of the page "Refugees Welcome" is strictly regulated by administrators. A negative content is hardly found in the page "Refugees Welcome", while the analysed data in the page "Public Committee against Forced Immigration" contains high amount of negative rhetoric – almost a half of presented information (out of 100) is negative.

The most of refugees in Lithuania are considered as working age people, unfortunately they have an extreme difficulty of finding a job. Refugees are educated in particular fields and are experts in what they do. Unfortunately, it is complicated to apply their skills for the advantage of Lithuanian people. In order to minimise social exclusion, followers of the page "Refugees Welcome" are genuinely asking for the help from society. Refugees are described as hard working individuals who always had job in their home countries and never were beggars, as shown in the example "Aida is a primary school teacher in Syria. She had a job there, however she had to leave her home country and come to Lithuania. Now three of her children are attending school in Jonava. Unfortunately, Aida still has difficulty of speaking Lithuanian and cannot find a job place according to her profession" (Fig. 6) [45]. While presenting refugees, people often forget that they had a life, education, job, status, dignity in their home country, however, they were forced to leave it because of different reasons. That is why refugee supporters ask other people for help, to help refugees to stand on their own feet again



Fig. 6. Often a refugee seems to us like faceless nobody

The content of the page "Refugees Welcome" denies the image of refugee as a criminal. The fact that not all refugees are related with crimes is emphasised in photos and videos, example "It is easy to say "they are all like that", "refugees must leave" when you see images like these. No crimes such as street attacks, thefts, rapes are either culturally or religiously accepted in their home countries. Crimes, committed by couple of dozens of men, cannot sum up all the behaviour and values of 1,09 million refugees registered only in Germany (2015). Be just and objective" (Fig. 7) [46]. Press usually describes refugees completely different from "us", clearly setting the line between inner and outer groups. However, crimes, committed by just couple of people, cannot generalise the opinion of all refugees. They are considered as an object of discrimination in an accepting country but not many realise that they have families and jobs "<...> These people are living quite long time in Lithuania; they have jobs, children, place to live" ([24] example 29) and are not related with any crimes.



Fig. 7. When it comes to another race, nationality or religion the answer is not so easy

All in all, criticism and stereotypes about refugees are the most common opinions to follow. It slowly becomes the field of war of different interests and different representations of refugees.

Argumentation

Various sources of information and shared links are found in arguments of *Facebook* page “Refugees Welcome” discourse contrary to the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration”. Top-rank police officers give the answer whether refugees will make the criminogenic situation worsened or not: “Refugees themselves often become victims of terrorist crimes. It is unlikely that refugees would report about the crime contrary to the citizens of a country” ([24] example 30). This quote denies the fact that all refugees are related with crimes or violence. Information of police officers is presented along with statistics “According to US data, 40 % of adult refugees are suffering from PSS (post-traumatic syndrome), also 90 % children refugees suffer from PSS” (refugee-healthta.org) ([24] example 31). Statistics comes from reliable sources, such as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or Refugee Health Technical Support Center [47].

There is no discussion about the rights and freedoms in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” but Universal Declaration of Human Rights is mentioned in one post of the page “Refugees Welcome” where the rights for shelter are listed in the 14th article: “Each person has a right to seek for shelter form persecution in any country” ([24] example 32). Preserving human rights for all refugees is important as the way how media present refugees to the society. Unfortunately, there is more negativity than positivity about refugees in the media. This fact makes lives of refugees even more complicated. As given in example “Myths are presented as reality, the opinion of experts is given according to their personal and emotional side; statistics and data are left aside; there are no reasonable links, deep and impartial analysis. / Followers of the page “Refugees Welcome” mentioned couple times that one of the key points of successful refugee integration is the position and the transparency of an accepting community. However, the position of media is more likely to disturb the integration of refugees in the society since the problem of refugees is new and unknown. The media should create impartial view instead of making up stories, based on myths and fears” ([24] example 33). People should know the difference between integration and assimilation ([24] example 34). This information, how UK press informs people about refugees, is based on the research, carried out by Information Center for Asylum and Refugees in the United Kingdom.

To summarise the argumentation analysis of the page “Refugees Welcome”, arguments are clear and based on proven data, which changes the image of refugees as beggars and criminals. All details in posts are taken from statistics of international and Lithuanian institutions. This in-

formation adds another type to the discourse, which is related, with assurance of human rights, integration of refugees and press providing false facts. This suggests that some media outlets and *Facebook* pages present more danger in their desire to get views and likes with “breaking news” than refugees themselves.

Perspectivization

Discourse of refugees is presented as discriminatory. The press does not give impartial view about the positions of refugees in the context of humanitarian crisis, so followers of the page “Refugees Welcome” post real footages of refugees telling about their lives, consequences of civil war, and difficulties which they have to face during integration. The example of these videos “I am telling my family in Syria that Germany is beautiful but when they ask if I ever come back home, I tell “Yes, I will. I will fall on my knees and will kiss the land on which I am standing” ([24] example 35). The video of Aida is addressed to people’s feelings “It seems that refugee is Mr. nobody. He was nothing, he is nothing but he wants to become someone on account of others. You forget that once refugees had a life, status, dignity” (**Fig. 4**) [43].

Both pages “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” and “Refugees Welcome” have posts with views of politicians. Contrary to “Public Committee against Forced Immigration”, views of politicians in the page “Refugees Welcome” are more liberal and ideas of anti-immigration are not present. Example shows how Canadian prime minister greets refugees “Today, 163 refugees from Syria reached Canada. Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau announced “This is the way to show the world how to have an open heart” ([24] example 36). Not only foreign leaders are quoted in posts of the page “Refugees Welcome”, Lithuanian president V. Adamkus is quoted as well. President encourages people to participate in the campaign of Red Cross ([24] example 37). All quotes in the page “Refugees Welcome” are from reliable sources (trusted political leaders). These quotes can form more liberal views for the participants of the discourse.

Experts of migration, representatives of education and non-governmental organisations express their concern about the integration of refugees in Lithuania. Followers of the page “Refugees Welcome” are invited to a conference called “Refugees in Europe and shelter for them: what do we know?” ([24] example 38). Volunteers who worked with refugees nearby Mediterranean Sea also follow the page “Refugees Welcome”. The quote of one volunteer: “The ones who are against refugees actually have never seen them in person. The ones who have seen are not that hostile. This video is for those who think that Syrians should stay in their own country and fight back with knives against falling bombs” ([24] example 39). If a negative opinion is present in social media, it adds more discrimination of refugees in an accepting society. The discourse in the page “Refugees Welcome” presents information in different view – through the eyes of refugees.

Intensification / Mitigation

Another goal of the qualitative content analysis of the page “Refugees Welcome” is to answer the questions of intensification / mitigation category, do the posts have clear idea, does the idea presented directly, does the idea is intensified / mitigated ([24] appendix 1). Posts in the page “Refugees Welcome” are usually presented in a form of the question. Couple photos depict irony that helps to show mistakes of stereotypical thinking. One photo with chat: “–I don’t feel safe from the moment when refugees came. / –Were you attacked? Raped? Robbed? / –No, just I have found out that I am living around these terrible people” (**Fig. 8**) [48]. The crowd in the background is against of the refugee shelter. Irony – many people fear refugees for no reason even though refugees live for quite a long time in Lithuania – they have jobs and families. The goal of photos (memes) in the page “Refugees Welcome” is not to make fun or offend refugees, quite the opposite. Sarcastic or ironic photos forces to think about the stereotypes which are not based on any proven data and makes to consider the situation of refugees.

Posted photos are not to shock or intrigue because the page “Refugees Welcome” has administrators who are responsible for the shown content. The painting from the collection of one student from Vilnius Art academy has a potato and a text “Emigrant from South America was the elite one. Because of her nerves she saved Europe from famine” ([24] example 40). This painting has some spice in it. Repetitions and hyperbole are rhetorical devices that draw away negative

attention from the representation of refugees. For example, “If a drunk Arab harasses you, it is the trait of his nationality or maybe because he is using drugs; if a Lithuanian is aggressive at the airport – that is his type of life or nationality?” (Fig. 5) [44]. Irony is also found in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” even though the discourse is completely different from the page “Refugees Welcome” “Refugees may lose their passports, not phones” ([24] example 41). To add up, there is not much irony in this message according to the followers of the page “Refugees Welcome”. Refugees are not allowed to take many things with them ([24] example 42). A phone might be the only way to *take* memories from their lost lives.



Fig. 8. I do not feel safe since the arrival of refugees

All in all, photos in the page “Refugees Welcome” help to form positive opinion about refugees. This is the reason why this discourse is more favourable towards refugees – negative refugees’ stereotypes are avoidable, there is less panic, information is impartial. The feeling of reality is created through life stories of refugees which are presented in photos or videos. The visual content helps to understand the context broadly.

5. Conclusion

1. Nowadays the problem of refugees and asylum seekers is discussed among most press in Europe. As the quantitative analysis of posts in the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” revealed, the most common words used to describe refugees are *terrorist*, *criminal*, *Muslim*, *rapist*. This gives an impression that refugees are not welcome to the accepting countries, while the most common words in the page “Refugees Welcome” are *refugee*, *victim*, *help* which are creating more moderate image of refugees for the followers of the page “Refugees Welcome”. The page emphasises the need of help for refugees.

2. Many headlines and text inside and below photos have words that incite the fear in page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” followers. Refugees are depicted as an unwanted group of people because of what they can do to society. Arguments are based on unsuccessful politics of multiculturalism in Europe; crimes such as terrorist attacks, rapes are thought to be the result of the campaign “Refugees Welcome”. Contrary to this, in the page “Refugees Welcome”, refugees are presented as victims who lost their homes because of war and who need material and psychological help.

3. The comparison of two different social pages allowed to draw the conclusion about people who are forming the image of refugees in social media. Followers of the page “Public Committee against Forced Immigration” are against refugees and they form the anti-immigration discourse, though it is still not clear about their real identity. Arguments are based on opinions of politicians and leaders of different countries, but posted information is carefully selected to reveal “the real face of refugees”. The data presented in the page “Refugees Welcome” are taken from the source – all the stories are told by refugees. They tell about their hardships during integration. The main participants of the discourse consider themselves as followers of marginalised groups.

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ACTUALIZATION OF METHODOLOGICAL SYSTEMS, SEPARATE FORMS AND METHODS OF NATIVE THEORY AND PRACTICE (END OF XIX – BEGINNING OF XX CENTURY) AS TO ORGANIZATION OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNDER CONDITIONS OF FORMATION OF THE NEW UKRAINIAN SCHOOL

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Abstract

The “foreign speaking competence” is an urgent task in the modern society. It is felt most acutely in countries of the post-Soviet space because of changing a paradigm of foreign language education, processes of integration of these countries in the world society. Organization of teaching foreign languages in the New Ukrainian school needs determining strategies and further perspectives as to the common work of pupils, parents and whole community on problems of the content and resource base for providing high-quality teaching taking into account the rich experience of teachers-practicians. The aim of the article is to use the historical experience for organizing teaching foreign languages for pupils of gymnasias. The brief analysis of substantial works of Ukrainian and foreign scientists as to the problem of organizing teaching foreign languages in native gymnasias at the end of XIX – beginning of XX century has been realized. Just this time there takes place a change of socio-economic conditions in the country that results in the fact that ancient foreign languages (Greek, Latin) lose their popularity. German, French and English occupy their place. It causes modernization of teaching methods and new organization of this process.

We have elaborated and introduced in the working practice of secondary educational institutions: the technology of a special seminar for improving the qualification of primary school teachers “Organization of teaching foreign languages for pupils: historical aspects and modern challenges” and technology of training exercises “Rozmovlyajko” for pupils of primary schools. We think that teaching foreign languages may serve as a means of reformation of the Ukrainian school and creation of a new productive and creative personality.

Keywords: New Ukrainian school, organization of teaching foreign languages, gymnasias, innovative methods.

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