Situation and Text: Representation of Migrants Whilst the Escalation of Refugee Crisis in Great Britain as Compared to Russia[1]

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Abstract

Increasing migration is a vital concern for a globalizing sociocultural environment in today's world. The UK and developed European countries have become an attractive destination for asylum seekers (labelled as "migrants") in the past decade. The rapid rise in the number of asylum seekers, which was labelled "migration crisis" (Ruz, 2015), made this topic an integral part of scientific discussion on sociocultural environment. There are different factors underlying the perception of migrants by local population. The given study is devoted to the review of the usage of different linguistic means and its strategies by mass media whilst the escalation of refugee crisis in Great Britain as compared to Russia. We implement situational approach to the non-fiction factual texts, in particular, texts representing a concrete (actual) situation. Today due to the development of neural network technology we can easily define thematic structure of the text, specify the central lexis, the near peripheral lexis and the far peripheral lexis and reveal implicit information. The data of British National Corpus and Russian National Corpus is analyzed using text mining software- TextAnalyst 2.01. The relationships and patterns among key words and their associations are cluster-analyzed and contextual interpretation of semantic core is provided. Associative structures enable us to define the lexical experience of its speakers (White & Abrams, 2004) while the analysis of associative network helps to study public opinion on different social issues (File, Keczer, Vancsó et al., 2018). The data for the text mine is gathered from the website Ruscorpora.ru (data set 1) and British National Corpus (data set 2). The thematic network depicts the structure of the text and the most pertinent information in the data. The semantic network constructs a list of topics and their semantic weights. It is a tree structure of the concepts of the text and identifies the relationships in the text. Just like in data set 1 public attitudes in data set 2 towards refugees and migrants are complex. Representation of migrants and hence public opinion are complicated by

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predisposition to favor those using legal means to enter a country with national culture, traditional customs, laws and ability to speak the language of the host country being the key factor in integrating migrants.

1. Introduction

Increasing migration is a vital concern for a globalizing sociocultural environment in today's world. The UK and developed European countries have become an attractive destination for asylum seekers (labelled as "migrants") in the past decade. The rapid rise in the number of asylum seekers, which was labelled "migration crisis" (Ruz, 2015), made this topic an integral part of scientific discussion on sociocultural environment. According to the Times "in the past 12 years Britain has changed significantly. European Union citizens have grown as a share of the total population from 2 per cent to 6.3 per cent" (Quality, not quantity, is the big issue when talking about migration, the Times, 2016).

The "change demanded explanation" and it was mass media that the politicians used to build public opinion. Mass media is a mediator between politicians and people (Шейгал, 2000; Schaffner & Bassnett, 2009), and it provides a means for public perceptions manipulation by presenting events, issues and people in different ways. (Bleich et al., 2015, Blakar, 1987). Wodak suggests that mass media uses various discursive practices of "inclusion and exclusion" while representing different groups of people (Delanty, Wodak, & Jones, 2008, p. 54). Wodak lays out the most widespread topoi when it comes to migrants: "they are a burden on our society", "they are dangerous, a threat", "they cost too much", "their culture is too different" and so on.

There are different factors underlying the perception of migrants by local population. As follows from a recent study including 15 European countries, they are: humanitarian concerns, anti-Muslim sentiments, economic reasoning (Bansak et al., 2016). With negative stories on migration being amplified by British mass media, the criminalization of asylum seekers resulted in terms confusion: the denotata "migrant", "asylum seeker", "refugee", "immigrant" standing for the significatum "newcomer". According to the report prepared for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (Press Coverage of the Refugee and Migrant Crisis in the EU: A Content Analysis of Five European Countries, 2015) the press coverage in the UK is the most negative and they employ the term "migrant" whereas in Germany and Sweden they use the words "refugee" and "asylum seekers". These terms stress the tenor of the countries' position. As it was pointed out in the article «UK is the

most aggressive in reporting on Europe's 'migrant' crisis» originally being neutral the concept "migrant" has recently acquired negative connotation.

The umbrella term migrant is no longer fit for purpose when it comes to describing the horror unfolding in the Mediterranean. It has evolved from its dictionary definitions into a tool that dehumanises and distances, a blunt pejorative.

As an opposition to negative perception solidarity movements have emerged. The problem of the dehumanization of the language of migrant crisis or "hate-speech" has become acute.

It also calls for industry wide and in-house training on migration issues and problems of hate-speech; improved links with migrant and refugee groups; and more employment of journalists from ethnic minority communities to strengthen diversity in newsrooms. The Guardian (17.12.2015)

Negative representation of migrants by Western mass media implicitly impacts public opinion of people in Russia. The Russians negatively assess not only the European refugee crisis but also the migration in their own country.

It should be pointed out that the problem in Russia echoes the one of Great Britain. According to The Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation there are 3 200 000 migrants out of the total number of population of 12 506 468 in Russia. They also state that Russia ranks highest in the number of Muslim people in European cities in quantity. At the moment there are 1,7 mln Muslim people in Moscow whereas, for example, in London – 1,1. Another feature of the given issue is the quality of migration, which used to contribute to cultural exchange and now Moscow serves as a transit hub for migrants who come there to earn some money and then leave (Колокол России, 2018).

2. Data and Methodology

The given study is devoted to the review of the usage of different linguistic means and its strategies whilst the escalation of refugee crisis in Great Britain as compared to Russia. We implement situational approach to the non-fiction factual texts, in particular, texts representing a concrete (actual) situation. In the given study we will be sticking to Glazkov (2016) interpretation of the term "factual text", i.e. "the type of text based on real or probable situation". Situations are represented by facts: "Situations present, at different levels of specification, the information that we handle, and they offer us the necessary feedback for building valid conceptions of the outer world as a basis for valid predictions about what will happen and what will be the outcome of our own behaviors" [Magnusson]. Following Berelson assumptions viewing content-analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication", we can reveal

the conceptual structure; identify propaganda strokes, used by mass media; reveal the intentions of communication parties; discover the interests, values and attitudes of different groups of people and public institutions (and, on a wider scale, set of beliefs and world models).

The data of British National Corpus and Russian National Corpus will be analyzed using text mining software- TextAnalyst 2.01. The relationships and patterns among key words and their associations will be cluster-analyzed and contextual interpretation of semantic core will be provided. Associative structures help to define the lexical experience of its speakers (White & Abrams, 2004) whilst the analysis of associative network can help to study public opinion on different social issues (File, Keczer, Vancsó et al., 2018]. Today due to the development of neural network technology we can easily define thematic structure of the text, specify the central lexis, the near peripheral lexis and the far peripheral lexis (Hofmann, 1999; Kharlamov & Le, 2017]. The text-minig software we use, TextAnalyst 2.01, simplifies the process of semantic analysis providing us with semantic network, which is a list of topics and their semantic weights. It enables to identify the concepts of the text, their relationships and study the given data-set at different semantic layers. Association search is a useful tool for extrapolating implicit information.

3. Results

The data for the text mine was gathered from the website Ruscorpora.ru (data set1). This website contains a corpus of the modern Russian language incorporating over 300 million words. The corpus of Russian is a reference system based on a collection of Russian texts in electronic form. We carried out the search on newspapers only within a period of most frequent use of the word "migrant"- 2013-14 years (see Figure1).
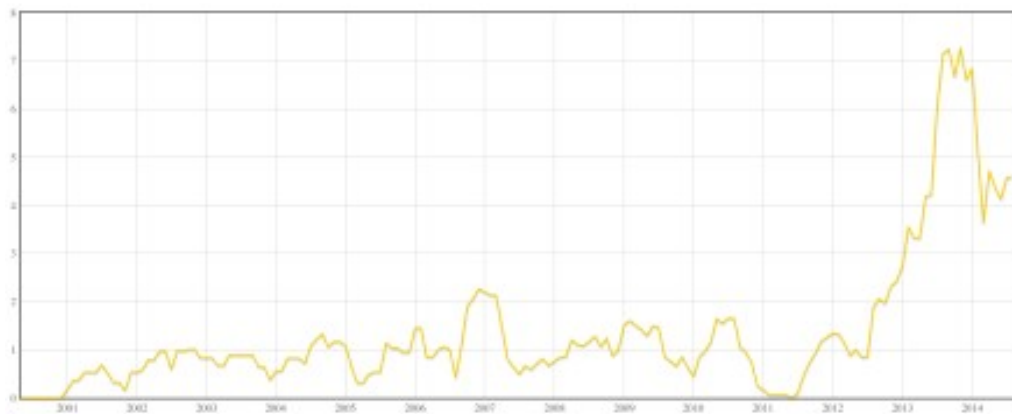
Figure 1: Yearly Instances per Million Words. www.ruscorpora.ru

The thematic network depicts the structure of the text and the most pertinent information in the data, producing a heirarchy of themes and subthemes and corresponds to semantic network nodes:
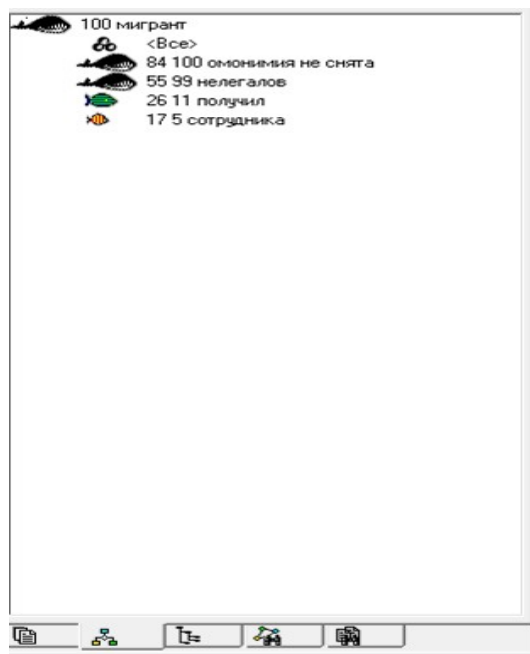
Figure 2: Thematic Network

The semantic network constructs a list of topics and their semantic weights. It is a tree structure of the concepts of the text and identifies the relationships in the text. Each concept is preceded by a pair of numbers. The first set of numbers is the semantic relationship between the parent and the concept, the second is a semantic weight of the concept. For example, the term "нелегал" has a semantic weight of 99 and it shares a semantic relationship with "мигрант" with a strength of 55 (see Figure3).

100 Комсомольская
100 Комсомольская правда
100 мигрант
&b   <Все>
84 100 омонимия не снята
64 100 Комсомольская
64 100 Комсомольская правда
59 99 омонимия не снята] Все примеры
55 99 нелегалов
53 99 нелегальный мигрант
48 99 российской
41 99 Москва
37 99 языку
34 99 РБК Дейли
33 99 экзамен
31 99 мигранткой // Комсомольская
31 99 мигранткой // Комсомольская правда
28 83 мигрантов // Известия
28 99 русского
26 97 въезд
26 11 получил
26 99 Похождения нелегальной мигрантки
22 58 адаптации
19 97 русскому
19 97 русскому языку
17 19 армии
17 35 деньги
17 26 летней
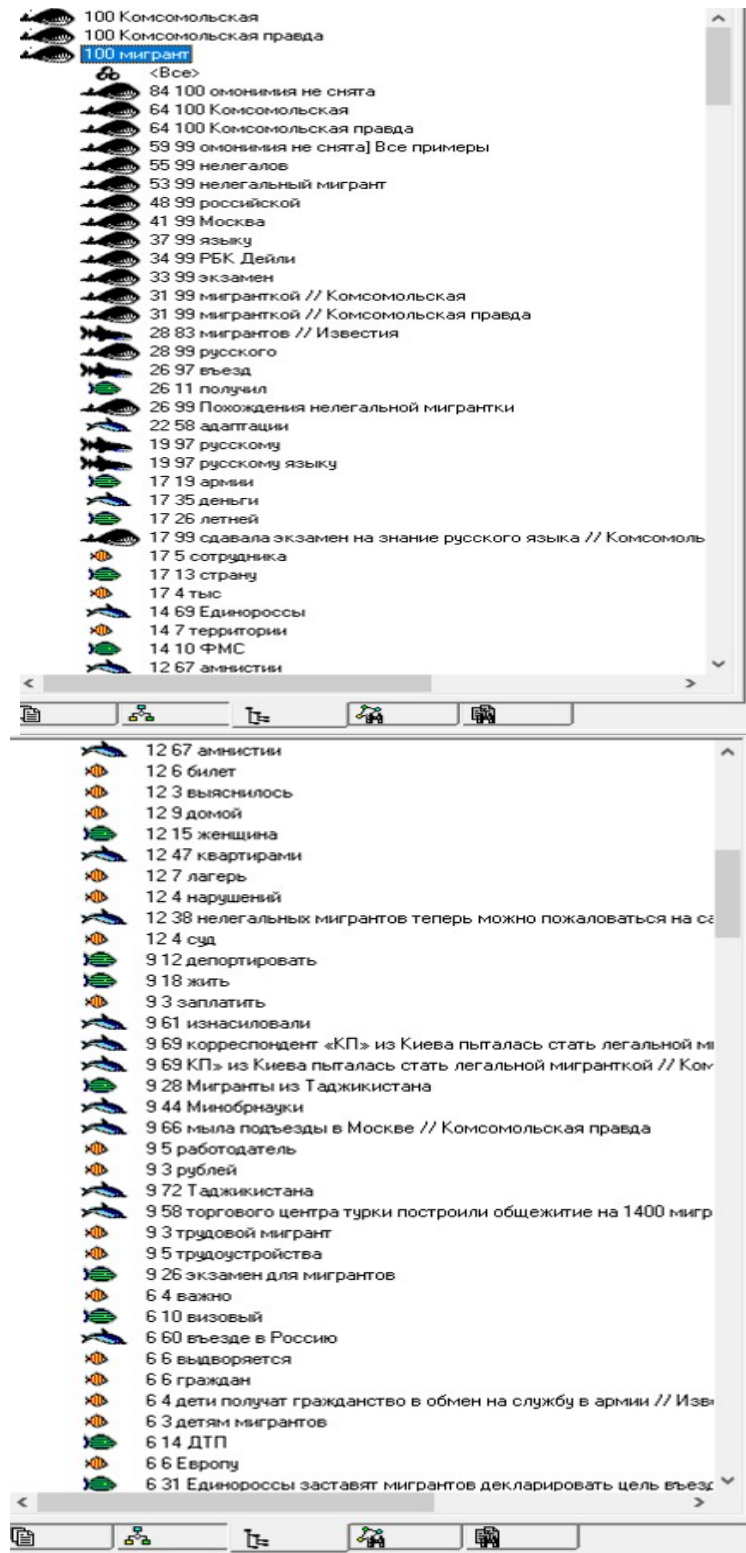17 99 сдавала экзамен на знание русского языка // Комсомоль
17 5 сотрудника
17 13 страну
17 4 тыс
14 69 Единороссы
14 7 территории
14 10 ФМС
12 67 амнистии

12 67 амнистии
12 6 билет
12 3 выяснилось
12 9 домой
12 15 женщина
12 47 квартирами
12 7 лагерь
12 4 нарушений
12 38 нелегальных мигрантов теперь можно пожаловаться на са
12 4 суд
9 12 депортировать
9 18 жить
9 3 заплатить
9 61 изнасиловали
9 69 корреспондент «КП» из Киева пыталась стать легальной ми
9 69 КП» из Киева пыталась стать легальной мигранткой // Ком
9 28 Мигранты из Таджикистана
9 44 Минобрнауки
9 66 мыла подъезды в Москве // Комсомольская правда
9 5 работодатель
9 3 рублей
9 72 Таджикистана
9 58 торгового центра турки построили общежитие на 1400 мигр
9 3 трудовой мигрант
9 5 трудоустройства
9 26 экзамен для мигрантов
6 4 важно
6 10 визовый
6 60 въезде в Россию
6 6 выдворяется
6 6 граждан
6 4 дети получат гражданство в обмен на службу в армии // Изв
6 3 детям мигрантов
6 14 ДТП
6 6 Европу
6 31 Единороссы заставят мигрантов декларировать цель въезд

Figure 3: Semantic Network

It is obvious that initially being neutral different direct nominations of the term 'migrant' in the analyzed texts acquire negative connotation due to the way they are represented by mass media. The adjectives in attributive position define the nature of the term ("нелегальный мигрант").

The study of lexical associations enables us to analyze implicit information. Migrants are represented as illegal without any knowledge of the Russian language and culture. They are subjected to a large number of discursive means, using practices of differentiation between us and them and drawing analogies with the refugee crisis in Europe. The most largely used othering practice is the representation of migrants as foreign culture-bearers.
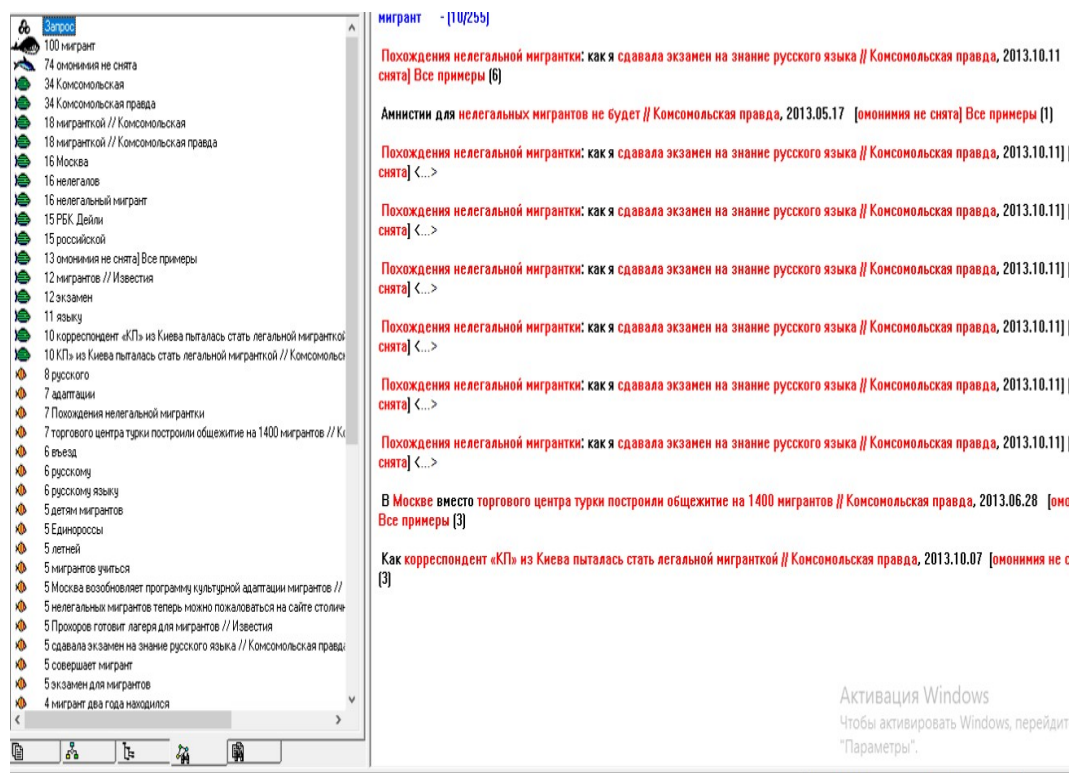

Figure 4: Association Search

There are 2 major topoi which can be identified:

- crime rate increase

Запретив детям мигрантов учиться в наших школах, не создадим ли мы уличные банды маргиналов?

Нелегальный мигрант снимал квартиру во втором доме по улице Чехова у 53-летней местной жительницы Ольги Мартыновой.

Достичь гармонии нелегальный мигрант решился в среду, приметив в первых лучах солнца гибкое тело 36-летней жительницы Строгинского

бульвара Марии М. Молодая женщина регулярно бегала по утрам купаться в лесопарковую зону "Строгинской поймы", что напротив 18-го дома по улице Твардовского.

Маньяком оказался 25-летний нелегальный мигрант из Таджикистана Зарипов.

- another language

В Москве нелегальный мигрант без знания русского языка занимался частным извозом на иномарке довольно сомнительного происхождения.

Инициатива Минобрнауки: Чтобы жить в России, мигрант должен знать минимум 850 слов по-русски // Комсомольская правда, 2013.03.13

The same method was applied while analyzing the 2d data-set- British National Corpus. The data for the text mine was gathered from the website www.english-corpora.org. The NOW corpus (News on the Web) contains 7.6 billion words of data from web-based newspapers and magazines from 2010 to the present time. We studied the NOW corpus of 2015 since it is the time when the numbers of migrants coming to Europe rose dramatically (see Figure 5).
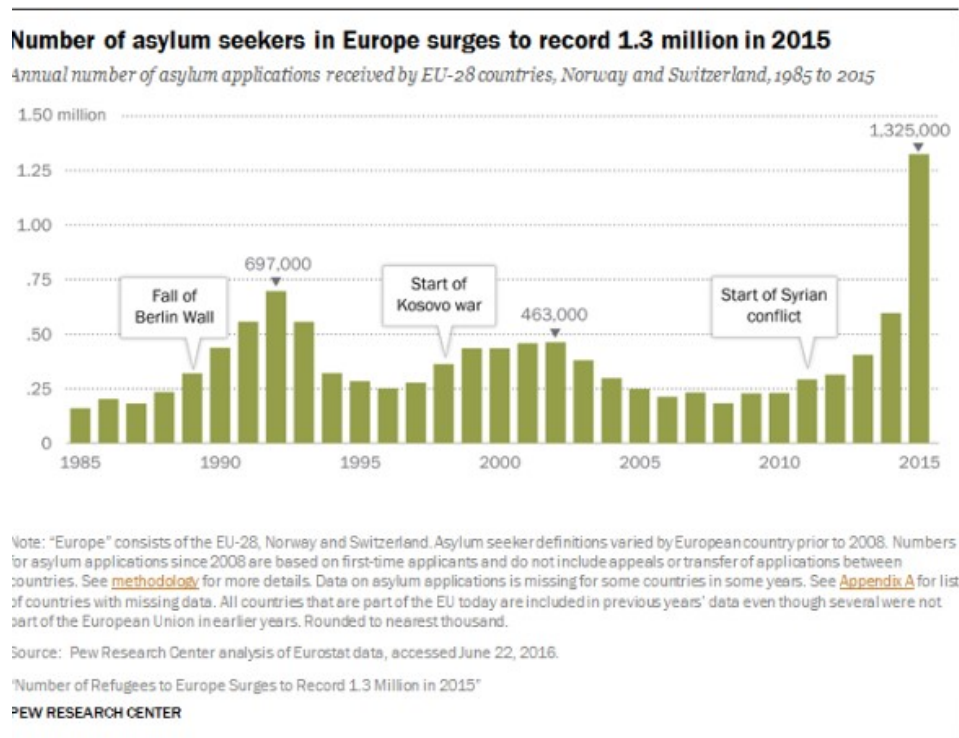

Number of asylum seekers in Europe surges to record 1.3 million in 2015
Annual number of asylum applications received by EU-28 countries, Norway and Switzerland, 1985 to 2015

Note: "Europe" consists of the EU-28, Norway and Switzerland. Asylum seeker definitions varied by European country prior to 2008. Numbers for asylum applications since 2008 are based on first-time applicants and do not include appeals or transfer of applications between countries. See methodology for more details. Data on asylum applications is missing for some countries in some years. See Appendix A for list of countries with missing data. All countries that are part of the EU today are included in previous years' data even though several were not part of the European Union in earlier years. Rounded to nearest thousand.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Eurostat data, accessed June 22, 2016.

'Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015'

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Figure 5: Number of Migrants in Europe. Pew Research Center

The analysis expectedly revealed that the information hierarchy in the given data has a single parent: "migrant". The nominations "migrant", "refugee", "number

of migrants", "migrant crisis", "illegal migrant", "migrant workers", "economic migrants", "million migrants" have maximum semantic weight. The nominations: "arrive", "cross", "rescue", "African", "undocumented", "European", "Muslim" have maximum semantic relationship weight for the term "migrant". So the central lexis of semantic field "migrant" comprises direct nominations *(migrants, immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, migration, migrate, move, resettle, relocate, displacement)*, which are stylistically neutral. The near peripheral lexis and the far peripheral lexis have some connotation and reveal the nature of the parent word (resettled… *under a new government scheme, sexual harassment* by young refugees, barefoot toddlers in *filthy* clothes).

There is a wide number of issues covered, such as the Mediterranean migration crisis, the economy, employment, housing, healthcare, illegality, migrant detention, deportation, border security, EU free movement. Still the most important is the number of migrants entering the UK. The scale of migration to the UK is presented as a justification for a crackdown on the phenomenon while the impact of migration on society is not so widely discussed (Victims & Villains. Migrant voices in the British media, Crawley H. et al, 2016).

Tony Blair's decision to throw open the doors early to Poland and the other eastern European accession countries 11 years ago brought some of the best and brightest to our shores. But the latest wave is less impressive: waitresses who cannot read the menu and drivers doing the minimum hours to get tax credits. Britain is now a country looking for the emergency brake. (Britain and Europe must slam the brakes on mass immigration. The Sunday Times, 8th March 2015)

Migrants are depicted as a threat to national security and employment: the most common collocates are "migrant workers", "migrant worker", "migrant crisis", "illegal migrants". However, there is some support for compassion towards refugees: there are nominations with less semantic weight found, such as "vulnerable persons", "the global dispossessed", "the world's dispossessed".

Just like in data set 1 public attitudes in data set 2 towards refugees and migrants are complex. The authors of the given texts choose the facts to be associated with the concept "migrant" and their choice depends on the way they intend to present the situation. Although the actual information is in focus, the situation cannot be devoid of situation-type.

Representation of migrants and hence public opinion are complicated by predisposition to favor those using legal means to enter a country. Public show clear concerns about "illegal migrants", i.e. illegal entries. (Blinder et al., 2011; Duffy et al., 2014). Another key factor in integrating migrants is national culture, traditional customs, laws and ability to speak the language of the host country. As Spring 2016

Global Attitudes Survey suggests "being able to speak our national language" is the main criterion for national identity and successful integration.
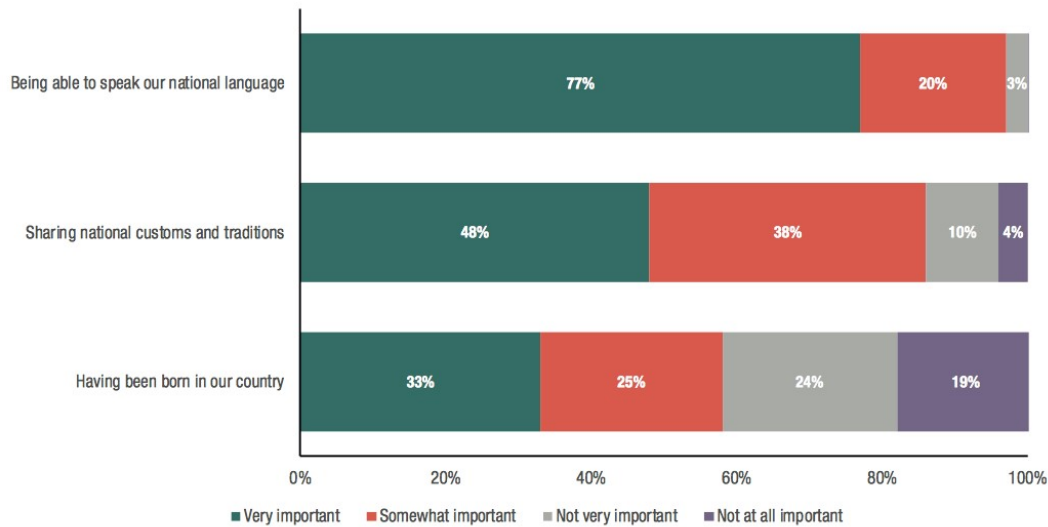
Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey Q85e-d, Cited in Wike et al., 2016.

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