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A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to

My dear parents

My husband,

My kids,

And all the members of my family.

Acknowledgments

Reaching the end of this long journey would not have been possible without the help and support of many individuals. First and foremost, I would like to direct an utmost thank to my supervisor Dr. Rida Bernouss for his continuous guidance, advice and support throughout this project. His invaluable feedback and constructive comments have helped me immensely during the production of this work.

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Abstract

With the rising rate of Internet penetration in Morocco, e-newspapers, which have become a popular tool in the spread of news, have given voice to their audience to have their say in what is reported. Yet, despite the popularity of such digital platforms, little is known about their communication process, production and consumption. It is also undeniable that, from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective, it is very important to study the process of news discourse as it is a site in which ideology and unequal power relations reside. Accordingly, this study critically investigates language use in one of the most prominent Moroccan e-newspapers, *Hespress*, in the way it represents irregular migration in the country. Therefore, 36 *Hespress*' news articles and their corresponding 360 readers' comments were examined for their representation of irregular migration during the time frame under study, from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018. The methodological framework is a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research methods which are used to analyse the thematic choices used in *Hespress* to represent the issue of irregular migration. This research identifies six key themes within which irregular migration is represented. The themes of Human Rights, Politics, and Integration, which emerged in the news articles, reflect a noticeable pro-migration discourse. In the readers' comments, however, negative discourse about irregular migration is dominating and themes of Blaming the Government, Economic Burden, and Threat are pervasive. The overall findings of this investigation show that there is a reproduction of unequal power relations between the news producers, as elite groups, and the migrants who are stereotyped in the news articles. Despite the journalists' humanitarian representation of the migrants, there is the risk of encouraging a hegemonic discourse that speaks more about oneself and how one feels rather than giving voice to the migrants to talk about themselves. For *Hespress*' readers, they represent the irregular migrants as a threat to the Moroccan society. Accordingly, the scenario of 'Us' versus 'Them' is also emphasised in *Hespress* readers' comments. Furthermore, the finding that the readers' comments contradict the journalists' main premises explains that e-newspapers have empowered their audience by giving them space to produce knowledge that challenges the news producers. *Hespress*' journalists still set the agenda for public discussions; however, its active readers have the ability to produce knowledge that challenges the news producers.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis; E-Newspapers; News Articles; Readers' Comments; Irregular Migration; Representation; Morocco

Résumé

Avec le taux croissant de pénétration d'Internet au Maroc, les journaux électroniques, qui sont devenus un outil populaire dans la diffusion de l'information dans la société marocaine, ont donné la parole à leur public pour avoir leur mot à dire dans ce qui est rapporté. Pourtant, malgré leur popularité, on sait peu de choses sur la production d'informations et les réactions du public sur ces plateformes numériques. Il est également indéniable que, du point de vue de l'analyse critique du discours (CDA), il est très important d'étudier le processus de communication de l'information car il s'agit d'un site où résident le pouvoir et l'idéologie. En conséquence, cette étude examine de manière critique l'utilisation de la langue dans l'un des journaux électroniques marocains les plus importants, *Hespress*, dans la manière dont il construit son discours a propos de la migration irrégulière dans le pays. Ainsi, la représentation de la migration irrégulière dans 36 articles de presse de *Hespress* ainsi que 360 commentaires de leurs lecteurs correspondants ont été examinés au cours de la période étudiée, du 9 septembre 2013 au 11 décembre 2018. Le cadre méthodologique est une triangulation de méthodes de recherche qualitatives et quantitatives qui sont utilisées pour analyser les choix thématiques représentant la migration irrégulière dans le journal électronique *Hespress*. Cette recherche identifie six thèmes clés au sein desquels la migration irrégulière est représentée. Les thèmes des droits de l'homme, de la politique et de l'intégration, qui ont émergé dans les articles de presse, reflètent un discours pro-migratoire notable. Dans les commentaires des lecteurs, cependant, le discours négatif sur la migration irrégulière est dominant et les thèmes de blâmer le gouvernement, de fardeau économique et de menace sont omniprésents. Les résultats globaux de cette enquête montrent qu'il existe une reproduction de relations de pouvoir inégales entre les producteurs de nouvelles, en tant que groupes d'élite, et les migrants qui sont stéréotypés dans les articles de presse. Malgré la représentation humanitaire des migrants par les journalistes, il y a le risque d'encourager un discours hégémonique qui parle davantage de soi et de ce que l'on ressent plutôt que de donner la parole aux migrants pour qu'ils parlent d'eux-mêmes. Pour les lecteurs de *Hespress*, ils représentent les migrants irréguliers comme une menace pour la société marocaine. En conséquence, le scénario « nous » contre « eux » met l'accent sur l'idéologie dans le discours des lecteurs de *Hespress*. En outre, le constat que les commentaires des lecteurs contredisent les idées principales des journalistes explique que les journaux électroniques ont responsabilisé leur public en leur donnant l'espace pour produire des connaissances qui interpellent les producteurs d'informations. Les journalistes de *Hespress* fixent toujours l'ordre du jour des débats publics; cependant, ses lecteurs actifs ont la capacité de produire des connaissances qui défient les producteurs de nouvelles.

Mots-Clés : Analyse critique du discours, journaux électroniques, articles de presse, commentaires de lecteurs, migration irrégulière, représentation, Maroc

مقتضب

مع ارتفاع معدل انتشار الإنترنت في المغرب، أعطت الصحف الإلكترونية، التي أصبحت أداة شائعة لنشر الأخبار في المجتمع المغربي، صوتًا لجمهورها للتعبير عن آرائه فيما يُنقل. وعلى الرغم من شعبيتها، لا يُعرف سوى القليل عن إنتاج الأخبار وردود فعل الجمهور في مثل هذه المنصات الرقمية .كما لا يمكن إنكار أنه من منظور تحليل الخطاب النقدي، من المهم جدًا دراسة عملية الاتصال الإخباري لكونه موقع تتحد فيه السلطة بالأيديولوجية. وفقًا لذلك، تبحث هذه الدراسة بشكل نقدي في استخدام اللغة في واحدة من أبرز الصحف الإلكترونية المغربية، هسبريس، في طريقة تناولها للهجرة غير النظامية في البلاد. لذلك ، تم فحص 36 مقالًا إخباريًا لهسبريس وما يقابلها من 360 تعليق من القراء من أجل تمثيلهم للهجرة غير النظامية خلال الإطار الزمني قيد الدراسة، من 9 سبتمبر 2013 إلى 11 ديسمبر.2018الإطار النظري المتبع في هده الدراسة هو التثليث المنهجي لتحليل المحتوى الكمي والنوعي كأدوات لتحليل الخيارات الموضوعية والمعجمية التي تمثل الهجرة غير النظامية. يحدد هذا البحث ستة مواضيع رئيسية يتم من خلالها تمثيل الهجرة غير النظامية. تعكس موضوعات حقوق الإنسان والسياسة والاندماج، التي ظهرت في المقالات الإخبارية، و هو خطاب مؤيد للهجرة. لكن في تعليقات القراء، يسود الخطاب السلبي حول الهجرة غير النظامية، وتنتشر مواضيع إلقاء اللوم على الحكومة والعبء الاقتصادي والتهديد. تظهر النتائج الإجمالية لهذا التحقيق أن هناك إعادة الإنتاج لعلاقات القوة غير المتكافئة بين منتجي الأخبار، كمجموعات النخبة، والمهاجرين الذين تم تصويرهم في المقالات الإخبارية. على الرغم من التمثيل الإنساني للصحفيين للمهاجرين، هناك خطر تشجيع خطاب مهيمن يتحدث أكثر عن أنفسنا وكيف نشعر بدلاً من إعطاء صوت للمهاجرين للحديث عن أنفسهم. من ناحية أخرى، فإن قراء هسبريس يمثلون المهاجرين كتهديد للمجتمع المغربي. وبناءً عليه ، فإن سيناريو "نحن" مقابل "هم" يؤكد الأيديولوجية في خطاب قراء هسبريس. علاوة على ذلك، فقد تبين من خلال الدراسة أن تعليقات القراء تتعارض مع الأفكار الرئيسية للصحفيين وهدا يوضح أن الصحف الإلكترونية قد مكنت جمهورها من التعبير عن آرائه خلال منحه مساحة لإنتاج و تقاسم المعرفة التي تتعارض مع منتجي الأخبار. بالرغم من أن محررو هسبريس لا زالوا هم اللذين يضعون أجندة المناقشات العامة؛ إلا أن القراء أصبحت لديهم القدرة على إنتاج المعرفة المتعارضة مع منتجي الأخبار.

الكلمات المفاتيح: تحليل الخطاب النقدي، الصحف الإلكترونية، المقالات الإخبارية، تعليقات القراء، الهجرة غير النظامية، التمثيل، المغرب.

List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
EU	European Union
GADEM	Groupe Antiracist d'Accompagnement et de Defense des Etrangers et Migrants
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
HAAC	The High Authority for Audiovisual Communication
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCP	Office Cherifien des Phosphates
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
SNIA	Stratégie Nationale d'Immigration et d'Asile
UDHR	United Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
US	United States

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The emergence of electronic communication has altered the landscape of information production and consumption from the traditional top-down or one-to-many model of communication into an interactive two-way model. In the latter model, information producers and receivers are both active participants in the communication process. In other words, the exclusive domain of information production once preserved only for media professionals has been transformed into a vibrant sphere of interaction and participation. In this sphere, the doctrine of 'we write, you read' began to be challenged by public participation (Haas, 2005), which has enabled counter discourses to find spaces and empower ideas that differ from the dominant narratives.

E-newspapers, or interactive newspapers, are a good example for such media that allow the general public to react on a wide variety of issues (Hermida et al., 2011). Among the many types of audience participation generated by electronic newspapers are readers' comments. According to Boyd (2016) the commenting practices have opened up new ways of incorporating users' feedback within the news context creating more possibilities for users to interact with powerful institutional discourse. Indeed, the new communication technologies have provided the adequate infrastructure that encourages audience' active participation in news communication in a way that news practitioners can no longer operate within an exclusive professionalized enclave. E-newspapers as main sources of information are becoming more and more popular thanks to their accessibility and interactivity that provides much space for audience response and engagement. However, although e-news discourse as a product has received extensive research interest because of its huge influence on society, as emphasized by Fairclough (1995), the discursive processes involved in news production and consumption have not attracted as much attention (Cotter, 2010; Bell & Garrett, 1998).

In this regard, this thesis is an attempt to explore the discourse of the most prominent Moroccan e-newspaper, *Hespress*[1], and its readers' comments in the way they represent the issue of irregular migration. Issues about irregular migration are considered newsworthy as

[1]- Hespress is a Moroccan news website, launched on 25 February 2007, by the brothers Hassan and Amine Guennouni. On its official website, Hespress presents itself as "the first Moroccan news website" that provides local and national news content for online readers in Morocco and abroad (Alexa.com 2018).

they are receiving a growing attention from the news media (Coole, 2002). In Morocco, for example, the adoption of a new migration policy in 2013 [2]has gone viral on the national news media and among the general public. Before probing into irregular migration[3], it is worth defining the terms immigration and migration from the outset as they are frequently used throughout this thesis. Immigration is defined as "the act of moving across international boundaries from a country of origin or country of emigration to take up residence in a country of destination or country of immigration" (Samers, 2010, p. 9). While for migration, according to the UNESCO, it can be understood as the living of any person temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born. The terms 'refugee', 'asylum seeker' and 'migrant' have become frequently used interchangeably in the literature (Gale, 2004; Pugh, 2004).

Accordingly, in order to explore the way *Hespress'* news articles and its readers' comments represent the issue of irregular migration, Critical Discourse Analysis [4](henceforth CDA) is specifically chosen as the most appropriate approach. According to Fairclough's (1992), CDA clarifies how news discourse normalizes relations of domination between social groups by relating a text to its context and by paying equal attention to the processes of discourse production, distribution and consumption. For him, CDA is a toolbox that clarifies the relationship between language and its context which mirror each other. That is to say, a society's beliefs and values will be apparent in the selected language items such as the selected themes, lexicon, and grammar people use to express their thoughts. CDA is a framework that explores in depth the relationship between the choices of the linguistic constructions (grammar and lexicon or vocabulary) and the wider social factors and interactional contexts that affect language choices and application (Jones, 2013).

[2]- In the 9th of September 2013, the Moroccan government announced the adoption of new measures for immigration whereby migrants would be better integrated in the society.

[3]- Irregular migration describes migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees who cross an international border by irregular means; that is to say, without documentation or authorisation, often using people smugglers (Brouwer & Kumin, 2003).

[4]- Critical Discourse Analysis aims to reveal the asymmetries of power relationships of dominance and discriminations in discourse and by extension in society.

1. Rationale for the study

The driving forces behind this research are both intrinsic and extrinsic. In fact, interest in studying news discourse emanates from the scholastic assertions that news discourse is inherently biased and ideological (Fowler, 1991). Although news is typically expected to reflect reality and adhere to principles of objectivity, impartiality and the norm of "reporting mere facts" (Kitis & Milapides, 1997, p. 561), there is no neutral representation of reality. According to Fowler (1971), all news is reported from some particular angle and it is imbued by the social and political contexts surrounding it to shape rather than mirror the world. Many scholars like Althusser (1971), Hall (1982), Fairclough (2006) and van Dijk (2000) maintain that news discourse does not only include facts., instead, news discourse includes opinions and attitudes which make it ideological since it is influenced by political, economic and social contexts. Besides, although the accessibility and interactivity of e-newspapers have made them inescapable in our everyday life as they have become the main channel that provides information, there is still a research gap in this field which is still a fertile soil to be explored due to its scarcity, if not complete inexistence in the Moroccan context. Accordingly, there is a need to explore the discursive practice between news production and consumption which still remains underexplored (Richardson, 2007). To illustrate e-newspapers interactivity, *Hespress'* representation of the issue of irregular migration is examined. Also, and to the best of our knowledge, there is a research gap in studying the discursive representation of irregular migration in the Moroccan news media context, especially on electronic platforms where there is the voice of both news producers and consumers.

Besides filling the research gap, there are some intrinsic interests that justify the reason behind conducting this study. In fact, the main personal motivation is built around a quest for knowledge and a desire to see this work achieved. Also, getting to know some irregular migrant raised a personal interest to know more about how this minority group is represented by the Moroccan media and the Moroccan public. Furthermore, as a linguist who is interested in sociology, the researcher wants to deeply understand this social phenomenon from multidisciplinary sociolinguistic and discursive approaches. From these assertions comes the rationale of the necessity to study *Hespress*' discourse when representing the issue of irregular migration.

2. Statement of the problem

As an e-newspaper, *Hespress* has become a frequent source of information people rely on to be informed about different issues around the globe. It has become the most popular e-newspaper in Morocco (Alexa, 2019) thanks to its accessibility and interactivity that provides much space for audience response and participation. According to Vatikiotis (2005), the new communication technology developments have provided the most suitable infrastructure that supports citizens to actively participate in news production. Yet, the boundaries of this interactive relationship between the newsmakers (news production) and their readers (news consumption) have not attracted enough attention and, thus, it is still blurry and unresolved (Cotter, 2010; Bell & Garrett, 1998). Also, to the best of our knowledge, research on electronic news discourse performance (production and reception) is still lacking in the Moroccan context as there has been no documented studies examining e-newspapers' discourse and their readers' comments. Besides, there is also a knowledge gap in the ideological properties and unequal power relations that may reside in *Hespress* news discourse when representing the issue of irregular migration. Additionally, though some research has tried to sketch the representations of irregular migration in the online press, audience interpretations have been relatively invisible (Boyd, 2018). Indeed, the news communication sector in Morocco is still a fertile soil to be explored because of the scarcity of studies on the news production and audience feedback. This study, therefore, is an attempt to answer this question of departure:

- How does *Hespress* and its readers represent the issue of irregular migration in Morocco from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018?

3. Research aim and objectives

The review of the relevant literature suggests that the question of how the content produced by e-newspapers and their readers' comments to represent social issues is still underexplored (Cotter, 2010; Bell & Garrett, 1998). Therefore, the main aim of this study is to investigate how *Hespress*, as an e-newspaper, discursively represents the issue of irregular migration after the adoption of the 2013 new migration policy and how its audience reacts. This study attempts to make a critical analysis of *Hespress* texts, discursive practice and its relation to

the broader social context in order to demonstrate unequal power relations that may reside in its discourse. With Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model as a theoretical framework, this study explores unequal power relations and ideologies which can be hidden in the discourse of the most prominent Moroccan e-newspaper, *Hespress*.

This study sets to achieve three objectives:

O. 1. To identify the dominant thematic patterns which are used in *Hespress* news articles and their readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration.

O. 2. To describe the frequency of the recurrent themes about the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress'* news articles and readers' comments.

O. 3. To reveal the underlying ideologies that reside in *Hespress'* discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration and explain how they relate to the wider social context.

4. Research questions

The aim of this study is to explore the thematic choices used by *Hespress* news articles and their readers' comments while representing the issue of irregular migration. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

Q. 1. Which dominant themes are used in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration?

Q. 2. With what intensity do the irregular migration themes occur in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

Q. 3. To what extent does *Hespress* discursive representation of the irregular migration issue align with Morocco's geopolitical agendas?

5. Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions addressed above, the following hypotheses are formulated as predictions to the way the issue of irregular migration is represented on *Hespress*:

H. 1. The dominant themes in *Hespress* news articles are Human Rights, Politics Theme, and Integration while Blaming the Government, Economic Burden and Threat themes are dominant in the readers' comments.

H. 2. The Human Rights theme has the highest frequency in the news articles while Blaming the Government theme has the highest frequency in the readers' comments.

H. 3. *Hespress* humanitarian representation of the irregular migration issue aligns with Morocco's geopolitical agenda.

6. Significance of the study

This study accumulates its significance from its findings which will contribute to the advancement of irregular migration discourse and e-newspapers' communication by adding more information to the literature. The study will also inform the work of future researchers, migration advocates and news makers to reflect more responsibly about the language they use while reporting on irregular migration. This study will help develop awareness and raise consciousness related to the ideological and hegemonic properties which are inherent in news discourse.

In terms of originality, to the best of our knowledge, this research is the first to critically analyse the language of an e-newspaper and its readers' comments in the Moroccan context in the way they represent the issue of irregular migration. The vast media coverage of the issue of irregular migration in the Moroccan news media makes it a very relevant and timely topic to explore.

In terms of this study's diagnostic aspect, the use of a multidisciplinary approach that cuts across discourse, migration and news communication provides an innovative lens to understand the representation of irregular migration in the Moroccan context. This study offers a combination of linguistic and social analyses of the issue of irregular migration with the aim of providing a full picture of how the event is represented from the news institution (*Hespress*) perspective as well as from the general public's (its readers). The study findings will attempt to provide evidence to support the claim that news media do not simply reflect the social reality but articulate and reproduce dominant ideologies in representing certain

events. Accordingly, this study will contribute to the understanding of the ideological role of language within news discourse in constructing representations in a society.

7. Methodological approach

To meet the objectives of this study and reach a comprehensive understanding of how *Hespress* and its readers represent the issue of irregular migration, a qualitative research is conducted. Qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meanings that come from social experiences or human problems (Creswell, 2013). This research focuses on exploring issues that occur in natural settings and study them in all their complexity in order to gain a deeper understanding of their manifest and latent meanings. Moreover, the topic of irregular migration representation by news media, which is chosen for this study, is complex and multi-dimensional; therefore, the qualitative research design is appropriate to capture its complex different layers.

The analysis starts by a Thematic Analysis of the news articles and readers' comments with the aim of identifying and extracting recurrent patterns of meaning or themes which are used to represent the issue of irregular migration in the sampled news articles and readers' comments. Then, Quantitative Content Analysis is conducted with the aim of quantifying the thematic patterns in order to reveal their intensity of occurrence in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. After that, Fairclough's (1992) CDA framework is conducted for an in-depth examination and interpretation of *Hespress* discourse with the aim of uncovering any hidden ideologies or unequal power relations by relating the text to its context. This framework will provide the necessary analytical tools to explore how knowledge and power are constituted and also naturalised in social relations. This critical discourse study is undertaken in order to better understand how language impacts social representations. By relating the emerging themes to wider social context, this study helps to explain how the themes that have emerged in *Hespress* align or not with Morocco's geopolitical agendas. Thus, Fairclough's (1992) CDA framework is chosen as the most appropriate tool to explore how the issue of irregular migration is represented in *Hespress* news articles and their corresponding readers' comments. This framework puts emphasis not only on the formal

aspects of language use, but also places an emphasis on the social actions accomplished by language users communicating within the social context.

In this qualitative study, the researcher has resorted to the application of more than one method in order to better answer the research questions. This means that there is a combination or triangulation[5] of different methods; namely, Thematic Analysis, Quantitative Content Analysis, and CDA. Since each of these methods has its strengths and weaknesses, it is very convenient to adopt more than one method as they will complement each other. This triangulation of methods will allow a broader interpretation of the texts and the context in which they appear. In other words, though this study adheres mainly to a qualitative research methodology, the need to address the data in terms of its manifest and as well as its latent content often invites the incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. While qualitative methods help in exploring the deep meanings in communication, quantitative content analysis helps in identifying the frequencies or number of times certain concepts have occurred in texts. Therefore, the two methods, qualitative and quantitative, are directed towards the same point of investigation. Quantifying the data by using a quantitative research design also gives the chance for a more objective and scientific research. Quantitative research design provides higher levels of reliability and credibility of the research findings through providing some numerical and statistical knowledge. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods to approach the research questions, this study has got a powerful analytical framework as it benefits from both approaches. Additionally, because of the complex nature of this study, one individual method would be insufficient to answer the research questions and analyse the findings. Therefore, the triangulation of the three methods is adopted in order benefit from the strong points of each method and to mitigate the weaknesses in the individual methods. This triangulation also gives quality to this research by further raising the degree of validity and reliability. Thus, the combination of the three methods allows the two research approaches, qualitative and quantitative, to complement each other which helps the researcher to benefit from the advantages of both methods (Creswell, 2009).

[5]- The importance of integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods has been raised by researchers. See (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007)

8. Limitations and delimitations

While this research has some major findings, it also has its share of limitations. Despite all the efforts made in the elaboration of this study, there are still a number of inconsistencies. As this is one of the first comprehensive studies of this nature, looking at how *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments are used for the representation of the issue of irregular migration in Morocco during the time frame 2013-2018, it is inevitably limited to some extent.

First, only one electronic newspaper, *Hespress*, was selected to represent an array of electronic newspapers in Morocco. However, as scholarship evolves, future research may focus on other Moroccan e-newspapers in order to explore other forms of language at work on their representation of the issue of irregular migration. To widen the scope of this research, future research can even be expanded to other Moroccan mass media.

Second, the semiotic aspect of the newspaper articles is not covered. Despite their important role in conveying a message to the reader, images which exist in the news articles are not subject to analysis because including the visual component in the analysis would require other different methodologies that are not considered feasible because of time and space constraints. Therefore, further studies can examine the visual component of e-newspapers.

Third, a limitation of online commenting is the anonymity and the use of pseudonyms of *Hespress* users which makes it difficult to contact them for ethnographic use. Because of that anonymity, there is no easy way to contact all of the users about their posts. This can be a limitation of being an outside observer which could have still caused oversight of subtle social cues, interactions, and intended meanings. To avoid this limitation, further research and interviews with the commenters themselves could be done about their own interpretations and meanings of their comments which could be very significant.

Fourth, the media analysis is situated within a particular timeframe in history from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018. Thus, investigating a different period of time could produce different results. So this study fails to analyse the representation of migrants during other significant timeframes.

Fifth, the eclectic nature of CDA is also criticised for lack of rigour in research, in terms of researcher position, choice of theoretical framework, and accusations of 'cherry picking' examples that suit the researcher's ideological interpretation (Meyer, 2001; Wodak, 2001).

Further research might also explore other different discursive strategies than those chosen in this thesis and investigate larger data.

9. Outline of the chapters

The structure of this thesis will be presented in this section to give the reader an overview of the thesis as a whole. The thesis starts by a general introductory opening that describes the context of the study, highlights its relevance and indicates its purpose that the rest of the chapter delves into. A discussion of the research rationale, research objectives, and the significance of the study are also highlighted. The general introduction also gives a general overview of the scope of the study and the methodology used to achieve the aims and objectives set forward by the researcher. Some limitations and delimitations are also introduced. The section ends with a brief outline of the organisation of the thesis and the remaining chapters.

Chapter One presents the literature review of the various disciplinary areas contextualising the research. There is reference to the representation of irregular migration in the national and international levels which helps to place this work within the context of what has already been known about it. There is also reference to news discourse, e-newspapers and their production and consumption. In the theoretical framework, which provides a solid background to the whole study, there is reference to Systemic Functional Linguistic as a linguistic theory, some critical theories such as Critical Discourse Analysis, and some media communication theories such as Agenda Setting and Active Audience Theories. This theoretical account about e-newspapers communication and irregular migration discursive representations attempts to delineate the scope of news discourse and define its related concepts. This review consists of sections and subsections which explain and outline the key concepts such as news discourse, e-newspapers, irregular migration representation.

Chapter Two is dedicated to the methodology adopted to answer the research questions and meet the research aims and objectives. It outlines the methodology used in the assessment of *Hespress* representation of irregular migration by analysing its thematic choices. It presents both the methods and material used.The chapter begins by presenting the research questions followed by a detailed description of the research design and analytical framework. The chapter also provides a detailed description of the collected and examined data that is examined and the data collection and sampling processes.

Chapter Three is devoted to the analysis and results of the various thematic patterns at play in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. It provides a thematic analysis, followed by qualitative content analysis and then CDA for an interpretation of the texts.

Chapter Four involves the discussion of the research findings reported in Chapter Three. The chapter provides answers to the research questions. It also provides the implications drawn from the findings of the study. It ends by highlighting some of the shortcomings and limitations of the research and making suggestions and recommendations for future research.

This thesis ends with a general conclusion which synthesises the whole line of inquiry. It projects a focused overview of the addressed issues during the assessment of *Hespress*' discourse performance, methodological management and results.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Introduction

The aim of the present chapter is to situate this study in the context of its related literature and academic traditions with the aim of developing a theoretical and conceptual framework that examines news discourse. This dissertation aims to examine news media discourse, mainly e-newspapers and their readers' comments when representing the issue of irregular migration. Therefore, the relevant theories and key concepts needed for the analysis are reviewed, such as: migration discourse, news discourse with its production and consumption research, and Critical Discourse Analysis.

1.1. The contextual background of the study

This section includes the contextual background of the study. It provides an objective and thorough summary of the relevant available literature mainly about irregular migration representation and news discourse. The concept of migration can be broadly described as the movement of people from one place to another. Those involved in this kind of movement are generally referred to as migrants. The consideration of factors such as motivation to migrate and length of stay, however, has led to further distinctions within the general term migrant along two main axes: first, voluntary versus involuntary; and second, short term versus long term. Voluntary migrants include sojourners such as people studying abroad, and immigrants who tend to stay in their host countries for longer periods of time. Involuntary migrants include long- or short-term refugees who are forced to leave their places of origin due to, for example, ideology-based persecution.

1.1.1. Irregular migration in the international context

The migration of individuals across the globe has been a feature of world history and continues to be an aspect of contemporary life. Lately, however, the migratory flows have become more complex and less predictable. In today's world, the number of irregular migrants fleeing from war and instability has hit an all-time high number of people being on the run. The increasing nature of irregular migration phenomenon makes it one of the most polarizing political issues in the world. Consequently, numerous studies have been

investigating the power of language in representing minority groups such as irregular migrants in the news media like Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017).

Many studies have been investigating news discourse about irregular migration representation. The notion of representations is central to this study. For Fairclough (1995), "any part of any text (from the media or from elsewhere) will be simultaneously representing, setting up identities, and setting up relations" (p. 5). He suggests that ideologies are "representations which contribute to the constitution, reproduction and transformation of social relations of power and domination" (Fairclough, 2006, p. 23). Fairclough (2006) further explains that:

> Whenever one representation is selected over other available ones, or whenever identities or relations are constructed in one way rather than other, the questions can be asked: a) what are the social origins of the option? […] b) what motivations are there for making this choice? C) what is the effect of this choice […]? (p. 15).

Previous academic research and literature investigations on the topic of media representation of minority groups have shown that there has been a binary framing of these people as either objects of humanitarian concern, or objects of security risk (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017). At the international level a delicate balancing act broadly takes place between discourses of the wanted (skilled, rich migrants) and discourses of the unwanted (poor migrants). Meanwhile, the general focus of those in powerful positions at the international scale is to prevent and combat illegal immigration (Guild, 2004, p. 3). This focus largely ignores broader governmental and capitalist processes that cause people to migrate without official permission.

An example of an important study was conducted by Torkington and Ribeiro (2019) which showed that irregular migrants are impersonalized, passivized, and are not given a voice. Torkington and Ribeiro (2019) aim to shed light on the role of news media

discourse on the shaping of social representations of groups of people who are not considered to be part of 'Us' and are therefore positioned as 'outsiders' from the starting point of news. This notion of 'in-group' and 'out-group' is also tackled by Wodak (2019) who states that irregular migrants are seen as not belonging to the European imagined community, and therefore as not worthy of becoming Europeans. Similarly, Horsti (2016) also distinguishes between two types of frames: migrants as threats or as victims. The first frame can be subdivided into three parts: "a physical threat to a society and its security, an economic threat often in the form of suspected welfare exploitation, and a cultural threat of invading values" (Horsti, 2016, p.2).

In general, representations of irregular migrants tend to sit within complex discourses of problematization and victimization within which they are predominantly framed as either objects of fear: potential terrorists and security risks, and a threat to the Western way of life, or victims: helpless, suffering and innocent people, seeking safety from war and persecution. Previous studies of the media representation of migration identify them as ambivalent media figures; that is to say, there are positive and negative representations. On the one hand, they emerge as victims of geopolitical conflict in need of protection; on the other hand, however, they appear as a threat to the hosting community. This symbolic instability of the irregular migrants, shifting between victim and threat, lies at the heart of critical scholarship on irregular migration representation. In what follows, the literature which points to these two prominent media representations of irregular migrants, problematization and victimization representations is presented.

According to (Spencer, 2014), representation is the social process of making sense of different systems within a culture. It refers both to the products of the process of representing and to the active process. For Spencer (2014), the process of interpreting signs is central to how "we see other people and ourselves" and that by critically exploring those commonplace representations it is possible to demonstrate that the accepted 'natural' order of things is really the product of culture (p. 11). Since representations about irregular migrants are created, power dynamics are translated and reproduced, through language.

1.1.1.1. Problematization representation

Problematization discourse constructs irregular migrants as problematic and as a potential security risk that threatens the hosting society (Ibrahim, 2005). This stance is closely linked to the need to protect the country's borders from the irregular migrants. The discourse of sovereignty is often used as an exclusion strategy by the media, which rely on categorizations of refugees and asylum seekers as problematic, illegal and, therefore, a threat (Pickering, 2001).

One area of consensus among scholars is that immigrants are generally constructed as a problem and more specifically frequently depicted as being involved in crime. Many scholars have studied the construction of migrants and refugees as a threat to the hosting society including Gilbert (2013), Goodman and Speer (2007), Ibrahim (2005), and van Dijk (2000). Securitization or probelamization discourses aim to demonise irregular migrants by portraying them as illegal, bogus and a threat to 'Our' way of life (McNevin, 2007). The critique of threat representation forms part of a broader critique of agency in the representation of irregular migrants. It draws upon two features of agency: the attribution of sovereignty, which construes irregular migrants as active and hopeful individuals rather than destitute bodies, and the attribution of malevolence of the irregular migrants' will to harm. Waever's (2000) definition of securitization is goes as such:

> Security is the speech act where a securitizing actor designates a threat to a specified referent object and declares an existential threat implying a right to use extraordinary means to fence it off. The issue is securitized – becomes a security issue, a part of what is 'security' – if the relevant audience accepts this claim and thus grants to the actor a right to violate rules that otherwise would bind (p. 251).

Securitization is fundamentally a discursive and intersubjective practice, in which a particular object is produced as threatening and particular actions are legitimized.

1.1.1.2. Victimization representation

On the other side of the spectrum, there is a victimization or humanitarian representation of irregular migrants by showing them as victims, worth of empathy, solidarity and humanitarian help (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a). Although the victimization representation of irregular migrants is less theorized, it is the process whereby migrants are presented as victims either of their culture by criminal smugglers, or by some regimes. Within such discourse, irregular migrants are represented as vulnerable victims, sad, and distressed individuals (Wright, 2002, 2004).

In mediated representations, humanitarian understanding of the migrant's unfortunate condition is evoked in emotional, gendered, and personal treatment of the story. A recent research analysing the European media coverage of the refugee crisis in 2015 found that refugees were represented as anonymous, unskilled, helpless victims - masses of people distraught, vulnerable, helpless, without political agency, reliant on Western aid agencies to save them (Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017). For Silk (2000), there is a number of ethical concerns around media representations of humanitarian subjects. First, media coverage of humanitarian disasters often depicts the Global South as dependent on a Global North response, while ignoring the wider structural injustices involved. Second, there is a tendency to represent people as passive victims rather than as active agents, raising questions about who is doing the representing and who gets to speak (Silk, 2000). Thus, as Szorenyi (2018) argues, people affected by humanitarian crises become framed as the distant suffering other, objects of compassion who need to be saved by 'Us'.

However, such victimization representations have been widely criticised for portraying humanitarian subjects as passive, helpless victims and in need for humanitarian aid and as such discourses risk encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that may speak more about ourselves as humanitarian actors than the very people we purport to

help (Chouliaraki, 2013b). A good illustration is the coverage of the Ethiopian famine (1984-1985) which depicted people with emaciated bodies with bloated stomachs, protruding ribs, half-naked and begging for help, or starving children with flies in their eyes (Chouliaraki, 2010). Although such pictures attracted international attention and donations, they were widely criticised for violating the identity and culture of the individuals depicted, and for producing and perpetuating a patronising, orientalist and dehumanising view of the Global South (Cohen, 2001). By the 1990s, NGOs tended to favour more positive representation that highlighted the agency, dignity and resilience of humanitarian subjects, and sought to encourage solidarity with distant others based on social justice rather than charity (Dogra, 2015; Orgad, 2013). In other words, humanitarian discourses can oversimplify representations of irregular migrants who are framed as powerless, passive, suffering, vulnerable victims in need of saving by the West (Escobar, 1995).

It is important to critically analyse and deconstruct the meaning within humanitarian discourse to uncover the power dynamics involved in the representation of others as it has been criticised for encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that may speak more about ourselves as humanitarian actors than the very people we purport to help (Chouliaraki, 2013). The critique of victimhood representations takes its starting point from two features of irregular migrants representation: massification, which depicts them as a multitude of indistinguishable individuals (Berman, 2016, p.102) and passivization where they are portrayed as in need, deprived of food, clothes or shelter which contributes to the de-humanisation of the migrants.

Therefore, the social constructivism of irregular migrants as powerless vulnerability and agentive malevolence shows the ambivalence of their representation as either a sufferer or a threat, but never a human being.

1.1.2. Irregular migration in the national context

Because of its geographical location within the Euro-African migration zone system, only fourteen kilometres away from Spain, Morocco has turned from a country of emigration

and transit to a destination of immigration. According to Bilgili and Weyel (2009), since around 2000 the numbers of migrants have grown dramatically in Morocco in response to civil wars, political unrest and economic downturn. Morocco has become acknowledged a country of emigration as many migrants decide to stay in the country as a second-best option, should their attempt to venture into Europe fail (Lahlou, 2003; De Haas, 2005). The UNHCR estimates that there are about 100,000 migrants and refugees in Morocco (UN DESA, 2019), of which approximately half are female, but no official estimates of the number of irregular migrants exist and some estimates suggest there are several hundred thousand irregular migrants (El Ghazouani, 2019).

1.1.2.1. Security-based representation

During the period 1990-2012, the Moroccan news media took the official governmental side justifying the country's security policy by considering the country as a victim of its geographical location (Natter, 2011). In 2000, Morocco adopted a security approach Law 02-03, criminalizing irregular migrants and establishing heavy fines and prison penalties for irregular migrants. This law provided a legal basis for the detention and deportation of irregular migrants from Morocco. There was also international negative media coverage about Morocco's mistreatment of sub-Saharan migrants and the widespread of human rights abuses perpetrated against this minority group.

This discourse supported the restrictive policies adopted by the state while neglecting inhumane deportations. Editorials by other political parties, such as the Islamist Justice and Development Party, connected the migrants with moral decadence and the spread of diseases such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) (Martinez, 2009). A large number of newspapers simply reflected the official propaganda like Le Matin and L'Opinion or adopted a xenophobic stance when treating this issue like the regional weekly Achamal which had as a headline of one of its issues 'Black Crickets invade the north of Morocco'. Later, Maroc Hebdo headlined 'The Black Peril' on the front page of a feature on irregular migration. Local newspaper articles were the most xenophobic as

they reflected a refusal of the presence of migrants in Morocco, and echoed the European perception of the threat of invasion (De Haas, 2007; Martinez, 2009).

Reports about the mistreatment of migrants, racism and deportations were scarce. A turning point occurred in 2005 when the Moroccan and Spanish authorities were implicated in the death of at least fifteen sub-Saharan migrants while trying to scale the fences separating Morocco from Melilla and Ceuta. Local independent newspapers, such as Telquel and Le Journal Hebdomadaire, reported the mistreatment against migrants (Martinez, 2009). The crisis of 2005 attracted worldwide media attention which tarnished Morocco's image on an international level making it "the dirtiest affair that Moroccan diplomacy ever had to face" (Natter, 2013, p. 22). The 2005 crisis mobilised many organisations to provide legal and moral support to migrants such as Association Beniznassen pour la Culture le Développement et la Solidarité in Oujda. However, the state did not recognise organisations created by migrants. Moreover, the ominous context of law 02-03 considered helping migrants a crime leading to the arrest and harassment of many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) members.

As a result, there was a negative international media coverage about Morocco's treatment of sub-Saharan migrants, as well a series of disturbing reports prepared by the Groupe antiracist d'Accompagnement et de Defense des Etrangers et Migrants (GADEM) and the Association Marocaine Des Droits Humains, Médecins sans frontières, and the National Council of Human Rights documenting widespread human rights abuses perpetrated against this population.

1.1.2.2. Humanitarian-based representation

This period starting from September 2013 is marked by the Moroccan news media refraining from publishing messages inciting people to intolerance and xenophobia against foreigners. On September 10, 2013, Morocco's King Mohamed VI held a meeting with his Minister of Home Affairs and a number of human rights representatives to initiate a new migration and asylum policy for irregular migrants in the kingdom. The plan was to adopt a humanitarian approach to migration and asylum that promises better protections, a

comprehensive strategy to battle human trafficking, and a regularization program that would help irregular migrants obtain residency permits. There was also the creation of a ministerial department devoted to migration affairs, the launch of a regularization program for undocumented individuals living in Morocco, the distribution of the first round of refugee and asylum seeker cards, and the adoption of the 2014 National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum by the Council of Government. The government also encouraged different institutions both private and public to pursue programmes facilitating this integration (Debbarh, 2014b).

1.1.3. The new migration policy 2013

On September 10, 2013, Morocco's King Mohamed VI held a meeting with his Minister of Home Affairs and a number of human rights representatives to initiate a new migration and asylum policy for foreign residents of the kingdom, especially aimed at irregular migrants. Therefore, in a joint communiqué released by the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Justice, the King called for a new vision for a national migration policy that is humanist in its philosophy, responsible in its approach, and pioneering at the regional level. This policy marked an end to the security-based policy adopted in the 1990s. It also came after Morocco was subjected to intense international criticism over its mis-treatment of Sub-Saharan migrants. Moreover, the National Council for Human Rights also issued a brief report, in which it recommended that the government should establish a policy of integrating refugees and their families, in terms of housing, health, schooling, training, and employment. The new migration policy was considered a turning point in Morocco's human rights approach to irregular migrants, mainly sub-Saharan Africans from countries such as Mali, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, but also refugees from Libya and Syria.

The new migration policy plan aimed to ensure equal opportunities for the migrants, improving their access to economic, cultural and political rights changing the perception of migration in society. The government encouraged public and private institutions to pursue programmes facilitating this integration (Debbarh, 2014b).

The new migration policy is founded on three main objectives:

- To facilitate the integration of the irregular migrants into the Moroccan society
- To grant the right of asylum to a greater number of asylum seekers in Morocco.
- To manage migration flows in a way that maintains respect for human rights.

By the end of 2014, the final date of the first exceptional regularization operation, the number of validated requests for regularization reached 17,916 out of a total of 27,332 requests, as noted above. A second operation followed between 2016 and 2017, involving around 24,000 irregular migrants. In terms of asylum, however, the UNHCR has recognized relatively few refugees in Morocco. There were 853 UNHCR recognized refugees, with 2,178 asylum seekers' cases pending as of September 2013. Concerning the other objectives of the new initiative, the Ministry in Charge of the Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs worked out a National Strategy of Immigration and Asylum. This strategy, adopted by a Government Council held in December 2014, aims at ensuring better social integration of immigrants and better management of the migration flow within the framework.

The issuing of new migration policy also comes in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[6] (UDHR), a document crafted in 1948 by representatives of the UN General Assembly, which has been historically hailed as the prevailing doctrine for human rights discourse. It claims itself to be a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations in so far as it acknowledges that recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

1.1.4. The new migration policy and Morocco's geopolitics

The launch in 2013 of a new migration policy marks a major paradigm shift: Morocco henceforth conceives of itself as a country of immigration, no longer only a country of

[6]- The Declaration represents the first global expression of rights to which all human beings are entitled. It consists of 30 articles which have been elaborated in subsequent international treaties, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions and laws.

transit. This shift in policy orientation is especially significant because it breaks with the security-based logic of migration management that had prevailed until then. The new Moroccan policy was presented as humanist, global and coherent (MCMREAM, 2016). It included two regularisation campaigns to ameliorate the irregular legal status of several tens of thousands of foreigners in an irregular situation and providing them with the necessary means to live in dignity.

The new policy was accompanied by the adoption of the National Immigration and Asylum Strategy through which Morocco expressed its desire to ensure that foreigners benefit from the same rights as those enjoyed by Moroccan citizens. It is on this basis, for example, that regularised immigrants were granted the right to engage in a professional activity without being subject to the principle of national preference; they could send their children to school, seek medical care, or create associations or cooperatives under the same conditions as Moroccans. This new policy has been widely welcomed as an important symbolic break with European leadership in migration policy (Cherti & Collyer, 2015).

Morocco's migration policy has been employed in the service of diplomatic objectives on the global stage. Its post-2013 migration policy has been heavily publicised globally. This has helped build Morocco's reputation as a progressive leader on migration issues and improve its global status, including its credentials to host major migration events such as the Marrakech Intergovernmental Conference to endorse the Global Compact for Migration in December 2018. This global influence, combined with the perception of Morocco as a trusted partner and ally of both African and European states, is a significant achievement, and one that is based on the use of migration as a platform for external engagement. Additionally, through its strategic use of migration policies to build alliances, attract financial resources, and develop credibility as a trusted regional and global player, Morocco offers some useful insights into the political economy of migration as a foreign policy strategy.

Morocco's migration policy reflects the interconnectedness of foreign policy priorities, desired reform and the reality of domestic politics. Morocco has positioned

itself as a counterterrorism and migration ally for Europe and at the same time leaning toward the African Union, and African markets. The primary purpose of Morocco's migration agenda appears to be oriented towards achieving specific foreign policy objectives, as represented by its positioning under the ministry responsible for foreign affairs. These foreign policy objectives promote Morocco's development through wide-ranging economic and political gains including the country's geopolitical relations with Africa and Europe.

1.1.4.1. Morocco-Europe geopolitical relations

Morocco has long been a country of emigration since the 1970s; as such, waves of labour seekers crossed to Europe. However, since the 1990s, it has increasingly become a country of transit and a destination for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa. Exact numbers vary, but most organizations posit that around 100,000 migrants and refugees who currently reside in Morocco (UN DESA, 2019). Countries throughout North Africa, especially Morocco, have continuously been labelled Europe's policeman for supporting the EU's externalization of the migration problematic (Kostas, 2017). Morocco often pushes back, at least rhetorically, against this role, but at the same time it uses the migration question as a valuable bargaining chip in its relations with the EU, as well as in bilateral relations with countries like Spain.

Migration policy has been a long-standing component of Morocco's diplomatic relations with the EU and with its member states. The economic benefits of this relationship are substantial for Morocco. The EU, for instance, accounted for two-thirds of its trade exports in 2017, and provided almost three-quarters of foreign direct investment in 2018, as well as billions of Euros in annual remittances from the EU-based Moroccan's diaspora. Given Europe's pressing need to improve migration management at its borders, migration cooperation has certainly been significant in helping Morocco to cultivate a privileged relationship with the EU and with individual member states. These bilateral and multilateral partnerships with EU states have in turn been important for Morocco's

development by facilitating further trade links, investment and access to EU visas for Moroccan citizens.

The security-border control strategy pursued by the EU and implemented elsewhere in countries like Morocco is a slippery slope. The efforts of both the Moroccan civil society groups and the international press to shed light on the human rights abuses that migrants face in Morocco have pushed the EU to fund various initiatives in Morocco to help the most vulnerable migrants. On top of these humanitarian projects, the EU continues to implement the 140 million euro program to support border management and a resumption of negotiations on readmission and visa facilitation with Morocco. Unfortunately, Europe's aid packages and humanitarian initiatives are often overshadowed by the regional politics of securing the border in order to keep them out of the EU and countries of transit like Morocco.

Accordingly, the main objective of Morocco-EU cooperation has been to limit the number of irregular migrants transiting through Morocco towards Europe (Maccanico, 2018). Such bilateral cooperation on migration issues creates opportunities for Morocco to negotiate labour mobility agreements, which enhance legal migration possibilities, prospects for employment and work experience to the benefit of Moroccan people. On-going mobility partnerships include Germany, Spain and Belgium, often as part of a larger package of migration cooperation. These agreements contribute to reducing the pressure the government faces with unemployment and increasing economic difficulties in the country. Migration cooperation with Spain is wide-ranging and has been based on a much wider partnership, including support in the area of economic development and transformation, tackling unemployment, political partnerships, and some opportunities for legal mobility of Moroccan workers or students to Spain through seasonal work contracts or scholarships.

1.1.4.2. Morocco-Africa geopolitical relations

Morocco's aim in strengthening its relations with African countries has played an important role in determining Morocco's migration policies. In Morocco's engagement

with Africa, the new migration policy has contributed to a broader strategy to improve the country's status and influence on the African continent, by helping to project an image of hospitality, fraternity and shared identity with fellow African states, as well as regional leadership. This wider strategy in Africa has pursued valuable political and economic objectives. These include regaining entry and influence in the African Union from 2017, reducing opposition to its contested claim to Western Sahara, and promoting trade and a bid to join the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). These stronger ties with the rest of the continent all help Morocco to position itself as a gateway to Africa for global trade and investment.

The 2014 migration reform process, and especially the regularization programs, aimed to demonstrate openness toward sub-Saharan migration. This aligned with Morocco's foreign policy and economic plans to shift attention toward the continent, a move rooted in the goal of re-joining the African Union (AU) and expanding into African markets. However, Morocco's incoherent foreign policy aims are one potential cause for Morocco's contradictory migration policy. The openness Morocco looks to demonstrate to African countries, both in terms of markets and the movement of people, is often limited by EU pressure to secure the borders and keep migrants and refugees far from Europe's shores.

Hoping to reorient and improve its relationships with sub-Saharan countries, Morocco in 2015 launched the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum; this was to replace the 20-03 law with new policies and procedures to integrate migrants into Moroccan society. This policy seeks to guarantee migrants access to basic services such as education, health care, and labour-market integration. This announcement was considered a turning point in Morocco's human-rights approach to irregular immigrants, mainly sub-Saharan Africans. Morocco remains predisposed to adopt additional policies for receiving sub-Saharan migrants as long as their origin countries continue to support it in its conflict over the Sahara[7].

[7]- Morocco and an indigenous Sahrawi movement backed by Algeria since 1975 have contested ownership of the Moroccan Sahara.

King Mohammed VI spent much of 2016 travelling around Africa to secure support to re-join the AU, offering sizable investments and business deals across the continent. The trips resulted in more than fifty bilateral agreements with African countries and spearheaded talks of Morocco joining the ECOWAS bloc. According to the Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP) Policy Centre, Morocco is currently the second largest African investor in the continent, after South Africa.

Furthermore, Morocco's diplomatic openness toward Africa was also very rooted in seeking African legitimacy for its sovereignty over the disputed Moroccan Sahara. Its re-entry into the AU in January 2017 was described as a diplomatic victory that offered hope for peace building. While Morocco maintains control over the majority of the territory, securing a resolution that is validated by international bodies such as the AU and the UN remains an essential foreign policy goal. Two rounds of UN-brokered peace talks took place in December 2018 between Morocco, Algeria, the Polisario, and Mauritania for the first time in six years.

Morocco's strategic objective of expanding into the African market appears to be succeeding, although important questions remain about their potential membership of ECOWAS. Moroccan exports to African countries increased by around 9 percent every year from 2008 to 2016. Significant foreign direct investment flows have grown by 4.4 percent, and countries like Nigeria, Senegal, Mauritania, and the Ivory Coast have become the principal buyers of Moroccan products on the continent. As economist Fabiani (2018) explains that Morocco's most important long-term goal is to become a trade and production hub that can interface between European, American, and Sub-Saharan African trading blocs.

Morocco's migration policy represented a crucial dimension in this shift toward Africa. Morocco's ambitious regularization program gave residency permits to a large majority of undocumented migrants and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa. The initial program took place in 2014, with a limited appeals process in 2015. A further regularization process took place in 2017. According to the World Bank, more than 25.000 individuals from 116 different countries received one-year residency permits in the

2014 regularization process. The program accepted the applications of all women and children who applied, and the overall acceptance rate was over sixty-five percent. This population came mostly from Senegal, Syria, and Nigeria (Alami, 2014). The second round of regularization was announced in 2017 around the time that Morocco started making overtures to join the ECOWAS economic bloc. The second campaign legalized around 28.000 individuals. This program helped open the door to conversations about reintegration into the AU, economic cooperation, and the free movement of people between Morocco and Western African countries. Yet, according to the Human Rights Watch (HRW), these positive steps were overshadowed by continued police raids, the poor treatment of sub-Saharan migrants across the country, and poor living conditions experienced by many migrants and refugees.

Also, in December 2018, Morocco hosted the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakesh under the sponsorship of the U.N. General Assembly. The Global Compact for Migration (GCM), a non-binding agreement, was signed by 164 countries. Nevertheless, the meeting and the signed pact were points of controversy, with key countries such as the United States, Australia, and Hungary refusing to attend or sign the agreement. Other countries such as Italy, Bulgaria, Israel, and Switzerland remain undecided about the UN migration accord. While the summit and accord were marked by contention, there still remains a consensus that the management of migration flows needs to be addressed. The location of the meeting, in Marrakech, sheds light on the significance of Morocco's role in managing and supporting a new path toward migration reform.

Morocco views itself as bridging the narrative on migration between African and European countries (Ouassif El, 2019) utilising the geopolitical position of the country at the intersection of sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. A crucial part of Morocco's international strategy is linked to its visibility in promoting positive migration and integration discussions at the global level, including co-chairing the 11thsession of the Global Forum for Migration and Development with Germany, playing a role in the negotiation process of the Global Compact on Migration. It also puts a strong emphasis on

championing African migration at the AU. Ahead of Morocco's readmission or reacceptance to the AU, the regularisation of migrants in 2014 and 2016 was used to demonstrate that its treatment of Sub-Saharan African migrants had improved and that the government had taken concrete steps to rectify the negative reports of Morocco's conduct towards migrants (Cherti & Collyer, 2015).

1.1.5. News discourse

News is a late Middle English word which means new information about recent events (Reah, 2002). This definition indicates that news includes any happening anywhere in the world over the last 24 hours. However, according to Fowler (1991), this is not the case since news does not include everything. Decisions about what to include and exclude in a specific newspaper have to be made. These decisions are usually seen as editorial decisions. Editors, among other news producers, include the news items which they consider suitable and of interest to the target audience and exclude those which are of little interest to them. Furthermore, news is managed by many news workers, such as journalists, editors, printers, camera operators, and sound technicians, and is selected to reflect the social and economic interests of the owners of the news institution and the political party whom the owners support. Similarly, Richardson (2007) views the news media to be biased and ideological. He has explained that "language as the medium to do so" and when he has examined the language use or discourse of newspapers he has identified that language is a "non-neutral element" (Richardson, 2007, p. 13). For him:

> Language is social. Language is central to human activity; indeed, it is one of the things that make us human. It is through the use of language that we grant meaning to our actions; equally, it is through our use of language that we can attempt to remove meaning from our actions (p. 10).

Accordingly, the definition of news should be narrowed down to "information about recent events that are of interest to a sufficiently large group, or that may affect the lives of a sufficiently large group" (Reah, 2002, p. 1). That is to say, although news is considered to be objective, as a direct reflection of occurrences, the fact is that it seldom is. All discourse is socially constructed, and the news articles that are published undergo processes of both selection and editing for publication (Fowler, 1991). All discourse reflects upon a set of dominant values in the society in which it is published and as such news tend to reflect proposition that are not necessarily outright stated, but nonetheless dominate the structure of the reports. Fowler (1991) summarizes: "Thus news is a practice, a discourse which, far from neutrally reflecting social reality and empirical facts, intervenes in […] the social construction of reality" (p. 2). Similarly, Fairclough (1995) states that "the ideological work of media language includes particular ways of representing the world and particular constructions of social identities" (p. 12).

According to Bell (1998), in reporting news, journalists do not merely develop articles; instead, they write stories with structure, order, view point and values which, eventually, shape ideas and perceptions of the social realities of the world. This is the rationale behind saying 'news stories', where emphasis is put on the way the event is presented as a structured account (Reah, 2002). Similarly, Fowler (1991) stresses the fact that news are shaped and framed according to their social context. For him, "the media do not simply and transparently report what are newsworthy in themselves. News is the end product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories" (p. 12). In the same vein, Watson and Hill (2012) state that this mediation of information involves selection of what to report, edition of the raw happening, placement of emphasis on some sections and even manipulation of event representation. Accordingly, despite the anticipated neutral stance which is said to be the primary objective of the news media dictated by professional values such as integrity, objectivity, and newsworthiness, news articles and reports, however, play important roles in reproducing power relations and

ideologies. Their content is infused with numerous ideological conceptualizations that hold bias and not only facts (Berger, 1972).

For van Dijk (2012), ethnic beliefs, stereotypes and prejudices are not innate but socially acquired, mainly through the public discourses of powerful elites; these powerful elites are politicians, journalists, scholars, teachers, and writers. However, the public discourses of these elites would not reach the audience without the media. Elite discourse and opinions become influential through media. This is particularly true given the one-way flow of information from producer to consumer of the traditional media: "powerful news producers are seen as a dominant force in forming and shaping public opinion" (Boyd, 2018, p. 3).

Bell's (1991) work on language in news media discusses the structure of traditional news media, using the term inverted pyramid to describe the style of news texts. Comparing news structure to Labov's (1972) narrative structure, he sets out how news texts move from the main points of the news event, or the abstract, through progressively less important information. This structure has been used in most forms of traditional print news media and is therefore the schema of news media that consumers of news possess. By the same token, Herman and Chomsky (1994) believe that the news media interpret the key messages provided by policymakers to the public which means that there is news bias in every newspaper report and that nothing is reported fairly. News bias and ideology can be detected by analysing the selection of sources that are given more voice in the story. For example, bias can be seen when a journalist chooses a special lexis or diction, and when a news story presents only one side that is the reporter's. Bias in news is heavily linked to over-dependency on authority and government officials as sources.

Both Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (2008) see the news media as a powerful player in the control and dissemination of knowledge and information, particularly in the way it chooses to represent and emphasise certain types of stories over others. They consider news reports to be socially and culturally constructed, rather than a neutral or objective representation of the facts. What is considered to be 'newsworthy' and therefore

reported will always depend on who is interviewed and whose opinions and commentary is sought, what kinds of images are used, and how that information is recontextualised (van Dijk, 2008). Thus, the media does more than simply report the news; it is part of the "machinery of representation" (Klocker & Dunn, 2003, p. 74), which plays a central and powerful role in the dissemination of information, producing and reproducing particular narratives that influence the way the world is seen (van Dijk, 1997).

1.1.5.1. News production

The producer of a certain text is, generally speaking, responsible for the thoughts expressed and the messages intended behind his/her text, or utterance (Bell, 1991). With news production, however, it is difficult to identify who is responsible for the thoughts expressed and the words used. Unlike other forms of social communication, the forms and contents of the news are seldom the product of one individual. Many hands, such as writers, editors, chief reporters, printers and camera operators, contribute to moulding, modifying, shaping and producing the news with which the audience is presented. Bell (1991) uses the term 'news workers' to describe all those involved in overseeing, writing and editing the news.

For Herman and Chomsky (1994), news producers' main concern is to seize audiences' interest and grab their attention to the news content they disseminate via different media outlets. They have the power to frame and shape the issues according to a discourse that suits the interest of power holders. This is particularly implicative in regards to social change, because through the media's selective coverage of topics and the framing of these issues, media is able to constitute their audience's concerns and worries, and in doing so, keep them within the appropriate range of permissible ideas that do not upset power relations. What actually constitutes a news event is left largely up to the discretion of the media institution. News text producers have the power to act as a gatekeeper[8], or filter, in the selection of newsworthy stories (McQuail, 2010). As such, power holders within the media are able to decide what the general population is allowed

[8]- Gatekeeping is a process by which information is filtered to the public by the media. This process determines which information to be disseminated and which is not.

to see, hear, and think about (Herman & Chomsky, 1994). What any given news media outlet may deem as a newsworthy event or issue will vary depending in large part on how those events or issues fit or can be made to fit their agenda.

van Dijk (2008) emphasizes that the press is heterogeneous and that the contextual variations should be taken into account in studies of representations conveyed in news articles. According to him, detailed context analysis should be provided for each newspaper in terms of education, social position, status, and ethnic beliefs of owners, editors, and reporters. He also argues that news production is a complex set of social and discursive interactions that can correspond to a particular editorial agenda. The study of these different contexts of writing can reveal that some of the newspapers' editors are inclined to represent migrants in a certain way rather than in another. For example, Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) show that the conservative press are responsible for creating and maintaining a moral panic around migrants.

Accordingly, the construction of the news, spoken and written, is not merely the outcome of news producers who present and modify the social values and meanings on the news, it is also a product of discourse. The notion of discourse is used to indicate the relationship between a specific form of language use, spoken or written, and the notions of society and social relations. Kress (1989) defines discourses as "systematically-organized sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution" (p. 7). Meanings and values are expressed and implemented through language, which reflects the social relations, political and economic interests of the powerful groups, elites and institutions in society. The social situations determine how people use certain words and expressions in specific places and at specific times. At the same time, discourse displays the social relations, meanings and values expressed in these social situations. Discourse also defines and delimits what is possible to say, or to do, and what is not. According to Kress (1989):

> A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organises and gives structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. In that it provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions (p. 7).

That is to say, news discourse constructs the meanings of texts and utterances irrespective of its producers. Discourse influences the way writers write and speakers speak. Writers and speakers do not write and speak outside the forms and meanings of a given discourse. News discourse does not only construct the social meanings, it also constructs reality. It enforces, reinforces and implements the human experience and shapes the world which we live in (Fairclough 1992). It is what Berger and Luckmann (1966) refer to as the "social construction of reality", which means that reality is socially constructed by social practices, such as discourse. Discourse, as such, is never neutral or value-free, but deeply implicated in constructing opinions, values and the way people perceive the world (Fowler 1991). Similarly, news discourse is not a value-free presentation of facts. Fowler (1991) states that:

> News is a representation of the world in language; because language is a semiotic code, it imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented… News is a representation in this sense of construction; it is not a value-free reflection of 'facts' (p. 7).

News discourse is thus "reported from some particular angle" because it is controlled by economic and social institutions which express and implement their social meanings and values through language (Fowler, 1991, p. 10). In his words, Fowler (1991) maintains that:

> Because the institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated, all news is always reported from some particular angle. The structure of the medium encodes significances which derive from the perspective positions within society of the publishing or broadcasting organizations. In fact, what is being claimed about news can equally be claimed about any representational discourse. Anything that is said or written about the world is articulated form a particular ideological position (p. 10).

This quote further stress the fact that the production and construction of the news is not simply the outcome of news producers who present and modify the social values and meanings on the news, it is also a product of discourse or social context surrounding the text.

1.1.5.2. News reception

The reception of the news is as important as its production. Audiences, readers and listeners, contribute to the construction of the news by comprehending and interpreting the meanings in discourse. Audience reception research was initially conceptualised by the British sociologist and cultural studies scholar, Stuart Hall (1973, 1980). In fact, Hall (1973) made a shift from a technical to a semiotic approach to messages, as messages are no longer bullets that are directed from media sources to audiences, but the encoded message can be decoded and made sense of in various ways by different audiences. Thus, Hall's (1973) semiotic framework "moves away from a behaviouristic stimulus-response model to an interpretive framework, where all effects depend on an interpretation of media messages" (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 3).

Audience research, in this study, is approached from an active audience perspective which is concerned with exploring audiences' active choices, uses and interpretations of news content, and is based on the premise that existing knowledge and ideologies impact the selection and interpretation of media messages (Hall, 1980). Before the conception of audience reception, audiences were conceived as passive consumers of media content, vulnerable to the ideologies presented to them (Madianou, 2009). Active audience theory posits that audiences are neither passive nor homogenous; rather, they are diverse and active appropriators of meaning. It argues that different social and cultural groups interpret media texts in various ways depending on their personal experience, socio-cultural background, ideological beliefs and repertories.

According to Fowler (1996), the comprehension and interpretation of news discourse is not simply a decoding process of what is present in texts or utterances. Readers and listeners do not just read letters, or hear sounds; they build them into words, phrases and sentences and then recognize the meanings of what is written and said. Fowler (1996) calls this process of discourse comprehension as a bottom-up model. The audience is not merely restricted to what is in discourse, they are powered by expectations about what they hear or read. This process is referred to as top-down comprehension and it runs alongside the recognition of smaller units of discourse; such as, sounds, letters, words, phrases and sentences, in order to construct meanings. It is as Aitchison (1992) puts it:

> Decoding is not the simple matter it was once thought to be. People do not passively "register" the sentences uttered by a speaker. Instead they hear what they expect to hear. They actively reconstruct both the sounds and syntax of an utterance in accordance with their expectations (p. 205).

In other words, readers and hearers can react to the linguistic features in discourse and simultaneously deploy their linguistic competence and knowledge of the world in

order to construct the meanings of texts and utterances. The processing of the vast stores of knowledge about the world is known as encyclopaedic knowledge (Fowler, 1996). Since individuals can experience different knowledge of the world, their encyclopaedic knowledge is bound to be different from one another. However, individuals are also social members of society who share collective views, beliefs and opinions. These collective social beliefs are known as social representations, or conventional representations. They include shared ideas, beliefs, attitudes and ideologies which are mainly expressed through discourse and language (Fowler, 1996). Organization and packaging of these collective views and the pre-existing knowledge shared among social groups are what Fowler (1996) refers to as schemata.

By the same token, Hall's (1973) encoding/decoding model of communication postulates that the meaning of a text is not inherent within the text itself, but is created within the relationship between the text and the reader. It is a form of textual analysis that focuses on the scope of negotiation and opposition by the audience. That is to say, a 'text', be it a book, a movie or a picture is not simply passively accepted by the audience; rather, the reader or viewer interprets the meanings of the text based on one's individual, cultural background and life experiences (Hall, 1973). Hall's model is rooted in the premise that audiences are free to interpret media texts in any way because media messages are discursively constructed and audiences encompass various social backgrounds and identities that enable them to receive texts differently. Hall's model has been considered a turning point in audience research and has been adopted by many scholars mainly the news audience reception research which is an important point in this study.

The comprehension and interpretation of discourse in general and news discourse in particular is not simply a 'decoding process' of what is present in texts or utterances (Fowler, 1996). Readers and listeners do not just read letters, or hear sounds, build them into words, phrases and sentences and then recognize the meanings of what is written and said. This process of discourse comprehension is referred to as bottom-up model (Fowler, 1996). The audience is not merely restricted to 'what is there' in discourse, they are empowered by expectations about what they hear or read. This process is referred to as

top-down comprehension and it runs alongside the recognition of smaller units of discourse; that is to say, sounds, letters, words, phrases and sentences, in order to construct meanings.

1.1.6. Audience participation in digital platforms

With the rise of the digital era, traditional news faced many challenges in transmitting the messages to their audiences. This change in delivering news to certain target groups brought the transformation of the top-down model of journalism, with writers as gatekeepers of information, to a decentralized system where the audience have a more active role in the formation of news. That is to say, the rigid gatekeepers and old-hierarchies pervaded the mass-mediated age are shifting as now there is more participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006). For Jenkins (2006), new trends are developing in the media industry. While gatekeepers and hierarchies still exist, there is now less room to differentiate between those producing media and those consuming them and that 'read only' media culture is being opened up for more 'read/write' participation among media audiences. According to Habermas (1991), digital platforms provide a global, low cost and instantaneous system of two-to-many communications. A communication system that promises greater participation and freedom of information access that can promote democracy as it enhances citizens engagement in the public sphere which, according to Habermas (1991) is:

> By 'public sphere' we mean first of all a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed. Access to the public sphere is open to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere is constituted in every conversation in which private persons come together to form a public. When the public is large, this kind of communication requires certain means of dissemination and influence; today newspapers and periodicals, radio and

> television are the media of the public sphere. We speak of a political public sphere when the public discussions concern objects connected with the practice of the state (p. 398).

Habermas theory derives inspirational strength from a historical juncture during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Western Europe particularly in England, France and Germany when coffee houses, salons, societies, the town hall, the village church, the tavern, the public square, convenient barns, union halls, parks, factory lunchrooms, and even street corners became the arenas of debate, political discussion, and action. Habermas (1991) extends this to a normative model of popular involvement in the public sphere for contemporary times. He explains that in these venues, everyone had an equal right to speak as if they were equals.

One of the main features of the online publications is that interactivity represents the attribute that made e-newspapers so popular among readers (Chung, 2008). Furthermore, for Chung (2008) readers also find the new relationship between them and journalism a valuable one, with the on-going interaction being appreciated. The communicative power assumed to reside in traditional media hinges on the fact that there is a predominantly one-way flow of content from a few elite producers to masses of ordinary recipients. This assumes that, first, the flow of texts is linear and unidirectional from media elites to society, and second that there is a clear-cut separation between the processes of production and consumption of media texts. The control of elite groups over texts is assumed both in the industrial, political and economic sense, as well as in local communicative practices as recipients have little space to talk back. Even before the advent of new interactive and participatory affordances, approaches in media and communication studies had turned against audience passivity to audience power. In light of recent technological changes, a number of scholars and media commentators have announced sweeping social changes in media communication.

Digital platforms and social media are by their nature interactive, as opposed to the unidirectional nature of message flows in traditional media. One consequence of this shift is the separating lines between official and unofficial texts; hence, the traditional dichotomy of powerful versus powerless voices is eroding as more content is produced and consumed socially. While the institutional power behind discourse; that is to say, mass media power, may appear to have been compromised, the power in discourse, or bottom-up language-in-use, seems today to be the focus of interested domains of politics and the corporate world (KhosraviNik, 2014). Interactive media have now helped to decentralize the mass-mediated processes of pushing content onto audiences and offer some kind of participatory role to the individual communicator. By making access to the processes of production and distribution of texts possible, the locations of communicative power concentration 'are unfixed and shift according to the contextual environments' (Kelsey & Bennett, 2014, p. 43), and such spaces for resistant discourses are not only afforded but taken up and used effectively.

1.1.7. E-newspapers

In the age of the Internet, journalism is increasingly moving online. The Internet has changed the nature of news production, availability and consumption. As a consequence, over the last decades, e-newspapers have started to pervade the world of news media. Their interactive communication between news producers and consumers has broken away from the traditional linear flow of content from certain privileged producers to powerless consumers (O'Keeffe, 2012). There has long been concern with the top-down communication model of newspapers. Critics contend that the mass media have imposed a one-way discussion and argue that they largely produce messages independently from news audiences (Habermas, 1962). E-newspapers come to challenge traditional news delivery methods[9] where information is delivered through a top-down or one-to-many communication model that does not include the readers into an interactive model in which

[9]- In the traditional news delivery methods, the only way news readers can express their opinions is to write a letter to the newspaper with no certainty it would be published or even read.

more opportunities for users who assume more active roles and participation[10] in their news consumption experiences. E-news articles are now shared on social media, commented and liked. According to Boyd (2019), the commenting adds a new layer of recontextualization for the readers; they can have access to different opinions shared by other users' comments. The traditional one to-many relationship between the media and the readers becomes a many-to-many communication system. In fact, the emergence of interactive newspapers has ignited an on-going debate about the potential transformation of the role of the audience and the notions of producer/consumer and active participant/passive recipient.

In fact, two main approaches have been put forth regarding the potential impact of participation opportunities offered to the e-newspapers audience. The first approach is represented by theorists like Jenkins (2006) who have declared a shift in power to the advantage of users through the rise of a new participatory culture, in which the boundaries between production and consumption become blurry. Similarly, Bruns (2007) argues that the development of interactive news media signify an on-going paradigm shift, where notions such as production need to be conceptualized outside the industrial socio-economic models. What emerges is a hybrid model of produsage,[11] which is defined as the collaborative and continuous building and extending of existing content in pursuit of further improvement (Bruns, 2008). In this process, "the production of ideas takes place in a collaborative, participatory environment which breaks down the boundaries between producers and consumers and instead enables all participants to be users as well as producers of information and knowledge" (Bruns, 2007, p. 2). The outcomes of this process appear in the form of unfinished, editable work, rather than in the form of fixed or complete products of the industrial type.

[10]- Participatory media system prioritizes citizens' direct involvement in everyday life and public participation in decision making and active contribution to the development of society.

[11]- Produsage is a blend of the words production and usage. It was coined by Australian media scholar Axel Bruns. The concept blurs the boundaries between passive consumption and active production. The distinction between producers and consumers or users of content has faded, as users play the role of producers whether they are aware of this role or not.

On e-newspapers, audience participation is becoming a prominent trend, as mass media organizations increasingly incorporate user-generated content applications in their websites, inviting users to participate by commenting, submitting videos and pictures and rating. According to many scholars, this participatory shift in news production seems to hold the promise to transform traditional processes of news production, inaugurating new models of journalism. Terms such as participatory journalism (Bowman & Willis, 2003), citizen journalism (Bruns, 2007), networked journalism (Jarvis, 2006) and users-generated content are being used more or less interchangeably to refer to the individuals' active role in the elaboration and distribution of news content.

According to Beckett (2008), in these interactive newspapers, engaging the audience is assumed to assist journalists in telling stories more honestly. This means that news is no longer a finished project, which claims exclusive access to the truth. Instead of that, it focuses on the process more than the product (Jarvis, 2006) and it is in an open dialogue with affected communities, offering different angles from a wide range of sources. Opportunities for audience participation are often seen as a newly acquired agency for active audiences that signals a shift in power in favour of social agents (Robinson, 2009), as well as a means for redressing power asymmetries inherent in contemporary mediation processes and for challenging journalists' gatekeeping power and media monopoly in defining social realities (Williams et al., 2011). This kind of communicative activity performed by ordinary citizens has the potential to diversify the public sphere, by offering multiple perspectives on issues from a variety of standpoints and subject positions (Karlsson, 2010).

In the second approach, however, theorists do not see the discourse of participatory journalism as an unproblematic framework. For them, examining users-generated content remains skeptical regarding the agency attributed to new media users. Carpentier (2011) has shown how the signification of participation is itself part of the power struggles in society so that the definition of participation can be maximalist or minimalist terms depending on whether users' participation is in a strong form of democratic involvement in decision-making or much weaker forms of involvement. For

Carpentier (2011), regarding the relation of audiences to the media, in minimalist participatory forms "media professionals retain strong control over process and outcome, often restricting participation to mainly access and interaction […] instrumentalizing and incorporating the activities of participating non- professionals" (p. 26). On the contrary, in maximalist articulations of participation, professional control is restricted and the political nature of media participation is acknowledged. As Reich (2011) notes, "comments leave the journalist in the traditional position of the lead singer, while audience members generally play the minor, faceless and reactive role of the chorus" (p. 98).

1.1.7.1. Interactivity

There are two features essential to the nature of e-newspapers as being immediacy and interactivity as explained by Steensen (2011). Immediacy is historically a very important aspect of journalism, linked to the idea of getting something of interest to an audience as quickly as possible. For interactivity, it is described as the hallmark of the digital medium (Online News Association, 2003) and the key advantage of new media (Morris & Ogan, 1996). Unlike the traditional mass communication models which have followed a sender to receiver, unidirectional, centralized approach to information dissemination (Shannon & Weaver, 1949) and where the audience is relatively passive in the sense that they rely on the information source to deliver the news, interactivity gives the user the chance, not only to receive the information, but also the opportunity to disseminate it. Rafaeli (1988) has noted some of the common conceptions about interactivity:

> Interactivity is generally assumed to be a natural attribute of face-to-face conversation, but it has been proposed to occur in mediated communication settings as well. For example, interactivity is also one of the defining characteristics of two-way cable systems, electronic text systems, and some programming work as in interactive video games. Interactivity is present in the operation

> of traditional media, too. The phenomena of letters to the editor, talk shows on radio and television, listener participation in programs, and in programming are all characterized by interactivity (p. 110).

In order to theorize the concept of interactivity, researchers have tried to differentiate between human interactivity, also known as user-to-user, and medium interactivity, which is user-to-medium. The main distinction can be made through the understanding that human interactivity deals with interpersonal communication patterns and medium interactivity is more related to the content of the transmitted message (Massey & Levy, 1999). Besides, human interactivity happens on a communication line where users can generate information by message boards or emails. Medium interactivity, on the other hand, relates to the communication processes that take place when users interact with all the technological means on web pages, such as hyperlinks.

Since the main two sides of news communication are the journalists and the readers, it is apparent that the arrival of higher interactivity may be more difficult to process for some than for others. According to the development of online newsroom policy, despite the significant influence of technology in revolutionising the way news passes through the newsroom, the "traditional routines, standards, and other cultural components of a particular newsroom dictate the company's policies and, ultimately, the product consumption" (Robinson, 2010, p. 127). As the Internet grew, and the opportunity to comment on articles increased, so did the journalistic influence of people such as moderators and readers, therein increasing their influence as writers. The shift resulting from this has caused the entire infrastructure of news production to move from a "hierarchal, centralized, onto-many, unidirectional information flow to something more distributed, decentralized, poly-directional, many-to-many pattern" (Robinson, 2010, p. 141). As such, interactivity signifies a shift from the traditional media one-to-many communication to the emergence of a two-way communication model which converts online audience from passive to active media consumers. Besides, Rafaeli (1988)

mentions in his paper that interactivity brings along satisfaction from users and the motivation to keep on reading the same publication because they get a sense of entertainment and learning at the same time. The potential of interactivity to facilitate a dialogue between the media and its audiences is therefore indisputable.

1.1.7.2. Readers' comments

In the past, there were few possibilities for readers to comment or respond directly to a news story. One of the few such ways was the readers' letters to the editor. Today, however, many online newspapers provide their users with a wide range of interactive features allowing users to talk back to an original text. In this paradigm, users become also prosumers[12] because they are not only viewers of content but also the co-creators of the very content themselves (KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016).

Ziegele and Quiring (2013) define readers' comments as a media stimulated interpersonal communication that is published directly below news items on news websites or on news media presences within other online communication services. Comments are normally published via an online form with minimal censorship and usually do not require the commenters to use their real name. In this way, readers are allowed to add their voice to journalistic discourse in commentary sections and debate spaces creating a new channel for the visible and public discursive processing of news issues. Readers' comments sections on e-newspapers are an extension of the traditional letters to the editor page in a newspaper, where readers could share their views. They are a form of participatory journalism that gives the public a medium for expressing their perspectives on current issues. As a result of the implementation of the social medium for participation and dialogue on the news sites, readers are now provided with the opportunity to directly comment on online articles. For Loke (2012), this change has changed the dynamics of newspaper websites. While previously the readers' participation was limited and restricted to separate discussion forums, the comment sections are, nowadays, an active and important part of online newspapers.

[12]- The term 'prosumers' was coined by Alvin Toffler in 1980 and refers to a combination of production and consumption.

Most of the studies which have focused on readers' comments suggest that no real boundary shift occurs between journalists and their audiences (Karlsson, 2010). E-newspapers' commenters still maintain the roles they already had in traditional media settings, namely the role of active recipient but not of the news producer or of information source for a specific story but kept separate from professional journalism and clearly distanced from the newsroom (Hermida, et al. 2011). Some studied have shown that the two most closed stages of news production are the agenda-setting stage and gate-keeping (Singer et al., 2011). Other studies have investigated whether users' comments challenge mass media in their core journalistic functions or not. For instance, Karlsson (2010), for instance, has focused on how readers' comments challenged the dominant media frame, and took a critical stance towards mass media coverage. Similarly, Robinson (2009) compared how professional and amateur journalists covered the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina in 2006, reporting that in several occasions users challenged the newspapers' version of the story and expressed anti-media feelings. McCluskey and Hmielowski (2012) found that online reader comments provided a wider range of viewpoints, compared to letters to the editor. In this case, online posts also tended to challenge traditional institutions more often than did the letters to the editors. These findings suggest that readers' comments broaden the public sphere, while they also challenge mass media's role as gatekeepers.

1.1.8. The Moroccan news media

Before discussing the news media environment in Morocco, it is of paramount importance to shed light on the Arab mass media in general. William Rugh is one of the scholars who has conducted research on the Arab news media. Rugh (2004) has examined the Arab media and how it is controlled by the authoritarian regimes that prevail in the Arab states. The politically powerful elite in the Arab world regards media as important tools because of the crucial role they play in society, as they can reach a large number of audiences. In order to better understand how media function in a particular society, an understanding of the social and political environments in which these media function is required.

In the Moroccan context, the news media sector is sponsored and controlled by the state under the supervision of The High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAAC). Generally speaking, Morocco's media landscape is fragmented, with stark differences in journalistic quality between different types of news media. While Morocco is often touted in the region for its relatively liberalized press, Freedom House classifies Morocco's press as not free. Although oppositional viewpoints are frequently published, journalists must be careful to not cross the three red lines by criticizing Islam, the monarchy or Morocco's territorial integrity (Tayebi, 2015).

The media perspective is divided into audio, visual, written press and electronic press. On the visual level, there are currently nine public TV channels run by the State, in terms of finance and in terms of administration and supervision. Their programs are mainly broadcasted in Arabic and French, before the Amazighe language [13] significantly emerged in their programs. Besides, there is a sharp difference between print and audiovisual media outlets in Morocco; while the country enjoys a diverse range of independent print newspapers and newsmagazines, television and radio stations remain dominated by the state. The Moroccan government owns the country's official press agency Maghreb Arab Press, as well as most television stations. Following the partial liberalization of radio, there are now 18 private radio stations, although they deliver little political content (Sadiqi, 2006). Television, however, has not undergone the same process. Seven of Morocco's nine domestic channels are owned by the state. A channel of mixed public private[14] ownership, 2M TV, is largely owned by both the state (68%) and the King (20.7%). On the audio level, the country comprises fourteen radio stations, some of which are national, while others are regional. All are public state-run radio stations, except for Medi 1 Radio Station [15], which is owned by the foreign private sector, and the Sawa Radio, which broadcasts its programs from the Moroccan territory. As for the written press, there are 618 which are diverse in terms of language, that is to say, Arabic and French mainly, and less in Amazigh and Spanish.

[13]- dialect in some Moroccan areas

[14]- For private and independent Moroccan news media, see Zaid and Ibehrine (2011) and ElKadoussi (2016)

[15]- also known as the Mediterranean Sea International Radio Station

The Moroccan constitution has guaranteed freedom of the press and has considered access to, and dissemination of information in a free environment, a fundamental civil liberty. Nevertheless, when it comes into practice, other issues and parameters emerge. According to the Ministry of Communication Report (2016)[16], the Moroccan government provides financial subsidies to media organizations regardless of their governmental, political, or non-political affiliation. The majority of the subsidies are offered to print outlets and to a few electronic ones, mainly Hespress and Hibapress. The most popular independent dailies also receive the biggest government support. Consequently, Moroccan print, broadcast and digital media are, regardless of their diverse formats and contents, still under state regulation.

For the Moroccan electronic press, Internet was introduced to the country in 1995 and has since then experienced a rise in use. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Internet access in Morocco has increased in recent years from 52 % in 2010 to nearly 62% in 2017 and was among the highest penetration rates of the continent of Africa. Also, many news media outlets have shifted towards electronic and interactive models to deliver their products to their audiences. Figures indicate that there are 4 million users and dozens of online newspapers. Such papers are distributed in independent websites which are privately owned. Others are public and run by the State, the most important of which is the Ministry of Communications' website and Menara.

In spite of the importance of the Moroccan news media, scientific research remains very limited and this is evidently seen in the clear scarcity of reliable sources that investigate the Moroccan news media sector. In fact, although the history of the Moroccan press has been the subject of some studies (Baida, 1996) as has television (Zaid, 2009), contemporary debates have been poorly studied with the exception of participant testimonies (Daoud, 2007; Alaoui, 2012), reports by international organisations or debates which are sometimes stimulating but not based on investigations

[16]- See Ministry of Communication Report (2016)

(El Ayadi, 2006). This explains a certain normativity of this literature, often limited to measuring the level of 'democratisation' [17]of the Moroccan media.

In his book, Public Service Television Policy and National Development in Morocco: Content, Production and Audiences, Zaid (2010) explores that in Morocco, the media system swings back and forth from authoritarian to developmental. He finds that during Hassan II's reign, the authoritarian system characterized the media environment in Morocco till 1999, the year King Mohamed VI came into power. From 1999 to 2008, Zaid (2010) describes the Moroccan media system as a developmental one. The two systems are described are the following.

1.1.8.1. The Moroccan authoritarian media system: 1956-1998

Under the authoritarian system, the media serve and support the state. It is mainly characterized by suppressing and censoring opposing views and opinions to the regime. As Morocco was under the French protectorate for more than four decades, it is dogmatic that it inherited a set of laws and regulations that confined and restricted the media environment. This is clearly seen in all the press codes issued in 1959, 1963 and 1973 which gave the minister of interior the power to censor and ban any publication that didn't conform to the regulations set by these press codes. More clearly, article 5, for example, stipulates that anyone who wants to print or publish a newspaper or magazine needs an authorization from the state (Zaid, 2010). Also, article 21 states that anyone who dares criticize, defame or attack the person of the king or any member of the royal family can be sentenced for 5 to 20 years prison and pay a fine up to 1.000.000 US dollars ((9677350,00 DHS) (Ibahrine, 2007, p. 89). Moreover, During Hassan II's period, the broadcast media was under direct control and supervision of the state. Suffice it to notice that RTM (Radio Diffusion et Television Marocaine), the first Moroccan television that was launched in 1962, serve as the mouthpiece of the government and the palace. Its

[17]- Press democratisation is a very contentious theme in media scholarship and professional circles. The designation 'democratisation' is deliberately put between inverted commas because of the difficulty to vouch its genuine democratisation.

major role is “to promote nationalism, reinforce the sacredness of the monarchy and discredit communist and anti-monarchy and republican ideologies” (Zaid, 2010, p. 178).

According to this authoritarian system, no criticism to the head of the state or any member of the ruling family is allowed. Also, new media sources are given authorization under rigid restrictions, as the state owns and controls, either directly or indirectly, all media sources. For example, private ownership is not authorized unless it is aligned with the regime (Zaid, 2010). The categorization of the media system in Morocco, according to Zaid (2010), is based on an investigation of the legal environment, the economic environment and the political environment.

1.1.8.2. The Moroccan developmental media system: 1999-2008

According to Zaid (2010), the main transition that Morocco underwent can be dated back to 1997 when the socialist party led the government. As it immediately came into power, the new government promised for more freedom of expression and freedom of opinion, more promotion of human rights, free and diverse media. Only two years after King Mohamed VI succeeded his father, late King Hassan II, the media sector made a big step-forward shifting from the authoritarian system to the developmental one (Zaid, 2010).

The development or advanced media system aims primarily at developing the nation’s economic infrastructure, internal political unification and the alleviation of hunger, illiteracy and diseases. More importantly, the development media system manifests in countries that undergo a shift from under developing and colonized to independent and developing nations, because the role of the media is to help decrease illiteracy, health problems, poverty and to establish peace and social order. Indeed, as the media play a pivotal role in shaping public opinion, their main role is to establish political unification and social stability since they are the ones that can vouch for the country’s development and prosperity.

1.1.9. E-newspapers in Morocco

With the rapid rise of Internet penetration in Morocco, social media and digital news media have become increasingly important. Early 2010 saw an explosion in the number of

news websites in Morocco. Recent figures put the number of news websites at 892, but only 365 meet the standards and requirements set by the press code and so are legally recognized by the government as news websites (Lamzouwaq, 2019). According to the Arab Social Media Report in 2015, 86% of all social media users in Morocco have a Facebook account; overall Facebook penetration in Morocco is approximately 30% of the population. Of those users who have an account, 86% access the site on a daily basis. Moroccan Facebook users read and share news articles from Hespress and other indigenous Moroccan news websites, along with those from traditional Moroccans newspapers that have established websites. While the number of news-oriented bloggers is estimated at one thousand, 524 e-journalists including publishers, editors, correspondents are registered. In a short period, they have managed to attract a considerable number of visitors. The Moroccan top 10 news websites are shown in table 1.

Name	Top news websites in Morocco
Hespress.com	1
Hesport.com	2
Hibapress.com	3
Hibasport.com	4
Alayam24.com	5
Tanja24.com	6
Al3omk.com	7
Almaghreb24.com	8
Akhbarona.com	9
Lesiteinfo.com	10

Table 1 : The top 10 Moroccan news websites (Alexa, 2019)

Other news websites have also made headway in this emerging media ecosystem and are expected to grow as readers switch from traditional offline formats to online media. Like Hespress, Hibapress has been a remarkable success in Morocco and abroad, ranked among the top 10 websites in Morocco. According to Alexa Traffic Rank, it was ranked seventh in April 2019 (Alexa.com, 2019). With some news websites accounting

for the majority of Internet traffic, the challenge for these news sites is to determine how to attract and maintain the attention of digital users. Though different in their digital designs and editorial orientations, news websites have one thing in common: they are pioneers when it comes to providing local news. These news websites perform different functions because they offer different news content to different news consumers. They publish daily local news that reflects the everyday lives of ordinary Moroccans in specific communities (Ibahrine, 2020). Besides, Morocco has witnessed an outstanding advancement in the practices of commenting on electronic newspapers in the last few years leading to a transformation in the Moroccan news media.

The modern technologies that are available today in Morocco, the nationwide distribution of the Internet and the development of Web 2.0 have helped Moroccans to move from information consumers to information producers. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Internet percentage rate in Morocco grew from 52 percent in 2010 to nearly 62 percent in 2017. For instance, pioneer examples of these news organisations are the daily Arabic-language Akhbar Alyawm Almaghribia which allows citizens to take part in making the news on a daily basis through a rubric called Arraay and the free French-language Au Fait, which provides an online-based platform for people to create blogs, in addition to other examples from both written and online press. There are also many social media and communication services including You Tube, Facebook, and Twitter which are available in Morocco. Websites that discuss controversial views, such as the disputed territory of the Moroccan Sahara, the Amazigh minority and Islamists groups, are also accessible. Moroccans openly discuss controversial social issues and political events on social media. However, the government maintains control over the information landscape through a series of restrictive laws that can require the closure of outlets and the removal of online content.

1.1.9.1. A brief history of Hespress

One of the first Arabic written e-newspapers is the Moroccan support Hespress. It is an independent e-newspaper that was launched on February 25, 2007 by the brothers Hassan

and Amine Guennouni. The fact that one brother is a journalist and the other is a computer scientist has made them ideal entrepreneurs to launch a digital media enterprise. Its name is inspired from the Greek 'Hesperis', which referred to Gardens in ancient Morocco. It is also a homonym of the French study magazine about Morocco during the colonial time, Hesperis.

Hespress started as a blog gathering articles from different writers in one support. The support was through time modified into an information website with different sections (politics, sports, economy, languages, society, culture, media, high-tech, opinion, religion) which has nowadays its own journalists and correspondents. On its official website, Hespress presents itself as the first Moroccan news website that provides local and national news content for online readers in Morocco and abroad as its data analysis shows (Alexa, 2018). It is not only an e-newspaper, but it does also have video sections, where different videos uploaded from YouTube are shown, and it allows reader to comment and express their opinions. Articles in Hespress are famous by the comments and different opinions. It also allows its readers to vote and rate comments. Hespress has also a Facebook page with million fans, allowing even more interaction, comments, and less control than in the website.

Recent data extracted from the company profile on LinkedIn shows that there are 37 employees, including titles such as digital strategist, social video producer, creative planner, account manager, digital storyteller, online news editor, business development manager, financial journalist, community manager, multimedia journalist, and freelance journalist (Hespress, 2018). This long list of functions, positions, and tasks shows that Hespress has become a mature news website with a team of professional managers, technologists, and journalists. In 2012, the founders of the websites declared Hespress a privately held online media company run by Marocas. Following this official declaration, the Marocas started to protect its branded top domain name Hespress.com from misuse and abuse. Many similar domain names such as hespress-maroc.com and hespress.org were in circulation in the hope of luring and duping Moroccan internet users who were looking for hespress.com.

Hespress reflects the perspective of a privately-owned and independent national newspaper which aspires to cultivate democratic values by serving and informing the public objectively and professionally. It defines its mission statement as a news platform which provides independent, impartial news for audience and to offer a voice with no taboos to a diversity of perspectives. With a mission statement which is clearly seeking to promote freedom of speech of the general public, Hespress obviously tenets the involvement of its audiences as central to its mandate. In fact, it was the first ever Moroccan Arabic media to publish a caricature of the Moroccan king Mohammed VI. As such, Hespress presents a good example of citizen media in Morocco. It is considered to be the first online newspaper run by the mass as it is now number one in terms of readership (Alexa, 2018). By 2015, Hespress remained the most popular website in Morocco with an estimated 600,000 unique visitors per day. It is ranked fourth after Google, Facebook, and YouTube (Zaid & Ibahrine, 2011). It was ranked as the first electronic newspaper in the Maghreb region and the third most powerful Arab information website in 2012 after Masrawy (Egypt) and Sabq (Saudi Arabia). According to Roudaby, (2015), Hespress became the third most visited website in Morocco after Google and Facebook, surpassing YouTube.

The site's popularity is in part due to the fact that it was a precursor of the online Arabic-language press in the country. It is very active on social media and has managed overtime to attract a large span of readers, in part due to a wide editorial line, that covers all tendencies, and thanks to its interactive commentary and participatory sections for external contributers.

For Roudaby (2015), Hespress derives its revenues from advertising. The website initially relied on Google AdSense for advertising revenue, but later shifted its focus to selling advertisement space directly to Moroccan agencies. It is structured as a company and started recruiting professional journalists in 2009, with editorial staff located in Rabat. The company generated a turnover of up to MAD 150,000 a month in 2012. The company became profitable in 2011. In 2015, the website started to publish sponsored advertorials. As of 2015, the website has 37 staff members, with three dedicated to managing

its Facebook page. Over 35% of its readership uses Hespress' smart phone and tablet apps, while 30% of visits originate from its Facebook page.

1.2. Theoretical framework

To closely examine the discourse Hespress uses in its representation of the irregular migration issue, a theoretical framework that gives insight of language as a form of social practice is used. To explore the constituting abilities of language, and, as the focus of this study calls for a critical approach that can expose hegemonic power relations between different groups (elite groups and the irregular migrants), Critical Discourse Analysis, mainly Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional framework, is very relevant and, therefore, it is used as the main theoretical framework for this study for a better understanding of the broader social processes in which a discursive practice is located. Other social theories like Social Representation Theory, post-humanitarian and post-colonial theories are also used as tools to distinguish between individual groups within the news discourse and society. There is also reference to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory (SFL) as a linguistic theory which explains the relationship between language, especially its vocabulary, and its different functions. Besides, some communication theories like agenda setting theory and active audience theory are also referred to as they would help for a better understanding of different communication processes of production and consumption. The following subsections are about the main theoretical foundations upon which this research design is grounded as they provide a solid background to the whole research.

At this stage, it is of great significance to briefly refer to the general meaning of non-critical and critical approaches. The first point to make is that the division between the two approaches is not an absolute one. In fact, a distinction in the criticalness or non-criticalness of approaches has arisen mainly as a result of evolution in the views of a certain group of discourse analysts who later became known as critical linguists. Hence, this section will briefly review a selection of approaches to discourse analysis which fall under one or the other category. The main objective is to demonstrate the appropriateness

of critical approaches to discourse analysis and justify their use in my upcoming analyses by contrasting the two.

For non-critical approaches to discourse analysis, its starting point is a reaction to previous linguistic tendencies which concentrate on analysing the structure of the sentence. This means the analysis at sentence level. Motivated by Firth's (1935) interest in trying to understand "what language really is, and how it works" Sinclair and Coulthar's (1975, p. 4) approach aims at analysing "the function of utterances and the structure of discourse" above the level of the sentence. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) attempt to answer questions like

> how are successive utterances related; who controls discourse; how does he do it; how, if at all, do other participants take control; how do the roles of speaker and listener pass from one participant to another; how are new topics introduced and old ones ended, etc. (p. 4)

Nevertheless, although Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) aim at analysing functions of utterances, their approach is not functional in the traditional sense. This is evident in their departure from a previous approach which aimed at examining "the relationship between the grammatical structure of an utterance and its function in discourse"; that is to say, in the sense of accounting for the functional realisations of declarative, interrogative, and imperative structures of clauses as statements, questions, and commands (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, p. 2). Therefore, their main point of emphasis was his distance from the Chomskian (1965) view that had introduced the notion of deep and surface structures of clauses in order to explain instances where a declarative sentence functions as a question. Their answer to that is to account for context.

At the same time, Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975, p. 12) functional view is not functional in the Hallidayan sense since the Hallidayan view of the ideational,

interpersonal, and textual functions found in the clause does "not provide them with a useful starting point". They argue that Halliday's (1970)

> discussion is pitched at a different level in that he is concerned not with the function or meaning of a given utterance of a sentence, but rather with the function of the presence and surface ordering of elements within a sentence (p. 12).

Finally, they also reject the functional dimension of speech-act theory of Boyd and Thome (1969) and argue that their approach is functional in the sense that it concentrates on those functional relationships within the text which are beyond the boundaries of the sentence; that is to say, whether utterances are "intended to evoke responses", for instance, or whether they are "intended to mark a boundary in the discourse" (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, p. 4). In other words, it is how different levels of discourse function in relation of each other and to the context of the utterance.

Therefore, since their main objective is to find linguistic evidence "for discourse units larger than the utterance", Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975, p. 19) approach provides a functional descriptive system of discourse using larger units of analysis (transactions, exchanges, moves, and acts) which have a hierarchical relation between each other just as sentences and clauses, for example, have a structural hierarchical relationship between them. Finally, this descriptive system is followed by a proposed set of interpretative rules which take into consideration the linguistic form of sentences as well as the situational factors.

Another similar functional approach to discourse analysis is that of Conversation Analysis which finds its basis in the view that "language is not merely a mode of action, but a means of interaction" (Edmondson, 1981, p. 32). As a result, nonverbal acts are seen to be as significant as verbal acts "in terms of the development of a conversation" (Edmondson, 1981, p. 32). This meant that Conversation Analysis emphasised the view

that linguistic, extralinguistic and paralinguistic factors are equally structurally significant in discourse. Therefore, the role of silence, tum taking and sequence of utterances, usually underemphasized in previous approaches, is considered in detail (Edmondson, 1981, p. 43). Its medium of analysis is mainly informal conversation and this helped produce accounts of various aspects of conversation like openings and closings, how topics are established, developed and changed.

Moreover, Conversation Analysis developed in the light of ethnomethodology, the branch of sociology that deals with the codes and conventions that underlie everyday social interactions and activities. The effects of social structures such as age, sex or class categories were a major concern in Conversation Analysis. Yet for Zimmerman (1991) the main area of interest was more that of describing and understanding how actors deploy the mechanisms of talk-in-interaction " to accomplish institutionally oriented activities" (p. 4) rather than specifying the extent to which these interactional mechanisms enable the production and reproduction of the varieties of social formations found in society.

This led to criticism mainly by Critical Discourse Analysts such as Fairclough (1989) who argued that since data are interpreted "on the basis of a shared orientation among the participants to a single discourse type" (p. 9), one chief problem with such analysis is that the general picture of a harmonious and co-operative conversation is given. Of course, this is far from being a realistic picture.

From the perspectives of critical linguists, the main reason both these approaches are considered non-critical is because they lack "a developed social orientation" reflected in their failure "to consider how relations of power have shaped discourse practices" (Fairclough 1989, p. 15).

As for those approaches, whether functional or structural, which ignore the social and ideological dimensions of discourse, these are consequently deemed as descriptive in nature, since being analytical, from Fairclough's (1989, p. 15) perspective, involves accounting for the relationship between discourse and issues of power and ideology.

However, although it is true that these approaches mentioned above overlook social and ideological factors, their branding as merely descriptive seems rather harsh and unfounded. Firstly, the critical and non-critical division adopted by such Critical Linguists or Critical Discourse Analysts as Fairclough, Fowler, Kress, Hodge, van Dijk, etc. is based on a much specified view of what constitutes criticalness. Following this view, an approach is considered critical if, and only if, it accounts for the relationship between language, power and ideology; in other words, only if its main objective is an "interventionist" one, aiming at "making explicit an awareness of control in order to resist it critically" (Stockwell, 1999, p. 3). Yet this is an obviously narrow view of what a critical analysis entails. Criticalness is based on questioning the foundations, methods and results of specific claims by different fields of enquiry. Nevertheless, the issue of hegemony is only one of several aspects of the interaction between language and social structures that can be subject to critical analysis.

Secondly, the main area emphasised by critical approaches is that where noncritical approaches failed rather than they succeeded. In other words, they undermine how critical these approaches were and are in contrast with previous theories and tendencies to, for instance, concentrate on and analyse short and invented sentences as opposed to considering the context of an utterance within the larger and more authentic medium of discourse. These non-critical approaches are necessary constituents in the evolution of critical linguistic thought. One must also confess that such approaches are not merely descriptive since they do more than provide an objective description of what is present and evident at the surface structure of a text. Mills (1995) makes that point clear by arguing that these approaches do in fact relate different levels of structure to others both micro and macro as well as relating structural patterns to functions of language. This is an important issue since it ultimately clears up the possible confusion of mapping structuralist approaches with non-critical ones.

The other side of the division, then, brackets together a large number of critical approaches to analysing discourse, two of which are discussed in detail since they are more appropriate for the upcoming analyses. These are the earlier linguistic criticism of

Fowler and Cress (1979) and Fowler (1996) on the one hand, and the more recent CDA of Fairclough (1989, 1995). The division between these two is chiefly due to minor differences in the scope and coverage of these approaches rather than major theoretical ones. This becomes more obvious when looking closely at each approach where one can detect similarities relating to the most fundamental issues.

At the theoretical level, both approaches share the same linguistic theoretical background traceable back to Halliday's (1970) functional theory, particularly the view of language as essentially multifunctional in nature. Moreover, the two approaches are influenced by Marxist socio-political thought concerning issues of power, ideology, social institutions and the complex relationships among them. For Fowler (1996), they do not simply use linguistics to talk about what is objectively present at the surface structure of the text, but they see these objective structures as always having some further meaning in a given social context. Moreover, in order to carry out this interpretive aim, Linguistic Criticism and CDA need "a particular kind of grammatical model as its basis", namely, the functional model (Fowler, 1995, p. 14) although Fairclough (1995) considers Halliday's (1985) functional-systemic grammar as merely provisional.

Both these theoretical inspirations have direct implications on the practical side of Linguistic Criticism and CDA. On the one hand, the linguistic background is reflected in the tools and methodologies used in text analyses which spring mainly from Hallidayan models such as transitivity analyses. On the other hand, the socio-political influence motivates the main objectives of critically analysing discourse; that is to say, to examine the ways in which ideologies of social and political institutions affect discourse in general and how that effect is a dialectical one.

Consequently, in the light of these theoretical backgrounds, both approaches to discourse analysis are branded by Fowler (1996, p. 3) as "instrumental linguistics", the objective of which is to expose ideologies which are "coded implicitly behind overt propositions," in order to examine them "in the context of social formation". As van Leeuwen (1993) suggests

> CDA and Critical Linguistics should be concerned with ..... discourse as the instrument of power and control as well as with discourse as the instrument of social construction of reality. (p. 193)

The underlying presupposition is that words and structures chosen by the language users are 'motivated' and that they "communicate a cultural semiotic in addition to the literal meanings of the words and sentences" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 15). Both "selection and transformation are guided by reference, generally unconscious, to ideas and beliefs" (Fowler, 1991, p. 2)

Of course, ideologies cannot be simply "read off the linguistic forms because the same form has different significances in different contexts" (Fowler, 1996, p. 9). However, certain interpretations may be made of constructions that fall into a recurrent regularity. Finally, both CDA and Critical Linguistics see the ultimate effect of the reproduction of governing ideologies in discourse as bringing about what Fairclough calls naturalization and what Fowler calls habitualization. These very similar terms mainly focus on how ideology can be hidden in language. This problem is handled in the aims of CDA and Critical Linguistics at exposing those less visible aspects of discourse that indirectly position people in ways serving the ideological interests of those in power.

The differences between both approaches, on the other hand, are the following. Whereas Fowler's approach to text analysis is mainly linguistic or textual, Fairclough's is both textual and intertextual (Fairclough, 1995, p. 188). Fowler concentrates predominantly on the 'linguistic' level of text analysis. For Fairclough (1995), this covers both

> the traditional levels of analysis within linguistics (phonology, grammar up to the level of the sentence, and vocabulary and semantics) together with analysis of textual organization above the sentence including

> intersentential cohesion and various aspects of the structure of texts which have been investigated by discourse analysts and conversational analysts (including properties of dialogue such as organization of tum-taking). (p. 188)

Fairclough (1995), on the other hand, considers it essential to account for the intertextual level of analysis. This essentially shows how texts "selectively draw upon orders of discourse- the particular configurations of conversationalized practices" (p. 188) such as genres, discourses, narrativeswhich are available to text producers and interpreters in particular social circumstances.

Influenced by Bakhtin (1981), Fairclough (1995) believes that the concept of context should also include intertextuality as well as sociocultural knowledge which means that discourses are "always connected to other discourses which were produced earlier" (p. 276), as well as those produced synchronically and subsequently.

This, of course, increases the number of variables to be considered, and although serving the purpose of making discourse analysis more accurate, it nevertheless makes the task much harder and time consuming. It also paves the way for questions concerning the practicability of expanding the scope of analysis to account for more variables and where the analyst can draw the limiting line.

Such issues together with the problems of difficulty, one-sidedness, descriptive and interpretive potential of CDA are raised by Widdowson (1995), Fairclough (1996) and Toolan (1997). In their heated debates, Widdowson and Toolan question some of the terminology of CDA as well as its claims in terms of the interpretive capacity of this approach to discourse analysis. While Widdowson (1995) is mainly interested in terminological contradiction, Toolan focuses on how CDA differs from stylistics and how they sometimes work in opposition. The main point, however, is an agreed acknowledgement of the importance of the direction in which CDA is proceeding and the positive promise of further improvements in the analytical abilities of the approach.

From such debates, therefore, springs the agreement that conforming exclusively to one model of text analysis can be dangerously limited. This lack of satisfaction with adopting only one or another model for the analysis of discourse (Birch, 1989) is acknowledged by critical linguists throughout. Therefore, the tendency in future analyses should be directed towards being more selective in adopting a combination of models. However, one vital characteristic of any model or any combination should be its/their ability to present a systematic analysis of a text through utilising a set of linguistic features systematically described (Toolan 1990: 28). Another characteristic should be its flexibility. Such a tendency is based on the premise that as long as ways of analysing texts can help clarify that view of the relationship between discourse and social structures in a relatively neat manner, these ways are useful and can therefore be adopted. Such a tendency is pragmatic in nature. As Birch (1989) emphasises that the key to any future success would lie with "interdisciplinary approaches to analysis" (p. 151). This would mean recognizing the restrictions and constraints of single disciplinary approaches to the subject.

1.2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

The theoretical field of CDA is a very wide field, but, before delving into its meaning, it is of great significance to refer to what Discourse Analysis means. Discourse Analysis (henceforth DA) was first introduced in late 1960s and early 1970's. DA as an analysis approach came out from a collocation of a number of different disciplines studies such as linguistics, semiotics, psychology, anthropology and sociology (McCarthy, 2005). DA was initially introduced when the linguist Zellig Harris was conducting an analysis of sentences in a text in his Ph.D. paper titled Discourse analysis' in 1952 at the University of Pennsylvania. He was the first linguist who paid attention to studying sentences in coherence (discourse) within a social situation. His paper focused on analyzing the linguistic elements of a text, the coherent texts and the circumstances around the text (McCarthy, 2005).

In the beginning, DA was adopted to oral talk and conversations. Conversational analysis was initially founded by sociologist Harold Garfunkel in 1960s, a scholar in Ethnomethodology. A number of scholars in social science and linguistics contributed to discourse analysis like Hymes (1972) who worked on analyzing speeches within social settings, Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) the founders of the speech act theory, and Grice (1957) who had different works in discourse studies and was interested in maxims of conversation. M.A.K Halliday has greatly contributed to DA. His Functional Approach to language is concerned with the function of language discourses language in social contexts.

According to Gee (2014), DA is the study of language use. It is considered as the study of language within context in which the language is used. DA is applied to studies and descriptions of verbal interactions people consume daily, whether printed or spoken newspapers articles, letters, stories, recipes, instructions, notices, and comics. It covers all kinds of written texts, and spoken data, from conversation to highly institutionalized forms of talk (McCarthy, 2005, p. 8). DA is an approach used to find out meanings covering a number of activities. In other words, it is used to identify the intersection of activities among different disciplines like sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and computational linguistics (Brown & Yule, 1998). Brown and Yule (1998) argue that psycholinguistics is interested in the issues related to language comprehension such as the problems of texts and sentences comprehension. They explain sociolinguistics as the study concerned with the structure of social interaction manifested in conversations and their description emphasizing features of social contexts, dealing with real instances of language. And philosophical linguistics and formal linguistics studies are concerned with semantic relationships between constructed pairs of sentences and with their syntactic realizations (Brown & Yule, 1998).

For CDA, Caldas-Coulthard (1997) explains that it was developed in the 1980s and 1990s to examine language within the framework of politics and ideology. Historically, CDA is rooted in the works of Saussure who analyzed language in terms of its ‘Parole’ or instance of language use and ‘Langue’ which is language used as a sign

system. Halliday (1978) posits that language is a social semiotic system that allows people to make meaning based on their interactions with each other. CDA practitioners agree that discourse is a social practice influenced by the relationship between discourse and human life. It is this relationship between discourse and human interaction where CDA gets the term Critical[18] because CDA is not just about the analysis of discourse, but is also about the discourse's prominence in the social relations and power structures where the discourse originates (Caldas-Coulthard, 1997).

CDA is a multidisciplinary framework, a fundamentally critical social research aimed at revealing the relationship between ideologies and discourses by paying close attention to semantic properties of texts that can have some effect to reproduce or maintain a given social problem, political or institutional power. Scholars engaged in CDA are driven by a critique towards a social phenomenon reproducing and maintaining unequal power relations through the use of language, and characterise their work as explicitly critical and as a political orientation to studying discourse (Potter, 2012). Critical discourse analysts focus on "discursive manifestations of hegemonic oppression within a particular network of practices such as education or the media" (Weninger, 2012, p. 147); therefore, in their scope of analysis, there are media texts, political speeches, documents published by government agencies, institutions, or international organisations (Potter, 2012). CDA is concerned with power and struggle over power.

The main principles of CDA as sketched by CDA practitioners like Fairclough (1995) and Van Dijk (1998) can be concluded as follows:

- CDA is concerned with social problems. It is not concerned with language or language use per se, but with the linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures.

- Power-relations have to do with discourse, and CDA studies both power in discourse and power over discourse.

[18]- The critical theoretical orientation owes its origin to Kant, Hegel and Marx and its association to the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, and its development to successors, particularly to the group led by Jurgen Habermas.

- Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same time constitute discourse. Every single instance of language use reproduces or transforms society and culture, including power relations.

- Language use may be ideological. To determine this it is necessary to analyse texts to investigate their interpretation, reception and social effects.

- Discourses are historical and can only be understood in relation to their context. At a metatheoretical level this corresponds to the approach of Wittgenstein, according to which the meaning of an utterance rests in its usage in a specific situation.

- Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory. Critical analysis implies a systematic methodology and a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations.

In fact, CDA was first conceptualised as a framework by Norman Fairclough, the father of CDA, who wanted to study the connection between the use of language and the exercise of power through language. In this study, Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model is adopted to reveal the power relations, hegemony and sociocultural practices regarding Hespress' discourse. CDA helps to clarify how news discourse normalizes relations of domination between social groups. By normalization Fairclough (1989) means:

> The naturalization of the meanings of words is an effective way of constraining the contents of discourse, and, in the long term, knowledge and beliefs…The naturalization of subject positions self-evidently constrains subjects and in the long term both contributes to the socialization of persons and to the delimitation of the 'stock' of social identities in a given institution or society (p. 105)

The discourse is not only constitutive but it is also constituted which itself can shape knowledge, identified, social and power relations while it can be also influenced by social practices and structures (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2011). Similarly, according to Fairclough (1992), discourse plays a crucial role in constructing and shaping social identities, social relations, systems of knowledge and meaning.

Fairclough's approach differs from the poststructuralist position from certain perspectives, but mainly because it uses a theoretical and methodological model to analyse spoken and written language to reveal social action (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2011). This is contested in post-structuralism due to the subjective nature of the historical and cultural conditions. However, Fairclough's approach is careful to analyse the discourse within the social structure, social relations and social processes they are located in and adopt both an insider's (directly engaged) and an outsider's perspective (theorist) to analyse and reveal the ideologies behind the communicative interaction.

In this context, studying Hespress news discourse through the lens of a theory that reveals unequal power relations, ideology and bias in its news texts by relating it to its context like CDA is very convenient. CDA is basically a linguistic tool for analysis from a critical perspective. It is an eclectic analytic study of language-based data that is concerned with revealing the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias (van Dijk, 1998). It stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice. CDA examines how social practices are tied up to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested. In this context, the interest is not in capturing the meaning of texts per se; rather, the interest is in seeking to provide the force of things, their discourses and what they actually do.

Besides, CDA is multidisciplinary in nature as it combines different approaches and theories in order to arrive at "meaningful, adequate and transparent" explanations of texts (Weiss & Wodak, 2003, p. 19). Its roots are in critical linguistics, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, classical rhetoric and pragmatics (Weiss & Wodack, 3003, p. 11). The relationship between discourse and its context cannot be answered solely by discourse

theories; it is necessary to draw on other theories like sociological, political or cultural theory which help to provide explanations on the social practice in question (Fairlough, 1992; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). The relationship between language and society, via cognition (Wodak, 2006), is extremely complex and thus a complete analysis calls for the integration of different theories.

Overall, CDA aims at revealing the relationship between ideologies and discourses by paying close attention to semantic properties of texts that can have some effect to reproduce or maintain a given social problem, political or institutional power. Scholars engaged in CDA are driven by a critique towards a social phenomenon reproducing and maintaining unequal power relations through the use of language, and characterise their work as explicitly critical and political orientation to studying discourse (Potter, 2012). CDA studies are often focused on discursive manifestations of hegemonic oppression within a particular network of practices such as education or the media (Weninger, 2012). Therefore, in their scope of analysis, we find media texts, political speeches, documents published by government agencies, institutions, or international organisations (Potter, 2012). CDA is concerned with power and struggle over power. Hence, CDA is an appropriate method to analyse Hespress representation of the issue of irregular migration. It enables the researcher to critically examine the hidden power of Hespress in the way it constructs, conveys and recontextualises elite's knowledge about irregular migration, and the different ways this knowledge could be perceived by society.

1.2.1.1. Fairclough's sociocultural approach

Within the CDA field, one of the most dominant and frequently used approaches for analyzing discourse was developed by Norman Fairclough in the 1980s. Fairclough's sociocultural approach has been the keystone for many researchers that aim at finding structures and discourses in different communications (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough (2010) defines the role of the discourse analyst as "focusing on discourse, but never in isolation, always in its relations with other elements" (p. 5). Fairclough (1992, 1995) has developed his own approach to media discourse. Drawing on Halliday's functional

framework, Fairclough's (1995) approach is concerned with language, discourse, and power in society. He also draws on knowledge of social theory, especially the ideas of French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault. He is also influenced by social theorists such as Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and Jurgen Habermas and literary theorists like Mikhail Bakhtin (Fairclough, 1992; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). The view of this approach is that events and actions may be described with linguistic variations, which hide the ideologies. Fairclough's (1995) study aims to contribute to the struggles for social emancipation through increasing the critical awareness of news readers.

Fairclough's discourse analysis employs both linguistic and social analysis. Fairclough's method examines discursive relationships and social systems in three separate domains, local, institutional, and societal. Fairclough argues that these domains do not exist distinctly or individually as each domain constantly interacts with the others. Further, he points out the existence of dialectical relationships within elements that constitute social practices. These elements are semiotic or language-based constituents and non-semiotic constituents such as social relationships, individual beliefs, attitudes, history, and the material world. Fairclough (1992) contends that to make new meanings both semiotic and non-semiotic social elements need reconfiguration.

Fairclough (1993) briefly introduces the Critical Discourse Analysis in the following way:

> Discourse analysis aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts, and wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these

> relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (p. 135).

In Fairclough's ideal conception, CDA has three dimensional frameworks that map and links three separate forms of analysis; textual analysis, analysis of discourse practices through the production, distribution, and consumption of the news text, and lastly the sociocultural practices from the produced news text (Janks, 1997).

This three-dimensional model provides three levels of analysis which are description, interpretation, and explanation (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26). Fairclough's aim was to explore a particular social event from three angles: the text (description - language); discursive practices (interpretation – processing analysis) and discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice (explanation – social analysis). Critical discourse analysis has a strong connection between power relationship and different parties. According to Fairclough (1995), the main purpose of critical discourse analysis is to expose hegemonic power relationship between different groups, the newsmakers and the audience.Furthermore, this model deals with the process of meaning-making within the discourse. Also, it tends to interpret how people cognitively implement and invest meanings in their speeches and texts. This method is based on the formulation that the way people produce and interpret language is ultimately affected and controlled by power. That is to say, in order to analyze texts, one must analyze the relationship between texts, processes, and their social conditions. In this regard, Fairclough is the only scholar who elaborates the link between power, language and ideology in his research in 1989. He has presented a model in 1989 and revised it in 1995. His model is considered a hub around which the wheel of critical discourse analysis revolves. He was the first to design a theoretical framework for CDA and gave guidelines for text interpretation. Fairclough's model consists of three-step process of analysis which is tied to three inter-related dimensions of discourse which are given below.

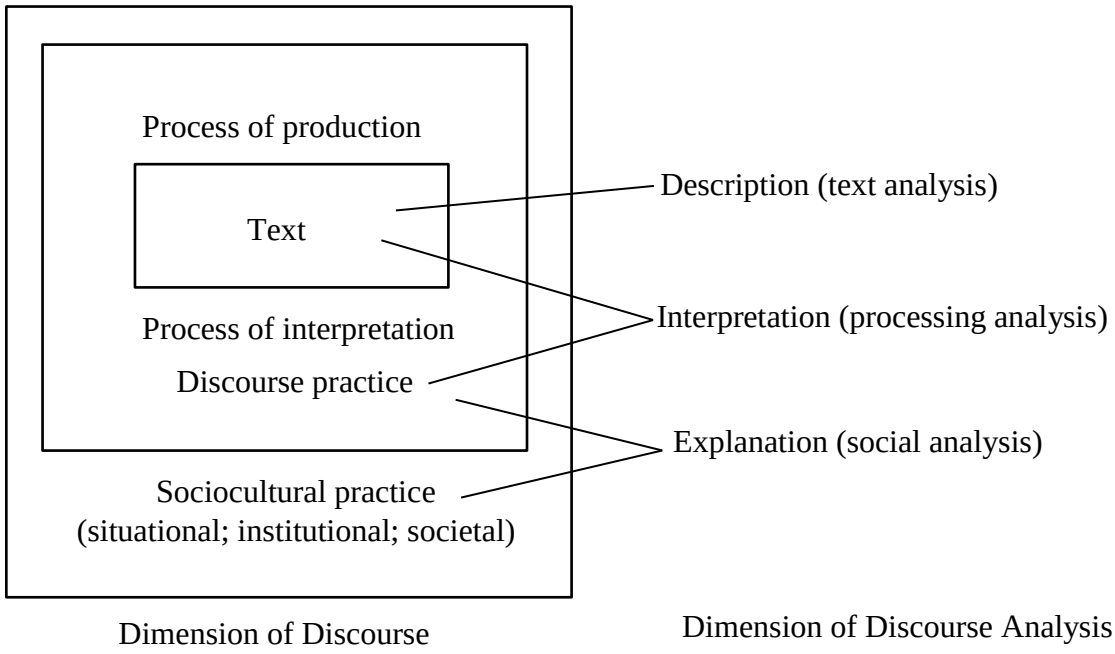


Figure 1 : Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse (Fairclough, 1992, p. 93)

The figure summarises Fairclough's (1992) view of communication. For him, every communicative event comprises three dimensions: it is a text (speech, writing, visual images or a combination of these); it is a discursive practice which involves the production and consumption of texts; and it is a social practice. Corresponding to the three levels of discourse, Fairclough developed three stages of CDA: description, interpretation and explanation. For him, discourse is a kind of social practice, which is the embodiment of social structure. Discourse is a unity of "context, interaction and text". Among them, text lies in the bottom, which is the result of interaction. Both the process of production and process of interpretation rely on context (Fairclough, 1992).

The three stages above are the procedure for analysing discourse critically. It implies that in conducting the analysis, it should pass or change from one stage to another stage. Related to this case, one thing that should be kept in mind is that these three stages are important so that it is necessary to carry out description, interpretation, and explanation to conduct a research of discourse using CDA method. Particularly, the analysis at the description stage will be different from analysis at the interpretation and explanation stages.

The following quote summarizes Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model in the most explicit and concise manner:

> I see discourse as a complex of three elements: social practice, discoursal practice (text production, distribution and consumption), and text, and the analysis of a specific discourse calls for analysis in each of these three dimensions and their interrelations. The hypothesis is that significant connections exist between features of texts, ways in which texts are put together and interpreted, and the nature of the social practice (p. 74)

Fairclough's three-dimensional model serves as an analytical framework for research on communication and society (Munshi, 1998). Following this model, the data from Hespress are analysed at three different levels: (1) Examination of the language or text, (2) the discursive practices, that is involved in the production and consumption of the texts, and (3) the analysis of socio-political and socio- cultural contexts in which the communicative events occur.

1.2.1.1.1. Text

The very first analytical attention of Fairclough's model is text. According to Fairclough (1995), text analysis is a linguistic analysis which is concerned with the description of the formal properties of text. Fairclough (1995) also states that, "Linguistic analysis includes the analysis of the grammar, vocabulary, sound system, semantics and cohesion organization above the sentence level" (p. 57). That is to say, in the description stage, linguistic features such as choices in vocabulary (wording), grammar (transitivity, passivization) and textual structure of the whole discourse (thematic choice, turn-taking system) should be systematically analyzed. To Fairclough (1992), textual analysis, which is part of the critical discourse analysis theory, is done by the help of a multifunctional

theory of language such Halliday's (1985) SFL which studies grammar and other aspects of language form in a functional way. Halliday (1985) regards language as a network of options from which language users make selections that are ideologically significant. Thus, meaning is generated from the choices made, or not made, by text producers. SFL provides a systematic, linguistic toolkit which not only decodes texts for their structure and meaning but also provides tools for examining the motivations, purposes, positions, assumptions, and interests of text-producers (Li, 2010). Textual analysis should consider both form texture and meaning. According to Fairclough (1993), the term text refers to "the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event" and that a close analysis of texts is a significant part of social scientific analysis of a whole range of social and cultural practices and processes (p. 138).

Textual analysis, according to Fairclough, can be done in two ways; linguistic analysis and intertextual analysis. The ascending framework of Fairclough (1992) analyses texts linguistically under four main headings: vocabulary (individual words), grammar (words combined into clauses, sentences), cohesion (how clauses and sentences are linked together) and finally text structure (organization of text). The intertextual analysis combined with the linguistic analysis would increase the meanings reached. In intertextuality, the choice of genres and discourse by the writer which depends on and is affected by the social context should be considered. Therefore, the social context affects the discourse and the type of text used. This analysis will strengthen the relationship between text and context for a better understanding.

1.2.1.1.2. Discourse practice

The second dimension of Fairclough's model of CDA is the analysis of the discursive practice level. It is concerned with the interpretation of the text by examining its production and consumption (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). This means the product is first examined, and then its meaning is understood. The way people produce, interpret and transform texts is the concern of this dimension. In other words, this dimension involves analysis of the process of production, interpretation, distribution, and consumption. It is

concerned with how people interpret and reproduce or transform texts. Therefore, it is an in-between step that sets path for a clear analysis of context. This involves identifying different discourse strands as well as what existing discourses and genres the author draws on. The study will consider both interdiscursivity and intertextuality as well as the role of the audience, referring to the consumption aspect of the second dimension of Fairclough's model. It consists of examining the discourses and genres that are articulated in the production and the consumption of the text. According to Fairclough, the relationship between texts and social practice is mediated by discursive practice through which people use language to produce and consume. At the same time, the text influences both the production and the consumption process. In the examination of how discursive practices draw on existing meaning formulations and how they mix different types of discourse, Fairclough's key concepts are intertextuality and interdiscursivity. The former examines how authors draw on existing texts, whereas the latter examines what existing discourses authors draw. So, this part of the analysis examines whether in particular communicative events and discourses are reproduced or if discursive change occurs as new components.

Fairclough (1995) argues that discourse practice is mediating between the textual and the social as it links text to larger societal tendencies. He mentions two processes which are worth looking into when analysing discourse practice: production and consumption. This means that in reporting about refugees, a journalist can either draw on already well-established discourse order within news media, which would constitute the order or discourse within the newspaper media, or he/she can be creative, drawing on discourses from other discourse orders in writing the article and in the overall news coverage. Fairclough uses documentaries as an example of how a creative mixture of discourse has helped facilitate documentaries being about not only informing, but also persuading and entertaining the audience.

When investigating discourse practice it is essential to understand how the linguistic analysis connects with discourse practice, which is why Fairclough (1995, p.61) emphasizes the need for the researcher to do intertextual analysis, involving questions into the text, such as what genres and discourses are drawn on in the text. These questions

work to find the "traces of the discourse practice in the text". The fact that media texts draw on metaphors can also be seen as intertextuality. Beyond that, it helps to "marginalize other constructions from the perspective of oppositional groups" (p. 72). This means that within intertextuality, hegemony and ideology are also found.

1.2.1.1.3. Social practice

The third and final dimension is the analysis of social practices. It is the socio-cultural conditions that govern the explanation and interpretation processes. That is to say, all that happens in the social, historical and cultural frameworks cover the discourse. Issues like power and ideology are explored through the ways discourses operate in society. Fairclough (1993) considered language use as socially shaped and socially shaping. He considered texts and discourses as socially constitutive. This level includes understanding the wider socio-cultural, political, ideological, and institutional contexts, and structures surrounding the text and their associated discourses. This aims to explain the relationship between discourse practice and wider social context.

The discursive practice acts as a link between the text and the social practice. It is about how texts shape and are shaped by social practice. This analysis examines whether particular discursive practices reproduce or restructure existing power relationships and what the implications of this are for the broader social order of which it is part. In other words, this dimension examines how the reproduction or restructuring of the order of discourse shapes behaviour and decisions in the broader social order. It deals with how the discursive practice constitutes the broader context of social and cultural relations and structures. Analyzing the socio-cultural practices helps to take into account the underlying power relations, how they are reproduced, and how they represent certain social groups.

When analysing social practice, it means putting the linguistic and discourse practice results into a larger cultural and societal frame. Here, analysis is aimed at trying to understand the bigger picture of why a text carries certain discourses and how these discourses affect the world around us. Therefore, for the analysis of this dimension to be successful, it is important that the analyst brings cultural or social science theories in to

assist in understanding how discourse can change society and vice versa. Fairclough (1995) mentions three aspects that enter into socio-cultural practice; economic, political and cultural. For this thesis, I will mainly look into political and cultural as it involves understanding power relations and hegemony.

In analysing the wider social practice, discourse analysis per se is not sufficient because social practice encompasses both discursive and non-discursive elements. Jorgenson and Philips (2002) assert that in discourse analysis, the use of different perspective is not only permissible but positively valued. They argue that distinctive perceptions provide different forms of knowledge about a phenomenon, this as such collectively generates a broader understanding. Therefore, Fairclough argues social and cultural theory is necessary in addition to discourse analysis, to shed light on the social dimension. Thus, social and cultural theories are necessary in addition to discourse analysis.

1.2.1.2. Criticism of Critical Discourse Analysis

Criticism is a part of all scholarly effort that propels research forward by exposing weaknesses and vulnerabilities in theories and methodologies that can then be reviewed and refined. Like most theories, CDA's theoretical epistemology and analytical framework are not unproblematic, despite its increasing popularity in social research as an "an intellectual orthodoxy" (Billig, 2002, p. 84). It is essential to consider its weaker points before embracing its employment in any serious research. Widdowson (2004) is one of the most well-known scholars criticizing CDA, but critique is also expressed by those who actively conduct research in the CDA vein, such as Chilton and even Fairclough himself. Widdowson (1995) states that one "cannot explain how people express their ideology by assuming in advance that ideology is already fixed in the language" (p. 168).

CDA, as a qualitative research methodology, is often criticised for not being rigorous enough, and of being biased or selective with data (Maxwell, 2013). CDA is also criticised for not being objective as it depends on the researcher's reading of the text,

therefore, requiring him/her to engage his/her background, beliefs and cognitive perceptions directly with the material under analysis with the condition of making those biases declared accordingly (Gill, 1996).

The eclectic nature of CDA is also criticised for its lack of rigour in research because of researcher bias and ideological interpretation. The position of the researcher and choice of theoretical framework and methodology can influence the analysis of discourses, thus prejudicing the sample (Meyer, 2001; Wodak, 2001). If all knowledge is socially constructed and bound by unequal power dynamics, then the researcher who analyses and interprets discourse is equally complicit in the production of discourse (Burr, 2015). Hence, researchers are accused of "cherry picking" examples that best fit the researcher's assumptions or preconceived notions (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 11). However, Weiss and Wodak (2003) argue that the eclectic interdisciplinary nature of CDA can give strength to understand the world around, and create new innovative approaches to discourse analysis that draw on a variety of theoretical and methodological frameworks. Fairclough also argues that researchers who conduct CDA are always upfront about their position in the collection and analysis of data (Meyer, 2001).

CDA is also criticized for its confusing terminology and interpretation. According to Widdowson (1995), many scholars have criticized CDA for fuzzy terminology, such as the distinction between discourse and text. He notes that CDA tends to use the terms "discourse" and "text" interchangeably and if scholars are using them "in free variation", or, "if they denote different things, what are they, and by what principles can they be related?" (Widdowson, 1995, p. 160).

Even harsher criticism has come from Widdowson (1995), warning against the dangers of bias in CDA and charging that CDA makes it possible for researchers to arrive at foregone conclusions due to their own ideological positions, and the selection for analysis only the textual samples backing that particular position by subjecting them to complex analyses which only a few can comprehend.

1.2.1.3. Key terms of Critical Discourse Analysis

This section presents the definitions of the basic concepts and key terms used in the present study as they have been discussed in the existing body of literature: discourse, ideology, and power.

1.2.1.3.1. Discourse

In most studies of CDA, the notion of discourse, rather than language, is more frequently applied by researchers. Martin and Nakayama (2010) explain that discourse refers to language in use which means that discourse is social. Besides, they argue that "the language used –the words and the meanings that are communicated – depends not only on the context but also on the social relations that are part of that interaction" (p. 233). This means that discourse is text in context and that it is the context which produces texts. Fairclough (1995) holds the opinion that discourse is a field of both ideological processes and linguistic processes. It refers to the whole process of social interaction, the interaction between speaker and addressee or between writer and reader. Therefore, discourse reflects the social interaction between the message, its sender, and its receiver.

The term discourse is also used as a response to a compelling need to transcend the concept of text, the linguistic product, as the locus of meaning, irrespective of its context, in order to capture the range of social suggestions which are contingent upon the contextual dictates directing interpretation (Talbot, 1995). The critical view that discourse imparts meaning has two different levels: a descriptive level, from post-structuralism, where discourse can be defined as a set of broad constitutive systems of meaning (Fairclough, 1992), and an interpretive level where discourse is representative of the bulk of knowledge and practices generally associated with a particular institution (Talbot, 1995). In other words, while texts are built up by the application of lexical and syntactic choices where surface non-contextual meaning is accommodated, discourses incorporate those choices and assign them interpretations that are closely linked to the socio-cultural background of the institutions using them.

The main difference between text and discourse is mainly made on the basis of the depth of the analysis. Talbot (1995) considers the text as a fixed product. Discourse, however, is often associated with power, ideology and dominance. Discourse here is seen as language-in-action, which indicates that discourse should not be considered as merely a system of linguistic forms people use, but rather as an activity-centred, dynamic and flexible entity (Blommaert, 2005). As Fairclough (1992) states, discourse and social structure are deeply connected which means that social structure directly or indirectly shapes as well as constrains discourse; furthermore, one can both represent and signify the world through discourse. Thus, to discuss discourse is to discuss language as a social practice (Fairclough, 1992).

1.2.1.3.2. Ideology

In most CDA studies, ideology is almost the essential concept of the study. The most prominent view of ideology has its roots with Marx and Engels (1879) whose conception links ideology to power, dominance and class conflict. Marx and Engels wanted to understand how minority groups could maintain power and why the majority of people accepted a system that appeared to be in contrast to their own interests. Their theory views ideology as "false consciousness" whereby individuals in society are presented with an illusory view of reality, presented as common sense so that systems of power can be maintained. Marx and Engels' theory is intended to expose this illusion and bring down the ruling class. For van Dijk (1995), he also argues that ideologies are the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs which are shared by the members of groups, organizations, or other social collectives of people. He also thinks that:

> Besides their social function of sustaining the interests of groups, ideologies have the cognitive function of organizing the social representations of the group, and thus indirectly monitor the group-related social practice; and hence also the text and talk of its members (1995, p. 256).

The unique features of ideology determine that they cannot be read directly. Thus, the communication of ideology can only be achieved through a certain channel. As the crust of ideology, language is the most common means of communication and discourse production. Therefore, discourse, which takes the form of language, is ideological. van Dijk (2006) states that ideology and other social representations control discourses and other social practices of group members. Therefore, discourse is a language group in processing rather than a language product. Besides, critical discourse researchers postulate that ideology belongs to the material production of the society. Nevertheless, the ruling class of the society manipulates the means of production. Accordingly, ideology is shaped to meet their own interests. The distorted ideology is served as a national machine to impose false consciousness upon people, which helps the dominant class to disguise the inequality of reality and consolidate their ruling power.

Gramsci (1971) has made an important contribution to the understanding of ideology. He explained how the state and civil society function to sustain the ideologies consistent with those of the ruling class and which support their control of society and the system to serve their interests. The state serves this function through coercive tactics, militarization, and policing. Civil society does so through the continual bombardment of ideologies and narratives that are presented as normal and natural. The media is a critical tool of ideology and hegemony by perpetuating national and international narratives that feed specific ideologies about particular groups to ensure the continuation of the status quo. Similarly, Althusser (1971) sees ideology as functioning to mould individuals into the role of subject while at the same time concealing from them their role as agents of the structure. Althusser also rejects the Marxist idea that only one class is responsible for the ideological control in a society. He explains that institutions like the mass media, also play a role. For him, mass media is one of the ideological state apparatuses that indoctrinates the mass into the ruling ideology.

While Fowler (1991) defines ideology as “the sum of the ways in which people think, say and interact with the society” (p. 92), Fairclough (1992) sees ideology as “significations generated within power relations as a dimension of the exercise of power

and struggle over power" (p. 67). Wodak (1996) gives a similar definition: "ideologies are particular ways of representing and constructing of society which reproduce unequal relations of power, relations of domination and exploitation" (p. 18). In short, critical discourse analysis regards ideology as a system of values representing a certain community or class, usually the ruling class.

In spite of different definitions concerning ideology, critical linguists take the same ground that ideology is deeply rooted in society and directly engaged in social process. Thus, ideology is the collection of judgments and opinions by a group of society and serves the purpose justifying and interpreting a certain event that happens in a particular social and cultural context. In other words, ideology is considered as a form of social cognition or sets of beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions, or world views that people can hold (van Dijk, 2009; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Ideologies are the beliefs that form the basis of people's taken for granted, everyday thoughts, and people's abstract mental representations. These latent ideologies can be utilized as methods of power formation, as they are invisible to the populous and are exercised and reproduced through routine, subtle and everyday forms of discourses that appear natural and common-sense (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). Ideologies of power are implicit, hidden, and discursively presupposed across groups within a given cultural and historical period (van Dijk, 2000; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Lastly, on ideology, Fairclough's (1995) focusing specifically on how media discourse represents the world, individuals and groups of people in a particular way asserts that:

> The ideological work of media language includes particular ways of representing the world (e.g. particular representations of Arabs, or of the economy), particular constructions of social identities (e.g. the construction in particular ways of scientific experts who feature on radio or television programmes), and particular

> constructions of social relations (e.g. the construction of relations between politicians and public as simulated relations between people in a shared lifeworld) (p. 12).

The discussion on the role of ideology in discourse, particularly media discourse, is necessary to this research. Fairclough (2095) explains the reason why discourse, in particular media discourse, plays such an important role in the reproduction of ideologies. He believes that ideology is most effective in sustaining those in dominant positions, if it is hidden or seen as commonsense. The reason for this is because if one becomes aware that a particular aspect of commonsense is sustaining powering equalities at one's own expense, it ceases to be commonsense, and may cease to have the capacity to sustain power inequalities; that is to say, to function ideologically. In discourse, this commonsense is achieved by presenting ideologies as background assumptions or presupposed knowledge and not explicitly foregrounding them as new information. With ideology comes power. In the next few sections, power in ideology will be discussed and elaborated since this is the integral part of the research.

1.2.1.3.3. Power

The concept of 'power' is a controversial topic in humanities, social sciences and critical discourse studies. For Farfan and Holzscheiter (2011) power is located both at the level of agency (the individual level) and at the level of structure (social institutions), the concept of power at these levels is fundamentally different from each other. At the agency level, power is the ways in which the individual human beings aim to influence and control each other either in subtle or more direct, offensive ways, whereas at the structural level of power, it is the ways in which social institutions, societal discourses and political authority constrain the behaviour of human beings. Indeed, most newspapers are under corporate ownerships. Media seems to be under control of large institutions partly because these corporate bodies operate as global market in which smaller companies are taken over or put out of business by competition. A convenient example has been given by Reah

(2002) about the newspaper business in Britain, whereby he has pointed out that Britain newspapers have come under fewer and fewer groups. In 1965 there were 11 owning companies who owned 19 national titles. In 1995 there were only 7 companies who owned 21 newspaper titles. This shift in concentration of newspaper into fewer hands of larger corporations, according to Reah, will have a result on press freedom. This will lead to the fact that, fewer institutions will therefore hold ideological dominance over the newspaper audience.

According to van Dijk (1993), power has to do with one group having control over others, and in their own interest, possibly influencing the minds of others and somehow limiting their freedom. Control over the media is always connected with power and there is a constant struggle amongst such media mongers. This is because, these powerful owners want to obtain positions of power and domination that far exceed their opponents so as to have the greatest influence in society rather than seeking economic gain. In addition to social power being based on privileged access to wealth, status, education, position, or other resources of social value, power is strongly connected to access to discourse.

van Dijk (1993) claims that when one has no active access to discourse, one lacks power. Furthermore, Fairclough (1995a) demonstrates that the ones who have the ability to control discourse also have power to convey and maintain certain ideologies, while dominating others. This can lead to dominance of a certain group and certain ideologies, which in turn, as van Dijk (1993) points out, results in social inequalities. Nevertheless, such dominance is silently accepted. Fairclough (1992) explains that hegemonies, meaning general acceptance of dominance due to influence, are also easily produced and transformed in media discourse (van Dijk, 1993). Therefore, it seems that the voices of minorities are often not heard and are of no interest which makes absent information about what is actually said. It is about how dominant forces exercise their power, maintain their superiority and show their dominance through language use. In other words, it is about how dominant forces or groups adopt some communication strategies which fulfil their personal interests. Therefore, through the application of CDA, the text is analyzed to

investigate the extent to which dominance and power are seen in the words and speech of those in power. CDA always aims at exploring the way social power abuse and dominance are enacted in society. Words are not to be considered neutral but as having some particular meanings which are not always obvious to all readers.

As an essential concept in CDA, Fowler (1985) defines power as "the ability of people and institutions to control the behaviours and material lives of others" (p.61). In the area of linguistics, especially in CDA, power means a kind of control, which refers to the action of manipulating others' thinking with the use of language (Fowler, 1985). According to van Dijk (1998), a social group is said to have power if it has the privileges to acquire rare social resources, such as wealth, fame, knowledge, information and military force and the abilities to manipulate the thoughts and actions of other social groups. At the same time, it is helpful for them to control the dominant discourse power in various forms of public discourse. For different social groups, speakers have their own language choice to show their identities. The diction of language variety depends on many factors, such as the social context, social distance between speakers, status of speakers, the topic, the formality of the setting and so on. Language is engaged in social power in a number of ways: language embodies power, expresses power, and it is involved where there is contention over power (van Dijk, 1998). As a conclusion, power relations determine the structure and language choice of the whole text. CDA analysts are interested in the means by how linguistic forms are used in various expressions and manipulations of power.

Generally speaking, the three terms are interrelated and indispensable in CDA. The study of CDA enables linguists to explore how powerful groups make use of language to maintain power and to investigate power relations and social inequality embodied in discourse. Halliday (1973) says "Language plays a central part, both as determiner and has determined: Language is controlled by the social structure, and the social structure is maintained and transmitted through language" (p. 90). That is the reason why CDA research starts from an investigation of the linguistic features of the target discourse for the purpose of disclosing the true hidden ideologies and powers inside

the language. In addition, ideology is closely related with power. Fairclough (2003) has given a detailed illumination of ideology and power, "ideologies are representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation" (p. 117). In his mind, founded on the employment of ideologies, power can be constructed, preserved as well as altered. Thereby, power is built upon ideology, and ideology is the carrier of power.

1.2.2. Social Representation Theory

Social Representation Theory holds great significance to this study as the news media are considered as a significant agent in the production of discourse and social knowledge. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, this theory is used to explore the social representations of irregular migrants through the ways in which they are used, and shaped by, discourses in Hespress, which functions as the mediating system. Social Representation Theory was advanced by Serge Moscovici in 1961. This theory suggests that one's perception of the world is largely shaped by the news and the discourse they carry. This theory is about the processes of collective meaning-making resulting in common cognitions which produce social bonds uniting societies, organisations and groups. As a theory of communication, it links society to the individual, media to the public. It specifies a number of communicative mechanisms explaining how ideas are communicated and transformed into what is perceived of as common sense; that is to say, the common ways of conceiving, thinking about and evaluating social reality. This touches the very heart of mediated communication; that is to say, how media naturalises[19] social thinking and generates collective cognition. For Hall (1997), the material world is shaped by a given meaning through the language individuals use to represent concepts. Constructions of meanings are made by social actors that use ideas and norms to construct and represent through meaning, thereby also making the world meaningful to others.

[19]- If a type of discourse is dominant over an institution in such a way that other types of discourse are totally oppressed or become a part of that discourse, this issue will not make the discourse seem an autocratic one; rather it will cease to be seen as natural and legitimate. Fairclough, like other critical discourse analysts, calls this phenomenon naturalization

Representation systems are of great importance behind the construction of world meanings. Media is an actor that reflects and helps produce a meaning-laden reality.

News media constructions of reality are inevitable because the relationship between the world and media is in itself constructive. News media constructs social reality, which further on causes individuals to construct that given material from the media into further categorizations. Meanings are the only factor that determines people's views on the world. According to Hall (1997), the way people understand the meaning of social categorizations such as gender, race, class, age, and ethnicity affects how one's reality is shaped, and therefore the meaning of such categorizations are therefore extremely important because "the practices of representation describe how ideas, concepts and emotions can be interpreted" (p. 28).

Social Representation Theory assumes the centrality of self-other-object relations (Moscovici, 1972), which essentially illustrates the role of relationships in how meaning is developed, maintained and changed whilst highlighting the indispensable focus on self-other communication. The self is relationally and socially composed which means that what starts as external also becomes internal (Moscovici, 1972), and in this process, social representations provide specific contents that correspond to one's knowledge, beliefs, images, and uses of language.

Indeed, representation is an important concept within the scope of this thesis as it is used to explain how language is used to create meanings to other people and how it connects to culture. According to Hall (1997), representation is the production of meaning through language as used by social actors to stand for ideas, thoughts and feelings. He defines a representation as

> The production of meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between [these] concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the 'real' [material] world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fiction. (1997, p.3)

Because meaning is determined by social actors, Hall argues that representation is closely related to power, which constantly strives to establish meaning that will support its agenda. For Fairclough (1995b), when talking about representations in the media, the issues of ideology, bias, and manipulation are often present. The vast selection of media content offers countless different perspectives and naturally, media representations are difficult to prove truthful or false. As Fairclough (1995b, p. 47) states, analysing representations in the media requires a thorough examination of multiple aspects. One should consider what is included and excluded, what is foregrounded (present and emphasised information) and what is backgrounded (explicit but deemphasised information) and what has possibly affected the creation of such representations (Fairclough, 1995b).

Similarly, Hall (1997) defines representation as "the process by which members of a culture use language to produce meaning" (p.61). For him, it is through words that people express what they think and feel about something, such as an object, person or event, how they categorize it, and what values they place on it, they represent that something in a particular way and therefore give it meaning. Stemming from a constructionist perspective, this definition implies that objects, people, events and experiences do not themselves carry any meaning, but it is 'Us', who create their meaning by connecting together the world of things, the mental concepts they have in their heads, and the language they use to communicate these concepts (Hall, 1997). At the base of representation theory is the Saussurean distinction between signifier and signified: the signifier is the means of representation, in the case of a text the actual words; while the signified is the concept that is represented, or the meaning given or attributed to those words (Hodkinson, 2011). When using particular arrangements of words (signifiers) in news headlines, journalists aim to convey certain meanings (signified), therefore offering a specific representation of the current event they are covering.

In media studies, the notion of representation is used to analyze and understand media messages as more than a mere reflection of reality, but rather as a way of constructing reality and contributing to the normalization of specific ideologies. In other

words, media representations can contribute to the establishment of norms and common sense about individuals and society. According to Hodkinson (2011) representation is in fact a key element in understanding the circular relationship that exists between media, content and society, where society is intended in the broad sense as culture. While other scholars see media as either shaping society, arguing that their content has the ability to influence the audience, or as shaped by society, therefore solely reflecting it as it is, Hodkinson (2011) believes that both processes coexist through representation. Therefore, in representing or manufacturing a version of reality by actively selecting what event they will cover and how, media producers necessarily base their content on real events and social trends. At the same time, by being constructed versions of reality, hence portraying facts from a specific angle or only partly, representations have the potential to influence the audience (Hodkinson, 2011).

Hall (1982) views media representations as versions of reality achieved through the active processes of selecting and presenting, structuring and shaping. In constructing reality media representations can, on the one hand, contribute to the perpetuation of specific ideologies and therefore the reinforcement of power relations, where power relations stand for assumptions about rights, relationships, knowledge and identities between groups of people (Fairclough, 1995). On the other hand, media representations can also play an important role in steering attention to and from public issues, often determining which problems will be tackled or ignored by society. In this context, the world is socially constructed to serve an interest, most often that of the ruling elites (Smith, 2001). By considering that migration discourse as one that is socially constructed to serve a purpose, and not as a natural social arrangement, it is possible to identify common ideologies in the discourse surrounding the issue of irregular migration.

By the same token, Cornwall (2007) suggests that "words make worlds" emphasising the power of language in constructing and creating a particular truth and reality (p. 471). Social constructionism[20] theory enables the researcher to explore the

[20]- Social constructionism views knowledge as socially constructed through language and interpreted by social actors, resulting in multiple realities (Burr, 1995).

relationship between language, people and places in order to highlight the socio-political-cultural norms that shape discursive constructions of others such as irregular migrants in this study. Knowledge is created in social interaction by social actors, and knowledge is embedded in history and culture; that is to say, the way that individuals understand and represent the social world will be a reflection of their historical and cultural context, and, thus, their understanding will be contingent on these relations. Therefore, the social world is socially constructed, and, for that reason, it could have been constructed differently. However, human activity is bound by context, institutionalised, and socially embedded with a certain degree of regularity. This hegemonic worldview, Escobar (1995, p. 39) argues, functions as a mechanism of power and control "in which only certain things could be said or imagined"; that is to say, representing irregular migrants as only victims or threats neglects alternative points of view in the process.

1.2.3. Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory

Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory (SFL)[21] is an important theory within the scope of this thesis as it is used to explore the hidden ideologies which reside in the linguistic features of a certain text. SFL was largely developed by M.A.K. Halliday building on previous work of two of the most influential linguists: Bronislaw Malinowski and J.R. Firth.

Bronislaw Malinowski was a Polish-born anthropologist who did much of his work based in England. One of his key concepts was that to fully understand an utterance, understanding the "context of situation" of that utterance is highly important. As he says:

> Our task is rather to show that even the sentence is not a self-contained, self-sufficient unit of speech. Exactly as a single word is save in exceptional circumstances meaningless, and

[21]- Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory is also referred to as Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). It is a suitable instrument to conduct CDA. It is the main source and underpinning of the theory. In addition, it provides CDA with clear linguistic categories for analyzing the relationships between discourse and social meaning

> receives its significance only through the context of other words, so a sentence usually appears in the context of other sentences and has meaning only as a part of a larger significant whole. I think that it is very profitable in linguistics to widen the concept of context so that it embraces not only spoken words but facial expression, gesture, bodily activities, the whole group of people present during an exchange of utterances and the part of the environment on which these people are engaged. (p22).

Another of his concepts is that the meaning of words lies in their ability to invoke the situation in which they have previously been used:

> In a narrative words are used with what might be called a borrowed or indirect meaning. The real context of reference has to be reconstructed by the hearers even as it is being evoked by the speaker. But situations in which the same words have been used with all the pragmatic vigour of a request or imperative, with all the emotional content of hope or despair, situations in which the use of a word is fraught with weighty consequences for the speaker and for his hearers, in such situations we have speech used in a primary, direct manner. It is from such situations that we are most likely to learn the meaning of words, rather than from a study of derived uses of speech. (p46)

For J.R. Firth, he was a linguist, who established linguistics as a discipline in Great Britain. He and his followers became known as the London School of linguistics, since they were mostly based in the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. His central contributions in regards to SFL are:

- Firth picked up Malinowski's idea about the centrality of the context of situation, and applied it throughout his linguistic model.
- He believed that the central concern of linguistics should be the study of meaning, which was very different from the dominant Bloomfieldian approach then current in American linguistics, which thought the study of meaning was not a concern for linguists.
- He developed an approach to phonology, called 'prosodic phonology', which allowed phonological features to be shared over successive phonemes, rather than each phoneme having its distinct features (segmental phonology).

This study makes use of Halliday's (1970) SFL in order to examine how the issue of irregular migration is represented at the textual level. SFL holds a view that language is functional in that it is used by people to achieve social goals. Halliday (1970) explains the nature of language in terms of social structure: "why is language as it is? The nature of language is closely related to the demands that we make on it; the functions are specific to culture... the particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve" (p.142). In Halliday's (1970) opinion, language is a system network consisting of a number of sub-systems from which people take choice to express their meanings.

Halliday (1970) had stressed the relationship between the grammatical system and the social and personal needs that language is required to serve. In fact, language users have several words and sentence structures at ones disposal to choose from when producing a text; the choice of certain words and structures over others may reflect ones' ideologies. Speakers can empower their language by choosing from the multitude of linguistic structures the ones that ensure the achievement of their objectives. The variety

of the linguistic structures allows for language manipulation to shape others' beliefs and opinions (Fowler, 1991). Recently, linguists have drawn attention to a very important aspect of language that allows it to be manipulative: linguistic choices. Within a language, there are possible choices at various levels (lexical, syntactic, semantics) that may seem arbitrary, but they are not. In fact, by meticulously selecting and structuring ones words, one's language can turn into a veritable instrument of manipulation, control and dominance. In other words, the choice of words, sentences and utterances are not just arbitrary choices; instead, they are governed by how one is positioned in the social group and the ideological positions one wishes to project.

Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory studies different linguistic aspects of language form in a functional way. Hallidayan linguistics constitutes a lexico-grammatical theory which does not consider language to be a self-contained system, independent of the context in which it is used, but instead tries to explain why language is the way it is. Halliday (1985) regards language as a network of options from which language users make selections that are ideologically significant. Thus, meaning is generated from the choices made, or not made, by text producers. SFG provides a systematic, linguistic toolkit which not only decodes texts for their structure and meaning but also provides tools for examining the purposes and interests of text-producers (Li, 2010).

For Halliday (1994), language lexis or diction is usually a site where ideological expression can be found. That is to say, lexicon choice or the selection of vocabulary by the speaker or writer is very significant. Since any language in the world is not completely objective, the classification of the vocabulary is more or less accompanied with personal experiences and opinions. In other words, instead of a direct reflection of a thing's basic qualities, the classification of the discourse is more influenced by a person's cognitive level and ideological idea. When a person chooses one word from the others in the same context, it shows his own viewpoint towards it. In this way, it is helpful for us to take classification into consideration during the discourse analysis.

While writing an article, the author usually has several choices when referring to the same person, social group, social relations or issues. Which choice is made depends on many contexts such as personal, social and socio-cultural context which are usually ideologically based (van Dijk, 1995). Lexis is widely considered to be an essential part of CDA because of the ability of vocabulary to reveal "socially shared beliefs" (van Dijk, 2001, p. 99) of a community and because vocabulary influences the opinions and attitudes of recipients (Fairclough, 1989; Fowler, 1991).The choice of words is important in providing readers with cues for interpreting events. Lexical items construct particular ideological representations of events. Apart from its experiential function, vocabulary has expressive value implying the producer's negative or positive evaluation of actions, participants and events (Fairclough, 1989).

Therefore, the selection of vocabulary can be regarded as ideologically based and that is why examining how the texts refer to the same people, social groups and relations with different words is important in uncovering if the text reproduces existing relations of power. For Fairclough (1989), lexical choices are ideologically encoded and they imply value judgments, as in the often-cited example of selecting 'terrorist' or 'freedom fighter'. For him, news reporting is ideologically loaded through the choice of certain lexis. Critical discourse analysts do not only consider what words are present in the text, but also what might have been used and selected instead. According to Fowler (2001), words often do not have single consistent meanings, but rather are, to use Fairclough's term, "ideologically contested", and may reveal traces of the author's identity and underpinning ideological beliefs (p. 95).

This is particularly true in instances where a particular lexical item is over-lexicalised, that is to say, where similar terms are repeated giving rise to a sense of over-completeness (Fowler & Kress, 1979). According to Fairclough (1989), over-lexicalisation can be indicative of ideological struggle as it shows "preoccupation with some aspect of reality" (p. 115) and it is most commonly used to describe powerless, oppressed or underprivileged people. For Richardson (2007), the analysis of lexical choice is the first stage of any text or discourse analysis because they convey the imprint of

society and of value judgments in particular; they convey connoted as well as denoted meanings. The selection of one lexical field, particularly nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, is not arbitrary and the choice of one necessarily implies the rejection of another. Also important in the area of lexical choice is the analysis of the collocation of words which are the combinations of words that often keep company with one another. Collocates can convey implicit messages, and sometimes reveal contradictions with "overtly expressed statements in the text" (Fairclough, 1995b, p. 102).

1.2.4. Post-Humanitarian and Post-Colonial Theories

There is a gradual shift in humanitarianism in terms of its objectives, functioning and ways of providing assistance. Humanitarian agencies today have significantly limited space to manoeuvre compared to the nineteenth century due to new political barriers, security risks and sovereignty of donor countries (Duffield, 2019).

The post-humanitarian[22] style of appeals has been first discussed by Lilie Chouliaraki, who has approached the communicative structure of humanitarianism as a theatre of suffering (Chouliaraki, 2013). She explored the communicative event as spectacle, in which refugees are actors and the western audience is the spectator. Moreover, she argues that humanitarian organisations, in order to renew the legitimacy of humanitarian communication had to move from the emotion-oriented discourse of pity to the post-humanitarian discourse of irony in their communication strategies. The discourse of pity can be used to provoke emotions in the audiences by using a victim-oriented narrative.

The post-humanitarian style of influencing has addressed the 'self' to achieve solidarity with the migrants. What characterizes the language of this new style of appeal is a meaning-making system and a contrast in the narrative due to which the spectators are faced to their own cultural distinctness rather than that of the migrants. However, Chouliariki (2010) argues that there is a de-emotionalization of the cause in this new type

[22]- Post-humanitarianism critiques the disempowering nature of humanitarian discourses as they do not account well for the individual agency of those represented.

of humanitarian communication in which the case of suffering "becomes disembedded from discourses of morality" (p.118). The contrasting elements in language and visual content also help to build up the moral agency by concentrating on the 'self' instead of universal claims. These contrasts create a reflexivity in the audience and render the psychological world of the spectator a potential terrain of self-inspection where they can judge and decide how to act on the case of refugees based on their own values. This self-inspection has critical importance in reinforcing cosmopolitan sensibility of self-fulfilment, which implies the moral obligation of taking action for a cause. At the same time, it has the risk of turning the attention away from the broader political context and historical background of the cause of suffering as the focus is on the act of helping over the 'Other' and on the self-gratitude that is related to it (Chouliariki, 2010).

Post-humanitarian appeals prioritize corporate branding strategies to marketize their cause instead of sharing universal claims and influencing the audience on what they should think and feel about a humanitarian situation. According to the post-humanitarian critique, humanitarian organisations focus on building organizational brand and image by moving from explicit marketing of suffering as a cause towards an implicit investment in the identity of the humanitarian agency itself (Chouliariki, 2010).

In post-humanitarian communication, it is common that the story of the refugee or the cause of the displacement and its difficulties are told by public figures and celebrities. For instance, UNHCR has similar partnerships with celebrities who serve as 'goodwill ambassadors' to advocate for the refugees and other people of concern. For Chouliaraki (2012), the risk of this type of communicative practice is that the attention can easily be taken away from the refugee and turned to the celebrity, contributing to constructing their image as heroically helping vulnerable others instead of engaging the spectator with the subject and the cause of suffering. Moreover, Chouliaraki (2011) further explains that:

> instead of enabling us to hear their voice and get an insight into their lives, it treats distant others as voiceless props that evoke responses of self-expression, but cannot in themselves become anything more than shadow figures in someone else's story (p. 372).

Similarly, the post-colonial theory emerged from the main political, ideological and military resistance of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which were all focused on struggles around racism, liberationist politics, challenges to white political and cultural domination and the assentation of black identities and cultures (Mcewan, 2008). Post-colonialism condemns the West's cultural dominance, criticizes the Eurocentric approaches and modernization processes and urges for changing the discourses from within the international development processes (Mcewan, 2008). Also, post-colonialism draws attention to the risk of advocating a global cultural convergence through universalizing models which may constitute "contemporary versions of modernization theory" (Mcewan, 2008, p. 110). It is, however, acknowledged by theorists that there were significant changes in development theories with regard to these initiatives since the mid-1990s (Mcewan, 2008).

The post-colonial theory, with regards to humanitarian discourses, portrays irregular migrants as 'Others' emphasising the difference between 'Us' and 'Them' and thus reproduces the colonial rhetoric, Orientalism[23],which is founded on the assumption of the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority[24]. For Dorga (2012) humanitarian organizations reproduce the long history of colonialism in their communication in multiple ways. Portrays of refugees represent them as different, distant and separate from the global North, even though discourses tend to convey counter-hegemonic messages and foster the ideology of one humanity. It is this paradoxical logic of difference and oneness that characterizes humanitarian' discourse

[23]- Orientalism is the process of Western countries, such as Britain, France, and the United States, constructing and representing the Orient's identity as how the West perceives it, not as it truly is.

[24]- See Edward Said, Orientalism (2003).

when it comes to representations of people from the global South (Dogra, 2012). While there is a rhetoric of distinction in the messages of humanitarian discourse, such as 'Us' and 'Them', 'the West' and 'East' they often share justice claims about solidarity, one humanity, universality and human rights appeals. She argues, that these justice claims and arguments are the principal ways international organisations can connect refugees with western audiences (Dogra, 2012). For Scott (2014), however, these universal images of 'oneness' deprive refugees of their complex situations and historical context and do not explain "the complex, longer-term, structural causes of suffering" (p.144).

Post-colonialism argues that claiming one's humanism excludes the historical roles and connections to colonialism and misses to reveal the causes of today's inequalities. This can deepen the feeling of injustice in the South, while it enlarges the gaps between poverty and prosperity among different regions. Besides, these types of representations leave the western audience with universal, dehistoricized and aid-dependent portrayals of distant others who should be saved by people of the global North in the name of solidarity and humanity and thus may uphold and further strengthen the power relations between North and the South.

The idea of the western-dominated development comes along with the West's political and economic ideologies and institutionalization to promote transnational capitalism in the South. Neoliberalism, as an extension of competitive markets into all areas of life, promotes the Western idea of material improvement and does not consider the culture-centric approaches. Those discourses about refugees which tend to promote and highlight their economic participation, empowerment and self-reliance contribute to West's economic dominance by placing refugees in a consumerist-centric society (Dykstra-DeVette, 2018). Discourses around empowerment and inclusion into western systems often serve the purpose of resettlement and inclusion as "the refugee… to be accepted as citizen might require fulfilling what the receiving society perceives as the markers of 'true' citizens" (Nayar, 2010, p. 198). While this type of representation may be effective to inspire the western audience in showing hostility towards refugees, it does not consider the cultural, social and economic values of the displaced people. Besides, similar

discourses foster the individual empowerment of the refugees, disconnecting them form their communities and from their country of origin, instead of rebuilding this relationship with the state (Duffield, 2019).

1.2.5. Agenda Setting and the Active Audience Theories

Since its inception, mass communication research has been concerned with the power that the media have on audiences (Williams, 2003). According to Madianou (2009), audiences have been construed as either passive recipients of media messages, or as active agents capable of producing their own meanings. Thus, "the study of the audience and effects of the media is the most active and well-supported area of investigation in media studies" (Williams, 2003, p. 165). Indeed, a study on effects and audiences requires a thorough and inclusive investigation of the media effects research tradition. Therefore, delving into the roots of media research provides a clear vision about the historical evolution of media effects studies. Besides, a clear understanding of the media effects history provides an insight into how media research and its dissemination can be socially relevant and meaningful.

Theories of news agenda setting (McCombs, 1997; McCombs & Shaw, 1972) and of the active audience (Liebes & Katz, 1986) are two of the most prominent approaches in mass communication research and on how news and public opinion influence one another. One of the main assertions of agenda-setting theory is that what the media find important, or salient, is what the public finds important (Marchionni, 2012). In other words, agenda setting is the selective coverage of topics that leads the public to perceive some issues as more important than others regardless of their inherent newsworthiness (Wu & Coleman, 2009). A second aspect of agenda setting theory is known as 'second-level agenda setting', which is the idea that the mass media not only tell people what to think about certain issues but also how to think about them (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). Second-level agenda setting surpasses the effect of relative salience of an issue and examines the two dimensions of the portrayal of that issue: its substance and affectivity (Coleman, et al., 2009; Wu & Coleman, 2009). In this perspective, media have powerful and direct effects

on relatively powerless and passive audiences. This theoretical perspective has been described as the hypodermic needle theory, the magic bullet theory, the stimulus-response or transmission belt theory. This model is based on the assumption that the media directly inject messages into audiences and that the media's message is a bullet fired from the media gun into the viewer's head. These messages are blindly and helplessly received by the vulnerable and helpless dupes who see things just in black and white without criticizing or opposing the received media content (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955).

The second major approach to studying the interaction of the news and public opinion is the active audience approach. Public opinion on social issues is not only shaped by mass media but can also influence the agenda of the media (Dalton, 2013). Alasuutari (1999) confirms that the cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall is the founding father of the reception research, particularly with the emergence of his influencial and groundbreaking article Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse (1974), because "the reception paradigm Hall promoted did involve a shift from a technical to a semiotic approach to messages" (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 3), as messages are no longer bullets that are directed from media sources to audiences, but the encoded message can be decoded and made sense of in various ways by different audiences. Thus, Hall's semiotic framework "moves away from a behaviouristic stimulus-response model to an interpretive framework, where all effects depend on an interpretation of media messages" (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 3). Hall (1974) clearly states that

> the broadcasting structures must yield an encoded message in the form of a meaningful discourse. The institution-societal relations of production must pass into and through the modes of a language for its products to be 'realized'. This initiates a further differentiated moment, in which the formal rules of discourse and language operate. Before this message can have an 'effect' […], or satisfy a

> 'need' or be put to a 'use', it must first be perceived as a meaningful discourse and meaningfully decoded. It is this set of decoded meanings which 'have an effect', influence, entertain, instruct or persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioural consequences (p.3).

Hall's application of the semiotic approach in his model is linked to what he labels "determinate moments" of the encoding and decoding processes:

> In the moment when the historical event passes under the sign of language, it is subject to all the complex 'rules' by which language signifies. To put it paradoxically, the event must become a 'story' before it can become a communicative event. In that moment, the formal sub-rules of language are 'in dominance', without, of course, subordinating out of existence the historical event so signified, or the historical consequences of the event having been signified in this way (Hall, 1974, p. 2).

According to Hall (1974), audiences can decode and read media texts in three different ways: the 'dominant or hegemonic reading', 'the negotiated reading' and 'the oppositional reading'. Hall's (1974) then-new paradigm in media and communication research was adopted and applied by many researchers in a set of empirical studies.

Recent studies have disputed the view that public opinion is formed via passive consumption of media information; media that study researchers in particular have identified the active presence of audiences through their responsive and interpretive analysis of the meanings of media products (Hermida et al., 2011). They suggest that journalists themselves perceive audiences as "active recipients … somewhere between

passive receivers and active creators of content" (Hermida et al., 2011, p. 17). This perception is enhanced by the journalists' expectation that users will even participate in the news spreading, especially in this current era of global media and online social platforms. Therefore, audiences support their role of active recipients by observing newsworthy events and spreading the news afterwards by applying their personal filter (Hermida & Thurman 2007; Hermida et al., 2011). Recent technological advances allow citizens with internet access to not only actively interpret and interact with web-based content, but also to broadcast their own interpretations of events (Thurman, 2008). The result is user-generated content, the 'product of active Internet contributors, who put in a certain amount of creative effort which is created outside of professional routines and platforms' (Van Dijck, 2009, p. 41). One popular form of user-generated content is the comment fields that accompany many newspaper articles published online. Commenters often challenged articles' content while providing new ideas and arguments (Graham & Wright, 2015, p. 17). Yet despite their popularity and apparent significance, research on news article comment fields has so far been very limited.

Conclusion

Up to the end of an adequate grasp of news media representations and irregular migration in context, this chapter has presented a descriptive account of the basic related theories. With respect to the centrality of the issue of ideology and power relations that characterize news discourse, this chapter has attempted to set out a clear explanation of the terms. This chapter has also provided the basic definitions of the founding concepts used in the present study as they appear in the literature. The first section puts forward the literature review where the assumptions underlying irregular migration and news discourse are presented. The second section provides the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study that will eventually help in demonstrating that social relations of power can be portrayed in texts such as newspapers. The subsequent chapter is devoted to describing the research methodology designed for the present study. It presents a detailed roadmap used to answer the research questions.

Chapter Two

Research Methodology

Introduction

After examining the relevant literature, this chapter is devoted to the methodological approach of the research at hand. To make a link between the theory and the methodological rationale for data collection and analysis, this chapter draws on the previous one in terms of the theoretical background underlying the current research. This chapter also comprises the research objectives and research questions guiding this investigation. Besides, a detailed account of the sample and sampling techniques is also presented. Prior to the conceptual and operational definitions underpinning the empirical work, the presentation of the research instrumentation adopted in this study is brought to the fore.

It has been established in Chapter One that discourse denotes language in use, highlighting the interwoven relationship between discourse and social practice. The research objectives and the assumption of this study require an integral research method that combines analysis of texts, discourse practice, and the sociocultural background in a critical manner. Therefore, Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework is used as the main method for such a critical discourse analysis. It includes sociocultural practice analysis, discourse practice analysis, and text analysis which help to generate a comprehensive understanding of a communicative event (Fairclough, 1992). Accordingly, it is necessary to reiterate the aforementioned conception of discourse as being simultaneously constitutive of and constituted by society. It is also of key importance to highlight that these interrelations between discourse and society are not shaped in 'monolithic or mechanical ways'; rather, societies sustain "a variety of coexisting, contrasting and often competing discursive practices" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 134). As a result, the multi-level nature of discourse requires a multi-level way for analysis, mainly the micro and macro-levels, which will be the focus later in this chapter.

1.3. Research objectives

As demonstrated in the literature review, a substantial gap exists in the available literature concerning Moroccan research that has critically examined how e-newspapers represent the phenomenon of irregular migration and how their readers react. To do that, this study draws primarily on Fairclough's sociocultural approach to CDA where discourses are described,

interpreted and explained with regard to the discourse practices of production and consumption and the broader social context.

Drawing on the theoretical points of departure, the current study has the following objectives:

O.1. To identify the dominant thematic patterns which are used in *Hespress* news articles and their readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration.

O.2. To describe the frequency of the recurrent themes about the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments.

O.3. To reveal the underlying ideologies that reside in *Hespress*' discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration and explain how they relate to the wider social context.

1.4. Research questions

Research methods should follow the framing of the questions (Silverman, 2000). Therefore, it is helpful to return to the main research questions that guide this study. The central research question is:

- How does *Hespress* and its readers represent the issue of irregular migration in Morocco from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018?

To answer this central question, three sub-sequent questions are asked:

Q. 1. Which themes are used in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration?

Q. 2. With what intensity do the irregular migration themes occur in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

Q. 3. To what extent does *Hespress* discursive representation of the irregular migration issue align with Morocco's geopolitical agendas?

To investigate these questions, a triangulation of three methods, namely, thematic analysis, content analysis and CDA, is applied.

1.5. *Hespress* as a case study

This research is approached through a case study strategy. Case study in media research constitutes an effective strategy which is often chosen for its shortcut and concentrative merits. It is particularly used in situations where contextual conditions of the phenomenon being studied are critical and where the researcher has no control over the events as they develop. Yin (2003) defines a case study as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined" (p. 13). The vastness, richness and context-bound nature of media scholarship have made it practically far-fetched to reach generalizable conclusions. This is what makes it a cumulative on-going process whereby every study contributes with an added value. For Gerring (2004), a case study is "an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units" (p. 342).

The decision to study one particular platform, *Hespress* in this case, rather than others, is grounded in the nature of this study which aims to conduct an in-depth exploration in order to reach a better understanding of the complex representations of news discourse rather than making any generalisations. As such, *Hespress* is a is considered a convenient research site as it provides authentic data from news articles and readers' comments which will make it possible to bring answers to the research questions. Besides, popularity, circulation and audience appeal witness the significant role this platform plays in the Moroccan society as a mediator of social discourse and public opinion. In other words, the choice of the e-newspaper *Hespress* as a research site is not random; it is grounded in the fact that it is the first Moroccan electronic newspaper circulating in the country and it has the largest readership (Alexa, 2018). It is the most widely circulated e-newspaper in Morocco. According to Youssef Roudaby (2015), with more than two million visitors every day, *Hespress* is the third most popular site in Morocco, just behind Google and Facebook, thus surpassing Youtube.

This means that *Hespress* gratifies its audience needs of infotainment[25] (information and entertainment), cognitive surveillance, and social connectedness. This makes it a significant player in the Moroccan society as a mediator of social discourse, public debate, and public opinion. This news platform is also chosen because it is an authentic example of an e-newspaper which provides accessible data from news articles and readers' comments. In fact, it is viewed as a bountiful site of readily accessible data that provides a significant body of collectable data over the studied period. The choice to study *Hespress* as an e-newspaper is geared by the fact that this platform provides authentic data comprising news articles and readers' comments. The choice to study *Hespress* news discourse is also geared towards the fulfilment of two fundamental functions of news media traditionally recognised as: consciousness-raising and self-development. That is to say, findings of this study will help the news agency to be more watchful and more rigorous towards language items selection and use in order to sound ideological-free. As such, *Hespress* will meet its objectives as stated in its mission statement which is to bring the general public closer to unbiased news.

On the basis of this understanding, *Hespress* is conceived as a rich and useful site for the study of the news discourse in context. On the newspaper site, the news articles are delivered originally in standard Arabic and the readers' comments are either in standard or Moroccan Arabic, or sometimes in French. For this study, the relevant texts were translated into English and, in all relevant cases; the original Arabic wording in the text is included.

1.6. Data collection

The general agreement among most CDA scholars is that CDA is not considered as one single method, but it is viewed as an approach consisting of different perspectives, methods and various tools for studying language in context (Van Dijk, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The study sample includes news articles and readers' comments from *Hespress* covering the period from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018. *Hespress*' news discourse has been chosen as the data for this study because its data is accessible, it represents reality through language, and that ideologies are expected to be found in its news texts.

[25]- The terms infotainment was first used in 1980 in the UK. The infotainers were a group of British information scientists who put on comedy shows at professional news conferences and which became very popular between 1980 and 1990.

In discourse analysis, the data could be anything that a researcher could read for meaning, including texts, pictures, events, and objects. In this study, it is inappropriate to talk about data collection in terms of the traditions of quantitative and qualitative research paradigms, as these involve questionnaires or structured interviews on the one hand, and open interviews or ethnographic studies on the other. Instead, the data gathered for this study is textual. Similar to Holst and Bingöl (2016), data collection used keywords as search parameters. Therefore, *Hespress* archive was consulted from the official website www.hespress.com for published news stories about irregular migration in Morocco from September 13, 2013 to December 11, 2018. The data collection was done through the selection of articles which contain specific keywords. *Hespress* integrated search engine was used by typing the following keywords: Morocco, migration reform, integration policy, new migration policy 2013, irregular migration, refugees, asylum seekers. Each of these keywords was used individually and then several combinations of key words were used in order to make the search of related news articles as extensive as possible in *Hespress*. This variety of keywords was utilized in order to access all possible texts that were written about irregular migration in Morocco during the time under study.

The timeframe selected for this dissertation starts from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 20180. This six years' time frame is chosen for specific reasons: the prominent event of the adoption of the new migration integration policy was issued in September 9, 2013. The years 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 have all very significant reforms and events about the new migration policy and 2018 marks the end of the reforms and also marks the time when the new law was in effect. The sampling therefore covers a specific time span relevant to the context of the event dealt with. This renders the analysed data more meaningful in the light of broader contemporary socio-political events (Khosravinik, 2009).

The selection of the most significant key events that have received major national news media coverage has led to the analysis of six spike periods that have marked the main reforms brought by the new irregular migration policy which are:

Investigated Time Frame	Key Event
September 9th, 2013	King Mohammed VI officially announced a plan to adopt a "humanitarian approach" to migration and asylum called the New Migration Policy. This included the creation of a ministerial department devoted to migration affairs, the launch of a regularization program for undocumented individuals living in Morocco, and the distribution of the first round of refugee and asylum seeker cards.
2014	The first phase of the policy's implementation in 2014 saw more than 24,000 migrants, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa and Syria, gain a one-year legal status. There was the adoption of the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum (Stratégie Nationale d'Immigration et d'Asile or SNIA) by the Council of Government. This new approach has improved access to residency cards for undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees within Morocco. The Ministry of Migration has described this strategy as a humanitarian and comprehensive policy. The new national integration policy seeks to promote the integration of migrants using a set of tools, at the apex of which is education.
2015	Morocco launched the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum; this was to replace the 2003 law with new policies and procedures to integrate migrants into Moroccan society. This policy seeks to guarantee migrants access to basic services such as education, health care, and labour-market integration. This announcement was considered a turning point in Morocco's human-rights approach to irregular immigrants, mainly sub-Saharan Africans. (Morocco remains predisposed to adopt additional policies for receiving sub-Saharan migrants as long as their origin countries continue to support it in its conflict over the Sahara).
2016	The second regularisation process was conducted, in which over 50,000 refugees and migrants from over 110 countries received residence permits which were to be valid for three years and automatically extended unless offences were committed. King Mohammed VI spent much of 2016 travelling around Africa to secure support for their bid to rejoin the African Union, offering sizable investments and business deals across the continent. The trips resulted in more than fifty bilateral agreements with African countries making Morocco the second largest African investor in the continent, after South Africa.

December 31st, 2017	The second phase was launched, granting residence permits to 28,400 migrants by December 31, 2017.
December 10th, 2018	The adoption of the first-ever Global Compact on Migration by the world leaders, outlining the framework to protect irregular migrants and supporting countries accommodating them took place on December 10 and 11, 2018. Morocco hosted the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Marrakech under the sponsorship of the U.N. The agreement was signed by 164 countries shedding light on the significance of Morocco's role in managing and supporting a new path toward migration reform. There was a wide recognition that it is a critical step forward in international cooperation, and one that can be construed as 'politically binding'. The Global Compact is the first agreement covering a wide spectrum of migration issues that has been negotiated intergovernmentally at the global level and heralds a significant step forward in international cooperation.

Table 2 : Key events from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018

These key events have ignited hot debate among pro-migration and anti-migration supporters, as it will be demonstrated through this dissertation.

1.7. Sampling

Sampling is the process whereby a small group of individuals or items is selected to represent the total population in a conducted research. The selection of a sample population depends on the research questions of the study and the sample is to be the proper representative of the whole population. Choosing a study sample is an important step in any research project since it is impossible and impractical to study whole populations. Every segment of the population should be included but the number should not be very large so as not to be very difficult to manage.

In this study, a non-random purposeful sampling technique is used. This means that the sampled news articles and readers' comments are intentionally selected in a way that allows the researcher to deeply focus on and examine certain phenomena or issues (Flick, 2009). The rationale behind the purposeful sampling is that it allows the researcher to

meaningfully select ones' own texts which is the most relevant to fully answer the research questions. As the present study is carried out within a research project targeting irregular migration representation in news discourse, the sampling method was designed to match this objective. Therefore, *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments were purposefully selected following systematic data collection criteria:

Inclusion Criteria	Origin	The news articles are to be originated from *Hespress.*
	Topic	The selected news reports should address the issue of irregular migration in Morocco.
	Time Period	the sampling period extends from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018.
	Comments	The news articles need to contain at least 10 readers' comments.
Exclusion Criteria	Origin	News articles originating from other sources than *Hespress*
	Topic	Articles dealing with irregular migration in other countries than Morocco.
	Time Period	Articles that are beyond the specified time frame.
	Comments	Articles with less than 10 readers' comments.

Table 3 : Criteria for data collection inclusion and exclusion

In order to focus on *Hespress*' news articles and their readers' comments, a double fold body of data corpus was collected. The first folder consists of data collected from *Hespress*' news articles. The second folder holds datasets collected from the newspaper's readers' comments. Any other genre beyond these, like pictures or videos, does not fall within the scope of this investigation.

1.7.1. Sample one: news articles

The included news articles are those that explicitly describe irregular migration in Morocco during the studied research time frame from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018. Lists of news articles were found with the keywords in their headlines. Every article was checked to evaluate whether the keywords were random matches or that the articles were about irregular migration in Morocco during the studied period. Each article was copied with its link and saved on individual word documents. Once all the articles that could be found were compiled, they were filtered again. The articles that had the key words but were out of the

study's scope or unrelated to the topic like the articles dealing with irregular migration but in other countries or beyond the time frame were all deleted. Also, the included articles have to contain more than or equal to 10 comments to ensure that the articles generated enough representations about irregular migration.

The full corpus of data collected is comprised of articles which were found to contain the query terms. But the amount of articles had to be downsized to a more manageable sample before implementing the qualitative methods of CDA. By adopting a systematic downsizing procedure introduced by KhosraviNik (2009), the number of articles was reduced to a more manageable size (36 articles; 6 articles for each year) for the purposes of the more in-depth critical analysis. More importantly, the data sample of 6 news articles per year has helped to reach the point of sample saturation. That is to say, when the researcher reaches the state saturation, there is no more new information or insight that emerges from the data and that only the same information starts to get repeated.

All the selected news articles are of textual content type, which means that the news articles including videos, slideshows and photographs are filtered out as they are not subject to this analysis. In other words, this study focuses only on text based content because this study's aim is to investigate the textual patterns and themes employed in *Hespress* news articles and their corresponding readers' comments which represent irregular migration. Although images play an important role in conveying a message to the reader in the ways they interact with the actual text, their inclusion in this study would require another method in addition to critical discourse analysis.

1.7.2. Sample two: readers' comments

The aim of developing readers' comments data is twofold. First, as mentioned earlier, analysis of the text consumption processes is an integral part of a comprehensive understanding of social meanings and ideologies in a text. Second, one of the research objectives is to investigate the way *Hespress* readers react to the news articles concerning the issue of irregular migration. In order to maintain consistency and manage the vast amount of readers' comments, no more than the first 10 comments would be considered inclusive of the replies and the oldest comments would be shown first as they are the initial reactions to the article,

which gives the total of 360 comments. Again, the number of ten comments has helped to reach sample saturation and that the same information starts to be repeated.

1.8. Sample limitations

This study has employed a purposeful sampling technique. It is the method of data gathering which is not done at random. It is based on the premise that the researcher can select and pick material which will best serve the purpose of the study; the limitation of what is referred to as "cherry picking"[26]. The researcher has the freedom to conduct an intentional selection of "information-rich cases to study in depth" (Patton, 2002). Such information-rich cases allow for the most advantageous approach to the subject matter, and to reach an in-depth understanding of the analysed phenomena.

In spite of all the explanation given above regarding the reasons for choosing a specific timeframe and the selected newspaper as well as difficulties of data collection, the small number of the sample 36 news articles with their 360 readers' comments gathered for the analysis still affects both the outcome of the research and the scope of claims. This means that, given the limited number of the samples, findings of the research can be held to count only for the data set (36 news articles and 360 readers' comments), topic (news discourse representation of irregular migration), and the period (from 13 September 2013 to December 2018) under study. In fact, when gathering *Hespress* news articles to begin the analysis, the aim was to gather at least 10 articles per year for each of the 6 main incidents. However, when conducting the search, that goal was unreachable, as there were some years that published less than 10 articles focusing on the humanitarian representation of irregular migration in Morocco during the 6 years that I was focusing on. Also, the use of the first 10 comments of each news article is also a limitation to this study because some information can get lost, as, for example, in cases where the readers discussed other issues while commenting on the news articles. It is important, then, that future research examines the various ways in which users thematize news stories through their comments.

[26]- CDA is sometimes accused of "cherry picking" when the research chooses the data in a way that suits their own aims and agendas.

1.9. Research design

The adoption of a social constructivist [27]epistemology (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), which proposes that one's understanding of reality is socially created, is appropriate for this work as it points to the social specificity of the world. It suggests that language categories which are employed in every day discourse are defined through a process of selection and construction that is dependent on societal dynamics and processes. Through this social constructivist understanding, it is assumed that the social world is constructed by human activity; the social reality individuals understand and know is created, shaped and reproduced in social processes. The view that linguistic choices and categories are not given haphazardly in the world but constructed, negotiated, reformed and organized by individuals to make sense of the world, encourages the belief that all human beings are principally social agents rather than simply passive reactors.

This study also adopts a critical approach to the study of how *Hespress* represents the issue of irregular migration. Critical theory was adopted as opposed to positivism because the methods used in the latter lead a researcher to become too focused on the facts and not analyse how these facts came to being. According to Agger (1991), positivism allows only one dimension of knowledge to become imperialistic and halt other forms of knowing. Positivism suggests that one can perceive the world without making assumptions about the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach suggests a neutral observation of the phenomenon being investigated and a value-free scientific approach to investigation. These could be suppositions on the potential of the internet, as scholars who embrace positivism do not give empirical evidence to buttress their points of view. As mentioned above, critical theory avoids the neutral observation of language and the value-free ideal of scientific knowledge. In order to avoid some of the assumptions of the positivist approach, critical theory looks at the conflicts within societies and how these shape the language that is used.

Accordingly, this research adheres mainly to a qualitative research paradigm which focuses on the social constructions that are present in *Hespress* news articles and their

[27]- For social constructivism, see Chapter Two.

readers' comments while representing the issue of irregular migration. Qualitative research uses words to describe and analyse what exists in the textual materials, aiming to uncover their subtle meanings (Gray, et al., 2007). For Creswell (2013), qualitative research is described as a research method which is used to explore and understand the meaning that come from social or human problems. As such, the aim of this qualitative research is to explore how people construct meaning by putting much emphasis on the social context. Qualitative research does not claim to be representative as it does not utilize a large sample of data; instead, the research attempts to acquire in-depth exploration and understanding from smaller data. However, the need to address the data in terms of its manifest and latent content often invites the incorporation of both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. Quantitative content analysis is conducted in order to quantify the thematic patterns with the aim of revealing their intensity of occurrence in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. Such an approach allows for a broader interpretation of the texts and the context in which it appears.

Therefore, combining quantitative and qualitative methods provides better answers to the research questions. The two different lines of enquiry, objectivity-oriented positivists and meaning-oriented constructivists, are directed towards the same point of investigation. In this respect, both trends have undeniable assets to build on for the accomplishment of these research objectives in a systematic triangulation. Another justification behind this triangulated methodological framework is to respond to some criticisms towards Thematic Analysis, Content Analysis and CDA, each of which is accused of having limitations. Therefore, since each of these methods has its own strengths and weaknesses, it is very convenient to adopt more than one method as they will complement each other. For instance, using qualitative methods alone will risk getting findings and conclusions that suit the researcher's ideological positions. Thus, quantifying the data will give the chance for more scientific and objective research with higher levels of reliability and credibility. In this respect, all methods have undeniable assets to build on for the accomplishment of the research objectives in a systematic methodical triangulation.

Accordingly, the following research design has been adopted. First, this analysis starts by a Thematic Analysis of the news articles and readers' comments with the aim of identifying and extracting recurrent themes which represent the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress* discourse. Then, a quantitative content analysis is carried out with the aim of quantifying the thematic patterns and their intensity of occurrence in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. After that, Fairclough's (1992, 1995) three-dimensional framework is conducted for an in-depth examination of *Hespress* discourse in order to uncover any hidden ideologies or unequal power relations by relating the text to its context. This framework will provide the necessary analytical tools to explore how knowledge and power are constituted and also naturalised in social relations. This critical discourse study is undertaken in order to better understand how language impacts social representations. By relating the emerging themes to wider social context, this study helps to explain how the themes that have emerged in *Hespress* align or not with Morocco's geopolitical agendas. Thus, Fairclough's (1992, 1995) CDA framework is considered as the most appropriate tool to explore how the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress*. This framework puts emphasis not only on the formal aspects of language use, but also places an emphasis on the social actions accomplished by language users communicating within the social context.

1.9.1. Thematic analysis

The method of thematic analysis is applied in this study in order to locate the dominant themes that exist in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. Thematic analysis is "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 57). Therefore, it allows the research questions to be explored in more depth. It is based on the premise that "broader assumptions, structures and/or meanings" are selectively articulated and represented in the knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). Accordingly, it is compatible with the current critical discourse analysis, which assumes that discourse shapes the construction of knowledge. It is a flexible research method that can be used in an either inductive or deductive manner, or even a combination of both approaches. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as a flexible research tool which aims to identify how the attendance of themes or patterns within raw unstructured qualitative data is associated with a

particular line of thought. It is based on the premise that "broader assumptions, structures and meanings" are selectively articulated and represented in the knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85).

Basically, thematic analysis is a qualitative method for recognising, analysing and reporting thought patterns within sampled sets of data. However, its flexibility makes it practically compatible with essentialist and constructivist frameworks, applicable in inductive and deductive analyses, and, thus, fits in quantitative and qualitative approaches. So, with the advent of themes by previous research, the methodological orientation towards themetic analysis is actually deductive. In other words, a deductive thematic analysis is conducted for this study which means that the themes are driven by previous research and theories. This approach might reduce the richness of the data, but it will instead give an opportunity to provide "detailed analysis of some aspect of the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). This research analytical preconception is inspired from acknowledged academic scholarship on migration discourse.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a theme is a "patterned response or meaning" derived from the data that informs the research question (p.82). Themes can be classified as either semantic or manifest, which address more explicit or surface meanings of data items, or latent, which reflect deeper, more underlying meanings, assumptions, or ideologies. The researcher has great flexibility about which themes to identify, but he or she should strive to identify themes that provide important insights that address the research question. Researchers can employ an inductive or deductive approach to theme identification. An inductive approach derives themes from the researcher's data. Conversely, deductive approaches use a pre-existing theory, framework, or other researcher driven focus to identify themes of interest.

Thematic analysis is used to identify and classify content in a text and it involves coding the texts into categories. Accordingly, this study follows the method as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as it has become the widely adopted method of thematic analysis within the qualitative literature. Their method of analysis consists of six steps (see Appendix I):

- Step 1: Braun and Clark (2006) recommended that the researcher needs to familiarize oneself with the data which entails repeated and active reading through the data; it is about

re-reading the entire data set at least once before embarking on analysis, as well as "reading the data in an active way" (p. 87) marking ideas and codes that might be useful in later stages.

- Step 2: The researcher generates initial codes; not themes. Boyatzis (1998) defined a code as 'the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon' (p. 63). A code should be sufficiently well-defined so as not to overlap with other codes and should fit logically within a larger coding framework or coding template that guides the coding process by outlining and defining the codes to be applied. Similar to distinctions among themes, codes can be tied to more semantic or latent meanings, and the coding framework can be inductive, reflective of pertinent issues raised by the data alone, or deductive, guided by specific theories. Once the coding framework is defined, researchers then apply the same codes to the entire data set by labelling data extracts with relevant codes. Coding can be done manually or with the assistance of a computer software program.

- Step 3: The researcher searches for themes. This step involves examination of the coded data extracts to look for potential themes. The process of theme identification is fundamentally an active and interpretive process. Themes do not simply emerge from the data; instead, themes are constructed by the researcher through analyzing, combining, comparing, and even graphically mapping how codes relate to one another. In inductive analysis, researchers derive themes expressly from the coded data, so the themes identified will be more closely linked to the original data and reflective of the entire data set. Conversely, in deductive analysis, predefined theories or theoretical frameworks will inform theme development, so these themes often focus more on a particular aspect of the data set or a specific question of interest. No defined threshold exists for the amount of data that constitutes a theme. Important themes will provide significant links between data items and answer key aspects of research questions.

- Step 4: The researcher reviews the themes. In this analysis, the researcher looks at coded data placed within each theme to ensure proper fit. He or she reviews all relevant code sand data extracts under each theme to make sure one has adequate supporting data. At this point, data extracts can be re-sorted and themes modified to better reflect and capture coded data. Themes can be added, combined, divided, or even discarded. The researcher should be

confident that the revised thematic map adequately covers all of the coded data to be included in the final analysis. The researcher here decides if individual themes fit meaningfully within the data set and whether the thematic map accurately and adequately represents the entire body of data. The thematic map should clearly demonstrate how themes represent the question. To accomplish this task, the researcher re-reads the entire data set to re-examine themes and to re-code for additional data that falls under the themes that have been newly created or modified in this phase, then revises the thematic map accordingly. Re-reading and revising codes and themes are expected parts of the analytic process. The revisions can cease once all data items that appear relevant to the study question have been incorporated into the coding scheme, themes are coherent, and additional refinements are not yielding substantial changes.

- Step 5: The researcher defines and names themes. The researcher creates a definition and narrative description of each theme. The names of themes to be included in the final report are reviewed to ensure they are brief and adequately descriptive. The researcher then creates a coherent narrative of how and why the coded data within each theme provide unique insights, contribute to the overall understanding of larger questions, and interact with other themes. This is a good time to select data extracts to be presented in the final report that illustrate key features of themes and to create narratives surrounding them that provide context to explain their importance to the broader story each theme tells.

- Step 6: This final step involves writing up the final description of findings. Elements of the writing process have already begun through the processes of note taking, describing of themes, and selection of representative data extracts in prior steps. The final report should move beyond mere description of codes and themes. The report should weave a narrative that provides a clear, concise, and logical account not only how a researcher interprets the data, but also why his or her selection of themes and interpretation of the data are important and accurate. Using both narrative descriptions and representative data extracts, the analysis should describe the data and provide an argument for why the researcher's explanation fully answers the research question. Any direct data extracts should contain adequate context to understand their meaning and be supported by interwoven textual description that explains their importance. The discussion section can broaden the analysis by relating themes to larger

questions, discussing implications of findings, and questioning the assumptions or preconditions that gave rise to the themes.

Given the flexibility that thematic analysis grants to researchers regarding how to conduct qualitative data analysis, it is particularly important to identify choices such as using inductive or deductive analyses in coding and identifying themes that underlie the analysis throughout the manuscript. Accordingly, for this study, two overarching themes were identified based upon the thematic analysis and the consultation of previous migration research which are pro-migration (victimization) and anti-migration (problematization) themes. This study is partially inspired from the research conducted by Berry, Garcia-Blanco and Moore (2015) which analyzed the most frequently occurring themes in news coverage about refugees and migrants in the European Union. The themes coded for that study are: Threat to national security, Crime, Cultural threat, Human rights, Health risks, Humanitarian, Integration to community, Political and policy response, Education, Economic and Success stories.

1.9.1.1. Strengths of thematic analysis

The benefits of thematic analysis are its foundational and apt tool for a first approach to qualitative research; and its flexibility (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which perfectly fits the aim of "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p.79). Particularly, the thematic analytical approach used will be a latent one; i.e. an approach which involves highlighting the meanings behind themes in a broader discursive context, and discussing each topic beyond its surface realist value. Also, as compared to many other qualitative methods, thematic analysis is relatively simple to learn and apply. Because it can be inductive and thus does not require the use of theory to inform analysis, thematic analysis is quite accessible to less experienced researchers. At the same time, it is a powerful method for analyzing data that allows researchers to summarize, highlight key features of, and interpret a wide range of data sets. Furthermore, its methods are foundational to numerous other forms of qualitative analysis; in fact, Braun and Clarke (2006) argued that it should be the first method of qualitative analysis that researchers learn. Finally, thematic analysis offers researchers great flexibility with respect to the volume of data analyzed and the ability to analyze data with an

inductive, data-driven approach or a deductive, theory-driven approach (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

1.9.1.2. Weaknesses of thematic analysis

The flexibility that thematic analysis offers can also be seen as a drawback of being not a rigorous method (Clarke & Braun, 2013). If manuscripts do not clearly state the paradigmatic orientation of the work and the role of theory in the analysis, thematic analysis risks being seen as a method that is applied broadly and never consistently. Additionally, given the flexible nature of this analysis method, it can be challenging for some researchers to determine which aspects of data to focus on and which theoretical of epistemological frameworks to use for their analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As with any analytic method, thematic analysis can be conducted poorly. However, a particular disadvantage with thematic analysisis that it has been more prone to inconsistent or improper use of terminology as compared to other methods with more well-defined and less flexible frameworks. These vagueries complicate appraisals of manuscripts that use, or claim to use, thematic analysis.

The flexibility that thematic analysis offers is also seen as a drawback in that it contributes to a perception among some that it is not a rigorous method. If manuscripts don't clearly state the paradigmatic orientation of the work and the role of theory in the analysis, thematic analysis risks being seen as a method that is applied broadly and never consistently. Additionally, given the flexible nature of this analysis method, it can be challenging for some researchers to determine which aspects of data to focus on or which theoretical or epistemological frameworks to use for their analysis.

1.9.2. Quantitative content analysis

In the second cycle of scrutiny, a quantitative descriptive analytical phase involving content analysis provides an overview of recurring manifest themes in the data. Content analysis is one of the most commonly used research methodologies in media and communication research. It has been a staple of media communication research for many years. Berelson (1952) defined content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest or surface content of communication" (p. 18). It is a

systematic and objective method for providing a quantitative description of any such communication. This quantitative investigation is also meant to bring a scientific aspect to this study by reducing the researcher's subjectivity; a limitation of qualitative research which is often criticised for not being rigorous enough, and of being biased or selective with data (Maxwell, 2013). Accordingly, after grouping the news articles and readers' comments into codes which are then categorized into themes, it has become possible to quantify the data to calculate the frequency of the themes. This has given the possibility to provide a small splash of quantitative thinking within this qualitative research study.

To count the frequencies of the thematic patterns, the quantitative method of content analysis is employed. The aim here is to sort out the occurrences of the main themes that are used to represent the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. The counts, which are processed via the descriptive statistics of excel software application, are meant to gauge the frequencies of occurrence of the emerged themes. Descriptive statistics, which are based on describing what is or what the data shows, are used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. They provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Together with simple graphics analysis, they form the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis of data. This procedure is likely to provide sufficient data to investigate *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments thematic choices. This will also allow for the presentation of a clear picture of the collected quantifying data as a large whole and make the research variables visible.

Quantitative content analysis, which is concerned with the quantification and measurement of the data, is a well suited instrument for the examination of manifest content. Krippendorff (1980) described content analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context. Stempel (1981) offered a broader view of content analysis as a formal system for doing something that all people frequently do informally by drawing conclusions from observations of content. Riffe et al. (2014) define it as the systematic assignment of communication content to categories according to rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods. Inceptive quantification of the material through coding allows for a general overview of the data in terms of its characteristics and their frequencies. Quantitative researchers are keen on

quantifying social research through objectivity-oriented techniques. Here, the analysis of all communicative forms focused on the apparent occurrence of linguistic items in texts to reach objective and reliable findings.

1.9.2.1. Strengths of quantitative content analysis

Content analysis can serve as an excellent research tool to systematically and objectively evaluate large populations of qualitative media content using numbers. It is a flexible research method that can be applied to a wide variety of text sources. Besides, the value of numerical evidence is based on the idea that it provide information at face value about the way in which media deal with diversity, and that this can be done for large data sets, over longer stretches of time. Quantitative content analysis is an easy technique to use because it is not time consuming. It also allows the researcher to take qualitative data which is in narrative format and transform it into a quantitative and numerical one. Content analysis can also be a very helpful method in reducing the problem of social bias when researching social and sensitive issues like irregular migration.

1.9.2.2. Weaknesses of quantitative content analysis

Content analysis simply consists of word counts and, therefore, it cannot, on its own, give insight into the latent and deep meanings of news discourse representations. Since content analysis disregards the context of the text, it can only evaluate the manifest content. Therefore, an additional qualitative study would need to be conducted to study and explain the latent meanings in news discourse. There is also the criticism of quantitative content analysis in that the researcher has less freedom of interpretation and that it examines only manifest content while overlooking the latent contexts present within the texts. In other words, causality cannot be established as quantitative content analysis merely describes the data.

The difficulty to express nothing but superficial frequencies through quantitative measurements, however, rendered the whole quantitative project ‘a shallow counting game’ (Krippendorf, 2004) which does not give credit to the subtleties and complexities of news as discourse. So, when applied alone, quantitative content analysis often stops at the quantitative summarization of data without a more comprehensive consideration of the context (Tesch,

1990). Thus, the next part of analysis uses CDA which particularly analyses the salient meanings.

Another weakness of content analysis arises from the connection with the process of sampling and coding as they can introduce bias. The abstraction of content from its context can create problems. In other words, taking a word or a phrase in isolation of other parts of the text can result in the loss of meaning. In addition, content analysis risks overlooking what is not said in a particular text. In some situations, what is not said or omitted can be as significant as what is included.

1.9.3. Fairclough's CDA framework

Once the manifest themes are clearly formulated, the research proceeds to the more in-depth critical exploration of the texts as through CDA. The emphasis is put on the implications of the emergent rates, on the one hand, and with the repercussions of the ideological propositions made by the newspaper, on the other hand. Fairclough (2001) explains that qualitative research helps the analysis of the dialectical relationships between language and other elements of social practices.

Accordingly, in order to analyse the data corpus from a critical perspective, Fairclough's (1992) critical discourse analysis is applied, specifically through identifying how themes for and against irregular migration are represented and, what words or phrases are used for their construction. This analysis includes the analysis of the internal properties of the texts as well as their external or social properties. Accordingly, *Hespress*' discourse representing the issue of irregular migration is described, interpreted and explained with regard to the discourse practices of production and consumption and the broader social context.

With social structures and power relations, Fairclough (2003), who advocates a relational approach to CDA, explains that discourse is analyzed by looking at a text's internal or micro-level and external or macro-level and then looking at how these levels relate to one other. According to Fairclough (1995), texts are in forms of written or oral, and the analysis of texts does not only include the traditional forms of linguistic analysis, but also the textual organisation. The analysis of discourse practice involves facets of text production,

consumption, and distribution (Fairclough, 1995). By social practice, it refers to the wider economic, political, and cultural context in which the communicative event is happening (Fairclough, 1995). The three dimensions are so interrelated that the discourse practice bridges the gap between news texts and the wider social and cultural backdrops. News text is the result of discourse practice, which is generated from and shaped by the wider social and cultural settings (Fairclough, 1992). This framework for critical discourse analysis is powerful in investigating the representation of irregular migrants by *Hespress*. It has advantages in combining text analysis and social analysis. It can not only go deep into the micro element of texts to examine the final product of representation, but also distil the evolving power relations hidden in the shifting sociocultural principles and practices of the discourse, adding more social meanings to the simple analysis of the text. It also stands out in analysing text and society alone respectively.

In the case of this research which performs an analysis of *Hespress*' news articles and their corresponding readers' comments as a way to demonstrate this portrayal of power relations, this research features more specific underlying objectives. It is about analyzing the internal properties of these news articles and readers' comments using Fairclough's (2003) CDA framework, analyzing the external properties of these aforementioned texts, conducting discourse level analysis of these texts and from these, proposing generalizations on how the internal and external properties of these texts contribute to demonstrations of power relations in *Hespress*.

1.9.3.1. Strengths of Fairclough's framework

Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model is a robust systematic framework which can be used for analysis involving societal structures. It makes the analysis objective and rigorous by dividing discourse into three distinct aspects: the physical text (spoken or written), the discourse practice, and the social practice. Fairclough's three dimensional framework is acclaimed to be a very convenient method to bring together the three analytical traditions, each of which is indispensable for discourse analysis. These analytical traditions, according to Fairclough (1992), are:

- The tradition of close textual and linguistic analysis within linguistics.
- The macrosociological tradition of analysing social practice in relation to social structures.
- The interpretivist or microsociological tradition of seeing social practice as something which people actively produce and make sense of on the basis of shared common sense procedures.

1.9.3.2. Weaknesses of Fairclough's framework

One of the main critics to Fairclough's three dimensional framework is the linguist Henry Widdowson. Among the shortcomings, Widdowson highlights the excessive amount of overlapping, confusing terminology which he feels Fairclough has failed to explain coherently. He believes that Fairclough's framework "is not actually a method of analysis but an approach to interpretation" (Widdowson, 2004, p. 159), and that it is incomplete in the manner in which it deals with texts. However, he does not dismiss Fairclough's work entirely. For him, though Fairclough's demonstrations are partial and, in a sense, piecemeal, they are effective in revealing aspects of meaning from a particular socio-political perspective demonstrate the way texts can be constructed, how they can be made relevant to an understanding of social life. In fact, Fairclough (1992) himself admits the problem of the overwhelming number of textual features which are potentially worthy of inclusion in any critical discourse analysis.

Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework is also often criticised for not being rigorous enough, and of being biased or selective with data (Maxwell, 2013). It is also criticised for not being objective as it depends on the researcher's reading of the text, therefore, requiring them to engage their background, beliefs and cognitive perceptions directly with the material under analysis with the condition of making those biases declared accordingly (Gill, 1996).

Another point of criticism is Fairclough's second step, which places importance in the interpretation of a text. Widdowson (1995) criticizes the perceived tendency that "that the single interpretation offered is uniquely validated by the textual facts" (p. 169). He suggests that the discourse of one's interpretation may not match the discourse of the author's intention

(Widdowson, 1995, p. 171). In a later publication, Widdowson (2004) refers to this as the "functional fallacy", that is to say, the analyst misrepresenting the text by assuming "that semantic signification is directly projected as pragmatic significance in language use" (p. 96). What this means is that a text has several potential meanings, and the researcher fails to account for these alternative interpretations. He notes that Fairclough makes a distinction between potential meaning and pragmatic meaning, but argues that he does not follow this distinction through in his analysis.

1.10. Conceptual and operational definitions

The issue of value measurement in academic scholarship lies at the heart of the theoretical concerns about the matters of credibility and reliability of emergent research findings. For these concerns, this section provides the operationalization and definition of the variables at play in capturing the latent ideologies existing within *Hespress* discourse representing the issue of irregular migration.

First, the conceptual definition of the themes is presented, namely: pro-migration and anti-migration theme variables. These are informed by previous research and accommodated to fit within the mapping of this study's agenda. This study partially replicates the coding of main themes in the study by Berry, Garcia-Blanco and Moore (2015). This study analyzes the most frequently occurring themes in news coverage about refugees and migrants in the European Union. Similarly, this study coded for the main themes in *Hespress* news articles about irregular migrants in Morocco. Second, the coding scheme of the involved variables is presented.

1.10.1. Defining themes

A theme is an ideational unit capturing important information about the data with respect to the intent of the research question. The identification of themes within discourse offers an empirical case by isolating slots of patterned meaning for analysis. In this study, patterning is recognised to mean the identifiable 'recurring regularities' (Braun & Clarke, 2006) through which plausible deductions about the repetitive associations between the verbatim production and the structures of thought. With regard to the qualitative orientation of the study, the

interest in the themes is not limited to frequency as a quality of use, but also in the themes as mental constructs giving shape to basic representations of irregular migrants.

Thematically, the representation of irregular migrants was framed within two main discourses: pro- migration and anti-migration themes.

1.10.1.1. Pro-migration (victimization) themes

Themes are labelled as pro-migration, should they be addressing irregular migrants areas of concern. Basically, pro-migration themes supposedly frame irregular migrants within favourable positive frame in the host country. However, in critical qualitative analysis these labellings are recycled to detect dehumanizing framings within the pro-migration themes.

From the set of themes where irregular migrants are depicted as beneficial and positive, three themes emerged, namely Humanitarian Theme, Politics Theme, and Integration Theme.

The present research defines these themes as follows:

- Human Rights theme: Principles from the International Human Rights law or the universal right of asylum seeking are referred to as they emphasize emotions like solidarity, empathy and compassion.
- Politics theme: The ideas which emphasise that the Moroccan government has a political obligation towards helping the irregular migrants are stressed. Voices of political elite groups and political issues are highly incorporated in news reporting to represent irregular migrants.
- Integration theme**:** The sectors in which irregular migrants are integrated are referred to and the idea that the integration of the migrants does not represent any problem is stressed.

1.10.1.2. Anti-migration (problematization) themes

Conversely, anti-migration themes allude to thought units of negativity. Constructions suggestive of irregular migration as problematic to the host society are charted as pertaining to this category. News articles are anti-migration when their propositions are amenable to depicting irregular migrants as negative and problematic.

From the set of themes where irregular migrants undergo practices of negativity, this study adopts three themes: Blaming the Government, the Economic Burden, and the Threat themes.

- Blaming the Government theme: This focuses on blaming the authorities for adopting the new migration policy 2013.
- The Economic Burden theme: This focuses on the financial burden caused by irregular migrants on the Moroccan economy that already has many economic problems.
- The Threat theme: It refers to all the social and cultural threats posed by the irregular migrants like causing crime, having a different culture and carrying diseases. The threat theme criminalizes migrants and presents them as potential criminals, cheaters, dangerous evil-doers with the capacity to threaten and harm the host society.

1.11. Pilot study

Before I designed my thesis research, a pilot study with smaller samples was first conducted. Piloting was intended to test and ensure that the CDA approach can be applied for this study and see whether this study is worth being done in the first place. Based on the pilot study, it has been realised that the triangulation and systematic application of Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional framework along with the thematic analysis and content analysis are appropriate analytical methods in the study of news discourse. Furthermore, the pilot study has also served in gaining a greater awareness of the value and purpose of qualitative discourse analysis as the insights generated from focusing specifically on the research questions and corresponding discursive strategies was extremely rich.

The results obtained from the pilot study were constructive as they revealed the key themes that were prevalent in *Hespress* news articles and its readers' comments. The differing themes that emerged from this analysis were identified and accounted for. Following the pilot analysis, all texts that were disseminated from the news articles which referred to irregular migration from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018 were identified. This pilot project provided a guiding and helpful training of news discourse analysis.

1.12. Ethical considerations

Before drawing the methodology to a conclusion, one area that should be discussed and that continues to be debated is the ethical dimension to research. Whenever doing research within social sciences, some specific ethical guidelines for assuring quality are to be considered, mainly validity and reliability as they give quality and rigour to the study. Validity, on the one hand, refers to "the degree to which a test measures what it claims or purports to be measuring" (Brown, 1996, p.213). Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the collection of data in a consistent and accurate manner (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). For instance, having two individuals coding the same data independently increases reliability. The more manifest the meaning of a message is, the more likely the coders will code the passage in the same way (Neuendorf, 2002).

It is also pertinent to re-emphasize here that the use of a triangulation technique (adopting more than one method such as thematic analysis, content analysis and CDA) in this study is, first, to increase the degree of validity and reliability; and second, to achieve a qualitative depth through the provision of a quantitative breadth. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods to approach the research questions, this study has got a powerful analytical framework as it benefits from both approaches. Additionally, because of the complex nature of this study, one individual method would be insufficient to render an adequate and comprehensive analysis of the findings. Therefore, the triangulation of the three methods is adopted in order benefit from the strong points of each method and to mitigate the weaknesses in the individual methods and further raise the degree of validity and reliability.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), validating themes in the early and late stages of data analysis is essential. It has been suggested that the researcher should involve an outside reviewer during this early stage to evaluate and identified themes. In other words, to test if the themes the researcher identified are compatible with the whole of the text or not. The researcher should subsequently involve an independent reviewer for his/her feedback. This will enable the researcher to compare the two sets of feedback. The main purpose of this procedure is to build reliability in themes analysis coding. To ensure internal validity and reliability when coding the news articles and readers' comments, two undergraduate students were recruited to conduct a separate and similar analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) say that

by including two outside or independent reviewers would build a strong process for analytical credibility. The recruited students had no prior knowledge of the study and were included to incorporate a measure of validity. This measure was important to add rigour and confidence to the analysis. This step also helped reduce the risk of reviewer bias in the data interpretation and enhanced the confirmability of the reported results. The compiled list of thematic codes that was collected from the initial news articles analysis was shared and compared with the students'.

The collection process of the data for the present study therefore entailed investigating and following the privacy policy of *Hespress*. The submission and discussion guidelines state that the commenters have total responsibility for the messages they post on the comment sections. Moreover, it is also emphasized that the newspaper does not assume any liability for the content of the comments. The reader comment sections of *Hespress* website can be regarded as relatively public domains or public discussion forums, because the content can be read by anyone without registration and this openness is well notified on the website. However, the goal of the present study is to provide valuable information for the research objectives, not their identification. Consequently, the anonymity or the pseudonymization of the commenters is protected.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodological objectives of the study have been stated in detail. It provides a descriptive account of the analytical scope, the sampling method, and the operational definitions guiding the measurement of the variables. The analysis plan is also outlined to show how the framework of Thematic Discourse Analysis is invested under the umbrella of CDA. The quality of this research methodology relies on the authenticity of the sampled data, the significance of the selected time frame, the accountability of the production and reception phases, and the complementarity of the theoretical frameworks adopted to describe, interpret, and analyse *Hespress* discourse. The next chapter is devoted to the analysis of the various aspects of the thematic patterns at play in *Hespress* discursive performance and its implications in the wider social context.

Chapter Three

Analysis and Results

Introduction

The present chapter contains the analysis and results of study with the aim to answer the research questions. This chapter provides detailed descriptive and interpretive accounts of the themes that have emerged in *Hespress* discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration during the time frame under study, from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018. The initial phase of analysis acknowledges the value of undertaking a thematic analysis which aims to identify the main recurrent thematic patterns in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. The second phase of analysis is about a quantitative content analysis which is conducted with the aim of quantifying the frequency of the themes' occurrences. The quantitative content analysis develops a canvas from which further qualitative insight can be drawn. It also reveals which irregular migration themes are stressed in *Hespress* discourse and with what intensity or significance. In keeping with this study's critical agenda, the third phase of analysis is devoted to Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional framework which is conducted with the aim of a more in-depth analysis of the news articles and readers' comments. This framework is very relevant as it links between text and context which, eventually, helps revealing the ideologies and power relation that reside in the thematic patterns used in *Hespress*. Accordingly, the research design follows three analytical processes:

First, the thematic analysis section provides an answer to the first research sub-question of the thesis:

Q. 1. Which dominant themes are used to represent the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

Second, mapping on the thematic analysis, the quantitative content analysis intends to answer the second research sub-question:

Q. 2. With what intensity do the irregular migration themes occur in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

The third cycle of analysis is devoted to Fairclough three-dimensional framework for an in-depth qualitative and interpretive analysis of *Hespress* thematic performance with the aim of extracting any hidden agendas and ideologies. This intends to answer the third research sub-question:

Q. 3. To what extent does *Hespress* discursive representation of the irregular migration issue align with Morocco's geopolitical agendas?

3.1. Thematic analysis

Despite being widely used in qualitative research, there was a lack of clear conceptualisation and explanation of thematic analysis processes in most of the literature (Boyatzis, 1998). In order to overcome the criticism placed upon thematic analysis as being too vague in its method (Holloway & Todres, 2003) and give this study more reliability and rigour, the analytical process in this study adopts the six stages proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013) (Appendix 1). Accordingly, the starting point of analysis is the thematic analysis through the grouping of the topics within the texts which helped to identify themes that are important to the research questions by exhibiting "patterns of meaning" (Braun & Clark, 2006, p.86).

Once the data was collected it was analyzed to identify a coding scheme. A coding scheme is a list of codes and their associated definitions, beneficial for the organization of the data in a systematic and meaningful manner that helps prepare the dataset for analysis. In this study, a mixture of deductive and inductive approaches is used, thus allowing space for new themes to emerge. Deductive coding was used during the preparatory phases of the coding scheme as it was based on pre-existing literature on migration and news media analysis. This research is inspired by one particular work which focused on the construction of migration narratives and it was conducted by Garcia-Blanco and Moore (2015). Their study analyzed the most frequently occurring themes in the news coverage about migrants in the European Union, in which they used a deductive coding process. Their themes helped structure the coding schemes for this study, given that previous literature showed that press narratives about migration often underlined different feelings about the migrants, which are mainly positive and negative feelings. The inductive coding was used during the execution of the data analysis.

Accordingly, the data is processed through Braun and Clarke's (2006) six stages of thematic analysis, as follows:

- During the first stage, the researcher immersed oneself in the data to familiarise with it. The researcher reads and re-reads the data to become intimately familiar with its content; analysis begins with noticing things of interest that might be relevant to the research questions. These were noted in an electronic file for record keeping.

- During the second stage, coding the data starts by identifying aspects of the data that relate to the research questions. This involved selective coding, where only material of interest was manually coded through using sticky notes and highlighting with different colours the identified categories.

For reliability and rigour, the initial descriptive coding was shared with the recruited coders in order to check on possible biases. The complete coding started with the first data item and progressed systematically until the last data item was coded in a thorough way.

- During the third stage, the researcher searched for and identified themes that capture something important about the data in relation to the research questions. At this third stage, all data relevant to the research question was coded at a semantic level. Semantic codes were data driven and provided summary of the explicit data content, whilst latent codes were researcher-driven and identified implicit meanings within the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the separation between semantic and latent level of coding was not pure and occasionally codes had both elements. Codes were evident in more than one data item and captured patterns and diversity within the data set. The elements of each code were considered for consistency or overlap with other codes, which in turn provided the opportunity to start refining codes and linking these together.

- During the fourth stage, the researcher has to review the identified themes by making sure that the themes are appropriate and sufficient for the research objectives. This gives the opportunity to ensure that the thematic analysis is going the right direction, and the researcher can make final changes in the themes as needed. Therefore, after the process of refinement, two overarching themes and six main themes were identified and presented in a table. Overview of all themes could be seen in Appendix 2.

Braun and Clarke (2006, p.91) advise that "Data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes."

- During the fifth stage, the researcher defined and gave names to themes. Defining themes by stating what is unique and specific about each one; useful because it forces researchers to define the focus and boundaries of the themes by distilling to a few short sentences what each theme is about.

- During the sixth stage, which is the final description of the findings, the researcher selects compelling examples of data extracts that illustrated the themes and related them back to the research questions and literature. Nikander (2008) has argued that extracts should be offered in order to increase transparency and demonstrate analytic rigour.

The following table demonstrates the overarching themes, the themes, and their description:

Overarching Themes	**Themes**	**Description**
Pro-migration	Human Rights	Principles from the International Human Rights law or the universal right of asylum are referred to as they emphasize emotions like solidarity, empathy and compassion.
	Politics	The ideas which emphasise that the Moroccan government has a political obligation towards helping the irregular migrants are stressed. Voices of political elite groups and political issues are highly incorporated in news reporting to represent irregular migrants.
	Integration	The sectors in which irregular migrants are integrated are referred to and the idea that the integration of the migrants does not represent any problem is stressed.
Anti-migration	Blaming the Government	This criticises the authorities for all the mess caused by the irregular migrants by adopting the new migration policy and its reforms.
	Economic Burden	It considers the irregular migrants a heavy burden on the Moroccan economy that already has many internal economic problems.
	Threat	It refers to all the social and cultural threats posed by the irregular migrants like causing crime, having a different culture and carrying diseases.

Table 4: Overview of overarching themes, themes, and their description

The overall finding from this thematic analysis has led to the identification of two overarching themes pro-migration themes and anti-migration themes. Each overarching theme has its corresponding three themes which are used in the construction of irregular migrants' identity in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. The themes of Human Rights, Politics, and Integration are recurrent in *Hespress* news articles. The themes Blaming the Government, Economic Burden and the Threat theme, however, are recurrent in the readers' comments.

3.2. Quantitative analysis of the thematic patterns in *Hespress*

After categorising the identified themes into categories as pro- and anti-migration themes, as defined by the previous thematic analysis, the quantitative description of Hespress news articles and readers' comments is conducted. The focus here is on the frequencies of the emergent themes in the news articles and readers' comments during the specified time frame. With the help of the excel software application, tables and figures are designed in order to clearly display counts of theme frequencies falling under the categories of pro-migration and anti-migration discourses as sampled in the methodology chapter. The purpose of this numerical analysis is to provide the reader with a comprehensive view of the analysed news articles and readers' comments by discussing the data in the form of numbers and frequencies before moving to a more in-depth discursive analysis.

The data corpus consists of 36 news articles and 360 readers' comments from which thematic categories are derived. The analysis of the thematic choices within *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments reveals a list of lexis and phrases used to portray the irregular migrants during the sampled time frame. The compiled list of terms was coded for being: Human Rights theme, Politics theme, Integration theme, Blaming the Government theme, the Economic Burden theme and Threat theme. Up to the end of the quantitative assessment of *Hespress*' thematic performance, a series of comparative tables and figures projecting the frequencies of each theme on an annual basis is

presented. The descriptive accounts will display the spectrum of themes that *Hespress* journalists and readers use to represent the issue of irregular migration.

3.2.1. Pro-migration themes in *Hespress'* news articles

Three pro-migration themes have dominated *Hespress* news articles and, therefore, they are the focus of this section. The first distinctive element that has emerged from this quantitative analysis is that *Hespress* news articles about irregular migration are dominated by the Human Rights theme. This theme is the highest in frequency. This was followed by the Politics theme, and then the Integration theme. The following table and figure depict the distribution of the pro-migration themes in *Hespress* news articles:

Year	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Human Rights	238	62,47	45	22,39	95	37,55	57	25,11	99	39,29	169	53,82	703
Politics	90	23,62	120	59,70	107	42,29	73	32,16	70	27,78	94	29,94	554
Integration	53	13,91	36	17,91	51	20,16	97	42,73	83	32,94	51	16,24	371

Table 5 : Distribution of the pro-migration themes in *Hespress* news articles

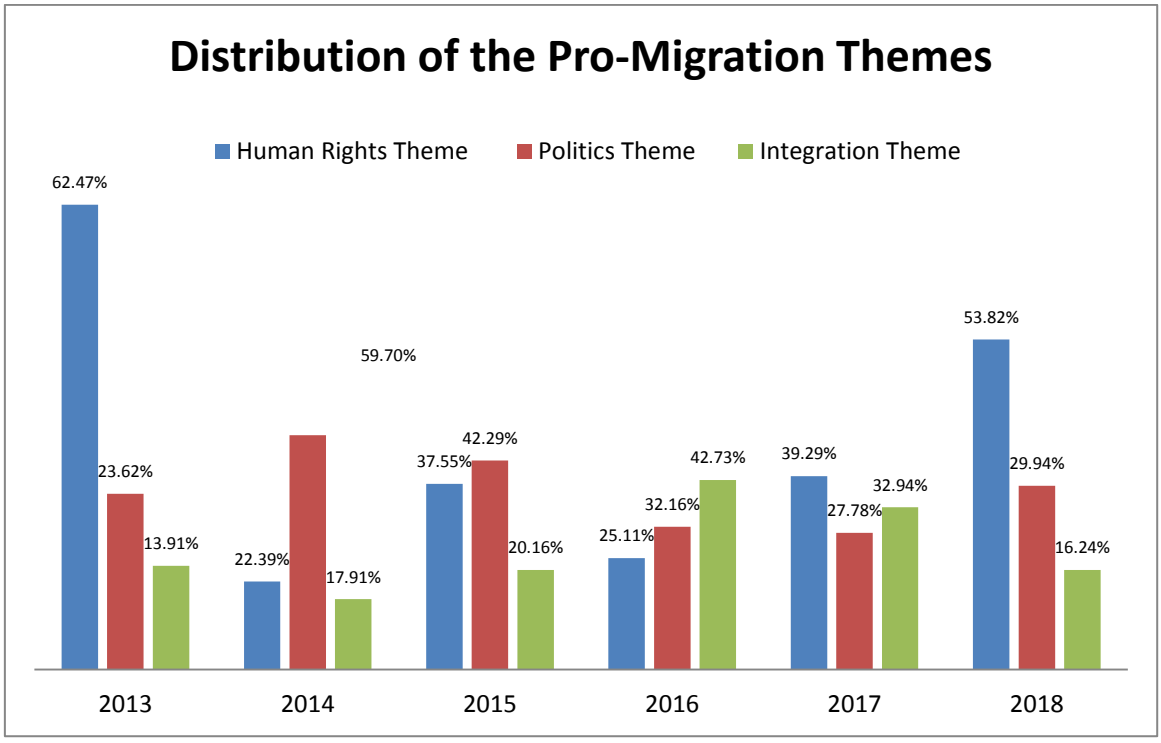


Figure 2 : Pro-migration themes in *Hespress* news articles

As it appears in Table 5 and Figure 2, the distribution of pro-migration themes in *Hespress* news articles is remarkably inconsistent during the studied time frame, 2013-2018. Of the total sampled themes (N=1628) populating the 36 news articles from 2013 up to 2018, the theme that has the highest frequency is the Human Rights theme with 43.18% (N=703) rates, followed by the Politics theme with 34.03% (N=554) rates and then the Integration theme with 22.78% (N=371) rates. This predominance of the Human Rights theme reveals that two years, 2013 and 2018 witnessed a series of important migration-related events which attracted significant media coverage and triggered a humanitarian representation of the issue. The results of the quantitative analysis reveal that *Hespress* news articles support the new migration policy and its reforms by emphasising pro-migration themes and that negative representations are very low and marginal.

3.2.1.1. Human Rights theme

The Human Rights theme is the most prevalent of all the pro-migration themes. It has the highest frequency with 43% (N=703) occurrences within the data corpus. This can be attributed to the importance given by *Hespress* editorial team to the phenomenon of irregular migration and representing it as an issue that needs to be tackled in a humanitarian way especially when the King Mohammed VI officially announced the new plan to adopt a New Migration Policy in 2013 and when Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was held in Marrakech under the sponsorship of the UN in 2018.

The news producers have chosen a specific lexical paradigm which best communicates their humanitarian discourse such as: aid, support, assistance, host, protect, victims, vulnerable, refugees, refuge, fleeing war and persecution, shelter, donations, charity, humanity, humanitarian agencies, family, women, children, rights, humanitarian aid, circle of rights, human rights, Human Rights Watch, UNHCR. The table and graph below show the frequency of the Human Rights theme throughout the six years.

Year	N° Frequency	Percent
2013	238	33.85
2014	45	6.40
2015	95	13.51
2016	57	8.10
2017	99	14.08
2018	169	24.03
Total	703	100.00

Table 6 : Distribution of Human Rights Theme

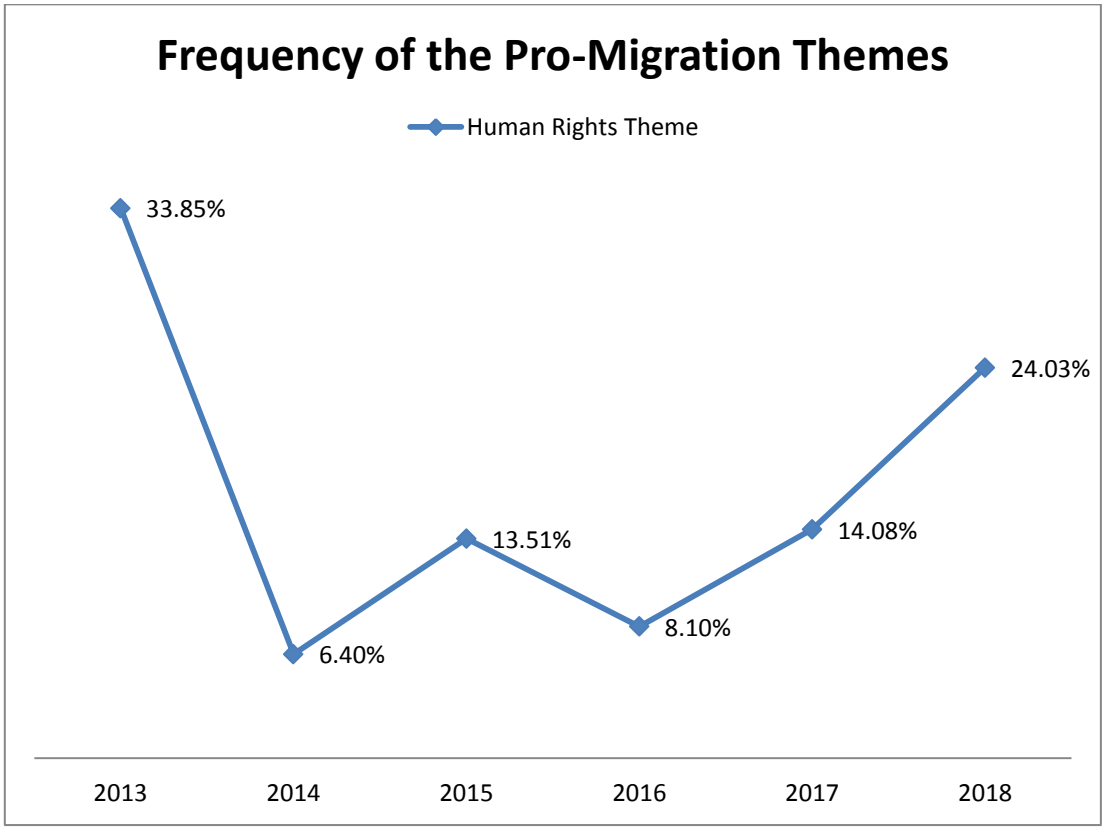


Figure 3 : Human Rights Theme

Table 6 and Figure 3 illustrate in an expository way the distribution of the Human Rights theme during the six years. Of the 703 sampled Human Rights theme populating the 36 news articles from 2013 up to 2018, the years 2013 and 2018 have the highest frequency rates of the Human Rights theme with 33.83% (N=238) and 24.03% (N=169) rates respectively. This is followed by the years 2017 and 2015 with 14.08% (N=99) and 13.51% (N=95) respectively. The year 2016 and 2014 have shown less inclusion to the Human Rights theme only by 8.10% (N=57) and 6.40% (N=45) frequency rates, respectively.

With regard to the historical context in which the Human Rights theme is situated, its highest frequencies occurred during the years 2013 with 33.83% (N=238) and 2018 with 24.03% (N=169) which can be justified by two main events that have had high reference to human rights ideas: the Moroccan government issued of the new migration law in 2013 when the King officially announced the adoption of a humanitarian approach to migration and asylum and when Morocco hosted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Marrakech under the sponsorship of the U.N.

3.2.1.2. Politics theme

The Politics theme appears second in the total frequency with 34.03% (N=554) rates. The theme emphasises that the Moroccan government has a political obligation towards helping the irregular migrants. The arguments about how to implement the 2013 new migration policy and the political authorities responsible for that are dominating *Hespress* news articles. The news articles reporting on the new migration policy and setting laws to cope legally with the phenomenon are also discussed especially when the Moroccan Government started the implementation of the first phase of the new migration policy in 2014 and when it launched the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum in 2015.

The news producers have selected certain lexical items for the Politics theme like: law, policy, legalizing situation, political system, political refugees, government, Moroccan government, Spanish government, African countries, the EU, global politics,

international relations, politicians, ministers, king, president, policymakers, authorities, bilateral relations, international organisations such as UN and UNHCR.

Year	N° Frequency	Percent
2013	90	16.24
2014	120	21.66
2015	107	19.31
2016	73	13.17
2017	70	12.63
2018	94	16.96
Total	554	100.00

Table 7 : Distribution of Politics Theme

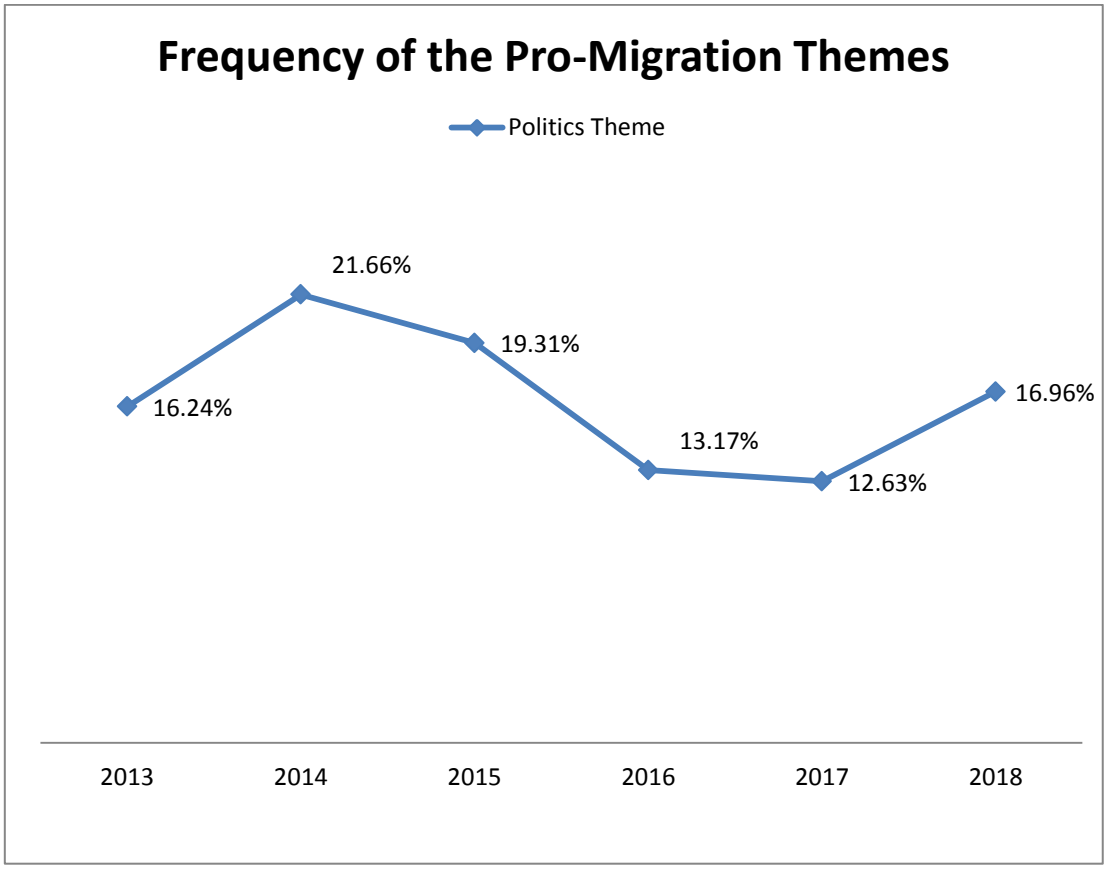


Figure 4 : Politics Theme

Table 7 and Figure 4 clearly illustrate that in the years 2014 and 2015, the rates of the Politics theme in *Hespress* news articles were 21.66% (N=120) and 19.31% (N=107), respectively. The years 2018 and 2013 had 16.96% (N=94) and 16.24% (N=90) frequency rates, respectively, while referring to the Politics theme. However, the years 2016 and 2017 showed less reference to the Politics theme only by 13.17% (N=73) and 12.63% (N=70) frequency rates, respectively.

With regard to the historical context in which the highest frequencies of the Politics theme is situated, its highest frequencies took place in 2014 with 21.66% (N=120) and in 2015 with19.31% (N=107) and this again can be attributed to two main events which are: when the Council of the Moroccan Government started the implementation of the new migration policy in 2014 and when the Moroccan government launched the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum in 2015.

3.2.1.3. Integration theme

The Integration theme appears third in frequency rates with 22.78% (N=371). This again can be attributed to the importance given by *Hespress* news makers to the issue of integrating the irregular migrants into the Moroccan society. *Hespress* news producers are reporting and acknowledging the positive contribution those irregular migrants can bring to the Moroccan community especially during the King's 2016 visits to many African countries in order to secure Morocco to rejoin the African Union and during the second regularisation process which granted residence permits to many irregular migrants in 2017.

Hespress news producers have resorted to the repetition of some lexis like: integration, mobilisation, logistics, regularisation, integration into the job market, integration into the Moroccan society, benefit, interest, community, school, education, labour market, job, labour, workers, residency cards, education, health care, regularization, and financial aid.

Year	N° Frequency	Percent
2013	53	14.28
2014	36	9.70
2015	51	13.74
2016	97	26.14
2017	83	22.37
2018	51	13.74
Total	371	100.00

Table 8 : Distribution of Integration Theme

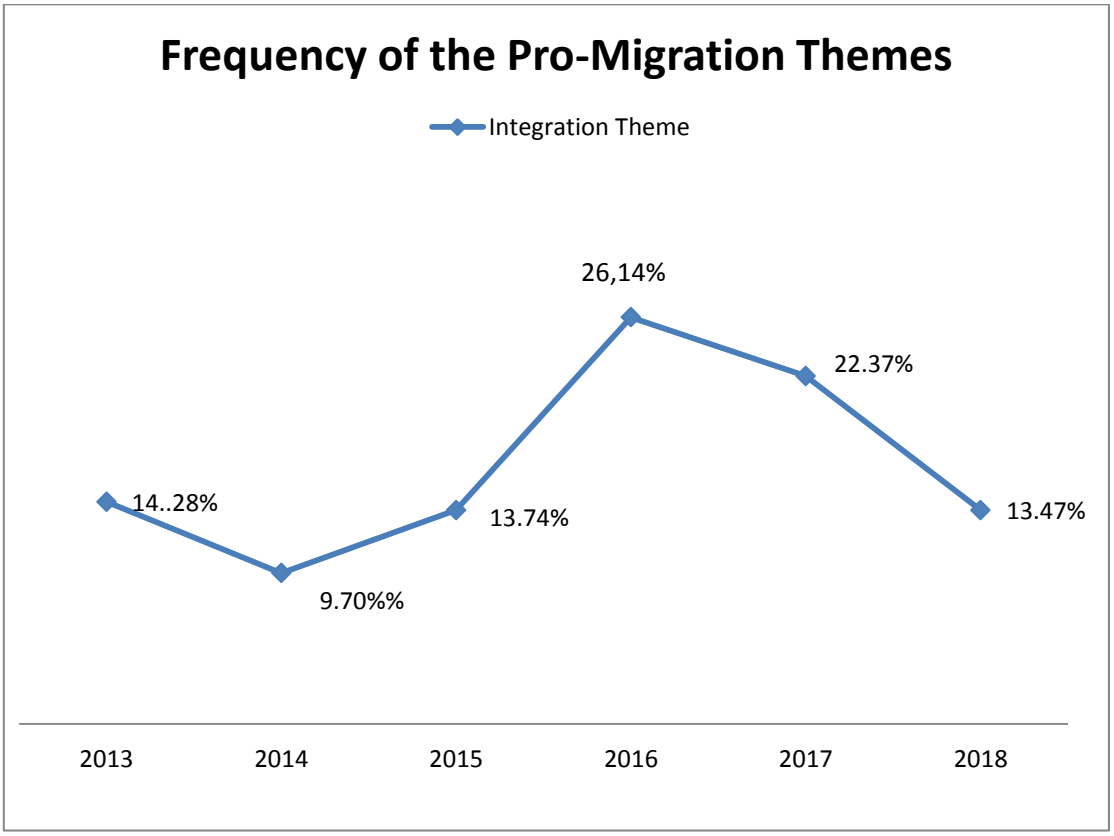


Figure 5 : Integration Theme

Table 8 and Figure 5 display the following: The year 2016 had the highest frequency rates of the Integration theme by 26.14% (N=97). This is followed by the year 2017 with the frequency of 22.37% (N=83). In 2013, the Integration theme reached the rate of 14.28% (N=53). The years 2015 and 2018 showed similar reference to the Integration theme by13.74% (N=51) rates in both years. The least occurrence showed in the year 2014 with 9.70% (N=36) rates.

The high occurrence of the Integration theme was mainly in the year 2016 with 26.14% (N=97) and the year 2017 with 22.37% (N=83) frequency rates and this can be attributed the following events: The year 2016 witnessed the King's visits to Africa in order to secure Morocco rejoin the African Union. The year 2017 saw the second regularisation process which granted residency permits to 28,400 migrants by December 31, 2017.

3.2.2. Anti-migration themes in *Hespress* readers' comments

Three anti-migration themes have dominated *Hespress* readers' comments and they are, therefore, the focus of this section. The emergent anti-migration themes are Blaming the Government theme, the Economic Burden theme, and the Threat theme. The first distinctive element that has emerged from this extensive quantitative content analysis research is that in *Hespress* readers' comments, there is a clearly stated negative attitude towards the phenomenon of irregular migration in Morocco. Very few are the readers who showed tolerance and welcome to the migrants.

Year	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Blaming the Government	20	33,33	40	66,67	18	30,00	16	26,67	29	48,33	23	38,33	146
Economic Burden	18	30,00	13	21,67	12	20,00	34	56,67	19	31,67	17	28,33	113
Threat	22	36,67	7	11,67	30	50,00	10	16,67	12	20,00	20	33,33	101

Table 9 : Distribution of anti-migration themes in Hespress readers' comments

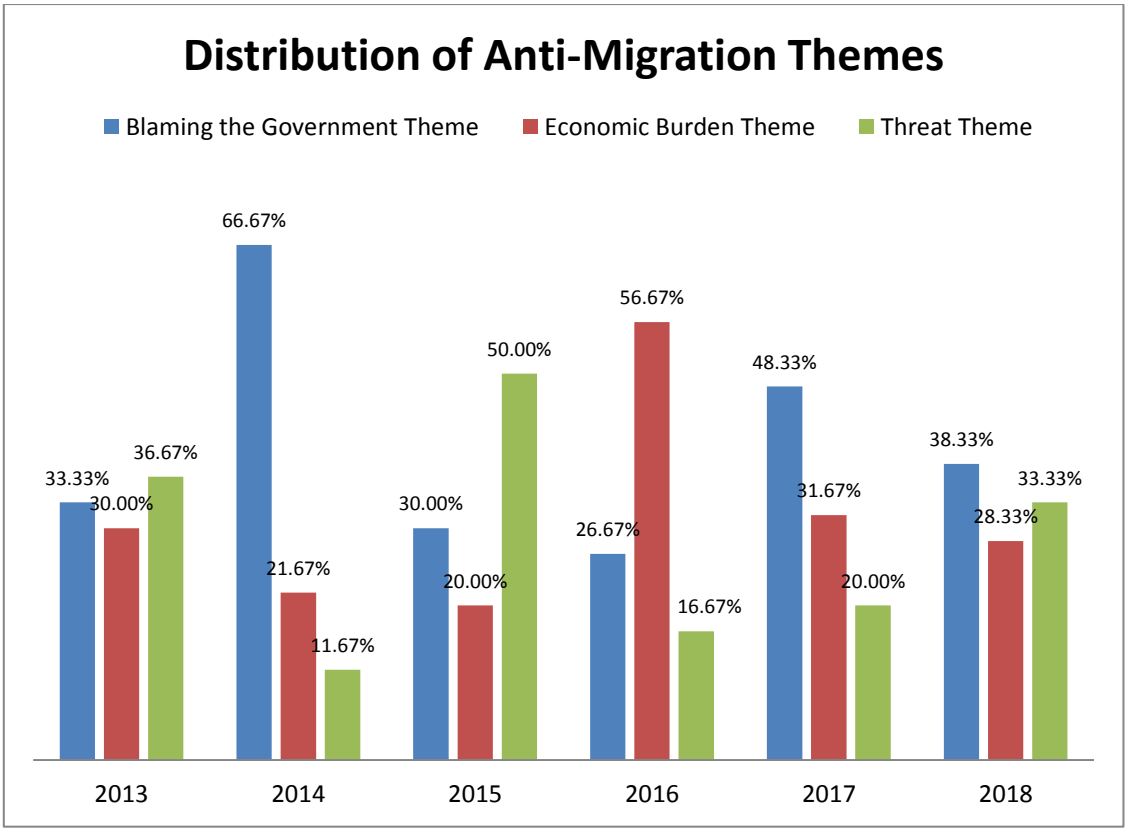


Figure 6 : Anti-migration themes in *Hespress* readers' comments

As it appears in Table 9 and Figure 6, the distribution of anti-migration themes in *Hespress* readers' comments is remarkably inconsistent during the time frame 2013-2018. In the data, it has been shown that *Hespress* readers' comments on irregular migration have mainly focused on Blaming the Government theme with 40.55% (N=146) frequency rates, the Economic Burden had 31.38% (N=113) rates, and the Threat theme showed 28.05% (N=101) rates.

3.2.2.1. Blaming the Government theme

Blaming the Government theme is very prominent in *Hespress* readers' comments during the timeframe under study. The narrative of the readers' comments is mainly shaped by attributing blame and accusing the Moroccan authorities for not doing their job appropriately as they have adopted the new migration policy especially since Morocco suffers from significant regional disparities, a poor educational system and high unemployment rates, especially among young Moroccans. Besides, the socio-economic deprivation and the lack of opportunities are key drives for not accepting the new migration policy. There is also a big shortage of secure jobs in the formal employment sector which represents a key challenge to Morocco's economic growth which can carry the risk of breeding social unrest.

To express their blame on the government, the readers repeatedly used in their feedback comments some lexis like: irresponsible politicians, causing the mess, corruption, corrupted policy makers, fraud, accused authorities, failure to manage the crisis, and incompetent and corrupt politicians who seek only personal interest. The results of the occurrences of Blaming the Government theme is presented in the table and figure below.

Year	N° Frequency	Percent
2013	20	13.69
2014	40	27.39
2015	18	12.32
2016	16	10.95
2017	29	19.86
2018	23	15.75
Total	146	100.00

Table 10 : Distribution of Blaming the Government Theme

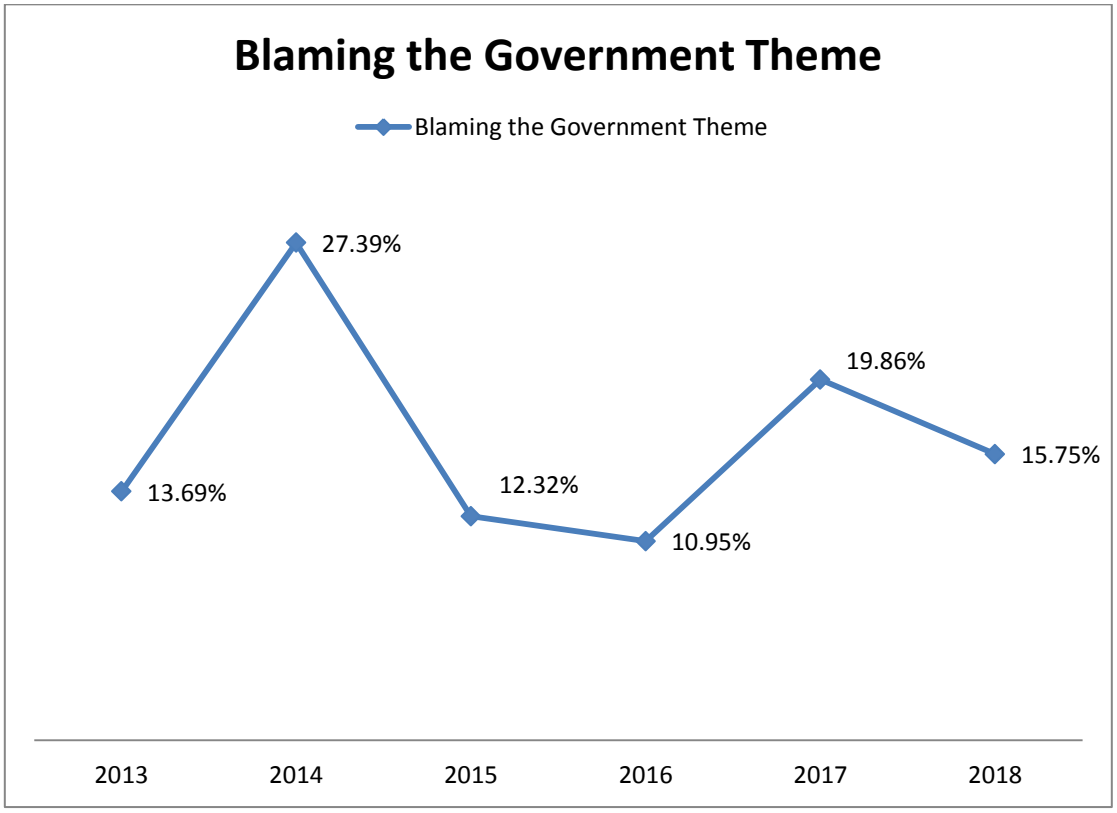


Figure 7 : Blaming the Government Theme

Table 10 and Figure 7 show that out of the 146 sampled Blaming the Government theme populating the 360 readers' comments from 2013 up to 2018, much of the blame expressed in *Hespress* readers' comments to the Moroccan government took place during the year 2014 with 27.39% (N=40) rate. This was followed by the years 2017 with 19.86% (N=29) rate. Then the years 2018, 2013, 2015 and 2016 followed with 15.75% (N=23), 13.69% (N=20), 12.32% (N=18) and 10.95% (N=16) rates, respectively.

3.2.2.2. Economic Burden theme

Many of *Hespress*' readers consider the irregular migrants as a heavy burden which threatens the Moroccan economy and its prosperity. There is also a lot of criticism which is expressed about the expenses associated with the Moroccan asylum system which, eventually, has a negative impact on the Moroccan economy. The readers depict the migrants as a drain on the Moroccan economic sector which already suffers from scarce resources. The irregular migrants' presence in Morocco is also described as a threat to the locals as they take all that belongs to them; they take away or steal their jobs and create unemployment, they also take away houses and cause instability. These unfavourable characterizations of the migrants excluded them from the Moroccan society by representing them as problematic especially since the Moroccan socio-economic sectors already suffer from serious problems like regional disparities, a poor educational system and high unemployment rates, especially among young Moroccans and even degree holders. Besides, the socio-economic deprivation and the lack of opportunities are key drives not to accept the new migration policy. There is also a big shortage of secure jobs in the formal employment sector which represents a key challenge to Morocco's economic growth which can carry the risk of breeding social unrest.

These constructions are created by *Hespress*' readers through careful lexical choices that describe the migrants such as: opportunists, welfare migrants, poverty, illiteracy, joblessness, bogus, illegal, crisis, and burden, unwanted and merely

economic migrants who take advantage of the Moroccan asylum system. The results of the Economic Burden theme rates are presented in the table and figure below.

Year	N° Frequency	Percent
2013	18	15.92
2014	13	11.50
2015	12	10.61
2016	34	30.08
2017	19	16.81
2018	17	15.04
Total	113	100.00

Table 11 : Distribution of the Economic Burden Theme

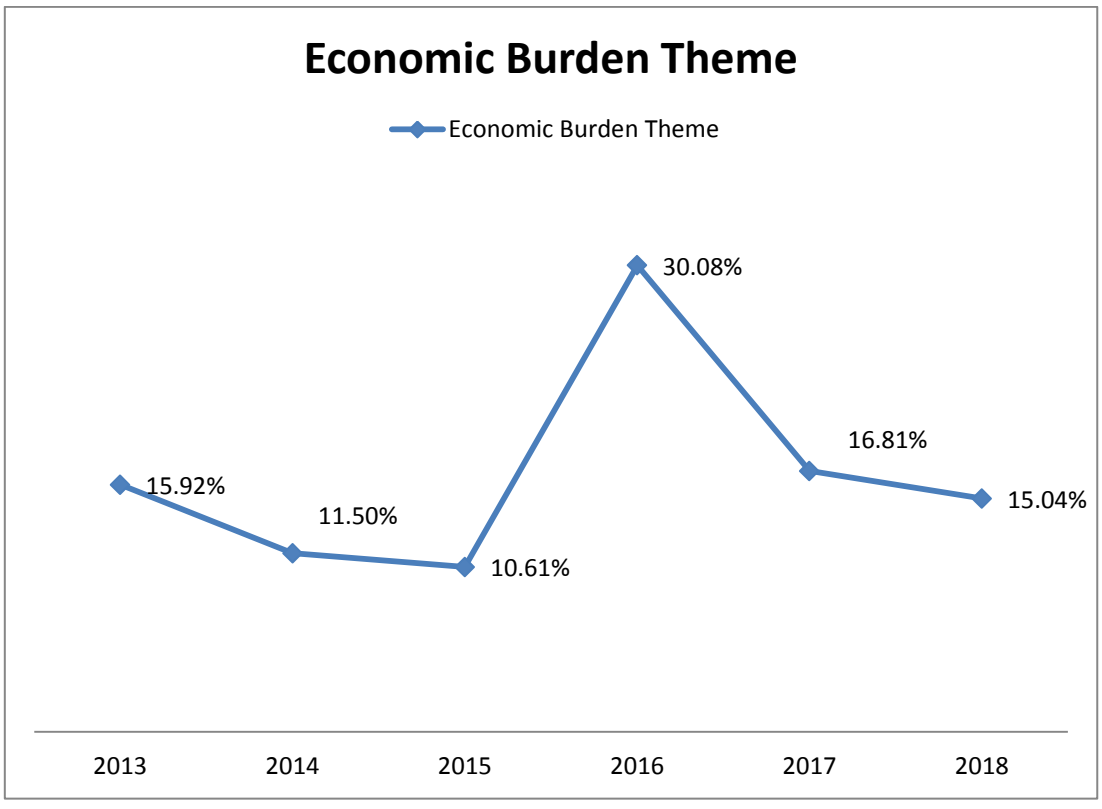


Figure 8 : Economic Burden Theme

Table 11 and Figure 8 illustrate that year 2016 saw the highest occurrence of the Economic Burden Theme with 30.08% (N=34) rate. The year 2017 had the theme to appear 16.81% (N=19) rates. The years 2013, 2018, 2014, and 2015 had the rates 15.92% (N=18), 15.04% (N=17), 11.50% (N=13), and 10.61% (N=12), respectively.

3.2.2.3. The Threat theme

Another anti-migration theme which is recurring in the readers' comments is the Threat theme. This theme emphasises the serious threatening consequences coming from the presence of the irregular migrants in the host country. The irregular migrants are depicted as a danger in terms of their different cultural background. They are referred to as undesirable 'Others' who are different from Moroccans and they are, thus, considered a threat to Moroccan cultural identity and traditions. They are also described as dangerous individuals who are associated with criminality. There is the construction of a link between irregular migration and crime. Thus, the migrants are positioned as unwanted people to be fearful of. The criminalization argumentation is evident in the readers' comments calling the government for more restrictions, prevention and control of the irregular migrants.

The analysis of the lexicon which is used by the readers to depict the irregular migrants reveals a dominant negative portrayal of the migrants. The threat repertoire is achieved through the use of some lexis such as: theft, illegal, dirt, garbage, Moroccan identity, rape, burglary, begging, violence, crime, threat to security, beggars, pickpockets, fearful criminals, a threat which need to be controlled, carriers of the AIDS and HIV diseases and swine flu, Ebola, attack, delinquent, suspicious, disturbance, uninvited outsider, criminal, beggar, different culture, black, and Christians.

The results of the Threat theme are presented in the table and figure below:

Year	N° Frequency	Percent
2013	22	21.78
2014	7	6.93
2015	30	29.70
2016	10	9.90
2017	12	11.88
2018	20	19.80
Total	101	100.00

Table 12 : Distribution of Threat theme

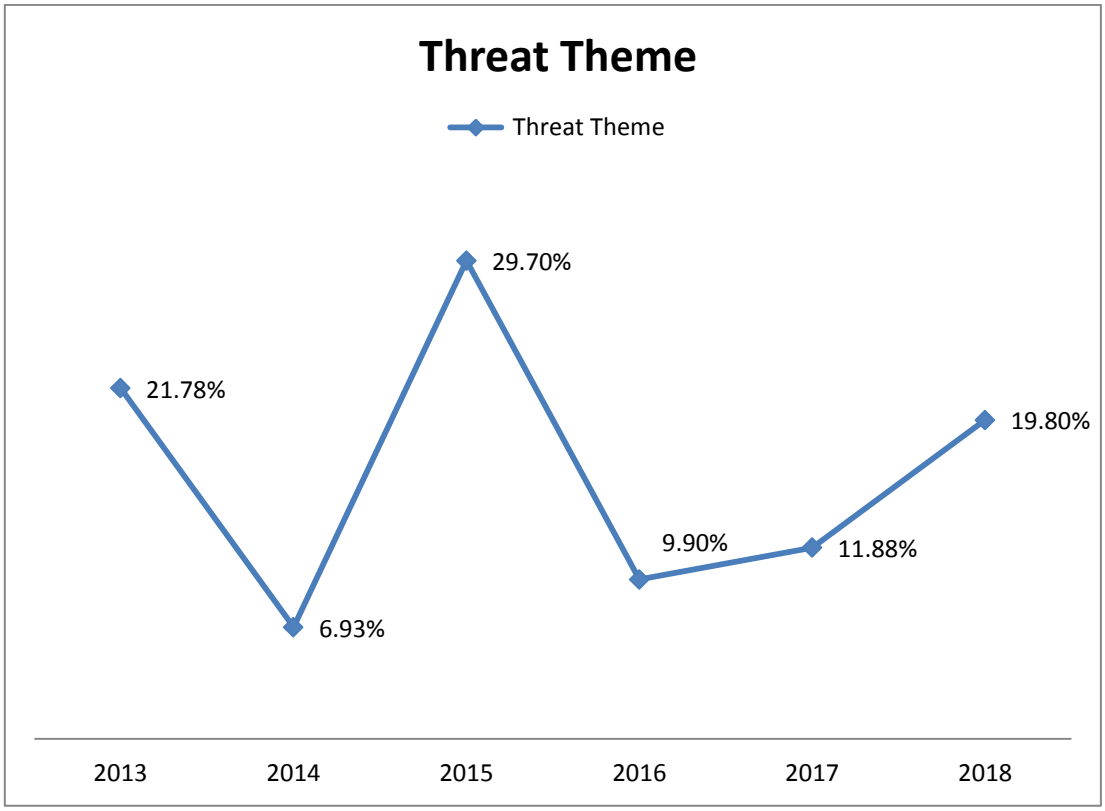


Figure 9 : Threat Theme

Table 12 and Figure 9 show that the highest frequency of the Threat theme occurred in the year 2015 with 29.70% (N=30) frequency. The years 2013 and 2018 had approximately similar frequency rates with 21.78% (N=22) and 19.80% (N=20), respectively. Then the years 2017, 2016 and 2014 had the following frequency rates 11.88% (N=12), 9.90% (N=10) and 6.93% (N=7) respectively.

In general, the findings provided by the quantitative analysis throughout the description have reflected the opposing concerns underlying *Hespress*' news producers and readers' comments. *Hespress*' journalists and its readers hold different attitudes and perception about the irregular migration issue in Morocco. The pro-migration theme that has the highest frequency rate is that of Human Rights theme while that of anti-migration is Blaming the government theme. This finding will provide the basis for the critical analysis which is the purpose of the next section.

3.3. Fairclough's analysis to the thematic patterns in Hespress

While representing irregular migrants in a victimization (pro-migration) or problematization (anti-migration) way, there is a bulk of scholarship (Chouliaraki, 2013; Johnson, 2011; KhosraviNik, 2009; Malkki, 1996; van Dijk, 1993) that assumes that news discourse endorses ideologies and hegemonic propositions. With the critical perspective being adopted, Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework is employed to analyse *Hespress* news articles and the readers' comments with the aim of detecting ideology and power relation that reside in *Hespress* discourse.

Mapping on the thematic analysis and quantitative descriptions laid in the previous sections of the present study, this section intends to provide a critical analysis to *Hespress* thematic patterns. In keeping with this project critical agenda, data analysis involves a great deal of meticulous work on the textual, discursive and social practice levels by thoroughly describing, analysing and theorizing on the findings. As already discussed, the 36 news articles and their corresponding 360 readers' comments are to be critically examined to uncover any hidden ideologies, bias and power relations that

reside within their discourses. However, since a critical analysis of all the sampled data is not conceivable due to limitations of time and space and more importantly to the limitation of the nature of CDA methodology which predetermines smaller data for analysis, the discussion of some major extracts from the news articles and readers' comments has been chosen. The reason for choosing specific extracts is that collectively they contain at least one example of each of the themes which appeared during the analysis of the 36 news articles and also each article is taken from one of the six years representing the selected time frame. Therefore, the extracts are reasonably representative of the broader qualitative dataset because they provide a convenient overview of the dominant discourses within the broader dataset.

The first level of analysis in Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional framework is the textual dimension in which the emphasis will be on the language of the texts, mainly its lexical choices. The second level is the discursive dimension which will examine the different discourses struggling to make meaning in the texts' production and consumption. The third level is the social dimension which will combine the latter into broader social contexts. So, the following sections will analyze in detail each theme individually and offer examples of the different news articles within which each theme occurs.

3.3.1. The textual level

The first level of Fairclough's three-dimensional analytical framework is concerned with the "formal properties of text" (Fairclough, 1989 p. 26). This level of analysis is mainly influenced by the work of Halliday's (1970) SFL which focuses on language description. For him, language provides a system of options from which language users take choices to express their meanings. That is to say, language users have several linguistic choices to choose from (like lexis and grammar) and that the choice of certain linguistic features over others can reflect ones' ideology. In this sense, language is functional as it is used to achieve social goals. The linguistic feature which is examined in this study is lexis. Therefore, the lexical paradigm which *Hespress* used to represent the issue of irregular migration is examined at the textual level as it will make it

possible to construct certain identities of the migrants. In this regard, Richardson (2007) explains that the analyst assumes that the textual content in any given script results from a linguistic 'choice' and that whatever choice is made depends on many contexts such as personal, social, and socio-cultural. Therefore, the lexical choices which were made during the production of *Hespress* discourse are analysed in order to explore what has been included and, more importantly, what has not been included, as both can equally be of ideological significance. By using Fairclough's CDA framework (1992), *Hespress* texts present two primary social actors: the Moroccan government and the irregular migrants. As the analysis will show, with the former assumes an active function and the latter assumes the role of beneficiary of the action. These textual representations in view of power relations are significant as they show *Hespress* standpoint towards the irregular migrants.

3.3.1.1. Pro-Migration themes in Hespress news articles

Throughout the timeframe 2013-2018, which is the sampled period of this study, the data content of *Hespress* news articles categorized under the pro-migration themes was found to involve current issues of great interest to the representation of the issue of irregular migration. The discourse of *Hespress* news articles enclosed pro-migration concerns in which Human Rights theme, Politics theme and Integration theme are very dominant. Therefore, most of the issues raised were found to relate to human rights, solidarity, integration, and victimization of the migrants.

3.3.1.1.1. Human Rights theme

The most dominant theme that has reached the highest frequency rate in *Hespress*' news articles is the Human Rights theme. This theme reached its highest frequency rate in the year 2013 with 33.83% (N=238) and the year 2018 with 24.03% (N=169). This can be explained by the issuing of the new migration law in 2013 when the King officially announced the adoption of a humanitarian approach to migration and asylum. The year 2018 also witnessed a very important international event which was hosted in Marrakesh, Morocco, and which was about the adoption of a Global Compact about the

protection of the irregular migrants. During that international event, the world leaders acclaimed Morocco's significant role in managing migration. These two events can be linked to the way *Hespress* emphasises the humanitarian representation of the irregular migrants.

In their humanitarian representation to the issue of irregular migration, *Hespress* editorial team have resorted to a lexical paradigm from which they have chosen certain lexis to communicate their pro-migration attitude, such as: humanitarian (الإنساني /al-insānī/), tolerance (التسامح /lltsāmḥ/), respect the rights (احترام حقوق /aḥtrām ḥqūq/), coexistence (التعايش /al-tʿāīš/).

In *Hespress* news articles, the Human Rights theme represents the issue of irregular migration as an important phenomenon that should be dealt with in a humanitarian. There is high reference to Morocco as a country of tolerance, coexistence and fraternity. As such, the Moroccan people should show such humanitarian qualities and have a positive attitude and approach vis-à-vis the irregular migrants. Therefore, it is very common to find in the news articles expressions like:

- the necessity to deal in a humanitarian way (ضرورة التعاطي الإنساني /ḍrūrẗ al-tʿāṭī al-insānī/).
- respect the rights of immigrants (احترام حقوق المهاجرين /aḥtrām ḥqūq al-mhāğrīn/).

Besides, within the Human Rights theme, the irregular migrants are also constructed within a narrative of victimhood and as masses of vulnerable and helpless people who are reliant on Moroccans' humanitarian help to save them. They are represented as desperate and victims of circumstances as in the example:

- They live in a tragic situation and in a state of homelessness
  (يعيشون وضعا مأساويا وفي وضعية تشرد /īʿīšūn ūḍʿā mʾasāwyā ūfī ūḍʿīẗ tšrd/).

Besides, feelings of solidarity, affection and empathy with the suffering undergone by the irregular migrants are also prominent and they are explicitly stated in the news articles. The are many arguments which focus on showing Morocco as a

country that strongly believes in tolerance by accepting and welcoming differences. Instances such as the following are very prominent:

- Morocco is a land of civilized and cultural convergence and a space for tolerance, coexistence, dialogue and brotherhood among peoples.
  (المغرب أرض للتلاقي الحضاري والثقافي وفضاء للتسامح والتعايش والحوار والتآخي بين الشعوب /al-mġrb arḍ lltlāqī al-ḥḍārī wālṯqāfī ūfḍāʾ lltsāmḥ wāltʿāīš wālḥwār wāltʾāḫī bīn al-šʿūb/).

Hespress news producers also justify their humanitarian representation of the irregular migration issue by emphasising Morocco's international good reputation as a country that respects universal law of human rights and people's dignity. This positive image in dealing with the issue of irregular migration is created by praising the successfully way Morocco has dealt with the phenomenon. There are many examples like:

- Ban Kimoon praises the King's call to respect the rights of immigrants
  (بان كي مون يشيد بدعوة الملك الى احترام حقوق المهاجرين /bān kī mūn īšīd bdʿūẗ al-mlk al-i aḥtrām ḥqūq al-mhāğrīn/).
- Morocco plans to complete the settlement of immigrant status amid international acclaim.
  (المغرب يخطط لإكمال تسوية وضعية المهاجرين وسط إشادة دولية /al-mġrb īḫṭṭ likmāl tswyẗ ūḍʿīẗ al-mhāğrīn ūsṭ išādẗ dūlīẗ/).

Besides, in the news articles, there is fear that Morocco loses its international reputation as a country of tolerance and commitment to the universal law of human rights. In this account, Morocco is constructed as having a good record on migration and as a multicultural society. Morocco is also represented as a country of generosity and humanitarianism which is acknowledged globally, as in:

- The world advocates for humanity and pluralism
  (العالم يناصر الإنسانية والتعدد /al-ʿālm īnāṣr al-insānīẗ wāltʿdd/).

The dominance of the Human Rights theme comes also from the expressions that *Hespress* editorial team is giving about the irregular migration phenomenon. Most

of the expressions depict the issue as a distinctly humanitarian topic, like in these examples:

- The King stresses the necessity to deal in a humanitarian way with the situation of migrants in Morocco

  (الملك يؤكد ضرورة التعاطي الإنساني مع وضعية المهاجرين بالمغرب /al-mlk īuʾkd ḍrūrẗ al-tʿāṭī al-insānī mʿ ūḍʿīẗ al-mhāğrīn bālmġrb/).

- a humanitarian policy in its philosophy.

  (سياسة إنسانية في فلسفتها / sīāsẗ insānīẗ fī flsfthā/).

Below are examples from the data in which irregular migrants are represented in a humanitarian way:

Researcher's Translation	**Human Rights Theme Extracts**
The King stresses the necessity to deal in a humanitarian way with the situation of migrants in Morocco.	الملك يؤكد ضرورة التعاطي الإنساني مع وضعية المهاجرين بالمغرب
He affirmed that Morocco was and still is a land of civilized and cultural convergence and a space for tolerance, coexistence, dialogue and brotherhood among peoples.	مؤكدا أن المغرب كان ومازال أرضا للتلاقي الحضاري والثقافي وفضاء للتسامح والتعايش والحوار والتآخي بين الشعوب
King Mohammed VI affirmed his conviction that "the problem of immigrants arriving in Morocco, which is the focus of legitimate concerns and sometimes the subject of wide debate and controversy, must be dealt with in a humanitarian and comprehensive manner, in compliance with the requirements of international law, and according to a renewed approach to multilateral cooperation."	أكد الملك محمد السادس قناعته بوجوب "التعاطي مع إشكالية المهاجرين الوافدين على المغرب، التي هي محط انشغالات مشروعة وأحيانا موضوع نقاش وجدال واسعين، بطريقة إنسانية وشاملة، وفي التزام بمقتضيات القانون الدولي، ووفق مقاربة متجددة للتعاون متعدد الأطراف"
Deportation to the south is not a solution, but rather a circumstantial and temporary measure that contravenes international human rights covenants, considering that "the decision to deport migrants increases their suffering, as it plunges Morocco into costly financial and human problems."	الترحيل صوب الجنوب ليس حلاً وإنما هو إجراء ظرفي ومؤقت يتنافى مع المواثيق الدولية لحقوق الإنسان"، معتبرا أن "قرار ترحيل المهاجرين يزيد من معاناتهم، كما أنه يدخل المغرب في مشاكل مكلفة ماديا وإنسانيا

Mohamed VI defends the migrants and criticizes the populists' approaches	محمد السادس يدافع عن المهاجرين وينتقد مقاربات الشعبويّين
They live in a tragic situation and in a state of homelessness	يعيشون وضعا مأساويا وفي وضعية تشرد
King Mohammed VI called for the logic of unity to prevail over populism in its various forms, rejecting the policy of closure and adopting international dialogue and cooperation to reach solutions to win the big stakes in the phenomenon of migration, and said that Morocco's interest in the issue of immigration is not born today and is not linked to an urgent circumstance, rather it stems from a genuine and voluntary commitment embodied In a humanitarian policy in its philosophy, comprehensive in its content, practical in its approach, and responsible in its implementation.	دعا الملك محمد السادس إلى تغليب منطق الوحدة على الشعبوية بمختلف أشكالها ورفض سياسة الانغلاق واعتماد الحوار والتعاون الدولي للتوصل إلى حلول لكسب الرهان الكبير لظاهرة الهجرة، وقال إن اهتمام المغرب بمسألة الهجرة ليس وليد اليوم ولا يرتبط بظريفة طارئة، بل هو نابع من التزام أصيل وطوعي مُجسد في سياسة إنسانية في فلسفها وشاملة في مضمونها وعملية في نهجها ومسؤولية في تطبيقها.
The world advocates for humanity and pluralism by signing the Immigration Pact	العالم يناصر الإنسانية والتعدد بالتوقيع على ميثاق الهجرة
The international media will direct all its lenses towards the city of Marrakesh at the beginning of December 2018, when the Moroccan city will host two international events in the field of migration and asylum. The issue concerns both the Global Forum on Migration and Development on 6 and 7 December in its eleventh session, co-chaired by Morocco and Germany, and the International Conference on the Global Compact for Migration on 10 and 11 of the same month under the auspices of the United Nations.	سيُوجه الإعلام العالمي كل عدساته نحو مدينة مراكش مع بداية شهر دجنبر 2018، حيث ستحتضن المدينة المغربية حدثيْن عالميْن في مجال الهجرة واللجوء. ويتعلق الأمر بكل من المنتدى العالمي حول الهجرة والتنمية في 6 و7 دجنبر في دورته الحادية عشر، برئاسة مشتركة بين كل من المغرب وألمانيا، والمؤتمر الدولي حول الميثاق العالمي للهجرة يومي 10 و11 من الشهر نفسه تحت رعاية هيئة الأمم المتحدة.
Ban Kimoon praises the King's call to respect the rights of immigrants	بان كي مون يشيد بدعوة الملك الى احترام حقوق المهاجرين
The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Kimoon, praised the directives of King Mohammed VI to the government to initiate as soon as possible the development and implementation of a strategy and action plan on the horizon of formulating a comprehensive immigration policy and the King's call to "respect the rights of migrants."	أشاد الأمين العام للأمم المتحدة بان كي مون، بتوجيهات الملك محمد السادس للحكومة من أجل الشروع في أقرب الآجال في وضع وتنفيذ استراتيجية ومخطط عمل في أفق صياغة سياسة شاملة بشأن الهجرة وبدعوة الملك إلى "احترام حقوق المهاجرين".

Morocco plans to complete the settlement of immigrant status amid international acclaim.	المغرب يخطط لإكمال تسوية وضعية المهاجرين وسط إشادة دولية
The Ministry Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in charge of Moroccans residing abroad and Migration Affairs celebrated today, Thursday, in the city of Skhirat, the fourth anniversary of the launch of the national policy for migration and asylum, in the presence of representatives of African countries and the Director-General of the International Organization for Migration, Lassi Swing.	احتفلت الوزارة المنتدبة لدى وزير الشؤون الخارجية والتعاون الدولي المكلفة بالمغاربة المقيمين بالخارج وشؤون الهجرة، اليوم الخميس بمدينة الصخيرات، بالذكرى الرابعة لانطلاق السياسة الوطنية للهجرة واللجوء، بحضور ممثلي دول إفريقية والمدير العام للمنظمة الدولية للهجرات، الاسي سوينغ.

Table 13 : Hespress news articles' Human Rights theme extracts

The selection of extracts in Table 13 is mainly made on purpose. The above examples from *Hespress* news articles offer authentic examples in which the journalists emphasise the humanitarian representation of the irregular migrants. The implications of the Human Rights theme in the examples in Table 13 show that the authors of the texts use specific diction and lexis to express the deep interest of the Moroccan government to provide help and support to these minority groups.

3.3.1.1.2. Politics Theme

The political discourse which reports on irregular migration is highly prevailing in *Hespress* news articles during the six years period under study. With regard to the historical context in which the highest frequencies of the Politics theme is situated, its highest frequencies took place in 2014 with 21.66% (N=120) and in 2015 with19.31% (N=107). In 2014, there was the adoption of the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum which was described. In 2015, the Moroccan government launched the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum and guaranteed migrants access to basic services such as education, health care, and labour-market integration.

Hespress editorial team has resorted to a lexical paradigm that stresses politics lexis such as: policy (سياسة / sīāsï/), ministry (الوزارة /sīāsï/), the government (الحكومة

/al-ḥkūmŧ/), migration pact (ميثاق الهجرة /mīṯāq al-hğrŧ/), UN Organisations (منظمات أممية /mnẓmāt ammīŧ/), international (الدولية /al-dūlīŧ/).

Throughout the time frame under study, the data content categorized under the Politics theme is found to involve frequent political terminology which emphasises that the Moroccan government has a political obligation towards helping the irregular migrants, like:

- The working session chaired by the King was devoted to examining the problem of migration in Morocco.

  (جلسة العمل التي ترأسها الملك وخصصت لتدارس إشكالية الهجرة في المغرب

  /ğlsŧ al-ʿml al-tī trʾashā al-mlk ūḫṣṣt ltdārs iškālīŧ al-hğrŧ fī al-mġrb/).

- The Ministry in charge of the Migration Affairs

  (الوزارة المكلفة بشؤون الهجرة /al-ūzārŧ al-mklfŧ bšuʾūn al-hğrŧ/).

The political discourse is also conveyed mainly through repeated references to some important national and international political figures, as in:

- King Mohammed VI and heads of states and heads of government
  (الملك محمد السادس وزعماء دول ورؤساء حكومات /al-mlk mḥmd al-sāds /zʿmāʾ dūl ūruʾsāʾ ḥkūmāt/).
- The British official in charge of migration

  (المبعوث البريطاني المكلف بشؤون الهجرة /al-mbʿūṯ al-brīṭānī al-mklf bšuʾūn al-hğrŧ/).

- international acclaim

  (إشادة دولية /išādŧ dūlīŧ/).

Besides, the Moroccan politicians and authorities are described as very decisive in their attempts to implement the reforms that the new migration policy has brought. This would also imply that *Hespress'* editorial team tries to legally legitimise the adoption of the new migration policy by focusing on politicians and their political narratives. Most notably, there is the predominance of the voices of political elites'

discourse as sources within *Hespress* news texts. Examples such as the following are very dominant:

- Tim Cole, the British envoy in charge of migration affairs, praised Morocco's policy in the field of migration and asylum

  أشاد تيم كول، المبعوث البريطاني المكلف بشؤون الهجرة، بسياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة واللجوء)

  /ašād tīm kūl, al-mbʿūṯ al-brīṭānī al-mklf bšuʾūn al-hğrẗ, bsīāsẗ al-mġrb fī mğāl al-hğrẗ wāllğūʾ/).

- In a conference sponsored by the United Nations and hosted by the Kingdom of Morocco, and which was known to the presence of a number of heads of state and heads of government from five continents.

  في مؤتمر رعته الأمم المتحدة واستضافه المغرب وحضره زعماء دول ورؤساء حكومات من القارات الخمس)

  /muʾtmr rʿth al-ʾamm al-mtḥdẗ wāstḍāfth al-mġrbīẗ ūʿrf ḥḍūr zʿmāʾ dūl ūruʾsāʾ ḥkūmāt mn al-qārāt al-ẖms/).

There are other examples in which the lexis of political discourse is dominant and which can be attributed to the importance given to the issue of irregular migration by the Moroccan government. For instance, the political and moral principles of the Moroccan government to help the irregular migrants are stressed in the Politics theme, as in:

- Morocco's immigration and asylum policy

  (سياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة واللجوء /sīāsẗ al-mġrb fī mğāl al-hğrẗ wāllğūʾ/).

- the second session of the Moroccan-Spanish Forum

  فعاليات الدورة الثانية من المنتدى المغربي الإسباني)

  /fʿālīāt al-dūrẗ al-ṯānīẗ mn al-mntdi al-mġrbī al-isbānī/).

Such lexical choices represent the irregular migrants as victims and the Moroccan government and its political system are the protectors and saviours. It is very common to find in the news articles examples like:

Researcher's Translation	Politics Theme Extracts
Mohammed VI defends the migrants and criticizes the populists' approaches.	محمد السادس يدافع عن المهاجرين وينتقد مقاربات الشعبويّين.
The government supports the integration of immigrants into the labour market and the protection of their rights.	الحكومة تدعم إدماج المهاجرين بسوق الشغل وحماية حقوقهم.
The government calls on Europe to support Morocco's new approach to migration.	الحكومة تدعو أوروبا إلى دعم التعاطي الجديد للمغرب مع الهجرة.
The world advocates for humanity and pluralism by signing the migration Pact.	العالم يناصر الإنسانية والتعدد بالتوقيع على ميثاق الهجرة.
the Ministry in charge of Moroccans residing abroad and Migration Affairs, in partnership with the International Labour Organization, organized a seminar on the topic of "Migration and the labour market: in order to approach Integrated, inclusive and rights-based, "in keeping with the new national policy for migration and asylum.	نظمت الوزارة المكلفة بالمغاربة المقيمين بالخارج وشؤون الهجرة، بشراكة مع منظمة العمل الدولية، صباح اليوم الخميس بالرباط، ندوة حول موضوع "الهجرة وسوق الشغل: من أجل مقاربة مندمجة وشاملة قائمة على الحقوق"، وذلك في إطار مواكبة السياسة الوطنية الجديدة للهجرة واللجوء.
The King calls for a new migration plan and denounces images of 'slaves' in Libya.	الملك يدعو إلى خطة جديدة للهجرة ويُندد بصور "العبيد" في ليبيا.
King Mohammed VI devoted his message to the Fifth Summit of the African Union - the European Union, which opened this evening, Wednesday, in the Ivorian capital, Abidjan, to the problems of migration, and said that "the current circumstance is no longer appropriate to make diagnoses, or to persist in sterile and overt debates. Now is the time for serious work."	خصص الملك محمد السادس، رسالته إلى القمة الخامسة للاتحاد الإفريقي – الاتحاد الأوروبي، التي افتتحت أشغالها مساء اليوم الأربعاء بالعاصمة الإيفوارية، أبيدجان، إلى إشكالات الهجرة، وقال إن "الظرفية الراهنة لم تعد ملائمة للقيام بالتشخيصات، أو التمادي في السجالات العقيمة والمتجاوزة. بل إن الوقت الآن هو وقت الجد والعمل".
Morocco does not consider migration to be a problem.	المغرب لا يعتبر الهجرة مصدرا للمشاكل.
Ambarka Bouaida, Minister Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, in the European capital, Brussels, highlighted Morocco's immigration policy.	أبرزت امبركة بوعيدة، الوزيرة المنتدبة لدى وزير الشؤون الخارجية والتعاون، بالعاصمة الأوروبية بروكسيل، سياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة.
Morocco's integration of refugees' children in education is being praised by UN organizations.	إدماج المغرب لأطفال اللاجئين بالتعليم ينال إشادة منظمات أممية.
Morocco's policy of integrating refugee children into the national educational system has received a mention from the	حظيت سياسة المغرب في مجال إدماج الأطفال اللاجئين في النظام التعليمي الوطني بتنويه من لدن

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund, as these two UN agencies considered the kingdom a "role model" in this field.	المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين ومنظمة الأمم المتحدة للطفولة، إذ اعتبرت هاتان الهيئتان الأمميتان المملكة "مثالا يُحتذى به" في هذا المجال.
Morocco plans to complete the regularisation of the migrants' status amid international acclaim.	المغرب يخطط لإكمال تسوية وضعية المهاجرين وسط إشادة دولية.
A British official praises Morocco's immigration and asylum policy.	مسؤول بريطاني يُشيد بسياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة واللجوء.
Tim Cole, the British envoy in charge of migration affairs, praised Morocco's policy in the field of migration and asylum, both at the national and African levels. And this is in the midst of his visit to Rabat from the 18th to the 20th of this March.	أشاد تيم كول، المبعوث البريطاني المكلف بشؤون الهجرة، بسياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة واللجوء، سواء على المستوى الوطني أو الإفريقي؛ وذلك في خضم زيارة يقوم بها إلى الرباط من 18 إلى 20 مارس الجاري.
Calls for the integration of immigrants conclude the Moroccan-Spanish Forum	دعوات إلى تحقيق اندماج المهاجرين تختتم المنتدى المغربي الإسباني
The activities of the second session of the Moroccan-Spanish Forum on the topic of "coexistence", organized by the Delegate Ministry in charge of Moroccans residing abroad, immigration affairs and the State Secretariat for Migration and Immigrants in Spain, were concluded this evening, Wednesday, in Rabat.	اختتمت، مساء اليوم الأربعاء في الرباط، فعاليات الدورة الثانية من المنتدى المغربي الإسباني حول موضوع "العيش المشترك"، والذي نظمته الوزارة المنتدبة المكلفة بالمغاربة المقيمين بالخارج وشؤون الهجرة وكتابة الدولة للهجرة والمهاجرين بإسبانيا.
The government calls on Europe to support Morocco's new approach to migration.	الحكومة تدعو أوروبا إلى دعم التعاطي الجديد للمغرب مع الهجرة.
In the wake of the working session chaired yesterday by King Mohammed VI, and devoted to discussing various aspects related to the problem of immigration in Morocco, a joint communiqué was issued to the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Justice and Freedoms, which said that the King's directives "really constitute a new vision for the national policy in the field of migration, humanity. In its philosophy, comprehensive in its content, responsible in its approach, and pioneering at the regional level" as the document puts it.	في أعقاب جلسة العمل التي ترأسها أمس الملك محمد السادس، وخصصت لتدارس مختلف الجوانب المرتبطة بإشكالية الهجرة في المغرب، صدر بلاغ مشترك لوزارات الداخلية، والشؤون الخارجية والتعاون، والعدل والحريات، قال إن توجيهات الملك "تشكل بالفعل رؤية جديدة للسياسة الوطنية في مجال الهجرة، إنسانية في فلسفتها، وشاملة في مضمونها، ومسؤولة في مقاربتها، ورائدة على المستوى الإقليمي" وفق تعبير الوثيقة.
An international seminar in Laayoune on the integration of migrants and refugees.	ندوة دولية بالعيون حول إدماج المهاجرين واللاجئين.

Marrakesh Agreement... These are the contents of the first comprehensive global compact on migration.	اتفاق مراكش ... هذه مضامين أول ميثاق عالمي شامل حول الهجرة.
Nearly 164 countries across the world ratified, on Monday in Marrakesh, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, at a conference sponsored by the United Nations and hosted by the Kingdom of Morocco, and which was known to the presence of a number of heads of state and heads of government from five continents.	صادقت قرابة 164 دولة عبر العالم، أمس الاثنين بمدينة مراكش، على الاتفاق العالمي من أجل الهجرة الآمنة والمنظمة والنظامية، في مؤتمر رعته الأمم المتحدة واستضافته المملكة المغربية وعرف حضور عدد من زعماء دول ورؤساء حكومات من القارات الخمس.

Table 14 : Hespress news articles' Politics Theme extracts

The extracts in Table 14 provide authentic examples in which *Hespress*' editorial team resorts to political lexis while representing the issue of irregular migration.

3.3.1.1.3. Integration theme

The integration of irregular migrants into the Moroccan society is an evident discourse in *Hespress* news articles. The high occurrence of the Integration theme was mainly in the year 2016 with 26.14% (N=97) and the year 2017 with 22.37% (N=83) frequency rates. The year 2016 witnessed the King's visits to Africa in order to secure Morocco rejoin the African Union. The year 2017 saw the second regularisation process which granted residency permits to 28,400 migrants. Therefore, it is clear from the data texts that Hespress editorial team has resorted to a lexical paradigm that phocuses on integration lexis, like: Development (تنمية /tnmīẗ/), contribute (تساهم /tsāhm/), integration (إدماج /idmāğ/), employment (تشغيل /tšġīl/), benefit (يستفيدون /īstfīdūn/), granted rights (الحقوق الممنوحة /al-ḥqūq al-mmnūḥẗ/), job market (بسوق الشغل /bsūq al-šġl/), residency cards (بطاقات الإقامة /bṭāqāt al-iqāmẗ/), regularisation (تسوية /tswyẗ/), housing (السكن /al-skn/).

At the textual level, *Hespress* news producers construct a positive image about the integration of the irregular migrants into the Moroccan society. They stress the

advantages of the new migration policy and consider their integration as a positive option from which the Moroccan society can benefit, as in the example:

- The African community contributes to the development of Morocco.

(الجالية الإفريقية تساهم في تنمية المغرب /al-ǧālīẗ al-ifrīqīẗ tsāhm fī tnmīẗ al-mġrb/).

- In order to benefit from the competence of the migrants.

(من أجل الاستفادة من كفاءة المهاجرين /mn aǧl al-āstfādẗ mn kfāʾẗ al-mhāǧrīn/).

In the examples about Integration theme, *Hespress* journalists refer to the different sectors and services which the irregular migrants have already been integrated in, like in the examples:

- The rights granted to migrants to include housing

(الحقوق الممنوحة للمهاجرين لتشملَ السكن /al-ḥqūq al-mmnūḥẗ llmhāǧrīn ltšmla al-skn/).

- Children from sub-Saharan countries flock to Moroccan schools

(الأطفال القادمين من دول جنوب الصحراء يتدفقون على المدارس المغربية

/al-ʾaṭfāl al-qādmīn mn dūl ǧnūb al-ṣḥrāʾ ītdfqūn ʿli al-mdārs al-mġrbīẗ/).

- African immigrants benefit from a program to teach Moroccan languages and culture.

(مهاجرون أفارقة يستفيدون من برنامج لتعليم اللغات والثقافة المغربية

/mhāǧrūn afārqẗ īstfīdūn mn brnāmǧ ltʿlīm al-lġāt wālṯqāfẗ al-mġrbīẗ/).

Furthermore, the different phases and procedures that were taken in order to implement the new migration policy reforms to integrate the irregular migrants into the Moroccan society are also highlighted. Instances can be found in:

- Morocco starts granting residency cards to thousands of irregular migrants.

(المغرب يشرع في مَنْح بطائق الإقامة لآلاف المهاجرين غير النظاميين

/al-mġrb īšrʿ fī manْḥ bṭāʾiq al-iqāmẗ lʾālāf al-mhāǧrīn ġīr al-nẓāmyin/).

- The launch of the second phase of regularization of migrants' status.

(إطلاق المرحلة الثانية من تسوية وضعية المهاجرين /tswyẗ ūḍʿīẗ al-mhāǧrīn/).

These lexical choices which are made at the textual level to refer to the Integration theme create a positive image about the migrants who, eventually, deserve to be integrated into the Moroccan society. The following excerpts are examples of the Integration theme:

Researcher's Translation	Integration Theme Extracts
The African community contributes to the development of Morocco	الجالية الإفريقية تساهم في تنمية المغرب
Morocco starts granting residency cards to thousands of irregular migrants.	المغرب يشرع في مَنْح بطائق الإقامة لآلاف المهاجرين غير النظاميين.
Hundreds of refugees benefit from residency cards in Morocco.	مئات اللاجئين يستفيدون من بطاقات الإقامة في المغرب.
Children from sub-Saharan countries flock to Moroccan schools.	الأطفال القادمين من دول جنوب الصحراء يتدفقون على المدارس المغربية.
Morocco expands the circle of rights granted to migrants to include housing.	المغربُ يُوسّع دائرةَ الحقوق الممنوحة للمهاجرين لتشملَ السكن
The launch of the second phase of regularization of migrants' status.	إطلاق المرحلة الثانية من تسوية وضعية المهاجرين.
The National Committee in charge of regularizing the status and integration of immigrants in Morocco announced the launch of the second phase of the integration of migrants in an illegal situation in Morocco, starting tomorrow, Thursday, at the level of each region and employment, and that it will mobilize the appropriate human and logistical resources necessary for the success of this process.	أعلنت اللجنة الوطنية المكلفة بتسوية وضعية وإدماج المهاجرين في المغرب عن انطلاقة المرحلة الثانية من إدماج المهاجرين في وضعية غير قانونية بالمغرب، ابتداء من يوم غد الخميس، على مستوى كل إقليم وعمالة، وأنها ستعبئ الموارد البشرية واللوجيستيكية المناسبة اللازمة لإنجاح هذه العملية.
African immigrants benefit from a program to teach Moroccan languages and culture.	مهاجرون أفارقة يستفيدون من برنامج لتعليم اللغات والثقافة المغربية.
Coinciding with Morocco's continuing efforts to absorb illegal immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and grant them legal residency to integrate them into Moroccan society, civil associations seek to keep pace with this dynamic by teaching Moroccan languages and culture to immigrants and refugees, who chose to settle in the kingdom after abandoning their "dream."	تزامناً مع مواصلة المغرب جهوده من أجل استيعاب المهاجرين غير الشرعيين من دول إفريقيا جنوب الصحراء ومنحهم الإقامة الشرعية لإدماجهم بالمجتمع المغربي، تسعى جمعيات مدنية إلى مواكبة هذه الدينامية عبر تعليم اللغات والثقافة المغربية إلى المهاجرين واللاجئين، الذين اختاروا الاستقرار في المملكة بعدما تخلوا عن "حلم" العبور إلى الضفة

Crossing over to the northern bank of the Mediterranean.	الشمالية من المتوسط.
Morocco plans to complete the settlement of immigrant status amid international acclaim	لمغرب يخطط لإكمال تسوية وضعية المهاجرين وسط إشادة دولية
Weak immigrant employment questions the mechanisms of the integration process.	ضعف تشغيل المهاجرين يسائل آليات عملية الإدماج في المجتمع.
In an international seminar organized a few days ago in the city of Casablanca on enhancing labour mobility in Africa to prepare a plan to strengthen the capacities of institutions concerned with the labour market, Mohamed Yateem, Minister of Employment and Professional Integration, said that his ministry worked to facilitate the process of immigrants and refugees entering the labour market through Exemption from providing some necessary documents.	في ندوة دولية جرى تنظيمها قبل أيام في مدينة الدار البيضاء حول تعزيز حركية اليد العاملة في إفريقيا لإعداد خطة لتعزيز قدرات المؤسسات المعنية بسوق الشغل، قال محمد يتيم، وزير الشغل والإدماج المهني، إنّ وزارته عملت على تيسير عملية ولوج المهاجرين واللاجئين إلى سوق الشغل من خلال إعفائهم من تقديم بعض الوثائق الضرورية

Table 15 : Hespress news articles' Integration Theme extracts

Table 15 provides instances in which *Hespress* editorial team talks about the integration of irregular migrants in the Moroccan society. The implications of the Integration theme in the examples in Table 15 show that the authors of the texts select specific lexical words to express the importance of integrating the irregular migrants.

3.3.1.2. Anti-migration themes in *Hespress* readers' comments

In the previous section, *Hespress* news articles were textually analysed revealing the dominance of the pro-migration or humanitarian lexis. In this section, the focus shifts to the textual representation of irregular migration in *Hespress* readers' comments. The aim is to try to ascertain if the discourse about irregular migration in the news articles is reproduced or challenged in the readers' comments. The quantitative analysis of anti-migration themes has shown that the overriding position of *Hespress* readers reflects negative or anti- migration themes that are unfavourable to the new migration policy and its reforms, mainly: Blaming the Government theme, the Economic Burden theme, and the Threat theme.

Hespress readers have resorted to a lexical paradigm which reflect their anti-migration stance such as: disaster (الكارثة /al-kārṯ̈/), crisis (أزمة /azmẗ/), diseases (أمراض /amrāḍ/), the poor (الفقراء /al-fqrāʾ/), the unemployed (المعطلين /al-mʿṭlīn/), the corrupt (الفاسدون /al-fāsdūn/).

3.3.1.2.1. Blaming the Government theme

Most of *Hespress*' readers have clearly expressed their opposition to the new migration reforms through direct attacks which were directed to the Moroccan government and the authorities involved in issuing and adopting the new migration policy. In their comments, *Hespress'* readers focused their anger on blaming the government for its decisions to accept the presence of irregular migrants in the country. The names of some prominent Moroccan government personalities involved in the migration issue are mentioned in various readers' comments, as in:

- I swear to God, this ministry and government are responsible for this disaster.

(بالله على هذاه الوزارة و الحكومة وكل مسؤل عن هذه الكارثة

/abāllh ʿli hḏāh al-ūzārẗ ū al-ḥkūmẗ ūkl msuʾl ʿn hḏh al-kārṯ̈/).

The readers also select specific lexis to describe the government as corrupt. The readers accused the government for the mess caused by the adoption of the new migration law which is very problematic. Those who are responsible of issuing such a policy are described as irresponsible and insane. Instances such as the following are very prominent in the readers' comments:

- This government is insane.

(هاذ الحكومة مصطية /hāḏ al-ḥkūmẗ mṣṭīẗ/).

More examples from the dominant and frequent lexis which is found in the readers' comments are: irresponsible politicians, causing the mess, insane government, corruption, corrupted policymakers, fraud, accused authorities, failure to manage the crisis, incompetent and corrupt politicians who seek only personal interest.

Examples of some readers' comments that blame the government include:

Researcher's Translation	Blaming the Government Extract
Have you found work for Moroccans to think of employing the migrants?	حسن السوسي: الخميس 17 مارس 2016 - 14:09 خدمتو بعدا المغاربة؟ بقا ليكوم غير المهاجرين
I'm laughing to death. You didn't teach Moroccans to teach refugees	محمد: الخميس 14 شتنبر 2017 - 12:24 وامي كرشي، قريتوا حتى ولاد البلاد بقا غي ولاد اللاجئين
Morocco has grown much worse because of the so-called human rights defenders: an increase in: the immigrants, the criminalization, the impunity	Aziz: الجمعة 24 غشت 2018 - 16:35 مكانش اللي اخرج على المغرب قد هاد المسمون حقوقيين: زيادة في: الهاجرين التشرميل الاجرام الافلات من العقاب.....
Who eats about the resources of Africa? Isn't it imperial Europe with its corrupt rulers? Europe should take responsibility. It's the one which has rendered these poor youngsters.	الجمعة 24 غشت 2018 - 17:08 شكون لي كال رزق افريقيا. ماشي الامبريالية الاوروبية باتفاق مع حكامها الفاسدون. خص اوروبا تحمل المسؤولية. هي لي فقرة هاد الشباب
Is that what is needed? Our youth is unemployed....Each one of them holds his diploma however they go out to work as street venders.... With all this difficulty of life, these peoples come to us. I swear God, this ministry and government are responsible for this disaster. How and when will this country become like other developing and developed countries? I swear by God, you are going backwards by a thousand years. God help.	مهاجرة: الخميس 02 يناير 2014 - 22:35 أهذا ما يحتاجه؟ شبابنا عاطل... كل واحدمنهم يحمل شهادته ويخرج ليعمل بائع جوال..... مع صعوبة الحياة وإذا به يدخل علينا هؤلاء الأقوام بالله على هذاه الوزارة و الحكومة وكل مسؤل عن هاذه الكارثة كيف ومتى سيصبح هذا البلد كاباقي البلدان النامية المتقدمة والله إنكم تتراجعون إلى الوراء بألف سنة. والله المستعان.
Morocco, unfortunately, has become vulnerable to the attacks of everyone. Morocco has become these days a dumping ground for Europe and a haven for all the African tramps that fill the public space, acting as if they are the owners of the land and the Moroccans are just refugees on this land. Isn't the Moroccan citizen more likely to be defended than to defend a African migrant? His presence in the country is illegal and does not respect the customs and traditions of the host country.	مواطن: الجمعة 24 غشت 2018 - 18:32 المغرب مع الأسف أصبح مستباح لكل من هب ودب وكأنه وكالة بدون بواب. أصبح المغرب هذه الأيام مطرح الازبال لأوروبا وملجئ لكل المشردين الأفارقة يملؤون الفضاء العام يتصرفون كأنهم هم أصحاب الأرض والمغاربة مجرد لاجئين على هذه الأرض. أليس المواطن المغربي هو أولى بالدفاع عنه بدل الدفاع عن مهاجر جنوب إفريقي وجوده في البلد غير قانوني ولا يحترم عادات وتقاليد البلد المضيف.
Any procedure in this regard must be consulted by the entire West. Neither the king nor the minister has the right to make decisions to settle millions in a country that has its own people. Because the migrants	الأربعاء 5 مارس 2014 - 13:13 أي إجراء في هدا الصدد يجب ان يستفتى فيه الشعب الغربي قاطبة. لا الملك ولا الوزير له حق اتخاذ قرار توطين الملايين ببلد له شعبه. لان المهاجر لن

will not bother the king in his daily life. The minister will not be subjected to the oppression and barbarism of Africans. So let the decision is passed on to the weak on earth. The public is the one who decides.	يضايق الملك في قوت يومه. ولن يتعرض الوزير لبطش وهمجية الأفارقة. ادا فليحيلوا القرار للمستضعفين في الأرض عامة الشعب هم من يقرر
Morocco is still unable to settle the situation of its children, how about the refugees? Oh my God, be kind to us!	الأربعاء 5 مارس 2014 - 13:13 المغرب مازال عاجزا عن تسوية أوضاع أبناءه ناهيك عن اللاجئين.. يا ربي تلطف بينا وصافي!
Random decision-making is evidence of a lack of strategic vision. After two years, Morocco will become "Coffee and Milk"	Philo: الأربعاء 5 مارس 2014 - 13:04 العشوائية في اتخاذ القرارات دليل على انعدام رؤية استراتيجية. بعد سنتين سيصبح المغرب "قهوة حليب
There is anarchy in this country. We suffer from swords holders, big thieves; they added the tsunami of Africans. One day they will tell us to leave our country and look for another one. I understand nothing here. Are we crazy people?	Zagori: الجمعة 31 غشت 2018 - 22:27 ولا السيبة فهاد البلاد محيلتنا صحاب السيوفة محيلتنا الشفارة الكبار زادونا بتسونامي ديال الافارقة باش نتلاهاومعاهم وشي نهار يقولو لينا سيرو قلبوليكم على شي بلاد....مابقيتش أصلا فاهم واش أنا كنحلم حلمة خايبة ولا ولينا مسطيين في حديقة حيوانات
On the contrary, Morocco is making a huge mistake in the field of immigration! It became a barrier protecting Europe from immigrants in exchange for crumbs of Euros. The catastrophic political, cultural and demographical results do not appear now, but after 20 or 30 years. Whoever is still alive remembers my words.	Mann - 1الاثنين 19 مارس 2018 - 21:25 بالعكس المغرب يرتكب خطأ فادح في ميدان الهجرة ! فأصبح حاجز يحمي أوربا من المهاجرين مقابل فتات من الأورو .. النتائج الكارثية سياسيا و ثقافيا و ديموغرافيا لا تظهر الان بل بعد 20 سنة او 30 سنة من بقي حيّا يتذكر كلامي.
We need our right from our wealth, we need convenient work and health, we need good education, we need real democracy and freedom of expression, we need freedom, dignity and social justice, we need a fair trial, we need accountability and trial of the corrupt, predatory, tyrants who plunder our wealth and steal our money.	صدعتونا بهاد الهجرة الثلاثاء 11 دجنبر 2018 09:15 بغينا حقنا في ثرواتنا وبغينا الشغل والصحة في المستوى وبغينا تعليم جيد وبغينا ديموقراطية حقيقية وحرية التعبير وبغينا الحرية والكرامة والعدالة الاجتماعية وبغينا قظاء نزيه وبغينا محاسبة ومحاكمة الظالمين المفسدين المفترسين الطواغيت لي كينهبو ثرواتنا وكيسرقو اموالنا
Morocco cannot bear all the misery of the world. It is up to the political leaders in their countries to bear the consequences of that, not because their country has failed on the economic and social level.	افران الاطلس المتوسط الاثنين 10 دجنبر 2018 لا يمكن للمغرب أن يتحمل كل بؤس العالم. الأمر متروك للزعماء السياسيين في بلدانهم أن يتحملوا عواقب ذلك ليس لأن بلادهم قد فشلت اقتصاديا واجتماعيا.
You close your doors and withdraw from the European Union for your refusal to receive immigrants and you praise a country that instead of you it can bear the misery of Africans. Hypocrisy of the English.	MOHA الاثنين 19 مارس 2018 - 21:36 تغلقون ابوابكم وتنسحبون من الاتحاد الاوربي لرفضكم استقبال المهاجرين وتشيدون ببلد ليتحمل بدلا منكم شقاء الافارقة نفاق الانجليز

Table 16 : *Hespress* readers' comments Blaming the Government Theme extracts

Examples from Table 16 show that the readers' choice of lexis serves to blame the government for adopting the new migration policy.

3.3.1.2.2. Economic Burden Theme

Representing the irregular migrants as an economic burden is frequently referred to throughout the examined readers' comments. Economic worries and concerns related to irregular migration are presented in different ways and to different degrees. Most of the readers' comments focused directly on the irregular migrants as a heavy burden on the Moroccan economy, which already suffers from many economic problems, such as poverty, like:

- We will become much poorer, we'll get more diseases, and we'll be much more ignorant.

  (سوف نزداد فقرا على فقر أمراضا على امراض و جهلا على جهل

  /sūf nzdād fqrā ʿāi fqr amrāḍā ʿli amrāḍ ū ğhlā ʿli ğhl/).

There is also high reference to the high level of unemployment in Morocco. There are particularly high unemployment rates especially among degree holders, as in these examples:

- Have you integrated the unemployed Moroccan troops?
  (هل أدمجتم جيش من المعطلين المغاربة /hl admğtm ğīš mn al-mʿṭlīn al-mġārbẗ/).
- The poor and simple Moroccans, the unemployed, the deprived.
  (المغاربة الفقراء والبسطاء والعاطلون والمحرومون

  /al-mġārbẗ al-fqrāʾ wālbsṭāʾ wālʿāṭlūn wālmḥrūmūn/).

In other readers' comments, the focus is on the financial help which is considered as a waste of resources, as in:

- How about Morocco which suffers from adversity and wants to integrate immigrants.
  (فما بالك بالمغرب الذي يعاني المحن ويود ادماج المهاجرين

  /fmā bālk bālmġrb al-ḏī īʿānī al-mḥn wyūd admāğ al-mhāğrīn/).

The readers problematize the impact of the migrants on the labour market, local welfare system and social services. They described the chaotic consequences of the new migration policy. An example of this is:

- Moroccans cannot find schools where to study in. 80 students per classroom

  لقاو حتى المغاربة فين قراو 80 واحد في القسم)

  /lqāū ḥti al-mġārbï fīn qrāū 80 wāḥd fī al-qsm/).

In the readers' comments, there are instances in which the readers describe the irregular migrants as opportunists who take advantage from the situation. This is an important discursive element used by the readers to stigmatize and belittle the irregular migrants. Similar terms used for the same purpose are economic migrants and welfare migrants emphasising that they are not worth any help. Instead, all financial support and help should be given to the Moroccans who are already in real need and not to the migrants who are a very heavy burden on the Moroccan economy. The readers have resorted to some lexical items to delegitimize the financial support given to the irregular migrants like: opportunists, welfare migrants, poverty, illiteracy, joblessness, bogus, illegal, crisis, burden, unwanted and merely economic migrants. The following examples explain these views in more depth:

Researcher's Translation	**Economic Burden Theme Extracts**
Great job!!!! God bless you!!!!! It's all we need!!	تيزي النيف: الخميس 17 مارس 2016 - 14:11 ماشاء الله!!!وتبارك الله عليكم!!!هدا شي ليخصنا!!
Moroccan cannot find schools where to study. 80 students per classroom with very low levels. And still you talk?!	سامي: الخميس 14 شتنبر 2017 - 12:22 لقاو حتى المغاربة فين قراو 80 واحد في القسم تدني المستوى وكتكلموا باز
How weird !!!!! Have you integrated the huge number of unemployed Moroccans to employ the poor migrants? How strange. Have you integrated the unemployed Moroccan troops to integrate the poor migrants!	SIMOU: الخميس 17 مارس 2016 - 14:09 وباز .هل ادمجتم جيش من المعطلين المغاربة حتى تدمجوا المهاجرين المساكين.
The poor and simple Moroccans, the unemployed, the deprived and the small employees who own 3 thousand dirhams, all of them were not satisfied with bread	الرامي: الخميس 18 دجنبر 2014 - 13:43 المغاربة الفقراء والبسطاء والعاطلون والمحرومون والموظفون الصغار اصحاب 3 آلاف درهم ، كلهم لم

or food, and did not find housing, decent clothing, and no medicine, as well as a car and .... the state spends on foreigners, and God is a miracle and a farce of the 21st century and peace.	يشبعوا خبزا ولا إداما ولا يجدون سكنا ولا لباسا لائقا ولا دواء فضلا عن سيارة و....والدولة تنفق على الأجانب، والله إنها معجزة ومهزلة القرن 21 والسلام.
We call for the integration of the forgotten Moroccans in schools.	مول حمص: الخميس 14 شتنبر 2017 - 12:59 نطالب بإدماج أبناء المغرب المنسي بالمدارس
Hahahaha! Morocco is a land that attracts immigrants They will only make us more poor than poor. The immigrant is the one who has a vision for the country to which he will go. He has the experiences of an educated person who wants to. He works at a better level than he wanted to innovate, but he did not find this in his homeland which compels him to emigrate. Immigration controls governed by a future country that controls the numbers of arrivals to it and imposes on them several conditions to accept their emigration. As for me, who enters my guidance, we will become much poorer, we'll get more diseases, and we will be much more ignorant. Leaving behind, we will begin to lose our identity. I don't even need Ghadia Meziane in this country. Ahhh, Morocco !	Kamal: السبت 14 شتنبر 2013 - 15:26 هههههههه المغرب أرض تستقطب مهاجرين إنهم لن يزيدوننا إلا فقرا على فقر المهاجر هو من تكون له رأية للبلد لتي سوف يدهب إليها تكون له خبرات متعلم يريد أن يشتغل في مستوى أحسن مما كان فيه يريد أن يبدع ولم يجد هدا في وطنه مما يضطره للهجرة للهجرة ضوابط تحكمها بلد مستقبل يتحكم في أعداد وافدين إليه ويفرض عليهم عدة شروط للقبول هجرتهم أما لي جا يدخل هدي غي تخربيقة سوف نزداد فقرا على فقر أمراضا على أمراض جهلا على جهل تخلفا عن تخلف و سوف نبدأ في فقد هويتنا حتى حاجة ما غادية مزيان في هدا بلد آآآههههه يا مغرب
Give them more and more until they colonize us. Then, we will regret. These are not our children to be responsible of. I wish I could exterminate them all as Hitler did to the Jews. They are not of any benefit to us. We should protest and reject them, from our country that we love. We don't want them to jostle us. I hate them. Please, broadcast.	ايرما: الخميس 02 يناير 2014 - 22:26 وغير عطوهم وزيدوا عطووهم حتى استعمرونا ديك سااعه نقولوا ياريت لى حرا ماكان هاد القوم ولدانهم ونسيناهم لو كان بامكانى كون درت ليهم الاباده كما دار هتلر لليهوود مامنهم نفع خاصنا نحتجوا ونرفصووهم فبلادنا بلادنا تنموتوا عليها ومباغينهم مباغينش ازاحمونا تنكرهم ونشرى عفاك
Dear minister, find work for the unemployed teachers who sleep in the streets or take with you 2 migrants and employ them and then we'll see.	agadir: الخميس 17 مارس 2016 - 20:32 خدموا بعد هذوك الاساتذة لكنعسوا في الطريق اوالسي الوزير خذ معك 2 من الهاجرين واخدمهم وانشوفوا
Respect the rights of Moroccans first. Especially in hospitals	MASFIWI: الجمعة 13 شتنبر 2013 - 09:44 احترموا حقوق المغاربة اولا. خاصة في المستشفيات
And where are the rights of Moroccans in employment, health, housing and a decent life. Then, we consider the rights of immigrants.	Brahim: الجمعة 13 شتنبر 2013 - 10:28 و اين حقوق المغاربة في التشغيل والصحة والسكن والحياة الكريمة ثم بعد ذلك نرى حقوق المهاجرين.
Are there parallel directives ordering the preservation of the dignity of Moroccans in the world and before that in their kingdom?	خديجة: الجمعة 13 شتنبر 2013 - 18:41 أيس هناك توجيهات موازية تأمر بحفظ كرامة المغاربة في العالم وقبل ذلك في مملكتهم؟

They say it is to benefit from the competence of immigrants, and to ensure a good integration of them, as is the case in a number of developed countries, such as Canada. But Morocco is different from Canada. Moroccans are hard to trust, we need a place where to export such Moroccans.	Redwan: الخميس 18 دجنبر 2014 - 13:18 قا ليك من أجل الاستفادة من كفاءة المهاجرين، وضمان إدماج جيّد لهم، كماَ هو معمول به في عدد من البلدان المتقدّمة، مثل كندا. غير هيا أ العموم المغرب كايختلف شي شوية على كندا حنا عندنا كحل الراس بزاف خاصنا حنا إلا كاين فين نصدرو دياولنا
Hospitals and schools have not yet opened for Moroccan people to open to foreigners	كان هنا و غادر: الجمعة 17 أبريل 2015 - 13:47 المستشفيات والمدارس لم تفتح بعد بوجه الشعب المغربي كي تفتح للأجانب
We do not need immigrants. I do not speak of fanaticism or racism. I am speaking from reality and under the pretext of logic and reason. Morocco does not have the capabilities to integrate immigrants into the labor market, health and schooling. The eye is insight and the hand is short, as it is said, we need capital to create major projects that benefit our children. The country is exhausted by unemployment and we need to strengthen the infrastructure in the health sector and we need to reform the education system. I say it again. We are unable to absorb immigrants. Doors and outlets are imposed on immigrants, and unfair laws are enacted against immigrants, such as arbitrary expulsion and non-renewal of residency papers for immigrants. How about Morocco which suffers from adversity and wants to integrate immigrants.	عبدالاله العروي: الجمعة 17 أبريل 2015 14:07 نحن لسنا بحاجة للمهاجرين انا لا اتكلم بتعصب او عنصرية ف ا نا تكلم من الواقع وبحجة المنطق والعقل المغرب ليس له امكانيات لإدماج المهاجرين في سوق الشغل و الصحة و التمدرس ف العين بصيرة واليد قصيرة كما يقال نحن في حاجة لرؤوس الاموال لخلق مشاريع كبري يستفيد منها ابناء الوطن الدي انهكته البطالة ونحن في حاجة لتقوية بنية تحتية في قطاع الصحة ونحن في حاجة ل اصلاح منظومة التعليم ا اقولها مرة اخري نحن غير قادرين علي استيعاب المهاجرين ف لدينا همومنا ومشاكلنا التي لاتعد ولا تحصى مادام ان اوربا و امكانياتها الضخمة و تنهج سياسة التقشف و تغلق الابواب والمنافد علي المهاجريين وتسن قوانين مجحفة في حق المهاجرين من طرد تعسفي وعدم تجديد اوراق الاقامة للمهاجريين فما بالك بالمغرب الذي يعاني المحن ويود ادماج المهاجرين

Table 17 : *Hespress* readers' comments Economic Burden Theme extracts

The examples in Table 17 show that *Hespress* readers' have chosen certain lexis with the aim of emphasising the messy and the problematic situation caused by the presence of the irregular migrants in Morocco. This depiction promotes an alarmist situation of the heavy economic burden caused by these irregular migrants who are going to drain the Moroccan's resources in a country which is already a poor and suffers from many economic problems.

3.3.1.2.3. Threat Theme

Representing the irregular migrants as a threat is identified continuously across *Hespress* examined readers' comments. Arguments protesting against the new migration policy and the migration reforms are clearly expressed. In their comments, *Hespress'* readers have described the presence of the irregular migrants in Morocco as an invasion of some dangerous gangsters. The readers also represent irregular migrants as a different stranger with whom Moroccans will inevitably have hardship to live. The readers talk about the issue of irregular migration in a way that positions both groups, Moroccans and migrants, in a cultural clash in the present and future.

The discourse of danger and illegality predominate the readers' comments. The use of the terms like illegal, delinquent and criminal portray the irregular migrants as deviants from the Moroccan society and point towards the need to safeguard the country through the deportation and detainment of the migrants. The migrants are portrayed as a threat to Morocco's security and stability, undeserving of protection, involved in violence, drug dealing and conflicts. This narrative of irregular migrants as a threat is constructed and maintained by the pervasive negative associations of the migrants with uncertainty, criminality and illegality. The increasing emphasis on the criminality of refugees rationalizes the exclusion of these individuals from the Moroccan community. Examples from the Threat theme are:

- The Africans represent a danger on the Moroccan society

  (الافارفة يشكلون خطر في المجتمع المغربي /al-āfārfï īšklūn ẖṭr fī al-mġtmʿ al-mġrbī/).

- Their stay in Morocco is often accompanied by theft and drugs trafficking.

  (بقائهم في المغرب دائماً يكون مصحوبا بالسرقة والتشرد في الطرقات أو تجارة المخدرات

  /bqāʾihm fī al-mġrb dāʾimāً īkūn mṣḥūbā bālsrqï wāltšrd fī al-ṭrqāt aū tğārï al-mẖdrāt/).

Most commonly, the image of violent irregular migrants is portrayed by referring to topics of crime and violence which threaten the security and stability of the

country. Their stay in Morocco is always accompanied by theft or drug trafficking. The readers have also made predictions about the difficult and threatening situations in the future in which Moroccan people will have to live with all the migrants. Thus, it is very common to find instances such as:

- Wait for the worst: rape, diseases, theft, fraud...

  إنتضرو الأسو أ : إغتصابات، أمراض، سرقة، إحتيال)

  /intḍrū al-ʾasū a : iġtṣābāt, amrāḍ, srqẗ, iḥtīāl/).

Another recurrent threat among the commenters is related to the demographic danger. There is a fear that irregular migrants would replace Moroccan people, eventually leading to a black African majority in Morocco, like the example:

- After two years, Morocco will become 'Coffee and Milk'

  ("قهوة حليب" بعد سنتين سيصبح المغرب /bʿd sntīn sīṣbḥ al-mġrb"qhūẗ ḥlīb/).

Another description of irregular migrants as threat is through causing social, cultural and religious instability to Moroccans, for instance:

- Moroccan Arab Islamic identity is disappearing.

  صليو صلاة الجنازة على الهوية المغربية العربية الإسلامية)

  /ṣlīū ṣlāẗ al-ğnāzẗ ʿli hwyẗ al-mġrbīẗ al-ʿrbīẗ al-islāmīẗ/).

More than that, the readers express their fear from the spread of Christianity and contagious diseases because the irregular migrants are very likely to be carriers of the HIV and AIDS, Ebola disease and swine flu, like in the example:

- Christianity, Ebola, AIDS.

  (ابولا السيدا المسيحية /abūlā al-sīdā al-msīḥīẗ/).

The depiction of irregular migrants as a threat and undesirable people is a very common occurrence in the readers' comments, for instance:

Researcher's Translation	Threat Extracts
No, no, flooding Morocco with Africans. This is a dangerous scheme to obliterate the Moroccans. Beware!	kabalist - 11الثلاثاء 11 دجنبر 2018 - 21:26 لا لإغراق المغرب بالأفارقة اته مخطط خطير لطمس المغاربة احدرو!
Yes, to humane treatment of migrants for humanitarian reasons, like our brothers from Syria and Palestine, but Africans unfortunately consider Morocco a transit station to Europe illegally, and their stay in Morocco is always accompanied by theft and homelessness on the roads or drug trafficking, and there are no racist reasons, but Moroccans in need are the first to help. What was the reason to please Europe and embrace these immigrants away from European borders?	Ouisam - 17الاثنين 09 شتنبر 2013 - 17:48 نعم للتعاطي الإنساني مع المهاجرين لأسباب إنسانية كاخوتنا من سوريا وفلسطين ولكن الأفارقة للأسف يعتبرون المغرب محطة عبور لأوروبا بشكل غير قانوني وبقائهم في المغرب دائماً يكون مصحوبا بالسرقة والتشرد في الطرقات أو تجارة المخدرات، وليس هنالك اي أسباب عنصرية ولكن المغاربة المحتاجين هم أولى بالمساعدة، إلا إذا ما كان السبب إرضاء أوروبا واحتضان هؤلاء المهاجرين بعيدا عن الحدود الأوروبية.
This country has become a dustbin for Europe in exchange for dollars. Where can these people integrate? Are there schools for Moroccans? Where will they be integrated?..... Christianity, Ebola, AIDS. We do not want Morocco to become a dustbin	مغربي: الجمعة 17 أبريل 2015 - 14:17 هده الدولة اصبحت مزبلة لاروبا مقابل دولارات اين يدمج هؤلاء اين هل وجدتم مدارس للمغاربة اين سيدمجون .....ابولا السيدا المسيحية لا نريد ان تصبح المغرب مزبلة
The Africans pose a danger in Moroccan society. The government must confront their deportation and take strict measures. If the king wants to hug them, this is in the royal palace and not in the forests.	med - 34الثلاثاء 10 شتنبر 2013 - 02:45 الافارفة يشكلون خطر في المجتمع المغربي يجب على الحكومة ان تتصدى لترحليهم واخذ اجراءات صارمة واذا ارد الملك ان يحضنهم وذلك في القصر الملكي وليس في الغابات
Now, Moroccan Arab Islamic identity is disappearing. Oh God, it is not just!	الدكالي: الخميس 02 يناير 2014 - 23:54 صافي غير صليو صلات الجنازة على هوية المغربية العربية الاسلاميةاللهم ان هدا منكر الله
We have already warned of these hordes; wait for the worst (rape, diseases, theft, fraud...)	محمد: الأحد 1 يناير 2017 - 19:04 سبق و أن حذرنا من هذه الجحافل، إنتضرو الأسوأ إغتصابات، أمراض، سرقة، إحتيال....
These people should go to their countries and learn how to extract their rights there	الأحد 1 يناير 2017 -19:07 هؤلاء يجب ان يرحلوا إلى بلدانهم و يتعلموا كيفينتزعون حقوقهم هناك
The Africans represent a danger on the Moroccan society. The government must confront their deportation and take strict measures. If the king wants to host them, this is in the royal palace and not in the forests.	med - 34الثلاثاء 10 شتنبر 2013 - 02:45 الافارفة يشكلون خطر في المجتمع المغربي يجب على الحكومة ان تتصدى لترحليهم واخذ اجراءات صارمة واذا ارد الملك ان يحضنهم وذلك في القصر الملكي وليس في الغابات

Stop bringing poverty and misery, why do you bring us these refugees with problems who did succeed in the countries. We already have plenty of problems. The African are poor and they give birth to a lot of children. I forgot, we are the only people who prefer foreigners than locals	The truth: الخميس 19 دجنبر 2013 - 05:10 بركة ما تجيبو لينا الزلط او الميزيريا، آش غيجيبو لينا هاد اللاجئين من غير المشاكل والفتنة ربما مقفرينها فبلدانهم، حنا مطفرينو بقا لينا غير البراني، خصوصا هادوك الأفارقة راه الفقر او كيولدو بزاف، آه نسيت في المغرب حنا هما الدولة الوحيدة اللي كنفضلو البراني على ناس البلاد
Eyes are almost out of place. Faces that terrify hearts. And women as if they were dinosaurs scattered by the Atlantic tsunami... This is the combination of tourist beauty with which Europe wants to decorate the features of the most beautiful country in the world. Drug promotion, prostitution, Spread of sexually transmitted diseases, exposure to pedestrians, harassment to our women, and rapes. This is only the first generation. Black migration is a disgrace to the economy and tourism	الجيل الأول: الجمعة 17 أبريل 2015 - 16:33 عيون تكاد تخرج من مكانها شرا وجوه تثير الرعب في القلوب و نساء كأنهن دينسورات لفظهن تسونامي المحيط الأطلسي...هته هي تركيبة الجمال السياحي التي تريد به أوربا تزيين ملامح أجمل بلد في العالم. ترويج المخدرات نشر الأمراض المعدية جنسيا التعرض للمارة الذعارة التحرش بنسائنا الإغتصابات السطو وأعتراض المارة هدا فقط الجيل الأول الهجرة السوداء مزيانة للإقتصاد والسياحة
Morocco cannot bear the misery and poverty of an entire continent. We don't want them among us so leave us. Morocco is for Moroccans. They are all beggars and drug dealers forging currency. Most of their countries support the Bouzlisario, so let him go to Bouteflika. We don't want them between us. The best immigration of Latin Americans to Arabs or Asians over Africans.	مغربي من طنجة الاثنين 09 شتنبر 2013 - 19:28 المغرب لا يستطع ان يتحمل تعاسة وفقر قارة بكاملها لا نريدهم بيننا فليرحلوا عنا المغرب للمغاربة فقط كلهم متسولون وتجار مخدرات مزورين العملات أغلب دولهم تساند البوليزاريو فليذهبو إلى بوتفليقة لا نريدهم بينا أفضل هجرة الأمريكي اللاتيني إلى المغرب أو الأسيوي على الإفريقي.

Table 18 : *Hespress* readers' comments Threat Theme extracts

The extracts in Table 18 are authentic examples from *Hespres's* readers reacting to the news producers. The analysis of *Hespress* readers' comments data set has revealed a focus on the irregular migrants' deviancy through the representation of them as a threat to security. Thus, the government's help to the irregular migrants is delegitimized.

Overall, the findings from the textual analysis show that *Hespress* news articles support the migration reform through using special lexis. The articles focus on pro-migration themes like the Human Rights Theme, the Politics Theme, and the Integration Theme which all express a humanitarian discourse that stresses the need for a humane and sympathetic way of dealing with the migrants who are vulnerable, helpless and

victims of circumstances. *Hespress* Readers' comments, on the other hand, portray a negative image of these migrants which centres on notions of anti-migration discourse especially Blaming the Government Theme, the Economic Burden Theme, and the Threat Theme. The lexical paradigm used by *Hespress* news articles (pro-migration lexical paradigm) and readers' comments (anti-migration lexical paradigm) demonstrates the opposing representations between the news producers and the irregular migrants.

3.3.2. The discursive level

This level of analysis focuses on the second dimension of Fairclough's (1992) analytical framework which is the discursive practice. This stage of the analysis focuses on the interpretation of how the text is produced and consumed. For Fairclough (1989), this level is concerned with the relationship between the text and the interaction by seeing the text as the product of a process of production, and as recourse in the process of interpretation. The discursive dimension sees the social practice as something which people actively produce and make sense of the world on the basis of shared common sense procedures (Fairclough, 1992). As previously discussed, this involves the analysis of the processes of text production and consumption, which are influenced by the type of discourse being analysed and the specific social context it is situated within. To identify the social practice where the text is situated in, Fairclough (2003) identifies the one who performed the text and the field where the text is coming from. In this case, the performers are *Hespress*' editorial team and journalists. The news texts function within the social practice of news reporting which works within a larger social structure which is privately owned media companies.

Hespress discursive level of analysis demonstrates that the news texts typically work within a social structure of the news media as a genre. Despite being privately owned media companies, they generally feature reports that present the government as the initiator of social reforms. This assertion is highlighted in Hartley's (1982) declaration that press freedom has always yielded to higher considerations such as the security of the state and the right and duty of the state to provide for the well-being of

its citizens; among others and that the government is the most important agency in news production. In this case, it is clear that when the news texts present the government's positive attitude toward the irregular migration, the texts were indirectly representing the government and the security of Morocco as having primacy.

3.3.2.1. News production

Understanding news production really matters in the sense that news influences the formation of public opinion. News production is the most important link between the news and its audience. Since this study uses news discourse as its data material, it is important to briefly consider what the role of media and journalism is. News media is an industry owned by a small number of large corporations that control, determine, and decide information fluidity (Chomsky, 2002). Despite the anticipated neutral stance which is said to be the primary objective of the news media and which is dictated by professional values such as integrity, objectivity, and newsworthiness, news articles, news discourse is highly influenced by corporate interests and agendas as they play important roles in reproducing unequal power relations and ideologies. In other words, the media are used by those in power in order to normalize their values and desires. In fact, this study works with the assumption that news discourse is inherently biased and ideological (Fowler, 1991). News words are never neutral, transparent or innocent; instead, they always carry the power and ideologies that reflect the interests of those who speak or write them (Taiwo, 2007). News content is infused with numerous ideological conceptualizations that hold bias and not only facts (Berger, 1972). In this study, as a genre, news texts feature an institutional identity by belonging to a speech community that shares communicative norms. These are reflected in their unique linguistic behaviour. Bhatia (1993) explains that a genre is governed by a mutually defined and agreed communicative purpose which in this case in hard news reporting issues like irregular migration. News texts are generally informative and epistemic statements in their modalities and sometimes evaluative in their stance. Hence, while the texts maintain institutional identities as news reports that are characterized by

straight-forward presentation of facts, these texts also reveal some evaluative stance as exemplified by the lexical choices the journalists intentionally employ.

This research assumes that *Hespress* news articles about the representation of irregular migration are not realities that can be taken for granted, but are constructed by powerful institutions and agencies, which can influence people's ways of thinking and communicating. Though news institutions stress their news-making professionalism, especially their insistence on news values like truth, reality, objectivity, independence, and accuracy, Fairclough's (1995) offers a valuable social constructionist perspective to explain that it is not the case. Media professionals are working within a certain sociocultural backdrop instead of working in vacuum. Therefore, their coverage of any communicative event is influenced by a specific sociocultural context. As a matter of fact, *Hespress*, as a news institution, articulates mediated messages which do not emerge from a vacuum; instead, they are shaped by a myriad of historical, cultural, ethical, normative, economic, and strategic factors. Accordingly, these articulations or messages should not be taken for granted or at face value; instead, they should be assessed locally and contextually. This means that when analysing social practice, the linguistic and discursive practice are linked to larger cultural and societal frames. It is about how the language relates to what is happening in the world around the discourses. The analysis here aims to clarify the bigger picture of why a text carries certain discourses and how these discourses affect the world around.

When it comes to *Hespress* discourse about irregular migration, the agency, or its editorial staff, tells stories that fulfil their interests and cover or eliminate information that contradict these discourses. It is no accident that the significant emphasis is on the humanitarian representation of the migrants and on how it benefits the system; little, on the other hand, is said about the main causes behind such representations which leaves the reader without important information about the origin of adopting the new migration policy policy.

The historical period contextualising the production of Hespress news texts was characterised by the Moroccan government issuing of the new migration policy in 2013 and it was followed by the implementation of its reforms during the six years of this study. This justifies the positive representation of the issue of irregular migration in Morocco. That is why *Hespress* news articles enclosed pro-migration concerns in which Human Rights theme, Politics theme and Integration theme are very dominant and in which the notions of solidarity, integration, and victimization of the migrants are emphasised.

The following six events provide an important contextual background to the analysis of the pro-migration stance adopted by Hespress editorial team when producing their texts about the issue of irregular migration:

- The contextual background behind the production of the Human Rights theme in Hespress news articles can be attributed to two main historical events:

(i) In 2013 there was the issuing of the new migration policy when the King Mohammed VI officially announced the new plan to adopt a humanitarian approach to migration and asylum called the New Migration Policy. This included the creation of a ministerial department devoted to migration affairs, the launch of a regularization program for undocumented individuals living in Morocco, the distribution of the first round of refugee and asylum seeker cards.

(ii) The year 2018 also saw a very important event which is the adoption of the first-Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Marrakech under the sponsorship of the UN. The agreement was signed by 164 countries outlining the framework to protect irregular migrants' rights and to support the countries accommodating those migrants. The world leaders also shed light on the significance of Morocco's role in managing and supporting a new humanitarian path towards irregular migration.

- For the Politics theme, the contextual explanation behind its dominance in Hespress news articles can be attributed to two main events, which are:

(i) In 2014, the Council of the Moroccan Government started the implementation of the first phase of the new migration policy and, thanks to which, more than 24,000 irregular migrants, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa and Syria, gain a one-year legal status. There was also the adoption of the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum (Stratégie Nationale d'Immigration et d'Asile or SNIA) by the Council of Government. This new approach has improved access to residency cards for undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees within Morocco. The Ministry of Migration has described the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum as a humanitarian and comprehensive policy. The new national integration policy seeks to promote the integration of migrants using a set of tools, at the apex of which is education.

(ii) In 2015, the Moroccan government launched the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum. This was to replace the 2003 law with new policies and procedures to integrate migrants into the Moroccan society. This new policy seeks to guarantee the migrants access to basic services such as education, health care, and labor-market integration. This announcement was considered a turning point in Morocco's human-rights approach to irregular immigrants, mainly sub-Saharan Africans.

- For the Integration theme, the contextual explanation behind its dominance in Hespress news articles can be attributed to two main events, which are:

(i) The year 2016 witnessed the King's visits to Africa in order to secure Morocco rejoin the African Union, offering sizable investments and business deals across the continent. His visits resulted in more than fifty bilateral agreements with African countries making Morocco the second largest African investor in the continent, after South Africa. The same year was marked by the second regularisation process in which over 50,000 refugees and migrants from over 110 countries received residence permits which were to be valid for three years and automatically extended unless offences were committed.

(ii) The year 2017 saw the second regularisation process which granted residence permits to 28,400 migrants by December 31, 2017.

As a genre, news discourse is produced by some big institutions and organizations that have the power to control and shape information in a way that serves their interests. They do that by selecting certain issues and leaving out others, emphasising some issues and downplaying others. That is to say, news producers exhibit high level of power and agency while shaping the discourse and their representation within it. Accordingly, in *Hespress* news articles pro-migration themes are emphasised since there is a high reproduction of Moroccan elites' discourse which advocates the irregular migrants' humanitarian rights. The arguments presented under the pro- migration discourse present the need to recognize migrants' human rights, their political worth, and the interest behind their integration into the Moroccan society. Such representations, however, are often presented through the voices of recognized elite groups. The majority of the news articles were more reliant on government officials, political and human rights sources. Many news articles, for instance, cite or quote the king, the government or journalists support to the new migration reform program. On the other hand, the voices of the irregular migrants are downplayed. In other words, there is an absence of the migrants' voices in *Hespress* news articles. As such, Hespress discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration reinforces a monologic and authorial voice. In other words, *Hespress* news articles' representation deprives the irregular migrants from any agency as it does not allows them any space to express their own opinions or own voices heard which makes *Hespress* presents its own ideological representation regarding the representation of irregular migrants.

Another aspect which can illustrate news production is intertextuality which is the borrowing from other discourses into one's discourse. Intertextuality helps news media organisations to share more information on a particular case and articulate better on their messages by bringing an external voice or content into the context. In *Hespress*' news articles, there is a high level of intertextuality by referring to post-humanitarian and post-colonial notions and concepts. Accordingly, intertextuality helps *Hespress* to

use ideas from post-humanitarian and post-colonial discourses for a better articulation of its ideas. Ideas of victimhood, for instance, are intertextually associated to all the pro-migration themes. The dominant terminologies which prevail in *Hespress* news articles tend to depict the irregular migrants in constant need and subordination to a superior 'Other' which makes this discursive practice draws on the colonial discourses as it deprives the migrants from any agency and shows them as constantly dependent on superiors' help and support.

In fact, in *Hespress* discourse, there is an apparent contrast between a superior Moroccan government and a vulnerable inferior migrant, which is suggested to be intentional to make an impact and inspire action. Besides, there are also some instances in which *Hespress* discourse borrows from the neoliberal discourse by representing the irregular migrants as potential active players to the Moroccan society as they can contribute to the country's economic growth.

Intertextuality also includes reported speech and quotations, which are common features in news articles (Richardson, 2012).

- Tim Cole, the British envoy in charge of migration affairs, praised Morocco's policy in the field of migration and asylum

  أشاد تيم كول، المبعوث البريطاني المكلف بشؤون الهجرة، بسياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة واللجوء)

  /ašād tīm kūl, al-mbʿūṯ al-brīṭānī al-mklf bšuʾūn al-hğrẗ, bsīāsẗ al-mġrb fī mğāl al-hğrẗ wāllğūʾ/).

- Ambarka Bouaida, Minister Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, highlighted Morocco's migration policy.

  أبرزت امبركة بوعيدة، الوزيرة المنتدبة لدى وزير الشؤون الخارجية والتعاون، بالعاصمة الأوروبية بروكسيل، سياسة المغرب في مجال الهجرة)

  /abrzt ambrkẗ būʿīdẗ, al-ūzīrẗ al-mntdbẗ ldi ūzīr al-šuʾūn al-ẖārğīẗ wāltʿāūn, bālʿāṣmẗ al-ʾaūrūbīẗ brūksīl, sīāsẗ al-mġrb fī mğāl al-hğrẗ/).

In *Hespress*' news articles, the quotes which are stated are often by elite groups like important journalists and distinguished political figures. This is also the basis for the argument that these actors could be seen as the ones performing the humanitarian act, which is then communicated by the media to the audience. More examples of quotations from different actors have been seen previously in the text analysis. They all illustrate the fact that actors such as politicians are given a voice but not the migrants. This again can be seen as ideological as it reflects the exercise of hegemony and power.

This critical analysis of the news production has shown that the humanitarian discourse which dominate *Hespress'* news articles operates as a mechanism of social exclusion of the irregular migrants as it reproduces hierarchal power structures in society (Yin, 2005).This confirms the assumption that *Hespress*, as a news agency, has an agenda that reproduces and reflects the discourse of the powerful elite.

3.3.2.2. News consumption

Thanks to *Hespress* interactive format, its readers are able to discuss the content of the published news articles and express their views about them. As an e-newspaper, *Hespress* comes to challenge the traditional news delivery methods in which information is delivered through a top-down or one-to-many communication model that does not include the readers' feedback. In traditional newspapers, the only way readers can express their opinions is to write a letter to the editor with no certainty it would be published or even read. In the interactive newspaper model, however, there are more opportunities for readers to assume more active roles and participation in their news consumption experiences. Nevertheless, despite this interactivity, *Hespress'* news producers are still the ones who control the discussion because they set the topics for the readers to discuss and comment on. In other words, it is the institution of *Hespress* that sets the agenda for the readers by creating the context of discussion. For Manosevitch and Walker (2009) interactivity has enabled the readers to discuss topics in a pre-determined context since the articles they are connected to mark the subject of discussion. Thus, *Hespress* sets the agenda for discussion on different issues, and its readers further discuss those issues and express their different perspectives about them.

The discourse which is identified in *Hespress* readers' comments, which is an anti-migration or problematization discourse creates an opposition and a contrast to the humanitarian discourse which is identified in the news articles. The analysis of *Hespress* readers' comments has revealed that the readers do not accept the humanitarian representation of irregular migrants that was dominating the news articles; instead, they come to reject and challenge the news representations. *Hespress* readers represent the irregular migrants as causing chaos, being connected to crime and, thus, not deserving any help. The readers have often resorted to a lexical paradigm in their comments such as: economic crisis, threat, security, and danger.

This discourse constructs migrants as a threat to Morocco, validating the need for urgent and practical security measures. This problematizing discourse is also characterised by terms such as crisis and disaster, which are the most common words used to describe the situation in of irregular migration in Morocco. Such words have a very strong negative connotation of something which needs to be dealt with urgently; fitting into the securitization theory of threat construction which postulates the need to secure ones' borders from strangers. This creates an even stronger image of migrants as a security danger issue. In other words, in the readers' comments, irregular migration is referred to as a crisis and a problem; legitimizing the emergency measures that should be taken by those who are responsible.

These negative representations are also framed by describing the increased number of irregular migrants as an invasion of Morocco. They are frequently constructed as a different 'Other' who threatens and abuses Morocco's stability. That is to say, they are depicted as people against whom one's own identity can be defined, and against whom one's social practices, conventions, customs, values and beliefs can be contrasted. Consequently, the Moroccan culture and the culture of the irregular migrants are depicted as being too different to co-exist in one society. The fear from a different culture, a different religion and sets of values is clearly expressed and cultural misunderstandings will inevitably lead to collisions and negative outcomes.

Such discourse justifies and legitimizes the need to protect 'Ourselves' from the threat of the irregular migrant causing to the country. Therefore, it can be argued that the discourses drawn on here construct a battle of 'Us versus Them' via the representations of culture clash between locals and migrants. The lexis that dominates the readers' comments is: theft, illegal, dirt, garbage, delinquent, Moroccan identity, rape, burglary, begging, violence, crime, threat to security, beggars, pickpockets, fearful criminals, a threat which needs to be controlled, carriers of the HIV and AIDS disease and swine flu, Ebola, attack, suspicious, disturbance, uninvited outsider, different culture, black, and Christians. The extracts from *Hespress* readers' comments are instances of such negative representations which dehumanise irregular migrants as they completely consider them as a different 'Other'.

The contextual background behind *Hespress* readers' negative attitude towards the new migration policy can be attributed to the Moroccan socio-economic sectors which suffer from serious problems. Morocco suffers from significant regional disparities, a poor educational system and high unemployment rates, especially among young Moroccans and even degree holders. Besides, the socio-economic deprivation and the lack of opportunities are key drives not to accept the new migration policy. There is also a big shortage of secure jobs in the formal employment sector which represents a key challenge to Morocco's economic growth which can carry the risk of breeding social unrest.

According to a study conducted by Labour Market Situation in 2015[28], graduate youth have come to represent a burden on employment policies with the unemployment rate among this category standing at over 20%. There is particularly high unemployment among degree holders: the rate stood at 4.1% among non-degree holders in 2014, as against 17.3% among degree holders. As to the rate of the employed active population without degrees, it stood at 61.2%, that of those with secondary level degrees standing at 11.6%, while those with a tertiary level degree not exceeding

[28]- Memorandum on "Labour Market Situation in 2015" (Publications of the Higher Commissionership for Planning)

11.6%. For poverty rates, the World Bank has confirmed that poverty rates are high in Morocco. It highlighted geographical disparities, as poverty was three times higher in rural areas than in urban areas, and 80% of the poor in rural areas have no opportunity to access paid work. Morocco Poverty Map reveals that the wealth of certain regions did not help reduce poverty in them.

Overall, as an interactive newspaper, *Hespress* represents the issue of irregular migration from two perspectives: top-down or institutionally official produced discourse (news articles) and bottom-up or social media discourse (readers' comments). For KhosraviNik (2017), the interactive communication paradigm of e-newspapers affords a convergence space through which readers are both the consumers and producers of media content which causes blurred boundaries between grassroots bottom-up and top-down institutional discursive content. The participatory nature e-newspapers dissolves the traditional passive role displayed by (traditional) news consumers that was once proclaimed by the pro-typical transmission linear or one-to-many model of communication (Shannon & Weaver, 1949); to an interactive many-to-many model of communication depending on the prosumers (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010) who actively and powerfully engage in mediated meaning-making. Accordingly, *Hespress* interactivity has allowed its readers to challenge the main premises of the news producers. There is a struggle of meaning which is reflected through contradictory discourses of the journalists' humanitarian discourse versus the readers' problematizing discourse.

3.3.3. Social level

The final part of the analysis focuses on the third dimension of Fairclough's model, social practice. Social practice refers to the wider economic, political, and cultural context in which the communicative event is happening (Fairclough, 1995). This is an explanation phase which is concerned with the relationship between the interaction and its social context. At this level, Fairclough discusses discourse within a view of ideology and hegemony. He stresses that ideology contributes to the construction of reality including social relations, social identities, and the physical world through

discursive practices, which play a significant role in producing, reproducing, or transforming relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough's framework for sociocultural practice analysis is an extension of Foucault's thoughts about the constitutive role of discourse in the construction of society and knowledge. One of its constructive effects is that it constructs social entities and relations by contributing to "the construction of systems of knowledge and belief" (Fairclough, 1992b, p. 64), and consequently, influence ways of thinking and behaving (Hall, 1992). The underlying dynamism is that the rules and practices of a discourse can make certain knowledge possible. Therefore, the sociocultural practice analysis focuses on the rules and conventions in the society around the communicative event in question.

Therefore, for the analysis of this dimension to be successful, it is important that the analyst brings cultural or social science theories in to assist in understanding how discourse can change society and vice versa. Fairclough (1995) mentions three aspects that enter into sociocultural practice; economic, political and cultural as they involve understanding power relations and hegemony. In this research, the most obvious influence came from the Moroccan government whose guidance and policies act as the driving force of *Hespress* journalistic constructions and discourse.

In fact, geopolitical dynamics are an important backdrop to the formulation of Morocco's migration policy. Two main aspects in particular, as already stated in the literature chapter, have shaped the new migration policy context: Morocco's relationship with the EU and its relationship with other African states. So, the primary purpose of Morocco's migration agenda appears to be oriented towards achieving specific foreign geopolitical objectives. These geopolitical objectives promote Morocco's development through wide-ranging economic and political gains with Europe and Africa. According to Teevan (2019), Morocco has long sought a strong relationship with Europe. The EU continues to hold a substantial economic importance to Morocco. Morocco's relationship with the EU has become one of the most developed of all the EU's southern partners; it includes the establishment of a Free Trade Area in 2000, the first attainment of advanced status among southern partners in the European

Neighbourhood Policy in 2008 and on-going negotiations to establish a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. The economic benefits of the EU relationship are significant for Morocco (Teevan, 2019). Similarly, as the closest African country to Europe, Morocco's geographical location on the border between the two continents has given it significant geopolitical leverage with the EU especially with Spain (Lahlou, 2015) and migration is a key component of that relationship. In principle, a policy aiming to integrate migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and other neighbouring countries into Morocco could serve Europe's wider policy objectives to better manage and reduce irregular migration at its borders by providing opportunities and incentives for migrants to stay in Morocco. For this reason, European partners have provided significant funding to implement the SNIA (Stratégie Nationale d'Immigration et d'Asile).

For its relations with the African countries, Morocco has a deep but complex relationship with its North African and sub-Saharan African neighbours (Messari, 2018). It was a founding member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the African Union's (AU) predecessor. However, Morocco withdrew from the OAU in 1984 due to the territorial dispute over the Moroccan Sahara. The Moroccan Sahara dispute has been a problem on Moroccan diplomatic relations, leading not only to the country's isolation from the AU, but also impeding progress on the development of an Arab Maghreb Union. Accordingly, the adoption of the new migration policy in 2013 comes as a consequence to key geopolitical concerns and political priorities of Morocco in the region. The new migration policy framework is a key pillar of an evolving narrative of economic growth in a broad sense, as well as being part of an ambition to play an increasingly strategic role as a trusted partner and interlocutor in the region. Morocco is presented as a destination country that attracts welcomes and integrates migrants from across the African continent.

The essential social practice that this phase of the research needs to consider is Morocco's humanitarian approach towards irregular migration. The real intention of 'helping' the vulnerable migrants has to be put in its social context to scrutinize whether solidarity is practised for the sake of humanity or is driven by other ideological

interests. As Beaglehole (2013) explained, irregular migrants were historically chosen in relation to their skills, education, and how well they would assimilate into the host society. However, the representation of refugees in terms of what they are worth or what they will eventually pay back to the host country can have the risk of becoming more about how the country could benefit, rather than about the very people who are at the heart of the argument.

From a critical perspective, the Human Rights theme that predominates Hespress' news articles holds ideological propositions and hegemonic functions and work as mechanisms of power and control. The humanitarian narratives about irregular migration do not mirror the situation of every single migrant and contradict in many ways the original principles of the universal law of human rights. Therefore, with the presence of the humanitarian thematic content in Hespress news articles, there seems to be no editorial parameter filtering out content perpetuating a hegemonic discursive representation in which the irregular migrants are passive victims waiting for others' mercy and help. For Johnson (2011), humanitarian discourse is used by elite groups in order to justify their interventions. That is to say, embedded in the humanitarian discourse are mechanisms of victimisation that deprive irregular migrants of agency and construct them as simple suffering objects, mute, helpless victims rather than specific persons. Hence, by presenting irregular migrants as desperately dependent on the humanitarian intervention and donations of others, humanitarian narratives are a way of mobilising public support. The use of pro-migration themes in *Hespress* news articles when representing the issue of irregular migration sounds very humanitarian; however, these types of humanitarian discourses are hegemonic and function as a mechanism of power and control "in which only certain things could be said or imagined", resulting in a "regime of representation" that dismisses alternative worldviews (Escobar, 1995, p. 39). Over the history of migration discourse as the literature informs, there stands prominent humanitarian and victim narratives and in which it is a moral responsibility to help poor and suffering others (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Calhoun, 2010). In other words, when representing the irregular migrants as hopeless, desperate, victims there is

the silencing of the voices of those being represented (Malkki, 1996). According to Yin (2005), humanitarian discourse operates as a mechanism of social exclusion of the irregular migrants as it reproduces hierarchal power structures in society.

In fact, *Hespress'* humanitarian discourse helps to construct a particular social knowledge about the irregular migrants, based on processes of dominance and resistance, where power is clearly ascribed to those on the donating and helping side, while those on the receiving side are disempowered. Within Hespress humanitarian discourse which has created this social knowledge, irregular migrants are not individuals, but masses of people without personal histories, stories and reasons for exile (Johnson, 2011). While this discourse helps policymakers to manage the fear of instability posed by the presence of the irregular migrants, it also controls the agency of the migrants. These representations carry the danger of dehumanising irregular migrants by representing them as suffering objects without their own will or rights other than those afforded to them as refugees. Thus, irregular migrants become an abstract figure without a story whose personal experience becomes devalued (Johnson, 2011).

Overall, the analysis of the internal micro-level properties of *Hespress* discourse and its external macro-level properties has revealed that the way the texts were written seems to portray unequal power relations that exist between the news producers and the irregular migrants. It has been shown that Morocco's migration policy is guided by some geopolitical considerations rather than humanitarian ones. That is to say, Morocco's geopolitical interests have led to the adoption of the new migration policy. This is evident when the texts emphasise the Moroccan government's commitment to help the irregular migrants. Therefore, the Moroccan government is represented as the active performer of the execution of the new migration policy. This is how *Hespress* discourse reaffirms dominant Moroccan elite views and discourses concerning migration by reproducing the government's humanitarian approach to irregular migration. In a similar context, Wetherell and Potter's (1992) argue that although discursive resources such as human rights, democracy, egalitarianism and equality have been utilised in pro-migration discourse, they are also successfully

deployed to support arguments whose effects are undemocratic. They found that these arguments are used by participants without further explanation of the real reasons behind adopting certain policies. In other words, the real reasons behind adopting the new migration policy are not plainly mentioned. In other words, the analysis of the pro-migration themes in *Hespress* news articles has revealed that despite the good intentions of integrating the migrants into the Moroccan society, such discourses can lead up to marginalising those who seek the support. Irregular migrants may be recognised as human beings in the newspaper discourse, but their humanity and agency are undermined by the very fact of others speaking for them (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). They are reduced to people who are passive and are thereby categorized as a sort of passive entity who do not have any influence on their own integration in Moroccan society. Such discourse also denotes the fact that irregular migrants are deprived from their individual and personal desire to verbalize their will.

The narrative raised by the *Hespress'* readers has reflected the socio-economic problems Morocco suffers from as their contextual background. Therefore, they refused the new migration policy and its reforms which, according to them, will worsen the situation in Morocco. The readers also consider the new migration policy as largely driven by geopolitical factors that serve the interests of the most powerful and influential members of the country. To express their opposition to the integration of the migrants into the Moroccan society, the readers stressed on the dichotomy between 'Us' and 'Them' and made reference to how each group contradicts the other. The extracts from *Hespress* readers' comments also hold hegemonic language and negative implications over the irregular migrants as a minority groups with a different culture (Said, 2003). The previous examples from the readers' comments data are all instances which dehumanise the irregular migrants by considering them as a different and dangerous 'Other'. That is to say, the migrants are depicted as people against which one's own identity can be defined, and against which one's social practices, conventions and customs, values and beliefs can be contrasted. Such representations reveal that the news producers and news readers work as the primary actors or performers, whereas the

irregular migrants are the passive beneficiaries. From a critical perspective, it can be argued that *Hespress*' discursive representations create stereotypical and ideological messages about the issue of irregular migration. *Hespress* discourse focuses on the point of view of the authorities, political institutions and elite groups. Their voices receive huge attention and are predominantly presented as active participants in the debate. They can thus advance their migration views which are evident in the prevalence of the elites' political response and policy themes. Thus, the manner of reporting exposes how *Hespress* uses certain themes to represent the irregular migrants without considering their different ideological and stereotypical meanings

Conclusion

Like other newspapers, *Hespress* has an important role in communicating information and shaping images to the world. Insights gained from this quantitative and qualitative analyses of *Hespress* indicate that *Hespress* news articles tend to cover the issue of irregular migration in a positive way while its readers have a more negative depiction of it. At the textual level, *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments have resorted to specific lexis to represent the irregular migrants. The news articles have referenced to irregular migrants in terms of their victimhood, vulnerability and human rights. *Hespress*' readers, on the other hand, refer to the minority group from an anti-migration perspective by endowing them with negative descriptions as violence and criminality. Having analysed how *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments link migration to victimization and problematization in the textual, discursive and social context within which this occurs, it is important to discuss some implications of the results which will be the aim of the next chapter where recommendations for future research directions are also highlighted.

Chapter Four

Discussion and Implications

Introduction

The purpose of this critical study is to examine the representation of irregular migration in the news articles and readers' comments on one of the most prominent Moroccan e-newspapers, *Hespress*. Therefore, this chapter includes a discussion of the main findings related to how *Hespress* and its readers represent the phenomenon. In so doing, this chapter aims to consider the main objectives and research questions that are introduced in Chapter One. The research hypotheses will also be tested. The chapter will also identify some limitations of the study and recommend further areas for research. Lastly, some final remarks will be made to highlight how this research has gone a step further with irregular migration research, e-newspaper communication, and critical discourse scholarship, especially in the Moroccan context.

4.1. Discussion

This research has addressed a notable gap in the literature about how the Moroccan e-newspaper, *Hespress*, represents the issue of irregular migration in Morocco during the timeframe under study, September 9, 2013 - December 11, 2018. In the previous chapter, it has been demonstrated that two contrasting discourses have prevailed in *Hespress* news articles and their corresponding readers' comments when representing the issue of irregular migration. The pro-migration (victimization) discourse is very dominant in *Hespress* news articles as the news producers have resorted to a humanitarian lexis that depicts the migrants as victims and vulnerable people who deserve humanitarian help. In the readers' comments, however, an anti-migration (problematization) stance is made evident. In their discourse, the readers are highly critical of *Hespress* news representation about the issue of irregular migration, voicing a wide range of concerns about the problematic consequences of integrating the migrants into the Moroccan society.

Therefore, this section discusses the general aspects of these research findings. In keeping with the study's critical agenda which intends to deconstruct *Hespress* discourse, the present study explores the presence of ideologies and unequal power

relations that reside in its discourse when representing the issue of irregular migration. Besides, this study also aims to find out whether *Hespress*' readers confirm or challenge the journalists' main premises.

4.1.1. Review of research objectives

This study's overarching objective, which is related to the originality of this research, is an attempt to explore the way *Hespress*' news articles and their corresponding readers' comments represent the issue of irregular migration in Morocco. On the whole, while recognising the limitations of this study, this research has successfully achieved its objectives that were set at the beginning of this study which are:

O. 1. To identify the dominant thematic patterns which are used in *Hespress* news articles and their readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration.

O. 2. To describe the frequency of the recurrent themes about the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments.

O. 3. To reveal the underlying ideologies that reside in *Hespress*' discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration and explain how they relate to the wider social context.

Acknowledging the limitation of this study, this research, however, has successfully achieved its objectives. For the first objective, the identification of the thematic patterns which are used to represent the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments was realised thanks to the thematic analysis. Accordingly, two overarching themes, pro-migration and anti-migration themes, were identified. Each overarching theme has its corresponding three themes which are used in the construction of irregular migrants' identity. The themes Human Rights, Politics, and Integration were identified as the predominant themes in *Hespress* news articles. The themes of Blaming the Government, Economic Burden and the Threat theme, however, were identified to be dominant in the readers' comments.

For the second objective, the quantitative content analysis of the emergent themes in *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments helped this objective to be met by quantitatively describing the frequency rates of the themes.

The third objective was also achieved thanks to CDA which helped in revealing the underlying ideologies that reside in *Hespress*' discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration and explaining how they relate to the wider social context. Indeed, Fairclough's three-dimensional framework has shown that the analysis of the internal micro-level and the external macro-level properties of *Hespress* discourse embody ideological and unequal power relations that exist between the news producers and the irregular migrants. It has also been shown that Morocco's migration policy is guided by some geopolitical considerations rather than victimization (pro-migration) or problematization (anti-migration) ones. In what follows is the discussion of the general aspect of the research findings.

4.1.2. Discussion of the research findings

The analysis of the present study has led to three main findings. The findings of the thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) have led to the identification of two overarching themes: pro-migration (victimization) themes and anti-migration (problematization) themes. Each overarching theme has its corresponding three themes which are used in the construction of irregular migrants' identity in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. The themes of Human Rights, Politics, and Integration are dominant in *Hespress* news articles. The themes of Blaming the Government, Economic Burden and the Threat theme, however, are recurrent in the readers' comments.

The findings provided by the quantitative content analysis throughout the description of the frequency rating of the thematic patterns have reflected the opposing concerns underlying *Hespress*' news producers and readers' comments. The analysis has shown that Hespress' journalists and its readers hold different attitudes and perceptions about the irregular migration issue in Morocco. It has also been shown that

the themes that have reached the highest frequency rates during the studied timeframe are the Human Rights theme in *Hespress* news articles and Blaming the Government theme in the readers' comments.

The finding of Fairclough's (1992) CDA framework has shown that the analysis of the internal micro-level properties of *Hespress* discourse and its external macro-level properties portray ideological and unequal power relations that exist between the news producers and the irregular migrants. It has also been shown that Morocco's migration policy is guided by some geopolitical considerations rather than victimatization or problematization ones. This is evident when the texts emphasise the Moroccan government's commitment to help the irregular migrants. That is why the Moroccan government is represented as the active performer of the execution of the new migration policy. As such, *Hespress* discourse reaffirms dominant Moroccan elite views and discourses concerning migration by reproducing the government's humanitarian approach towards irregular migration. *Hespress* humanitarian representation focuses only on the notion of solidarity while neglecting to explain the main causes behind such representations which leaves the reader without important information about the origin of the new migration policy adoption. Without revealing the complexity of their situation, the irregular migrants are depicted as needful, helpless victims without agency, while Morocco is inserted in the role of a saviour or a lifesaving agent.

4.1.2.1. Research questions

Using a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative approaches, this study sets out to answer the research questions that have guided this study. The responses to the three research questions are:

Q. 1. Which dominant themes are used in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration?

This question examines the dominant thematic choices that characterise *Hespress* news articles and their corresponding readers' comments in their depiction of

irregular migration during the studied time frame, September 9, 2013 - December 11, 2018. The findings of the data analysis have shown that the adoption of the new migration policy in 2013 by the Moroccan government has led to the emergence of two primary migration discourses among *Hespress* news producers and readers: a humanitarian (pro-migration) discourse and a securitization (anti-migration) discourse. The news producers have expressed a commitment to solidarity through their humanitarian discourse while the readers have described the challenges and problems caused by the presence of the irregular migrants in Morocco.

Following the thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), there was the identification of the attendance of three main themes within *Hespress* news articles and three other main themes in its readers' comments. In *Hespress*' news articles, a positive attitude towards the new migration policy has been expressed through the predominance of pro-migration themes. The themes that dominated the news articles narratives are: the Human Rights Theme, the Politics Theme, and the Integration Theme. As already mentioned, within this discourse, the recurrent lexis is: humanity, solidarity, integration, victim, benefit, and deserving. The readers' comments, however, voiced a negative attitude about the new migration reforms by emphasising anti-migration themes. The themes that dominated the readers' comments are: Blaming the Government Theme, the Economic Burden Theme and the Threat Theme. The narratives of the readers' comments are dominated by lexicon like: threat, burden, problem, crisis, different 'other', unwanted invaders, and crime.

In general, both *Hespress* journalists and readers have chosen different and opposing lexical repertoires when voicing their perspectives about irregular migration during the studied time frame. It was found that by using different themes and wording, *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments communicate very differently about irregular migration. The victimization discourse in the news articles has remained the same and the same is true with the problematization discourse in the readers' comments which have not shown any change during the same period.

Q. 2. With what intensity do the irregular migration themes occur in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

The quantitative statistical analysis carried out to answer this research question has revealed that the sampled news articles were dominated by a victimization (pro-migration) discourse in which out of the total sampled themes (N=1682) populating the 36 news articles from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018, the theme that has the highest frequency is the Human Rights theme with 43.18% (N=703) rates, followed by the Politics theme with 34.03% (N=554) rates and then the Integration theme with 22.78% (N=371) rates. The dominating discourse in the readers' comments, however, was a problematization (anti-migration) one in which out of the 360 sampled themes populating the readers' comments, it has been shown that *Hespress* readers' comments on irregular migration have mainly focused on Blaming the Government theme with 40.55% (N=146) rates, the Economic Burden had 31.38% (N=113) rates, and the Threat theme showed 28.05% (N=101) rates.

Another finding about *Hespress*' interactivity which is about whether its readers assume or not any of the core journalistic functions regarding news production like: setting the news agenda, intervening in the gatekeeping function by providing original, unreported information. What was found is that Hespress' readers often challenge the journalistic viewpoints and, consequently, they air oppositional views. In this context, however, *Hespress*' editorial team is still the one to steer and guide audience's participation because they effectively tell them what to discuss about. As Reich (2011, p. 98) notes, "comments leave the journalist in the traditional position of the lead singer, while audience members generally play the minor, faceless and reactive role of the chorus".

Similarly, very few readers use comments as channels to provide original information about reported news. Rather, readers tend to limit themselves to expressing their opinions on public issues, without interfering with the core journalistic functions. This finding confirms previous studies which show that most readers have not yet assumed new roles, apart from the ones they had before the emergence of digital media

(Neuberger & Nuernbergk, 2010). It is evident, then, that this type of audience participation is not rendering audiences co-producers of news content in significant ways. The potential implications of this question is that *Hespress*' commentary sections have allowed its readers to react to the representations and categorizations provided by *Hespress*' journalists which means that professional news no longer have a monopoly over the production of meaning for public issues but they blend with readers' perspectives in new hybrid texts.

Q. 3. To what extent does *Hespress* discursive representation of the irregular migration issue align with Morocco's geopolitical agendas?

Using Fairclough's three dimensional framework of analysis, it has been shown that *Hespress*' news articles which hold a pro-migration approach towards the issue of irregular migration are ideologically driven. It has been shown that such discourse is purposefully used with the aim of enhancing Morocco's geopolitical agenda. Irregular migrants can thus be seen as positively portrayed for Morocco's geopolitical interests, mainly with the EU and AU. In fact, the Moroccan authorities set irregular migration in their agenda at the beginning of the twentieth century in response to a constraining regional context. After some years of relative isolation both from its European and its African neighbours, Morocco seized the opportunity of an increased European interest in irregular migration control to re-establish its regional position.

For Bensaad (2005), the Maghreb states, after having refused to talk about this topic, now highlight the strong presence of migrants on their territory, as well as their proximity with Europe, out of a desire to assert migration as a 'geographical rent. Irregular migration thus became a crucial topic for Morocco's diplomacy of migrations and reciprocally, geopolitical considerations were, from the very beginning on, an essential factor in Morocco's policy decisions on irregular migration. For Benjelloun (2017), the new migration policy launched in 2013 emerged from three Moroccan geopolitical considerations which are Morocco's ambition to rejoin the African Union in order to exert influence across the continent and to find solutions to the Moroccan Sahara issue, Morocco's desire to maintain closeness with Europe, and to establish itself

as a global player in migration issues in the various international cooperation frameworks.

Therefore, it can be argued that *Hespress*' editorial team has strategically and purposefully aligned with the pro-migration agenda by reproducing the Moroccan government discourse about the issue of irregular migration. This justifies the interconnectedness between Morocco's geopolitical agenda which is behind the issuing of the migration policy and the positive representation predominating *Hespress* news articles. Analyzing *Hespress* humanitarian coverage of irregular migration in Morocco from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018 has shown that the newspaper largely adopts the government's positive and humanitarian rhetoric regarding the phenomenon. This indicates that *Hespress* discourse does not challenge the Moroccan government discourse; instead, the e-newspaper reproduces the same discourse. By adopting the government discourse, *Hespress*, ultimately, reproduces unequal power relations and helps to win consent of its readers through the normalization of its representation. For instance, by quoting and reporting on prominent political figures and elite groups, it is emphasised that the hegemonic majority determines how those in the minority are depicted. As such, the hegemonic majority continues to silence the minority and this finding confirms Connell's (1980) argument that impartiality of news media is a myth and that any representation by news media is to a certain point biased.

4.1.2.2. Hypotheses Testing

Based on the review of the literature, this study predicted that *Hespress* representations of the issue of irregular migration are ideologically shaped as nothing is innocent in news discourse (Fowler, 1991).

The main hypothesis addressed in this thesis stipulates that:

- *Hespress* news articles produce a humanitarian discourse to represent the irregular migration issue while there is a negative stand in the readers' comments.

Relying on the qualitative and quantitative data previously described, it is observed that *Hespress* news articles produce a humanitarian discourse to represent the

irregular migration issue while there is a negative stand in the readers' comments. The analysis of the textual and contextual factors affecting the implementation of the new migration policy has shown that *Hespress* representation of the issue of irregular migration is guided by some Moroccan geopolitical considerations. In such climate, Morocco adopted the new migration policy 2013 which holds a humanitarian approach that focuses on communication strategies to persuade the general public into accepting the inclusion of the migrants into the Moroccan society which was presented as 'humanist, global and coherent' (MCMREAM, 2016). On the other hand, *Hespress'* readers represent the issue of irregular migration as very problematic as the migrants are being connected to crime and causing chaos.

So, the findings support the main hypothesis, and corroborate the theories advanced in the theoretical background concerning the ideological assumptions of news discourse. This finding confirms the theory of CDA that news media readers are not simply "passive vessels or sponges, absorbing an ideology which the source of the text imposed on them" but that "there is every reason to propose that being a reader is an active, creative practice" (Fowler, 1991, p. 43). This finding has also confirmed the greater attention which has lately been given to online news media users, especially the role of the reader in the construction of news events (McEnery et al., 2015). O'Keeffe (2011) similarly notes that "the reader is no longer reading an article in protracted isolation; s/he can comment on it via a website, email it to a friend, post it on a social network for others to discuss it" (p. 450).

H. 1. The dominant themes in *Hespress* news articles are Human Rights, Politics theme, and Integration while Blaming the Government, Economic Burden and Threat themes are dominant in the readers' comments.

When conducting the thematic analysis to identify the main recurrent themes in the data, it was found that the dominant themes in *Hespress* news articles are Human Rights theme, Politics theme, and Integration theme while Blaming the Government theme, Economic Burden theme and the Threat theme are dominant in the readers' comments. According to this result, the sub-hypothesis one is supported. The analysis

of the readers' comments has demonstrated that the readers challenge and resist the news articles' main premises. Also, while *Hespress* news articles have positioned the Moroccan government in a positive and powerful position, it has been made evident that the readers' comments did not reproduce these representations, signalling their dissatisfaction with the government irresponsibility. This finding demonstrates that e-newspapers' readers are active participants in the interactive communication who can oppose dominant ideologies and hegemonic agendas by representing a range of perspectives.

This finding also supports the Active Audience Theory's postulation that the audience are very active rather than passive in their information reception and that the meaning of a text is not inherent within the text itself; instead, it is created within the relationship between the text and the reader. For Hall (1973), readers to a minor extent accept the preferred meaning by the encoder. They generally resist and modify the content in a way that reflects their own experiences and interests has been clearly revealed in this study as earlier discussed under literature review. He also argues that a 'text' is not simply passively accepted by the audience, but that the reader or viewer interprets the meanings of the text and reacts to it based on his or her individual cultural background and life experiences. Therefore, despite the fact that *Hespress* journalists reported the news in a certain way, its readers have chosen to interpret and react to the news based on their own preconceived or biased convictions.

H. 2. Human Rights theme has the highest frequency in the news articles while Blaming the Government theme has the highest frequency in the readers' comments.

This hypothesis is tested in the light of the results arrived at in the quantitative data analysis concerning the frequency rate of each theme. The results indicate that the theme that has the highest frequency is the Human Rights theme with 43.18% (N=703) rates. This theme stresses that humanitarian measures such as protecting the irregular migrants and providing them with the necessary rights should be adopted. For the readers' comments, on the other hand, the dominating discourse was a negative one in which it has been shown that Blaming the Government theme has the highest frequency

rates with 40.55% (N=146). This theme has emphasised the problematic consequences of adopting the new migration policy be the government. This statistical analysis has shown that *Hespress*' readers are calling for defensive measures such as sending the irregular migrants back. The readers openly took an anti-migration stance where emotions of anger and frustration were evident. Hence, the second hypothesis is supported by the reported data.

This finding also fits in the Active Audience Theory which explains how active readers of e-newspapers are using new technologies and applications like the Internet not only to receive messages, but also to reflect on the received messages and react on them. Accordingly, the readers can challenge the journalists' main premises by expressing their personal attitudes and beliefs regarding the news they read. Therefore, the readers are more concerned with what they do with the media rather than what the media does to them (Anaeto et al., 2008).

H. 3. *Hespress* pro-migration representation of the irregular migration issue aligns with Morocco's geopolitical agenda.

After using Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework of CDA and analyzing *Hespress* text and context, it has been shown that Hespress representation to the issue of irregular migration is ideologically shaped and that it serves some geopolitical interests of its producers. So this sub-hypothesis, which was advocated by several scholars and theories cited in the literature review (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008; Halliday, 1970; Boyd, 2018) who stress on the ideological aspect of news discourse, is supported by the critical analysis of Hespress news discourse.

This finding fits into the social constructivism theory which looks at human actions and interactions as purposefully constructed in a given context (Greene, 2000), which means that the world is socially constructed to serve an interest, most often that of the ruling elites (Smith, 2001). By considering that migration discourse as one that is socially constructed to serve a purpose, and not as a natural social arrangement, it is possible to identify common ideologies in the discourse surrounding irregular migrants.

Similarly, Cornwall (2007, p. 471) suggests that "words make worlds" emphasising the power of language in constructing and creating a particular truth and reality. Social constructivism theory enables the researcher to explore the relationship between language, people and places in order to highlight the socio-political-cultural norms that shape discursive constructions of others such as irregular migrants in this study. This hegemonic worldview, Escobar (1995) argues, functions as a mechanism of power and control "in which only certain things could be said or imagined" (p. 39); that is to say, representing irregular migrants as only victims or threats neglects alternative points of view in the process.

The findings also confirm CDA theory that there is no arbitrariness in signs (Fairclough, 1995) and that nothing is innocent in news discourse which is, instead, highly ideological. Critical discourse analysts argue that language is a system of options and choices and that everything that is said or not said is done for a reason and quite often this reason is power. Johns-tone (2002, p. 45) similarly argues that "linguistic choices are strategic, in the sense that every utterance has an epistemological agenda, a way of seeing the world that is favoured via that choice and not others" and it is through these choices about lexical choice, genre, style, and grammar that ways of thinking "can be manipulated". By taking a critical approach to ideology, a researcher accepts that ideology produced via discourse is a method "through which social relations of power are reproduced" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 17). For van Dijk (1998, p.8) ideologies are the basis of "the social representations shared by members of a group"; they are systems of ideas that are influenced by complex relationships between cognition, society and discourse (1998, p. 5). For him, ideas are psychological but also social, cultural and political and so their "social representations and their function for social cognition" (van Dijk, 1998, p. 6) also need to be investigated.

To conclude, it is reasonable to argue that all the hypotheses addressed in the introduction of this thesis, and theoretically shaped and corroborated by the literature review, are entirely supported by the reported data.

4.1.3. Discussion of methodological contribution of the study

This is the first time that *Hespress* news articles and their corresponding readers' comments on the representation of the issue of irregular migration in Morocco from 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018 are critically analysed. The triangulation or merging of quantitative content analysis and qualitative methodologies such as thematic analysis and CDA are important research approaches which have been combined in this study in order to better understand the complex nature of this research problem and answer the research questions. In addition to that, the use of Fairclough's three dimensional framework, a variant of CDA, is helpful as it pays particular attention to the textual and contextual levels of news production and consumption in a critical way. Such a theoretical framework has broadened and opened up more space for multiple realities about irregular migration representation. This research, therefore, adds to the scholarly knowledge of irregular migration in the Moroccan context especially in terms of how they are represented on e-newspapers.

By combining quantitative and qualitative methods to approach the research questions, this study has got a powerful analytical framework as it benefits from both approaches. Additionally, because of the complex nature of this study, one individual method would be insufficient to answer the research questions and analyse the findings. Therefore, the triangulation of the three methods is adopted in order benefit from the strong points of each method and to mitigate the weaknesses in the individual methods. This triangulation also gives quality to this research by further raising the degree of validity and reliability. Thus, the combination of the three methods allows the two research approaches, qualitative and quantitative, to complement each other which helps the researcher to benefit from the advantages of both methods (Creswell, 2009).

Being of exploratory and interpretive aims, this research is an opportunity for future research in terms of theory and practice. It recommends that more research is needed to refine and elaborate on the issue of irregular migration representation by e-newspapers.

4.2. Implications of the study

From the previous discussions, some conclusions and implications can now be drawn. In fact, this study provides a pioneering work on interactive newspapers' discourse, production and consumption, representing irregular migration in the Moroccan context. For Boyd (2018), a plethora of research has tried to sketch the representations of irregular migration in the e-newspaper, but audience interpretations have been relatively invisible in those studies. Studies like those carried out by Cotter (2010) and Bell and Garrett (1998) have revealed that the discursive processes involved in news production and consumption have not attracted as much attention as news production by itself. As a consequence, this study comes to tackle this weakness.

An important implication of this qualitative research is its "rich learning" (O'Leary, 2014, p. 61) which deepens one's understanding of social issues (irregular migration representation) in a particular context (Moroccan e-newspapers). Similarly, the strength of CDA lies in its eclectic interdisciplinary nature and its ability to create new innovative approaches to discourse analysis to better understand the social world. Indeed, the themes that have emerged from both *Hespress* news articles and their corresponding readers' comments provide rich learning and insights into e-newspapers' representations of the issue of irregular migration. This will contribute to the academic debate on the quality of the socio-cultural knowledge being circulated by the most prominent Moroccan e-newspaper, Hespress.

Another important implication of this study is that *Hespress* discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration highlights unequal power relations between the elites who are doing the representation (*Hespress* journalists and politicians) and those being represented (the irregular migrants). For instance, the lexical tools used to define this social relation embody non-balanced power relations between the irregular migrants and *Hespress* as a news organization which only emphasizes the case of the suffering and the roles associated with it and it masks the processes responsible for this issue. This highlights the bias that exists in *Hespress*' representations which confirms Connell (1980)'s appellation that the impartiality of

news media is widely considered a myth. That is to say, any representation by news media is to a certain point biased as it supports institutions, reproduces power relations, and has ideological effects in one way or another (Parker, 1992). This finding confirm previous studies such as the ones conducted by scholars like Althusser (1971), Hall (1982), Fairclough (2006) and van Dijk (2000) and which postulate that news discourse includes opinions, attitudes and not only facts; news discourse is ideological and influenced by political, economic and social contexts.

Accordingly, aspects of latent ideological propositions that reside in *Hespress* discourse were deconstructed through critically analysing the different thematic patterns which have mostly focused on the lexical representation of irregular migrants. By offering a detailed analysis of pro- and anti- migration themes, this research sought to invest in the avails of thematic analysis by bringing the identified recurrent themes to assess how ideological propositions reside in the journalistic constructions of the thematic content. *Hespress*' humanitarian depiction of the irregular migrants can have just as damaging an impact as it limits all their personal potentials. By describing the Moroccan government as a saviour and the migrants as victims and not giving them voice, *Hespress* turns into an oppressor by removing the agency and humanity from the irregular migrants. Therefore, this deconstruction of *Hespress* discourse has enabled one to move away from reductionist conclusions which see a causal relationship between the presence of e-newspapers and their use for public participation. It was found that *Hespress* news discourse, production and consumption, is a site of ideological struggle where power imbalances of different interests converged on the platform in an attempt to shape the discussion in a manner that supports certain ideological interests and geopolitical agendas.

It has also been found that *Hespress* journalists use linguistic strategies that subordinate the irregular migrants to the Moroccan aid by showing them as passive people who constantly depend on others' help. It has been argued that this type of representation may have multiple risks. Depicting the irregular migrants as constantly dependent on Morocco's help makes their ability to self-reliance and agency blurred.

Besides, showing their dependence on the support of Morocco reinforces unequal power relations and thus promotes an image that subordinates the migrants to Morocco. Another risk associated with the portrayal of vulnerable and needy migrants is that it constructs the feeling of responsibility that can be associated with the feeling of superiority which leads again to unequal power relations. Besides, communicating humanitarian and solidarity discourses emphasises the help and support provided by Morocco and constructs the image of the saviour of the migrants, and this may further promote the movement of people illegally migrating to Morocco. Therefore, representation of irregular migrants as powerless victims, or agentive malevolence, shows the ambivalence of their representation as either a sufferer or a threat, but never a human being.

This finding confirm previous studies which criticised humanitarian representations of minority groups since they violate the identity and culture of the individuals depicted by reproducing and perpetuating a patronising, orientalist and dehumanising view (Cohen, 2001). Similarly, Escobar (1995) sees that humanitarian discourses oversimplify representations of irregular migrants who are framed as powerless, passive, suffering, vulnerable victims in need to be saved.

The study has also revealed that *Hespress*' news articles are often constructed by a narrative that is built up and told by *Hespress* journalists and not by the migrants themselves. As a speaker on behalf of the migrants, *Hespress* purposefully portrays that minority group in permanent need of humanitarian help. However, such communication technique constructs a stereotypical image about the irregular migrants which impersonalize them and have the risk to blur their real identity. That is why it is important to critically analyse and deconstruct the meaning within humanitarian discourse to uncover the power dynamics involved in the representation of others as it has been criticised for encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that may speak more about ourselves as humanitarian actors than the very people we purport to help (Chouliaraki, 2013).

The study suggests that *Hespress* journalists, in their news articles, often construct the victim-saviour social relation between the migrants and Moroccan government: victim (irregular migrant) and saviour (Moroccan government). The journalists continuously affirm the exigency of the assistance Morocco provides in the analysed news articles, and they focus more on the case of victimhood instead of the migrants themselves, while the real reasons responsible for them to be victims are almost never revealed. This study suggests that this is done intentionally in order to reaffirm the legitimacy of their work and highlight the importance of the integration of the irregular migrants.

Hespress' humanitarian portrayal of irregular migrants as vulnerable victims elicits audience empathy and compassion for the migrants. Rather than that, as Silverstone (2007) suggests there should be a proper distance between feelings and representation of minority groups. Instead of representing the irregular migrants as vulnerable others, they should be represented as individuals and people with self-reliance and agency. In other words, they should be perceived as ordinary people, highlighting their individuality, rather than referring to them as anonymous victims who need to be saved. Moving beyond victimisation helps on the resiliency, strengths, capabilities and assets of the migrants. To put it differently, *Hespress* discourse should move beyond pity and framing the migrants as helpless, passive victims towards a form of self-reflectivity that includes the voices of others (Chouliaraki, 2017). Giving voice to the irregular migrants will enable them to give accounts of themselves and participate in social processes. Since elite groups can control the type of language used in their discourse, they should include the voices of those they wish to support. Therefore, *Hespress* should create a room and space in its news articles about the issue of irregular migration for the voices of the migrants to be heard and, as Chouliaraki (2012) argues, we need to hear their voice and see their real situation.

Another important implication about this study is that *Hespress*, as an interactive newspaper, has given space for its readers to write feedback and react. For instance, the three main themes about the issue of irregular migration that have

prevailed *Hespress* news articles (Human Rights theme, Politics theme, Integration theme) were different from the ones used in the readers' comments (Blaming the Government theme, Economic Burden theme, Threat theme). The important finding here is that *Hespress* readers oppose and challenge the main premises of *Hespress*' journalists as they did not approve their depiction. The agenda setting theory helps us to understand that *Hespress* journalists are still the ones who set the agenda for the public to discuss.

This finding also fits with the active audience theory which explains how audiences actively and creatively interpret what they are exposed to, and how, through comment platforms, change the direction of the discussion and the content they consume. More importantly, the introduction of the active audience's participation in *Hespress* as an e-newspaper, as analyzed in this study, has shown how the examination of the discussion between journalists and audiences has the potential to redefine the public perception on the themes related to irregular migration. The main finding here is that the use of interactive e-newspapers has changed the patterns in news acquisition and distribution and therefore questions the theory of agenda-setting that was developed in the mass media environment of the 1970s to the 1990s. It shows that certain characteristics of e-newspapers such as interactivity or the possibility of publishing and sharing content within an e-newspaper can challenge the main ideas of agenda-setting theory.

However, there is a call for more empirical research that would identify the actual influence and role of interactive newspapers compared to traditional ones. In general, *Hespress*' commentary sections have allowed the readers to see beyond the representations and categorizations provided by the news media producers and that professional news organisations no longer have a monopoly over the production of meaning for public issues but they blend with users' perspectives in new, hybrid texts.

In addition to that, the findings of this dissertation reaffirm Edward Said's (2003) thoughts on the 'Us versus Them' dichotomy that is perpetuated in society. One

of the tenets of Orientalism[29] states that "the Orient is at bottom something either to be feared . . . or to be controlled" (p. 301). By viewing irregular migrants as either victims, helpless and needing to be saved or as a threat to be vanquished, *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments create an 'Other' to be feared or to be controlled. By so doing, *Hespress* creates a greater divide between the Moroccan citizens and the irregular migrants.

4.3. Limitations of the study

While this research has some major findings, it also has its share of limitations. Despite all the efforts made in the elaboration of this study, there are still a number of inconsistencies. As this is one of the first comprehensive studies of this nature, looking at how *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments are used for the representation of the issue of irregular migration in Morocco during the time frame 2013-2018, it is inevitably limited to some extent.

First, only one electronic newspaper, *Hespress*, was selected to represent an array of electronic newspapers in Morocco. However, as scholarship evolves, future research may focus on other Moroccan e-newspapers in order to explore other forms of language at work on their representation of the issue of irregular migration. To widen the scope of this research, future research can even be expanded to other Moroccan mass media.

Second, the semiotic aspect of the newspaper articles is not covered. Despite their important role in conveying a message to the reader, images which exist in the news articles are not subject to analysis because including the visual component in the analysis would require other different methodologies that are not considered feasible because of time and space constraints. Therefore, further studies can examine the visual component of e-newspapers.

[29]- The propagation of the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority. Orientalism is 'a set of constraints upon and limitations of thought' applied to the Oriental, which is always political and designed to promote the difference between the familiar 'us' and the strange 'them'(see Edward Said, Orientalism, 2003)

Third, a limitation of online commenting is the anonymity and the use of pseudonyms of Hespress users which makes it difficult to contact them for ethnographic use. Because of that anonymity, there is no easy way to contact all of the users about their posts. This can be a limitation of being an outside observer which could have still caused oversight of subtle social cues, interactions, and intended meanings. To avoid this limitation, further research and interviews with the commenters themselves could be done about their own interpretations and meanings of their comments which could be very significant.

Fourth, the media analysis is situated within a particular time in history within 2013-2018 timeframe. Thus, investigating a different period of time could produce different results. So this study fails to analyse the representation of migrants during other significant timeframes.

Fifth, the eclectic nature of CDA is also criticised for lack of rigour in research, in terms of researcher position, choice of theoretical framework, and accusations of 'cherry picking' examples that suit the researcher's ideological interpretation (Meyer, 2001; Wodak, 2001).

Further research might also explore other different discursive strategies than those chosen in this thesis and investigate larger data.

To avoid this limitation, further research and interviews with the commenters themselves could be done about their own interpretations and meanings of their comments.

4.4. Recommendations for future research

With regard to the implications identified earlier, this study makes the following key recommendations, first for *Hespress* journalists and editorial staff and second for future research as there Is a myriad of exciting options for further future research like:

(i) For *Hespress* editorial team, they should

- have their production quality checklist include watchful lexical items for an unbiased reporting. A rigorous systematic control should be structurally integrated to rule out discordant aspects of discourse content.

- enhance the quality of their social migration affiliation by setting up a position of a sociolinguist advisor within their editing department with an aim to gate keep ideological propositions in their discourse.

- use communicative strategies that avoid stereotypes and create space for alternative voices. *Hespress* editorial team should give voice to the irregular migrants who have been silenced. This is how to take power away from the elite groups and give it to those who have been abused by that power. In other words, *Hespress* should avoid the top-down representation of the issue of irregular migration, the unequal power dynamics, and the discourses of compassion and solidarity. Instead, advocates, according to de Waal (2015), should ensure the voices of the subjects are heard and acknowledge their agency and capacity and that if advocates wish to speak for others they must strive to create space for multiple voices and perspectives. Speaking with others can help lessen the danger of misrepresentation and paternalism. Minorities' advocates need to be accountable for what they say and open to criticism, as speaking on behalf of others carries great responsibility. Similarly, Ambrose et al. (2015, p. 1) contend that responsible advocacy requires advocates to be "accountable to the people and the situations they represent". Irregular migrants are to express their position and strive to avoid disempowering stereotypes. Therefore, while this research has largely focused on irregular migration's representations and discourses of solidarity, the voices and actions of the migrants themselves should be highlighted, which may challenge and change dominant elite discourses.

(ii) For future research recommendations, this study could humbly inspire future researchers to investigate the following:

- News discourse is worth further exploration by linguistic researchers in order to uncover the hidden ideologies beneath.

- More studies are needed to fully explore the readers' reception of e-newspaper's media in order to further understand how interactive means of communication have remodelled the traditional flow of information.

- Further research might also explore different discursive strategies than those chosen in this thesis and investigate corpora with more significant sizes.

- Future research should extend the scope conducting an ethnographic study that reaches out to *Hespress* users by administering questionnaires, surveys or interviews, instead of relying on the data collected online to increase the relevance and validity of research findings.

- While this study has considered the way in which irregular migrants are represented in the *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments, it would be worthwhile widening this study's scope to include interviews with journalists who write the stories and even the irregular migrants themselves to get more insights into media representation of migrants.

- Another area for future research is the semiotic aspect of online news articles, which could not be tackled within the scope of the present thesis. It would be worthwhile to look at how images and videos may be employed to propagate a certain stance with *Hespress* or within other Moroccan e-newspapers.

- As e-newspapers are still at their very beginning and the current growth rates point to a mainstreaming of audience engagement in the coming years, future researchers need to examine other means of audience participation, such as sharing news in social networking sites or how the readers differ from each other in terms of representations.

Overall, this study has exposed some discursive weaknesses of *Hespress* representation of the issue of irregular migration. Therefore, it is expected that this finding will have an important interest to improve *Hespress*' reporting on the issue in a way that will minimise negative stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory narratives. The study can help journalists in understanding the effects of lexical choices in writing

news stories about irregular migration and how different words can convey biased information that can shape the perceptions of citizens on migration. Furthermore, to remedy such ideological representations, it is argued, in this thesis, that irregular migrants' voices should be heard. This would allow the migrants to potentially provide readers of *Hespress* with a more nuanced representation of them, and it would empower these migrants and potentially challenge the unequal power relation that is established and reproduced in *Hespress*. Therefore, it is important for *Hespress* to avoid simplistic narratives and stereotypes by including the perspectives, experiences and voices of irregular migrants. Thus, a solidarity discourse based on equality and justice is a balancing act between empathy and justice in the representation of others. Therefore, it is recommend that irregular migrants advocates are to open up space for the migrants to get involved in activism which would decrease power inequalities and create a more equal playing field between the migrants and their advocates.

Conclusion

This chapter was basically devoted to the discussion and implications of the findings of the present study which is a CDA of irregular migration representation in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. The most significant finding of the present research is that there are two contradicting discourses that dominated the news producers and news consumers. The findings of the data illustrate the disagreement between the news article and readers' comments discourses; the positive discourse around irregular migration is voiced by the journalists and it is accompanied by negative comments as a typical reaction.

Discussions have shown the presence of ideological language in *Hespress*' discourse performance in the analysed data is not a novelty. The results highly confirm similar conclusions drawn in related literature informing this study. The findings indicate that *Hespress* representation of irregular migrants is biased. *Hespress* news articles exclude voice and agency of the irregular migrants. There is the prevalence of a stereotypical image of irregular migrants as passive victims. Stereotypical articles with

prejudice and bias are published by Hespress while reporting on irregular migration. The news discourse gives extensive voice to elite groups while migrants are marginalized and excluded. Extensive and repetitive use of this exclusion could imply that the elites like politicians and journalists are better qualified to speak about and for these people (Loto et al., 2006; Teo, 2000). A key recommendation put forth in this chapter is based on the belief that for a more objective reporting, *Hespress* is to pay more attention to its lexical tools.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This chapter concludes this study by summarising the key research findings in relation to the research aims and research questions, as well as the value and contribution thereof. The main objective of this research was to contribute to the academic debate on the quality of the socio-cultural knowledge production being circulated by e-newspapers in the Moroccan context. The literature review of this research has shown the scarcity of existing research on this topic and, eventually, formed the rationale for the need to conduct such a study. This study has attempted to provide a comprehensive answer to the main research question:

- How does *Hespress* and its readers represent the issue of irregular migration in Morocco from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018?

Acknowledging the limitation of this study, this research, however, has successfully achieved its objectives:

O. 1: To identify the thematic patterns which are used to represent the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

O. 2: To describe the frequency of the recurrent themes about the issue of irregular migration in *Hespress*' news articles and readers' comments.

O. 3: To reveal the underlying ideologies that reside in *Hespress*' discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration and explain how they relate to the wider social context.

Three subsequent lines of inquiry unfolded to examine the dominant themes in *Hespress'* discursive representation to the issue of irregular migration in Morocco. The questions addressed were:

Q. 1. Which dominant themes are used in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments to represent the issue of irregular migration?

Q. 2. With what intensity do the irregular migration themes occur in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments?

Q. 3. To what extent does *Hespress* discursive representation of the irregular migration issue align with Morocco's geopolitical agendas?

With regard to the complexity of the issue of *Hespress*' representation and the qualitative data this study was committed to analyse, three cycles of processing were applied in dealing with the data. The first cycle of probing focused on identifying and extracting the recurrent thematic patterns in *Hespress* discourse, news articles and readers' comments. The second cycle of analysis was a quantitative content analysis with the aim of quantifying the frequencies of the emerged themes and their distribution over the sampled time frame, September 9, 2013 - December 11, 2018. The third cycle of analysis relied on Fairclough's three dimensional framework with the aim of uncovering the hidden ideological propositions which reside in *Hespress* discourse representing the issue of irregular migration.

This means that there is a combination or triangulation of different methods; namely, Thematic Analysis, Quantitative Content Analysis, and CDA. Since each of these methods has its strengths and weaknesses, it is very convenient to adopt more than one method as they will complement each other. This triangulation of methods will allow a broader interpretation of the texts and the context in which they appear. In other words, though this study adheres mainly to a qualitative research methodology, the need to address the data in terms of its manifest and as well as its latent content often invites the incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. While qualitative methods help in exploring the deep meanings in communication, quantitative content analysis helps in identifying the frequencies or number of times certain concepts have occurred in texts. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods to approach the research questions, this study has got a powerful analytical framework as it benefits from both approaches. The triangulation of the three methods is adopted in order benefit from the strong points of each method and to mitigate the weaknesses in the individual methods.

After the investigation of the pro- and anti-migration emerging themes that are used to represent the migrants, it was found that Hespress news articles depict the migrants as fundamentally victims who deserve humanitarian help. The readers' comments, however, hold a different view about the migrants. They resorted to anti-

migration themes to show them as an unwanted 'others' who threaten ones' own security and stability. The main findings that have been reached within these representations are:

-The finding of the thematic analysis has led to the identification of two overarching themes pro-migration themes and anti-migration themes. Each overarching theme has its corresponding three themes which are used in the construction of irregular migrants' identity in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. The themes of Human Rights, Politics, and Integration are recurrent in *Hespress* news articles. The themes Blaming the Government, Economic Burden and the Threat theme, however, are recurrent in the readers' comments.

- The findings provided by the quantitative analysis throughout the description have reflected the opposing concerns underlying *Hespress*' news producers and readers' comments. The analysis has shown that *Hespress*' journalists and its readers hold different attitudes and perception about the irregular migration issue in Morocco.

- The finding of Fairclough's CDA framework has shown that the analysis of the internal micro-level properties of *Hespress* discourse and its external macro-level properties portray ideological and unequal power relations that exist between the news producers and the irregular migrants. It has also been shown that Morocco's migration policy is guided by some geopolitical considerations rather than humanitarian or securitisation ones. This is evident when the texts emphasise the Moroccan government's commitment to help the irregular migrants. That is why the Moroccan government is represented as the active performer of the execution of the new migration policy. That is why *Hespress* discourse reaffirms dominant Moroccan elite views and discourses concerning migration by reproducing the government's humanitarian approach to irregular migration.

There is a continuation and perpetuation of stereotypical and ideological representations in *Hespress* discourse in which the elite groups or hegemonic majority determine how the minority groups are depicted. As such, the journalists and government officials continues to silence the minority by depriving them from agency.

Overall, based on the key findings on the thematic patterns regarding the discursive representation of the issue irregular migrants in *Hespress* coverage, it has been shown that news media cannot provide a perspective that is totally free from subjective interpretation of events; on the contrary, media institutions tend to construct reality in a manner congruent with their underlying ideological and political functions. Generally speaking, the study proved that linguistic tools are among the most important items which result in a biased representation of news stories. Moreover, the results showed that the language of *Hespress* is highly ideological while representing the issue of irregular migration in Morocco. Moreover, the study has proved that linguistic tools or the ways of using these tools have got an incredible discoursal capability of news bias and ideology. Finally, it has also been observed that such ideological representations and biased languages in news media can result in legitimation of one side and suppression of the other side. Therefore, future research should be conducted in order to continue this endeavour of studying e-news discourse on a comparative level, especially in the Moroccan context.

The present dissertation comprises four chapters with a General Introduction and General Conclusion. The General Introduction describes the context of the study, highlights its relevance and indicates its purpose that the rest of the chapter delves into. A discussion of the research rationale, research objectives, and the significance of the study is also highlighted. The general introduction also gives a general overview of the scope of the study and methodology used to achieve the aims and objectives set forward by the research. Some limitations and delimitations are also introduced. The chapter ends with a brief outline of the organisation of the thesis and the remaining chapters.

Chapter one has presented the literature review and theoretical framework of the various disciplinary areas contextualising the research. This chapter provides the reader with the main key concepts upon which the investigation is founded; namely, the concepts of news discourse, irregular migration representation and ideology. The theoretical considerations are reviewed to rethink their meanings and implications within the Moroccan context and more particularly within a specific community of e-

news media as represented by *Hespress*. Further in the chapter, the theoretical frameworks were presented to highlight the avails that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for this study findings.

Chapter two was designed to provide an exhaustive description of the methodological delineation and operationalization of the toolkit that the present study has adopted to demystify the research problem, answer the research questions and, subsequently, meet its objectives. The chapter has outlined the sampling method, the range of analytical scope. The coding procedures and the analysis plan have all been mapped to illustrate how the framework of thematic analysis has been invested.

Chapter Three was devoted to the analysis of the various thematic patterns at play in *Hespress* news articles and readers' comments. It provides a thematic analysis with the aim of identifying the recurrent thematic patterns; then, an exhaustive quantitative content analysis description of the emerged themes to quantify their frequencies and their distribution over the sampled time frame, from September 9, 2013 to December 11, 2018. The third phase of analysis relied on Fairclough's three dimensional framework with the aim of uncovering the hidden ideological propositions which reside in *Hespress* discourse representing the issue of irregular migration. The analysis has revealed that *Hespress* discursive practice is ideological and that there are different representations in *Hespress*' news articles and their corresponding readers' comments.

Chapter Four involves the discussion of the research findings reported in Chapter Three. The chapter provides answers to the research questions. It also provides the implications drawn from the findings of the study. It ends by highlighting some of the shortcomings and limitations of the research and making suggestions and recommendations for future studies.

This thesis ends with a general conclusion which synthesises the whole line of inquiry. It projects a focused overview of the addressed issues during the assessment of *Hespress*' discourse performance, methodological management and results.

With respect to the discourse performance in *Hespress* probed in this study, some important implications arose:

- *Hespress* discursive representation of the issue of irregular migration highlights unequal power relations between the elites who are doing the representation (*Hespress* journalists and politicians) and those being represented (the irregular migrants).

- *Hespress*' humanitarian depiction of the irregular migrants can have just as damaging an impact as it limits all their personal potentials. By describing the Moroccan government as a saviour and the migrants as victims and not giving them voice, *Hespress* turns into an oppressor by removing the agency and humanity from the irregular migrants. Therefore, this deconstruction of *Hespress* discourse has enabled one to move away from reductionist conclusions which see a causal relationship between the presence of e-newspapers and their use for public participation.

- *Hespress* journalists use linguistic strategies that subordinate the irregular migrants to the Moroccan aid by showing them as passive people who constantly depend on others' help. It has been argued that this type of representation may have multiple risks. Depicting the irregular migrants as constantly dependent on Morocco's help makes their ability to self-reliance and agency blurred. Besides, showing their dependence on the support of Morocco reinforces unequal power relations and thus promotes an image that subordinates the migrants to Morocco. Another risk associated with the portrayal of vulnerable and needy migrants is that it constructs the feeling of responsibility that can be associated with the feeling of superiority which leads again to unequal power relations.

- *Hespress*' news articles are often constructed by a narrative that is built up and told by *Hespress* journalists and not by the migrants themselves. As a speaker on behalf of the migrants, *Hespress* purposefully portrays that minority group in permanent need of humanitarian help. However, such communication technique constructs a stereotypical image about the irregular migrants which impersonalize them and have the risk to blur their real identity.

- *Hespress*' humanitarian portrayal of irregular migrants as vulnerable victims elicits audience empathy and compassion for the migrants. Rather than that, as Silverstone (2007) suggests there should be a proper distance between feelings and representation of minority groups. Instead of representing the irregular migrants as vulnerable others, they should be represented as individuals and people with self-reliance and agency. In other words, they should be perceived as ordinary people, highlighting their individuality, rather than referring to them as anonymous victims who need to be saved.

- *Hespress*' commentary sections have allowed the readers to see beyond the representations and categorizations provided by the news media producers and that professional news organisations no longer have a monopoly over the production of meaning for public issues but they blend with users' perspectives in new, hybrid texts. However, though Hespress' readers often challenge the journalistic viewpoints by airing oppositional views, *Hespress*' editorial team is still the one to steer and guide audience's participation because they effectively tell them what to discuss about. As Reich (2011, p. 98) notes, "comments leave the journalist in the traditional position of the lead singer, while audience members generally play the minor, faceless and reactive role of the chorus".

In a nutshell, this study has shown that *Hespress* news discourse through its positioning and presentation of voices contributes to a more subjective account of the irregular migration representation as initially expected. These observations contest the objectivity of, and raise questions about the extent to which, news producers are influencing the news discourse. Therefore, since migration is not about to stop as huge numbers of people continue to seek better places to live either in Morocco, Europe, or elsewhere, it is of paramount importance to continue research in this critical area in order to outline and reveal how the media particularly newspapers construct messages about these migrants.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

The Six Stages of Thematic Analysis

Stage	Thematic Analysis	Description
1	Reading and familiarizing with data	Reading and re-reading the data to become intimately familiar with the content (i.e., immersion); analysis begins with noticing things of interest that might be relevant to the research questions.
2	Coding data	Identifying aspects of the data that relate to the research questions; can involve selective coding, where only material of interest is coded or complete coding where the entire dataset is coded.
3	Searching and identifying themes	Identifying salient features that capture something important about the data in relation to the research question; may represent some level of patterned response or meaning within the dataset.
4	Reviewing themes (visual map of provisional themes and subthemes, that can show relationships between them)	Determining whether candidate themes fit well with the coded data; themes should tell a story (not necessarily the story) that 'rings true' with the data; essentially represents quality control in relation to the analysis
5	Defining and giving names to themes	Defining themes by stating what is unique and specific about each one; useful because it forces researchers to define the focus and boundaries of the themes by distilling to a few short sentences what each theme is about.
6	Writing and finalising analysis	Writing the report by selecting compelling, vivid examples of data extracts, and relating them back to the research question and literature

Based on Braun and Clarke (2013), pp. 202–203.

Appendix 2

Coding Scheme

Codes	Description
Human Rights	Statements/Reference to international Human Rights law and the universal right of asylum (Hyndman, 2000). Emphasising emotions like solidarity, empathy and compassion.
Politics	Voices of political elite groups and political issues are incorporated in news reporting to represent irregular migrants
Integration	The sectors in which irregular migrants are integrated are referred to and the idea that the integration of the migrants does not represent any problem is stressed.
Blaming the Government	This focuses on blaming the authorities for adopting the new migration policy
Economic Burden	This focuses on the financial burden caused by irregular migrants on the Moroccan economy that already has many problems.
Threat	It refers to all the social and cultural threats posed by the irregular migrants like causing crime, having a different culture and carrying diseases. The threat theme criminalizes migrants and presents them as potential criminals, cheaters, dangerous evil-doers with the capacity to threaten and harm the host society.

(Researcher's coding scheme)

Appendix 3

Transliteration

In this study, the Library of Congress transliteration system adopted by Abdul-Raof (2006) is used. The transliteration system is consistently employed in some Arabic expressions. Representing and spelling the characters of the Arabic alphabet is based on the assumption that Arabic and non-Arabic readers can benefit from the Arabic extracted. Though transliteration may make theses look cumbersome, its role is very important as it enables readers to make sense of words meanings, help researchers to have a clearer vision of wording of Arabic texts. In fact, all translation and transliteration used through this thesis are done by the researcher of this work.

Arabic	*Transliteration*	*Arabic*	*Transliteration*
ا ب پ ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ص	â b p t th j ḥ kh d dh r z s ṣ	ش ظ ض ع غ ف ق ک ل م ن و	sh ḍ ẓ ʻ gh f q k l m n w
Arabic Vowels		â, û, î, a u, i,	

Table 19 : Transliteration system of Arabic Expression (Abdul-Raof, 2006)