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Czech media discourse on migration

Content of the lecture

- The media discourse and construction of reality
- Exercise 1
- The securitization theory (outline)
- The coverage of the European migration crisis in the Czech online news media
- Exercise 2
- Discussion

Media discourse and construction of reality

- **signifying power of media:** power to influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social identities, social relations
- ongoing discussions
 - traditional media vs. social media
 - professional vs. citizen journalism
- **trustworthiness** and critical media literacy (sources)
- nonetheless, media discourse could be crucial, especially when reporting affairs or events of which their recipients have **no or only little experience**
 - „migration crisis“ in Czech Republic
 - chance to explain – to exploit the fear of unknown

Media discourse and construction of reality

- media discourse **helps** to organize social reality into meaningful blocks and patterns (Berger – Luckmann: semantic fields), i.e. media representation of family values
- on the other hand, media discourse can also **simplify** social reality (stereotypes, prejudices, labels), i.e. media representation of LGBT
- „Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize.“

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Shortcuts in media discourse

- principally, media discourse may be empowering, but stigmatizing as well
- practically, media discourse is **necessarily selective**, both on the side of its production and its reception
- therefore, we should be concerned **not only** with whether the news chosen is based on true facts or not, **but also** how and why has it been chosen – perspectives of whom it promotes and standpoints of whom it marginalizes

Rules for selection, media institutions

- media discourse is **necessarily selective**, both on the side of its production and its reception
- concept of newsworthiness and news values (Lippmann, 1960, Galtung and Ruge, 1965)
- different aspects of the news process (Bednarek, 2016)
 - News writing objectives: general goals associated with news writing, such as clarity of expression, brevity, colour, accuracy and so on;
 - Selection factors: any factor or criterion impacting whether or not a story becomes published, not necessarily values, for example, commercial pressures, availability of reporters, deadlines and so on;
 - **News values**: the ‘newsworthy’ aspects of actors, happenings and issues as established by a set of recognised values such as Negativity, Timeliness, Proximity, Superlativeness, Eliteness, Impact, Novelty, Personalisation, Consonance, Aesthetic Appeal

News values

Table 1. News values and their definitions.

News value	Definition
Negativity	The negative aspects of an event or issue
Timeliness	The relevance of an event or issue in terms of time: recent, ongoing, about to happen or seasonal
Proximity	The geographical or cultural nearness of an event or issue
Superlativeness	The large scope or scale of an event or issue
Eliteness	The high status of individuals, organisations or nations involved in an event or issue
Impact	The high significance of an event or issue in terms of its effects/ consequences
Novelty	The new and/or unexpected aspects of an event or issue
Personalisation	The personal or 'human' face of an event or issue, including eyewitness reports
Consonance	The stereotypical aspects of an event or issue; adherence to expectations
Aesthetic Appeal	The aesthetically pleasing aspects of an event or issue

- Caple, Helen - Bednarek, Monika. 2016. Rethinking news values: What a discursive approach can tell us about the construction of news discourse and news photography. *Journalism* 17 (4): 435-455.

Rules for selection, media publics

- media discourse is necessarily selective **necessarily selective**, both on the side of its production and its reception
- selective exposure
 - we cannot read/watch all the news available
- selective perception
 - we pay more attention to news which are coherent with his opinions and attitudes
- selective retention
 - after a period a time, we are able to recall only some informations originally gained (usually again those which do not contradict our identities)

Media agenda setting

- media agenda
 - political agenda
 - public agenda
-
- media bias and concept of journalistic objectivity

Exercise (in small groups)

- How are events represented? Which aspects of the European migration crisis are stressed or conveyed in a photo?
- How actors are represented in a photo? What identities are set up for migrants? What activities and characteristics are attributed to them? What identities are set up for Europeans? Who represents them?
- What relationships are set up between migrants and Europeans?
- What kind of approaches to migration (if any) are displayed in this photos?

The migration crisis in news photography



The migration crisis in news photography



The migration crisis in news photography



The migration crisis in news photography



The migration crisis in news photography



The migration crisis in news photography



The migration crisis in news photography



Common trends in media coverage of migration

- **Victimization** – migrants as victims of tragic event (Khosravini, 2009; Van Gorp, 2005; Figenschou, Thorbjørnsrud, 2015)
- **Politicization** – migrants as object of policies, mediated by accounts made by politicians (Khosravini, 2009; Threadgold, 2009; Klocker, Dunn, 2003)
- **Securitization** – migrants as a threat (Abid, Manan, Rahman, 2017; Banda and Mawadza, 2015; Threadgold, 2009)
- **Criminalization** – in relation to criminal offences (Rasinger, 2010; Brouwer, Woude a Leun, 2017)
- **Collectivization** – migrants as homogenous group of people (Khosravini, 2009)
- **Decontextualization** – focus on actual events, reasons like persecution in or suffering in home country are omitted (Pugh, 2004)

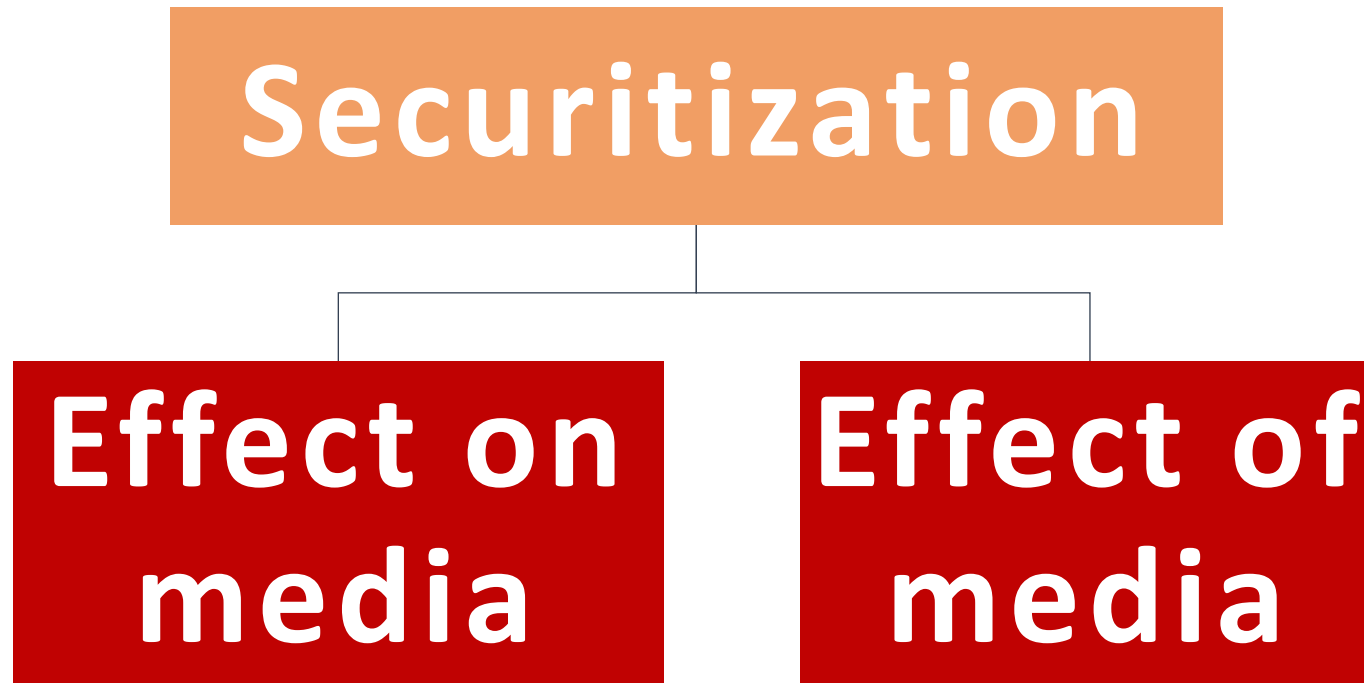
Theory of securitization

- **security problem** – a situation, in which an event, a course of action or an actor is **evaluated as a threat** to the particular object of reference (person, nation, value system etc.) and thus **requires safety measures** to be taken in order to ensure the safety of the object of reference.
- **constructivist approach** to security – an issue becomes a security threat not because it essentially is one, but because it is presented and perceived as such (Buzan, Weaver, de Wilde, 1998: 24; Balzacq, 2011: 1).

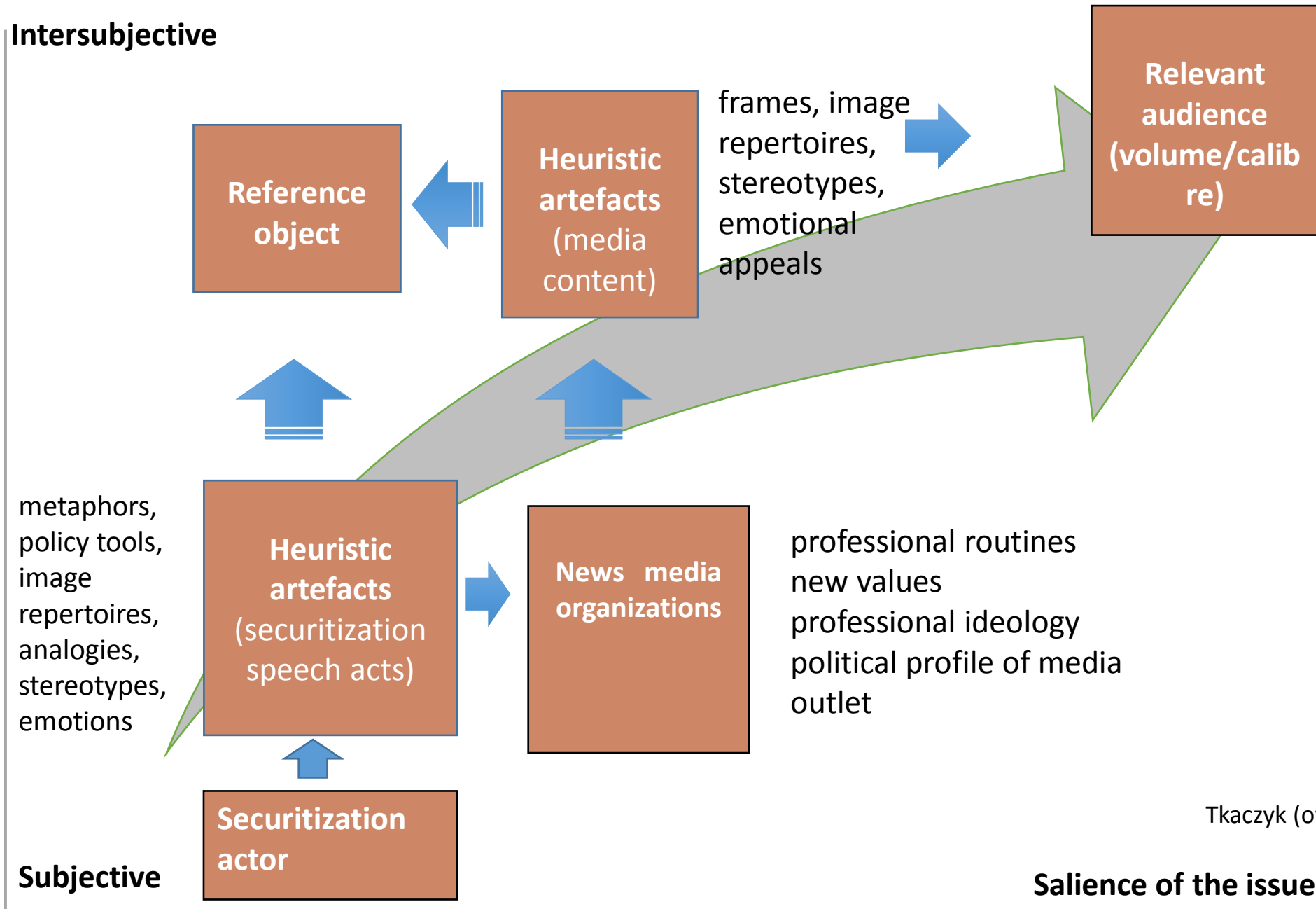
Theory of securitization

- **securitization** is a process in which “the the issue is presented as an **existential threat**, requiring emergency measures and justifying action outside bounds of normal political procedure” (Buzan, Weaver, de Wilde 1998: 23-24).
- Security sectors: Political, Military, Societal, Environmental, Economic (Buzan, Weaver, de Wilde 1998: 21-23)

Securitization theory and the media

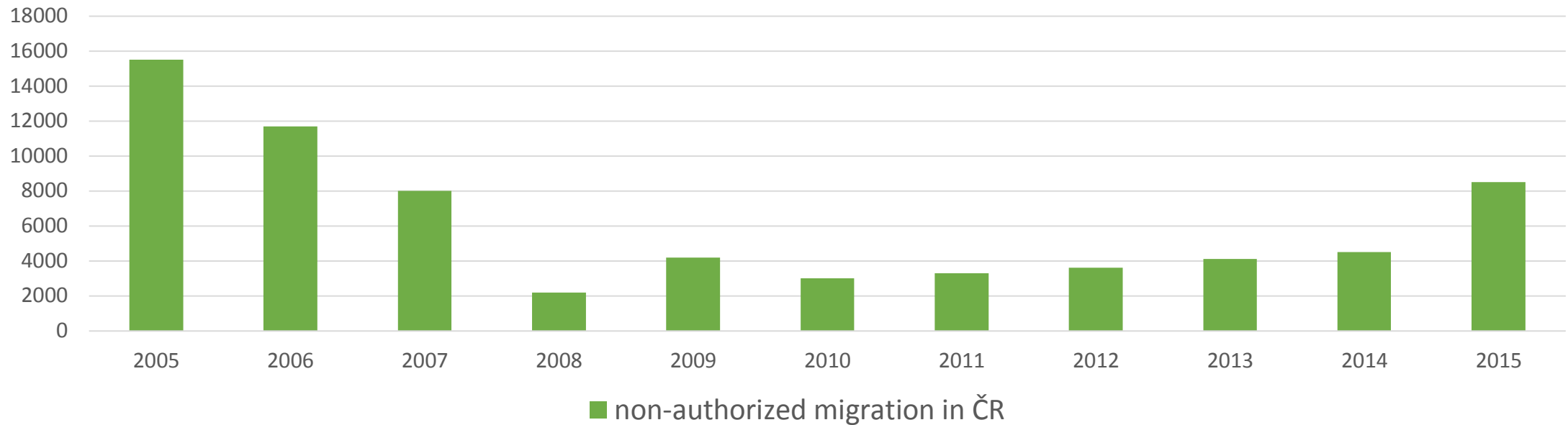


(Vutlee, 2011)



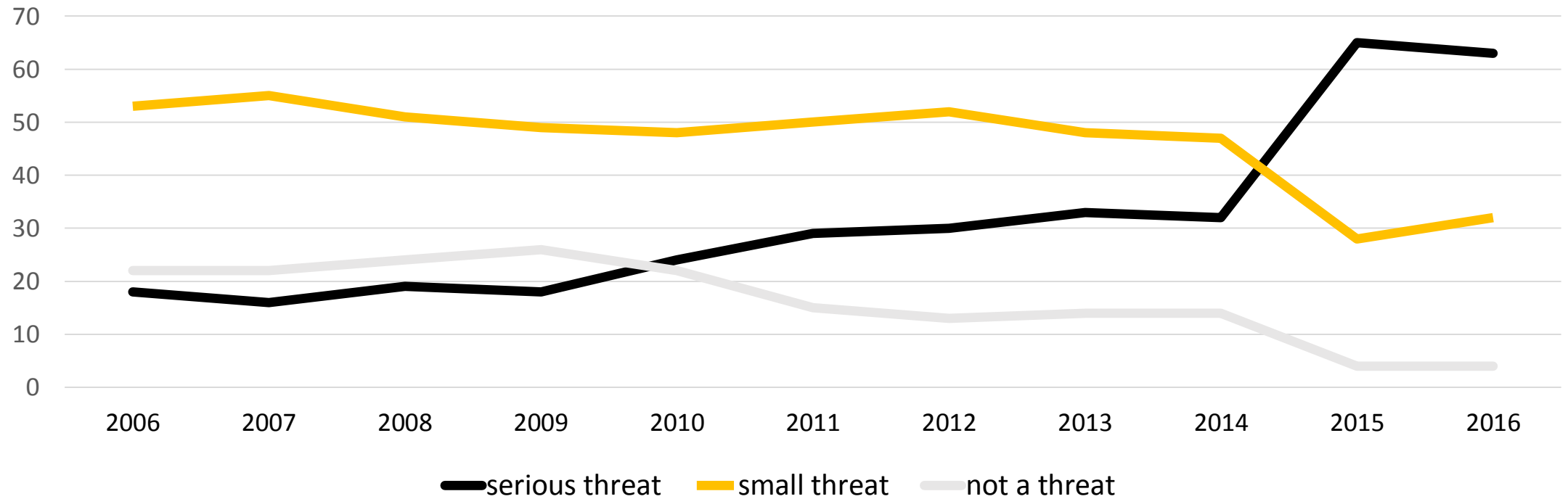
Migration in Czech Republic

- In **2015** only **134** citizens of Syria, **38** citizens of Iraq and a few people from Afghanistan applied for **asylum** in the Czech Republic.
- Not-authorized stay in ČR: Syria (**2 016**), Afghanistan (**585**), Iraq (**404**), all (**8563**)



Czech public on refugees as a threat

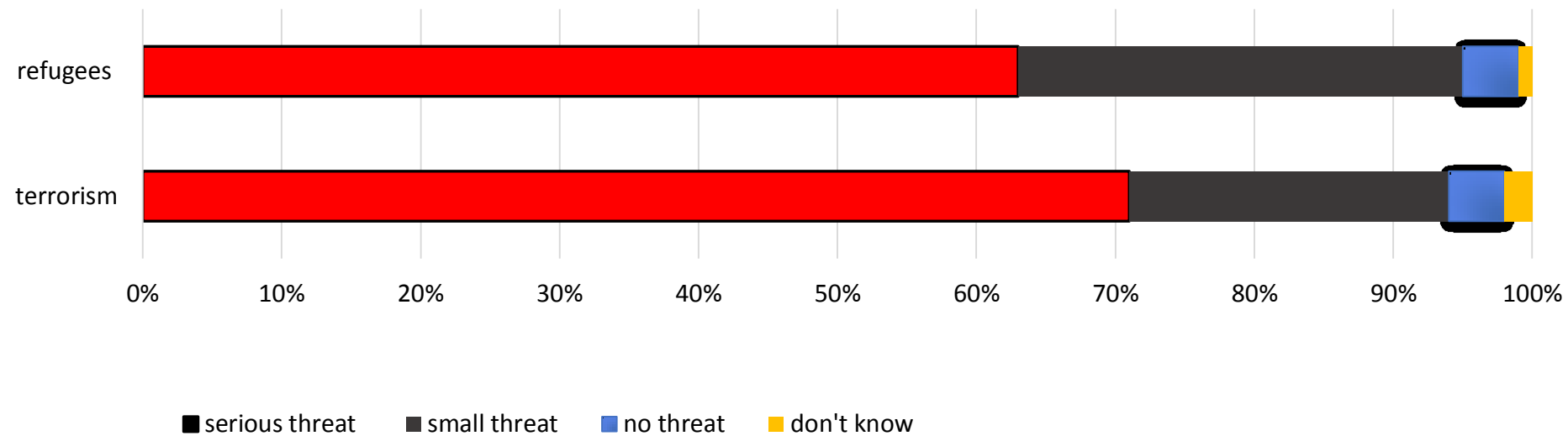
The actuality of a threat - refugees



CCVM poll on perceived threats and security risks, December 2015

Czech public on refugees as a threat

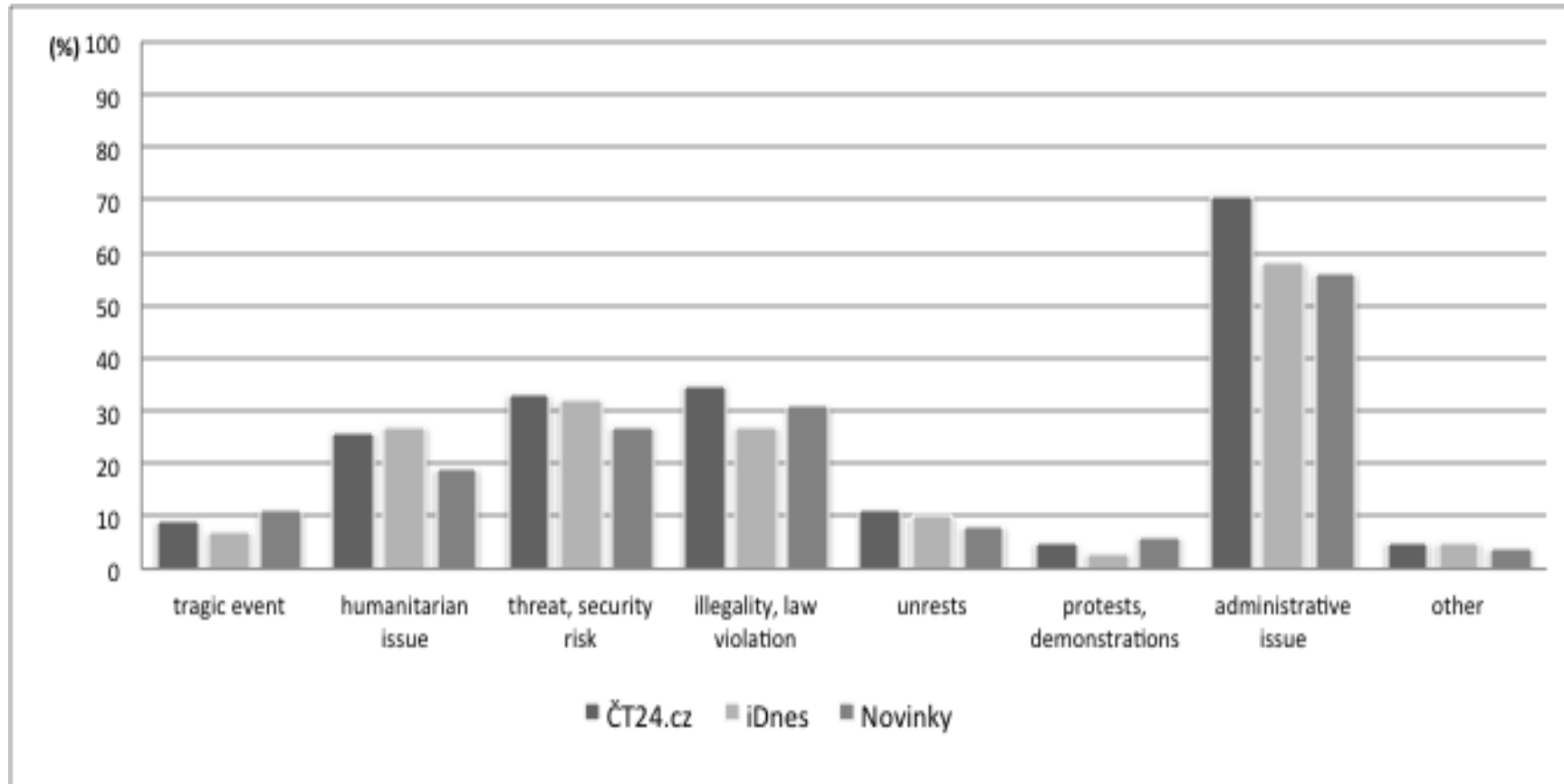
Actual threats for the Czech Republic



CCVM poll on perceived threats and security risks, December 2015

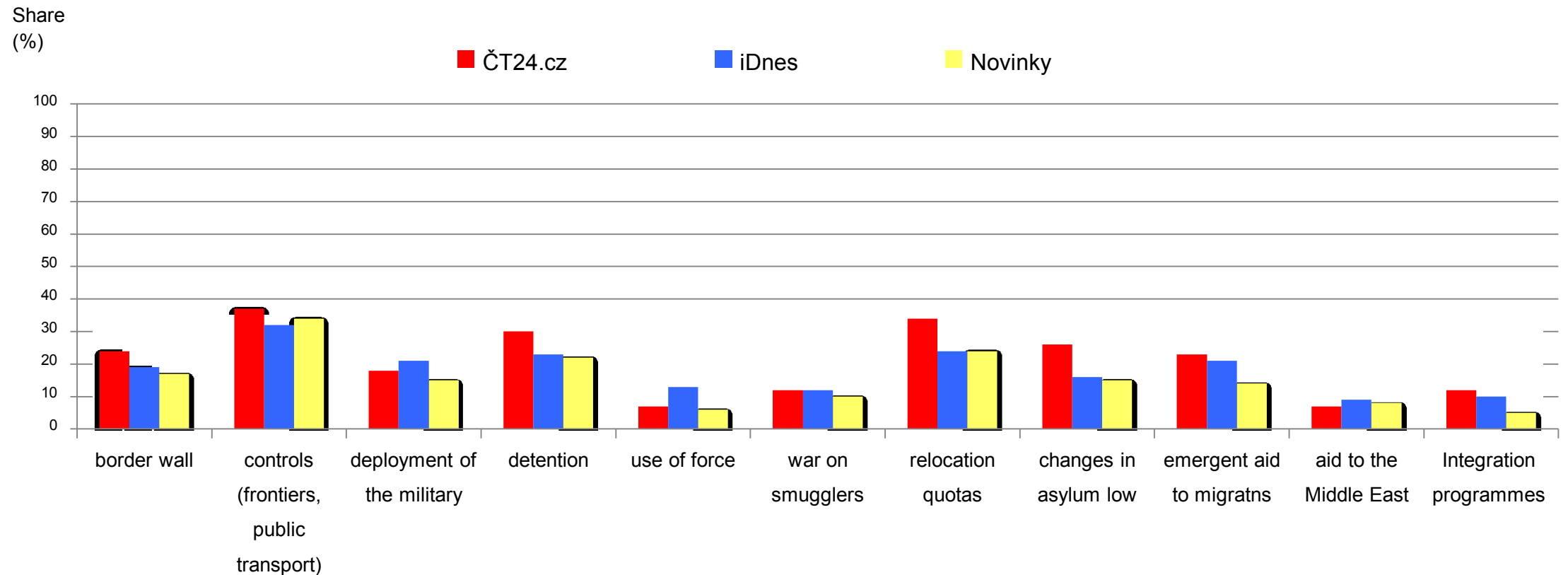
The Czech news coverage on the European migration crisis

Problem definitions in the analysed news items (Tkaczyk 2017)



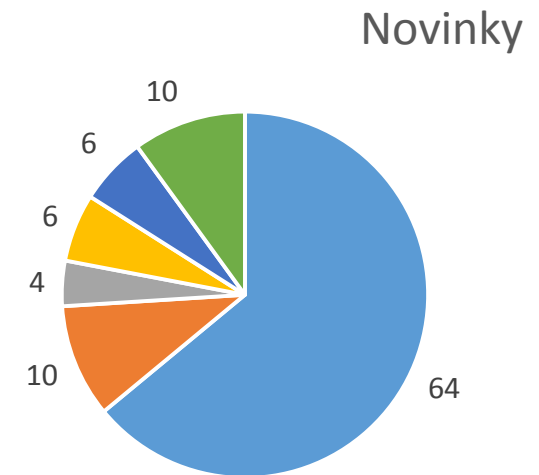
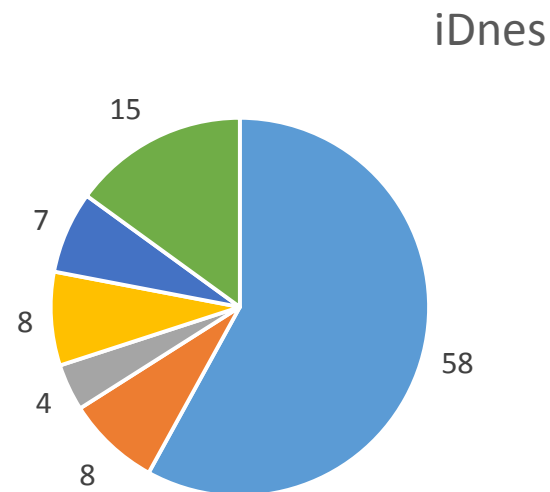
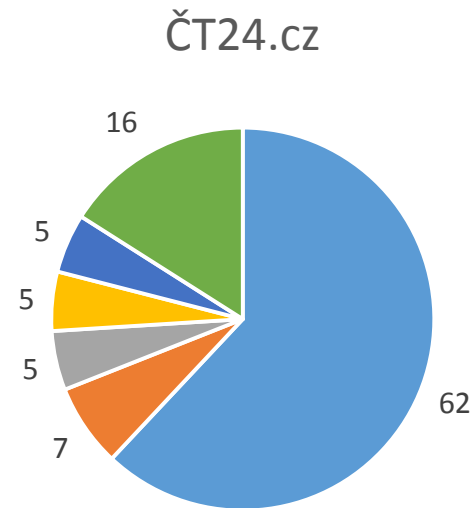
The Czech news coverage on the European migration crisis

Discussed or presented solutions to the crisis (Tkaczyk 2017)



Migration in Czech Republic in Czech news media

- Voices in the news coverage (Tkaczyk 2017)



■ Politician

■ Public institution representative

■ Migrants

■ Law-enforcement agencies representative

■ NGO representative

■ Others

Exercise (in small groups)

- How are events represented? Which aspects of the European migration crisis are stressed or conveyed in the news story?
- How actors are represented? What identities are set up for migrants? What activities and characteristics are attributed to them? What identities are set up for Europeans? Who represents them?
- What relationships are set up between migrants and Europeans?
- What kind of approaches to migration (if any) are conveyed in the news story? Is there any kind of evaluation of these approaches present in the news story?

Discussion

- In general terms, how was the European migration crisis covered by news media in your country of origin?
- Which frames and event definitions prevailed?
- Who could speak in news?

Literature

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