

# MIGRATION – WHAT IS IN A WORD

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**Abstract** – Given the present climate of heated political debate and social tension over the question of migration, the aim of this study is to investigate how the topic is represented to the general public. The study will examine texts from the British press and from blogs of migration organizations and research centres. The research centres offer themselves as a medium for intelligent discourse on migration and their intent is to bring this discussion out of academia and into an accessible forum for anyone interested in the question. They will therefore give a different perspective to the linguistic landscape of migration from the more politically coloured discourse of the press. The study first uses corpus linguistic methods to examine how migration is represented linguistically in the two subcorpora and then the Appraisal Theory for a qualitative analysis of some extracts from the texts. The analyses show that both the blogs and the press do not use primarily attitudinal lexis, preferring other linguistic resources, such as dialogistic positioning, intensification and evoked evaluation.

**Keywords:** migration; UK press; migration organizations and research centres; quantitative analysis; Appraisal Theory.

## 1. Introduction

Globalization and the present dramatic geopolitical situations in the world have acted as strong stimuli to migration, leading to heavy migratory flows towards Europe. Even though migration has taken place ever since time immemorial, the topic still arouses strong emotions and reactions. In 2015 a survey carried out by the *Economist* showed that migration was a major concern for two thirds of Britons (Economist 2016). As a result, migration often becomes a significant political issue and a focal point in debates and campaigns, as in the case of the recent Brexit referendum.

Migration has, in fact, been the object of study from many disciplinary perspectives in the social sciences (Martínez Guillem 2015). Studies have also been made specifically on the language of migration, as for example in both American and European law (Cunningham-Parameter 2011; Incelli 2013) and in a recent work on political discourse (Salvi 2017). Of particular interest for this paper are the large-scale analyses carried out on the portrayal of migrants in the British press (Allen 2016; Blinder, Allen 2016; Baker *et al.*

2008; Balanakova; Balch 2010; Gabrielatos, Baker 2008). In 2008, long before the current European migrant crisis, a paper called *Fleeing, sneaking, flooding* was published reporting on the findings of a Lancaster University research project into the discursive construction of refugees and asylum seekers (and immigrants and migrants) in a 140-million-word corpus of articles that appeared in the press between 1996 and 2005 (Gabrielatos, Baker 2008). The very title suggests the overall negative aura of migration discourse in the press which was confirmed by the findings that revealed “the deployment of nonsensical terms and collocates indexing negative *topoi* or embodying negative metaphors” (Gabrielatos, Baker 2008, p. 33).

Ten years on, and in the present climate of heated political debate and social tension, the aim of the present study is to investigate how the topic of migration is presented to the general public today by examining two different text types, namely articles from the press of different political alignments and the blogs of migration organizations and research centres.

What the press reports or, equally important, what it does not report, and how it does so, shapes and strongly influences public opinion and in turn, public debate and policymaking. The press discursively constructs and projects attitudes and stances in accordance with their political alignment, thus framing the discourse of a topic. It creates mental representations based on pre-existing conceptions of what that object or thing is (Blinder, Allen 2016, p. 4; Martínez Guillem 2013). As van Dijk (1996, p. 84) says, this influence can be seen as a form of social power, controlling the minds and actions of groups of people. However, Gabrielatos and Baker (2008, p. 9) point out that the relationship between the press and its readers is bidirectional. People read the newspapers that share their ideas and therefore papers also need to reflect the ideas and beliefs of their readers, and in doing so will reinforce them.

Although the press still has a very strong influence in the modern world, readers also draw on other sources for information, in particular the Internet and its various genres. For this reason, the study analyses blogs specialized in migration issues which will perhaps throw a different light on the subject as they aim to inform the public debate on migration in the UK and in Europe, as one research centre says on the homepage of its website, “by providing new insight helping to steer the current policy debate in a direction that is based on carefully researched evidence without partisan bias” (Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration, <http://www.cream-migration.org/>).

Both the press and the migration and research centres may then be considered as important sources of influence and play an important role in facilitating or hindering the integration of migrants and refugees in host societies. The study will compare the more politically coloured discourse of the press with what may be expected to be a more balanced approach in the blogs and identify the focus of each genre, and how they deal with the topics.

## 2. Methodology and theoretical framework

The study has adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, following Baker *et al.* (2008), who suggest that each approach can provide different kinds of insights to the analysis. Basic corpus linguistic methods, frequency counts, collocations and concordance lines, were first used to examine how migration is represented linguistically in the two subcorpora. Bearing in mind the small size of the subcorpora, the quantitative findings cannot be considered as ‘totally accountable’ and the study is guilty of what Baker *et al.* call “a casual use of corpus-based techniques to give preliminary findings before the qualitative analysis” (2008, p. 275). However, it is hoped that it can orient the investigation. Qualitative analyses were then made to contextualise the findings and also bring to light the different rhetorical strategies used by the press and the blogs to present their arguments in a persuasive manner. Baker *et al.*’s study used Critical Discourse Analysis to complement the quantitative analysis, whereas for this study the qualitative analysis has been made using Martin and White’s Appraisal Theory, which I have already applied in previous research (Salvi, Turnbull 2010; Turnbull 2013). It explores and describes the way language is used to evaluate, adopt stances and manage interpersonal positionings. Its very broad and comprehensive approach covering different aspects of the linguistic resources available to the writer should therefore highlight the strategies adopted in the different texts.

The Appraisal Theory is a complex framework and methodology and there is space here only for a brief overview (Table 1, but for a full explanation see Martin, White 2005; White 2015). It works on three main domains:

- *Attitude*, which encompasses different options for expressing positive or negative evaluation,
- *Engagement*, which concerns the resources by which speakers/writers adopt a stance towards to the value positions being referenced by the text and with respect to those they address,
- *Graduation*, which refers to the adjustments of attitude and engagement in terms of strength, the up-scaling and down-scaling of expressions.

*Attitude* itself is divided into three regions of feelings, each of which in turn is subdivided further: *Affect* in which assessments are based on emotional responses (happiness, security, satisfaction), *Judgement*, assessments of human behaviour (social esteem, social sanction) and *Appreciation*, assessments of aesthetic and social value of things (reaction, composition, valuation).

*Engagement* resources allow for alternative positions and voices to be expressed in the text (entertain and attribute), what Martin and White call dialogic expansion, but also the opposite, dialogic contraction, in which

positions may be challenged, dismissed or concurred with (disclaim and proclaim).

*Graduation* works across two clines, intensity and prototypicality and can be applied both to attitudinal meanings and the expressions of *Engagement*. It is an essential aspect of the Appraisal Theory because it interacts with the other two systems. Indeed, as Martin and White (2005, p. 159) explain, “Appraisal meanings do not operate as isolated values, but rather as integrated complexes of meaning”.

ATTITUDE	ENGAGEMENT	GRADUATION
AFFECT happiness security satisfaction	Monogloss	Force <i>intensification</i> <i>quantification</i>
JUDGEMENT social esteem social sanction	Heterogloss <i>dialogic contraction</i> disclaim proclaim	Focus <i>prototypicality:</i> sharpening/softening
APPRECIATION reaction composition valuation	<i>dialogic expansion</i> entertain attribute	

Table 1  
Appraisal Theory.

The Appraisal Theory is obviously a complicated system and methodology to be applied and Martin and White (2005) themselves highlight the difficulties or complications involved in applying it, two of which are of particular interest here. Firstly, appraisal or evaluation is very subjective and context-dependent, giving rise to the possibility of multiple interpretations. Secondly, evaluation is not always inscribed directly in the discourse. At times the simple selection of ideational meanings is enough to evoke evaluation, even if there is no attitudinal lexis that explicitly tells us what to feel or think. This may, once again, introduce an element of subjectivity but, as Martin and White say, a text “naturalises a reading position” (2005, p. 63), so the reader can be expected to capture the intended evaluation.

### 3. Corpus

The corpus is composed of texts from the British press and posts from blogs of migration organizations and research centres. Table 2 shows the composition of the two subcorpora. The press subcorpus is made up of ten articles about migration and migrants from two quality and two popular newspapers and a weekly magazine for a total of fifty texts in 2016 before,

during and immediately after the Brexit referendum in June 2016. There is admittedly a certain bias in the corpus because the two popular papers are more right wing, whereas the other publications are centre/centre left. Furthermore, although the same number of articles were collected from each publication, the popular papers have much shorter articles, integrated with many pictures and provoking captions. As a result, the weekly and the quality papers account for a larger part of the corpus than expected.

Press	Blogs
Daily Mail	The Migrationist
The Sun	MRN (Migrants' Rights Network)
The Guardian	CREAM (Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration)
The Independent	COMPAS (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society)
The Economist	
Total words 47,261	Total words 51,534
Types 5,933	Types 6,321

Table 2  
Corpus.

The blogs are *The Migrationist*, an international academic/professional blog, the *Migrants' Rights Network*, a national NGO working and campaigning in support of migrants in the UK, the *Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration* (CREAM), an interdisciplinary centre based in the Department of Economics at University College London and Oxford University's *Centre on Migration, Policy and Society* (COMPAS). Ten posts were taken from each blog. However, as the focus of some blogs is much broader than the UK press and looks at migration throughout the world, it was necessary to cover a broader period for the selection of texts on migration in the UK. As a consequence, a few of the posts date back to 2015.

The two subcorpora taken together form what might be called a nano-corpus compared with the Lancaster research and will not give 'statistically significant' results, but they will perhaps give a snapshot of the linguistic landscape of migration in the UK today.

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1. Quantitative

A frequency count was made for the keywords *migrant*, *migrants*, and *migration* (Table 3) and the number of occurrences is similar in the two subcorpora, though the blogs show a preference for the word *migration* rather than *migrant(s)* which could suggest that they focus more on the phenomenon

than on individuals, unlike newspapers where human interest stories are very frequent.

	Press		Blogs	
	instances	%	instances	%
Migrant	62	0.1313	52	0.1016
Migrants	223	0.4723	166	0.3245
migration	195	0.4109	228	0.4457

Table 3  
Number of instances of *migrant*, *migrants* and *migration*.

However, when looking at their concordance lines it immediately became obvious that *migrant* was used as an adjective, rather than as a noun to refer to a person, the individual, in both the press and the blogs. Only three occurrences in the blogs were concerned with *a* migrant and two in the press. Interestingly, the blogs told personal stories of individual migrants, whereas the newspapers did not.

An indication of the attitude or feeling about the topic may be acquired from collocations, which give information about the most frequent or salient ideas associated with a word (Gabrielatos, Baker 2008, p. 10). The most frequent right collocates of *migrant* in the press are: *children* (10 occurrences), *crisis* (5), *camps* (2), which represent the dramatic aspects of the current situation, and other words which suggest numbers and quantity: *flow* (2), *influx* (3), *rush* (2), *stream* (2), *numbers*, *march*, *route*. There are also nine occurrences of the collocate *workers*, which reflects one of the major concerns in the Brexit debate – EU migrants taking British jobs.

A slightly different set of right collocates emerged in the blogs, though the topics remained basically the same. There were the words suggesting quantity, *inflows* and *influxes*, and also quite a few to do with the workplace – *employees*, *labour*, *labourers*, *workers* (9), but the use of *communities* (4), *community* (2) and *exploitation* suggests a broader social approach to the question.

To get a clearer idea of the image portrayed in the texts concordance lines of phrases including the key words were drawn up. Here are the examples of *migrants are* which shows that in both subcorpora most of the occurrences were concerned with employment and the migrants' contribution to the economy. Given the moment in time around the Brexit referendum six out of the 14 occurrences in the press are concerned with EU migrants, whilst the discourse in the blogs concerns a more general view of the topic and migrants' position and status, though also referring to EU migrants.

(1) Press *migrants are*

1 icult to attract native workers.  
 2 such as health care. Economic  
 3 fears of ordinary Germans that  
 4 the day, unaccompanied child  
 5 and arrived in Sebha, in Libya.  
 6 employment rates for arriving  
 7 mber trying it. This year 3,173  
 8 ion is beneficial to the UK. EU  
 9 pact could be substantial”. EU  
 10 blic sector occupations for EU  
 11 open later this year. European  
 12 ployment. In other words, EU  
 13 erly people’s bottoms that EU  
 14 eded but not wanted Economic  
 15 cent European Economic Area  
 16 e 101,000 overseas short-term  
 17 turn our backs on Europe’ EU

**Migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are**

also often granted work visas by definition a mobile labour causing an explosion in viole children, first and foremost, encouraged by family, friend high. Of the 290,000 people known to have died or gone more likely to be in work in net contributors to public fin NHS nurses and doctors. The not just paying their way, the not making it harder for UK prepared to do now. As for th seen as a threat to jobs and supported by the UK benefits working in Britain. Would Br MIGRANTS are worried they face an unce

(2) Blogs *migrants are*

1 r concern that some groups of  
 2 0,000 people. While irregular  
 3 tooed as political communities.  
 4 00 highly skilled non-student  
 5 is that a large majority of EU  
 6 ployed British people. [2] A8  
 7 een told enough times that EU  
 8 ere is an overall fiscal deficit.  
 9 to make sure that the rights of  
 10 ration? Evidence is tenuous.  
 11 hat job. In Hull, for example,  
 12 Round about twice as many  
 13 ows that nearly 30 per cent of  
 14 nd is, don’t get carried away:

**migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are migrants are**

being exposed to work situati central to this legislation, the discursively constructed as estimated to have entered the in work and so are paying ta more likely to have tertiary e net contributors to the public no more unhealthy and no m not further trampled on in th on the whole, predominantly predominantly employed in f to be found in management a to be found in the ‘processin working hard to turn their dis

The cluster *migrants and* indicates a frequent grouping of migrants with refugees and asylum seekers in both the press and blogs, thus conflating the terms as Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) had shown. In the press we can also find the *migrants and people smuggling gangs*, an association that contributes to the negative discourse prosody also identified by Gabrielatos and Baker.

(3) Press *migrants and*

1 court’s decision. Hundreds of  
 2 ing to reach EU Hundreds of  
 3 ay wall would halt the flow of  
 4 he wall would halt the flow of  
 5 he wall would halt the flow of  
 6 ree accommodation in the UK.  
 7 dehumanises the vulnerable  
 8 any deficiencies. The flows of  
 9 e to roughly 10,000 desperate  
 10 ya’s shores. More than 4,000  
 11 rucks in Calais HOW MANY  
 12 increase” in violence against  
 13 sea rescue APThousands of  
 14 of the more than one million

**migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and Migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and migrants and**

asylum seekers march towar asylum seekers set off on fo keep drivers safe • Critics cl keep drivers safe In July of keep drivers safe. The Home people-smuggling gangs are prevents solidarity from wor refugees are not properly ma refugees from war-torn or po refugees have perished whils REFUGEES LIVE TH refugees since the Balkan bo refugees were rescued from refugees who illegally entere

15 ty; and the heightened fear of **migrants and** refugees, which reached feve  
 16 guish between those irregular **migrants and** those in need of protection.

#### (4) Blogs *migrants and*

1 oubling times in the UK for EU **migrants and** anyone else with a migrant  
 2 punitive measures in the Bill, **migrants and** asylum seekers were instead  
 3 about students, highly-skilled **migrants and** close family members, than  
 4 ntal for the rights and welfare of **migrants and** communities across the  
 5 in terms of securing rights for **migrants and** fostering social cohesion but  
 6 of points of contact between **migrants and** host societies, strengthened  
 7 ndardized group interviews with **migrants and** key informant interviews  
 8 crease the suffering and risks of **migrants and** refugees but will not dimini  
 9 he discussion about the rights of **migrants and** refugees by bringing to the  
 10 year's numbers. Over 200,000 **migrants and** refugees entered Europe via  
 11 preventing volunteers assisting **migrants and** refugees in distress and a ne  
 12 e concept of receptivity toward **migrants and** refugees more prominently  
 13 tions and identities, and pushes **migrants and** refugees to stigmatized spac  
 14 nt by the increasing number of **migrants and** refugees trying to reach Eur  
 15 dimension of their relation to **migrants and** refugees. Understanding mi  
 16 ment abroad generates for EU **migrants and** their families. It is not unre  
 17 oncerned. And it is not just the **migrants and** those who have employed t  
 18 eed to prioritize highly-skilled **migrants and** yet we lack the capacity to f  
 19 cies to protect the rights of EU **migrants and** young people. A month ou

The phrase *of migrants* shows an interesting and significant difference. In the press the collocates were: *the number, hundreds, thousands, flow(s), full, influx, streams*, once again all giving the idea of overwhelming numbers of migrants. However, negative prosody once again emerges with the phrases *fear of migrants*, which occurs twice and a single occurrence of *onslaught of migrants*, as if they were organising an attack on the UK.

#### (5) Press *of migrants*

1 he dramatic sea rescue Thousands **of migrants** and refugees were rescued  
 2 cludes a £1.2billion annual net cost **of migrants** from Europe They consu  
 3 cludes a £1.2billion annual net cost **of migrants** from Europe, who consu  
 4 have been squeezed, the extortion **of migrants** has grown. At the IOM's tr  
 5 extremists are trying to incite fear **of migrants** Chalk outlines of 'dead bo  
 6 society; and the heightened fear **of migrants** and refugees, which reache  
 7 rters say wall would halt the flow **of migrants** and keep drivers safe Critic  
 8 that the wall would halt the flow **of migrants** and keep drivers safe. The  
 9 that the wall would halt the flow **of migrants** and keep drivers safe In Jul  
 10 n borders closed for the free flow **of migrants** in March. "In the last mont  
 11 only quite recently that the flow **of migrants** was reversed (see chart). E  
 12 oduce any deficiencies. The flows **of migrants** and refugees are not proper  
 13 ke two years. Moment lorry full **of migrants** is opened up after being pul  
 14 ple trying to reach EU Hundreds **of migrants** and asylum seekers set off  
 15 g the court's decision. Hundreds **of migrants** and asylum seekers march  
 16 ux throughout the bloc. Hundreds **of migrants** pulled to safety off the coas  
 17 is partly to blame for the influx **of migrants** by opening the door and all  
 18 conomics. If an area has an influx **of migrants,** it receives more local tax r  
 19 an automatic response to an influx **of migrants.** Third, restrict migration  
 20 and fingerprint the vast majority **of migrants,** that's only one piece of the  
 21 aid: "An increase in the number **of migrants** in the labour force can actu  
 22 oughly 10,000 people. The number **of migrants** living there has steadily inc  
 23 During recent months the number **of migrants** who have abandoned the at  
 24 already faces a nightly onslaught **of migrants** trying to board UK-bound



25	t a new high, so there is little <u>sign</u>	<b>of migrants</b>	taking natives' jobs. As for
26	f the treaty is scrapped <u>thousands</u>	<b>of migrants</b>	will be able to reach our sh
27	D FROM THE MED <u>Thousands</u>	<b>of migrants</b>	including a newborn baby r

In the blogs (6), we find numbers (30%, *increasing*, *sheer*, *net number*), but also a more social view of migrants with the words *rights* and *welfare*. *Story* might appear as a focus on the individual but actually is used to accuse the government of making up stories about migrants and criminal activities.

#### (6) Blogs of migrants

1	imental for the rights and welfare	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>and</u> communities across th
2	y increase the suffering and risks	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>and</u> refugees but will not di
3	tain the discussion about the rights	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>and</u> refugees by bringing to
4	evident by the increasing number	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>and</u> refugees trying to reac
5	nds for concern that some groups	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>are</u> being exposed to work
6	period to make sure that the rights	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>are</u> not further trampled on
7	tiny shows that nearly 30 per cent	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>are</u> to be found in the 'proc
8	evertheless estimated that 10-13%	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>arrived</u> in the US via a thir
9	vernment has been using the story	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>as</u> criminals and abusers of
10	his is that the government's story	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>as</u> criminals and burden on
11	a target for overall net numbers	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>coming</u> to the country. The
12	oped world. Data showing stocks	<b>of migrants</b>	('foreign born') in the cou
13	all dropped following the arrival	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>from</u> Poland, the Czech Re
14	on public services, the presence	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>has</u> merely revealed once a
15	strategies for defending the rights	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>in</u> preparation for the impa
16	for the disproportionate presence	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>in</u> work situations which ar
17	<u>try through</u> taxes paid on and out	<b>of migrants'</b>	incomes. But the non-mov
18	h or in kind. The net contribution	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>should</u> alleviate the cost of
19	<u>know</u> very little about this group	<b>of migrants,</b>	the conditions they find th
20	<u>ut</u> concerns registered on behalf	<b>of migrants.</b>	The first is, yes, there are
21	<u>sals</u> to address rights and welfare	<b>of migrants.</b>	There is a promise to end
22	<u>being</u> gained through employment	<b>of migrants.</b>	There is evidence that im
23	a novelty. Yet, the sheer number	<b>of migrants</b>	<u>traversing</u> in increasingly
24	University: • Close to two-thirds	<b>of migrants</b>	(understood as 'foreign-bo
25	e: What will happen to the rights	<b>of migrants?</b>	We respond to the outcom

The two subcorpora were also put through WMatrix which identifies the main semantic domains in the files. The results (see Table 4) seem to confirm the impression that the concordance lines were giving, that both the press and blogs were generally talking about the same things. The top 20 domains were similar, though sometimes their ranking differed.

Press	Blogs
1. Moving, coming and going	1. Moving, coming and going
2. Geographical terms	2. Work and employment: generally
3. Government	3. Government
4. Other proper names	4. People
5. People	5. Evaluation: true
6. Crime	6. No obligation or necessity
7. No obligation or necessity	7. Degree
8. Places	8. Places
9. Work and employment: generally	9. Allowed
10. Degree	10. Helping
11. Speech: Communicative	11. Other proper names
12. Residence	12. Cause&Effect/Connection
13. Helping	13. Knowledge
14. Law and order	14. Location and direction
15. Quantities	15. Mental object: conceptual object
16. Alive	16. Deciding
17. Work and employment: professionalism	17. Alive
18. Evaluation: true	18. Belonging to a group
19. Speech acts	19. Politics
20. Wanted	20. Cheap

Table 4  
Semantic domains (WMatrix).

However, there were some significant, albeit not surprising, differences. The high ranking of geographical terms in the press can be explained by the frequent reference to EU migrants in view of the Brexit referendum. But what stands out in particular is *crime* in fifth position and *law and order* in 14th position in the press subcorpus, neither of which appears in the blog subcorpus. A close examination of the concordance lines for *migrants* showed that their connection with crime was their illegal status, *irregular*, *illegal*, rather than as perpetrators of crimes such as theft.

(7)

25	of the more than one million	<b>migrants</b>	<u>and</u> refugees who illegally entered
27	distinguish between those irregular	<b>migrants</b>	<u>and</u> those in need of protecti
85	police protection.” Police helped the	<b>migrants</b>	<u>from</u> the lorry before takin
139	Smugglers and a big number of irregular	<b>migrants</b>	<u>or</u> refugees will follo
161	and fingerprint the vast majority of	<b>migrants,</b>	that’s only one piece of the
173	market, causing the number of illegal	<b>migrants</b>	<u>to</u> reach 12m in 2007, wh

Indeed, they were also portrayed as victims of crime:

(8)  
87 have been squeezed, the extortion of **migrants** has grown. At the IOM's transit

It is often more by grouping migrants with other categories, in what would appear to be a gratuitous way that the element of crime is introduced:

(9)  
17 efits and free accommodation in the UK. **Migrants** and people-smuggling gangs are becoming  
137 we've got prostitutes, and bringing in **migrants** on top of that – it's piling misery on t  
139 Smugglers and a big number of irregular **migrants** or refugees will follow another way.

Among the semantic domains of the blogs corpus it is interesting to note in 12th position *cause/effect* and in 14th position location and direction that once again seem to reflect a broader sociological anthropological interest in the phenomenon, as indeed in 18th position *belonging to a group*.

## 4.2. Qualitative approach

The quantitative analysis has shown how the question of numbers is a recurring issue and, indeed, much of the debate about migration in the UK centres on the net migration rate which the Conservative party had pledged in 2010 to keep down to 100,000, but has failed to do so. The freedom of movement within the EU is often held responsible for this. In the second part of the analysis the Appraisal Theory will be used to examine and compare qualitatively some extracts dealing with this aspect of migration and the presumed effects of such heavy migratory flows.

The following examples, (10) from the *Daily Mail* and (11) from the CREAM blog, discuss the official statistics on migration that had just been published in May 2016. They are clearly positioned to argue against or in favour of Brexit on the basis of the figures on migration.

(10)  
The shocking Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures are the last to be released before voters decide whether we should cut our ties with Brussels on June 23. [...]  
Some 630,000 people came into the country over the 12 months to December, marginally down on the year to December 2014.  
But the number leaving the country was also down 22,000 to 297,000.  
British citizens continued to dominate the emigration figures, making up 123,000 or 41 per cent of the total.  
Meanwhile, long-term immigration from the EU was 270,000 - up from 264,000 the previous year - while 85,000 left.  
Bulgarian and Romanian nationals alone accounted for 58,000 of the net migration to the UK, up from 44,000 in the previous year.

Some 101,000 of the EU migrants claimed they had a definite job lined up – but 77,000 said they were looking for work.

The overall net migration total of 333,000 was up 10,000 on the year to September, although the ONS insisted the change was ‘not statistically significant’. (*Daily Mail*, May 26, 2016).

(11)

The long-term annual net migration figure of 333,000 is the difference between a gross inflow of 630,000 people and an outflow of 297,000 people. So people are arriving at roughly twice the rate at which they are leaving. What change the figures do record is a consequence of a fall in emigration (though still statistically insignificant) rather than of a rise in immigration.

This illustrates a point that rises in net migration can be as easily a result of fewer individuals leaving as of more coming. Is insufficient emigration what worries those upset by migration numbers? It seems unlikely.

A closer look at the numbers

The Brexit debate is focused more on migration from within the EU than immigration from outside and the ONS figures are also illuminating on this. Net inflows of EU citizens (other than the UK) and non-EU citizens are very similar: 184,000 and 188,000 respectively. So are the gross inflows, 270,000 and 277,000. Whether measured net or gross, EU immigration therefore accounts for about half of the total.

The statistics show that work is the most common reason for immigration, accounting for 308,000 arrivals, 58% of whom had a definite job to go to and the rest arriving with the intention of looking for work. Many more of these were EU citizens (61%) than were from outside the EU (24%). The number is currently rising. (CREAM, May 27, 2016).

As the figures are official statistics, the numbers quoted in the texts are obviously the same for the most part, but there are fundamental differences in the way the information is presented and the argument structured.

The newspaper opens with very large figures referring to the people entering Britain, which may alarm some readers. It also adds that nearly half of those leaving are British. It goes on to break the figures down in detail, distinguishing between EU and non-EU migrants, even highlighting certain nationalities. After having built up a series of large numbers, it finally gives the net migration figure attributed to the ONS. However, it also expresses its disagreement with the ONS’s judgement of the increase in net migration as *not statistically significant*, by saying it *insists*, which intensifies the expression and suggests it is in contrast with the paper’s own opinion. As a result, it clearly distances itself from that position.

In contrast, the blog starts from the net migration figure, which is obviously a much smaller figure than the newspaper’s opening figures, and proceeds in a more orderly manner, explaining the terms used and their significance. So introduces a reformulation of the information to give a clear understanding of their value. After having quoted the figures for EU and non-

EU migration, it points out their similarity and also observes that most migrants already have a job lined up when they arrive in the UK or are looking for one.

Both figures and percentages are used to present the information, though the newspaper seems to prefer numbers and uses a percentage only once. The effect of bare figures is to emphasise the large flow of migrants, whereas percentages put the numbers into a certain perspective.

Although there is very little attitudinal lexis in either text, both express a general evaluation of the figures. The blog post describes them as *illuminating*, using *Appreciation*: valuation, whilst the newspaper uses the word *shocking*, *Appreciation*: reaction. This more emotional appraisal is typical of the press and especially of the popular papers. In contrast, *illuminating* is a formal word with a fairly low frequency, so it intensifies its force.

It would appear, as might be expected, that the blog gives a more balanced presentation of the figures, whilst the newspaper ‘manipulates’ the information to further its position. With little implicit inscribed evaluation, how is it that the two texts clearly position themselves so differently?

In the blogs the ‘explanations’ are, in fact, comments. The complex sentence, *What change the figures do record [...]* is used to contrast the Brexit argument of large numbers of migrants. The cleft structure emphatically puts the focus on *the fall in immigration* as being the cause of the increased net migration rate rather than a rise in immigration and the use of the auxiliary *do* for contrastive emphasis also intensifies the force of the sentence. A further comment within the comment, *though still not statistically significant*, is given in brackets, which rather than diminishing its force actually heightens it, underscoring the author’s position that migration is not an argument in favour of leaving the EU. As the author gives explanations of what the statistics mean and how they should be interpreted, he clearly endorses them with the statement *the statistics show*, unlike the newspaper which, as we have seen, throws doubt onto the validity of what the ONS is saying.

The author of the blog then goes on to proclaim *This illustrates a point that rises in net migration [...]* which categorically argues against the interpretation of the statistics used by the Brexit campaigners. He then ironically asks and answers what Martin and White (2005, p. 110) call a “pseudo-question”, seemingly to entertain alternative views, *Is insufficient emigration what worries those upset by migration numbers?*

Similarly, the newspaper uses a combination of Engagement and Graduation resources to put forward its position. *Some* before a number intensifies the force, as if it were being underlined, as indeed *alone* when pinpointing Bulgarian and Romanian migrants and *dominate* when stressing not only so many foreigners are entering the country, but also how many

Britons are leaving. It also punctually specifies the direction the statistics are moving in compared to the previous year. When the figure is down, it is softened, *marginally down*, but when it is up the difference is given in thousands, sharpening the focus.

Although the extract is basically presenting the figures to the reader, it does express evaluations on the validity of the statements, as we have seen above with *insist*. Another example is *Some 101,000 of the EU migrants claimed they had a definite job lined up*, where the paper is attributing the proposition to migrants and also the ONS, but clearly distances itself and seems to challenge the veracity of the statement.

In another article in the *Daily Mail* published two weeks later a similar approach is used. There is a strong build-up of figures, before reporting a statement at the end attributed to Brexit campaigners which says that these numbers are responsible for putting enormous pressure on services in the UK.

(12)

Nearly two million migrants from the European Union have settled in Britain in just ten years, it emerged yesterday.

Figures revealed by the UK Statistics Authority show that on average 535 EU citizens have come to live in the UK every day between 2004 and 2014.

It means almost twice as many European nationals have come here since Tony Blair threw open the doors to Eastern Europe as live in the whole of Birmingham – population 1.1million.

And the number is expected to have risen to record levels in the past two years as migrants continue exploit Brussels free movement laws.

Almost twice as many European nationals have come here since Tony Blair threw open the doors to Eastern Europe as live in the whole of Birmingham – population 1.1million

In total, 1.95 million EU citizens have set up home in Britain since 2004, when Poland and seven other former Soviet Bloc countries joined the EU. On top of this, some 1.49million non-EU foreigners moved here to live in the last decade – a total increase in overseas residents of 3.45million.

Brexit campaigners said the huge numbers placed massive pressure on public services including schools, hospitals and transport. (*Daily Mail*, June 9, 2016).

The information is presented as fact, with no attitudinal lexis, but other means are adopted to convey a negative discourse prosody. The underlined expressions come from ‘voices’ external to the text that should make the facts appear more objective, especially as the figures are attributed to the UK Statistics Authority. However, the use of impersonal and passive forms without agency make the expressions, *it emerged yesterday* and *the number is expected*, vague, hinting at a negative semblance of secrecy or uncertainty.

The figures quoted are always massive, expressed in terms of millions, thus heightening the force of the statements. Similarly, Blair did not just open the borders, he *threw open the doors*. Repetition and reformulation are used

throughout the text building up tension and intensifying the facts. For example, the word *migrants* is used only twice and thereafter migrants are referred to as *European nationals* and *EU citizens*, which distances them from the reader. They are then grouped with *non-EU foreigners* and lastly, *overseas residents*, conflating EU mobility of labour with other international situations, and thus reinforcing the idea of being outsiders and not belonging. Another example is the variety of expressions denoting residence in the UK; migrants have *settled*, *come to live*, *set up home*, none of which are intrinsically evaluative, but can be interpreted as coming to occupy, colonise the UK.

There is also a powerful example of evoked evaluation in the text. The article compares the number of migrants with the size of Birmingham's population, which may appear as a bare statement, but Birmingham is Britain's second most populous city with a very large immigrant community, which implicitly suggests and associates new migrants as masses. It ends with the statement attributed to Brexit campaigners as the natural conclusion to be reached that the number of migrants indisputably puts pressure on public services and no further evidence is given to support the statement.

The question of pressure on the public services is also discussed in a newspaper broadsheet, *The Independent*, but with a completely different structure to the argumentation. The title of the article is: *UK migration: Six myths about immigration debunked as latest figures show fall in non-EU arrivals*. The use of the word *myth* immediately prepares the reader for the value position of the author and the text tackles the question from the opposite direction, not as a conclusion but as a supposition. As to be expected, it uses a balanced argumentative approach to counter negative ideas and opinions about one of the six myths of migration.

(13)

It puts a strain on public services, hospitals and schools

UCL's Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration at University College London found that European immigrants to the UK pay more in taxes than they receive in benefits, effectively subsidising public services.

"A key concern in the public debate on migration is whether immigrants contribute their fair share to the tax and welfare systems", co-author Professor Christian Dustmann wrote.

"Our new draws a positive picture of the overall fiscal contribution made by recent immigrant cohorts, particularly of immigrants arriving from the EU."

While school places and hospital beds are under pressure in many areas, much of the change arises from rising birth rates, the effects of an ageing population and other factors that local and national government has failed to respond to by expanding provision analysis. (*The Independent*, February 25, 2016).

Attributions to institutions and individual professors together with direct quotes lend authority to the argument. A concurring concession, introduced by *while*, is made, admitting that there is real pressure in many areas, but the

explanation given is that it is due to internal factors, not immigration and is therefore contractive. This strategy of concede + counter is an attempt by the author to persuade the reader who may have some doubts about ‘discrediting’ this myth, by first recognizing the possibility of this point of view and establishing a point of solidarity and then putting forward the author’s own alternative view.

Unlike the previous examples, extract (14) presents many cases of inscribed evaluation.

(14)

THOUSANDS of stricken migrants including a five-day-old baby have been saved from the Mediterranean Sea in a dramatic rescue operation today.

The desperate refugees, mostly of from Eritrea, were pictured jumping into the water from massively crowded wooden boats off the coast of Sabratha, Libya.

Rescuers from the NGO Proactiva Open Arms saved 700 migrants from just one boat while it’s believed as many as 1,500 more were crammed onto up to 20 boats.

Among those rescued in the daring maritime operation was a father and his newborn son.

Amazing photographs show the life or death risks some are taking for the chance of a new life in the west.

Dozens are seen launching themselves into the sea as the rescue boats arrive.

Those that can’t swim are seen bobbing up and down in the waters. Others cling onto the sides of their boats waiting to be lifted to safety.

It’s estimated a staggering 70,000 migrants have crossed the Med into Italy between January and June this year.

They mostly cram into rickety wooden boats unsafe for the 190-mile perilous journey from war-torn Libya’s shores.

More than 4,000 migrants and refugees have perished whilst looking for a better life mainly in Europe, the International Organisation for Migration said.

Of that total, some 3,120 died trying to cross the Med – including 120 who drowned off Libya’s coastal town of Sabratha at the end of July.

Meanwhile, European nations continue to argue about how to share the newcomers.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Sunday that the refusal of some EU countries to accept Muslim refugees is ‘unacceptable’.

She called for quotas to divide the influx throughout the bloc. (*The Sun*, August 29, 2016)

The words in italics are evaluative, in the domain of *Affect* (‘desperate’), *Judgement* (‘unacceptable’), but mostly *Appreciation* (‘daring’, ‘massively’, ‘crowded’, ‘crammed’, ‘staggering’, ‘amazing’, ‘rickety’, ‘unsafe’, ‘perilous’). ‘Staggering’ and ‘amazing’ may also be considered as belonging to *Affect*. What is interesting, given the stance of the paper, is that they are describing the state of the migrants, the vessels they travelled in, the journey and the rescue, but are not negative evaluative expressions of migrants and migration. The text which totalled 331 words was accompanied by 12



photographs, each with a caption, totalling another 145 words. The photographs visually represented what was described in the article with overcrowded boats, people in the water and those who had been rescued, many of whom were young children. The article concludes by reporting Angela Merkel's comments about the responsibility of the whole of the EU, to be read as Britain included, thus closing the circle and linking migration to the Brexit question.

At the end of the article readers placed comments, all of which are threatening and offensive. Two of the politer ones were: *Not our problem*, and *Soon to be in a home near you and paid for by you*. The 'neutral', almost sympathetic article, which can be considered as 'politically correct', provoked reactions which reflect the stance of the newspaper without it having to express its opinions explicitly. Just as "collocates can [...] act as triggers, suggesting unconscious associations which are ways that discourse can be maintained" (Baker 2006, p. 114), so pictures trigger associations and perceptions. People's assumptions or perceptions of something are often more important than 'facts'; in this case the fear of the arrival of masses of migrants who are going to steal jobs and put strain on public services prevails over the desperate situation of human beings.

## 5. Conclusions

The analysis has shown that in recent years the question of migration still manages to provoke strong reactions among public opinion. The quantitative analysis, however, did not reveal such an explicitly negative discourse prosody as might have been expected. It would appear from the qualitative analysis of both the blogs and the press that linguistic resources other than explicit attitudinal lexis are used to present arguments in favour of or against tolerance towards migrants and migration. The different forms of *Graduation*, force and focus, and *Engagement*, expanding or contracting dialogistic positioning, enable authors to put forward their opinions strongly. Another linguistic tool that plays a very important role in the press is evoked *Evaluation*, where the reader can pick up the meaning of an apparently neutral assertion depending on how the text has naturalised the reading position and to what extent the reader shares the assumptions of the author. For example, if we take the following sentence: *EU migrants are more likely to be in work than UK nationals*. How is this to be interpreted? It could mean that EU migrants are 'stealing' jobs from British people or that migrants are paying their way in the UK, since as workers they will be paying tax and therefore contributing to the provision of public services. This statement appeared in fact in *The Independent*, arguing against accusations of 'benefit tourism'.

The ultimate rhetorical effect is the result of which meanings have been chosen, in which combinations and in which sequences (Martin, White 2005). Public opinion is obviously influenced by newspapers and blogs (or other sources of information) that can select, highlight or ignore bits of information. Whilst they decide on the content and the coverage of stories, they also respond to readers' interests and concerns. In the case of the press, in particular, they will closely reflect their readers' opinions and attitudes. When we pick up a paper, we have a good idea of what we will find and very few people read around to see what other papers are saying. Papers can be 'politically correct', but nevertheless manage to get their message across, certain that their readers will read between the lines, contributing to and enlarging in their own way the linguistic landscape of migration. "In many respects a text is merely the tip of the iceberg of what is mentally represented" in the minds of individuals and society at large (Van Dijk 1998, p. 28).

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