

RESEARCH ARTICLE

“Sad day for the UK”: The linking of debates about settling refugee children in the UK with Brexit on an anti-immigrant news website

Simon Goodman  & Amrita Narang

Coventry University, Coventry, UK

Correspondence

Dr. Simon Goodman, Coventry University,
Priory Street, Coventry CV1 5FB, UK.
E-mail: Simon.Goodman@Coventry.ac.uk

Received: 5 May 2017

Accepted: 11 February 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2579>**Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors have no conflict of interest.

Ethical Statement

Ethical approval was granted by Coventry University ethics committee.

Transparency Statement

The entire discussion forum that comprises the data analysed for the article can be freely accessed here: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3573053/David-Cameron-announces-major-U-turn-refugee-children-opens-door-living-camps-inside-Europe.html#comments>

Abstract

This article uniquely demonstrates how UK debates about supporting child refugees during the “refugee crisis” came to be used as support for leaving the European Union (EU). The research question “how did users of a news website respond to a report about the UK government’s decision to allow child refugees into the UK?” is addressed with a rigorous discursive analysis of an internet discussion forum on the anti-immigrant website MailOnline consisting of 2,014 unique posts, with a reach of 30 million viewers. Analysis demonstrated that (1) child refugees were presented as adults, (2) allowing in refugees was presented as a “burden” on taxpayers, (3) the decision was presented as opposed to the public’s will, and (4) this was used as a warrant for leaving the EU. The significant implication of this analysis is that political attempts at associating the refugee crisis with the EU may have been successful in this context.

Keywords: Brexit, discourse analysis, European Union, migrant crisis, migrants, refugee crisis, refugees

This article reports an analysis of the response to a major news story in the UK in which the Prime Minister decided to resettle unaccompanied Syrian refugee children after initially refusing to do this. This decision in June 2016 came during the “refugee crisis” and campaigning over “Brexit”, in which the British public eventually voted for the UK to leave the European Union (EU). While these two events may appear disconnected, this article will show how the two came to be associated, so that criticism of refugee policy became linked with a justification for Brexit.

The “migration crisis” first came to prominence in April 2015 following reports of people drowning attempting to cross the Mediterranean sea (Goodman, Sirreyyeh & McMahan, 2017). Throughout the remainder of 2015 and 2016 the “crisis” continued, with over 1 million refugees crossing into Europe in 2015 (United Nations Refugee Agency, 2015) and 3,692 drowning while attempting the sea crossing in 2015 alone (International Organisation for Migration, 2015). Over half of these refugees were fleeing the civil war in Syria, which has caused nearly 5 million

people to become refugees (as of September 2016, UNHCR, 2016a). While it may be expected that refugees fleeing a civil war would be well received, like many refugees before them they have been treated with hostility (Mulvey, 2010) and negativity in the media (e.g. Goodman et al., 2017) as Europe attempts to prevent refugees reaching its shores (Crawley, Duvell, Sigona, McMahan, & Jones, 2016). Opposition to refugees reflects a wider anti-immigrant sentiment in the UK (Meleady, Seger, & Vermue, 2017) where migrants from the EU can be viewed as a threat to jobs and the culture of the country (Hynes & Sales, 2009). The status of child refugees is itself controversial, particularly as assessing the age of refugees can be difficult (Crawley, 2007), which has resulted in claims that children are wrongly being assessed as adults (Crawley, 2010).

The “Brexit” referendum in the UK allowed voters the chance to determine whether or not the country should remain in the EU. The referendum took place on 23 June 2016, coinciding with the “crisis”. While the referendum, in which 51.8% of voters opted to

leave the UK, focused on a number of issues (including sovereignty and free trade), debates about immigration took centre stage (Meleady et al., 2017). The Brexit campaign and the subsequent negotiations to leave the EU have dominated the news and political spheres in the UK and have divided the country into those supporting and those opposed to Brexit. In the run up to the referendum the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), and its then leader Nigel Farage, became a major political force (after initially being a fringe party). Immigration, and especially the right of all EU nationals to reside in the UK, was an especially dominant issue in the Brexit campaign, reflecting the anti-immigrant sentiment of the UK. Perhaps the most notable linking of migration and Brexit came with UKIP's campaign poster featuring a queue of refugees with the slogan "BREAKING POINT: The EU has failed us all", which was criticised for its similarity to Nazi propaganda.¹

In April 2016 the (centre-left) Labour peer, Lord Dubs, a former MP who sits in the House of Lords (the UK's unelected upper parliamentary house) and was himself a refugee who went to the UK as a child as part of the "Kindertransport" (where child refugees were rescued at the start of the Second World War), proposed an amendment to the Immigration Act so that it would allow 3,000 child refugees into the UK. Shortly after, in May 2016, David Cameron, then UK Prime Minister, backed down on his initial decision to reject what became known as the "Dubs amendment". One possible explanation for this change was that the *Daily Mail*, which is usually particularly vociferous in its anti-immigration (and anti-EU) rhetoric (Green-slade, 2005), campaigned to allow these children to enter the UK. This was therefore a controversial decision for the Prime Minister and the *Daily Mail* which offers a unique insight into how people responded to this change in policy from both.

Discursive Research and Anti-Immigration Arguments

Discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992) addresses the representations of, and talk about, a topic rather than attempting to ascertain what people are "truly" thinking, which makes it ideal for studying arguments about refugees. This is especially important given the variation, ambivalence and ambiguity in arguments about immigrants and refugees, as illustrated by the *Daily Mail's* campaign to support certain unaccompanied Syrian refugee children when more commonly taking an anti-immigration and refugee position (Green-slade, 2005). For this reason, there is now a body of discursive psychological research

looking at issues around immigration; this literature is reviewed here.

The discursive findings around immigration talk tend to focus on the variety of ways in which opponents of migration argue against it, while also attending to cultural norms against prejudice (Billig, 1988), which means that rational explanations for opposing migration are required. Augoustinos and Every (2007) reviewed discursive literature about "race talk", of which much (but not all) referred to immigration. They identified five features of race talk: (i) the denial of prejudice; (ii) presenting views as rational and reasonable; (iii) positive self and negative other presentation; (iv) discursive deracialisation, where arguably racial elements are removed from talk about race; and (v) liberal argument for illiberal ends. Research focusing specifically on issues around migration tends to align with these findings.

Regarding the denial of prejudice, Sapountzis, Figgou, Bozatzis, Gardikiotis, and Pantazis (2013) show how different categories of migrants, such as the broad category "human" but also sometimes "migrant", were used flexibly by Greek participants in their talk about migration into Greece so as to prevent themselves from appearing to be prejudiced. However, alternative categories that distinguished between immigrant groups deemed either able or unable to integrate into Greece were also used, which provided the rationale for excluding certain groups. Sapountzis et al. (2006) found that speakers also flexibly managed their category use so as to avoid appearing prejudiced, while also presenting immigrants as aggressive or prone to criminality, which is a consistent representation of migrant groups (see Figgou, Sapountzis, Bozatzis, Gardikiotis, & Pantazis, 2011; Goodman & Speer, 2007; Leudar, Hayes, Nekvapil, & Turner Baker, 2008). However, more recent work by Xenitidou and Sapountzis (2018) has suggested that in talk about migration, people are now more willing to make admissions of prejudice and racism, but do so ironically in ways that still adhere to the cultural norm against prejudice, while criticising the norm against prejudice.

Much European research on migration has focused specifically on the migration allowed by the free movement principle within the EU, which allows all EU nationals to move around the entire union. In particular, this has led to research focusing on the notion of citizenship. Kadianaki, Andreouli, and Carretero (2018) show how historical representations of the nation (in their case Greece) are used to present immigrants as lacking appropriate citizenship to belong in the nation. Also in Greece, Kadianaki and Andreouli (2017) show how essentialised constructions of citizenship containing an ethnic component can be used to present immigrants as failing to belong. This process is challenged by immigrants themselves, through attempts to ridicule essentialised citizenship criteria (Sapountzis & Xenitidou, 2018). In the British context,

¹https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/nigel-farages-eu-has-failed-us-all-poster-slammed-as-disgusting-by-nicola-sturgeon_uk_576288c0e4b08b9e3abdc483

citizenship officers (Andreouli & Dashtipour, 2013) and policy documents on “earned citizenship” (Andreouli & Howarth, 2013) both distinguish “good”, “deserving” and “elite” migrants from “bad”, “underserving” and “non-elite” migrants, with only the former being deemed suitable for inclusion in the country. However, Andreouli, Figgou, Kadianaki, Sapountzis, and Xenitidou (2017) demonstrate that when debating European migration, the category “Europe” itself can mean different things, both progress and decline, where decline is deemed to be caused by multiculturalism, which is facilitated by migration, therefore criticising the free movement principle.

Gibson and colleagues have focused specifically on talk about EU migration into the UK, and the ways in which this is designed to justify the exclusion of migrants. Gibson, Crossland, and Hamilton (2017) demonstrated how arguments about “social citizenship” were used to argue against allowing EU migration into the UK, here with categories such as “East European” and “immigrants” being presented as particularly likely to claim welfare benefits and therefore to be a financial burden on the UK. Gibson (2015) showed how Polish migrants were presented by young English participants as problematic in terms of the economy, their different culture and because they could be threatening and intimidating. Gibson and Booth (2018) focused specifically on UKIP’s anti migration policy, showing how their focus is on an Australian “points based” system that is (purportedly) aimed at allowing immigrants into a country based on their skills and therefore the economic value this will bring to the country. This policy was justified through libertarian tropes of allowing in anyone from around the world (including ethnically different groups) rather than favouring (predominantly) white Europeans as migrants. Such a strategy, which is based on specific categorisations, functions to deracialise the migration policy, while also arguing against allowing for free movement within the EU.

This discursive literature on migration collectively demonstrates how anti-immigration policies and stances are brought about by the flexible use of a range of specific categories (including Greek, Polish, deserving) to distinguish between those who are entitled and those who are not entitled to citizenship within the country people migrate to. This category work is used to present opponents of migration as reasonable and non-prejudiced, while also providing a justification for excluding migrant others.

Refugees constitute a specific sub-group of migrants, who are forced to leave their home countries because of a lack of safety. Unlike other migrants, refugees are legally entitled to seek refuge under international laws designed to protect them (United Nations, 2010). This means that a different, although connected, set of arguments is used in debates about refugees.

Discursive research regarding refugees (see Kirkwood & Goodman, 2018, for a review) has shown that a dominant feature of refugee debates is also related to categories, with opponents of refugees arguing that they are not really refugees at all, but actually illegal immigrants (O’Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007) or economic migrants, for example through the distinction between “bogus” and “genuine” asylum seekers (Lynn & Lea, 2003), a distinction that can be blurred (Goodman & Speer, 2007), meaning that all refugees come to be presented as at least potentially false. This has the implication of presenting refugees as an economic burden (Hynes & Sales, 2009), who through their (alleged) deception can also be presented as immoral (Lynn & Lea, 2003) and likely to be criminal (Leudar et al., 2008). Leudar et al. (2008) showed how the category of asylum seeker is so often linked with criminality that the category itself comes to imply a certain level of criminality. Natural disaster metaphors such as “wave” and “flood” (Parker, 2015) and personal accounts (Hanson-Easey & Augoustinos, 2012) are used to imply that refugees are a source of threat, with the specific threat of terrorism (Rudiger, 2007). Therefore, opposition to refugees is presented as being in the nation’s best interests, to protect social cohesion and to prevent extremists from taking advantage of the situation (Goodman, 2008; Lynn & Lea, 2003), while, as with broader opposition to immigration, care is taken to avoid this opposition being taken as due to racism (Goodman, 2010; Mulvey, 2010).

Literature on the current “crisis” has shown that, despite the images of drowned refugees and the footage of the destruction in Syria (where many, but not all refugees are coming from), many of the standard anti-asylum arguments, particularly in terms of presenting refugees as economic migrants, were still in use (Goodman & Speer, 2007). Dehumanising language has also been documented being used throughout the crisis, for example David Cameron’s use of the terms “swarm” and “bunch” of migrants (BBC, 2015). It has also been shown that the naming of the crisis changed regarding the location of the crisis and the people involved, being mainly a “migrant crisis”, but temporarily becoming a “refugee crisis” following the publication of photographs of a drowned refugee boy (Goodman et al., 2017; Nightingale & Goodman, 2016), an event that has been shown to have increased sympathetic representations of refugees across Europe (Parker, Naper, & Goodman, 2018). This demonstrates that what constitutes a “crisis” is (re-)constructed through how it is represented, meaning that both the nature of the crisis and the people involved in the crisis are subject to categorisation through public debates. However, to date there has been no analysis of the categorisation or representation of child refugees who may be allowed into the UK during the “crisis”. The aim of this article is therefore

to address how users of the *Daily Mail's* discussion forum responded to the news about the UK government's decision to allow unaccompanied child refugees into the UK.

Method

The data used in this project comes from the online discussion forum² that directly followed the *Daily Mail's* article entitled "David Cameron announces major U-turn on refugee children as he opens the door for some living in camps inside Europe".³ This particular forum was chosen because the article represents an unusual situation where the *Daily Mail* made a pro-refugee argument that (the newspaper claims) affected policy. While the website and its forum cannot be seen to be representative of the general public, the *Mail Online* is the most popular news website in the UK, with over 30 million viewers per month (Ponsford, 2017), which represents an important arena of debate. The forum used in this analysis (now closed to new posts) has 2,014 contributions, some of which have over 3,000 ratings, meaning that this data as well as focusing on a unique and controversial issue is also naturally occurring (see Potter, 2004) and contains a large amount of interaction.

The literature on the use of discussion forums is mixed, with some (e.g. Burke & Goodman, 2012) showing that online settings can lead to unguarded hostile language directed at asylum seekers being used, in a phenomenon sometimes called "flaming" (Bomberger, 2004). Others (Weber, Loumakis, & Bergman, 2003) suggest that the use of the internet offers the potential for people to influence civic and political participation in a democratic society. In this way, online participation can be seen as a reflection of offline political discussions. Members of such forums usually do not know each other and do not have to be co-located in order to engage in a conversation (Fozdar & Pedersen, 2013). Discursive analyses of discussion forums have already been used to address how people argue for and against asylum seeking families (Goodman, 2007).

Although contributors to the forum have to supply a name, these are usually pseudonyms and are rarely detailed enough to allow a participant to be identified (i.e. a first name only); therefore names are presented as they appear on the website before the post. Posts are also presented as they appear on the site, so any spelling or grammatical errors are kept. All posts have a rating system where readers can click a symbol to show their support (an upwards arrow) or their

opposition (a downwards arrow) to each comment. These arrows (which can also be used to organise how the discussion is displayed) are also included to give a sense of popularity of posts.

Posts were analysed using discourse analysis. This approach is used to assess the action orientation of texts (Edwards & Potter, 1992), which is what they accomplish, rather than what they say about participants' true beliefs. Particular attention was paid to the use of categories throughout (Stokoe, 2012). In this analysis, conducted by both authors, the entire forum was initially read, and a number of key arguments were identified as being used consistently throughout the discussion. Of these, some represent well identified arguments, such as category work suggesting that refugees are economic migrants, associations with crime and cases of Islamophobia. A small number of comments supporting the policy of allowing in child refugees were also made but are notable for their lack of popularity in terms of their downward arrows and critical responses (additionally some of these posts appear to be ironic and therefore still critical of the policy). However, other previously unrecognised arguments were also found. These were analysed further to ascertain what they were accomplishing, how they worked in the interaction and how these different arguments linked together.

Analysis

The analysis identified four interconnected arguments that were used throughout the debate, together building a link with the EU referendum and the justification of a leave vote. They are:

1. Presenting refugee children as adults
2. Criticising the "burden" allowing in child refugees may have on taxpayers
3. Positioning the decision as opposed to the public's will
4. Using this decision as a warrant for voting for UKIP and to leave the EU

These four strategies will now be addressed in turn.

1. Presenting refugee children as adults

In the following posts child refugees are explicitly presented as being adults.

Extract 1: Lovingit, London

- 1 There had better not be men pretending to be children let in. [↑350 ↓2]

All these posts present the refugees as adults rather than children. This first comment, which is a statement, implies that the children may not be children at all. Two specific categories are of relevance here. First,

²<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3573053/David-Cameron-announces-major-U-turn-refugee-children-opens-door-living-camps-inside-Europe.html#comments>

³<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3573053/David-Cameron-announces-major-U-turn-refugee-children-opens-door-living-camps-inside-Europe.html>

there is the age category of child/adult, where children are presented as at least possibly adults, through the use of “pretending”, which itself presents the refugees as potentially cheating their way into the UK and therefore of low, potentially criminal, moral standing (Leudar et al., 2008). The second category used here is gender based, where only “men” are specifically referred to. This suggests validation of the notion that all refugees are young men, who are more threatening and less deserving than that implied by the use of the categories women or children. The next post, which starts a new discussion “thread”, begins by challenging two aspects of these refugees’ status, both relating to the categories to which they are presented as belonging to, first questioning if they are actually children and then whether or not they are orphaned.

Extract 2: Pobtyoc, Somewhere oop North

- 1 Please do dental checks on them first to check their age, and confirm they
- 2 actually are orphans. Looking at what is happening in other countries this will
- 3 open the flood gates to relatives suddenly turning up, or these 13 year olds
- 4 actually being nearer 30. Sad day for the UK [↑1777 ↓19]

The initial plea for dental checks (1) isn’t a request, but an opportunity to challenge these refugees’ legitimacy, using a supposedly objective measure (ageing teeth). Parallels with (unspecified) “other countries” (2) are used to build the case, and attempt to present as fact that allowing these refugees in is problematic, by claiming that adult refugees have posed as children abroad. Therefore, their category status as both children and orphans is challenged, in an attempt to remove the category entitlement of sympathy that “children” and particularly “orphan” can infer. These people’s presence comes to be presented as a problem for the entire country (4). This post is extremely highly rated, with very few negative ratings (1,777 positive, 19 negative) and is also met with support, rather than criticism in the posts that are made in direct reply, as can be seen in the following extract.

Extract 3: Augustus, Gosport, United Kingdom

- 1 Denmark are, allegedly suspending their programme of admitting kids after
- 2 some claim to be 15 when they are at least 20. Chancers the lot of them, yet
3. Cameron falls for it. So much for an Eton education! [↑235 ↓1]

First “Augustus” builds on the original post by specifying another European country (1) that, it is claimed, is no longer allowing child refugees in because they are not in fact children at all (2). By adding a specific country to the previous post’s more general “other

countries”, “Augustus” is collaboratively constructing this decision regarding refugees as a threat. While only “some” children are accused of cheating in this way, this behaviour is then generalised to all refugees, through an extreme case formulation (“Chancers the lot of them” 2) which now generalises the (supposedly) problematic behaviour of some to all members of the refugee category. This comment is ended with a criticism and insult of the then Prime Minister (2–3) which positions the UK (via its leader) as being duped by cheating refugees. The next reply from “mumof2” also supports the initial post by adding further support for the suggestion that these refugees are really adults, this time by referring to a different European country.

Extract 4: mumof2, Brighton and Hove, United Kingdom

- 1 That poor young woman who was murdered in sweden in January was
- 2 working in a “child migrant centre”. Her killer claimed to be 15 but has been
- 3 deemed by the courts to be “at least 18”. Her family say many of the “children”
- 4 are in their 20s. [↑207 ↓2]

Here, the risk of this policy is upgraded from being sad and problematic to being potentially dangerous through the reference to a migrant murderer who killed a sympathetic care worker. The murder victim’s family is drawn upon to add support to the idea that the children are actually adults (2–4). This further upgrades the risk referred to in previous comments and shows how the arguments in these posts are developed collaboratively (Jingree & Finlay, 2013). These well-supported posts, which are typical of this forum, contain a number of well-recognisable anti-refugee arguments. In particular they contain a strong “us and them” dichotomy (Leudar, Marsland, & Nekvapil, 2004) where refugees are presented as very different, and morally inferior, compared to the British “us” who are caring, but “duped”. This moral inferiority is displayed through their being lying and cheating “chancers” who may also be murderers (Leudar et al., 2008). Most dominant here is the delegitimisation of refugees. Refugees are normally challenged over the legitimacy of their claim and their status as refugees (Lynn & Lea, 2003); however, the Syrian civil war, which is not mentioned in these posts, makes such a challenge difficult, so instead the challenge over status is applied to their age, so that refugees initially categorised as children come to be recategorised instead as adults, demonstrating that category work is again used to delegitimise refugees. This section shows how arguments about the age of refugees were made and despite the reference to other European countries, no specific mention, or criticism, of the EU is found in these examples.

2. Presenting allowing in child refugees as a “burden” on taxpayers

In the following extracts allowing child refugees into the UK is presented as an unfair burden on the (British) taxpayer.

Extract 5: Lovingit, London

- 1 Why do local authorities(tax payers) have to take on the burden, why are the
- 2 family of these “chimdren” not taking them into their homes, paying for health
- 3 and education?
[↑287 ↓4]

The idea that refugees are a burden to the UK is central in these posts. The first post consists of two rhetorical questions. The first is used to present it as problematic that taxpayers should pay to look after child refugees and the second is used to argue that rather than UK taxpayers paying, the refugees’ families should be looking after them instead. The use of quotation marks around “chimdren” (sic) (2) demonstrates that the first strategy of suggesting that these refugees are really adults is being used alongside this argument, which again contains a clear “us and them” distinction and presents refugees explicitly as a financial “burden” (1). The lack of any orientation to the Syrian civil war in the suggestion that refugees should simply be looked after by their families additionally works to present them as illegitimate and not real refugees. This post is responded to with a comment (extract 6) that this will cause tax to rise.

Extract 6: Louiebay, London, United Kingdom

- 1 Council tax to go up +++ [↑324 ↓1]

This post supports the initial idea that refugees constitute a burden that will be shouldered by British taxpayers and demonstrates agreement and the collaborative work being done by the contributors to the forum to co-construct the refugees as problematic. A later post (extract 7) draws on the “differentiating the self” argument (Lynn & Lea, 2003) by suggesting that British taxes should be spent on British people “first”, which in practice would mean only if refugees originate from neighbouring countries. In practice, therefore, this means that refugees cannot be supported at all.

Extract 7: Nefertiti, Akhetaten, Egypt

- 1 British taxes should be spent on British citizens first. [↑107 ↓1]

Finally, in direct response to the comment on British taxes, “Acrid” offers the suggestion that these taxes may be “EU taxes”, which makes a direct link with the support of refugees with EU rules and costs.

Extract 8: Acrid, UK, United Kingdom

- 1 It seems like they are EU taxes. [↑2 ↓1]

This linking with the EU is a major part of this debate, and will be returned to shortly. This example demonstrates how the linking of the EU with the refugee crisis permeates this discussion. These posts collectively work to present refugees (whose status as refugees is omitted) as a burden to be shouldered unfairly by British taxes, which should be spent on services for British people. The category work used throughout this strategy is the drawing on the national category “British” (also “British citizens” and “tax payers”) as the category that should be prioritised, but that will be harmed by the decision. The ingroup category is favourably contrasted with the “families” of the refugees (demonstrating a lack of orientation to the category “orphan”). Other outgroups are non-citizens (demonstrating a clear “us and them” distinction) and the EU. Helping children refugees is therefore presented as a negative thing because of the supposed financial costs to taxpayers.

3. Positioning the decision to allow in child refugees as opposed to the public’s will

In the next section, which develops the idea that this decision is a burden on the British taxpayer, the decision is presented as being against what the public want. This can be clearly seen in the following, highly rated, comments.

Extract 9: Damo, Guangzhou, China

- 1 The MPs DO NOT speak for the people. We do not want them! [↑3066 ↓83]

These comments are all brief and clear in their message. The first post here explicitly states that this decision is unpopular. The poster’s footing (Goffman, 1981) is of speaking on behalf of the whole nation “we”, “the people” who are presented as being misrepresented by MPs, who are therefore positioned as a problematic other. This post simply signals opposition to allowing child refugees into the UK while also blaming politicians rather than refugees themselves, which has been shown to be a successful strategy for avoiding making personal comments that could open up the speaker to criticism for being uncaring (Goodman, 2008). This post, through its footing, suggests that everyone in the UK is opposed to the decision, which works to downplay the controversial nature of the claim. A little later, after some debate about exactly whose fault the decision is (with some blaming the opposition Labour party) “Is it me” blames the incumbent Conservative (Tory) party. This entire debate (including the disagreement over whom to blame) works to construct the decision as wrong and

against all public opinion, again removing the possibility that some may support it.

Extract 10: Is it me, York, United Kingdom

- 1 Actually it is Tory MPs who have pushed for this.
Remember this at election
 - 2 time. Representing us ? pfff. They have total disrespect for us [↑116 ↓3]
- “Is it me” continues to build MPs (qualified as Tory MPs [1] who have a parliamentary majority) as unrepresentative, here through the use of a rhetorical question (2) that is answered with a disagreement (“pfff” 2). The final statement that they lack respect also builds the “us and them” distinction between “us” (2) the public (who are opposed to supporting refugee children) and Tory MPs (2) who are presented as supporting this, something presented as disrespectful. Here category work distinguishes “us” (2) from the MPs who work against the interests of the ingroup, rather than refugees themselves. Therefore, not supporting refugee children is presented as respectful, whereas helping them is not. The next extract also contains a rhetorical question which works to present the decision as unrepresentative.

Extract 11: James, Surrey, United Kingdom

- 1 Does the British public not get a say? [↑100 ↓1]

In this post, which is not directly responding to the previous one, the same argument is made in much the same way. Another rhetorical question draws on the category “British public”, which here is used to suggest that the category entitlement of a democratic decision-making public is not being adhered to, which warrants the ground for complaint. The final post in this section, which was also the start of a new thread that was shown popular support (1,966 positive arrows), also contains a rhetorical question that implies that the decision is unrepresentative.

Extract 12: Stuart, Bradford

- 1 As this could affect the whole of the UK, shouldn't Cameron be asking the UK
- 2 first [↑1966 ↓25]

Like the earlier posts, this one implies that hosting child refugees will be problematic (“it could affect”) and uses the extreme and general “whole” to suggest that these problems will be for the entire country even though the hedging term “could” does allow for the possibility that allowing in refugees may not necessarily be negative and allows for the possibility that some parts of the country may not be affected. The rhetorical question that completes the post supports both previous ideas (i) that the decision is unpopular and (ii) that politicians are not representing the will of the wider public. Taken together, these posts collaboratively construct the decision as causing problems for the UK and these problems are attributed to British MPs who do not care about the

British public, which mirrors the talk of the far-right British National Party (BNP) about immigration (Johnson & Goodman, 2013).

4. Using this decision as a warrant for voting for UKIP and to leave the EU

In this final section it can be seen how these first three strategies are brought together and drawn upon to present this decision as a justification for both to vote for UKIP and to leave the EU in the (then) approaching referendum.

Extract 13: Brian, At Home, France

- 1 He will ask the country at the referendum. Vote to leave Europe. [↑958, ↓11]

This strategy has already been hinted at in previous extracts as it develops the arguments that have already been identified. This can be seen in the criticism of (then) Prime Minister Cameron (extract 3), the reference to EU taxes (extract 8) and the general criticism of MPs and the Prime Minister (most obvious in the previous section). The first post in this section is a direct response to the final post of the previous extract (“shouldn't Cameron be asking the UK first”, extract 12), which further shows how these strategies are related and how the arguments against refugees and the EU are built collaboratively by the forum users. This post explicitly links the decision to accept refugee children with the Brexit vote and presents a leave vote as the solution to the “problem” of allowing in refugees. The next post is longer, and also links Brexit with the refugee crisis.

Extract 14: Mike, Worthing

- 1 Dodgy Dave—good at doing u-turns as long as it benefits anyone other than
- 2 Brits. Worried about his legacy—well, here it is. If we vote remain he will be
- 3 the man that sold out Britain. If we vote for BREXIT he will be the man that
- 4 tried to sell out Britain. INSANE TO REMAIN—VOTE UKIP to rid ourselves
- 5 of the LibLabCon merchants and VOTE OUT to DUMP DAVE. [↑185 ↓1]

The post begins with an insult aimed at Cameron (1) which is based on his supposed poor leadership working against the interest of “Brits”. This means that, again, British leaders are presented as working against Britain. It is then suggested that Cameron can be stopped by voting two ways: for UKIP and to leave the EU (4). Staying in the EU is presented as irrational (“insane”, 4), which is part of a rhyming slogan (4) that is put in capitals to add emphasis (and perhaps to catch readers' attention). “LibLabCon” (5) is a reference to the three major British political parties who are here clearly lumped together into one problematic whole. This is signalled through a play on words with

“Con” representing both the Conservative (incumbent) party and that these parties all “con”, that is, deceive, the British people. Together these three parties are therefore presented as acting against the interest of the British people they are meant to represent. The use of “we” (2) again presents an “us and them” distinction where “we” are the (supposedly homogeneous) British whereas “they” are the politicians. The only exception is that UKIP are presented as outside these problematic politicians and more aligned with the British “us”, as UKIP is positioned as representing British people. The next post (“Citizen”) also positions UKIP, and its leader (Farage), as being different from other politicians because they are more representative of British interests.

Extract 15: Citizen, Cardiff

- 1 The only one who will return these children should the family suddenly be
- 2 found in Nigel Farage so if you vote for anyone other than UKIP you are
- 3 agreeing to these illegals immigrants entering the UK and taking your jobs,
- 4 your social housing and you benefits [↑318 ↓5]

This post links the refugees to the EU by drawing on the assumption that the EU means unchecked immigration, something that only UKIP (“the only one”, 1), with their aim of leaving the EU, would challenge. Alongside this argument for voting for UKIP, this post also works to problematise refugees, first by implying that these children may not really be orphans. This is an unusual strategy for challenging these refugees’ status, as more commonly it is their status as children, rather than orphans, which is challenged in this discussion. Nevertheless, these refugees are instead positioned as “illegals (sic) immigrants” (3) rather than refugees, again demonstrating how the categories are drawn upon and challenged in making these arguments. A three-part list is then used to suggest why these “migrants” are problematic. This list includes taking jobs, which seems to suggest that their status as children is ignored, or that these children are being categorised together with other immigrants. The final post in this extract by “SM” doesn’t challenge the refugees’ status as children (or orphans) but instead criticises the notion of taking refugees already in the EU.

Extract 16: SM, Gloucester, United Kingdom

- 1 So other EU countries are not safe havens! So does that mean we have to start
- 2 looking after French children too? When will the idiots in Westminster realise
- 3 we cannot fix the whole world. Hopefully 23rd June will be when they fin
- 4 out. [↑297 ↓2]

This draws on the widely used argument that refugees should only go to their nearest safe country (in

fact most refugees do go to their nearest countries, even when these aren’t always safe, UNHCR, 2016b) which means that no refugees from outside Europe (so no refugees) could ever go to the UK. This argument is drawn upon through the first statement (which is shown to be problematic through the use of the exclamation mark, 1) and the rhetorical question (2–3), which ridicules the idea of taking refugees already in the EU. These comments are then responded to first with an insult (“idiots”, 2), which is a common feature of these posts, to refer to politicians (“Westminster” is where British politicians work). Next, supporting these child refugees is presented as problematic through a broad generalisation and extreme case formulation that “we cannot fix the whole world” (3), which works to argue against any small steps being taken to help those in need because it won’t help everyone. The post is concluded with a reference to the Brexit referendum (“23rd June”, 3) which suggests that voting to leave the EU is the only way to resolve this “problem”. All these posts then work to present leaving the EU as the only way to stop this problematic policy of allowing in child refugees.

Discussion

This analysis has demonstrated that in a *Mail* discussion forum, where the Prime Minister’s decision to implement the “Dubs amendment” to let in child refugees was debated, four interconnected strategies were used, which together built to leaving the EU being presented as the solution to the “problem”. First, child refugees were presented as most likely not being children. Here category work was used to delegitimise the children and to present them as a threat, rather than as people in need of support. This was presented as a Europe-wide problem. Next, allowing in refugees was presented as a financial burden to the UK, although part of this financial burden was blamed on the EU. Because of the problematic status of refugees, the decision to allow in child refugees came to be presented as against the will or the public and as something imposed by politicians. Finally, the solution to the problem was presented as voting to leave the EU. This work therefore demonstrates the importance of paying attention to debates that are played out in the public sphere regarding different controversial topics so as to ascertain how they can become linked, and how they can be used as calls for political action.

The most striking finding from this analysis is the way that the refugee crisis and Brexit are shown to be interlinked. While on the face of it these are two distinct issues, there is a very clear and often explicit association of the two throughout this debate. This analysis is therefore the first to demonstrate the ways in which these diverse topics came to be interconnected and therefore poses potential support for the idea that the UKIP and leave EU campaign strategy of linking the two (as seen in the controversial “Breaking

Point" poster campaign) may have been successful in this particular context (which is a forum on an already anti-immigration and EU newspaper). The EU is not responsible for the movement of refugees into the UK, and asylum figures remained completely unaffected by the refugee crisis (Refugee Council, 2016), but the UK is signed up to the United Nations convention on refugees, which is international (not EU) law. Additionally, more immigrants were coming into the UK from *outside* rather than within the EU at that point (Office of National Statistics, 2016). However, in the debate here, the EU is clearly blamed for causing migration into the UK and leaving it is presented as the solution (and often the only way) to prevent this.

The refugee/migration "crisis" of 2015 and 2016 has therefore been shown to be drawn upon by contributors to this particular discussion forum, as well as the anti-EU campaign and UKIP, as a justification for opting to leave the EU. In this case then not only are two distinct issues (child refugees and the EU) brought together and constructed as interconnected, but the plight of child refugees, in the context of the "crisis", is used to achieve a practical action, which is arguing to leave the EU, something which appears to be successful.

There are a number of underpinning argumentative positions that are constructed as factual throughout this discussion forum, including immigration necessarily being problematic, refugees being immigrants, immigrants being untrustworthy and threatening, and that there is a consensus that British people are opposed to immigration and want to leave the EU. All of these assumptions are at least potentially problematic and controversial (in the end 51.8% of those of who voted, voted to leave); however, much of the opposition to these assumptions is absent. A major controversial issue within British politics is the extent to which migration into the UK is positive or negative, yet here there is very little suggestion that migration of any kind (including regarding child refugees) can have any benefits. The common anti-asylum argument that refugees are not really refugees (Lynn & Lea, 2003; Goodman & Speer, 2007) is also prevalent in this debate, despite the news reports of the civil war in Syria (where the refugees in Syria were coming from), which would seem to challenge this idea.

Discursive research on migration can be broadly organised into three areas that are all used in opposition to migration: categorisation, citizenship and attending to possible accusations of prejudice. Each will now be addressed. Regarding categorisation, different categories are shown to relate to whether or not migrants are deemed to be entitled or not to enter the country (Andreouli & Howarth, 2013; Andreouli et al., 2017; Sapountzis et al., 2006) and refugees can be repositioned as economic migrants (Goodman & Speer, 2007; Lynn & Lea, 2003). While this categorisation does occur in this debate, the more prevalent category work is to reposition children as adults. This makes sense given the context of the news event being discussed, and to some extent mirrors the British

government's approach to child refugees, who do have to prove that they are children (Crawley, 2007). What this category work does is to add to the suggestion that refugees are untrustworthy, and perhaps not really refugees at all (Lynn & Lea, 2003), but it removes the need for humanitarian support for refugees of any age, even though young adult refugees are very probably in need of a range of support (Crawley, 2007) and arguably should not be denied the right to life and safety even if they are over 18 years of age.

A further category that is contested in the discussion forum is that of "orphan", so that the unaccompanied nature of the child refugees comes to be questioned. This additional category work undermines the moral and humanitarian argument that orphans should be supported. Instead, the alternative category "chancers" is used to present all refugees as problematic. Other categories are mobilised in the data; alongside the well-recognised "us and them" distinction (Leudar et al., 2004) made between refugees and the host nation, there is also a distinction made between the UK and Europe, where Europe is the problematic outgroup, and between the general British public and MPs, who are presented as acting against the interest of the public. This analysis therefore builds on the existing work about category use by demonstrating which additional, context relevant, category distinctions are used in addition to those found in previous studies.

Citizenship has been shown to be another important contested area in talk about migration, especially in regard to EU migration (Kadianaki et al., 2018; Sapountzis & Xenitidou, 2018). In the data analysed here citizenship is rarely topicalised, but it is of relevance, particularly through the suggestions that the refugees don't belong in the UK (furthering the "us and them" distinction) and more broadly in the claims that supporting these refugees would be an unreasonable expense for the UK in the form of taxes, which implies that the refugees would not contribute anything to the host nation. Whereas Andreouli and Howarth (2013) show how talk about citizenship can be used to distinguish "deserving" from "undeserving" migrants, the posts in this discussion forum clearly present the refugees as undeserving. European citizenship is presented as a cost and a threat to UK sovereignty (e.g. referring to "EU taxes" to support refugees) and UK citizenship is drawn upon in the complaints that UK politicians are not acting in the interests of "ordinary" citizens.

Related to this, the denial of, and orientation to, prejudice is another well-recognised feature of talk about immigration (Augoustinos & Every, 2007; Sapountzis et al., 2013; Xenitidou & Sapountzis, 2018). In regard to this, a surprising finding of the analysis is the similarity with talk that is often considered to be far-right and extremist permeating the debate. As well as the clearly anti-immigrant rhetoric, even applied to children orphaned through war, there is also the conspiratorial argument that states that the government (and indeed all politicians) are so out of touch that they work against the interests of the general population in supporting

immigration, so that existing citizens are being discriminated against. This argument was used by Nick Griffin, then leader of the far-right BNP, in his anti-immigration and anti-EU comments (Johnson & Goodman, 2013) and this is also apparent in some of the posts featured here (particularly “Mike” in extract 14). While the BNP are not referred to in the discussion, instead UKIP and its leader Nigel Farage are presented as the solution to the problem by those in the debate, which suggests that what was considered to be the talk of an extremist has now become commonplace, with popular support, at least in this particular discussion. The orientation to prejudice therefore is in terms of presenting the UK majority (or at least the forum users) as the victims of prejudice, rather than perpetrators, which suggests that, in this context, denials of prejudice towards refugees are simply not required, suggesting that there is no taboo against prejudice (Billig, 1988) in operation here. Elsewhere, opposition to refugees is presented predominantly as an economic issue, which is presented as “common sense”.

This analysis took place before another major media story, which occurred when the “Dubs amendment” policy being debated came into effect in October 2016. When child refugees did start to move into the UK many national newspapers, including the *Daily Mail*, the paper that had campaigned to allow these children in, ran numerous headlines stating that the refugees were not really children. This means that these newspapers were drawing on the first strategy identified here. The news story developed as some British celebrities challenged these negative reports (and therefore strategy one in this analysis), as being problematic and lacking humanity. There followed media criticism of these celebrities and a continuation of the claims that these refugees were not children. This demonstrates that the findings of the current analysis can also be applied to the later debate and show the development of this strategy. The “Dubs amendment” scheme was abandoned in February 2017.

This discussion forum was of special interest because it showed the response to a newspaper that is often vociferously anti-immigration here supporting (a limited number of) refugees, on the ground that they were deserving child refugees. Nevertheless, despite the newspaper’s argument for this exception, its readers (or at least those contributing to this discussion) are clearly not convinced by this argument and instead the more normal anti-migration rhetoric of the paper is clearly in use here. However, despite this clear opposition to the newspaper’s (unusual) position, there were very few obvious displays of anger directed towards the paper, with the criticism (often signalled through insults) directed towards the then Prime Minister, politicians in general and the EU. It could therefore be concluded that the newspaper failed in convincing its readers to make an exception to opposing helping refugees built on a compassionate plea, but that this did not appear to reflect badly on the paper as its more common anti-immigration position is repeated and supported throughout the debate.

As well as what featured in the debate, what was not said is also of interest. Of particular note is the lack of arguments based on compassion and/or humanitarianism throughout the debate. While it has been demonstrated that arguments based on these did appear to be made regarding the wider refugee crisis, especially following the photographs of a drowned 3-year-old refugee (Goodman et al., 2017), and that these humanitarian arguments are some of the strongest pro-refugee strategies (Kirkwood, 2017; Wroe, 2018), these arguments are generally missing from this particular discussion and are not found to be used to respond to some of the anti-asylum arguments that are featured in this analysis. There are exceptions to this, as some contributors to the forum did begin threads with humanitarian arguments; however, these posts make up the “worst rated” (those with the most “negative arrows”) in the discussion and are met with hostility, rather than support, from respondents.

Also missing from the discussion are overt references to Syria, the country with a civil war where the child refugees are from. This suggests that even in a situation where there is a clear and salient reason for refugees fleeing safety (Syria’s civil war) and when it is unaccompanied children that it is argued should be helped, there is still overwhelming opposition to supporting refugees with humanitarian arguments. The lack of reference to the civil war and to the unaccompanied children whom it caused to be refugees is an important omission which works to undermine potential legitimate reasons for the child refugees’ presence. Given this situation, in the context of a *Daily Mail* discussion forum, it is hard to expect any situation where there may be support for, or a display of willingness to help, refugees. It is therefore difficult to see how any pro-refugee argument could gain traction.

Conclusion

This analysis has demonstrated the tangential but nevertheless connected discourse of the refugee “crisis” and Brexit, so that a discussion about child refugees quickly became one about Brexit, building a rationale to leave the EU. This reflects attempts by UKIP and the leave campaign to link these subjects. The analysis also shows how far-right discourse appears to have become common and mainstream in talk about preventing access for refugees and that humanitarian arguments in support of refugees carry no rhetorical weight. The possibilities for successfully campaigning for the inclusion of vulnerable refugees seem to be extremely bleak.

References

- Andreouli, E., & Dashtipour, P. (2013). British citizenship and the “other”: An analysis of the earned citizenship discourse. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 24, 100–110. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2154>

- Andreouli, E., Figgou, L., Kadianaki, I., Sapountzis, A., & Xenitidou, M. (2017). "Europe" in Greece: Lay constructions of Europe in the context of Greek immigration debates. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 27*, 158–168. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2301>
- Andreouli, E., & Howarth, C. (2013). National identity, citizenship and immigration: Putting identity in context. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 43*, 361–382. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2012.00501.x>
- Augoustinos, M., & Every, D. (2007). The language of "race" and prejudice: A discourse of denial, reason, and liberal-practical politics. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 26*, 123–141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927x07300075>
- BBC (2015, 30 July). David Cameron criticised over migrant "swarm" language. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-33716501>
- Billig, M. (1988). The notion of "prejudice": Some rhetorical and ideological aspects. *Text, 8*, 91–110. <https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1988.8.1-2.91>
- Bomberger, A. (2004). Ranting about race: Crushed eggshells in computer-mediated communication. *Computers and Composition, 21*, 197–216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2004.02.001>
- Burke, S., & Goodman, S. (2012). "Bring back Hitler's gas chambers": Asylum seeking, Nazis and facebook: A discursive analysis. *Discourse and Society, 23*, 19–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926511431036>
- Crawley, H. (2007). *When is a child not a child? Asylum, age disputes and the process of age assessment*. Immigration Law Practitioners' Association. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.ilpa.org.uk/data/resources/13266/ILPA-Age-Dispute-Report.pdf>
- Crawley, H. (2010). No one gives you a chance to say what you are thinking: Finding space for children's agency in the UK asylum system. *Area, 42*, 162–169. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2009.00917.x>
- Crawley, H., Duvell, F., Sigona, N., McMahon, S., & Jones, K. (2016). Unpacking a rapidly changing scenario: Migration flows, routes and trajectories across the Mediterranean, (Research Brief No. 1). Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.medmig.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/MEDMIG-Briefing-01-March-2016-FINAL-1.pdf>
- Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992). *Discursive psychology*. London, UK: Sage.
- Figgou, L., Sapountzis, A., Bozatzis, N., Gardikiotis, A., & Pantazis, P. (2011). Constructing the stereotype of immigrants' criminality: Accounts of fear and risk in talk about immigration to Greece. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 21*, 164–177. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.1073>
- Fozdar, F., & Pedersen, A. (2013). Diablogging about asylum seekers: Building a counter-hegemonic discourse. *Discourse & Communication, 7*, 371–388. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481313494497>
- Gibson, S. (2015). Constructions of "the Polish" in northern England: Findings from a qualitative interview study. *Journal of Social & Political Psychology, 3*, 43–62. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v3i2.414>
- Gibson, S., & Booth, R. (2018). "An Australian-style points system": Individualizing immigration in radical right discourse in the 2015 U.K. General election campaign. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 24*, 389–397. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000267>
- Gibson, S., Crossland, M., & Hamilton, J. (2017). Social citizenship and immigration: Employment, welfare, and effortfulness in online discourse concerning migration to the United Kingdom. *Qualitative Psychology, 5*, 99–116. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000078>
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Goodman, S. (2007). Constructing asylum seeking families. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines, 1*, 35–49.
- Goodman, S. (2008). Justifying the harsh treatment of asylum seekers on the grounds of social cohesion. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology, 6*, 110–124.
- Goodman, S. (2010). "It's not racist to impose limits on immigration": Constructing the boundaries of racism in the asylum and immigration debate. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across disciplines, 4*, 1–17.
- Goodman, S., Sirriyeh, A., & McMahon, S. (2017). The evolving (re)categorisations of refugees throughout the 'Refugee/Migrant crisis'. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 27*, 105–114. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2302>
- Goodman, S., & Speer, S. A. (2007). Category use in the construction of asylum seekers. *Critical Discourse Studies, 4*, 165–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405900701464832>
- Greenslade, R. (2005). Seeking scapegoats: The coverage of asylum in the UK press, Institute of Public Policy Research. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from https://www.ippr.org/files/images/media/files/publication/2011/05/wp5_scapegoats_1359.pdf
- Hanson-Easey, S., & Augoustinos, M. (2012). Narratives from the neighbourhood: The discursive construction of integration problems in talkback radio. *Journal of Sociolinguistics, 16*, 28–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2011.00519.x>
- Hynes, T., & Sales, R. (2009). New communities: Asylum seekers and dispersal. In A. Bloch & J. Solomos (Eds.), *Race and ethnicity in the 21st century* (pp. 39–61). Aldershot, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- International Organisation for Migration. (2015). Irregular migrant, refugee arrivals in Europe top one million in 2015: IOM. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <https://www.iom.int/news/irregular-migrant-refugee-arrivals-europe-top-one-million-2015-iom>
- Jingree, T., & Finlay, W. M. L. (2013). Expressions of dissatisfaction and complaint by people with learning disabilities: A discourse analytic study. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 52*, 255–272. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.2011.02064.x>
- Johnson, A., & Goodman, S. (2013). Reversing racism and the elite conspiracy: Strategies used by the British national party leader in the justification of policy. *Discourse, Context and Media, 2*, 156–164. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2013.04.006>
- Kadianaki, I., & Andreouli, E. (2017). Essentialism in social representations of citizenship: An analysis of Greeks' and migrants' discourse. *Political Psychology, 38*, 833–848. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12271>
- Kadianaki, I., Andreouli, E., & Carretero, M. (2018). Using national history to construct the boundaries of

- citizenship: An analysis of Greek citizens' discourse about immigrants' rights. *Qualitative Psychology*, 5, 172–187. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000087>
- Kirkwood, S. (2017). The humanisation of refugees: A discourse analysis of UK parliamentary debates on the European refugee 'crisis'. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 27, 115–125. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2298>
- Kirkwood, S., & Goodman, S. (2018). Discursive psychological research on refugees. In S. Gibson (Ed.), *Discourse, peace and conflict: Discursive psychology perspectives* (pp 169–184): Springer.
- Leudar, I., Hayes, J., Nekvapil, J., & Turner Baker, J. (2008). Hostility themes in media, community and refugee narratives. *Discourse & Society*, 19, 187–221. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926507085952>
- Leudar, I., Marsland, V., & Nekvapil, J. (2004). On membership categorisation: "us", "them" and "doing violence" in political discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 15, 243–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926504041019>
- Lynn, N., & Lea, S. (2003). A phantom menace and the new apartheid: The social construction of asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom. *Discourse and Society*, 14, 425–452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926503014004002>
- Meleady, R., Seger, C., & Vermue, M. (2017). Examining the role of positive and negative intergroup contact and anti-immigrant prejudice in Brexit. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 56, 799–808. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12203>
- Mulvey, G. (2010). When policy creates politics: The problematizing of immigration and the consequences for refugee integration in the UK. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 23, 437–462. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feq045>
- Nightingale, A., & Goodman, S. (2016) Building the barricade: Public and media debates of the refugee crisis. *The Psychologist*.
- O'Doherty, K., & Lecouteur, A. (2007). "Asylum seekers", "boat people" and "illegal immigrants": Social categorisation in the media. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 59, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530600941685>
- Office of National Statistics. (2016). Statistics bulletin: Migration statistics quarterly report: August 2016. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/migrationstatisticsquarterlyreport/august2016>
- Parker, S. (2015). "Unwanted invaders": The representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Australian print media. *eSharp*, 23.
- Parker, S., Naper, A., & Goodman, S. (2018). How a photograph of a drowned refugee child turned a migrant crisis into a refugee crisis: A comparative discourse analysis. *For(E)Dialogue*, 2, 12–28
- Ponsford, D. (2017, June 26). NRS national press readership data: Telegraph overtakes Guardian as most-read "quality" title in print/online. *Press Gazette*. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/nrs-national-press-readership-data-telegraph-overtake-s-guardian-as-most-read-quality-title-in-printonline/>
- Potter, J. (2004). Discourse analysis as a way of analysing naturally occurring talk. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 200–221). London, UK: Sage.
- Refugee Council (2016). The UK's role in the international refugee protection system. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0004/3370/The_UK_s_Role_in_the_international_refugee_protection_system_Jun_2017.pdf
- Rudiger, A. (2007). Prisoners of terrorism? The impact of anti-terrorism measures on refugees and asylum seekers in Britain. *Refugee Council*. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/prisoners-of-terrorism-the-impact-of-anti-terrorism-measures-on-refugees-and-as-126138>
- Sapountzis, A., Figgou, L., Bozatzis, N., Gardikiotis, A., & Pantazis, P. (2013). "Categories we share": Mobilising common in-groups in discourse on contemporary immigration in Greece. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 23, 347–361. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2128>
- Sapountzis, A., Figgou, E., Pantazis, P., Laskaridis, G., Papastavrou, D., Bozatzis, N., & Gardikiotis, A. (2006). Immigration and European Integration in Greece: Greek national identity and the "Other within". *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 3, 27–47. <https://doi.org/10.16997/wpcc.57>
- Sapountzis, A., & Xenitidou, M. (2018). Criteria of citizenship and social inclusion in immigrants' discourse in Greece. *Qualitative Psychology*, 5, 155–171. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000094>
- Stokoe, E. (2012). Moving forward with membership categorization analysis: Methods for systematic analysis. *Discourse Studies*, 14, 277–303. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445612441534>
- UNHCR. (2016a). Syria Regional Refugee Response. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php%20>
- UNHCR. (2016b). Global Trends for Forced Migration in 2015. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/statistics/unhcrstats/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html?query=refugees%20in%20dangerous%20countries>
- United Nations (2010). *Conventions and protocol relating to the status of refugees*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/basic/3b66c2aa10/convention-protocol-relating-status-refugees.html>
- United Nations Refugee Agency. (2015). A million refugees and migrants flee to Europe in 2015. Retrieved March 12, 2019 from <http://www.unhcr.org/567918556.html>
- Weber, L. M., Loumakis, A., & Bergman, J. (2003). Who participates and why? An analysis of citizens on the internet and the mass public. *Social Science Computer Review*, 21, 26–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439302238969>
- Wroe, L. (2018). "It really is about telling people who asylum seekers really are, because we are human like anybody else": Negotiating victimhood in refugee advocacy work. *Discourse and Society*, 29, 324–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926517734664>
- Xenitidou, M., & Sapountzis, A. (2018). Admissions of racism in discourse on migration in Greece: Beyond the norm against prejudice? *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 48, 801–814. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2364>