British Newspapers and the Representation of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Immigrants between 1996 and 2006

by

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2008
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Introduction

Immigration and the presence of “different” communities in Britain have been the subject matter of many studies and debates from various angles within the last few decades. New major developments in the world order during the recent decades such as the political shifts from a bipolar world order to what came to be known as a ‘new world order’, the emergence of a new socio-political/cultural categorisations and the new ‘blocs’ along with (constructed and actual) threats of ‘terrorism’ have all contributed to emergence of discourses of urgency in the demarcation of ‘us’ and ‘them’ among many modern European societies. These processes in turn translate into a tendency towards ‘conservative’ ideologies and identity convergence in several European countries (Wodak & Van Dijk 2006, Wodak 1996, Van Dijk 1991).

Within such grand changes in the world arena and on a more local level within Britain there have emerged concerns/interests on issues of ‘national identity’, ‘British-ness’ and immigration in terms of what is to be constructed as in-group ‘home’ communities and out-group ‘other’ communities. Thus, as research shows,1 the last 10 years have been increasingly replete with discourses on/about immigration, refugees and asylum seekers with British public discourses and “the issue” has become ubiquitous in socio-political argumentations of the mass media.

On the other hand, the hegemonic majority power and the tendency to marginalise and ‘cast out’ the constructed out-groups have intertwined with modern liberal and egalitarian discourses in modern societies -which prevailed after the Second World War (Van Dijk 1991). This meant that “older” discriminatory discourses on ‘out-groups’ have had to take on a quasi-argumentative elaboration focusing on “culture” and religiously avoiding “race” in their discursive construction of ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ (Billig 2006, Van Dijk 1991:25). However, abandoning the strict ‘racialised’ definition of racism, does not necessarily entail abolishment of these discourses altogether.

With this context in mind, the present study investigates 10 years of British newspapers coverage of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees (henceforth RASIM) between 1996 and 2006 within various socio-political events occurred inside and outside the UK. This paper will account for discursive representations of these groups through detailed textual analyses of a sample of newspapers published at five critical points in time and contextualise the linguistic micro-processes within the world events and provide a rough historical mapping of the different ways British newspapers have represented these groups of people. The analysis also attempts to

1 See Fig. 1 on the increasing number of British newspapers articles on/about immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers between 1996-2006
account for differences and similarities of representations of these groups among a
variety of newspapers in terms of their formats as tabloids or broadsheets and of their
ideological associations (for example, conservative versus liberal).

The paper will firstly discuss some relevant concepts of critical discourse analysis,
and then review a few studies on representations of RASIM in the British context. In
the following section the RASIM project, its methods of data sampling and analysis
are discussed. While the overall conclusions will be based on detailed analyses carried
out in all the five periods, this paper will be more focused on two periods in
particular.

**Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) as an approach in discourse analysis
maintains that discourse is not only a container and carrier of ideologies - hence
ideology is represented in discourse but also considers linguistic behaviour and
discourse as a social action on its own which contributes to or creates collective
mentalities i.e. ideologies. Due to the collective nature of ideologies, discourse
acquires a pivotal role in re/productive, re/creative and reshaping them. Thus, a
critical analysis of discourse is not only an academic investigation of various qualities
of a hegemonic ideology interwoven in discourse but it is in itself a social action of
opposing those discriminatory ideologies by raising awareness of opaque ways in
which power is legitimated in discourse, inter alia. In other words, CDA is explicitly
socially and politically committed and by definition needs to account for the link
between its detailed textual linguistic analyses and various levels of socio-political
contexts affecting the processes of production and interpretation of a discourse.

CDA holds that discourse –as in language use in any form- which refers to a larger
abstract collective mentality, ideology, is both ‘socially constitutive as well as socially
conditioned’ (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 258). That is, not only does it reflect a
picture, perhaps incomplete, of the ideology at work, but it also shapes those social
cognitions. Thus, the relationship between discourse and ideologies is ‘dialectic’
(Fairclough 2001).

Collective mentalities are fluid entities which are constantly formed and reshaped by
new discourses and interdiscursive dynamisms. In the meantime power as an
important aspect of discourse and ideology is not believed to derive from the language
per se. However; language/discourse is both used as a means of transfer and is the
essential entity of moulding a collective mentality as such. At another level power
manifests itself in language not only through micro-linguistic choices within the text
but also by control of a social occasion by means of the genre of a text (Weiss and
Wodak 2003:13).

On the other hand, the power carrying and power creating nature of discourse has a
direct link to the resultant linguistic product such as how “mass” the communication
can be, i.e. how widespread and influential a semiotic medium such as the press is.
Following the logic of ‘the communication era’ and the belief that communication is a
major source of power in modern “discursive” (modern) societies, the power of a
discourse is also directly linked to how far it is disseminated to and received by minds
at large. Thus, the quality of a ‘communicative event’ e.g. who gets to communicate with whom in what terms and conditions, is one domain on which critical awareness brought about by CDA can help throw light. These processes of demystification and critical analysis engage themselves in both opaque micro-linguistic qualities of discourse as well as grand macro-structures legitimising dominance, discrimination and power abuse and/inequalities.

In the same way symbolic elites as people who have access to mass public discourses (see Van Dijk 1996 for the role of ‘access’) such as politicians, journalists, scholars, teachers and writers have control over a potential re/production and re/creation of power relations in society. That is, ideologies as inherent collective mentalities have an essential discursive nature (Baker et al. 2008, Van Dijk 2005).

Criticality as another defining characteristic of CDA plays a role at all levels of an analysis such as identification of a social problem as well as data selection and methods of analysis. Criticality is directly linked with the concept of contextualisation in CDA and may take a top-bottom, bottom-top dynamism. It entails close examination of micro-mechanical categories e.g. explanation of lexical and/or syntactic choices and macro-argumentative assumptions and reflexivity on various levels of realisation of a discourse/text, explaining how and why these various elements are linked together. At the same time it means challenging the role of asymmetrical power relations including their re/production through non-discursive practices.

In other words, a critical analysis would consider a systematic description of a discourse – as in describing the characteristics of the language in a text- as merely the first—though essential—level of analysis and would call for going beyond this and explaining why and with what consequences the producers of a text have made specific linguistic choices (or have avoided doing so) among several other options that a given language may provide. Such a framework would hence be capable of accounting for absences as well as presences in the data (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001). On a different level criticality is associated with having a reflexive view on all levels of data collection, analysis, and contextualisation of findings in discourse analysis (Wodak 2001:9). Contextualisation on the other hand accentuates the role of historicity in the process of production and interpretation of discourse and ‘explicitly includes social-psychological, political and ideological components and thereby postulates an interdisciplinary procedure’ (Meyer 2001:15).

‘Discourse’ is another central concept which seems to have been the main buzzword in social sciences and linguistics in recent years. In terms of Laclau’s social constructivist approach, ‘discourse’ is a system of meanings providing networks through which different entities are assigned different values (Laclau & Mouffe 1981). In such a view there is no distinction between the ‘discourse’ as an ‘abstract social practice network’ and language as its realised form; both are seen as parts of a meaning producing apparatus. Jäger (2001), drawing on Laclau’s conceptualisation, maintains that meanings are all embedded within an epistemology that ‘discourse’ holds and the ‘values and meanings’ change with the change in a ‘discourse’.

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2 Such network systematicity, or the meaning making structure, can also be explained through van Dijk’s notions of macro-structure and social cognition.
2001:43). Van Dijk, in common with Wodak and Fairclough, distinguishes the abstract entities from each other and from the linguistic entity and by drawing on social cognitive psychology discusses this abstract entity in terms of a set of ‘mental models’ via which the production and/or interpretation of discourse, as in a concrete linguistic realisation, is mediated. He argues that ‘the meaning of a discourse [linguistic data], compared to its mental model, is incomplete’ (2001a:112). He maintains that ‘context models are mental representations that control many of the properties of discourse production and understanding, such as genre, topic choice, local meanings and coherence, on one hand but also speech acts, style and rhetoric on the other hand’ (Van Dijk 2001a:108).

Wodak’s definition of discourse maintains that language is a form of social practice (Fairclough and Wodak 1997) and prioritizes language as the starting point of the ‘demystification journey’ that is a CDA study, while at the same time emphasizing its link to abstract societal entities. Wodak (2001:66) defines discourse as:

‘A complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across social fields of action and thematically interrelate semiotic, oral and written tokens, very often as ‘texts’, that belong to specific semiotic types, that is genre’.

Van Dijk similarly stresses that CDA ‘needs a solid ‘linguistic’ basis while understanding ‘language’ ‘in a broad structural-functional sense’. However, discourse in a broader sense does not limit itself to language as in spoken or written communication, but, depending on the scope and aims of a CDA study, it can be extended to include any semiotics of communication in what van Dijk’s terms a communicative event, including conversational interactions, written text, as well as associated gestures, facework, typographical layout, images and any other ‘semiotic’ or multimedia dimension of signification’ (Van Dijk 2001a:98).

Thus, CDA can and is informed by numerous theoretical backgrounds to maintain its defining characteristics of being critical and explanatory, including linguistics. Hence it is inherently interdisciplinary in its explanatory power and it should essentially be diverse. This, in turn would equip CDA with an elaborate eclectic power (Weiss and Wodak 2003) which offers a range of various grand to micro level theories as well as an abundance of methods to choose from. To address how one might bundle together such a potentially confusing array of theories and methodologies under a generic term, Weiss and Wodak (2003:12 & Wodak 2001) suggest that the notion of ‘school’ could be used for CDA in line with van Dijk’s definition that CDA is discourse analysis ‘with an attitude’ which focuses on social problems and especially on the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power abuse or domination’ (Van Dijk 2001a:96). In a broader sense van Dijk would describe CDA a movement or ‘a different “mode” or “perspective” of theory, analysis and application throughout the whole field’ (Van Dijk 2001b:1). Such concerns and discussions at the same time have their roots in the fact that the variety of CDA’s proposed approaches would not allow CDA to be moulded into a single frame and hence make it difficult to be academically challenged. This avoidance of constructing CDA as a typical discipline

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3 Personal communication. Also Van Dijk, engaging in the same discussion, has started using the term Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) on his academic website (for more information please see www.discourses.org)
is to avoid the criticism that CDA may turn into a “full fledged” academic discipline with same rituals and institutional practices which are restrictive and counter-productive to CDA’s announced aims and ideals (Billig 2003).

**Mass media**

The structure of modern life and polity in terms of its ever growing centralization of power in communicative events assigns to discourse an unrivalled function and a unique permeability, in having access to a mass audience, to shape and control almost all other forms of social practices while, at the same time, being influenced by them. Wetherell and Potter (1992), drawing on Foucault, describe modern ways of power enforcement as ‘less obvious rituals, less clearly repressive and coercive- in some ways less physical and more mental’. That is, in modern societies power is more ‘discoursal’, -the power is acquired and accumulated in created collective consent which may or may not be the outcome of a true deliberation in a Habermasian sense. This increasingly discursive nature of modern polity has made the role of mass communication media central to proliferating, topicalising, de-topicalising, creating knowings and/or beliefs.

Media function as not only a link to reflect on what people think or believe but as a subliminal source of redefining, manipulating or creating ideologies of different types. The study of the role of mass media on immigration in Britain can be traced back to Hartman and Husband (1974), who conclude that mass media are a major source of ‘knowledge’ among people who may not have had a personal experience regarding immigrants. Despite pointing out to some positive functions of the mass media, they view mass media as the main culprit in creating racist ideologies among ordinary people and as being ‘capable of providing frames of reference or perspective within which people become able to make sense of events and of their experience’ (1974:16).

Jäger (2001) emphasizes that discourse transports this knowledge, on which the realities are constructed into the collective mentality of a community;

‘Discourses exercise power as they transport knowledge on which the collective and individual consciousness feeds. This emerging knowledge is the basis of individual and collective action and the formative action that shapes reality’ (Jäger 2001:38).

Van Dijk emphasizes the discursive nature of power and control in democratic societies and the role of consensus-making practices, and argues that through such a framework the mass media are assigned a ‘nearly exclusive control over the symbolic resources needed to manufacture popular consent, especially in the domain of ethnic relations’ (1991:42-3). His study on the processes of discriminatory discourse in

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4 Van Dijk defines an epistemologically different “truth” where he argues that ‘each community, or historical moment of a community, has its own criteria that allow members to establish that some beliefs are treated and shared as knowledge, whereas others are not’ (2005:73). The ‘pragmatic truth’ can be defined as extended engrained version of such “belief”. Also Wetherell and Potter (1992) argue that the focus of analysis should turn the veracity of racist claims and the study of arguments prevalent in such an ideology to the process whereby these claims become communicated as ‘facts’ and empowered as ‘truth’ (1992:60). This is in line with the argument that historical process of the formation of a ‘truth’ should also be the object of critical analysis of the ‘truth’ (Foucault 1980).
interpersonal communications shows that discourses disseminated through the mass media play a major intermediary role in the reproduction of public conceptualisations of out-groups and provide the input for most adult citizens’ thoughts and talk about ethnic groups (Van Dijk 1987).

Fairclough (1993), along with Herman and Chomsky (1988), points out the changes that the new technology and feasibility of mass communication have made to the nature of the public sphere. He argues that this new arrangement has created a mass (and almost always) unidirectional discursive practice, which creates a -or the- power centre and having access to this unique preferential discursive practice, directly or indirectly, facilitates the influence on the public at large in a collective sense to the benefit of dominating group.

**CDA studies on RASIM**

Critical discourse studies of the representations of RASIM and various ‘ethnic minorities’ as constructing ‘out-group’ and ‘others’ in modern societies have attracted ample attention in CDA. Wodak and Matouschek (1993) focus on ‘neo-racist’ discourses on ‘foreigners’ in Austria between 1989 and 1991 when they investigate the parliamentary official discourses along with newspaper texts and anonymous conversations on the streets recorded during the Waldheim campaign of 1987 and the Viennese municipal election of 1991. Their study suggests that the neo-racist discourse occasioned by population migrations after the collapse of communist Eastern Europe not only targets the specific Eastern European ethnic out-groups, but is elastic enough to combine these prejudices with those against other more traditional out-groups. They show how these new discourses link together with older prejudices against, Jews, Turks forming a generic neo-racist discourse.

Wodak (1996) accounts for the socio-political and historical context of the development of racist discourse in Austria in terms of argumentative strategies of constructing a ‘we’ discourse through self-justification. She maintains that

> ‘the linguistic forms of realising this constitution of an in group and out group…include the use of grammatically cohesive elements, such as personal pronouns, depersonalisation, generalisation, and equation of incommensurable phenomena; the use of vague characterisations; and the substantive definition of groups…The aim of…a discourse of self justification, which is closely wound up with

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‘we discourse’, is to allow the speakers to present herself or himself as free of prejudice or even as a victim of so-called ‘reverse’ prejudice.’ (1996:116)

The study concludes that the semantic macro-structure of the anti-foreigner discourse incorporates the elements of difference, deviance and perceived threat. In this structure the ‘foreigners’ damage the host country’s socio-economic interests while at the same time they are stereotyped as ‘different’ in terms of culture and mentality. Reisigl and Wodak (2001) reporting on studies of anti-foreigner discourses around the ‘Austria First’ petition campaign and the text of the petition identify certain topoi at work in discursive practices of the time. A short general list of topoi includes; Topos of advantage/usefulness, Topos of danger/threat, Topos of definition/name-interpretation, Topos of burdening/weighting down, Topos of law/right, Topos of culture, Topos of abuse, and Topos of authority (see also Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999).

Teo (2000) gives a comprehensive study on the construction of racism inherent in the structure of newspapers in Australia, which highlights more or less similar discursive strategies of negitivisation and criminalisation of Asian immigrants in Australia. Similar to Wodak (1996) and Van Dijk (1991) he draws on Barker’s (1981) arguments on the new assigned role on culture as a point of categorisation and maintains that there is a shift in the nature of racism and ethnic domination in modern and increasingly cosmopolitan societies such as the United States of America, Western Europe and Australia. While the people who practice this ‘new racism’ believe in the basic values of democratic egalitarianism, and would emphatically deny that they are racist, they would speak or act in such a way that distances themselves from the ethnic minority, engaging in discursive strategies that blame the victims for their circumstances on their own social, economic and even cultural disadvantage (see also Clyne 2005 on representation of asylum seekers in Australia).

Hartley and Montgomery indicate that textual features play an active political role in cultural relations of power. That is to say, the news is active in the politics of sense-making, even when the stories concern matters that are not usually understood as political. Such sense-making grand strategies function within an overall strategy of ‘we/them’ (1985: 260). That explains why news such as crimes, customs, practices or social ordering that are perceived as exotic and strange by the host culture automatically qualify for being highly news-worthy for the majority group.

Van Dijk (1991) elaborates on these macro-level categories and argues that macro categories, i.e. general grand themes or categories of attitudes, and micro categories, i.e. the practices of production and consumption of discursive practices, are complementary. Thus, the existence of a certain macro-structural theme about, say, immigration is functionally dependent of processes through which such a macro ideology is being incorporated and vice versa. This is why it is argued that these macro-micro relations between system principles and practices are both top down and

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6 Reisigl and Wodak (2001) define “topoi” as parts of argumentation which belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises. Topoi are the content-related warrants or ‘conclusion rules’ which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion, the claim. As such they justify the transition from the argument or arguments to the conclusion. Topoi are central to categorizations of seemingly convincing arguments which are widely adopted in prejudice discourse on out-groups.
bottom up. The cognitive aspects of a prejudicial ideology and the social realization of it are interconnected and attempts at both macro and micro levels can help break the chain of production and perception of a certain ideological cycle (see Essed 1991).

Hartmann and Husband (1974) – though not under the title of CDA- research the representation of immigrants in the news coverage of Britain critically and try to account for the impact of the news coverage on the general public. Although they seem to rely on descriptive content analysis as their main method, they apply reflexivity in their methods and findings. At the same time, they acknowledge that the description of such a representation would not adequately explain cognitive processes involved in the news representations of immigrants and call for an ‘audience’ study as well. They also focus on political debates and actions with regard to ‘race’ and to ‘coloured’ people and argue that ‘race’ in Britain has been portrayed as being concerned mainly with immigration and the control of entry of the so-called “coloured people” to the country. Their study concludes that the British press portrays Britain as a ‘white’ society and alienates ‘coloured’ people as a ‘problem’:

‘The perspective within which coloured people are presented as ordinary members of society has become increasingly overshadowed by a news perspective in which they are presented as a problem… the press continued to project an image of Britain as ‘white’ society in which the coloured population is seen as some kind of aberration, a problem, or just an oddity, rather than as ‘belonging’ to the society’ (1974:144-5)

An interesting and quite neglected point regarding xenophobic/prejudicial discourses is the striking similarities among them both in terms of micro-linguistic features and macro-argumentative structures. For example Hartmann and Husband (1974), studying the representation of immigrants in the media in the early 1970s, find major similarities between anti-Semitic discourses regarding Jewish immigrants in the 1920s and arguments and discursive strategies used in 1970s discourse on immigration, and argue that in both historical instances news discourses drew on fallacious xenophobic arguments. An example would be the argument that, more immigration (Jewish in 1920 or ‘coloured’ communities in 1972) will cause racism inside the country towards the already established immigrants. This is in line with the general macro-strategy where “the “coloured” population is seen as some kind of aberration, a problem, or just an oddity, rather than as ‘belonging’ to the [British] society” (1974:144-5). This theme of victim-perpetrator reversal is also a widespread argumentative strategy in contemporary anti-Semitic and xenophobic discourses (Wodak 1996, Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999, Teo 2000).

Van Dijk (1987) confirms the findings of Hartmann and Husband (1974) on immigration being represented as causing problems and argues that immigration and social problems are redefined as a ‘race’ problem concomitant with a clear ‘us/them’ divide in which these groups are not represented as being part of British society, but as outsiders who preferably should be ‘kept out’. Van Dijk (1991), in a major study of the British press, emphasizes the ‘genre-specific’ features of newspaper coverage, and shows how manipulation of the features of a typical news report such as ‘quotations and sources’ can play a significant role in the micro-linguistic mechanisms of a prejudicial ideology. All the proposed formal and semantic categorisations seem to partly overlap and integrate with each other in news articles.
Lynn and Lea (2003) also study the British context and try to account for the social construction of asylum seekers’ image in the UK through discursive and rhetoric analyses of the letters written to British national newspapers. In their investigation into ‘how social identities are manifested in the discourse, they conclude that there are three major discourse themes at work; discourses of differentiating the other where the different (negative) attributes are explicitly or implicitly associated with the asylum seekers, differentiating self where the boundaries between ‘us’ group and ‘them’ group are established through emphasizing the ‘us’ characterisation and establishing how the ‘other’ identity is harming it, and discourse of ‘enemy in our midst’ where ‘them’ group is being associated to terrorism, and criminality.

The RASIM project

The present paper is part of a larger project at Lancaster University’s Linguistics and English Language department. The study is a double-angled investigation in the representations of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in British newspapers between 1996 and 2006 with one strand looking into the texts through the traditionally qualitative approach of CDA and the other adopting the generally quantitative methodology of corpus linguistics (for reports on the corpus linguistics strand of the project please see Gabrielatos and Baker 2008, and Baker et al.2008). The present paper is, however, solely concerned with the CDA strand of the project.

Events and the texts

As might be predicted, the number of articles on or about immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees over a period of 10 years in all British newspapers with no restrictions on the type, size, ideological standpoints and scope of circulation of the newspapers would create a huge sized corpus and a huge number of articles that can be analysed in detail. The corpus linguistics strand of the project provided the starting point for the CDA strand in decisions on data selection. Through using query terms (see Gabrielatos 2007 for more details) the corpus linguistic strand of the project came up with more that 170,000 articles in which at least one instance of RASIM had been spotted within this period. While the large amount of data works to the benefit of corpus linguistic methodologies in boosting the validity and reliability of the findings, such a large amount is obviously beyond the possible range of analysis for CDA’s qualitative text-analytical procedure. Hence there was a need to find a systematic and sensitive mechanism of sampling and downsizing the data.

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7 ESRC funded project entitled “discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspapers between 1996 and 2006” carried out at Lancaster University Linguistics Department 2006-2007. The project had two methodological strands; CDA and Corpus linguistics. Ruth Wodak, Michal Krzyzanowski, Majid KhosraviNik collaborated on the CDA strand while the corpus linguistics strand was carried out by Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos, and Tony MacEnery. For more information please see, http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/activities/285/.

8 The CDA strand of the project has benefited from the contributions of Michal Krzyzanowski in the course of the CDA analysis and his contribution in devising a sensible and systematic down-sampling procedure is specially appreciated.
Figure 1 shows a clear pattern of higher frequencies in the number of articles at different points of time which could indicate the general levels of attention paid to RASIM in the British press.

The graph shows the frequencies of articles between 1996 and 2006 in terms of number of articles and months. The first thing to note is that the attention paid to the issue of RASIM has been on a steady and significant rise within the last 10 years. This indicates that RASIM has increasingly become an important ‘issue’ in public debates in the British context. On the other hand, within this general rise some spikes can be traced in which RASIM have received an unprecedented high attention and hence frequency. These spikes are statistically significant. Thus, as the first down-sampling stage, we decided to focus on five spikes in which RASIM were at the centre of socio-political debates in British newspapers. This would give us five month-length periods of newspaper coverage on RASIM. Later, these periods were roughly linked to their relevant world events as follows:

**Period 1:** March 1999, NATO invasion in Kosovo and Kosovar refugees.

**Period 2:** September 2001, 9/11 attacks and issues of asylum seekers in Britain, Australian ‘boat people’ case.

**Period 3:** May 2002, second round of French presidential election LePen vs. Chirac, asylum seekers’ children schooling, and assassination of Pim Fortyun.

**Period 4:** March 2004, Madrid bombing, the asylum bill, East European immigration checks, expansion of EU.

**Period 5:** May 2005, Campaign leading to British General Elections

This selection of periods, based on the events and the spikes, on the one hand helps the CDA strand to apply a preliminary restrictive factor in down-sampling the data.

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9 Adapted from Gabrielatos & Baker (2008)
and on the other hand makes the data selection sensitive to the aims of deconstructing the representation of RASIM in terms of relevant socio-political developments, instead of applying a randomised text selection which is usually advocated by strictly quantitative approaches.

Further down-sampling

The outcome of the first restrictive sampling would be the coverage of RASIM in five different months throughout all the newspapers, which would still be beyond what A single CDA analyst can analyse. Thus, two other phases of down-sampling were applied here, a quantitative and a qualitative one;

*Quantitative* down-sampling of the corpus, narrowing the search to one week of each spike which is most relevant to the world events;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Number of Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period 1: 24-31 March 1999</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 2: 11-17 September 2001</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 3: 05-12 May 2002</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 4: 11-17 March 2004</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 5: 17 March – 05 May 2005 (a week sampling)<strong>10</strong></td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Three newspapers with their Sunday editions* were selected in terms of the format (broadsheet [quality] or Tabloid) and socio-political ideologies (liberal or conservative) as follows;

One liberal quality newspaper: *The Guardian & The observer*
One conservative quality newspaper: *The Times & the Sunday Times*
One “tabloid” newspaper: *The Daily Mail & the Mail on Sunday*

The size of the data after quantitative down-sampling was reduced to 2669 pages for all periods.

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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Periods</th>
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<tr>
<td>22-31 March 1999</td>
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<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-17 March 2004</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March –May 2005</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>439</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Qualitative* down-sampling of the data**11** further restricts the selection of articles for detailed text analysis to only those articles pertaining to the issues of immigration,

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**10** As the topic of RASIM in British election campaigns would be an on-going topic throughout the campaign we decided that the best way was to select our data based on a week sampling in which selection starts from 7 weeks before the election day choosing one day from each week systematically; Monday of the first week, Tuesday of the second week and so on.
refugees and asylum-seeking in general. We chose only those articles which link to
the events which caused the spikes whilst ignoring the articles in which an irrelevant
or unimportant occurrence of RASIM is found (such as obituaries).

Methodology

Major CDA studies on social out-groups such as immigrants and foreigners within
Wodak’s Discourse-Historical and van Dijk’s socio-cognitive approaches have
developed useful methodologies and proposed several analytical categories through
which the representations of these groups in discourse can be accounted for.

Van Dijk’s (1991) analytical categories such as discourse topics definition of macro-
topics of the text under analysis and the definitions of sub-topics of the respective
parts of passages of the data are among the analytical categories employed in this
study. In the meantime the five level analytical approach proposed by the Discourse-
Historical approach (Wodak 2001); referential strategies (naming), predicational
strategies (attribution), argumentative strategies (topoi), perspectivisation, mitigation
and intensification strategies proved to be relevant to our study as well. Added to
these two major methodologies is Van Leeuwen’s (1996) socio-semantic approach to
discourse analysis where it is argued that socio-semantic categorisation needs to be
the starting point of discourse analysis and representations of different social actors
are accounted for by linking these socio-semantic categories with their linguistic
realisations. Van Leeuwen proposes a detailed systematisation of the socio-semantic
and linguistic categories which may not all be relevant to specific research project but
it certainly lays the ground for an explanatory framework for CDA studies. Some of
the most relevant categories include; foregrounding/ backgrounding, passivation/
activation, personalisation/ impersonalisation, individualisation/ assimilation, and
functionalisation. While the study benefits from the system proposed by Van
Leeuwen (1996: 66) it does not apply all the categories proposed and at times some
other socio-semantic categories are redefined or created.

As well as this, genre specific features of the data- that is; newspapers- also play an
important role in rendering certain linguistic parameters more effective. Categories
like (i) topics, (ii) topic order, (iii) quotation patterns, (iv) naming the participants,
and (v) distribution of grammatical agency (proposed and applied by Van Dijk 1991
in accounting for British news discourses) are similarly relevant to this study.
Pietikainan (2003), who investigates representation of the indigenous minority group
in Finland, the Sami focuses on these analytical categories. Pietikainan also finds
‘absence’ at the discourse topics level to be an important aspect of discrimination in
Finnish news discourse and concludes that;

“the shortage of news about ethnic minorities, the clear emphasis of majority interests in the
topics, and the imbalance in terms of quotations, access to news, reporting order and grammatical roles
all give support to the claim that are often made by ethnic minorities that news about them is unfair and
imbalanced” (2003:605)

11 It should be noted that at this point the actual reading of the content material of the articles was
carried out and hence the study engages in actual qualitative analysis as of this stage, i.e. the analysis of
discourse topics.
In addition, metaphors have proved to be an important discursive strategy in an analysis of RASIM and ‘foreigners’. Several studies found that metaphors of aliens, water, natural disasters, pollution and impurity, war/fighting, house/building, disease/infection, animals, goods and the economy are salient to the argumentative structure of discourses of RASIM (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Wodak & van Dijk 2006, van Dijk 1987, 2004, Santa Ana 1999, Flowerdew & Tran 2002, Sedlak 2006).

Lakoff’s conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson 2003) and Chilton’s political metaphors (Chilton 2004) are also useful analytical categories in analysing discursive problematisation of out-groups. Santa Ana’s (1999) study on immigration to the USA shows that the dominant metaphor for immigrants in American news discourses seems to be; ‘immigrants are animals’ while less frequent are a set of secondary metaphors including, ‘immigrants are debased people, weeds, commodities’ (1999:198).

Considering the abundance of analytical categories proposed in various CDA studies, and in line with the concept of ‘eclecticism’ in the selection of methods in CDA, the present study makes use of a selection of CDA methodologies by mainly drawing on analytical categories proposed by Wodak’s Discourse-Historical approach to CDA (Wodak 2001, Reisigl and Wodak 2001), macro-strategies of positive self presentation and negative other presentation (Van Dijk 1987, 1991, 1995, Wodak & van Dijk 2006) and the representation of social actors (Van Leeuwen 1996) while examining relevant metaphors and genre specific categories of newspapers discourse. Further to selecting the most relevant analytical categories a systematisation of the micro level analytical categories for detailed text analysis emerged during the detailed text analysis of the data which was further developed in an attempt to systematise the stages in the application of different categories in text analyses.

This amalgamation mainly combines analytical categories from the discourse-historical approach, including referential, predicational, and argumentative strategies (topoi) (Wodak 2001, Reisigl and Wodak 2001), discourse topics, positive self-presentation and negative-other presentation (Van Dijk 1991, 1995, Wodak and van Dijk 2006), and socio-semantic categorisation of social actors (Van Leeuwen 1996) and shows how the micro-level analytical categories are linked to the macro-structures at work. Specifically, a three-level analytical framework is suggested for CDA study investigating various social actors in discourse. This framework divides the analysis into three main categories of Actors, Actions and Argumentation and looks at what is (not) there in terms of these three levels on the one hand, and analyzes how these three levels are operationalised and realised through a set of linguistics processes/aspects which “perspectivise” the realisation of these three levels (KhosraviNik in preparation).

**World events and analysis**

**Period one:** March 1999, NATO invasion in Kosovo and Kosovar refugees.

On March 24th, 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) attacked Yugoslav targets after negotiations failed to resolve the three years of conflict
between Serbian security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which in turn had caused a massive population displacement in Kosovo. The proclaimed goal of the NATO operation was summed up by its spokesman as “Serbs out, peacekeepers in, refugees back”\textsuperscript{12}. The ethnic cleansing campaign by Serbians was stepped up and within a week of the start of the war over 300,000 Kosovar Albanians had fled into neighbouring Albania and Macedonia, with many thousands more displaced within Kosovo raising the total figure to 850,000 as reported by the United Nations in April 1999 (see Scorgie 2004 for details and history of the conflict).\textsuperscript{13}

Obviously the buzz word of this period of analysis is ‘refugee’ and the spike on the high frequency of articles with an instance of RASIM is caused by the coverage of this event. In line with the general macro-structure at work (which in turn also legitimated the invasion and rescue operations), the general evaluation of the situation of refugees is “positive”.\textsuperscript{14} Drawing on the intertextual and interdiscursive elements of previous and adjacent recurring topics such as the Serbian ethnic cleansing agenda, widespread topic of an imminent humanitarian crisis and Serbs not cooperating with the international community, the analyzed newspaper texts reflect the generally sympathetic macro-structure. However, this is not to say that all the newspapers adopted the same discursive and linguistic strategies. There are variations in the perspectives and content of the different newspapers.

**Topics and argumentations**

On the topic analysis level\textsuperscript{15}, *The Daily Mail* generally presents itself as sympathetic by drawing heavily on topos of victimisation, where refugees are viewed as helpless, desperate, powerless and the victims of attack and humanisation, and referential and predicational (Wodak 2001) strategies of representing refugees as “normal” people in various “normal” activities are used. These latter in turn call on other subsidiary linguistic strategies of individualisation: singling out, using proper names and affiliations, character building, (quite opposite to aggregation and collectivisation strategies widely found in other periods such as period 5). Similarly the account incorporates a substantial amount of narratives from refugees in accounting for their plights. A typical example of this is in *The Daily Mail* on March 27, 1999, “Reports


\textsuperscript{13}Scorgie drawing on Abrahams (2000) maintains that the “brutal policy of ethnic-cleansing [had] by the end of the seventy-eight day war … resulted in 850,000 ethnic Albanian refugees, between 300,000-400,000 internally displaced people within Kosovo, and approximately 10,000 killed” (2004: 28-9).

\textsuperscript{14} Apart from the fact that political ideologies influence the interpretation of certain discourses as positive or negative, using the term “positive” referring to discourses on/about RASIM seems to be essentially problematic. While we can label discourses as negative -as in constructing the RASIM as “bad”- the same argument can not apply as discourses in which the RASIM are NOT constructed as “bad” would not necessarily be “positive”. Quite a number of topos which could be labelled as “positive” e.g. discourses of humanitarianism, responsibility, ethical values and even human rights can be classificatory and/or exclusionary in other ways. Thus, in using the term “positive” it is necessary to keep in mind that positive representation of out-groups does not automatically equate the opposite of negative representation. While negativity is a rather explicit strategy, an essential positive construction of RASIM would be a status in which the distinctions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ is none existent.

\textsuperscript{15} The topic analysis is based on the analysis of one month of our data during the spikes.
form Macedonia on refugee family’s plight” which shows all these strategies in one way or another.

Humanisation:

He was doing his homework when the tanks stormed the village, a five-year-old boy sitting quietly at the table with his mother.

Using proper names, characterization and referring to individual differences:

Shortly before the Nato bombing started, the family decided to make a break for freedom. With Bajrie in her arms, Azemine Ilazi led the way. Behind her were her other children, aged between 13 and seven, and their 65-year-old grandmother Mrs Arife Kazi.

The Serbian special police burst through the door and handcuffed a man, a simple Albanian farmer whose family had lived there for generations.

At the same time The Daily Mail employs topoi of victimisation and humanisation by drawing on discourses of genocide such as March 29, 1999, “They were shoved into water into gun points, then the soldiers opened fire and threw grenades until no one was moving”, and March 29, 1999, “Flight from genocide” March 31, 1999, “Too late for these tragic victims”, along with topos of ethical responsibility; March 31, 1999 “How you can help”, and March 31, 1999, “Why we must help them”.

The Times’ coverage is also generally, sympathetic towards this group of refugees, both on the discourse topics level and the micro-linguistic level. The Times similarly draws on humanisation and victimisation in focussing on the plight of the refugees by putting the events in narrative form with a lot of ‘extensivisation’, and by providing detailed information on the names, places and conditions of the refugees. It also gives a lot of direct quotations on the part of the victims with frequent use of proper names.

An example is The Times on March 30, 1999, which is an account of a fleeing family where there is no negative perspectivisation or distancing strategy through possible micro-linguistic techniques such as hedging, modality, reporting verbs or other mechanisms.

Bajrum Nikats sank to his knees as a farmer told him he had reached the safety of the border. His wife, Baki, was convulsed in tears as she embraced her three young children. Bajrum described how gunmen burst into their home after dark and gave them 45 minutes to leave: "I walked outside and our whole village of Vil Lanishe was leaving. My wife's father tried to protest so they just shot him. He was lying at our feet, dying. They would not let my wife help him. She could not even touch him. We had to step over his body to get away. We cannot bury him and I doubt we will ever see our home again.”

Direct quotation;

Their mother, Atije, 44, said: "The Serbs have dropped their version of the neutron bomb. Our city, our businesses and homes are still there, but the people are disappearing. Half of Pristina is empty. Soon there will be no Albanians there at all.”

This extract includes the jobs and professions, education, lifestyle and even level of income, while in unsympathetic accounts of refugees out of this context none of these qualities are referred to, and the accounts are usually collective with no reference to
the reasons and conditions of the refugees’ flights, potential life styles, income, or education.

While *The Daily Mail* mainly focuses on the “dramatic” aspect of ‘the refugees’ plight’ and the coverage of events on the ground, *The Times* additionally covers in some articles the tension among the Serbian community in Australia; March 29, 1999, “Protest violence flares in Australia”, and the Serbian diaspora inside Britain; March 25, 1999, “Live and let live in an anxious suburb”.

It also outlines the historical roots of Serbia’s claims on Kosovo; March 25, 1999, “Myths lie at the root of Serbia's psyche”, and the potential threats of conflict to Europe; March 25, 1999, “Europe’s tinder box ready to ignite”. There is also the focus on the problems that refugees entering other countries may cause; March 30, 1999 “Officials impotent as refugees pour in” and March 29, 1999, “Albania flooded by rising tide of refugees”.

*The Guardian’s* account on the other hand, while being within the same macro-structure of support and victimisation of Kosovar refugees, is much more loaded with acute referential and predicational strategies against the protagonist Serbs and Milosevic, along with strong, direct, and explicit predications of atrocity, murder and genocide to Serbian perpetrators while *The Times* and *The Daily Mail* seem to try to account for the victims only. That is, the accounts of the tabloid *The Daily Mail* and of the conservative broadsheet, *The Times* mainly draw a picture of a “horrible situation”, focusing on the victims and insinuating potential problems for tensions inside the UK, whilst *The Guardian’s* account agentivises the role of Serbs in causing the plight.

**Micro linguistic features**

Extensivisation - describing the actions and situations of refugees in detail and adding as much subsidiary information as possible - is another general strategy in positive (or neutral) representation of these groups, where various aspects of the refugees’ horrible ordeal are accounted for. This is pursued by all the newspapers in this period in varying degrees and qualities.

*The Daily Mail*, March 27, 1999,

The first thing Bajrie heard was gunfire. Then, the squeals of the cows and sheep as they were slaughtered in the fields.

His mother had carried him in her arms through snowdrifts up to three feet deep, with her other children and their grandmother trailing behind, to become unwilling refugees of war.

Refugees are described as being ‘traumatised and exhausted’ in ‘misty, rainy weather’. Serbs, agentivised, are predicated as stripping [these] women of their jewellery. This is through an activisation which emphasizes the role of the agent. The rest of the negative predications are agentless and are provided as processes. such as ‘cars had their licence plates removed’, *The Guardian*, March 29, 1999;

As the traumatised and exhausted people crossed from Kosovo in misty, rainy weather, Serb police stripped many of the women of their jewellery. Cars had their licence plates removed and every person man, woman and child had their identity papers confiscated in the hope they will never be able to prove they came from Kosovo, and hence will not be allowed to return.
There are also processes of direct negative quotations and humanisation by identifying people with detailed qualities e.g. *The Guardian*, March 29, 1999:

'The Serbs told us 'never come back; we don't want you back',' said Myrdete Krasniqi as she sat on a low wall outside the town's hospital. *Sixteen years old, with her curly hair pulled back behind her ears, she had premature lines around her eyes.* 'We have been on the move for a week,' she said. 'The police came into every house in the village last Saturday night and told us to get out. We left everything. Ten of our men are still somewhere in Kosovo, they are staying to fight.'

*The Daily Mail’s* directionalisation – incorporating no hedging or other micro-linguistic processes to perspectivise the content- constitutes an important strategy in which the general tone of factuality aligns the reporter to the side of the victims. That is, the victims’ words are not perspectivised with a distancing reporting verb or any other journalistic mechanisms, *Daily Mail* March 27, 1999;

My father was born there and so was his father. When we left I could see my neighbour's house was burning. They probably burned my house as well.

Until a few days ago we had all we wanted as a family. Now we have nothing.

At the same time there is a strong appeal to topoi of humanitarian aid and emergency and the need for support, *The Times*, March 29, 1999;

ALBANIA yesterday made a desperate appeal for a huge humanitarian operation to help tens of thousands of ethnic Albanian Kosovans fleeing to Europe's poorest country from Serb atrocities.

**Representation of the perpetrators**

Within the macro-structure of support and victimisation of refugees, there are explicit negative referential and predicational strategies used for Serbs along with a general practice of agentivising their negative actions. This is more prominent in *The Guardian* than *The Daily Mail* which reflects their differences in journalistic and ideological practices. *The Times* has the least agentivisation of Serbs’ negative actions.

*Daily Mail* March 27, 1999:

The Serbian special police burst through the door and handcuffed a man…Repetedly they smashed his head with a rifle butt…Serbian forces moved in to 'cleanse' the community of 70 houses.

*The Guardian*, March 29, 1999;

'Ve could see the village about 500 metres away. We were some way above it. The police started to loot the houses, taking TV sets and other appliances. Then they burned the farm machinery, the hay and forage and even the cattle sheds with the animals inside them.'

War in Europe: Bombers target troops: Dramatic switch in Nato tactics as; *'Serb regime of genocide creating Europe's worst refugee crisis'.*

The last chapter of *Serbian rule* in Kosovo is coming to a vindictive and heartless end.
Metaphors

There is also a remarkably high frequency of references to large numbers and metaphors of large quantities. Quite interestingly, there are a lot of metaphors of large quantities such as water bodies (e.g. floods) or ‘exodus’ (as found in Wodak 2001 as negative topoi) in the coverage of refugees in this period. However, the socio-political context of the event and more importantly the macro-structure of interpretation of discourses about refugees for this period constitute a different conclusion rule for the interpretation of these metaphors. Geographical distance may play a role in how a macro-structure is formed regarding this group of refugees in a British news context, as this crisis is happening well away from Britain. The Daily Mail, March 31, 1999:

The trails of fleeing refugees are endless.

The authorities and aid groups were unprepared for yesterday's influx, and appeared helpless. There is growing consternation at the seeming inability of the United Nations and others to cope, even though the number of refugees has grown since airstrikes began.

Overwhelmed by the numbers, border guards simply waved everyone through, ignoring the fact that most refugees had had passports and identity papers confiscated before they were ordered to leave their homes by Serb troops. The Times also incorporates terms of large quantities. It even employs more common metaphors of natural phenomena such as refugees as ‘flood’ and ‘rising tide’ which have been found as typical strategies of a prejudiced discourse in some other contexts (for example Reisigl and Wodak 2001), The Times, March 29, 1999;

The refugees were welcomed by families in Kukes, but the ever-swelling numbers could not be accommodated...Albania flooded by rising tide of refugees

The Guardian, March 29, 1999

Nato reported that a million refugees had crossed the border into neighbouring Macedonia and Albania, a quarter of the Kosovan population, with up to 50,000 crossing in recent days, and at least 10,000 more expected.

The mobilisation is referred to as ‘exodus’ and Serbs are associated with the ethnic cleansing of Albanians.

From Kosovo there were more chilling reports of Serb forces waging 'scorched-earth' war against the ethnic Albanians who form 90 per cent of the population. Three bodies were found in Pristina's Dardania neighbourhood and a fresh exodus from the south-western town of Djakovica was reported.

The use of metaphors like “flood” and “tide” do not seem to be working towards negative presentation of the refugees and in fact they seem to argue for more humanitarian help. It seems that the use of typical metaphors for refugees or immigrants does not automatically create a negative representation of them, and the function of metaphor use strictly depends on the social, cultural, and political and

16 I am reluctant to use “topos of numbers” here as it is usually used in a syllogism of communicating a negative “conclusion rule” e.g. ‘the flood of foreigners are paralysing out towns’. However, the references to large numbers and quantities in this particular period point to a different (or opposite) conclusion rule i.e. the severity of the humanitarian crisis and the need to help. The investigating mechanisms of such differences in “conclusion rules” can be an interesting topic for further research.
geographical elements, for example, whether they are talking about refugees pouring in Britain or other countries, or what is the assumed reasons for their arrival.

The crisis and the British government

Within the sympathetic representation of refugees in this period, *The Daily Mail* at the same time attempts to negatively present the government, and since the UK had been participating in bombing campaigns against Serbs the situation became rather complicated and potentially contradictory. The solution emerging from a blend of two rather paradoxical argumentation strategies of giving a sympathetic account of refugees and of criticising the government (which actually seems to have done something in line with the newspaper’s arguments) is to argue that the government has somehow contributed to the refugees’ plight, *The Daily Mail* March 31, 1999;

For every act of barbarity, every slaughter of the innocent,’ says Tony Blair, ‘Milosevic must be made to pay a higher and higher price.’ *It's empty, emotional rhetoric, and it's dangerous. It's the Albanian families who are paying the price for NATO's bombs and they will pay for years to come. The air attacks haven’t helped them.*

They [the bombings] have fuelled Milosevic's mad appetite, not quenched it; they've made him a more powerful dictator; they've strengthened the loyalty of Serbs who had begun to doubt his sanity.

The bombing hasn't protected the Albanians, who have lost their homes, their jobs and their land.

Thus, a sympathetic representation of refugees and a shared macro-argument of ‘the need to help’ among the British newspapers become the subject matter of political rivalry, creating a discourse which backgrounds these people and reduces them to a group over which discourses of political rivalry take place (see KhosraviNik 2009 in press and Baker et al. 2008 for more details). Also *The Daily Mail* negatively presents the effects of bombing in exacerbating the plight of these people, which means indirectly criticising the government for making a wrong decision.

Tefik Majku, 50, who arrived with ten of his family from the outskirts of Pristina, said: "Every time there was an air raid the Serbs would hit us with artillery and mortars."

Similarly the conservative broad sheet, *The Times*, throws doubts on the government’s ability to handle the situation efficiently, e.g. March 31, 1999, “the politicians must now let us know their true objectives”.

*The Times* also points to the signs of alarm and speculation at what the situation may mean for the UK and tries to criticise the government. This point –which is vaguely pursued- contradicts with the general macro-argument of urgency for help and legitimacy of these refugees’ mobilisation. *The Times’ account is also sympathetic yet this does not seem to apply with regard to refugees entering the UK where the word ‘refugee’ is abruptly replaced by ‘displaced’ Kosovo Albanians, *The Times*, and March 30, 1999;

No government has yet announced that it is to open its doors to the displaced Kosovo Albanians. As it did during the height of the Bosnian war, Britain is likely to operate an extremely restrictive policy, making it hard for any Albanians to reach safety in this country.
The Guardian is more explicit in referring to the perpetrators and agentivises the atrocities, thus topicalising ‘responsibility’ of the Serbs. This goes along with numerous direct narratives of the plight of the refugees. The Guardian is also critical of the right-wing parties and the ‘west’ for having a double standard and paradoxes e.g. March 31, 1999, “refugee chic”.

It can also be argued that there are differences in discursive strategies found in the conservative broadsheet (The Times) and the tabloid (The Daily Mail). The Times is more reliant on argumentation whilst The Daily Mail predominantly depends on referential and predicational strategies. The Daily Mail is also more “sensational”, with more vivid, graphic descriptions of the situation along with more documentary type features. These features, of course reflect the differences in their target readership.


The spike caused in this period seems to be influenced by several world events rather than just one: the 9/11 terrorist attacks on United States; its immediate after-effects on British news discourses and the representation of British “immigrants” and Muslim communities in particular; and various issues of asylum seeking in Britain seem to be among major relevant events, along with the Australian ‘boat people’ case.  

Discourse Topics

The Daily Mail and The Times take a special interest in asylum seeking issues in Britain in general and in particular associate them with potential terrorist threats and security issues. This theme is largely influenced by 9/11. Discourse topics covered by The Times and The Daily Mail include ‘Britain is at war’ and ‘the Muslim community is the enemy inside’ some titles on these argumentation strategies include The Daily Mail, September 17, 2001, “Britain already at war with terror”, and The Daily Mail, September 12, 2001, “Refugees' gateway to Britain will stay open”, The Times; September 17, 2001, “Police seek bin Laden's British links”, September 12, 2001, “Pre-war migration”, and September 15, 2001, “Still a haven: Terrorists are still using London to plot evil overseas”.

Along with this the topic of asylum seekers in general is focused on in these two newspapers such as The Times, September 14, 2001 “Asylum-seekers exhaust hospitality”, attacking the asylum lawyers; The Daily Mail, September 15, 2001, “Warning to ‘gung-ho' asylum case lawyers”, and the Australian ‘boat people’ case; The Sunday Times, 16 September 2001, “Islanders have second thoughts on boat people”, Afghan refugees in

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17Boat people is a term (usually) referring to illegal asylum seekers who arrive en masse in old or crudely-made boats. The term came into common use during the late 1970s with the mass departure of Vietnamese refugees from communist-controlled Vietnam; following the Vietnam War...they often risk their lives on dangerously crude and overcrowded boats, to escape oppression or poverty in their home nations. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boat_people and http://www.encyclopedia.com/SearchResults.aspx?Q=boat+people).
Sangatte and 9/11 attacks; *The Times*, September 17, 2001, “Afghan refugees prepare to flee Sangatte in fear”.

*The Guardian*’s coverage of 9/11 incorporates the potential backlashes against 9/11 and the attacks on Arab Americans and asylum seekers, examples are the articles such as September 17, 2001, “Sikh shot dead in US ‘retaliation’ attack” and the measures which may curb freedom such as September 13, on Arab Americans, September 15, potential restriction of freedom: “Society's freedoms may be curtailed”, backlash against Muslims, September 13, 2001, “Arab Americans stress loyalty in face of backlash” and September 14, 2001, “Muslims beware” emphasizing interconnectedness of the world; *The Observer*, September 16, 2001, “A time for reflection, not revenge”.

**Period three:** May 2002, Assassination of Pim Fortyun, asylum seekers’ children schooling, and the second round of French presidential election LePen vs. Chirac,

The spike on this period also seems to be due to a series of different events which are pursued differently by different newspapers in terms of the weight of attention paid and the qualities of the coverage.

**Discourse topics**

*The Daily Mail*’s coverage seems to focus on the issue of asylum seekers’ children’s schooling along with other news and analyses on or around asylum seeking in the UK in general. *The Daily Mail*’s account strictly legitimises the motion of putting a ban on asylum seekers’ children’s schooling by employing rather overt referential, predicational and argumentative strategies which mostly draw on topos of ‘burden’ (economic and social) among other micro-linguistic techniques, e.g. the article in *The Daily Mail* on May 12, 2002, “Swamped” which starts with an infamous metaphor.

**Syncretism** as in blending of different potentially contradictory themes in argumentation (Wodak and Van Dijk 2006: 34) or *mixtum compositum* (Reisigl and Wodak 2000:276-8) can also be described as an ideological (potentially paradoxical) strategic pseudo-argumentation in which the goal (ideology) justifies the means. This strategy is an integral element in everyday discriminatory argumentation (Essed 1991) which at times finds its way to tabloid argumentative repertoire. A case in the point is the coverage of schooling of the asylum seekers’ children in which these people are referred to and predicated as an “educational problem” (e.g. May 12, 2002, “Swamped”) whereas a few days before on May 5, 2002, (“Top pupil denied chance to be a doctor; “Technical hitch” prevents brilliant asylum seeker taking her place at medical school”) an asylum seeker is described as being educationally “brilliant” and “top” and the very same law that the newspaper has been so adamantly supporting and justifying – referred to as “technical hitch”- is preventing her from pursuing a medical career. Syncretism and contradictory argumentations are inherently fallacious argumentation strategies.

Discoursally relevant to the topic of asylum seekers’ children’s schooling, is the interest shown by the tabloid in the issues around people entering the UK e.g. May 10, 2002, “The frozen invaders” or May 8, 2002, “March of the brazen; another day another group of

\[18\] A small harbour town on the northern coast of France, bordering the English Channel where there is a refugee camp.
asylum seekers and they are not even bothering to wait for nightfall”. Another discoursally adjacent topic which thematically links to these two, is the account of asylum seekers in what can be called the articles on ‘party politics’ in which the issue of asylum seeking is always an integral element e.g. May 8, 2002, “the REAL fascists are on the left”.

Another topic widely covered in *The Daily Mail* is the assassination of the Dutch far-right politician Pim Fortuyn in which Mr. Fortuyn’s aggressive anti-immigration, and Islamophobic positions are always accounted for and repeated e.g. May 7, 2002, “Extremism and the shadow of the gun: treasure Island”, or May 8, 2002, “Man who shot dead Holland’s enemy of migrants”.

Other topics which contribute to the spike in this period are the Israeli-Palestinian conflict e.g. May 10, 2002, “Gaza Strip in panic as Israel gears up for revenge raids” and the French election e.g. May 6, 2002, “Humiliation for Le Pen, but he won’t go quietly” which were not as widely covered as the first two topics.

*The Times*’ coverage in this period focuses more on major developing events with higher number of articles in general. Pim Fortuyn’s assassination is the most covered topic in *The Times*, in which the newspaper seems to pay attention to various consequences of the murder, e.g. May 12, 2002, “Grief of thousands at Fortuyn funeral hints at swing to Right”, or May 8, 2002, “Dutch mourn the death of a man and of tolerance”. Party politics and issues on and around immigration and asylum seekers are another focus of the newspaper in this period in which the newspaper’s anti-immigration policy is expressed by incorporating argumentative strategies, e.g. May 9, 2002, “immigration goes upmarket”, May 7, 2002, and “A very decent party”. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is also covered more comprehensively in *The Times* than in *The Daily Mail*.

*The Guardian* follows a more or less similar pattern of themes in this period. The coverage of Pim Fortuyn’s assassination e.g. May 8, 2002, “Life and death of a populist” seems to have more references to the assassin’s personality e.g. May 9, 2002, “Activist remanded for Fortuyn murder: Mystery surrounds ‘quiet’ hardworking ‘animal rights campaigner’”. Following this theme in *The Guardian* is the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian recent stand off and the case of the Church of Nativity. Le Pen and French election and the arguments around it, is the next topic, followed by the British party politics in which ‘immigration’ is ubiquitously present, e.g. May 8, 2002, “The nasty party can’t become the nice party overnight: Duncan Smith must take care not to leave his core voters behind”.

**Period four:** March 2004, the asylum bill, East European immigration checks, expansion of EU and Madrid bombing.

**Discourse Topics**

*The Daily Mail* in this period heavily focuses on the issues regarding the news about government hiding its policies regarding the immigration following by the issues on the expansion of EU to some East European countries on May 1, 2004. *The Daily Mail* mainly draws on scare tactics (Flowerdew & Tran 2002) and alarmist discourses not only to contribute to a negative construction of the possible immigrants but also to create an atmosphere of panic and urgency. This topic which is closely juxtaposed with the criticism of government immigration policies constitutes the dominating
discourses of this newspaper in this period. The broadsheet conservative, *The Times* also pays a great deal of attention to the government scandal on the immigration. However, it is less outspoken and dramatic in its account and incorporates various argumentative strategies in its coverage. *The Guardian* on the other hand does not seem to account for the topic of the government’s scandal on immigration policies and seems to avoid it. On the other hand it incorporates articles on the theme of asylum seekers plights and their relevant issues.

The other main topic concerning this period is the Madrid terrorist bombing as there were several ‘immigrants’ among the victims of the attack. Within the context of dramatic event of the bombing, the representation of Spanish immigrants in both conservative and liberal newspapers becomes sympathetic and “positive”. In line with such a mood, the word ‘migrant’ is predominately used for this group who would have been referred to as ‘immigrants’ otherwise.

**Period five: May 2005, Campaign leading to British General Elections**

The key words used in this period are ‘immigration’ and ‘asylum seekers’. There are several stories in *The Times* and *The Daily Mail* in which immigrants and asylum seekers are presented as being involved in asocial or negative activities e.g. 3 April, 2005 *The Daily Mail*. The conservative broadsheet (*The Times*) and the tabloid (*The Daily Mail*) incorporate strategies of individualisation in characterisation of RASIM only when they are involved in a negative actions, for example *The Times* on March, 18, 2005, “HIV assault appeal loss”.

In the coverage of *The Times*, the “issue” of immigration at times becomes the centred element of political debates in this period. On such occasions the liberal broadsheet newspaper; *The Guardian* too merely resorts to numbers and collective categorisation to argue against the rival party. This is where RASIM turn into a de-humanised “issue”, with *The Guardian’s* approach in these cases seemingly ‘defensive’ and evasive.

Similar to period four the political debates and representation of immigrant at times merge and attacking one automatically constructs an indication of attacking the other. This is seen mostly on the right wing newspapers where negative representation of immigrants and asylum seekers seem to translate as that of the Labour party. In the meantime, *The Guardian* does not necessarily (or immediately) resort to “positive” presentation of this group to counter-attack instead it focuses on the flaws and weak points of the rival.

*The Guardian* includes topics relating the stories of specific immigrants or asylum seekers e.g. on 18, March, 2005 on a Malawian asylum seeker; Verah Kachepa, on 18, March, 2005 Algerian Karim Saidi, 3, April 2005 Luol Deng of Sudan, and on 27, April, 2005 Esther Freeman from Liberia. Moreover, there are much more extensive and active accounts of immigrants and asylum seekers, their conditions and backgrounds and their contributions. However, in political debates *The Guardian* tends to use the same aggregation strategies in referring to ‘this group’, and generally speaking, there are a lot of examples of personalization and dissimilation of the group as various people and backgrounds in *The Guardian* in this period and the
representation of RASIM tend towards presenting this group as ‘people’ rather than an ‘issue’. In line with the general discursive distinction of tabloid vs. broadsheet, The Guardian employs more argumentation strategies than referential ones. Finally, The Guardian draws on topoi of human rights, ethics, human value, usefulness, contribution in “positive” representation of immigrants and refugees.

The Daily Mail’s article on April 11, 2005; “White flight’ grows from the cities divided by race” can be taken as an example of negativisation of RASIM in creating a discourse of panic, urgency and battle. As the headline denotes, the article associates the situation with a quasi ‘battle’ of races in which a group of whites seem to be under attack and are fleeing the field. The metaphoric, nominalised construct ‘White flight’ is describing a situation where ‘our’ people (being ‘white’ or ‘true natives of Britain’ etc. that is) are presented as being swamped by a large number of overtly hostile ‘them’ in a way that they (whites) need to be rescued by air and that these friendly people are immediately and seriously threatened.

The head-line is also adopting a factual tone in portraying such a dramatic situation in relation to a racial confrontation in the cities and makes no attempt to incorporate any hedging or distancing mechanisms.

The social actors present in the article include the ‘whites’, ethnic minorities which are distinguished as ‘Asian’ and later narrowed down to Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, or people from the ‘sub-continent’, and Migration Watch chairman Sir Andrew Green, who is described as a ‘think tanker’.

The article puts together numbers and figures from different sources and draws on statistics about general immigration, which are not labelled clearly (topos of numbers and vagueness). Hence, the article makes no reference to the actual numbers of different ‘racial’ groups living in those cities and focuses on the increase or decrease in percentages when it talks about ‘minority’ Asians vs. majority ‘Whites’.

Further negative other presentation in achieved by these people being implicitly described as people who wouldn’t like to integrate and people who are responsible for the so-called ‘racial divide’ (victim-perpetrator reversal strategy). The ‘whites’ are victimized as people who have no choice other than leaving their cities while the overall picture of the article gives the impression that ‘Asians’ are ‘everywhere’ from London to cities in the north like Manchester; again vagueness is used as a strategy.

Our report demonstrates conclusively that it is now not only London which is seeing substantial numbers of people leaving to be replaced by immigrant populations. This is also occurring in several northern cities.

Also, the Asians are portrayed as people who are putting a lot of pressure on housing, education, and health systems. The ‘newcomers’ from the sub-continent are thus challenging the identity of the already established existing populations (topos of threat).

The Asians are also described to be involved in ‘chain migration’ and economic migration indicating that these people seek to share this “exploitation” with more of their new-coming family members, who are described to be a ‘challenge’ to the identity of the majority. The negative connotations of the terms “chain migration,
economic migration” are emphasized both by attributes and implicatures. The compound noun “chain migration” also implies some kind of mechanical/technical and thus uncontrollable dynamism.

There is also an ambiguous use of ‘we’ where it is not clear if this ‘we’ who evaluates the situation as ‘serious and urgent’ is referring to ‘we’ as the British people or ‘we’ as the white majority or ‘we’ as conservatives or an anti immigration coalition or ‘we’ as the journalists and writers of this article. Like-wise, most of the propositions of the writer are ambiguously attributed to the ‘report’ rather than the writer’s view as in; “The report said…”, “The new evidence…”, “It suggests that…”, “the Migration watch think-tank, said…”, “It said…” and so on.

Throughout the article the ethnic minority members, who are at times narrowed down to Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and at others, broadened to immigrants in general (as the numbers and statistics afford) are referred to and talked about through numbers, figures and percentages (topos of numbers). While the actual comparisons of the number of populations are strategically avoided (as it would actually show that these people are in fact minorities), the article makes full use of vague and not precisely quoted increases/decreases percentages. In an overall view the ‘immigrants’ are always referred to in the plural and homogenous not as individuals.

The article constructs two groups; on one side there are ‘white’ people, and on the other there are ‘immigrants’. This latter group is always identified with their real or perceived status as ‘foreigners’ or people who do not belong to the UK permanently, hence the element of their real or perceived short residence is always topicalised by collectively calling them ‘immigrants’ while it is never mentioned in the article that most of these people are technically British tax payers.

As for the metaphoric references the article is perpetuating the metaphors of size and quantity (such as container metaphors and natural catastrophe metaphors). Although it does not fall for the more classic metaphors such as ‘waves’ or ‘tides’ of immigrants, it is depicting a situation of a similar type by the key metaphoric phrase ‘white flight’ accompanied by direct calls for urgency and seriousness of the situation, which is achieved by a manipulative presentation of percentages and figures.

Moreover, the article positions itself in the macro argumentation strategy of ‘war’ and confrontation by trying to portray a Manichean picture of ‘race’ relations in which there are only two distinct groups, ‘whites’ and ‘Asians’.

In general, it can be said that negative other presentation of immigrants and English Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in particular in this article is achieved by portraying them as actual ‘threats’ to the majority’s identity along with alienating them as people whose life practices are seriously different from the majority’s norms.

The Daily Mail, April 11, 2005, “Immigration and the demonising of decency”, is another example of The Daily Mail account of RASIM which taps into populism and scare tactics in a negative presentation of RASIM. There are several instances of collective generic reference to the vague notion of ‘people’ (4 cases), ‘they’ (people) (10 cases), ‘public’ (3 cases), ‘British’ (2 cases). On the other hand the article employs aggregation processes where the other social actors in the article,
immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees are referred to through collective nominals such as numbers: ‘huge numbers’, ‘number of immigrants’, de-humanisation of immigrants as in simply calling them ‘numbers’ and ‘entrants’, and ‘newcomers’ which are usually accompanied with excessive quantity adverbials like: ‘enormous rise in immigration, huge numbers, many [immigrants], uncontrolled [number], and unlimited numbers’.

On the predicational level the article associates the ‘other’ group (immigrants) with an array of negative predications. The article does not indulge in argumentation and vagueness; instead the conclusions of such negative associations are explicitly and overtly provided. Immigrants are described as ‘danger to the country’, and ‘putting a strain on the public services’ (topoi of burden, threat and finance), and are associated with illegality and crimes when they are described as a phenomenon needing ‘round the clock policing and control’.

There is also a quasi reference to the water metaphor in the next part where immigrants are associated with illegality, and being in ‘mass’ numbers with a clear functionalisation process by referring to people by what they do as ‘entrant’. Here the most important feature for these people is considered to be the fact that they ‘enter’.

There is a strong negative other presentation through referential categorisations such as calling the opponent ‘hypocrites’, or a handful of extremists and through predicational strategies; they [opponents] are advocating ‘open borders and totally unlimited immigration.

The article describes the “problem of immigration” as an ‘extraordinary fact” and associates immigrants with terrorism;

After all, what is the use of politicians who are too cowed by political bullying to address the extraordinary fact that, in the face of a terrorist threat, the country has lost control of its borders?”

In line with that it describes the asylum system a shambles with no modality whatsoever;

By tackling the issue head-on - and crucially, using the language of values in calling the asylum shambles 'inhumane' and 'unjust' - Mr Howard was not only protecting himself from the taint of racism…

There is the strategy of positive self presentation by associating the in-group with moral values, describing the in-group as a “beleaguered majority” whose champion Howard stands against lies and smears of political correctness along with the negative other presentation of the other as supporting ‘lies and smears’.

He was also signalling to the beleaguered majority that at last they have a champion who will stand up for mainstream decencies against the lies and smears of political correctness.

For it touches some of the deepest feelings of the British people – about fair play, bullying and the makeup and orderliness of their country. They know they are being taken for a ride, and that something of inestimable value is being lost.
The whole article depicts a panic situation through various —much more explicit—strategies such as referential strategy; immigrants as ‘crisis’, uncontrolled, unlimited, and huge, and predicational strategy; immigrants being described as threat to society, as changing the face of the country, threatening the ‘British’ values, the countries orderliness, being the source of crimes, and having a relation to terrorism.

It is interesting to note that the word ‘entrant’ or ‘newcomer’ is used to refer to the already negative concept of immigrants. This can throw some light onto how the idea of mobility and people’s movement is being described. Obviously the implicit idea here is that any kind of ‘entry’ to Britain is unfavourable and other people need to stay put. On the same note there are instances where diversity is associated with negative consequences and threatening the country’s identity.

...taking in so many people from very diverse backgrounds will transform this country's identity and character.

_The Guardian_, on March 18, 2005, “Deported from Dorset: The heartrending case of a Malawian asylum seeker exposes the poisonous hypocrisy of Tory election tactics” is an example of individualisation and humanisation strategies in _The Guardian_ as opposed to general strategies of collectivisation and functionalisation of the conservative broadsheet and the tabloid. The article humanises the case in point by giving a full story of the background and information on how things have ended up. The supporter group is described as belonging to a church (positive presentation) supporting a Malawian woman with four children (humanisation) who are against ‘forcible’ deportation (negative other presentation). Further humanisation can be seen in accounting for the personal conditions of Verah as somebody who has ‘sold everything to join her husband’, and some one involved in voluntary work in charity shop.

**Howard’s remarks in a TV debate**

Howard’s remarks during the election campaign also attracted a lot of attention in this period in all the newspapers. Howard appearing on a TV program stirred a lot of discussion and the coverage of this event is particularly interesting for this study as it sheds some lights on the journalistic mechanisms of manipulation and perspectivisation as well as genre specific aspects of the data analysed.

_The Daily Mail_, April 19, 2005; “Howard stands his ground on migrants during TV grilling” foregrounds his remarks and propositions in various ways. The headline here may sound neutral as it does not contain the content of Howard’s arguments but contributes to his ‘good quality’ of ‘standing his ground’ while it victimises him as the person under pressure and attack. This headline is a good example of perspectivisation where the author (or the newspaper) does not distance but aligns itself with Howard. On the same note the other social actors present in the article -people who disagree with Howard- are described as people who have ‘ambushed’ him. Howard is predicated as ‘defending his policy’ in the face of ‘aggressive’ questioning from the presenter, who is associated with a ‘coordinated attack’. Other positive self presentation strategy includes Howard’s defending his [our or in-group] grounds, standing by his views along with negative other presentation through predicational strategy of associating negative or unfair actions to the out-group social actor, for
example the opponents are; conspirators and people who attack unfairly, question aggressively, their approach is hostile, they [presenter] ‘presses [Howard] and the attack has been co-ordinated. This can also be analyzed in terms of perspectivisation and the article’s point of view in negatively describing the role of out-group through the use of adjectives like ‘aggressive question’ and hostile approach’ and verbs like ‘press’ (the presenter pressed Mr. Howard).

There are also populist references to ‘people’ as a major social actor who thinks the same as ‘us’, that community relations are at risk (victim-perpetrator reversal). The in-group is predicated as being people who are concerned about community relations and the out-group-immigrants- are implicitly referred to as the threat to that.

The idea of depicting the interview as an entrapment or an ‘ambush’ is further elaborated by describing what the presenter does, such as going through the transcriptions of Howard’s speeches and quote from them (predicational) and how he conducts the interview e.g. with an aggressive approach or hostile questioning (referential), and the setting of the show e.g. high degree of co-ordination between questioners and presenter.

Despite all the elaboration on the negative atmosphere against Howard, he is described to have ‘earned several rounds of applause as well as a number of attacks’.

While the article implicitly -several times- and once explicitly describes the setting as being designed against the Tories and Howard, it continues;

ITV executives said the audience was selected to reflect the balance of opinion across Britain. They insisted it was not loaded against the Tory leader.

This is what can be called ‘explicit-denial-insinuating- existence of a proposition as it purports that there has been issues on that front and that the actual case is that the setting and the audience have been selectively against Tory and Howard. Interestingly, almost half a page is allocated to discuss the issues of selection of the audience and setting of the program.

**Direct and indirect quotation patterns**

In *The Daily Mail*’s coverage the in-group social actor, Howard, is reported directly most of the time and his exact words are quoted. The other parties who get to be reported directly are the presenter and a young member of the audience. The presenter –who is an out group member- is quoted directly only when he is asking a question which is on the allegedly prejudiced arguments by Howard. In a way the question is actually the argument that Howard and this article want to put forward, thus it is quoted directly;

He said: ‘Are you fearful that if there are more newcomers than you think are desirable that there will be more Burnleys, more Bradfords and more Oldhams?’ Mr Howard replied ‘Yes’ and went on to say: ‘I think people have to have confidence—that there is a proper system of control.’

The second instance of direct quotation is about one of the audience members who is named as an-18-year-old Dean Delani, who “shouts” out an extreme expression and
calls Howard racist and xenophobic. Predictably, Howard is given full space and a direct quotation to reply to this expression.

It is interesting to note that the out-group gets to be quoted directly only in these two instances which both contribute to the positive self presentation and negative other presentation (they have the same fears and questions like ‘us’ in the first case and ‘they’ are illogical extremists who do not want things to be debated in the second).

*The Times* on April 19, 2005; “Howard warns of new race riots” adopts a series of strategies in reporting on a TV debate in which Howard directs his attacks at immigration. It begins by summarizing what he proposes in two separate quotes; one by the reporter and another one by reporting the gist of what Howard has said.

The Tory leader has raised fears of violence if people lose confidence in immigration rules, Tosin Sulaiman reports.

Britain faces the threat of race riots if people believe that immigration is out of control, Michael Howard said last night.

In the first one ‘fears’ is used in a nominal form with mystification of the agent, thus associating it with ‘all people’s fear. Similarly the process of suppression and aggregation is seen by the typical use of ‘Britain faces’. This can also be considered as a form of strategic ‘activation’ which topicalises the subject of the sentence, and aggregate whole ‘Britain’ or the British people.

There are 10 instances where Haward is using aggregated words such as; ‘people’, ‘They’, (people), and ‘we’, which vaguely positions himself as speaking for ‘all people and relating the ‘fears’, ‘anxieties’ and ‘worries’ of everybody.

When reporting audience protest against Haward’s proposition, the article resorts to a series of backgrounding processes such as passivisation (e.g. The Conservative leader [Howard] was accused of...) using negative reporting verbs (accuse), negative evaluative adjectives (an angry audience) and patterns of direct and indirect quoting with significant difference in space allocations (e.g. after Howard is ‘accused’ of pandering to xenophobia, he ‘defends’ his position in a direct quote).

The Conservative leader was accused of pandering to xenophobia and hatred by an angry audience at a TV show. On the first of the ITV1 series Ask the Leader, with Jonathan Dimbleby, Mr Howard defended his position of putting immigration at the centre of his election campaign. "I think that immigration is out of control," he said. "It has tripled since Mr Blair came into power."

The article also makes some reference to the riots in Bradford. Here the main social actors represented are immigrants, who are negatively associated with riots and crime. It explicitly associates immigrants and new-comers as the source of the problems and the unrest in a directly quoted question to which, Howard too, replies with explicit affirmative which gets to be quoted directly.

Mr Howard replied: "Yes, I think that people have to have confidence in the system. They have to understand that there is a proper system of controls and that gives people reassurance. I think that when people believe that there is no proper system, immigration is out of control. I think that feeds anxieties and that has an effect on good community relations."
There are four aggregative references to ‘people’ and ‘their’ anxieties, and immigrants are described as causes of anxiety, stress and a danger to ‘good community relations’ (topoi of disadvantage and threat) with all these propositions being reported in direct quoting.

On the other hand, Howard is quoted indirectly for when he employs strategic hedging in avoiding to directly describe immigrants as violent (topos of violence). Immediately following that, he is quoted directly when saying;

“we have to be vigilant if we are to make sure we continue to have good community relations”.

In the above quote, there are two instances of ‘we’ and a repetition of negative attribution to immigrants as a threat to ‘good community relations’.

In the next section, backgrounding takes place where the reported ‘repeated’ challenges to Howard and his party are downplayed through a set of linguistic and semantic procedures. Passivisation and nominalization occur when the person(s) asking questions are not identified and it is further emphasized that these questions were drawn from across the political spectrum’, downplaying the truth and legitimacy of such questions as being purely politically motivated. This section does not clarify what the questions are (not even in an indirect quotation pattern), who asks the questions and how Howard replies to them. The topic of the questions is nominally referred to as being on the Tory’s policies on health services and managing the economy.

There are four people presented as asking questions. Three of these people are identified in one way or another and the fourth one is represented as accusing Howard of an extreme -and out of context- label. Two of the persons asking questions are described as being from a specific ethnic minority “Gilbert Barthley, an Afro-Caribbean” and another one Dean Velani, “A young Asian man (18 years old)”. This is a clear example of ‘irrelevant information’ where there is an unnecessary reference to ethnic backgrounds of people (Van Dijk 1991:114). Such reference here insinuates that these people cannot afford to keep an unbiased view as they are part of the ethnic minority and their views are blindly slanted against Howard. Another person asking question is described as ‘a disillusioned Tory voter’ and the last one is described as Anthony Dunn. In three cases the reporting verb for their opposition is the verb ‘accuse’ and the other one is the verb ‘attack’.

The first question by the Afro-Caribbean person is reported indirectly. In the case of the young Asian protestor he is reported partially directly for the main proposition in his last sentence (Howard as ‘inciting xenophobia and hatred’) to which Howard is given a full paragraph of direct quotation to reply. It is also indicated that these are only ‘labels’ ‘abuses’ or insults coming from people who cannot debate in a reasonable manner. In the next one, the person raises the question of how immigration, asylum seekers and terrorism are related. Such a proposition is not at all referred to throughout this article and for the readership it can actually work as an insinuation that such a relation actually exists (Howard is not reported to reply to this at all). The last person is also partially quoted directly only when wording some extreme blame on Howard to which he replies quite irre relevantly and dwells topoi of threat, security and burden.
Anthony Dunn accused Mr Howard of suggesting that immigrants were "bringing dirty diseases". Mr Howard replied: "Controlled immigration is the key to ensuring Britain's security, managing demand on public services and guaranteeing good community relations."

The article is a typical example of how social actors can be represented manipulatively as being fore-grounded or back-grounded through (a) linguistic processes of passivisation, activisation, nominalization and quoting patterns, (b) argumentation strategies such as topoi of threat, burden, security, and disadvantage, and (c) schematic distribution of semantic information which predicts the readership’s schematic processes of decoding the information, such as reference to ethnic backgrounds.

*The Guardian*, April 19, 2005; “Election 2005: Howard in TV clash over race and immigration” does what can be seen as opposite to the conservative accounts. The exact same event which is referred to as a blatant ‘set up’ by *The Daily Mail* is called ‘a clash over race and immigration’ in the headline. It adds to it the element of ‘race’ to insinuate that the debate involves issues beyond ‘just’ immigration and ‘numbers’.

Opposite to the account of *The Daily Mail*, where Howard is depicted as the ‘victim’ who is under ‘pressure’ in a set up where things happen to him, here Howard is given a general agentive role as creating the ‘clash’;

**Michael Howard** last night clashed with members of a TV audience

His remarks are associated with the cause of the ‘angry response’ while the audience is backgrounded as passive participants whose angry reactions are justifiable because of Howard’s remarks.

Mr Howard's suggestion, on Jonathan Dimbleby's Ask the Leaders programme, **drew an angry response** from the audience.

This is further elaborated by specifically pinpointing the stage where the audience started to react when Howard claimed that there would be race riots if immigration continued at the present rate. Similar to other examples of direct quotations, Howard’s strong claims are reported in exact quotations.

Another interesting point arising from the comparison of *The Guardian’s* account with that of *The Daily Mail* and *The Times* is the quotation and space allocation patterns. In the *Daily Mail* account only one remark of the opponent party is mentioned and quoted. The person is described with his age and his expression is quoted exactly when he blames Howard for inciting xenophobic feelings. This one reference to the protests against Howard is singled out and flagged as the only type of reaction.

*The Times* account is more subtle in reporting on three of the protesters. One is the same young person who is further described as being Asian, with more or less the same patterns as in *The Daily Mail* of quotations and reply. Next is the one who described himself as a disillusioned Tory voter, whose name is mentioned in *The Times*, but not in *The Guardian* (Roger Chandra). In the account of *The Guardian* this person is referred to as a member of audience who ‘attacked’ not Howard but ‘[his]
party rhetoric’. His action is perceptivised by the distancing process of ‘what he said was the rhetoric...’ in The Times. Also he gets more exact quotation in The Guardian.

The third person protesting, who is non-existent in the account of The Daily Mail is Anthony Dunn, who is not quoted in The Times while in The Guardian his exact words get to be quoted. In The Times he is described as ‘an Afro-Caribbean’, in The Guardian he is initially referred to as another audience member and later described as a person who has endured campaigns on immigration since coming to Britain in 1954.

The most salient features in positive self presentation and negative other presentation in these three articles, which are on the same event, can be summarised as;

a. The patterns of quotations and space allocations.

b. The strategies of perspectivisation mostly enacted through reporting verbs.

c. Overall description of the event and provision of background knowledge such as Howard being besieged and ‘set up’, Howard causing tension and clashes, or downplaying the coverage as being on a not a very important issue.

**Overall differences between The Times and The Daily Mail; Tabloid Vs. Broadsheet**

Apart from the different ideologies at work on the conservative - liberal continuum, there are certain discursive differences between the tabloid newspapers; The Daily Mail and the conservative broadsheet; The Times:

The Daily Mail predominantly employs more referential and predicational strategies rather than argumentative ones in their account of RASIM. On the same note there is more referential (naming) and explicit predicational compared to implicit argumentation. The Times on the other hand employs more argumentation strategies followed by predication, perspectivisation and reference. Similarly the referential strategies used seem to be more blatant in The Daily Mail through the use of more strongly loaded terms compared to The Times.

There seems to be little (or at times no) hedging in generalizations, categorisation and labelling processes in The Daily Mail, which is true for both parts of its categorisation; ‘RASIM’ vs. ‘British’. This is also to say that the world view in The Daily Mail is more Manichean one with explicit either/or duality between good and bad. This is also reflected in sharp and clear cut ‘us’ against ‘them’ categorization in The Daily Mail and thus more aggregation (collective terminology). In general The Daily Mail is more explicit, and simple, that is, its categorization and the strategies of self positive presentation and negative other presentations are more linguistically ‘overt’ such as naming rather than argumentation. Thus, its approach can be defined as less sophisticated and more populist.

Lastly, The Daily Mail seems to have less reservation in perpetuating and reinforcing the existing known stereotypes and metaphors and thus recreating/reproducing common negative altitudes of the its readership, whereas The Times is more “creative” and does not generally reproduce the existing stereotypes explicitly. It can
be argue that in terms of prejudice negative presentation of RASIM, The Daily Mail ‘harvests’ and reflects the prejudices in society while The Times ‘creates’ and introduces newer versions (see KhosraviNik 2009 in press for more details on this).

**Overall conclusions**

The ideological negative and ‘positive’ representation of RASIM throughout these periods and events in British newspapers seems to show a certain correlation with the proximity of these groups of people to the UK, and with how ‘dramatic’ the events described are. These two elements are cumulatively present in period one (Kosovo refugee) and period four (Madrid bombing) during which there was a generally supportive, ‘positive’ presentation of affected people in all the newspapers’ accounts, although this does not mean that the qualities of such representations were the same across all the newspapers.

The role of politics and political discourse and their impacts on the representation of RASIM is another important factor to be considered. In the British political domain the issues on and around immigration are always a core topic in debates, and as the findings show, whenever RASIM become the focus of political debates, they are automatically backgrounded and functionalised, as politics is a domain of striving for power via forming some kind of ‘consent’ discursively.

This is how at times the discourse of ‘political rivalry’ from both sides – ‘conservative’ or ‘liberal’- reduces RASIM to ‘an issue’, a problem or mere figures. In such a discourse backgrounding of RASIM is mainly to be taken for granted semantically and pragmatically along with references to numbers, percentages, cases or applications.

In terms of the link between macro-structures -ideologies- and micro-linguistic structures, the study shows that such a link does not constitute a two way system; while a positive ideological approach can influence the interpretation of the linguistic realisation -ranging from macro argumentation to micro-mechanisms such as perspectivisation- the reverse is not necessarily valid. The process of interpretation of micro mechanisms, such as linguistic foregrounding/ backgrounding in the first period (Kosovo refugees), essentially depends on the macro schema at work, and it is within this framework that incorporation of even common metaphors like those linking refugees with natural disasters and large quantities do not automatically constitute a negative representation in this case. Rather it seems that the topoi of numbers and quantity work in favour of the refugees and victims as they are decoded as a call for an urgent decision to be made to give help and support. That is to conclude that the topoi of numbers and large quantities or in fact (with some reservation) any other linguistic micro structures (except of course naming) do not by themselves constitute “negativity”; that is to argue that “negativity” is an aspect of macro structure of production and interpretation of a discourse. The interpretation of negativity requires a complex approach which would account for inter-discursive topics and all the other elements which contribute in defining a macro-structure; an ideology.

Thus, it is not the strategies and micro level mechanisms which create positive or negative representations; rather they are tools which may be used for the positive or
negative representation of a certain social actor. It is the tacit shared macro structure which orients, regulates, and decodes the “meanings”. This is to say that real ‘meanings’ are in society, rather than the language, and micro mechanisms do not automatically “create” macro structure of meanings.

The study also shows that the negative representation of RASIM in the British press in the events relevant to the UK mainly draws on a series of common topoi including numbers, economic burden (abuse of welfare system, expenditure), threat (threat to cultural identity, threat to community values), danger, and law (legality issues). At the same time RASIM are systematically constructed as a homogenous group, sharing similar characteristics, backgrounds, motivations and economic status, all of them different to UK citizens – thus a discursive processes of ‘othering’ and social backgrounding occurs throughout the press reporting, employing processes of aggregation, collectivisation and functionalisation. Aggregation is not restricted to the pluralisation of RASIM linguistically in the agent or object positions in the sentences, but it can be located in quotation patterns and political discourses as well.

The most typical construction of a RASIM member is as a different-looking (generally non-Caucasian), healthy (but lazy), adult, a young, single male with no or little education or professional skills. Other possible constructions, for example as elderly people, children, or educated people, tend to be backgrounded.

The assumption of homogeneity is a major quality of the negative representation of RASIM group which is most pursued by conservative newspapers. Conservative accounts of RASIM hardly recognise these groups using their names or other qualities and background them even when drawing on their personal narratives (which is rare in the first place), unless they can be positioned inside or adjacent to one of the negative topoi available. Liberal news reporters do make more of an effort to recognise diversities and generally provide more information about individual cases and differences among these groups.

However, liberal newspapers tend not to have a clear argumentation strategy to support their own constructions of RASIM, their reactions being mostly defensive and justificatory. Liberal newspapers draw on some specific topoi (human rights, ethics and human values) which construct some ‘positive’ presentations of RASIM. These topoi are mostly used to account for asylum seekers where the plights and fears of these people are foregrounded to create empathy and awareness. However, such an attitude may best be described as “victimisation” rather than as “positive” representation.

Due to the genre of the discourse being analysed - newspapers articles- some genre-specific features become salient in the representation of RASIM. Journalistic features like the order of information, agenda setting, exaggeration, extensivisation / summarisation and space allocation in general, and quotation patterns in particular, play an important role in constructing particular perspectives.

The extensive analysis of representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in British newspapers shows some main directions and trends in the representation of these groups of people across different periods and events. The general rise of public discourses on RASIM as seen in press discourse in this study, and the demarcation of
who is the ‘in’ and ‘out’ group hint at a change towards more convergent ideologies with an implicit ‘modernised’, ‘nationalist’ agenda which attempts to distance itself from the more “traditional” common discriminatory discourses (although the tabloid does not generally share even this attempt). These are all occasioned by the rise of more populist conservative discourses in Europe (for example see similar conclusions in Wodak 1996, Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Van Dijk 1991) which by definition tend to over-simplify and de-historicise the current social texture in modern societies like the UK. However, such strategic attempts in public discourse to avoid the resemblance to ‘known’ prejudiced discourses, does not diminish the risk involved in how these macro themes of argumentation will be translated for the public. It must also be kept in mind that the shift from implicit to explicit can be affected swiftly as events in the material world can conveniently fill in the gaps and clear out inhibitions far easier than we would like to imagine.
References


