

Ever Challenged Union: Exploring Ways Out of the Crises

Belfast, 29-30 June 2015

Conference papers are works-in-progress - they should not be cited without the author's permission. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s).

www.uaces.org

Europe in the News: Analysing Media Representations of the European Union

1. Introduction

When the General Election results came in in the early hours of May 8th and a Conservative majority government became more and more likely, an in/out EU referendum became a certainty as well. In fact, only days after the election David Cameron announced he would hold his pre-election promise made in 2013 in his Bloomberg speech (Cameron, 2013) and start renegotiations as soon as possible, the referendum was to be held by the end of 2017.

A British referendum poses a new challenge to the European Union, which saw Eurosceptic parties across the continent make significant gains in last year's European Parliament Elections (Treib, 2014). The impending UK referendum will require renegotiations and potentially treaty change. Conflicts between member states over those renegotiations and the British perception of exceptionalism can be expected (Glencross, 2015). Furthermore, in case of a no-vote in the referendum and a British exit, a domino effect could lead to other member states following the route and hence destabilise the EU (Vojtíšková, 2014). What should be considered though, is that the possibility of a 'Brexit' following an in/out referendum is unique to the British case as it calls into question a normative commitment to European integration. Although scepticism and discussion is present in other member states as well, this normative commitment to the project is only contested in the UK (Glencross, 2015).

The certainty of an EU referendum with its implications for both Britain and Europe as a whole makes it all the more important to analyse media representations of the European Union in British news media. Very rarely do citizens experience the EU directly, through contact with the EU institutions. Rather, they gain their information and knowledge through media (Gavin, 2000). Media representations therefore play a vital part in the formation of opinions and the forming of attitudes towards the EU, its institutions and European integration with all its consequences. Now that a referendum is imminent, citizens will have even more demand for information, which will at least partly be obtained through media. As long as citizens do not actively search for EU and government publications, they will have to rely to some extent on mass media and what they choose to report. Although face-to-face communication as well as pre-existing opinions might play an important role in decision-making, it is worth having a closer, analytical look at the way media represent the EU.

Analysing media representations is of particular importance when looking at long-time trends in opinions about the UK's EU membership: although, overall, public opinion leans towards remaining in the EU, these opinions are still volatile (Copsey and Haughton, 2014). This ties in well with LeDuc

(2002), who found that electoral behaviour in referendums is in general more volatile than in indirect elections, such as the General Elections. Although the EU debate has been present in the British public and British party politics for a long time, and opinions are therefore more stable than in debates about less ideologically loaded and new debates (LeDuc, 2002), media representations might still have an impact. It has to be considered that knowledge about the EU, its institutions and structures is low. Citizens have an opinion of the EU, but cannot base it on factual knowledge (McCormick, 2014). In general, trust in UK news media is gradually declining (YouGov, 2011). Nevertheless, citizens should be aware of any particular practices within the media which might sway their opinion in the case of an EU referendum.

In this paper I will introduce my approach to analysis which will hopefully give a different perspective on media representations of the European Union in British news media. After a brief overview of British relations with the EU and a summary of previous research, I will outline my research project. I will give an overview of sampling as well as my methodological procedure. With an example I will illustrate the different steps of my textual analysis, which will hopefully shed light on the production and reproduction of discourses about the European Union in the UK.

2. Britain in the UK: An Overview

To contextualise this research project I will give a brief overview over the UK's relationship with the EU. News is not generated in a vacuum. In order to fully comprehend how news stories about the EU are compiled, which discursive practices influence the production and ultimately why news look and sound a certain way and not another, it is vital to understand the societal context in which they are produced. This background knowledge helps contextualising the results but it also assists the researcher when conducting the analysis.

The UK has often been labelled a reluctant European or an awkward partner (George, 1998). Ever since negotiations about a coal and steel community started in the 1950s, there has been resistance of UK parties, governments but also the public against taking part in the project of European integration across the UK's political system (Copsey and Haughton, 2014). After two unsuccessful applications, vetoed by France, Britain joined the European Economic Community in 1973. A first in/out referendum was held only two years later, in 1975 (George, 1998). However, the issue was not settled after the referendum although the majority of the British voters opted to stay in. The controversy surrounding the issue of Europe can be traced through Margaret Thatcher's administration (1979-1990). Her time in office can be split into two periods. The first period was characterised by a European policy of engagement, which culminated in signing the Single European Act in 1986. After signing the SEA, however, the government and prime minister became more sceptical which she expressed in her Bruges speech in 1988 (Forster, 2002, p. 63), which, similarly to Cameron (2013) in his Bloomberg

speech, set out a new vision for Europe. Thatcher moved from a mainly pragmatic position, from which EC membership could be regarded as an opportunity for the economy, to a more ideological stance, where European integration was seen as a threat to parliamentary sovereignty (Forster, 2002, p. 64). Margaret Thatcher embraced the growing antipathy towards the then European Economic Community and transformed the Conservative party into a more openly Eurosceptic party (Vojtíšková, 2014). In this period the term *Euroscepticism* started to emerge, although resistance to European integration, economic as well as political, had been evident before the Prime Minister openly changed her attitude (Vasilopoulou, 2013). Although EU support was growing again in the 1990s, the Maastricht Treaty which established European Union and deepened integration, had a negative influence on both public opinion and party politics (Vasilopoulou, 2013).

In all these debates economic cost-benefit arguments dominated. This distinguishes the British debate from debates across the continents, which all entail a normative aspect, an ideological commitment to the European project (Wall, 2009). In Cameron's (2013) Bloomberg speech in which he states that the EU is a means to an end: 'prosperity, stability, the anchor of freedom and democracy both within Europe and beyond her shores – not an end in itself'.

Scepticism towards the EU can also be detected among the British public. Ever since the UK joined the European Union, Eurobarometer data suggests that British citizens are less enthusiastic about the future of the EU than a majority of their continental counterparts. British citizens appear less optimistic about the benefits of membership but are rather concerned about the negative consequences (European Commission, 2013b). British citizens also report to regard themselves as predominantly British, not European (European Commission, 2013a). The UK has been scoring consistently low on these questions since the Eurobarometer was introduced.

Furthermore, the European Union appears to gain importance in General Election campaigns. Although the EU as an issue is still ranging low in opinion polls asking for the most important issues facing Britain today (Iposos Mori, 2015), it has to be acknowledged that the issue of immigration has become an important factor in discussions about the EU. Immigration in general, including both EU and non-EU immigration, is ranging much higher in opinion polls (Iposos Mori, 2015). Support for Ukip can be seen as a symptom of dissatisfaction with the EU and immigration levels as well. In the European Elections 2014 they won the majority of votes in Britain. In the General Elections 3,881,099 (12.6%) UK citizens voted Ukip (BBC, 2015). Of course, this could also be regarded as a protest vote against established mainstream parties, and a symptom of political alienation. Nevertheless, growing anti-European sentiment, as well as opposition to the principle of free movement of people, have played an important part in this development (Glencross, 2015): Ukip supporters and potential supporters are united by a 'visceral dislike' of the European Union, and, maybe even more, of some of its practical implications, first and foremost immigration from EU member states (Copsey and Haughton, 2014, p. 84).

The focus of this paper and research project will not be the political system and parties', politicians' or even the British public's attitudes towards the European Union. However, these are intimately interlinked with media representations and an understanding of the political debates and public opinion will help in the analysis of news texts, especially when working within a critical discourse analytical framework. Before introducing this approach, however, I will briefly summarise previous research on media representations of the European Union.

3. Previous Research on Media Representation of the EU

3.1 Quantitative Research

The majority of research in this area is conducted in a quantitative and comparative manner (for example Semetko *et al.*, 2000; De Vreese, 2001; Anderson, 2004; Peter and de Vreese, 2004; Trenz, 2004; Gleissner and de Vreese, 2005; Meyer, 2005; De Vreese *et al.*, 2006; Vliegenhardt *et al.*, 2008), although some of the studies do not exclusively draw on quantitative methods. This type of study considers news coverage in different European member states and on some occasions candidate countries and compares it in terms of visibility or evaluation of the European Union. A comparative approach has an important advantage: the researcher is not inclined to generalise on the basis of one single country, in which specific contexts are important to consider. Instead the researcher will have data from different countries which can be compared. The identification of general trends on the basis of these results will be more reliable (Blumler *et al.*, 1992). Additionally, data is often collected over several years, allowing for a longitudinal outlook and the discovery of developments and trends.

Quantitative content analyses concentrate predominantly on visibility of the EU in news media in cross-national as well as single-country studies: Findings consistently show that reporting of the EU and its institutions is cyclical (for example Norris, 2000; De Vreese, 2001): EU coverage peaks around key events, such as European Parliamentary elections, the launch of the euro to form a European Monetary Union, or during European Commission summits. During routine periods the EU becomes almost invisible.

Often studies looking at the frequency of EU as an issue in the news also consider or focus predominantly on processes of Europeanisation (Peter and de Vreese, 2004; Trenz, 2004; Meyer, 2005; Statham and Gray, 2005). There seems to be an implicit assumption that a more frequent reporting enhances the emergence of a European public sphere. The EU and its actors have to be visible to the citizens. The assumption that more frequent coverage leads to the feeling of European citizenship across the EU, however, is questionable. Frequent negative reporting might even enhance growing scepticism and hostility towards the EU and its institutions. Therefore, in studies exploring visibility of the EU and Europeanisation, the tone of coverage should be taken into account as well. Frame

analyses take up this task. Definitions of ‘frame’ are varied and operationalised in very different ways (Entman, 1993; Vliegenthart and van Zoonen, 2011). The classic definition of frame, which is applied in most frame and framing analysis will nevertheless clarify the concept: framing is to ‘*select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation*’ for the item described’ (Entman, 1993, p. 52; italics in original). The frame can therefore be regarded as the lens through which a story is explored. Quantitative frame analyses offer a good overview of patterns in news coverage. Moreover, the identified frames will inform my own analysis. The possibility of using results from this strand of research therefore makes it worthwhile to revisit quantitative studies analysing framing of the EU in the news.

Frames identified in these studies include, for example conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, responsibility (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000), risk and opportunity (Schuck and de Vreese, 2006) or in a specifically British context benefit and loss (Gavin, 2000). Overall, these studies point towards a general trend: UK media report the EU more negatively than most other member states.

However, as this type of research considers large bodies of data, an in-depth description of particularly interesting cases is not possible. Quantitative comparative studies are rather aiming for breadth than for depth. For my particular research interest the British context needs to be taken into account.

3.2 Qualitative Research

The focus of qualitative studies is often different from quantitative ones. Instead of frequency of framing and tone, it is their quality which is being investigated (for example Anderson and Weymouth, 1999; Hawkins, 2012). In this paper I will focus on qualitative studies considering the British case of an EU member, as it is this specific case I am interested in in my own research project.

One of the most prominent and influential pieces of work in this category is probably Anderson and Weymouth’s study published in 1999. Considering articles from broadsheet as well as the tabloid press from the run-up to the 1997 general election and during the time of British presidency of the EU in the first half of 1998, they provide an overview of dominant themes in the British press related to the EU. Pro-European press is more likely to be penetrated by Eurosceptic voices than the Eurosceptic press by pro-European voices. Ideology is not as openly expressed as in the Eurosceptic newspapers.

Overall, Anderson and Weymouth discover a largely Eurosceptic discourse emphasising disadvantages and risks deriving from the UK’s membership, with only a few exemptions.

Discourses and frames that have been identified in qualitative research concerning British media representations of the EU furthermore include nationalism (Anderson, 2004), national history which emphasises conflict between Britain and the rest of Europe (Daddow, 2006) and separation and threat (Hawkins, 2012). This is also historically motivated. As a consequence of framing the EU debate as a

competition of national interests, people are cued to think of the EU not in terms of issues and policies but in terms of nationality.

In a longitudinal oriented commentary on previous research, Daddow (2012) traces back this generally negatively biased reporting in Britain to explain the cultural diffusion of Euroscepticism. There has been a shift in media support during the 1980s. Formerly supportive media have become increasingly sceptical of the process of European integration and the EU as an institution. Daddow (2012) attributes this shift mainly to the growing influence of Rupert Murdoch in the British media landscape, who puts his business interests ahead of his political beliefs. Bombastic reporting, giving a sense of urgency, guaranteed more copies to be sold. Recently, EU regulations inhibiting an expansion of News International's Sky across Europe, might have triggered further dislike from Murdoch.

Similarly to Anderson (2004), Daddow acknowledges the commercial motivation of employing a Eurosceptic style of reporting as it ensures higher profits. He detects a difference in the type of Euroscepticism expressed in different media outlets: while the tabloids exaggerate for the sake of effect, broadsheets 'express Euroscepticism in a more restrained fashion, while television broadcasters tend to achieve greater balance still. The general trend, however, has been to the predominance of coverage tainted by hard Eurosceptical editorialization' (Daddow, 2012, p. 1221). However, there might be other circumstances which enhanced the process, such as a deepening of European integration which resulted in the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, or more recently the economic downturn since 2008. Domestic problems, in this case, could be attributed to the EU.

Overall, the studies, quantitative as well as qualitative, give the impression of a generally rather negatively biased British news coverage on EU-related issues. Some studies explain this bias to a certain degree. This has been proven in comparison with other EU members (see for example Peter and de Vreese, 2004; Gleissner and de Vreese, 2005) as well as in studies focussing on the British case in particular (see for example Gavin, 2000; Daddow, 2006; Daddow, 2012).

Furthermore a national discourse is still pervasive. European actors are less prominent than national ones and EU-related news are most commonly evaluated in terms of their consequences for the UK (see for example Peter and de Vreese, 2004; Vliegenhardt *et al.*, 2008). Studies analysing rhetorical strategies discovered a nationalist discourse or discourses which draw heavily on historic stereotypes and repeat common but not always qualified arguments against British involvement in European integration (Daddow, 2006; Daddow, 2012; Hawkins, 2012). As far as production processes are considered in the analyses, several factors influencing the reporting have been discovered ranging from the insufficient and complicated, technocratic communication from European institutions to journalists to editorial preferences and commercial interests of proprietors (Anderson and Weymouth, 1999; Anderson, 2004). Euroscepticism in the British news appears to have become a 'default position' (Hawkins, 2012, p. 573). The reasons for largely Eurosceptic reporting, however, need further inves-

tigation. This is one of the tasks of this thesis as it tries to explain news discourse in relation to production processes and organisational circumstances.

4. Research Questions

My research project approaches the issue of media representations of the EU from a particular angle. Most studies cited above consider framing. Very few, however, analyse how language and rhetoric is used to create those frames and how language is producing, reproducing or normalising discourses. Furthermore, the interplay of production processes and textual features has not been given much space in previous studies.

My research interest can be subdivided into two research questions:

1. How is the EU represented in British news media?
2. Why is the EU represented in a certain way by the British news media?

In order to answer these two broad questions each of them can be broken down to a set of sub-questions which guide the analytical process. The first set addresses the news texts themselves:

- a) What key themes, frames and conflicts are dominant in media discourse concerning the EU and the UK's membership?
- b) Who are the key actors in the news stories? How are they characterised? What agency is attributed to them and what motives and outcomes are presented?
- c) What argumentations are drawn upon regarding the UK's EU membership?
- d) How is language and rhetoric used? In what ways are ideological positions and power relations reproduced in language?

The second set of sub-questions concern the production processes in media organisations, which should help explain why the EU is represented in certain ways. Questions to be tackled will be

- a) To what extent do political, societal and organisational circumstances influence the reporting?
- b) Do ownership, editorial preferences, the journalists' personal opinion and perceptions of public opinion play a role in reporting?
- c) How do economic limitations and time pressure influence the production process?
- d) Do organisations and parties influence the reporting? If so, how do they communicate their ideas to the media organisations?

In order to answer these questions and to provide a comprehensive overview of how the EU is represented and what influences these representations, a critical discourse analytical framework will be

used, which will be supplemented by qualitative interviews. Before introducing this and demonstrating its application with an example from my data, I will give a brief overview of the data gathered.

5. Methodology

5.1 Sampling of Media Material

My sample includes five newspapers and two TV news broadcasts. Namely these are *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Mirror* and *The Sun*, as well as their Sunday equivalents. The two news broadcasts are the BBC News at 10 and Channel 4 News at 7pm. On the weekends the broadcast aired closest to these times has been recorded.

With this sample I tried to capture a variety of different formats as well as include the most widely used newspapers and TV news. Apart from audience size, ownership as well as partisanship have been taken into account. The sample is not representative for the whole of the British media landscape. For example, Rupert Murdoch as an owner is present in the sample – The Sun is one of News Corp’s publications – but his greater influence in the British media sector is not accounted for. This is a necessary trade-off as my sample aims more at capturing the variety of formats and types of news media in Britain. My sample ensures large readerships and audiences but also reflect various positions on the political spectrum. Admittedly, there is a bias towards Conservative-backing newspapers (The Sun, The Daily Mail, The Daily Telegraph), but this is a symptom of the general bias towards the right in the British print media industry. All of these newspapers are furthermore owned by different people. This will make it possible to make careful inferences about their influence.

Data has been collected in two waves. As mentioned above, coverage of the EU peaks around large-scale European events. Therefore the first wave started two weeks before the European Parliament Elections 2014 and continued until one week after the British public went to the polling stations on May 22nd.

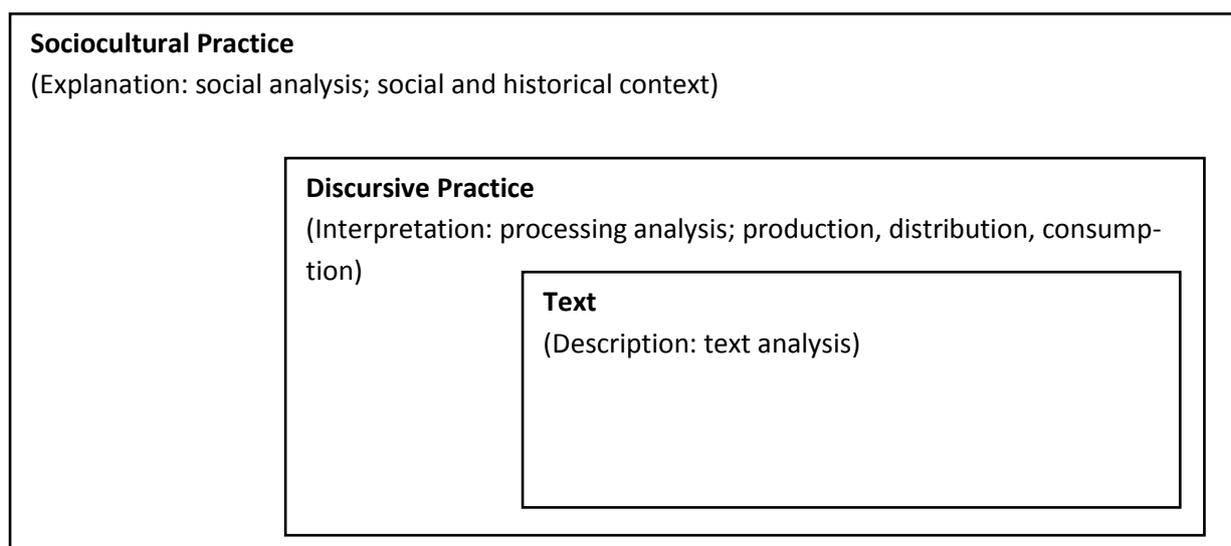
As the European Union, or at least immigration from other EU member states, was expected to be an important issue in the General Election campaign 2015, the second data collection period took place during the short election campaign from 30 March 2015 until one week after the General Elections, 14 May 2015. The additional weeks after polling days ensure that analysis of the results is captured in the sample. A party’s stance towards the European Union, certain EU policies or a potential referendum could prove vital in this analysis.

This sampling method led to a large body of data which had to be reduced in order to ensure an in-depth analysis. The exact rules for creation of this subsample would exceed the scope of this paper. To summarise, I created three subsets differing in relevance. The more relevant the stories, the more closely analysis will be. This will be demonstrated with an example below.

5.2 An approach to critical discourse analysis: Fairclough's three levels of discourse

The methodological approach taken to answer above stated research questions is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA does not label one school of thought or a certain approach to text analysis. Rather, CDA is a perspective towards text analysis, which is taken up by scholars in different social sciences and encompasses a variety of methodological approaches and different conceptualisations of discourse. It offers a 'general theoretical perspective on discourse which recognises the constitutive potential of discourse within and across social practices without reducing social practices to their discursive aspect' (Farrelly, 2010, p. 41). Linguistic and social theories are employed in order to unpack the interplay of power and ideologies in discourses (Souto-Manning, 2014), but different scholars draw on different theories, especially those developed by Bourdieu, Foucault, Marx or Critical Theory, among others. Despite the multifaceted frameworks used in the application of CDA, all approaches have one important assumption in common: Both written and spoken 'discourse' are social practice (Wodak, 1996; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997); and all social practices are tied to 'historical contexts and are the means by which existing power relations are reproduced or contested and different interests are served' (Janks, 1997, p. 329). According to Bell (1998), CDA is concerned with discovering and bearing witness to unequal relations of power which shape language use in society, as well as revealing how discourse (re)produces (or challenges) socio-political dominance. It is a problem-oriented approach (Farrelly, 2010), that takes into account the role of language use in the process of shaping discourses: Society is shaped through language use and language use is shaped by society.

CDA is not one, unified approach to research. As mentioned above, there are varied interpretations. The most useful approach to CDA has to be chosen according to the research question. The framework which proves to be most suitable as an overarching structure for my research project is Fairclough's (1995) dialectical-relational model of discourse, which conceptualises discourse in three levels.



The first level of analysis is the news text itself. Fairclough (1995) puts particular emphasis on the texture of texts, for example grammar, theme and word meaning. In this study, the news stories will also be analysed in terms of their formal measures and frames to give a comprehensive description of news coverage. A linguistic analysis on its own, without the context of content, would not answer the research questions as it gives no clear account of argumentative structure, actors, and key topics. This multi-layered description of texts can already partially answer the research questions. However, a description, regardless of how detailed it might be, cannot fully analyse the discourse about the European Union, nor can it explain why the texts have these characteristics. According to Fairclough (1995, p. 9) ‘analysis of texts should not be artificially isolated from analysis of institutional and discursive practices within which texts are embedded’. Therefore, on a second level of analysis, production, consumption and distribution processes are analysed in order to put the results of textual micro-analysis into context.

The third level of analysis, the level of sociocultural practices, contextualises the results further by linking them to the specific cultural and historical background. In the case of this study, myths and discourses concerning the British relationship with the EU will be taken into account for explanation. The dialectical-relational framework has the advantage of capturing the essence of CDA, namely the importance of the socio-cultural context for the generation, reproduction and normalisation of discourses as well as its intimate relationship with language use.

6. Application of a theoretical framework: How to analyse news media texts covering the EU

The framework sketched out above provides the theoretical backbone of my research project. However, for the textual analysis, this appears abstract and difficult to operationalise. Therefore I have se-

lected one example from my first data collection wave with which I would like to demonstrate my approach of textual analysis.

Firstly, formal measures will be recorded for all news stories included in the sample. For this example the formal measures are summarised below.

6.1 Formal measures, Frames and Actors

Media outlet	The Sun
Publication/broadcast date	09/05/2014
Page	2
Word count	313
Author	Tom Newton Dunn, Political Editor

Besides formal measures, the relevant news event will be coded for every article in the sample. This happens inductively. Although this approach requires re-coding the stories every now and then, it ensures that all relevant news events can be coded in necessary detail. The news event here is the revelation that there are now almost as many EU-immigrants coming to the UK as there are non-EU immigrants arriving per year. Due to the growing EU influx Prime Minister Cameron is unlikely to meet his target of reducing net migration to the tens of thousands. Interestingly, this article is part of a larger *Sun* campaign: *Make immigration your EU red line, Cameron*. Intertextuality will be interesting in this case, however, it cannot be explored within this paper.

In a second step the relevant EU policy area that is being touched upon is coded. A mix of deductive and inductive coding is applied here. A initial set of codes is adopted from Norris (2000), who has listed all policy areas the EU has responsibility for (at least to some extent). This set can be adapted, specified and updated throughout the coding process, particularly because competencies of the EU have evolved since Norris listed these policy areas. In case of this example *Immigration Policy*, more specifically the *principle of free movement of people within the EU* can be coded.

While the above mentioned will be applied to all articles and broadcasts sampled, the following categories will only be applied to those more relevant to my research project. These would be stories which do not only touch upon the EU but the EU or EU policies or actors constitute the news event. Actors and frames will be coded for these stories. For both of them a mix of deductively and inductively derived codes will be applied, which are informed by previous research but are also open to particularities of my sampled data.

Actors in the example are: Immigrants (EU and non-EU), Prime Minister, the EU, senior Tories, minister and Migration Watch UK.

The frame that is predominant in this piece is *threat*. The EU is framed as a threat to sovereignty. Britain cannot stop immigration as the EU has taken away the UK's powers to control its own. EU immigration is framed as a threat to the country as a whole. As will be elaborated further below, EU immigrants are assumed to be a burden, overcrowding the place and putting pressure on the British society.

The second frame which can be detected is *urgency*. As will be explained further below, language and rhetoric imply that the situation has to change quickly. Embedding the article in a wider campaign which is urging the Prime Minister to act in order to reduce EU immigration adds up to the urgency-frame.

6.2 Linguistic Choices

Besides the categories listed above, this research project will pay particular attention to language use. Language and rhetoric matter in two ways. Firstly, they have the capacity to shape discourse and secondly they are shaped by discourse (De Cillia *et al.*, 1999). It is important to look at language when trying to uncover the emergence of certain discourses in society as it is at the same time a driving force and a reflection of it.

It should be appreciated that every linguistic choice is exactly that: a choice. When analysing a news text linguistically it has to be kept in mind that the author has uncountable opportunities to report a certain story but he or she decide for one specific way to put it (Machin, 2007). This is not to say that all these choices are conscious. Some of them might be made in order to create an intended representation, other linguistic choices might be unconscious. This links back to the two-fold function of language. If the choices are active, language use becomes the driving force behind the creation of discourse. If the choices are unconscious they can be seen as a reflection of discourses and ideologies which are prevalent in society. At the same time these unconscious choices will eventually normalise a discourse and again, become a force in shaping it. In a CDA understanding of language, the linguistic characteristics of a text are 'extraordinarily sensitive indicators of sociocultural processes, relations, and change' (Fairclough, 1995, p. 4). This interplay of language use and society has to be kept in mind when analysing news texts. The next section of this paper will demonstrated with an example how this close linguistic analysis will be applied to a subset of my data.

The linguistic features to be analysed in this example are vocabulary and word choice, naming, opposition, grammar and presupposition. Of course, these are only some of the features which can be investigated. Whether this list needs refinement will be decided after a number of articles and news stories have been analysed.

The most obvious and accessible language feature I would like to pay some attention to is vocabulary and word choice. The words that are used to describe news events can suggest underlying attitudes and ideologies (see for example Van Dijk, 1986).

The headline already gives excellent scope to analyse vocabulary. Headlines are particularly important as they catch the eye of the reader and are therefore carefully designed. They also set out tone and main topic of the article (Fowler, 1991). This particular one from my example will catch the reader's eye as it is on the one hand a humorous pun and on the other hand already gives some indication of the ideological underpinnings, which might resonate well with the readership.

'OPEN BORDERS SHOCK; EUROVISION THRONG CONTEST; EU-immigrants to overtake non-EU'

The words 'Shock' and 'Throng' convey a sense of urgency. 'Shock' does so in particular. A 'shock' is an unpleasant surprise (Cambridge University Press, 2015) and implies that a situation is even worse than expected. It also implies immediacy and negative consequences. Shock can be seen as a state of *not knowing what to do now, being unable to act*. A shock takes away agency and leaves the shocked powerless for a short while.

Throng can be defined as a crowd or large group of people (Cambridge University Press, 2015). In this case it signifies a steady and unpleasant flow of migrants. At the same time, the word 'throng' contributes to the feeling that the country is full now due to the uncontrollable masses coming in. It also implies that these masses are undesirable.

The parallel drawn to the Eurovision Song Contest is interesting here as well. To clarify, the ECS did take place around the same time of the year and was a popular subject of reporting. In this case, however, it is used to make Europe immediate. The pun with Eurovision Song Contest links a pop culture phenomenon to political debate; it draws parallels where in reality there are none. The EU is a complex and complicated format but by linking it to Eurovision Song Contest it makes it better understandable, breaks it down to a level every reader can digest and understand. This pun explains the EU with a not very fitting metaphor. Thereby it implies that some 'rules' of the Eurovision Song Contest automatically also apply to the EU, for example the idea that UK is always left out. In the ESC as well as in the EU the Eastern Europeans are dominating, and other states are ganging up against the UK, the contest is rigged against the UK.

The subheading links in well with the idea of a contest: *EU-immigrants to overtake non-EU immigrants*. The verb overtake implies a race in which EU-immigrants are winning. It also appears as if these winning EU-immigrants are the kind of immigrants that are not wanted. By employing the sport metaphor of overtaking the idea of a contest is even strengthened. This is a race for Britain in which Britain automatically loses out, a similar situation as the Eurovision Song Contest.

Within the text these patterns are repeated. Only a few examples can be reviewed here. The author is talking of *bombshell stats* which are due to be confirmed when the official immigration numbers for 2013 are released. *Bombshell*, similar to *shock*, implies immediacy and an unpleasant surprise. At the same time it is a word which is normally used in the context of violent conflict and war. A contest, as implied in the headline, becomes suddenly violent. This is supported by the use of *explosion* to describe the growing numbers of EU migrants. Again, explosion and shock imply similar things: an unpleasant, sudden event which leaves the victims paralysed.

In this whole scenario *Britain is powerless*, not only because it is in a state of shock but also because all control is taken away from the UK by the EU, which is, in this context rather a hostile foreign power than a supranational organisation of which the UK is a part. This furthermore ties in with a common myth that the UK loses sovereignty to the EU while the EU hinders the UK to govern itself.

It is, however, not only vocabulary itself that can be analysed. For example, naming is a way to describe actors in a news story. For example, in the text *EU immigrants* are compared to *arrivals* from the rest of the world. *Immigrants* and *arrivals* are two words for the same social reality. However, the noun *immigrants* carries more negative connotations than *arrivals*.

Another instance of naming which results in negative connotations is the emphasis that EU migrants come largely from *debt hit south and eastern* European states. Even if a majority of them does, it implies without justification that these migrants are poor and maybe even somewhat dodgy. This poses the question why it is important to mention the area where those immigrants come from. It might towards ideological positions within the media organisation and/or the readership.

Another interesting feature is opposition as it can be used to emphasise certain points. The first example from the text emphasises the urgency of the matter again: *The stats bolster The Sun's Red Line demand for Mr Cameron to **win back power** of UK borders or see Brits vote **to leave the EU** in 2017.*

The second example puts emphasis on the threat by EU migrants, juxtaposing their 'explosion' in numbers to the lowest level of non-EU migrants in decades: *Non-EU newcomers are at their **lowest level** since 1998 – but the **explosion of EU arrivals** has left the Tories unable to gloat.* Again, these emphases might point towards a development in society, underlying ideologies within the news organisation or expectations within the news organisation about which kind of stories and storylines will sell best among their readerships. This, at the same time, could link back to dominant, powerful discourses in the sociocultural context.

Furthermore, grammar can prove interesting in a textual analysis. Grammatical constructions are not only means to communicate meaning but can carry meaning in themselves. It should be acknowledged, however, that some grammatical patterns might not be idiosyncratic to the reporting of the EU but are part of a specific writing style adopted by journalists and subeditors. This does not mean that grammatical choices are not ideological. In contrary, they give an indication of some underlying ideo-

logies, values and potentially commercial interest within the news organisation. Nevertheless, it will have to be carefully considered to what extent those grammatical choices are specific to the reporting of the EU or mirror attitudes towards the EU and to what extent they try to meet readers' needs. However, by comparison of grammar constructions across different news media it will be possible to draw some careful conclusions.

Passive and active constructions are a grammatical feature which deserves some attention. In general, active constructions will give someone or something, the subject, responsibility for what is happening. Passive constructions, on the other hand, will put the subject of the sentence at the receiving end of an action. This takes away responsibility of the subject (see for example Richardson, 2007).

In the chosen example active constructions are more frequent than passive constructions. As explained above, this could be a characteristic of writing style among Sun journalists. After all, The Sun is a tabloid which tries to serve a particular audience whose members have certain expectations. For example, they might appreciate a simple writing style more than a complex one. Nevertheless, it is striking that EU immigrants always take on the role of an active subject within the sentences. Therefore they are given responsibility for rising numbers of migrants and all its consequences. The EU itself also predominantly takes the position of an active subject. Again, responsibility for the imbalance of immigrants as well as the UK's powerlessness to stop it, is ascribed to the EU.

Modality is another grammatical feature which deserves attention. Through modal constructions degrees of certainty can be expressed. The usage of verbs to introduce a statement can be relevant here as well as modal verbs. For example *The prime minister believes immigration can be reduced* implies less certainty than *The prime minister states immigration can be reduced*. This is significant as in the first example the prime minister appears less capable than in the second example. Similarly, modal verbs can fulfil the same function in a sentence. For example the modal verb *will* in the following sentence from the *Sun* article expresses more certainty than if it was substituted with *could*: *Migration Watch UK last night backed Tory calls to restrict movement – predicting more than 500,000 more EU migrants will arrive within five years*. The actor in this sentence, Migration Watch UK, acts as an authority here as well, as an unbiased watchdog; not only politicians are worried, migration experts are as well.

One hidden, but nevertheless crucial features of news discourse are presuppositions and implications as they help normalising discourse. Presuppositions draw on shared cultural knowledge, on what the author believes everybody in the readership knows already. Some things are so obvious that the author does not need to mention them. However, by not explaining and explicitly mentioning them but by assuming common knowledge presupposition are maybe even stronger than a statement as they normalise certain viewpoints by not justifying them or backing them up by facts. Through this process

they become even more strengthened in society and challenging them becomes more and more difficult (Van Dijk, 2005).

Presuppositions that are transported in this particular example are the following: There are too many immigrants in the UK, especially too many EU immigrants. This is not explicitly stated but implied. At the same time, these numbers and immigration itself are assumed to have negative consequences for the UK. It is not overtly written down that immigration has a negative impact but through word choice and framing this becomes obvious. For what other reason is it so urgent to reduce EU immigration? Another presupposition in this particular news text is the responsibility of the EU for this unpleasant development. Firstly, control has been taken away from the EU and needs to be reclaimed. Secondly, within the EU the economy is struggling which worsens the immigration situation for Britain.

7. Conclusion

This paper aimed at introducing an insightful approach to textual analysis in order to investigate representations of the European Union in the British press. With a referendum on UK membership within the EU now certain, media representations will have to be scrutinised in order to give citizens the opportunity to make an informed decision. Practices in the media which might sway opinions should be investigated. The introduced approach might help in this process as it not only takes into account manifest content but also latent features as well as their interlink with organisational and sociocultural contexts and discursive practices.

The list of textual features presented in this paper is not yet finalised. In the process of analysis adaptations and alterations are a possibility and maybe even a necessity. However, this demonstration sketches out the general approach and its goals. Of course, the example chosen here for demonstration purposes might not be representative for the whole sample. Furthermore, although organisational discursive practices have been mentioned in bypassing, this paper mainly introduced the textual approach. The next level of analysis, which will be supplemented by interviews with media and PR professionals, will give a more comprehensive view of how and why these news discourses emerge and develop.

Bibliography

- Anderson, P. (2004) 'A Flag of Convenience? Discourse and Motivations of the London-based Eurosceptic Press', *European Studies*, 20, pp. 151-170.
- Anderson, P. and Weymouth, A. (1999) *Insulting the public? The British Press and the European Union*. New York: Longman.
- BBC (2015) *Election 2015 Results*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015/results> (Accessed: 19/05/2015).
- Bell, A. (1998) 'The Discourse Structure of News Stories', in Bell, A. and Garrett, P. (eds.) *Approaches to Media Discourse*. pp. 64-104.
- Blumler, J.G., McLeod, J.M. and Rosengren, K.E. (1992) *Comparatively speaking: communication and culture across space and time*. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage.
- Cambridge University Press (2015) *Cambridge Dictionaries Online*. Available at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/essential-british-english/> (Accessed: 19/05/2015).
- Cameron, D. (2013) *The future of the EU and the UK's relationship with it*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/eu-speech-at-bloomberg> (Accessed: 09/02/2015).
- Copsey, N. and Haughton, T. (2014) 'Farewell Britannia? 'Issue Capture' and the Politics of David Cameron's 2013 EU Referendum Pledge', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 52(Annual Review), pp. 74–89.
- Daddow, O. (2006) 'Euroscepticism and the culture of the discipline of history', *Review of International Studies*, 32, pp. 309-328.
- Daddow, O. (2012) 'The UK media and 'Europe': from permissive consensus to destructive dissent', *International Affairs*, 88(6), pp. 1219-1239.
- De Cillia, R., Reisigl, M. and Wodak, R. (1999) 'The discursive construction of national identities', *Discourse and Society*, 10(2), pp. 149-173.
- De Vreese, C.H. (2001) 'Europe' in the News: A Cross-National Comparative Study of the News Coverage of Key EU Events', *European Union Politics*, 2(3), pp. 283-307.
- De Vreese, C.H., Banducci, S.H., Semetko, H.A. and Boomgaarden, H.G. (2006) 'The News Coverage of the 2004 European Parliamentary Election Campaign in 25 Countries', *European Union Politics*, 7(4), pp. 477-504.
- Entman, R.M. (1993) 'Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm', *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), pp. 51-58.
- European Commission (2013a) *Standard Eurobarometer: European Citizenship*. Brussels. [Online]. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb79/eb79_citizen_en.pdf (Accessed: 10. April 2015).
- European Commission (2013b) *Standard Eurobarometer: Public Opinion in the European Union*. Brussels: Communication, D.-G.f.
- Fairclough, N. (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis*. London Longman.
- Fairclough, N. and Wodak, R. (1997) 'Critical Discourse Analysis', in Van Dijk, T. (ed.) *Discourse as Social Interaction. Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. London: Sage, pp. 258–284.
- Farrelly, M. (2010) 'Critical Discourse Analysis in Political Studies: An Illustrative Analysis of the 'Empowerment' Agenda', *Politics*, 30(2), pp. 98-104.
- Forster, A. (2002) *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics: Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties since 1945*. London: Routledge.
- Fowler, R. (1991) *Language in the news: discourse and ideology in the press*. London: Routledge.
- Gavin, N. (2000) 'Imagining Europe: political identity and British television coverage of the European economy', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2(3), pp. 352-373.
- George, S. (1998) *An awkward partner: Britain in the European Community*. 3rd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gleissner, M. and de Vreese, C.H. (2005) 'News about the EU Constitution: Journalistic challenges and media portrayal of the European Union Constitution', *Journalism*, 6(2), pp. 221-242.

- Glencross, A. (2015) 'Why a British referendum on EU membership will not solve the Europe question', *International Affairs*, 91(2), pp. 303-317.
- Hawkins, B. (2012) 'Nation, Separation and Threat: An Analysis of British Media Discourses on the European Union Treaty Reform Process', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 50(4), pp. 561-577.
- Ipsos Mori (2015) *Economist/Ipsos MORI April 2015 Issues Index* Available at: <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3566/EconomistIpsos-MORI-April-2015-Issues-Index.aspx> (Accessed: 27/05/2015).
- Janks, H. (1997) 'Critical Discourse Analysis as a research tool', *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 19(3), pp. 329-342.
- LeDuc, L. (2002) 'Opinion change and voting behaviour in referendums', *European Journal of Political Research*, 41(6), pp. 711-732.
- Machin, D. (2007) *Introduction to Multimodal Analysis*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- McCormick, J. (2014) 'Voting on Europe: the potential pitfalls of a British referendum', *The Political Quarterly*, 85(2), pp. 212-219.
- Meyer, C.O. (2005) 'The Europeanization of Media Discourse: A Study of Quality Press Coverage of Economic Policy Co-ordination since Amsterdam', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43(1), pp. 121-148.
- Norris, P. (2000) *A Virtuous Circle: Political Communication in Postindustrial Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Peter, J. and de Vreese, C.H. (2004) 'In Search of Europe: A Cross-National Comparative Study of the European Union in National Television News', *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 9(4), pp. 3-24.
- Richardson, J.E. (2007) *Analysing Newspapers: An approach from critical discourse analysis*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Schuck, A.R.T. and de Vreese, C.H. (2006) 'Between Risk and Opportunity, News Framing and its Effects on Public Support for EU Enlargement', *European Journal of Communication*, 21(5), pp. 5-32.
- Semetko, H.A., De Vreese, C.H. and Peter, J. (2000) 'Europeanised Politics - Europeanised Media? European Integration and Political Communication', *West European Politics*, 23(4), pp. 121-141.
- Semetko, H.A. and Valkenburg, P.M. (2000) 'Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News', *Journal of Communication*, 50(2), pp. 93-109.
- Souto-Manning, M. (2014) 'Critical narrative analysis: the interplay of critical discourse and narrative analyses', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27(2), pp. 159-180.
- Statham, P. and Gray, E. (2005) 'The Public Sphere and Debates about Europe in Britain', *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 18(1), pp. 61-81.
- Treib, O. (2014) 'The voter says no, but nobody listens: causes and consequences of the Eurosceptic vote in the 2014 European elections', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 21(10), pp. 1541-1554.
- Trenz, H.-J. (2004) 'Media Coverage on European Governance: Exploring the European Public Sphere in National Quality Newspapers', *European Journal of Communication*, 13(9), pp. 291-319
- Van Dijk, T. (1986) *Racism in the Press*. London: Arnold.
- Van Dijk, T. (2005) 'Contextual knowledge management in discourse production: A CDA perspective', in Wodak, R. and Chilton, P. (eds.) *A New Agenda in (Critical) Discourse Analysis: Theory, Methodology and Interdisciplinarity*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 71-100.
- Vasilopoulou, S. (2013) 'Continuity and Change in the Study of Euroscepticism: Plus ca change?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 51(1), pp. 153-168.
- Vliegenhardt, R., Schuck, A.R.T., Boomgaarden, H.G. and de Vreese, C.H. (2008) 'News Coverage and Support for European Integration, 1990 - 2006', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 20(4), pp. 415-439.
- Vliegthart, R. and van Zoonen, L. (2011) 'Power to the frame: Bringing sociology back to frame analysis', *European Journal of Communication*, 26(2), pp. 101-115.
- Vojtíšková, V. (2014) 'The prospect of a British exit from the EU', *European View*, 13(2), pp. 309-317.

- Wall, S. (2009) *A Stranger in Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wodak, R. (1996) 'Critical Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis', in Verschueren, J., Östman, J.-O. and Bloomaert, J. (eds.) *Handbook of Pragmatics*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, pp. 204-210.
- YouGov (2011) *Trust in the media*. Available at: <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2011/11/14/trust-media/> (Accessed: 27/05/2015).