From burden to threat: A diachronic study of language ideology and migrant representation in the British press

1. Introduction and background

In April 2018, a 24-year-old woman was attacked on a London Underground train for speaking Spanish. Her two assailants were heard shouting that she should 'speak English in England' (Stickings 2018). The incident was described by the British Transport Police as a 'vicious and racially-motivated assault' (ibid.). In a separate incident in October that year, a 56-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of racially aggravated actual bodily harm after he punched a woman on a London train because she was speaking Spanish, shouting 'you need to speak in English, you're in fucking England. You shouldn't speak other languages' (Forrest 2018).

These and other instances of language-based discrimination occur against a UK political and media backdrop which has increasingly targeted people living in Britain who don't speak English as a first language. In terms of the political context, successive UK Governments have implemented a series of policies designed to 'encourage' migrants to the country to learn English to ease their integration (c.f. Sebba 2017). This has included such interventions as reductions to state-funded translation of public information materials, the implementation of legislation which places more stringent obligations on migrants to learn (and demonstrate knowledge of) the English Language, and suggestions that a deadline should set by which point everyone living in the country should be able to speak English. From a media perspective, Wright and Brookes (2019) examined the fallout in the right-leaning British national press following the publication of the results of the 2011 Census, which indicated that 8% of UK residents (4.2 million people) had a first language other than English. We found a persistent media narrative which represents non-native English speakers living in the UK in a negative and stigmatising way, particularly as a burden on and threat

towards UK society, ultimately contributing to a wider anti-immigration agenda which legitimises exclusionary and discriminatory practices against people from minority linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. In this chapter, we take a take a different perspective on this coverage, adopting a diachronic approach in order to study changes in the right-leaning press discourse surrounding the phrase 'speak[ing] English' over a thirteen-year period (2005 to 2017, with the 2011 Census as a mid-point). Although our focus is on the press within this time frame, we consider the patterns in representation to be symptomatic and reflective of the wider socio-political context, and not just the media and Census alone.

There is a now well-established link between language and notions of national identity and belonging. Piller (2001: 273) for example, writes, 'ideologies of national identity are a central facet of modern social identities and they are intricately bound up with linguistic identity', while Billig (1995: 29) argues that 'language is a prime determinant of nationalist identity'. It therefore follows that many individuals 'hold passionate beliefs about the importance and significance of a particular language to their sense of national identity' (Blackledge and Creese 2009: 458). Indeed, such beliefs can become deeply passionate and potentially discriminatory, such that language ideologies can have 'direct implications for linguistic minorities, their rights, and the policies protecting them' (Vessey 2016: 21). Indeed, the two stories cited at the beginning of this chapter attest to the sorts of behaviours that can manifest at the interface of nationalistic and language ideologies. Given the vested public interest in language-related issues, it is not surprising that they are newsworthy, and it has been argued that the media exploits this newsworthiness and makes 'linguistic and cultural diversity visible' (Kelly-Holmes and Milani 2011: 477). To that end, an examination of the media can help reveal the ways in which representations of languages and speakers can operate to discriminate against linguistic minority groups (Blackledge 2002: 84).

In this chapter, we examine press representations of people living in the UK who don't speak English as a first language. Focusing in particular on the right-leaning press, we identify where and how these representations have changed, but also the ways in which they remain stable, over the period 2005 to 2017. We interpret these representations in terms of the language ideologies they support and propagate. Following Vessey (2017: 278), we understand language ideologies to be 'beliefs about languages (or a particular language) that are shared and that become so well-established that their origin is often forgotten by speakers; the beliefs accordingly become naturalized, perceived as common sense, and are socially reproduced'. Moreover, we also interpret these representations and their attendant ideologies in terms of their relation to contemporaneous social and political events, paying particular attention to those which have direct implications for immigration in the UK. Such contextual factors range from the 2011 Census itself, to legislative introductions and the UK Home Office's 'hostile environment' policy towards immigration (cf. Hill 2017).

2. Data and approach

The study reported in this chapter is based on a purpose-built corpus of right-leaning UK national newspaper articles about the topic of speaking English, published between 2005 and 2017 (inclusive). This date range was chosen because it represents the press coverage surrounding the 'speak English' debate in the six years prior to and following the 2011 Census. For this chapter, we decided to focus on right-leaning press articles only. This decision was based on two considerations: (i) the right-leaning press accounts for the majority of newspaper discourse in the UK (of the ten national newspapers, six are right-leaning, three are left-leaning and one is centrist; Baker et al. 2013), and (ii) between 2005 and 2017, the right-leaning press published approximately twice as many articles concerned

with the topic of speaking English, as we have defined it (see below), compared with the left-leaning press (4,879 vs. 2,436 articles, respectively).

Articles were obtained from the online searchable newspaper database *Nexis* and were included in the corpus if they contained the words *speak** and *English* (contiguously or non-contiguously) in their headline and/or lead paragraph.[1] The search included all six right-leaning UK national tabloids and broadsheets; *Express*, *Mail*, *Sun*, *Star*, *Telegraph* and *Times*.[2] Newswires were excluded, and similar results were grouped together to minimise the inclusion of duplicates (default search settings in *Nexis*). The completed corpus amounts to 4,879 articles (3,044,315 words). Table 1 and Figure 1 provide breakdowns of the number of articles published in each year covered by the corpus.

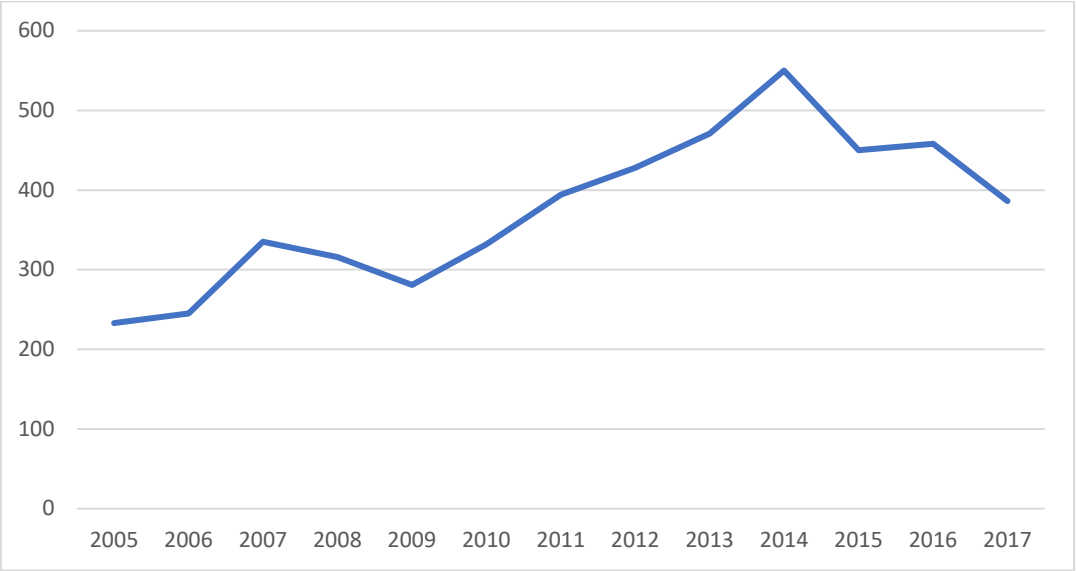
Table 1. Breakdown of number of articles and words per year.

Year	Articles		Words	
	Freq.	%	**Freq.**	%
2005	233	4.78	145,217	4.77
2006	245	5.02	146,806	4.82
2007	335	6.87	182,504	5.99
2008	316	6.48	176,154	5.79
2009	281	5.76	172,350	5.66
2010	332	6.80	186,221	6.12
2011	394	8.08	225,129	7.40
2012	428	8.77	266,265	8.75
2013	471	9.65	271,721	8.93
2014	550	11.27	355,793	11.69
2015	450	9.22	321,519	10.56
2016	458	9.39	349,139	11.47
2017	386	7.91	245,497	8.06
Total	**4,879**	**100.00**	**3,044,315**	**100.00**

[1] The asterisk following *speak* acts as a wildcard for any set of characters, so the search included words like *speaks*, *speaker*, *speakers* and *speaking*. We decided not to include *spoke* or *spoken* in our search term as only a minority of the results produced by these terms (less than 5%) were about speaking English. Instead, these past tense forms tended to be used to frame a quote or to indicate that someone had spoken to the newspaper or the media more widely about the topic of the story.

[2] Note: Sunday editions and sister publications are subsumed under the main newspaper name, for example *Times* also covers the *Sunday Times*. This is also the case for online versions, for example the *Mail* includes articles published on the website dailymail.co.uk. The exceptions to this are the *Sun* and the *Times*, for which paywalls preclude the inclusion of online articles in *Nexis* results.

Figure 1. Number of articles about the 'speak English' debate published 2005–2017.



The number of articles concerned with the speak English debate – as we have defined it – generally increases over time, peaking in 2014 (the year following the publication of the Census results) before falling to levels comparable to 2011 – the year of the Census itself. The corpus includes traditional news articles (i.e. 'hard news') but also columns, editorials, reviews, letters to the editor and opinion pieces. We decided to include these publication types since they all occupy space on the pages and websites of the media outlets under study, are all consumed by readers, and all contribute to the language ideologies that we are interested in analysing in this chapter. We did not filter the results for articles that we deemed not to be sufficiently 'about' the topic of speaking English, as doing so would have required us to make a series of subjective judgements which would impinge upon the replicability of our data collection procedure (Baker et al. 2013).[3] Data downloaded from *Nexis* includes a large amount of metadata and indexing information which we removed, leaving only the headline and main body of the articles for analysis.

[3] This point notwithstanding, we performed a 'sanity check' on the corpus to ensure that the proportion of 'false positives' (i.e. articles that clearly had little to do with the English language) would not unduly influence our analysis. To do this, we extracted a random sample of 100 articles spanning all years and publication types. From this, we determined that just 3 articles had limited relevance to our purposes but the remaining 97 had something to do with the English language and those who can or can't speak it (well).

We analyse this data using a corpus-assisted approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is a type of discourse analytical research concerned with the ways in which social power abuse, dominance and inequality are 'enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context' (van Dijk 2015: 466; see also: Fairclough 1989). The combination of corpus linguistics and CDA is mutually-enforcing, with each method able to overcome some of the obstacles associated with the other (Baker et al. 2008). With corpus assistance, CDA can deal more effectively with larger and more representative datasets that are likely to reveal a wider range of representations and account for longer time periods than is possible (or at least practical) using a purely qualitative approach to CDA. Corpus assistance also adds a degree of objectivity to CDA approaches, as it offers a set of predictable analytical techniques and advocates a spirit of methodological transparency underpinned by two guiding principles: (i) no systematic bias in the selection of texts included in the corpus (i.e. do not exclude a text because it does not fit a pre-existing argument or theory) and (ii) total accountability (all data gathered must be accounted for) (McEnery and Hardie 2012).

At the same time, our corpus-assisted approach also stands to benefit from its synthesis with CDA, and particularly relevant here is CDA's commitment to analysing social context (van Dijk 2001), which includes providing arguably more robust theoretical accounts of the ways in which texts interact with the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. In the present study, we draw upon our knowledge of the social and political backdrop against which the articles in our corpus were published, paying particular attention to UK language policy and relevant events taking place within the time span of our data, in an attempt to re-situate the news stories within the original contexts in which they were produced and consumed.

Our analysis takes a collocation-based approach to trace similarities and changes in the discourse surrounding the key expression 'speak English' (n= 3,398) between 2005 and 2017. The frequency of this phrase in each year of the corpus is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency of 'speak English' in each year of the corpus.

Year	Freq.	%
2005	110	3.24
2006	124	3.65
2007	205	6.03
2008	160	4.71
2009	186	5.47
2010	197	5.80
2011	237	6.97
2012	264	7.77
2013	363	10.68
2014	453	13.33
2015	408	12.01
2016	323	9.51
2017	368	10.83
Total	**3,398**	**100**

We decided to use the phrase 'speak English' as an analytical entry point as it broadly corresponds with the wording of one of the 2011 Census items (i.e. 'How well do you *speak English*?'), while also reflecting the search term used to source articles for the corpus. Using *WordSmith Tools version 7* (Scott 2016), we generated a list of collocates of the phrase 'speak English' (L5 > R5) and extracted collocational pairings with an MI^3 score of at least 11 (Brezina et al. 2015). This measure was considered preferable to frequency alone as it promotes lower-frequency but more exclusive associations which can benefit identifying representations associated with a word, while curbing the low frequency bias associated with straightforward MI. Therefore, no matter how suggestive, an association which is not repeated enough will be less influential than an association that is more firmly established in the corpus. Furthermore, MI^3 avoids the sensitivity to corpus size and calculation of significance scaled to a particular range of values associated with t-scores and log-likelihood,

respectively (see Brezina et al. (2015) and Gablasova et al. (2017) for comparisons of measures). We then grouped these collocates into themes based on manually reading a random sample of 100 uses per collocate (where possible) in which each occurred alongside the expression 'speak English'. Based on this analytical step, we grouped the collocates into the following thematic categories: (i) proficiency, (ii) multilingualism, (iii) learning English and integration and (iv) public services and the private sector. We monitored change over time by identifying which years any given collocate did or did not reach our MI3 cut-off value of 11. This allowed us to observe collocates which had consistent prominence across the time frame as well as those which appeared only at given points in the data, and perhaps reflect growing or waning trends in the reporting. However, we take a broad view of 'change' that extends beyond quantitative changes over time. In our analysis, 'change' manifests in two ways. One way is the presence and absence of particular collocates at particular points in time, with some collocates appearing in only one or two years of the corpus. Meanwhile, the other acknowledges that although the same collocate may appear across many (consistent) years, the *way* in which it is used can change, in terms of the different representational patterns it contributes towards. This diachronic approach to corpus-aided discourse analysis differs from existing methods, most obviously Gabrielatos and Baker's (2008) analysis of 'consistent collocates' which appear in at least seven of their ten annual sub-corpora of newspaper articles about refugees and asylum seekers. This filtered out the so-called 'seasonal collocates' which were frequent in some years and not others. Such collocates were undesirable for Gabrielatos and Baker's study, but form an important part of our analysis here. On a further methodological note, our findings also highlight the importance of returning to and expanding upon previously analysed corpora (in this case from Wright and Brookes (2019)) which, as Baker and McEnery (2019) argue, can be useful for monitoring

changes in a dynamic discourse (in our case, around the *speak English* debate), and to assess the ways in which media representations reflect and influence their socio-political contexts.

3. Analysis

In this section, we examine each of the four themes identified through our grouping of collocates: proficiency; multilingualism; learning English and integration; and public services and the private sector. The analysis is structured thematically and addresses each of these themes in turn.

Proficiency

The first set of collocates we want to consider consists of terms relating to the proficiency with which migrants are represented as being able to speak English (see Table 3). This constitutes a large number of grammatically diverse collocates, including modal verbs (*can*, *cannot*, *can't*, *could*, *couldn't*, *must*, *should*), auxiliary verbs (*did*, *didn't*, *do*, *does*, *doesn't*, *don't*), degree adverbs (*barely, fluently*¸ *properly*, *well*), lexical verbs (*struggle*, *struggled*), adjectives (*able*, *unable*) and a noun (*standard*).

Table 3. Proficiency collocates of 'speak English' with normalised frequency of collocation (per hundred occurrences of 'speak English')[4]

Collocate	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
able			4.87			4.06	5.90	6.06	2.20	3.53	4.90	6.19	8.15
barely	4.54				3.76	2.53	2.53	2.27	1.37		1.83	0.80	1.34

[4] Blank cells indicate that a collocational pairing either did not occur in that year of the corpus or was assigned an MI^3 score below 11, meaning that it did not meet our threshold for significance.

can	11.82		4.87	7.50	6.45	10.65	5.06	10.60	3.86	3.75	7.35	4.33	7.07
cannot	10.00	7.25	7.80	8.75	10.21	7.10	13.50	3.03	9.64	9.27	10.34	17.33	
can't	7.27	9.67	8.78	6.25	5.91	4.56	6.32	4.16	6.06	6.84	3.09	1.21	9.63
could	10.00	8.06	4.39		5.91		4.22	7.95	10.19	6.84	2.69	6.50	6.25
couldn't				3.75	4.30			3.40		1.32	2.26	5.77	0.83
did									2.48		3.19	4.02	3.80
didn't									1.93	1.99	2.21		16.86
do		6.45	14.63	14.37	8.60	12.18	8.44	6.06	11.85	9.49	7.84	9.29	2.43
does					6.45		3.79			2.21	2.70		2.72
doesn’t								3.41		3.53	4.66	2.48	2.72
don't	5.45	6.45	5.85	10.00	6.45	6.09	5.91	3.79	9.36	6.84	16.34	2.94	9.51
fluently									2.20		0.30		
must						5.58	3.37		3.58	5.51	6.13	5.77	
properly		5.64				6.09	3.79	3.78	3.03				2.87
should										4.19	0.44	4.33	
standard											15.89		
struggle							2.11			1.32			
struggled													1.73
unable									2.20	1.98	0.69	2.24	6.33
well						4.06			8.81	4.86	2.70		

The first thing to note about this table is the proliferation of negative modal and auxiliary verbs. *Can't*, *cannot*, *couldn't*, *didn't*, *doesn't* and *don't* all collocate with 'speak English' to refer to people who do not speak English, while the affirmative forms *can*, *could*, *do* and *does* tend overwhelmingly to be negated to similar effect (e.g. 'those who *do not* speak English as a first language' (*Times*, 2007)). In a similar vein, the adjective collocate *unable* is consistently used to describe migrants as being unable to speak English, with the affirmative *able* constantly negated (e.g. 'ONE in 10 doctors in Britain may not be *able* to speak English properly' (*Star*, 2007)). We note here that this is a fairly stable feature of the corpus, with most of these terms emerging as strong collocates of 'speak English' in the majority of the years, while *can't* and *don't* appear as strong collocates across all years.

That these articles focus on people – migrants specifically – who don't or aren't able to speak English isn't particularly surprising, as it is not only arguably more newsworthy in a cultural context where English is the dominant language, but also reflects the tendency of the press – and the mainstream media generally – to report stories about things and events that might be considered (or which it can frame as) problematic or in some way negative (Bourdieu 1998). Yet, taken together, these collocates also reflect what we have previously described as a 'deficit model of linguistic competence' (Wright & Brookes 2019: 67), which focuses on migrants' linguistic deficiencies at the expense of their capabilities. In other words, rather than describing migrants as speakers of English as an additional language or indeed as speakers of other languages, collocates such as *can't*, *cannot*, *unable*, and so on, help to foreground migrants' perceived inability to speak English, all the while backgrounding or obscuring details about the languages they *do* speak.

Further analysis reveals an interesting trend with regard to *who* is represented as not speaking English at different points across the timespan represented by the corpus. Taking *can't* as a case in point (given its consistent collocation with 'speak English' over time), an

analysis of the social actors and groups to whom this refers shows that in each of the first four years of the corpus (2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008), it is foreign sportspeople working in the UK who are represented as not being able to speak English more than any other group. This consisted mainly of football players, but also football coaches and cricketers. In the next two years of the corpus (2009 and 2010), schoolchildren – children of migrants specifically – are most frequently described as not being able to speak English following the publication of Government statistics about the languages spoken by schoolchildren in the UK. Then in 2011 and 2012, it is healthcare staff who 'can't' speak English most often. In the next year, 2013 – the year of the Census results publication – the focus moves away from specific individuals and groups and it is 'migrants' generally who are most frequently represented as not being able to speak English. Yet it was not just *who* was the focus of this type of reporting but also *how* they were represented that changed over time, with migrants written about in more general terms in the years following 2013, for example as 'people living here' (1). Moreover, as this example also demonstrates, at this point the articles began to provide more precise quantification of the number of migrants who couldn't speak English – figures which not only reflect the Census outcome but also add authority and legitimacy (Potter et al. 1991) to claims that the English language is in 'decline' in the UK. Note that examples provided in this chapter were selected because they were deemed to be representative of the wider patterns being discussed.

(1) Polish is the second language of Britain and nearly 140,000 people living here *can't* speak English at all

(*Mail*¸ 2013)

However, migrants were not just represented as not being able to speak English at all but were also construed as having *limited* English skills – that is, as being able to speak English but only to a certain standard. Returning to Table 3, we find evidence for this in the shape of the lexical verbs *struggle* and *struggled*, the noun *standard* and the degree adverb *barely*, as well as *fluently*, *properly* and *well*, which tended to be negated.

(2) The census also showed that nearly a third of native Punjabi and Bengali speakers also could not speak English fluently. Highlighting the additional strain placed on the NHS, a third of migrants unable to speak English *fluently* were in poor health.

(*Mail*, 2013)

(3) Lecturers *'struggle* to speak English' at elite universities charging students £9,000 a year

(*Mail,* 2014)

(4) The new law, revealed in the Immigration Bill yesterday, prompted critics to warn it showed the extent to which immigration from Europe was out of control. Tory MP Andrew Percy said: 'People should not be allowed to come into this country to work at all unless they can speak English *to the right standard*.'

(*Mail*, 2015)

As these examples show, from the perspective of some of the articles in our corpus, it is not enough for migrants to speak English, but they are also expected to speak English *fluently*, to

a particular *standard* and to not *struggle*, else they are liable to be targeted and blamed for issues such as placing a strain on the NHS and harming university education (we return to the issue of public services later in the analysis). However, the discrimination against national varieties of English reported in the United Kingdom and other contexts (Lippi-Green 2012), indicates that the notion of fluency is contested. In other words, what counts as 'fluent' or, to quote Andrew Percy in example 4, the 'right standard' of English, can be debated. However, the failure by these and other articles which represent migrants as *struggling* to speak English or as not speaking it *fluently* enough or too a high enough *standard* to describe how they perceive or measure such notions, or to acknowledge the contested and complex nature of such debates, leads to an oversimplified representation of fluency. This, in turn, has the potential to widen possibilities for linguistic discrimination, since potentially anyone who speaks English non-natively and 'with an accent' (Lippi-Green 2012) is liable to be perceived as non-fluent and so to be blamed for the kinds of issues raised in examples 2-4.

Having established migrants not speaking English – at least to a high standard – as problematic, articles published in the latter years of our corpus also adopt more of a prescriptive tone, as indicated by the deontic modal verb collocates which are used to assert that migrants *must* and *should* speak English (well), as in these examples of *must speak English*:

(6) Labour pledge to pass Calman by next spring; Public workers *must* speak English, says Brown

(*Times*, 2010)

(7) Boris: Migrants who want to enter Britain *must* speak English

(*Telegraph*,2016)

The earliest year in which any of these terms emerge as strong collocates of 'speak English' is 2010 (*must*); the year preceding the Census. This suggests that the press's more prescriptive tone emerged – or at least intensified – in the run-up to the 2011 Census, at which point the articles began to foreground the idea that migrants *ought to* be speaking English and to a high standard. *Must* also emerges as a strong collocate in 2011 but not in 2012. It then re-emerges in 2013 – the year in which the Census results were published – and remains a strong collocate for the three years following (2014, 2015 and 2016), during which time the prescriptive *should* also remains a strong collocate. The prescriptive notion that migrants *should* and even *must* learn to speak English to enter and live in the UK could therefore be detected before the census. However, the uninterrupted strong association between these collocates and 'speak English' in the years immediately following the publication of its results might indicate that this prescriptive attitude was exacerbated or even legitimated by the Census outcome.

Taken together, then, the collocates analysed in this section suggest that for the duration of the time period represented by our corpus, the right-leaning press framed migrants' proficiency from a perspective of deficiency which foregrounded their linguistic limitations while backgrounding, if not obscuring altogether, their capabilities. While this was a fairly constant feature of the press discourse across this period, our analysis has also revealed shifts in the representations over the years. Namely, the focus on the type of migrants who can't speak English changed over time – from individual and exceptional cases like sportspeople in the public eye, to the broader groups of schoolchildren and healthcare staff and then, following the publication of the Census results in 2013, to the broadest group – all migrants living in the UK. Another feature of the articles published after 2013 was the problematisation of migrants not being able to speak English with ease and fluency, and the

adoption of a prescriptive tone to foreground the view of the press, and the various public figures they cite, that migrants *must* speak English, and they must speak it well.

Multilingualism

Although we have observed that some collocates of 'speak English' foreground a deficiency model of linguistic competence, other collocates do suggest a more nuanced take on this issue. This next set of collocates we want to explore consists of terms which denote whether English is spoken as a first or additional language. This category of collocates – which broadly surround the theme of multilingualism – includes the words *additional*, *first*, *language*, *mother*, *native*, *second* and *tongue* (Table 4).

Table 4. Multilingualism collocates of 'speak English', with normalised frequency of collocation (per hundred occurrences of 'speak English')

Collocate	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
additional									1.37	1.32			
first			7.80	5.63	13.44	16.24	6.33	8.71	7.99	6.40	3.68	4.33	10.05
language		6.45	11.22	11.25	13.44	24.63	8.44	15.90	19.00	20.10	4.41	8.99	11.68
mother				4.37									
native								1.89					
second		4.83		3.75		7.61		4.54	4.40	2.69		3.10	2.99
tongue				5						0.73			

Examining the texts in which these terms collocated with 'speak English' across all the years of our data, it emerged that all of the collocates in Table 4 exhibit a similar pattern; that is,

they tended to occur in passages reporting statistics relating to the number of schoolchildren living in the UK who speak English as a second or additional language. Taking these terms together, this pattern accounted for 87% of the articles in which one or more of these terms collocated with the phrase ‘speak English’.

(8) In the last 12 months, the number of children who speak English as an *additional language* has risen by almost 54,000, according to statistics published by the Department for Education. The National Union of Teachers has called for funding to help support the teaching of these children to be protected from Government cuts.

(*Express*, 2013)

(9) The Department for Children, Schools and Families statistics showed that 12.5 per cent did not speak English as their *mother tongue* as of January this year. For primary schools, the proportion was 14.3 per cent, compared with 10.5 per cent in 2004, the year before European Union expansion.

(*Mail*, 2008)

(10) A CITY'S primary schools face "meltdown" as nearly half its children do not speak English as a *first language*. In Bradford, 43% of pupils' primary language is not English, says the Department of Education. And in its secondary schools the total has soared to 30.3%. Pam Milner, of the Bradford branch of teachers' union NASUWT, said ministers should come to the city to see its problems first hand. It also needed to be protected from £6billion public spending cuts proposed by the new coalition government.

(*Star*, 2010)

(11) ENGLISH IS FOREIGN TO 2 in 3 KIDS Extra tuition costs a fortune. The immigration explosion is crippling British schools as staff struggle to teach children who cannot speak English. A shocking 30% of pupils in Manchester now speak English as a *second* language, and that figure rises to two in three in some parts of the city.

(*Star*, 2010)

The articles from which these extracts were taken follow a series of Government reports regarding the number of UK schoolchildren who spoke English as a second or additional language at various points across the time span of our corpus. As these examples show, the majority of these articles (64%) also referenced the economic costs that these children were purported to entail for schools and – by extension – taxpayers. For example, in (11) the reported 'extra tuition' required by these children is described as costing 'a fortune'. The volume of children with English as a second language, and the (economic) cost that this is purported to entail for schools and taxpayers, was also framed in explicitly negative evaluative terms, in the above as causing 'problems' and 'meltdown' (10), as well as 'shocking' and 'crippling' schools (11).

This economic perspective was not time-specific but could be found across all years featuring the collocates in Table 4. However, one aspect of the representation which did change over time was the solutions to these concerns that were put forward by the articles. Prior to 2014, as shown in (8-11), the response of the right-leaning press was to call for the Government to protect and even increase funding for schools. In some cases, such appeals were embedded within quotes from public figures involved in the education sector, as in (8)

and (10). However, in the 2014 reportage, concerns about school funding seem to be replaced by concerns that children with English as a second or additional language are actually 'outperforming' or 'overtaking' children who speak English as their first language, as in (12) and (13):

(12) AN INNER-CITY state primary, where most of the pupils speak English as a *second language*, is outperforming nearly all the fee-paying preparatory schools in The Sunday Times league tables.

(*Times*, 2014)

(13) Children who speak English as a second language are outperforming native speakers for the first time in GCSE exams, according to latest figures.

(*Mail*, 2014)

We observed this representation in 36% of the articles published in 2014 featuring one or more of the collocates in Table 4, compared to just 5% of the articles published prior to this year. Part of the reason for this was the publication of Government figures in 2014 which showed that primary school children with more than one language had, for the first time, achieved higher grades for some subjects compared to children who spoke only one language. It is possible, then, that the publication of these figures helped to prompt change in the press discourse around this time. Where migrant children were previously construed as struggling and so burdening schools' resources, following this report they are more likely to be depicted as competing and with and even out-performing children with English as a first language. We interpret this change in the representation of schoolchildren as reflecting a continuation

of the longer-term division between children based on their first language but by this time this division is framed in terms of threat, rather than as a reason to protect public spending.

Learning English and integration

The verb *learn* is a pervasive collocate of *speak English* throughout the corpus, meeting or exceeding the threshold MI^3 score of 11 in eight of its 13 years, appearing with such a strong association for the last time in 2015 (Table 5). Although the relative frequencies of *learn* as a collocate of *speak English* remain fairly consistent across time, the representational uses to which it is put do not.

Table 5. Learning collocates of 'speak English', with normalised frequency of collocation (per hundred occurrences of 'speak English')

Collocate	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
attend									2.20				
learn	5.45		5.05		4.37		4.80	3.86	6.89	2.46	3.99		
learned											7.30		
teach						3.09							
effort									2.20				
quickly									1.38				

In 2005, *learn* appears in the context of 'speak English' five times in total, 2% of all articles in that year of the corpus. It appeared in articles about a British TV presenter having elocution lessons so audiences in the US could understand him, Americans not understanding English slang, and a footballer endeavouring to learn English in order to prevent his teammate transferring away from their club. Notably, there is one instance in an article about immigration and integration and in particular plans of the Labour Government at the time to manage migration:

(14) It [Labour] aims to continue to ensure that those who settle in Britain can play a full part by helping them to speak English and *learn* about British life.

(*Times,* 2005)

In this example, although *learn* collocates with 'speak English', it relates to learning about *British life*, rather than the English language. Instead, the article is about plans to help migrants speak English, reflecting a responsible, active role of the Government in that process. However, this supportive perspective does not persist over time, and in the 2007 data the collocation of *learn* with 'speak English' is used to shift the responsibility for learning English and integrating into society away from the Government and onto the migrants themselves, for example:

(15) GORDON Brown has warned immigrants that if they want to stay in Britain they will have to *learn* to speak English. The Prime Minister made it clear that a condition for being part of British society must be a willingness to take on certain responsibilities. And those should include speaking English and understanding British cultural traditions.

(*Star*, 2007)

This is the first point in the data at which non-native English-speaking migrants learning English is linked to their 'being a part of British society', with this language learning and assimilation framed as being *their* responsibility. This stance differs considerably to that in the 2005 example (14), and is the launching point for a long and fluctuating relationship in the (right-leaning) media between migrants' responsibility for learning English and their integration in British society:

(16) Migrants lingo call – MORE immigrants should *learn* to speak English to improve community relations, says Eric Pickles.

(*Sun,* 2012)

(17) IMMIGRANTS must *learn* to speak English properly to stop communities breaking down, a Cabinet Minister said yesterday. Westminster Communities Secretary Eric Pickles warned that newcomers with "broken English" could not play a full role in society.

(*Express,* 2013)

(18) The Prime Minister criticised segregation between communities, promising new steps to promote integration in schools and housing estates and to ensure minorities *learn* to speak English.

(*Telegraph,* 2015)

In (16) from 2012, Eric Pickles – the then-UK Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government – is represented as imploring migrants to learn English. At this point in time, it was suggested that migrants should learn to speak English to 'improve community relations', positioning migrants' ability to speak English as potentially improving a situation which is not (explicitly) framed as being bad. A year later, Pickles raised the stakes, and migrants' English language skills were no longer simply a means of improving community relations, but they were now responsible for preventing communities from 'breaking down' entirely (17). As such, the sense of seriousness and urgency is increased, and migrants now *must* learn to speak English (see earlier analysis). At the same time, not only are migrants implored to

learn English as they were in 2012, but in 2013 they must learn to speak English *properly,* with the introduction of an ill-defined, vague level of proficiency now required. As shown in (18), by 2015 these sentiments were shared by then-Prime Minister David Cameron, as he suggested that the breakdown of communities prophesised by Pickles had by now been realised, as he 'criticised segregation between communities'. A response to this segregation, according to Cameron, was the promotion of integration, which included ensuring 'minorities learn to speak English'. Thus, the responsibility of migrants and their English language abilities had shifted once more. No longer were they the last line of defence against communities breaking down; they now held the solution to repair already broken communities.

Discussions around speaking English and integration did not occur in a vacuum. Between 2007 and 2011 they were accompanied by right-leaning media reports propagating the idea of non-native English speakers having access to benefits withheld by both Labour and Conservative-led Governments:

(19) 'Learn English or lose your benefits' – ETHNIC minorities could face losing their benefits if they do not *learn* to speak English, ministers said yesterday. Welfare Minister Jim Murphy warned that up to 40,000 could be struggling to find work because they are unable to master English.

(*Mail*, 2007)

(20) UNEMPLOYED people who cannot speak English will be forced to *learn* the language or risk losing their benefits, David Cameron said last week.

(*Telegraph*, 2011)

In the 2007 data, this appears in articles reporting Labour welfare proposals to restrict benefit payments to migrants on the basis of their proficiency in English (19), and in 2011 in reports of similar Conservative plans (20). Such plans are based on a framework that sees non-native English speakers as an economic burden on the UK, the logical extension being that they are undeserving of taxpayer-funded welfare support, precisely on the basis of their perceived lack of English proficiency. By focusing on unemployed people, reports are inherently limited to a small sub-section of non-native English-speaking migrants, and although their being unemployed makes them an easy target for vilification in the media (Baker and McEnery 2015), the generalisability of this vilification is limited. Although such welfare plans are reported on intermittently in later years (in 2015 there are two articles about the Conservative Government's 'incentives and penalties' for forcing migrants to learn English which included restricting housing benefit) in 2012 and 2013 they give way to a focus on the cost of translation services:

(21) Emma Boon, campaign director of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said: "Taxpayers will be shocked that so much is being spent on translation and interpretation in the NHS. "They expect their money to be going towards treatment for sick people, not on language services. […] "But those who live in Britain should make an effort to *learn* to speak English so that they are not burdening services like the NHS with ongoing costs for translation."

(*Mail,* 2012)

(22) "Those needing translation, in many cases, have lived in this country for many years and therefore have a responsibility to learn English". Matthew Elliott, chief executive of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said: "Those who choose to

> live in Britain must make an effort to *learn* to speak English so that council taxpayers do not get burdened with these costs".

(*Express,* 2012)

By shifting the source of the financial burden from unemployment benefit to translation services, the net of responsibility is widened, and more migrants are made responsible for costing taxpayers money. The fact that the new target is translation services specifically should not be overlooked. Examples (21) and (22) suggest that translation services should be reduced and angering and frustrating 'the taxpayer' is a means by which to get public support for this idea. Sebba (2017) notes that the reduction in translation services has been on the UK Government agenda since as early as 2007, as the provision of translated materials was considered a barrier to migrants learning English and therefore an obstacle to integration and something that encouraged segregation. However, the argument for stripping publicly funded translation services is at odds with the concurrently unfolding claims that migrants' lack of English language proficiency is damaging integration. While it may be that a political viewpoint holds that translated materials undermine community cohesion, translation and translated materials can be valuable resources in the acquisition of English as a second or additional language (e.g. Cook 2010). Therefore, at the same time as migrants are being incrementally blamed for the breakdown of communities in the pages of the right-leaning press, there are calls for the removal of resources and materials which could help arrest this perceived problem. The important point here, then, is that in the landscape of the 'speak English' debate between 2005 and 2017, these two seemingly incompatible representations emerged at the same time and on the same side of the political spectrum.

From public to private services

The final section of our analysis explores collocates relating to the theme of public services and the private sector, shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Services collocates of 'speak English', with normalised frequency of collocation (per hundred occurrences of 'speak English')

Collocate	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
banned					6.01		3.49						
banning					3.28								
changing										1.12			
character										1.12			
children	6.36			6.54	6.56	14.43		9.27	4.68	8.72	2.99	2.8	4.1
crime													3.01
customers					14.21								
dealing											1.5		
doctors							10.04		1.65	1.57			
drivers													2.46
gps						2.58							
jail										1.12			
kids						3.09						1.56	
nurses	4.55						6.11				2		3.01
patients							3.93						2.73
primary					3.83	4.12							
priority													1.37
pupils		10.66	6.57	10.46	9.29	13.4	3.49	4.25	5.23	10.07	2.24	2.8	2.73
required											2.24		
roles											1.75		
schoolchildren						2.58			2.2				1.37
serve					4.92								
services											2		
victims													1.91

waiters													1.64
wife										2.01			
witnesses							2.62						
workers						5.15				1.57	2.99		

In Wright and Brookes (2019), we identified the ways in which the press transported non-native English-speaking migrants into readers' everyday worlds by focusing on social actors in public service contexts, namely schools and healthcare. The most obvious pattern emerging from the collocates in Table 6 is the consistency with which *children* and *pupils* appear across the years. With *pupils*, which has the strongest association with *speak English* of these two collocates, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2014 are the years with the highest relative frequency. Despite being punctuated by intervals of two years or more, the patterns of representation in which this collocation is found remain consistent and reflect the right-leaning media's focus on the numbers of schoolchildren who have English as an additional language, as exemplified in (23) – (26):

(23) *PUPILS* who speak English as their first language are in the minority at most inner London primary schools. Nationally, one in five primary pupils is from an ethnic minority, making non-English speakers a majority in many schools.

(*Mail,* 2006)

(24) ONE in every eight *pupils* in our schools now speak English as their second language, a shock report revealed yesterday.

(*Star,* 2008)

(25) THE immigration explosion is crippling British schools as staff struggle to teach children who cannot speak English. A shocking 30% of *pupils* in Manchester now speak English as a second language, and that figure rises to two in three in some parts of the city.

(*Star,* 2010)

(26) According to figures, 1.12m children now speak English as a second language, including 654,405 in primary schools, 455,205 in secondaries and 13,585 in special schools.

(*Telegraph,* 2014)

This represents an unchanging media narrative, with a pre-occupation with the 'rising' numbers of non-native English schoolchildren in schools and the negative effect of this rise (see earlier analysis on school funding). Although in the public sector context of schools the reporting mainly focuses on the language of *pupils* rather than teachers, there has been sustained right-leaning media attention on the first language of NHS *doctors*:

(27) FOREIGN *doctors* who cannot speak English are to be banned from working in NHS hospitals and clinics, the Health Secretary announced.

(*Telegraph,* 2011)

(28) NHS *doctors* who can't speak English face being struck off. HEALTH staff who cannot speak English properly face being struck off from the NHS under plans revealed today.

(*Express,* 2014)

The noun collocate *doctors* has a particularly strong association with 'speak English' in 2011, 2013 and 2014 (Table 6). In all three of these years, almost all of these co-occurrences of *doctors* with 'speak English' relate to Coalition Government plans to ban doctors who can't speak English from practising in the NHS, as shown in (27) and (28). *Nurses* working in the NHS are subjected to similar treatment:

(29) FOREIGN *nurses* who cannot speak English properly are putting patients' lives at risk, a coroner warned yesterday.

(*Mail,* 2005)

(30) In the latest lunacy issued by the EU, doctors and *nurses* who struggle to speak English are being allowed to work in our hospitals.

(*Express,* 2011)

(31) NIGEL FARAGE has called for NHS doctors and *nurses* who do not speak English to be sacked.

(*Telegraph,* 2015)

As is represented by these examples, the attention shifts between the risks posed by non-native English-speaking nurses, to questioning why they are still working in UK hospitals, to explicit calls for their 'sack[ing]'. Such representations preceded, and perhaps contributed towards, policy and legislative change in 2016, as Part 7 of the Immigration Act of 2016 introduced specific English language requirements for migrants working in public sector roles, stipulating that: "a public authority must ensure that each person who works for the public authority in a customer-facing role speaks fluent English". Interestingly, after the introduction of this law, the focus on nurses changes. The collocation of *nurses* with 'speak English' is not a strong association in the 2016 data (at least by our criteria) but returns in

2017, by which point this pairing is used not in relation to NHS workers, but almost exclusively in articles covering a story from a care home:

(32) A CARE home where Polish-born *nurses* could not speak English properly to patients, with one having to use a translation service, has been criticised by inspectors.

(*Express,* 2017)

Extract 32 is taken from a story about Polish nurses working in Penrhos Polish Care Home in Gwynedd (Wales) in which, according to reports, inspectors found that two of the eleven nurses 'struggled to speak English to residents' (*Express,* 2013). Notwithstanding that this is a *Polish* care home, and that the nurses are judged to have not been able to speak English 'properly' as measured against ill-defined standards of what counts as 'good enough', this story is particularly noteworthy because this care home is privately owned by Polish Housing Society Limited, a registered charitable organisation. While these nurses without 'fluent' English may have been 'banned' from working in an NHS care home, no such legal requirements existed for the private sector at this time. Yet what we observe here is a familiar representation of nurses in the public sector, except that here it is being applied to the private sector, too.

In addition to private healthcare organisations, this representation is also evident in relation to two other customer-facing private sector occupations; namely, *waiters* and (taxi) *drivers*:

(33) "Co-existence can only work in Germany if we all speak German," Jens Spahn, seen by many as a potential successor to Angela Merkel, said. […] "It

drives me up the wall the way *waiters* in Berlin restaurants only speak English," he told Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung newspaper.

(*Telegraph*, 2017)

(34) In July, state laws which remove the requirement for *drivers* to speak English will overrule the local requirement in Miami Dade County.

(*Mail*, 2017)

In relation to both waiters and taxi drivers, the *Telegraph* and the *Mail* report on contexts outside of Britain. In (33), the *Telegraph* reports on an interview with Jens Spahn, the Parliamentary Secretary of State for Finance in Germany, in which he laments the use of English by waiters in restaurants in Berlin. All six instances of 'speak English' with *waiters* occur in articles covering this story. In another story covered by the *Mail,* as in (30), the focus is on an incident in Miami (U.S.), where Spanish-speaking Uber driver, Carmen Echevarria, was fined $250 under local law after a customer complained to Miami airport staff that Echevarria could not speak English. Both these stories are newsworthy to target readers of British right-leaning newspapers not only due to Germany's and the U.S.'s respective geographical and cultural proximity to the UK (Bell 1991: 156) but also because of the likely 'value proximity' (Balmas 2017: 668) of these stories to their readerships readers, wherein 'value' refers to 'deeply rooted motivations or orientations guiding or explaining certain attitudes, norms, and opinions'. By drawing on stories from elsewhere in the world where private sector workers are chastised for not speaking the main language of their country of residence, such beliefs and opinions about non-native English speakers working in the UK are shared, supported and rationalised. In doing so, the right-leaning media may be laying the groundwork for a new narrative and public debate in which non-native English-speaking private sector workers can be demonised and punished, as they are elsewhere in the world,

possibly with the aim of displacing them from their jobs and roles within British society. Indeed, there is evidence of this already, in that the only other story in 2017 in which 'speak English' co-occurred with *driver* was concerned with announcements of new English Language requirements for drivers with the taxi firm Uber working in the UK:

(35) Uber has lost the High Court challenge and its *drivers* will have to speak English.

(*Mail*, 2017)

The new requirements, which came into full effect in April 2019, demand that Uber drivers have a UK qualification in English (a GCSE A-G as a minimum), thus excluding those who do not hold such a qualification from working as a driver for the company.

It is not only public and private sector workers who are reported on, ostracised and castigated in the press for their lack of (native) English – such representations also exist for customers and users of such services. In 2009, our data is characterised by a strong association between 'speak English' and *customers* in which all instances of this collocation are found in articles (spanning all newspapers in the corpus) reporting on a postmaster who refused to serve customers at the post office where he worked unless they spoke English:

(36) AN IMMIGRANT postmaster has BANNED *customers* who cannot speak English - so they learn the language. Sri Lankan-born Deva Kumarasiri said: "If you come to Britain you have got to speak English. It's as simple as that".

(*Sun*, 2009)

(37) I'M BRITISH AND PROUD; Post Office patriot is your hero – SHOPKEEPER Deva Kumarasiri has been hailed a Great Brit hero after banning *customers* who do not speak English.

(*Star,* 2009)

(38) Sri Lankan-born Deva Kumarasiri, who's interested in the efficient running of his post office and is an integrated foreigner to boot, has the courage to say what needs to be said - that his *customers* must speak English.

(*Express,* 2009)

This is a useful story for the right-leaning press, since the integration of Kumarasiri's voice, himself a non-native English-speaking migrant, into the reporting amplifies its newsworthiness (Bednarek 2016) but also legitimises (van Leeuwen 2007) the argument that all migrants should speak English. In other words, presenting a migrant as holding these opinions allows the right-leaning media to express and justify exclusionary behaviours (such as banning people from shops) through the reporting of speech for which the they have no accountability, and allows the creation of a 'good' or 'model' migrant in Kumarasiri (who can speak English) as distinct from 'bad' migrants (who cannot). To this end, the identity of Kumarasiri as 'AN IMMIGRANT postmaster', 'Sri Lankan-born' and 'an integrated foreigner' all emphasise his non-Britishness, and he is offered as a spokesperson for migrants but one who says 'what needs to be said' (34). Kumarasiri's discriminatory practices (for which he was eventually dismissed from employment) are not only rationalised and justified by the press but are celebrated. For example, in the *Star* he is described as a 'Post Office patriot', 'your hero' and 'a Great Brit hero' (37). Such representation makes explicit the newspapers' supportive stance on banning people from shops on the basis of their language

abilities, at the same time invoking a nationalistic rhetoric to present Kumarasiri's stance as patriotic and thereby equate speaking English with Britishness.

The banning of customers from shops is not something that persists in the years following 2009 to the extent where 'speak English' and *customers* is a strong collocation. However, what does emerge from the most recent data (2017) is a familiar representation relating to public services. Only this time, it is not just public sector workers who are targeted, but the users of those services, with a particular focus on how non-native English-speaking migrants are supposedly being given preferential treatment by the NHS and the police:

(39) *Patients* who cannot speak English are given double the appointment time at the GP because it takes so long to translate, doctors have admitted. In recent years GPs' surgeries have struggled to keep up with soaring patient numbers, fuelled by immigration, which has seen an extra two million National Insurance registrations since 2011. Many GP lists are now 'closed' and patients complain that they cannot get appointments because of the influx.

(*Telegraph* 2017)

(40) A SENIOR police officer sparked anger last night by suggesting *crime victims* who don't speak English could be given the highest *priority*.

(*Express*, 2017)

(41) English in cop snub – *CRIME victims* unable to speak English may soon be prioritised by police, a top cop has said.

(*Sun,* 2017)

In the 2017 data we see a strong association between 'speak English' and *patients* (Table 6), and this collocate appears in reports of migrant patients receiving longer medical appointments on account of their (purportedly lacking) English proficiency (39). Similarly, the reporting of Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Craig Mackey's suggestion that under-pressure forces may have to prioritise face-to-face visits for those most vulnerable, which may include people for whom English is not a first language, is reflected in the 2017 collocates *crime, victim* and *priority* (Table 6). Both of these stories represent migrants who don't have English as a first language as eroding native-English speakers' access to public services, notably on the basis of their language skills. In (39), such migrants are implicated in discussions of struggling GP practices, 'soaring patient numbers' and the fact that people 'cannot get appointments', with no mention of other alternative influences such as an ageing UK population, children turning 16 and receiving their National Insurance numbers or, perhaps most crucially, a lack of Government funding (cf. Taylor 2013). Similarly, in the context of the policing story, there is no acknowledgement that the very need for prioritisation could itself be a result of the reduction in police numbers and Government funding.[5] Regardless of how true it is that people who have a non-native competency in English are more vulnerable than those who do, and require longer appointment times, such groups may always be considered as undeserving recipients of any re-allocation of public services in an enduring media narrative in which they are framed as the 'other'.

The crosshairs of right-leaning media attention regarding the position of non-native English speakers in the public and private sectors have clearly shifted over the last decade. Consistent reporting on the perceived danger of migrant doctors and nurses to patients' health, including calls for their sacking, subsided after legislative changes which demanding

[5] According to a recent report by the charity Full Fact, taking inflation into account, overall funding for the police fell by 19% between 2011 and 2019. By comparison, police funding increased by 31% between 2000 and 2011 (see https://fullfact.org/crime/police-funding-england-and-wales/).

'fluent' English for such roles. Since then, the focus has shifted to non-native English-speaking workers in the private sector, namely care homes(s), waiters and taxi drivers, possibly with a view to precluding (some) non-native English-speaking migrants from working in these occupations in the same way as they were, by this point, prevented from taking up certain jobs in the public sector without English language qualifications. At the same time, non-native English speakers' access to public services has come under scrutiny, highlighting areas where they are perceived to have received privileged access to those services. These may be the first stages of the right-wing media initiating very real public and policy discussions about the distribution of the most important public services on the basis of native language and/or language proficiency, wherein the indigenous British 'in-group' are competing with the migrant 'out-group'. Such divisive, exclusionary and prejudiced media recommendations would appear unambiguously racist were it not for their being disguised as discourse about language, in a mediated process which, Lippi-Green (2012: 74) argues, 'props open a back door' to discrimination. In Skutnabb-Kangas's (1988: 13) terms, this legitimation of unequal division of resources between groups in the basis of their language amounts to 'linguicism', an 'analogous concept to racism, sexism, classism etc.'

4. Conclusion

The study reported in this chapter has found that although non-native English-speaking migrants have been consistently represented in negative and stigmatising ways by the right-leaning British press, this representation has not been homogenous in nature over the thirteen years between (and including) 2005 and 2017. On one hand, we have seen the gradual broadening of social actors reported as not 'speaking English', from exceptional cases such as professional sportspeople, through to the general and aggregated 'immigrants'. Similarly, we have seen English shift from being one language in migrants' multilingual repertoire, to the

entrenchment of a deficit model of linguistic competence in which their other languages are backgrounded and dismissed as unimportant. Over the same period, we have seen the responsibility of integration shift from Government to migrants, to the extent that migrants' learning English is presented as the sole remedy for fixing communities that have reportedly already broken down. Finally, we observed a shift in focus from non-native English speakers *working* in public service roles to those *using* public services, while ideologies relating to linguistic competence and suitability for work are being smuggled into the private sector via the well-trodden route of healthcare and the reporting of language-related events from other countries. Throughout our analysis, we have, where possible, linked these changes in representation to changes in UK society, whether that be legislative changes, shifts in public opinion, or the 2011 Census. In Wright and Brookes (2019), we viewed the Census and its results as a watershed moment in the 'speak English' debate. However, taking a broader view over time, it has become clearer that this may not necessarily be the case. Rather, much like the right-leaning media reporting we have examined, the Census itself may be a symptom of the social and political climate of the time (c.f. Sebba 2017). In fact, the scale and nature of press reporting may have contributed to the very inclusion of the language-related questions in the Census. While the media clearly has a dialectal relationship with society – with each shaping the other (Fairclough 1995) – it is not easy to determine the extent to which media discourses around the 'speak English' debate have indeed instigated and influenced the various social, political and legislative events mentioned throughout this chapter, or indeed the other way around.

We have observed in this analysis that the *speak English* debate, as we have called it, is a dynamic one and one in which the scope and targets are broadening. Whether it is the shift from elite sportspeople to migrants generally, those in the public sector to those in the private sector, and from workers to customers, the number of non-native English speakers

being implicated in the debate is increasing. Similarly, changes in representations are such that schoolchildren were initially a burden to schools and English-speaking children, before becoming a threat to the native ingroup, and migrants have gone from being encouraged and supported in their integration to local communities to being blamed for the breakdown of such communities. Over time the debate has permeated new areas of life and new groups in Britain, all the while normalising the negative and stigmatising ideologies and representations we have described. In doing so, the right-leaning media make it easier to recommend, justify and rationalise exclusionary and discriminatory public opinion and government policy.

To conclude this chapter on a methodological note, the approach we have adopted in this study demonstrates the value of extending previous corpus studies to cast light on discourses that may otherwise have been assumed to be static (Baker and McEnery 2019). In Wright and Brookes (2019) we identified a number of representational patterns surrounding non-native English speakers *after* the 2011 Census. However, by including in our analysis the six years preceding the Census, and utilising collocation as a means to identify and monitor pertinent representations over time, we have found that while some representations are fairly consistent, others are intimately time-bound. At the same time, though, it is clear that there are a wider range of socio-political conditions than the Census that have influenced the press representations of non-native English speakers. Thus, our approach also serves to reiterate the importance of fully integrating corpus techniques within a CDA framework. It is only through viewing and resituating our texts within their original temporal, social and political contexts that we have been able to anchor our analysis to relevant moments in time, enriching our interpretation of the representational patterns revealed by the corpus data.

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