



JOMEC Journal
Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies

Published by Cardiff University Press

**Life in the ghetto:
How the media represent
British lifestyle migration to France**

Michelle Lawson

Lancaster University

Email: michelle.lawson3@btinternet.com

Keywords

lifestyle migration
British migration to France
corpus linguistics
social actor analysis
recontextualisation

Abstract

This study is part of a wider analysis of migrant identity within the context of British lifestyle migration to south-west France. The study uses an integrated methodology of corpus linguistics and discourse analysis (Social Actor Analysis) to examine how British migration to France is discursively represented within the UK media. The analysis reveals common keywords and patterns of language use that carry negative evaluation; distinctions are made between the existing British residents and a recent and more generalised phenomenon of migration, where the latter is portrayed in terms of a threatening invasion of ghetto-dwellers. Lifestyle migration is thus presented on different levels, with an overall sense that one kind of lifestyle migration is portrayed as more acceptable, or legitimate, than another. Such stereotypical positioning can be taken up as a resource by writers to self-identify against what they are not, at the same time reproducing ideologies of lifestyle migration. The study also concludes that although the British do not constitute a marginalised and vulnerable group, they are represented in the media using similar linguistic strategies to those seen in the representations of immigrants and asylum seekers.

Contributor Note

Michelle Lawson is conducting doctoral research at Lancaster University, Department of Linguistics and English Language. Her research focuses on British migrants in the Ariège, France, exploring positioning and distinction within migrant discourse and discourses of migration, including local, online and media discourse. She is an active member of the Lifestyle Migration research hub and has recently contributed to an edited volume. Michelle is an Associate Lecturer for the Open University and she also works globally in English language assessment.



Introduction

There has been increasing scholarly interest in press coverage of migration and how migrants and migration are represented. As a topic 'rarely absent' (Moore 2012: 1) from the news, reporting of migration often focuses on the scale and undesirability of such movements, including negative attitudes expressed towards refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants, within the British press (Baker et al. 2008). Yet there is another side of migration, that of the British who migrate within the EU. Attempts to counterbalance the idea of a one-way population movement include the Guardian's recent report (Nardelli, Traynor and Haddou 2015), which showed that the number of unemployed Britons drawing benefits in wealthier EU countries can be higher than the nationals of those countries receiving parallel benefits in the UK. Nevertheless, media representation of British migration within Europe is a comparatively understudied topic, despite relatively privileged forms of migration being no less subject to the power of the press in constructing and extending ideologies about migrants and migration.

Lifestyle migration, or the search for a deliberate and often escapist route towards a better or more fulfilling life (O'Reilly and Benson 2009), is a developing strand of research within the academic study of migration. A variety of global contexts is currently under study (see Lifestyle Migration Hub). The media undoubtedly plays a role in the positive social construction of this kind of migration, from broadsheet articles evaluating the most popular countries for British emigration, to the marketing of foreign property amid images of 'lifestyle' (*French Property News*), and television programmes such as *A Place in the Sun*.

Yet a common theme to emerge from the lifestyle migration literature is of intra-group processes of distinction, such as British migrants invoking stereotypes of other Britons who do not integrate in France (Benson 2009) and Spain (O'Reilly 2000). O'Reilly (2001) acknowledges that such ideas are promoted by the press, yet there has been no detailed examination of how more privileged migrants are represented in the media. As part of a larger study of positioning and distinction within migrant discourses relating to the British in France (Lawson 2015), this paper examines a corpus of media representations of British migration, in order to address the following research question: What kinds of migrant representations can be seen in media representations of British lifestyle migration in France? By identifying patterning or themes that indicate the discursive construction of lifestyle migration in the media, a socially determined system of value judgements about British migrants and their behaviour can be explored.

Migration in the media

Analysis of media representations of migration is but one strand of the academic interest in migration that has reached what O'Reilly terms 'fever pitch' (2012: 2). Recent work has brought together the disciplines of migration research and media studies (King and Wood 2001; Moore, Gross and Threadgold 2012), with a third discipline of linguistics offering frameworks for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of discourses of migration, including corpus approaches (Baker et al. 2008).

Much of the recent work within corpus linguistics has aimed to identify the linguistic strategies that are used in the media to propagate wider beliefs about RASIM (refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants). For example, Baker and McEnery (2005) examined a corpus of British press articles from 2003 to show how refugees were often constructed in dehumanised terms as an uncontrollable or unpredictable force, using water metaphors such as *flood*, *swelling*, *streaming*. Gabrielatos and Baker's (2008: 33) longitudinal study of the press from 1996 – 2005 highlighted similar negative prosodies or associations, to conclude that 'the conservative and tabloid British press are responsible for creating and maintaining a moral panic around RASIM, which has increasingly become the dominant discourse in the UK press'. Overall, the construction of such minority groups in the UK press is considered to be generally negative and is potentially an influence on the public's stance, being a form of 'social power' (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008: 8) that propagates a concern with the impact of such movements on the UK.

Moving beyond refugee discourse, and attempting to bridge local discourse with its wider contexts, Del-Teso Craviotto (2009) argues that the online discourse among Argentinian migrants living in Spain was influenced by racist and xenophobic discourses from the Spanish press, radio and television. The study shows how migrants utilised these discourses in a positive self-identification against 'other' migrants. However, the influence of the British press has so far been only briefly acknowledged in respect of lifestyle migration to France (see, for example, Ferbrache 2011) and it seems clear that a comprehensive study of media representations is required in

order to examine how the local discourse of lifestyle migration is embedded in the wider social conditions within which it is situated (Ivanič 1998). As part of a wider study of the discourse of lifestyle migration, this analysis of media representations is a first step towards examining how text at the micro-level may be influenced by the meso-level of discourse practices (Koller 2009).

Methodological focus

The study integrates corpus linguistics and discourse analysis to gain an overall picture of how the British in France are represented in the media. Baker et al. (2008) give a useful overview and assessment of combining corpus linguistics with discourse analysis, arguing that the complementary methodology combines the strengths of each approach. A quantitative corpus not only underpins the frequency and prominence of linguistic patterning, but it also signposts the analyst towards any unusual or striking language use that can be more closely examined in context. In some cases the frequency counts and statistical analysis of corpus methods inform a subsequent critical discourse analysis, which is thus deemed less arbitrary and subjective (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008). As the latter argue, a corpus analysis cannot always take account of the sociocultural context of the data; therefore a closer critical analysis of selected texts can be incorporated to investigate the purposes and interests served by certain linguistic strategies.

Building the news corpus of lifestyle migration

The corpus was generated by making a qualitative search to locate articles about British expats living in France, using the *LexisNexis* electronic news database. In order to yield a relatively current corpus that focused on British people living in France that covered the period before and during the recent economic downturn, a search was made for articles published in the British press between 2004 and 2011, using search terms British OR Brits OR Britons AND expats OR expatriates OR migrants AND France. As more than 3,000 articles were yielded, further searches were made within the results using narrower search terms, namely Brits AND France AND expats (274 articles), 'British expats' (141 articles), 'British residents' (28 articles) and 'British immigrants' (7 articles). These articles were examined individually for content and duplication, and those with a focus on sport, economics, politics or property hotspots in Europe were disregarded. The final 69 articles, totalling over 410,000 words, thus provided a specialised corpus with content loosely focused on lifestyle migration in the context of British nationals who were living in France. Publications spanned the British press, ranging from the Daily Mail and the Express to the Guardian, Independent, Observer and the Times. These articles included some news features but many had been published in sections such as Property or Cash, and a number were regular diary features of writers living in France, such as Michael Wright (*Daily Telegraph*) and Helena Frith Powell (*Sunday Times*).

After building the specialised corpus of texts, the next step was to compute a frequency list of words, followed by a list

of statistically significant keywords and lexical patterning, using the WordSmith software. A second reference corpus gave access to normative patterns of language use for the latter: WordSmith utilises the BNC Wordlist (Scott 2011), which represents a cross-section of current British English, mostly written but including some spoken. For this study it offered a point of comparison for the frequency list produced from the media texts, and this enabled WordSmith to compute a list of keywords in relation to the media corpus. These keywords represent those words occurring in the specialised corpus more frequently than we would expect compared with more general use, i.e. the BNC (Baker 2006).

P was set at > 0.000001 to reduce the list to only those keywords with a less than one in one million likelihood of being there by chance. Common grammatical words and proper names relating to authors or local people were removed, and simple plurals such as expat/s were joined. Only keywords with a minimum frequency of seven occurrences, and seen across a minimum of seven texts, were included. The final, refined list comprised 162 keywords. These could be examined in context using concordance lines (see Figure 3, for example) and the identification of collocates, these being common associations among keywords. More specifically, Baker's criteria of 'the above-chance frequent co-occurrence of two words within a pre-determined span [of] five words on either side of the word under investigation' was used (2008: 278) to compute collocates. Figures given below for 'keyness' ranking relate to the relative position of a keyword in order of keyword strength, with 1 ranked highest.

The next step was to group keywords relevant to the research question into

categories, in order to investigate particular discourses around British migrants in France. Such conceptual groups are clearly subjective (Baker 2004: 353) but they were selected on the basis of relevance to the research enquiry; i.e., how the British in France are linguistically defined and constructed in media texts. Four conceptual groupings were made: two related to naming and categorising associations in terms of being British, and the concept of being a migrant. The third grouping related to the concept of a new or better life, and the fourth to aspects of integration. The study uses two key terms to examine writer's stance: 'semantic prosody' is seen at word level, for example in repeated collocations of *British* and *invasion*. Different from this is the concept of 'discourse prosody' (Stubbs 2001), whereby an originally neutral word becomes, over time, associated with other evaluative lexis, and so the evaluation becomes extended to the original word. In this way, discourse prosody emphasises the idea of coherence across discourses.

The recontextualisation of lifestyle migration: A methodology for further analysis

Van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actor framework was selected to demonstrate how collective identity representations were constructed. Viewing discourse as a semantic construction of reality that can serve a social purpose, Van Leeuwen uses Bernstein's (1990, in Van Leeuwen, 2008) concept of *recontextualisation* to underpin a framework that investigates how a writer can transform or *recontextualise* an aspect according to their goals. If a text focuses on one

aspect of an event and adds evaluation according to the goals of the writer, it becomes transformed or recontextualised.

The framework maps linguistic elements onto what Van Leeuwen sees as the key fundamentals within the 'primacy of practice' (2008: 4), analysing how actors and their actions, roles and identities, performance modes and resources are presented. Most relevant to this study of lifestyle migrants is how social actors and actions are realised linguistically, in particular any social actor differentiation and categorisation. Within the social practice of lifestyle migration, migrants actively choose a lifestyle and, to an extent, associated behaviour. A framework which centres on the representation of people and their actions by writers is particularly relevant for investigating the discursive construction of the intra-group boundaries identified within the lifestyle migration literature.

The two most relevant linguistic strands of the framework for addressing the aim of this study are:

Rearrangements – this examines the allocation of roles within social actions and reactions, such as when agency is foregrounded or backgrounded, and how this serves particular interests.

Substitutions – this investigates how social actors are represented and differentiated in terms of what they do and who they are, for example *migrants* versus *residents*. Broadly speaking, Van Leeuwen maps substitution to an overall category of determination and its sub-categories, as outlined in the diagram below:

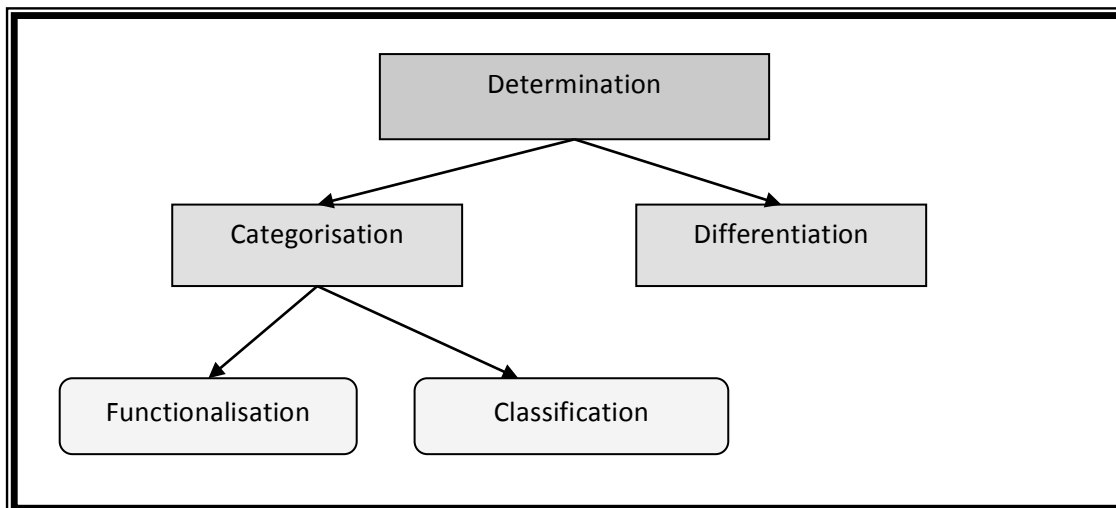


Figure 1: Analysis of how social actors are represented (determined)

These elements offer a way to analyse how social actors are represented in terms of identity categorisation. VanLeeuwen's category of *differentiation* represents less tangible and in- and out-group representation, where social actors are distinguished by representing differences between us and them. Within *categorisation*, more determinable categories such as permanent residents and holiday home owners may be defined through the sub-categories of *identification* (in terms of what people permanently or unavoidably are) and *functionalisation* (in terms of an activity, occupation or role). Putting this framework into action in their analysis of Brazilian migrant discourse, Caldas-Coulthard and Fernandes Alves (2007) demonstrate how functionalisation (for example *visitors, travellers*) was utilised and manipulated to represent the self and others more positively in the face of dominant migration discourse.

Identity and Being British

As outlined above, keywords relevant to the research question were grouped into

thematic categories, the first relating to group identity, or an internal definition by which the group is demarcated, and of which its members are conscious (Jenkins 2008), for example, 'British'. Nouns and adjectives such as *British* and *Britons* were naturally high in the keyword ranking, ranking 3rd and 7th respectively, since the corpus was obtained using these as search terms. However, examination of the concordance lines was carried out to identify any interesting patterns of use. One notable pattern was in the phrase of *British*, where the word two places to the left mostly showed quantification of some kind. This was seen directly, in *lots of, multitude, thousands*, and also indirectly, in more abstract conceptualisations of the British as a *phenomenon, wave, or having an impact*.

There was also an emerging contrast between *British* and *Brits*. A collocate of both words was *other*, ranking 18 out of 44 collocates with *Brits*, with 12 occurrences. Half of the latter were overtly negative in characterising the *other Brits*:

- i. *There were other Brits around, of course, but they were all very expat types.* [The Times, 28 April 2005]
- ii. *"I didn't come to France to hang out with other Brits" attitude...* [Sunday Times, 15 October 2006]
- iii. *FIND A RUSTIC RETREAT AWAY FROM OTHER BRITS* [Independent 14 January 2004]
- iv. *...they came in such numbers that they've ended up with precisely what many had hoped to leave behind - other Brits.* [The Times 20 August 2004]
- v. *... many other Brits are suckered into buying similarly unsuitable properties* [The Sentinel, 21 March 2007]
- vi. *Several work as cowboy tradesmen, helping other Brits carry out their house renovations without having to stoop to that ugly business of speaking French.* [Daily Telegraph 26 April 2008]

On the other hand, *other* ranked 150 out of 159 as a collocate with *British*, with just 5 occurrences. WordSmith also identified a 3-word cluster *Brits in France*. While the eight examples included two positive references, such as the Brits in France being resilient, the other six were seen within negative narratives, as in *Wake up call for Brits in France* and *the adventurous spirit of the Brits in France has its limit*. Although this is not strong evidence of a negative semantic prosody, WordSmith identified no comparable pattern for *British/Britons in France*. There is arguably an emerging sense of a negative phenomenon associated with the phrase *Brits in France* and *other Brits*.

An invading expat army

Of course, migrants were not merely represented in terms of nationality. In contrast to group identity, social categorisation is an external definition whereby we define ourselves and others as belonging to different social categories that are not consciously defined as such by their members (Jenkins 2008). This more dynamic model is of particular interest in order to investigate how writers represent the complexities of social identity within lifestyle migration. It also relates to themes within the existing literature relating to British lifestyle migration such as Benson's (2009) argument that claims to a particular kind of local identity are a response to stereotypes, as a way to affirm distinction from those who appear to remain rooted in British ways.

Looking at collocates to the right of *British*, the five most frequent nouns to follow the word were *people, expats, residents, invasion, migrants*, although *migrant/s* did not occur within sufficient texts to be included within the final keyword list. Three examples suggested that the word could be associated with a conceptualisation of a particular type or types of *expat*:

- i. *The kind of expat you become will depend mainly on the company you choose to keep.* [Sunday Times, 15 October 2006]
- ii. *There were other Brits around, of course, but they were all very expat types.* [The Times, 28 April 2005]
- iii. *...the expat cricket club as a good place to hunt for more, shall we say, traditional expat views.* [Mail on Sunday, 7 March 2004]

Keyword	Keyness ranking in list of 162 keywords	Frequency
Expat, expatriate, expats, expatriates	5	184 [40, 13, 117, 14]
Residents	38	42
Foreigners	58	20
Invasion	81	20

Figure 2: Keywords associated with migrant representation

Examination of the other collective nouns which collocate with *British* illustrates this emerging categorisation a little further, with some differences between the use of *residents* and *migrants* emerging. Of the 19 examples of *residents* collocating with *British*, there was one association with a *new wave*, but other phrases evoked permanence, established residency, and complaints about the new arrivals: *the longer-established British residents who feel*

most threatened by the "new" British invasion of "Dordogneshire" and its borders. In contrast, the nine examples referring to British *migrants* had stronger associations with more recent activity, as shown in Figure 3 below; they are *new* and *younger* and associated with continuing migratory activity as they are *heading, trying hard* or *finding it hard to integrate, scatter[ing]*, or conceptualised in mass terms: *a swelling army, a deluge, a wave.*

1	Duncan. But there are signs British migrants are finding it hard to integrate.
2	. There is now a wave of younger British migrants to the French south-west who
3	but there are signs that younger British migrants are trying hard to integrate
4	effect on the kind of France British migrants find when they arrive.
5	are already causing the new British migrants to scatter over a wider area. A
6	links and low prices, a swelling army of migrants and second-homers is heading
7	is less concerned about a deluge of migrants from the West than from the
8	of North Africans, the most visible of migrants flocking to France in recent
9	to the French Riviera. But most of the migrants talk of charms that are tougher

Figure 3: Concordance of *migrants*

Another noun associated with British migration was the word *invasion*, with 20 examples across the corpus, and it collocated with both *British* (10 examples across 9 texts) and *English* (5 examples across 4 texts). Its use in relation to the British in France may be

somewhat tongue-in-cheek, perhaps evoking historical military invasions, but there are some examples seen within largely pejorative co-text. These included reference to 'vitriolic' complaints from the locals about the British who *don't integrate properly, and they mess up the*

local economy; It's English suburbia gone badly wrong. They were certainly suggestive of a large-scale incursion and its effects:

[Locals] muttered darkly about what they describe as the British 'invasion'. The complaints were common: the English are pushing up house prices, taking their jobs and putting additional strains on their health service. [Zoe Dare Hall, Sunday Times, 30 January 2011]

Repeated usage without any evaluation may 'lead people to accept without question' (Hunston 2002: 119) the idea of an incursion of British property seekers with connotations of relentlessness. The negative semantic prosody is undeniable when we consider that a British expat bemoaning cultural isolation might look forward to *an influx of Brits*, whereas they would never look forward to *an invasion of Brits*. Moreover, an 'invasion' removes any idea of individuality or personal agency, as the British are presented as a generalised phenomenon, rather than specific social actors who are making individual choices.

Life in the ghetto

The frequency of the word *ghetto* (13 examples across 12 texts), traditionally used to describe isolated minorities forced into particular areas, seems unexpected when describing the relatively affluent British migrant who has chosen to follow a 'dream' of a better way of life. Although 'ghetto' originated in 16th century Venice with Jewish segregation, it has more recently become associated with poor ethnic minority neighbourhoods in the USA (O'Reilly 2000). O'Reilly (2000) discusses similar media representations of the British on the Costa del Sol, drawing on possible associations with the purpose built tourist/residential developments known as *urbanizaciones*. O'Reilly argues that this nevertheless obscures the mechanisms of community networking within the often multiethnic character of such settlements, and suggests we should view the term as more of a symbolic boundary that serves to define people (of different nationalities) who have something in common, i.e. lifestyle migration, rather than one of racial segregation and isolation (O'Reilly 2000: 118).

The variant spelling of *ghettoes* was not in the keyword list but has been included here as it clearly relates to the keyword.

1 find it less easy to become part of a ghettoised English-speaking group.
 2 with too many other expats as joining a ghetto doesn't count as genuinely living
 3 tried very hard not to fall into a British ghetto - we have French friends, too.
 4 branded her as belonging to the "British ghetto". Sad, but it wasn't the first time
 5 group as I call them live in British ghettos, surrounded by British mates,
 6 people remain stuck in this cosy ghetto, watching repeats of Little Britain
 7 he says. "If you are outside an English ghetto, you have to depend on locals to
 8 way. This will not be an expatriate ghetto paper. TheFrenchPaper's second
 9 do themselves no favours. "They form ghettos and buy isolated properties. It's
 10 and don't hide themselves in golfing ghettos. If you really want to avoid other
 11 the British to the Algerians, gathering in ghettos in the city suburbs. In some
 12 are complaining that the British live in ghettos, overload the health service and
 13 them speaks French. They stay in their ghettos, just like Arabs in the city

Figure 4: Concordance of *ghetto*

Of the above examples, only the tenth is positive, in terms of *most British try to integrate and don't hide themselves...* It is also notable that no actual British ghettos are named, and even in Spain, O'Reilly argued against the existence of a singularly British 'ghetto'. Faced with a degree of vague semantic associations, the examples can be examined in context for dynamic experiential meaning (Coffin, Hewings and O'Halloran 2004). Examples 3, 5 and 6 mirror socialising with one's own compatriots, while examples 9 and 12 reflect a belief that the British do not make links with the French, and example 8 infers that a 'ghetto newspaper' would not include any French news or views. There are also associations of clustering in comparisons with a rather different kind of 'other', where the British are presented as the rural counterpart of urban segregation relating to the ghettos of Algerians (line 11) and 'Arabs' (line 13) *in the city suburbs*.

The co-text of the fourth example includes another phrase that may carry a negative sense, that of 'branded as':

a friend admitted that when she bought an expatriate newspaper at the local supermarket she hid it under other purchases because she felt it branded her as belonging to the 'British ghetto'. [Michael Streeter, Independent, 4 May 2009]

While some of these examples are clearly pejorative, it is difficult to be precise about a firm sense of meaning beyond a vague sense of ethnic clustering, rather than British isolation. It can perhaps be seen as a conceptual metaphor that is somewhat stronger than the intended sense. In this way it is similar to the metaphor of *invasion*, which arguably conveys a negative connotation of mass incursion without a sense of actual attack.

Nevertheless, the occurrence of *ghetto* and related forms across 12 articles in this corpus does reflect a view that the British huddle together, and there is potential for triggering a cultural stereotype (Stubbs 2001) that when British people move abroad, they do not integrate. The existence of ghettos is

presented in a taken-for-granted way, where one's rental property can be situated *outside an English ghetto* (see example 7). The clustering of the British is represented in a *de facto* way as more factual, or 'given', than if the writers had described the settlements as 'like ghettos'. As White suggests (2004), the reader is not positioned to make a decision as to whether or not they agree with the label; the reader's acceptance is assumed. In such a way are ideas constructed about the British as a migrant group and repeated across texts, resulting in discourse prosody.

A dream that turns sour

Despite these representations of ghetto-like settlements, the inspiration for the move to France was related to a *dream*, which had 36 examples across 21 texts. While it was certainly present within positive narratives (four examples), e.g., *a dream of a childhood, our dream home*, in 27 of the 36 examples the word was used in conjunction with negative narratives that described the *harsh truths, wake up call for Brits, the dream is now over, dream has been ruined, no one can live a dream for ever and a half-baked dream*. The corpus contained three examples of the dream *turning sour*, and two of the dream *turning into a nightmare*. This indicates an overall discourse prosody that the British are uninformed in their decision to migrate. *Dream* is so often used to show the *distortion between dreams and reality* that the cumulative effect is to portray the British migrant acting on impulse without thinking through the decision to migrate.

The recontextualisation of lifestyle migration

While the corpus analysis has highlighted larger-scale language use across the media discourse, it also affords opportunities to examine the discourse prosodies with respect to how a writer can recontextualise lifestyle migration to suit a particular viewpoint. One article by John Lichfield (2004) in the Independent was selected to demonstrate this due to its categorisation, including reference to a 'new' British invasion to south-west France, and the indexing of an out-group within the title itself: *Find a rustic retreat away from other Brits*. This represents an underlying evaluation of the arriving British as a threat to the existing status quo in the rural idyll. It offers a particularly interesting example of collective identity representations that can be examined in more detail.

Lichfield has been the Independent's 'man in Paris' since 1997, covering French news (www.independent.co.uk). In this article, which begins with reference to 'an article in the influential newspaper Le Monde' about a French backlash against British property ownership, Lichfield gives some support to French sentiments by describing the towns of the south-west where English is 'the most commonly heard language in the Saturday street market'. He then goes on to claim that 'Franco-British racial strife seems to be rare to non-existent' elsewhere, such as in his own 'hamlet in the Norman hills', where his neighbours 'were relieved to discover that we were British'. Lichfield is therefore contrasting the areas where larger numbers of Britons congregate with the smaller towns and villages of Normandy, where British incomers are not only 'welcome, but prized'. Lichfield is not telling the British not to come to France; his

argument is about avoiding 'those places which have high concentrations of British temporary or permanent immigrants, such as the Dordogne'.

Two sections of Lichfield's feature were chosen to demonstrate the strategies utilised to make specific in-group and out-group references:

In many cases it is the longer-established British residents who feel most threatened by the 'new' British invasion of 'Dordogneshire' and its borders. Until, say, five years ago, almost all of the British incomers were seeking holiday or retirement homes. There is now a wave of younger British migrants to the French south-west who want to escape the congestion at home.

Personally, I have some sympathy with long-standing British residents who are uncomfortable at the thought of being swamped by other Britons. In most cases, the older residents say, they chose to live in France because they loved France and the rural French way of life. They did not want a slice of the home counties parachuted into the Périgord.

By John Lichfield, *The Independent*, January 14, 2004.

Rearrangements and role allocation

Analysis of social actor representation by role allocation allows us to assess how social actors are represented and consider the extent to which this serves to underpin any wider representations of the British in France. Grammatical

choices such as transitivity can rearrange the order of the social practice, such as when social actors and their actions are represented actively or passively (Van Leeuwen 2008).

Role allocation examines who is given the active or passive role, and what purpose is achieved. The *active role* may be foregrounded by active participation, or backgrounded in more circumstantialised ways.

Exclusion of the social actor may be seen in passive agent deletion, or backgrounding of the agent through nominalisation of an action, for example *the new British invasion*.

Process types can also be compared, such as the extent to which agents are represented in mainly material processes, affecting others, or in mental processes, including *reactions* (Van Leeuwen, 2008), which can be seen in literal mental processes such as *feel threatened*, as well as descriptive clauses such as *[they] are uncomfortable*.

Figure 5 below demonstrates how the established migrants are endowed with both active and passive roles as a means of positive representation. Established migrants are activated as the dynamic forces with mental (reactive) processes where their intellectual actions are foregrounded, such as making decisions based on cultural appreciation (*loved*); they also actively *chose* France and they are given a voice (*say*), unlike the new arrivals. Van Leeuwen's distinction between actions and reactions is useful here, as reactions can be seen to play a significant role in the representation of established migrants; they are represented as reacting emotively to the newer influx as they *feel threatened, uncomfortable*. Although these reactions

are activated using active verbs, the roles are constructed passively using circumstantialisation (*by the "new" British invasion; swamped by other Britons*). In this way the grammatical formations foreground these reactions to

present an image of affected older migrants. Moreover, Lichfield's own affective reaction of *sympathy* helps to counteract any suggestion that the fears are irrational or over-emotive.

Established migrants	Recent migrants
Labelling of social actors	
<i>longer-established British residents;</i>	<i>the "new" British invasion of "Dordogneshire;</i>
<i>long-standing British residents;</i>	<i>a wave of younger British migrants;</i>
<i>British incomers;</i>	<i>other Britons;</i>
<i>the older residents</i>	<i>a slice of the home counties</i>
Activation: active roles	
Participation	Circumstantialisation
<i>seeking holiday or retirement homes;</i>	<i>threatened by [threatening]</i>
<i>the older residents say;</i>	<i>swamped by [swamping]</i>
<i>they chose to live in France;</i>	
Activation: reactions	
<i>They did not want;</i>	
<i>they loved France and the rural</i>	<i>want to escape the congestion</i>
<i>French way of life;</i>	<i>at home;</i>
<i>feel most threatened by;</i>	
<i>are uncomfortable;</i>	
Activation: passive roles	
<i>being swamped by other Britons;</i>	<i>parachuted into the Périgord</i>
<i>threatened by the "new" British invasion</i>	

Figure 5: Role activation in the Lichfield extract

In contrast, the reactions of the newer migrants are represented in terms of a desire for *escape*, rather than an active choice; they are the provokers, not

provoked, and they remain a shadowy threat. Nevertheless, as figure 5 demonstrates, their invasion is not presented as a particularly dynamic

process, as they are de-emphasised in passive clauses, such as *threatened by*, *swamped by*. The effect of this is to represent these social actors as active yet backgrounded, as does the impersonalisation of them as *a wave* and *a slice of the home counties*. The latter example is an interesting passivation of an object that is *parachuted in*, as if a mass of recent migrants is scooped up and dropped in by some outside force. This kind of social action is familiar from analysis of racist discourse such as that examined by Van Leeuwen, where ‘immigration’ is ‘represented as a generalized and intangible “phenomenon” rather than as action by specific social actors’, yet ‘the reactions to it are represented in all of their specifics’ (Van Leeuwen 2008: 55). Lichfield’s focus is similarly upon the *threatening* and *swamping* effects of a generalised phenomenon. So while the context of migration may be very different, the strategies used to portray it are similar.

The overall effect of this language is to represent the newer migrants as following passively, en masse, and as a generalised phenomenon rather than distinct social actors. This contrasts with the older migrants who are seen to have made individual decisions based on appreciation of France and its culture. In fact, the only active participation by the new arrivals is represented as a desire to escape, which highlights the disparity between the push factors driving this recent migration and the pull factor of the love of France that influenced earlier migrants.

Substitution of elements

The Social Actor Framework also offers a systematic framework for analysing how people themselves are represented, besides their actions, using the sub-categories of *categorisation*. Within *categorisation*, in- and out-group representation can be defined by tangible and recognisable labelling of *identification* and *functionalisation*. Both of these can be seen throughout the corpus, most clearly in the *identification* of *British* or *English*, although Lichfield goes further with a regional classification of *the Home Counties*. More subtle is the *functionalisation* when social actors are referred to in terms of something they do, such as an occupation or role (Van Leeuwen 2008, p. 48), realised by a noun formed from a verb, as in *resident* (*reside*) and *migrant* (*migrate*).

Figure 6 shows a functionalisation strategy whereby Lichfield uses ‘migrants’ to categorise the newer arrivals in comparison with the long-standing ‘residents’. While ‘migrants’ may, of course, settle permanently, the word derives from the process of migration and it does also have some associations with more temporary settlement (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008). The word ‘resident’, however, reflects a more permanent activity of *residing*, as discussed above. Such differentiation could not easily be applied to expats in practice; therefore Lichfield’s use of the two appears to be a clear attempt to represent the British settlement on two levels, based on migrant behaviour, regardless of the fact that in reality the two categories would be virtually interchangeable

Determination			
Categorisation <i>(group identity)</i>		Differentiation <i>(social differentiation)</i>	
Identification	Functionalisation		
		(residents)	(migrants)
<i>British;</i>	<i>residents</i>	<i>migrants</i>	
<i>Britons;</i>		<i>long-standing;</i>	<i>other;</i>
<i>a slice of the home counties</i>		<i>established;</i>	<i>"new";</i>
		<i>older</i>	<i>younger</i>

Figure 6: Distinguishing between social actors in the Lichfield extract

These examples of ‘what people do’ shows that sub-categories based on functions can be manipulated as easily as the sub-categories that fall into Van Leeuwen’s *differentiation*, where writers attempt to differentiate between individuals or groups as a way of demarcating boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Van Leeuwen 2008: 40) – clearly seen in Lichfield’s reference to *other Britons*. This attempt at social distinction is supported by the adjectives used to differentiate between in-group and out-group, contrasting *other* with *long-standing*, *established* against *new*, and *younger* versus *older*. Once again, these generalised categories of ‘what people are’ would be difficult to assign to people, but here they represent and reinforce an idea of differentiation within British migration.

The Social Actor Framework includes a category of *impersonalisation*, with sub-categories of *abstraction* and *objectivation*. The representation of recent migrants as *a slice of the Home Counties* draws on this as the migrants are depicted as a portion of the UK being

dropped into France. There is further impersonalisation by metaphorical reference to *an invasion* or *a wave*. These lend strength to the effect as the individual identity of these settlers is obscured within the image of a ‘wave’, ‘invasion’ or mass region of the UK.

Discussion and conclusion

Analysis of the corpus has been a first step towards illustrating how British migration is socially constructed in the media. Semantic prosody is carried through associations of lexis such as *invasion* and *ghetto*, imparting a negative flavour to some of the representations. Using the Social Actor Framework to look in more detail at the co-text surrounding an example of *other Brits*, we can see how Lichfield goes beyond a mechanical repetition of stereotypical description as he makes a strategic categorisation of the British. At the same time, this affords him a way to construct identity in terms of what kind of migrant he is *not* (Baker and McEnery 2005: 222).

The attempt to draw distinction between the 'prized' and less welcome migration is familiar in the context of lifestyle migration: such place distinctions are mirrored in Torkington's (2011) Algarve research, where migrants used 'there-place derogation' and 'here-place celebration' as discursive strategies familiar within the construction of ideological social group membership (Van Dijk 2009). The current study shows that distinctions can include but go beyond place as they focus on categorising migrants themselves, and invoke what we might call 'current-migrant derogation' and 'established-migrant celebration'. There is an overall sense that one kind of lifestyle migration is portrayed as more acceptable, or legitimate, than another; this supports Van Leeuwen's claim that texts not only represent social practices but also 'explain and legitimate them' (2008: 20). By maintaining socially acquired prejudices, such writers are the 'symbolic

elites' who play a part in reproducing and legitimising dominant ideologies of [lifestyle] migration (Baker et al. 2008: 280).

Although the British do not constitute a marginalised and vulnerable group, they are represented in surprisingly similar ways to immigrants and asylum seekers in media discourse, using terms such as *swamped* (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008), the objectification and backgrounding identified by Van Leeuwen (2008) and the water metaphors highlighted by Baker and McEnery (2005). We should not, of course, assume that these evaluations of the British are universally-held views; nevertheless it is an accepted notion that some people will go along with received values that are current in society. Readers who are migrants themselves may be influenced by such texts, especially those who wish to construct an identity position in relation to that particular ideology.

References

- Baker, P. (2004), 'Querying Keywords: Questions of Difference, Frequency, and Sense in Keywords Analysis', *Journal of English Linguistics* 32(4), 346–359.
- Baker, P. (2006), *Using Corpora in Discourse Analysis*, London: Continuum.
- Baker, P., Gabrielatos, C., KhosraviNik, M., Krzyzanowski, M., McEnery, T. and Wodak, R. (2008), 'A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press', *Discourse & Society* 19(3), 273–306.
- Baker, P. and McEnery, T. (2005), 'A corpus-based approach to discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in UN and newspaper texts', *Journal of Language and Politics* 4(2), 197–226.
- Benson, M. (2009), 'A Desire for Difference: British Lifestyle Migration to Southwest France', in *Lifestyle Migration: Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences*, edited by M. C. Benson and K. O'Reilly, Aldershot: Ashgate, 121–136.
- Caldas-Coulthard, C. and Fernandes Alves, M. (2007), 'Mongrel selves: Narratives of Displacement and Multi-positioning', in *Identity Trouble: Critical discourse and contested identities*, edited by C. Caldas-Coulthard and R. Iedema, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Coffin, C., Hewings, A. and O'Halloran, K. (2004), 'Checking Overinterpretation and Underinterpretation: Help from Corpora in Critical Linguistics', in *Applying English Grammar: Functional and Corpus Approaches*, edited by C. Coffin, A. Hewings and K. O'Halloran, London: Hodder.
- Del-Teso-Craviotto (2009), 'Racism and Xenophobia in Immigrants' Discourse: The case of Argentines in Spain', *Discourse and Society* 20(5), 571–592.
- Ferbrache, F. (2011), 'British Immigrants in France: Issues and Debates in a Broadening Research Field', *Geography Compass* 5(10), 737–749.
- Gabrielatos, C. and Baker, P. (2008), 'Fleeing, Sneaking, Flooding: A Corpus Analysis of Discursive Constructions of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK Press, 1996–2005', *Journal of English Linguistics* 36.
- Hunston, S. (2002), *Corpora in Applied Linguistics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ivanič, R. (1998), *Writing and Identity: The Discoursal Construction of Identity in Academic Writing*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Jenkins, R. (2008), *Social Identity (3rd ed.)*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- King, R. and Wood, N. (eds.) (2001), *Media and Migration: Constructions of Mobility and Difference*, Routledge: London.
- Koller, V. (2009), 'Analysing Collective Identity in Discourse: Social Actors and Contexts', *SEMEN* 27. Available at: <http://semen.revues.org/8877> [Accessed 20 May 2015]
- Lawson, M. (2015). "'The More Wine you Drink, the Better the French Sounds": Representations of the Good Life within an Online Community of Practice', in *Practising the Good Life Lifestyle Migration in Practices*, edited by K. Torkington, I. David and S. João, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 161–177.
- Lichfield, J. (2004), 'John Lichfield our man in Normandy - Find a rustic retreat away from other Brits', *The Independent*, 14 January. Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/our-man-in-normandy-find-a-rustic-retreat-away-from-other-brits-73412.html> [Accessed 20 May 2014].
- Lifestyle Migration Hub (n.d.) <http://www.uta.fi/yky/lifestylemigration.index.html> [Accessed 20 May 2014].
- Moore, K. (2012), 'Introduction', in *Migrations and the media*, edited by K. Moore, B. Gross and T. Threadgold, 1 – 10, New York: Peter Lang.
- Moore, K., Gross, B. and Threadgold, T. (eds.) (2012), *Migrations and the Media*, New York: Peter Lang.
- Nardelli, A., Traynor, I. and Haddou, L. (2015), 'Revealed: Thousands of Britons on benefits across EU', *The Guardian*, 19 January. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jan/19/-sp-thousands-britons-claim-benefits-eu> [Accessed 20 May 2015]

- O'Reilly, K. (2000), *The British on the Costa del Sol: Transnational Identities and Local Communities*, London: Routledge.
- O'Reilly, K. (2001), "'Blackpool in the sun": Images of the British on the Costa del Sol', in *Media and Migration: Constructions of Mobility and Difference*, edited by R. King and N. Wood, London: Routledge.
- O'Reilly, K. (2012), *International Migration and Social Theory*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- O'Reilly, K. and Benson, M. C. (2009), 'Lifestyle Migration: Escaping to the Good Life?', in *Lifestyle Migration: Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences*, edited by K. O'Reilly and M.C. Benson, Farnham: Ashgate, 121–136.
- Scott, M. (2011), 'Oxford WordSmith Tools Version 5.0', <http://www.lexically.com>.
- Stubbs, M. (2001), *Words and Phrases*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Torkington, K. (2011), 'The Discursive Construction of Place-identity: British Lifestyle Migrants in the Algarve', unpublished thesis, Lancaster University.
- Van Dijk, T. (2009), *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2008), *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- White, P. (2004), 'Subjectivity and Evaluation in Media Discourse', in *Analysing English Grammar: Functional and Corpus Approaches*, edited by C. Coffin, A. Hewings and K. O'Halloran, London: Hodder, 229–246.



Cardiff University Press
Gwasg Prifysgol Caerdydd

cardiffuniversitypress.org

This article was first published in *JOMEC Journal*

JOMEC Journal is an online, open-access and peer reviewed journal dedicated to publishing the highest quality innovative academic work in Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies. It is published by Cardiff University Press and run by an editorial collective based in the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University, committed both to open-access publication and to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and academic integrity. *JOMEC Journal* is peer reviewed with an international, multi-disciplinary Editorial Board and Advisory Panel. It welcomes work that is located in any one of these disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary work that approaches Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies as overlapping and interlocking fields. It is particularly interested in work that addresses the political and ethical dimensions, stakes, problematics and possibilities of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies.

To submit a paper or to discuss publication, please contact:

Dr Paul Bowman: [BowmanP@cf.ac.uk](mailto: BowmanP@cf.ac.uk)

www.cf.ac.uk/jomecjournal

Twitter: @JOMECjournal

ISSN: ISSN 2049-2340

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. Based on a work at www.cf.ac.uk/jomecjournal.

