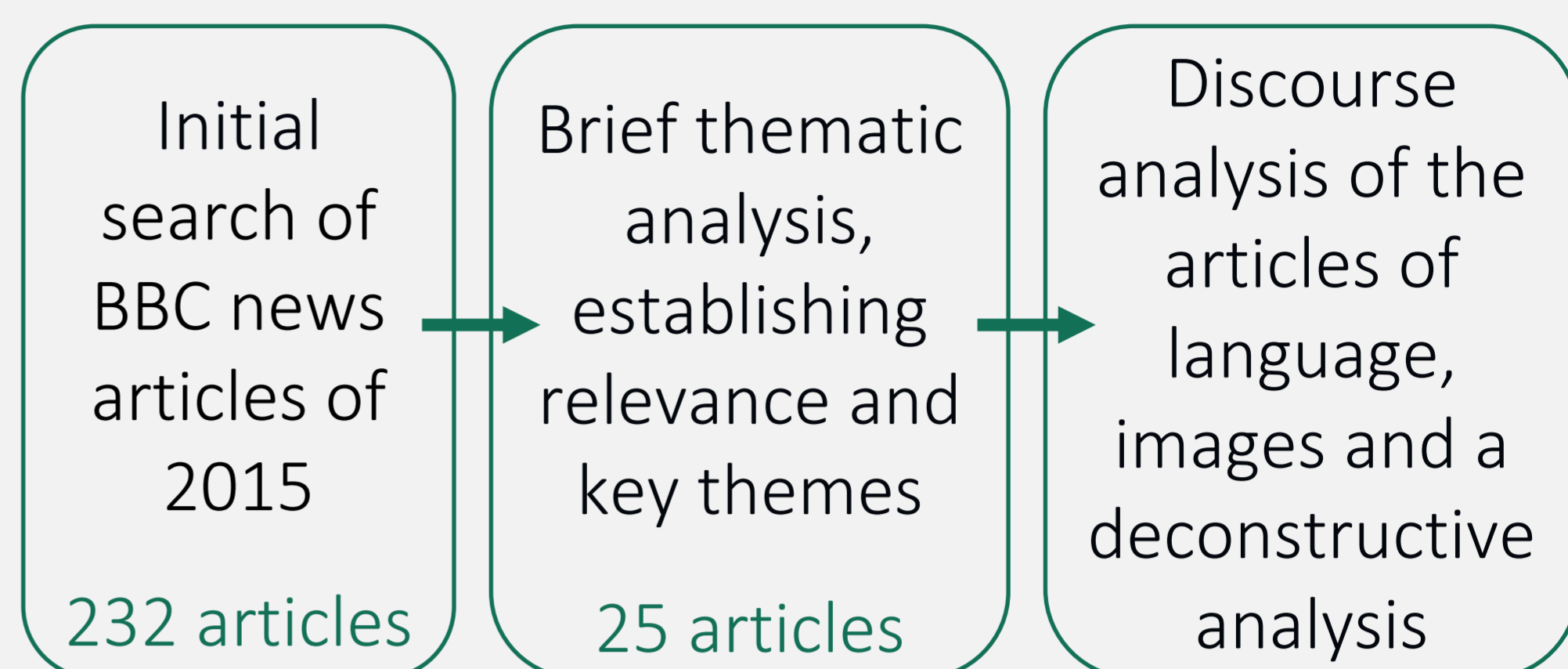


How has it become possible to represent migrants in Europe as a security threat and migrant deaths as a humanitarian concern?

Ella Gage email: 17062950@brookes.ac.uk

The 2015/16 migration crisis produced an influx of news articles about migration. Two key perspectives within these seeing migrants as a humanitarian concern and/or as a security threat. My research aimed to establish the factors which impacted this framing, specifically how reporting migrant death changed the focus to securing the migrant.



need for 'burden-sharing' amongst countries [5]



Image 1 (ref. 1) - police talking to migrants

Security discourse -

through framing migrants as a burden, and an object to be stopped; the police presence within photos which highlighted criminality

'restrict the flow' [2]

'protect the EU's external borders' [5]



Image 2 (ref. 2) - large groups of migrants being lead by officials

Both these discourses could be present in the same article, as they are not contradictory. The majority of articles contained a discourse of security, and through the limited humanitarian discourse, this security discourse was strengthened.

Implications

Discourses are always present, as they reflect implicit perceptions. Both the discourses of security or humanitarianism have issues. Therefore discourses need to be recognised and challenged, as they may become naturalised and seen as the norm.



Image 3 (ref. 3) - police officer chatting with a child

Humanitarian discourse -

found predominantly in articles which highlighted the story of migrants; created through identifying with the people within in the news article

'no other option' [4]

'desperate situation' [4]



Image 4 (ref. 4) - official carries drowned boy (Alan Kurdi) up the beach

'human cost of the crisis' [4]

Migrant crisis: Photo of drowned boy sparks outcry

3 September 2015

Europe migrant crisis

(Ref. 4)

'more than 2,600 migrants drowned... trying to cross the Mediterranean' [4]

Migrant deaths

In articles containing death a humanitarian discourse was not always present, through the dehumanising use of statistics. The Alan Kurdi image (image 4) was significant, as it gave a personality to the statistics. This focus on the individual reinforced a discourse of humanitarianism, rather than solely the presence on migrant death.

References: 1- BBC (2015) 'Serbian PM "shocked" at Hungary's plan for migrant fence', BBC News, 18/06. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-33168125 (Accessed: 10.12.20) | 2- BBC (2015) 'Thousands enter Slovenia after Hungary closes border', BBC News, 18/10 Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-34564830 (Accessed: 10.12.20) | 3- BBC (2015) 'Munich migrant welcome shames Europe', BBC News, 05/09. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-34173091 (Accessed: 10.12.20) | 4- BBC (2015) 'Migrant crisis: Photo of drowned boy sparks outcry', BBC News, 03/09. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-34133210 (Accessed: 10.12.20) | 5- BBC (2015) 'EU border security becomes new mantra', BBC News, 19.12. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-35140794 (Accessed: 10.12.20).