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

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Context

Militants, migrants and the Med: Europe's Libya problem

BBC News

@ 24 February 2015





Alan Kurdi death: A Syrian Kurdish family forced to flee

BBC News

@ 4 September 2015

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Europe migrant crisis



'Textual mechanisms... produce a "world" by providing positions for various kinds of subjects and endowing them with particular attributes'

Doty, 1993, pp.306-307



Background

'Security is being imagined and enacted in different ways in different situations' (Walters, 2010, p.222)

'Securitization is the process through which an issue becomes a security one, not necessarily because of the nature or the objective importance if a threat, but because the issue is presented as such' (Karyotis, 2007, p.3)

Pickering-

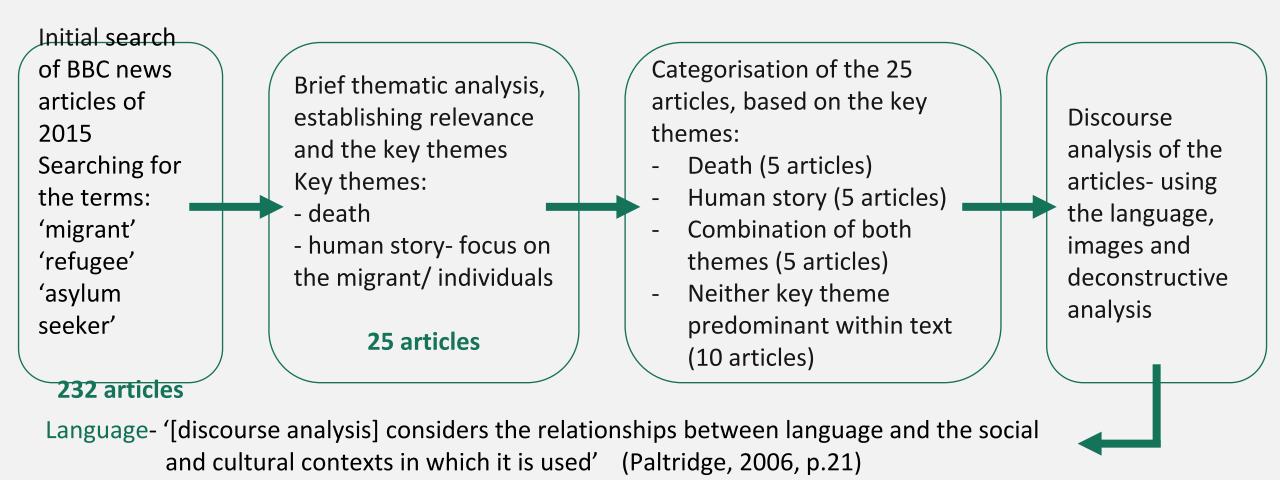
3 predominant discourses 'the invading deviant, the racialized deviant; and the diseased deviant' (2001, p.170)

Steimel-

'human interest frame describes the news in terms that personalise, dramatize and emotionalise' (2010, p.220)



Methodology



Images- 'images shape what can and cannot be seen and, indirectly, what can and cannot be thought'

(Beiker et al., 2013, p.400)

Results

'restrict the flow' (BBC, 2015d)

'some 3,400 have died or gone missing' (BBC, 2015f)

need for 'burden-sharing' amongst countries (BBC, 2015h)

> 'protect the EU's external borders' (BBC, 2015g)



'steady stream of migrants'

(BBC, 2015h)

'Croatia forcing Hungary to take migrants' (BBC, 2015i)

'forced to migrate' (BBC, 2015j)

'human cost of the crisis' (BBC, 2015k) 'no other option' (BBC, 2015k)

'doing what it takes to survive' (BBC, 2015L)





'some 3,440 have died or gone missing'

'29 died after spending several hours in the water'

'human cost of the crisis'

References: Image- BBC, 2015k, Top- BBC, 2015g, Centre- BBC, 2015m, Bottom- BBC, 2015k

Discussion

'Media messages not only reflect [public] fears [of migration], they channel and strengthen them and transform them into a powerful message/discourse for authorities'

(Buonfino,

2004, p.30)

Conclusion

- Humanitarian discourses were more prevalent when there was a focus on the individual
- Both discourses were used throughout the reporting of the 2015/16 migrant crisis, however that of security was more prevalent, and the lack of the humanitarian discourse strengthened the security discourse
- There can be issues with using either a humanitarian or security discourse in the construction of migrants; therefore it is necessary to be aware of and denaturalise these discourses

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