

# Where Are 'They' From? A Corpus-Assisted Study of the Geographical Representation of Migrants in the UK and Italian Quality Press in 2016 and 2017

**Dario Del Fante**

Università degli Studi di Padova

[dario.delfante@phd.unipd.it](mailto:dario.delfante@phd.unipd.it)

## Abstract

*Brexit cannot be only an isolated case but the evidence of a greater phenomenon, namely the upsurge of populist political tendencies among European countries. Their political campaigns have transformed peoples' concerns about the increasing number of terrorist attacks and of immigrants arriving in Europe into real fear. Within this context, the press plays a decisive role in reporting and commenting on social and political issues such as migration. Hence, this study analyzes how the Italian and British press reported migration discourse before and after Brexit, focusing on the frequency of representation in the quality press and on their geographical representation identified in the use of referential strategies. This study highlights the influence of political discourse on newspaper discourse: the prominence given by politicians to migration issues has influenced its newsworthiness, it has received significantly more press coverage in 2016 and 2017 than in the past. The Italian and British press frequently represent (?) indistinctly migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as coming from two main areas: European areas (more specifically, East Europe) and non-European areas (more specifically, Africa, Syria, and Afghanistan). The use of referential strategies to define group boundaries and to marginalize migrants in a unique group has been detected.*

## Keywords

*cross-linguistic studies, corpus-assisted discourse analysis, migration studies, referential strategies, translation studies, cross-cultural studies*