Climate change and migration in the UK news media: How the story is told

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Abstract
This research article explores the textual and visual representations of climate change induced migration within online news media in the UK. This article innovates in two-senses: it demonstrates how images interact with text to co-construct and present specific discursive packages to the general public, and also by pinning down their content more precisely to understand how they might affect policy and public understanding of the issue. Despite their differences, similar policy options emerge in relation to divergent discursive packages. The figure of climate migrant/refugee is depoliticised and divested of context and complexity, and as such it resembles the referent objects of securitising claims. This article suggests that this may work in favour of xenophobic sentiments and policies and, ultimately, deepen existing migrant and refugee integration challenges in traditional host societies.

Keywords
Climate change, critical discourse analysis, media, migration, refugees, securitisation

Introduction

Migration is one of the most profound effects of climate change on the human population (IPCC, 2014). Climate change impacts, such as accelerating sea level rise and more frequent and intense weather extremes, force people to relocate and often

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drive them from one country to another. The poorest populations and nations, the least responsible for climate change, are most dramatically and immediately affected (UN/DESA, 2016). However, rather than focusing on the social injustice that exacerbates vulnerability to climate change, mass media in developed, industrialised countries, such as the USA, the UK, and Australia, depict cross-border migration as a security implication of climate change (Schäfer et al., 2016). The rationale is that there is a clear causality between climate-linked resources' scarcity, population movements, violent conflicts, refugee flows and, ultimately, disruption in host countries' societies (Boas, 2015) even though there is not enough empirical evidence to support this line of argumentation (Owain and Maslin, 2018). Given media's role in framing issues surrounding the integration of migrating people into local communities (Triandafyllidou, 2013), this may contribute to policy developments that risk to be detrimental in climate-driven migrating people ability to relocate and adapt to host countries' societies (Hartmann, 2010).

This article represents an attempt to enable a more nuanced understanding of media portrayal of climate change induced migration in developed, and traditionally host, countries and contribute to the wider debate on the role of media and communication in migrants and refugees resettlement processes. In this regard, the UK serves as what Gerring (2007) calls a 'pathway' case, a case study that helps to elucidate causal mechanisms. It is a destination country for migrants and refugees in general and one of the places where the security implications of climate change play out in real politics (Boas and Rothe, 2016), but also in terms of its embrace of anti-migrant sentiments, which proved decisive in leading to the Brexit decision in the 2016 referendum (Meleady et al., 2017). As such, this article performs a textual and visual critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the representations of climate migration in a cross-section of online news media in the UK that includes quality, midrange, and tabloid news to draw attention to key components of discourses such as common assumptions, normative, and their overall composition. Moreover, it performs an analysis of frames underlying discourses, both textual and visual, to identify the underlying ideas that direct the construction of texts and visuals. Links and interdependencies between CDA and frame analysis are obvious. Either method would usually be used, rather than in combination. However, frame analysis enables an understanding of the overall labelling of climate migration, while CDA draws attention to detail and specific forms of meaning-making (Carvalho, 2000). The article examines articles for the period from January 2014 to March 2016. This period was selected as it covered a number of important climate change and migration-related events: the rise of media coverage of climate change in the UK in 'quality' news media (Gifford et al., 2016), the Paris agreement, the Brexit decision, and the culmination of the refugee crisis in Europe. Finally, the article digs into the literature on media representations of climate migration in other countries and through other channels, as well as on media representations of climate change and migrants and refugees in general to highlight similarities and discuss the media's role in this context.

Media discourses and frames on climate change induced migration

Securitisation is a process wherein elites and public reach a shared understanding that a referent object is threatening enough to justify extraordinary measures (Balzacq, 2011). Construction of threats is a key part of the securitisation process (Rychnovska, 2014) and media themselves serve as securitising actors, especially in regard to migrants and refugees' portrayals (Bleich et al., 2015; Watson, 2011). Literature on migrants and refugees' representations in the media shows how migrants and refugees are portrayed either as victims or as a threat to members of the host country and how these two ways of framing of people crossing borders, although they seem antithetical they are in fact interchangeable, thus reduce migrants and refugees to referent object for security (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017). In particular, victimisation mobilises public support and concern for displaced people's plight within a humanitarian discourse, but at the same time proves effective as to create a threat of instability presented by their condition of statelessness (Johnson, 2011).

How the media present migrating people in the context of climate change is similar to how they portray migrants and refugees in general. Scholarly work on media representations of climate change induced migration shows how media in developed, and traditionally host, countries capture people who flee the impacts of climate change as victims, forced to abandon their homes, or as a potential threat to the social order of the host country. More particularly, Randall (2017) performed a content analysis of UK print media coverage of climate migration and found that people migrating amid a changing climate are either framed as victims or as drivers of conflict and terrorism. Similarly, Ransan-Cooper et al. (2015) assert that big news media organisations, such as the Time Magazine and CBS News in the USA, seem particularly responsive to and propagate the security threat and the victim frame. Farbotko (2005, 2012) and Dreher and Voyer (2015) show how media in Australia and New Zealand focus mainly on victimhood or potential threat to stability instead on the plight of vulnerable communities of the Pacific Islands. However, newspaper articles are also sites of intense interactions between imagery and language, wherein images are used to draw readers' attention to accompanying text (DiFrancesco and Young, 2010). In terms of visual representations of climate migration in news media, Methmann (2014) demonstrates how migrating people are depicted as racialised and passive victims of a changing climate within US, UK, and German newspapers' articles. However, this binary type of representation, victim or threat, works to frame those people as one single undifferentiated category of passive and equally dangerous individuals. People migrating in the context of climate change remain as a distinct and victimised 'Other' that has no agency and, driven by desperation, easily becomes a threat to the host community (Manzo, 2010). At this point, it is worth noting that 'climate refugee' appears to be the concept commonly used in the Anglophone press to describe climate displaced people relative to that of 'climate migrant' (Felli, 2013).

However, current scholarship in media representations of climate migration has not to date explored how text and image connect to construct and affirm climate migration as a discursive object, although images used in news stories largely determine how audiences interpret those stories (DiFrancesco and Young, 2010). In this regard, this article examines how images interact with text to present discursive packages of climate migration to the general public. It also attempts to classify different discourse patterns in terms of their components and the policy options they encourage or foreclose.

The main research questions are: How are the different discourses on climate change induced migration constructed and represented by the online editions of UK newspapers? What are UK's news media perceptions of climate migrants? How are news media in the UK using images to construct these perceptions in news stories? What are the potential impacts of the portrayal of climate change induced migration in the UK news media upon public understanding of climate change induced migration and upon policy decisions?

Analytical framework and methodology

Within this study, CDA addresses both text and image. At the textual level, the method adopted here draws upon the approach to environmental discourse developed by Dryzek (2005) and the approach to media texts analysis developed by Carvalho (2000), as both were adopted and adapted by Doulton and Brown (2009) for discourse analysis of newspaper articles. As illustrated in Table 1, the analytical framework for textual CDA included six main components: surface descriptors, basic entities recognised and constructed, assumptions about climate change induced migration, agents and their motives, key metaphors and other rhetorical devices and normative judgments. At the visual level, the study draws upon the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996, 2001) who showed how to perform a critical analysis across the boundaries between modes of text and images. This study also used frame analysis to deepen our understanding of the multiple

Table 1. Analytical framework for CDA of newspaper articles adapted from Doulton and Brown (2009).

Components of discourses
Surface descriptors: newspaper, date, author, title of the article
Basic entities recognised or constructed: How climate change induced migration is understood? Ontology of the discourse and authority given to different sources of information
Assumptions about climate change and migration: Where, when, and how the effects of climate change on human population will be experienced?
Agents and their motives: Key actors, their interests, and motives
Metaphors and other rhetorical devices: Metaphors deployed to put a situation in a particular light
Normative judgements: What should be done, and by whom, to address climate change induced migration?

perspectives encountered in terms of media coverage of climate migration. The concept of the frame has been employed by many scholars from various disciplines and has quite varied meanings, but the one that is more relevant for this article defines frames are perspectives present in discourse, a particular standpoint to talk about complex issues (Carvalho, 2000).

UK media sector is becoming increasingly digital. Newspapers are most commonly published online as well as on paper. Newspapers' websites have partially displaced newspapers' print editions regarding audiences' preferences for news consumption (Thurman and Fletcher, 2019). For instance, national newspapers such as the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* reach more readers via their online rather than via their print edition (OfCom, 2018).

In this regard, the newspapers covered were a cross-section of the most popular online editions of newspapers in the UK that includes the online editions of the *Sun*, the *Daily Mail* (Daily Mail Online), the *Daily Mirror* (Mirror.co.uk), the *Telegraph*, the *Guardian*, and the *Independent*. The newspapers analysed here also represent a broad range of ideological and political perspectives within the UK newspaper market. The *Guardian* and the *Independent* are seen as supporting social democratic ideology and urgency to act on climate change, the *Daily Mail* and *Telegraph* are conservative papers and their coverage of climate change has included discourses of climate scepticism (Painter and Gavin, 2016), while the *Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* are tabloid newspapers, with the latter being historically a supporter of the Labour party.

The selected articles included news items produced by journalists for the specific outlets, editorials, opinion pieces, comment, and analysis. The aim was to find articles with a central focus on climate change and migration. Searches for articles were performed using newspapers online search engines and the 'Media Watch on Climate Change' Tool (http://www.ecoresearch.net/climate/). The articles were identified by using the search words climate change; migration; climate migrant; climate refugee. The process resulted in a database of 45 articles, with the online edition of the *Guardian* having more than half of the quantity of articles discussing climate migration (24 articles), no surprise given the tradition of the *Guardian* of covering environmental issues, while tabloid newspapers such as the *Sun* and *Daily Mirror* had fewer number of articles on the issue with only one and two articles, respectively. The *Independent* had 10, the *Telegraph* 3, and the *Daily Mail* 5 articles.

Regarding textual CDA, each selected article was analysed by applying the framework outlined in Table 1. Four discourses were more precisely defined by examining the actual statements made, the choice of words and the implied assumptions. Then, a critical visual analysis of, in total, 110 images accompanying the articles placed within each discourse was performed, and the visual tropes of visual storytelling of climate change induced migration were identified. Five visual tropes were defined with reference to the discourses. The discourses and associated visual tropes are outlined in Table 2. Despite discourses variation, those forced to relocate amid a changing climate are predominantly framed as victims or threats.

Table 2. Discourses and associated visual tropes.

Discourses	Visual tropes
Catastrophe	Outsiders: snapshots of climate displaced people
	A world apart: images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe and deprived areas
	Refugee imagery, massification, and passivisation
Crisis	Landscapes and the invisibility of local communities
	Outsiders: snapshots of climate displaced people
	A world apart: images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe and deprived areas
	Refugee imagery, massification, and passivisation
	Advocates and activism
Adaptation	Outsiders: snapshots of climate displaced people
	A world apart: images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe and deprived areas
Uncertain future	Landscapes and the invisibility of local communities
	A world apart: images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe and deprived areas
	Outsiders: snapshots of climate displaced people

Discourses and framings of climate change induced migration in the UK news media

Four discourses regarding climate change and migration were identified within the most popular online editions of newspapers in the UK: discourses of catastrophe (23 articles), crisis (14 articles), adaptation (3 articles), and an uncertain future (5 articles). The concept of 'climate refugee' is commonly used in all discourses relative to that of 'climate migrant', except from adaptation discourse, which attempts to challenge the perception of fatality associated with the concept of 'climate refugee' (Felli, 2013). However, migrating people in the context of climate change still exist as victims that re-emerge as adaptive agents in distant labour markets or as pathological sources of threat. The discourses and frames underlying discourses are described below.

Catastrophe: Conflicts, mass migration, and chaos

> Climate change will foster terrorism and will fuel immigration to the UK as millions of people are displaced by rising sea levels, a senior military figure has warned. (Gosden, *The Telegraph*, 12 December 2014)

> The Guardian view on climate change and social disruption: how one form of chaos breeds another. (Editorial, *The Guardian*, 8 March 2015)

Catastrophe shows how climate change and constrained access to recourses trigger conflicts, social unrest, and mass migration, emphasising a spectre of mounting waves of climate refugees to Europe and the US in the coming decades. In turn, climate refugees are perceived as a problem for the host countries, inextricably

linked with risk, emergency, and potential for terrorism. Climate change signals a new era of mass migration from the developing world and bigger refugee crises in the future, but people in developed, supposedly unaffected, countries like the USA will also feel the effects, and massive internal displacement will occur due to sea level rise. International organisations, policy-makers, and scientists, and also high-profile environmentalists such as Lord Stern and Prince Charles reinforce this apocalyptic imagery. Clearly, poor countries will suffer the worst impacts of climate change. Political leaders of the rich West should act more responsibly to prevent the worst to come.

Catastrophe was by far the most common discourse. It features heavily across all the newspapers: nine articles in the *Guardian* (37.5% of its articles), five articles in the *Independent* (50% of its articles), two articles in the *Telegraph* (67% of its articles), four articles in the *Daily Mail* (80% of its articles), two articles in the *Daily Mirror* (100% of its articles), and one article in the *Sun* (100% of its articles).

Crisis: Mass forced migration due to sea level rise and scarce resources

> The world is facing a future of food shortages and mass migration as a consequence of widespread water shortages caused by global warming, the outgoing head of the World Meteorological Society has warned. (Bawden, *The Independent*, 23 December 2015)

> This has devastating effects on migrants: painting them as threats, rather than people fleeing threats from civil war, the rising ocean or, as is increasingly the case, violence and conflict that scientists say has been worsened by the effects of climate change. (Lovato, *The Guardian*, 27 November 2015)

Crisis seeks to show how climate change impacts threaten survival and will force millions of people to migrate. Poor people and countries are the most vulnerable. While it is acknowledged that climate change does not cause conflict directly, it is clear that climate change can have significant implications for social stability through potentially increasing the likelihood of social unrest and conflict. Emphasis is given to the international policy tools that come up short with regard to climate migration. Thus, those suffering are desperate and have few options. International organisations, NGOs, and scientists confirm the urgency of climate migration, and the voices of local leaders from vulnerable communities are given authority in demonstrating the devastating effects of climate change that are already forcing people to migrate. Some of the worst can be prevented if asylum is given to climate refugees and also support is given to island nations for mitigation and relocation.

Crisis is prominent in the online edition of the *Guardian* (10 articles), comprising 42% of its articles on climate migration. It is also represented in the online edition

of the *Independent* (four articles) comprising 40% of its articles, but it is absent from the online editions of the rest of the newspapers.

Adaptation: Planned relocation is the key, the West must lead

> Don't call them 'refugees': why climate-change victims need a different label. (Randall, *The Guardian*, 18 September 2014)

> Australia must not be afraid of its obligations to Pacific climate migrants. (Marles, *The Guardian*, 10 November 2015)

Adaptation takes the view that the only way of assisting developing countries to cope with climate change effects on human population is through planned relocation actions. The failure to set a legal framework that covers climate displaced people lies with governments; however, attempting to tackle the issue directly through altering the Geneva refugee convention is not the answer. Local leaders from the Pacific Islands reject the idea of 'climate refugee', which is associated with desperation and drama. Future actions on the issue of climate migration should be based on the principle of planned relocation. Such efforts should enable members of vulnerable communities, seen primarily as victims of a changing climate, to find work in less vulnerable regions, while ensuring places of relocation and work are safe. Similar to the discourses of catastrophe and crisis, *Adaptation* sees migrating people as somehow the same in terms of their nationalities, their economic and social status, professional skills and intentions for the future; a common practice of 'othering' is traced here.

The discourse of *adaptation* features only in the *Guardian* (three articles), comprising 12.5% of its articles, and it is completely absent from the online editions of the rest of the newspapers.

Uncertain future: Real-life stories of resettlement

> Pacific Islander who tried to become the world's first climate change refugee because rising sea levels will wipe out his homeland is deported from New Zealand after losing legal battle. (Hall, *Daily Mail Online*, 24 September 2015)

> Isle de Jean Charles has lost 98% of its land and most of its population to rising sea levels – but as remaining residents consider relocation, what happens next is a test case to address resettlement needs. (Zanolli, *The Guardian*, 15 March 2016)

Uncertain future differs from all other discourses by relying on real-life stories of people forced to relocate due to climate change that individualise these people opposite to the collectivisation of previous discourses. In particular, *uncertain future* foregrounds the plight of people who are forced to relocate due to sea

level rise. Almost all the articles share the story of a Pacific Islander whose asylum application as 'climate refugee' was rejected by a New Zealand judge. There is also an article describing the plight of the indigenous people from Isle de Jean Charles, in Louisiana, in the USA, the first people in the USA forced to relocate internally due to sea level rise. Voices of different people in terms of their lifestyles, professions, and ages are given authority in demonstrating the devastating effects of forced relocation to their local culture. However, they are portrayed powerless and in a devastating situation, as sea level rise forces them to migrate and those crossing borders are not entitled to an asylum and the future is filled with uncertainty. *Uncertain future* although draws attention to a common humanising element, it excludes the historical and political context of climate migration. Similar to the discourses discussed above, how and why certain groups are more vulnerable to climate change impacts are neglected.

Uncertain future features occasionally in the *Guardian* (two articles), and the *Independent* (one article), comprising 8% and 10% of their articles, respectively. It also features in the *Daily Mail* (one article) and the *Telegraph* (one article), comprising 20% and 33% of their articles, respectively.

In summary, *crisis* and *catastrophe* are by far the most common discourses of climate migration in the UK news media and, thus, help to present climate migration as an emergency issue. Media representations of climate migration concentrate on the construction of a climate victim subject that relies on a reified and monolithic form of identity, stripped of context and complexity (Watson, 2011) like the referent objects of societal and statist securitising claims (Williams, 2003). In addition, news media emphasis on poor people and communities in developing countries – as well as on the poor indigenous communities in the US – highlights migrating people's otherness, as they are perceived as outsiders and external to the experience of audiences in the developed world. Thus, news media in the UK, along with the alarmist tone that they reflect when they cover the issue, draw on the discourse and practice of security to discuss climate migration. As such, media ran the risk to possibly legitimise negative feelings about migrating people in the context of climate change, against whom extraordinary measures can become justifiable.

Stories and visuals

Five visual tropes are seen in articles of all four discourses. They are: (i) images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe, and deprived areas, (ii) island landscapes, (iii) images of the refugee crisis, (iv) snapshots of climate displaced people, and (v) images of advocates and activism, with the first four tropes being those that are most frequently used and the last visual trope used only in one article.

A world apart: Images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe, and deprived areas

The kind of images that appear most frequently is those of damaged infrastructure, tides, floods, droughts, and deprived areas. However, this aesthetic of

abandonment, destruction, and emptiness performs a profound distancing between the viewer and the subject, as these portrayals distance vulnerable areas from their everyday reality (Herrmann, 2017). Thus, those most vulnerable to climate change impacts are not understood as people having a unique livelihood and culture. Instead, the only available interpretation for readers in one of victimisation and distant impacts. The vast majority of pictures are of Pacific Islands, – only a few are of other regions in developing countries and Isle de Jean Charles – thus, in most cases, developed and developing countries are represented in a hierarchy of safety. The developed world is a secure place, capable of offering a lifeline to suffering developing countries (Farbotko, 2005). Along with the commonly used alarmist tone of the textual discourses, these images work to mask a long history of neglect and colonialism that exacerbated socio-economic vulnerabilities to climate change (Herrmann, 2017).

Landscapes and the invisibility of local communities

One of those immediately recognizable characteristics of these images is the seascape that surrounds Pacific and South Asia islands. But this visual beauty is not represented in the supporting text. The dominant discourses that accompany these images are those of crisis and uncertain future. As such, these images of overwhelming landscape and hostile textual support help construct a facet of climate change induced migration that obscures the relationship of the indigenous with the landscape (Herrmann, 2017). In particular, the combative language used throughout articles, e.g., 'The island paradise is under attack', (Harman, 2014), 'rising sea levels threaten to deluge the nation of 100,000 people', (Hall, 2015), invokes an antagonistic relationship between human and nature, omits the presence of a set of everyday life practices in harmony, and not in conflict, with nature. Thus, only available understanding of climate migrant is one of a powerless and desperate victim of a changing climate. In addition, aerial images of flat, disappearing islands appeal to stereotypical notions of a tropical island paradise that risks being lost (Farbotko, 2005), while distancing the readers from the uniqueness of each community (Herrmann, 2017).

Refugee imagery, massification, and passivisation

Visual narratives in journalistic storytelling on climate change induced migration also include photographs of refugees taken during the recent refugee crisis in Europe supported by discourses of catastrophe and crisis. The key theme in these images are the masses of refugees squeezed on fragile dinghies or walking on the Balkan or other migratory routes, taking a distance and ignoring the uniqueness of people as persons. In particular, this focus on masses of unidentifiable people works to emphasise the 'threat' to global social order embedded within these new flows of people. A fewer number of images used throughout the conforming articles of catastrophe and crisis focus on individual refugees, e.g., a man

in front of the ruins of a destroyed house or images of refugee children in precarious situations. While these images cast refugees as objects of care (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017), it also means that such depictions allow viewers to comfortably imagine people forced to relocate due to climate change predominantly as distressed, clueless and powerless. Similar to the visual tropes discussed above, this victim visual subject is stripped of context and complexity. In combination with the alarmist textual support, it allows viewers to imagine vulnerable people as the wild 'other' that threaten 'us' (Manzo, 2010).

Outsiders: Snapshots of climate displaced people

Visual narratives of climate migration in media coverage of the issue do also include photographs of locals from climate hot-spot areas, that is Pacific Islands, Bangladesh and Louisiana, supported mostly by discourses of crisis, adaptation and uncertain future – this visual imagery is also found in articles under the catastrophe discourse but to a lesser extent. Women and children are pictured in slums. In another picture, a woman, already halfway into the water, is trying to get fresh water in a flooded area. Similarly, another image pictures a father and a daughter, already halfway into the water too, trying to build a wall to protect themselves from the flood. Other pictures include an islander trying to fish in a sea-flooded area, villagers working in dry fields, elderly men with their feet into the water during storm surges or sitting in the houses they have to abandon soon. These pictures offer a humanising potential. Individualisation adopts a close-up perspective and offers a more humanised representation of those migrating amid a changing climate (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017). It makes their active fight visible and encourages a relationship of compassion and care. However, on the other hand, it highlights their otherness, as they are perceived as outsiders, literally on the border and symbolically, in the case of indigenous people of Isle de Jean Charles in the US, on the margins of the American experience (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017; Herrmann, 2017). Vulnerable people are mostly pictured in their supposed natural environments, in line with colonial stereotypes of naturalness, nativeness and primitive lifestyles (Methmann, 2014). As such, these depictions allow viewers to understand those people as doomed victims of climate change who can only be helped by the rich Western countries, a widely held view in the UK press (Doulton and Brown, 2009).

Advocates and activism

Visual narratives of climate migration also include political storytelling; however, this visual trope appears only in one article of the crisis discourse (Moertimer, 2015). A close-up of Tony de Burn, Foreign Minister of Marshall Islands, as long as the snapshot of his tweeted image of his grandchild – with the caption 'This is who I am fighting for today'–, picture the representatives of Pacific Islands communities as empowered equals, qualified with advocacy, and offer an alternative

story, one of a local agency, beyond the power of the aerial images, the aesthetic of abandonment or the refugee imagery. The article also includes images of demonstrations and activists during the climate talks in Paris, in December 2015. This type of visual intervention challenges viewers to reimagine climate displaced persons as political agents by visualising Tony de Burn as an empowered advocate for his community, including the narrative of empowering events, such as climate activism. However, this political agency is obscured by the alarmist language used throughout article, e.g., 'the first in a predicted wave of environmental refugees' (Moertimer, 2015) which sees all members of the vulnerable communities as a mass of unfortunates, omits the uniqueness of each community and works to disempower communities by distilling their representation to distressed and desperate.

Discussion

Overall, the dominant discourses of climate change and migration in the UK news media concentrate on the disaster in the making that is mass migration due to climate change, but this formula works to securitise climate change induced migration, as it assumes that migration is responsible for generating conflicts, unrest and instability. More particularly, the discourses of catastrophe and crisis are the dominant ones, comprising 51% and 31% of the total articles examined here, respectively. The last two discourses of adaptation and uncertain future include a relatively lower number of articles, comprising 7% and 11% of the total articles, respectively. This difference regarding the number of articles for each type of discourse is due to the fact that the first two discourses not only appear in all the online editions of the UK newspapers, e.g., the catastrophe discourse appears in all the outlets examined here in contrast with the adaptation discourse that appears only in the _Guardian_, but also comprise of the majority of each outlet articles on climate change induced migration. For example, crisis is the most prominent discourse in the online edition of the _Guardian_, a quality, liberal newspaper with a tradition in covering environmental issues. Although there is a more complicated process in play, it is evident that media coverage of climate change induced migration is highly influenced by a common practice of xenophobia in the UK press (Ibrahim and Howarth, 2016), also traced in the media in other traditional, host countries such as the USA (Estrada et al., 2016) and Australia (Bleiker et al., 2013). But this rhetoric helps to sideline the importance of developing and establishing fair and inclusive policies for climate migrants. For instance, Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017) performed a content analysis of the news coverage of the 2015 refugee crisis in eight European countries, including the UK, and found that the refugees were systematically kept 'firmly outside the remit of "our" communities of belonging' (p. 629).

Media texts analysis shows that priority is given to climate migration in developing countries, as well as to less privileged, indigenous communities in the USA, but this allows a limited and specific kind of understanding of climate migration, that of a distant issue not only in geographical but also in cultural and social terms.

In addition, almost all images are set in foreign environments, thus reinforce this distance between such a reality and that of mainstream audiences (Bleiker et al., 2013). As such, media coverage of climate change induced migration in the UK media allows audiences to comfortably imagine climate migration as an off shore and distant hardship. This contributes to the dichotomous rhetoric of 'us' versus 'them' that is prevalent in the ways in which the securitisation process of climate migration develops (Boas, 2015). It also supports the passivity of policy-makers at the local, regional and national levels, justifying and excusing inaction to address the deeply political issues associated with human vulnerability to climate change.

This study reaffirms previous analysis on the issue that, despite discursive strategies variation, news media conceptualise vulnerable communities as an external and unknown 'Other', a passive victim of climate change that easily can become a threat to host communities. Even the adaptive agent cluster of representation that seeks to infuse the debate concerning climate migration with notions of agency and individual empowerment (Ransan-Cooper et al., 2015) does not overcome the 'dangerous outsider' logic. Seen as victims of climate change, at-risk individuals re-emerge as 'economic migrants'. If they fail to improve their situations in distant labour markets, their vulnerability can become a threat to host communities (Bettini, 2014).

Visual framing of climate displaced people does not differ to that offered by the textual information. When there is a visual presence of humans, they are pictured as disempowered victims of a changing climate or as a mass of unfortunates. Although visual storytelling of climate change induced migration make no reference to traditional notions of security, such as borders or military action, literature on the visual representations of climate migration explicitly shows how this visual construction of the climate victim is part of the broader public discourses of the depoliticised vulnerable beings who not only are denied specific subjectivities, but their condition can easily become a security threat to host communities (Mahony, 2016; Manzo, 2010; Methmann, 2014). This, also, underscores a striking and problematic feature of climate imagery in general, that is ordinary people tend to feature mostly as victims of climate change (Wang et al., 2017).

Yet, a disjuncture between image and article, e.g., peaceful images like a seascape accompany alarmist text 'rising sea levels threaten to deluge the nation of 100,000 people' (Hall, 2015), is found in many articles on climate migration. Rather than being complementary, many images do not directly correspond to the content of the articles. These captions, however, provide readers with a way by which to interpret the images, framing the narrative about consequences rather than causation, contributing to a possible confusion rather that clarity on the social nature of climate change, findings consistent with previous research on the visual constructing of climate change in news media (DiFrancesco and Young, 2010).

Despite their differences, similar policy options emerge in relation to divergent discursive packages. There is little respect for the vibrant culture and cohesive communities that still live in vulnerable areas. This helps to remove the seriousness

of these communities' fight to secure a viable future and obscures migrants' voices to be equated to those of decision makers in local, regional and international level. On the other hand, within a discursive package may exist seemingly divergent policy proposals. For instance, examining visual and textual co-construction of the catastrophe discourse, it is not certain whether the best response to climate migration consists of facilitating livelihood stability of vulnerable populations, relocation, investment in a low-carbon economy or enhanced border protection.

In overview, media are using discursive strategies of threat and urgency to communicate climate change induced migration. The figure of climate migrant/refugee is depoliticised and divested of context and complexity, and as such it resembles the referent objects of securitising claims. This also corresponds with the longstanding colonial imaginaries of the developing world as a site of scarcity and source of disorder (Selby, 2018). The question of how the vulnerability to climate change for certain people and communities is created, as well as the complexity and diversity of human mobility and its relation to the broader social and political context, remain neglected. The effect is to convey a limited view of a complex issue and increase the risk of anti-migration sentiments and policies (Bettini, 2014; Hartmann, 2010). It also obscures the development of a coherent response to a growing migrant and refugee integration challenge in the context of a changing climate.

As Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) assert, there is a crisis of responsibility in the media in the coverage of migration in general. As the authors suggest, news media should move from 'formal' responsibility, i.e., to help the vulnerable, to substantive responsibility, i.e., responsibility for the conditions of the most vulnerable people and communities to climate change impacts. In this regard, people affected should be able to speak for themselves and portrayed as 'creative and knowledgeable actors rather than as victims or terrorists; as citizens with views on the causes of the "crisis" and as professionals with ideas and aspirations' (p. 1174).

Conclusions

This article identifies the fundamental components of different discourse patterns of climate change and migration within online UK news media, focusing on the ways in which images interact with text to construct climate migration as a discursive object. Through this, it fills an important gap in current scholarship on media representations of climate migration.

Climate migration is conceptualised as an emergency issue within online UK news media. Although the vulnerability of the poorest populations and nations is recognised, priority is given to state and social security concerns of the countries in the West. Behind its humanistic façade, the humanitarian representation of climate displaced persons as victims that occasionally re-emerge as adaptive agents is also a securitising discourse (Watson, 2011). Common component of these discursive packages is categorising climate displaced people as a victimised and equally

dangerous 'Other', a notion that dominates the climate migration advocacy (Baldwin, 2014).

Given the critical role of media representations in constructing public narratives on migrant and refugee integration issues, this securitisation of climate migration in media reporting on the issue could be argued that hardly guarantees the emergence of democratic or progressive policies on climate change induced migration. Instead, it risks working in favour of xenophobic sentiments and restrictive refugee and migration policies, and, ultimately, deepening existing integration challenges in traditional host societies, a phenomenon that was made explicitly evident during the recent refugee flow in Europe. Further research is needed on how current media stories on climate migration can be reframed to best reflect the beliefs and practices of those at the forefront of climate change impacts and engage policy-makers and the public in novel understandings of the issue. A change will also require journalists and media professionals to critically reflect on their role in shaping how climate migration is understood and how they engage with, and frame, the voices, and experiences of people affected.

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