

Immigrant representations in two newspaper
articles from the Daily Telegraph

Bachelor's thesis
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KIELTEN LAITOS

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Immigrant representations in the Daily Telegraph

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Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää millaisia representaatioita ja identiteettikategorioita maahanmuuttajille rakennettiin brittiläisen The Daily Telegraph – sanomalehden Internet-sivuilla. Aihe oli sovelias tutkimuksen alaiseksi, koska maahanmuuttajan representaatiosta sanomalehdistössä oli vähän tutkimusta. Ilmiötä oli jonkin verran tutkittu suomenkielisissä sanomalehdissä.

Tutkimus oli vertaileva ja metodityökaluna käytettiin kriittistä diskurssianalyysia. Tutkimusaineisto koostui kahdesta artikkelista jotka oli julkaistu joulukuussa 2008. Tutkimuksessa vertailtiin Seija Lambergin pro gradussa listattuja kuutta identiteettikategoriaa tässä tutkimuksessa käytetystä aineistosta esiinnoitettuihin kategorioihin. Maahanmuuttajarepresentaatioiden vuoksi analyysin alaisena olivat myös artikkeleissa käytetyt substantiivit ja verbivalinnat.

Tulokset osoittivat että data sisälsi pääasiallisesti representaatioita maahanmuuttajista jotka olivat viranomaisten pelinappuloita tai työvoimaa Iso-Britannian hallitukselle. Lisäksi artikkeleissa oletettuina identiteetteinä olivat kotoutuja ja kulttuurien yhdistäjä, mutta niitä ei mainittu teksteissä suoraan.

Uusina identiteetteinä esiin nousivat maahanmuuttajat jotka olivat joko ansainneet paikkansa brittiläisessä yhteiskunnassa taitojensa vuoksi tai olivat vaarassa menettää mahdollisuutensa huonon käytöksen takia. Maahanmuuttajat pystyivät siis tällaisissa tapauksissa vaikuttamaan jossain määrin tulevaisuuteensa ,vaikka he olivatkin viranomaisten päätösten alaisia eikä heille suotu artikkeleissa suoraa puheenvuoroa. Artikkeleissa oli siis läsnä viranomaisten vallan diskurssi koska artikkelit oli kirjoitettu heidän näkökulmastaan. Voittamisen ja häviämisen diskurssi sekä paikkansa ansaitsemisen diskurssi olivat myös vahvasti mukana uusissa esiin tulleissa identiteettiluokituksissa.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat vallankäytön diskurssin olevan läsnä maahanmuuttajarepresentaatioissa. Tulokset mahdollistavat representaatioiden kriittisen tarkastelun joka voi puolestaan johtaa maahanmuuttajien marginalisoinnin tiedostamiseen ja toimintaan se estämiseksi sekä työskentelyyn uudenlaisten identiteettien luomiseksi.

Asiasanat: Critical discourse analysis, immigrant representations, discourse

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1 INTRODUCTION

Immigration in Britain has become an important economic and social issue, as the number of immigrants living there has grown over the years. In 2007 immigration contributed ten to 15 percent to the growing British economy and two years prior to that net immigration to the UK was 400,000 (“The number of immigrants”: 2009.) Despite the significance of immigration to Britain (both in the positive and negative sense) there do not seem to be many studies conducted on the representations of immigrants in British newspapers. Immigrant representations should not be forgotten, because public discourse has an effect on the consciousness of citizens when they attempt to construct the world around them. In this research paper I intend to study how immigrants are represented in a British newspaper and what kinds of identities are constructed for them. I believe this topic is important because one should be aware of the representations that the media is creating and reinforcing in order to openly discuss and alter the position of immigrants within society.

Lamberg (1999) has studied representations of immigrants in the Finnish media and found that the point of view of the immigrants themselves has become more important in the 1990s. I have not found British studies that concern the representation of immigrants and the viewpoint from which they are presented. Therefore, the two previous studies that form the theoretical background of my paper are conducted of immigrant representations in Finnish newspapers. This poses problems in terms of applicability of these findings to British newspapers, but similarities and differences can still be drawn.

I will be using critical discourse analysis as my method of analysis for this study because it will help me to dissect the texts critically and relates to the concepts that are of interest in this study. Those concepts include representation and different identities, as well as, the possible discourse of power/victimization, active participation and racism. I will also pay attention to the word choices that are used to describe the immigrants in the articles and the verb choices used to describe their actions. First I will define some concepts that form the theoretical background of my study and are of interest to me within my chosen data sample. I will be conducting a comparative, qualitative study, where I will analyze two articles from the British newspaper The Daily Telegraph. I will look for similarities and

differences between my findings and identity categories listed in Lamberg's Master's thesis from 1999. After making these comparisons, I will present any additional identities that I have found in my data sample. I gathered my research data by choosing a random period of time from the year 2008. I included the articles that discuss immigrants and their position in Britain in my study within this particular period of time.

My research paper first establishes the theoretical framework for this particular study and attempt to find parallels or similar methods of analysis from previous studies. Next the data and methods of analysis are introduced. Results are then analyzed in regards to surfacing immigrant identities. These are compared with identity categories listed in a Master's thesis made in 1999 and possible new identity categories arising from my data sample are discussed (alongside the older identities.) The results are further reflected upon in the discussion section in terms of possible suggestions for improvements and relevance of the research findings.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I will now discuss the theoretical framework of this study and explain the terms that I find relevant in conducting this study. These terms include discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis and representation.

2.1. Critical discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is the study of the use of language and the context in which the language is used. Discourse analysis studies language and other semiotic resources as a part of social conventions. This field is interested in the creation of meaning and how people constantly reinforce and change the world around them through their language. Discourse analyzers are interested in how the use of language is connected with practices and processes. Consequently, the function and context of language are the primary terms of interest (Pietikäinen 2008.)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is seen as a method that can expose the concealed values within texts. CDA questions the usage of language and the context of its' use and what subtext it produces to the text (Fairclough 1989, 1995, as quoted by Paltridge 2000:153.) Critical discourse analysis acquires the power to establish and change society.

It is the aim of CDA to make one aware of the use of power within texts (Blommaert 2005:25.) If this aim is achieved, critical discourse analysis can give a voice and empower those, who have been previously silenced and encourage people to rectify social inequities (Toolan 1997,as quoted by Blommaert 2005:25-26.)

2.2 Representation

Representation is a central concept within my study because I am interested in the representations that are constructed for immigrants through news articles. Hall refers (1997: 17) to representation as ... *the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language*. Representation ultimately consists of the mental images one creates in one's mind to refer to abstract and concrete objects around one. People share similar mental images within same cultures, which enable them to communicate with each other. This communication is realized through language, which is a crucial part of the nature of representation. Representation cannot exist without the medium of language, which communicates the meaning behind objects and mental images (Hall 1997:17-19.) Public and private discourses are based on different sets of representations that ultimately give meaning to the world. Representations reflect the past and the current values that influence societies. Therefore it is worthwhile to become aware of the media's representations of different groups, if one wants insight into the existing values of society.

3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON IMMIGRANT REPRESENTATION

The most important research done in the area of immigrant representation that best relates to my research questions is the Master's thesis of Lamberg (1999). It provides the basis for my research by outlining categories that are constructed for immigrants in the Finnish newspaper *Keskisuomalainen* during the 1990s. She examined how immigrants and racism were represented in the articles of *Keskisuomalainen* in the years 1992, 1995 and 1998. Lamberg's sample consisted of 190 news and feature articles that addressed the situation of immigrants in Finland, excluding news about sports and tourists. (Lamberg 1999:41-42.) Lamberg analyzed any emerging immigrant representations and compared the different years with each other, in order to uncover any changes in the immigrant discourse (1999:47.) Lamberg categorized these representations to six classes: *pawn of the officials* (*viranomaisten pelinappula*), *work force* (*työvoima*), *a refugee* (*pakolainen*), *a*

criminal (rikoksentekijä), someone who has settled in the country (kotoutuja) and someone who has mixed or united cultures together (kulttuurien yhdistäjä), (Lamberg 1999:48.) Based on Lamberg's sample the point of view of the officials had become less prominent but this was not consistently true throughout the entire sample (Lamberg 1999: 67.) I compared my findings with those of Lamberg to see if I could find similar and different representations from just two articles. Lamberg's study is, of course, considerably more extensive than my study and thus can provide a wider view of the identities assigned to immigrants in newspapers. However, I am specifically interested in finding out if the Lamberg's categories for immigrants are still present today in newspaper discourse by examining a considerably smaller sample. Moreover the basis for my study was conducted nine years ago and contexts and issues and identities that concerned immigrants then, have most probably changed during the years. Most importantly, Lamberg's study was conducted in the Finnish media, within the Finnish context and attitudes. Therefore it is not directly applicable to the British representation of immigrants. Nevertheless Lamberg's (1999) study does provide an excellent point of comparison for my study as I look for possible similar and new identity categories from British newspaper articles.

Another study that relates to this paper is the thesis on ethnic representation in Finnish newspaper discourse (Pietikäinen 2000). Pietikäinen (2000:3) studied ethnic representations in *Helsingin Sanomat* in 1985-1993. It is not directly relevant since it was conducted in Finland and through Finnish newspapers but offers one tool for analysis. I have used some of the same principles of analysis as Pietikäinen in her study. These similar principles were used in Jauhiainen's study (2000) about the representations of disabled people in the British media. I analyzed the nouns used to name immigrants and verbs used to describe the actions of participants. I found both studies to be very useful in trying to find suitable factors to analyze. Although Pietikäinen examined an ethnic minority (the Sami) instead of a group of immigrants the same result can be drawn from both groups. Pietikäinen (2000:3) concluded that ethnic minorities were marginalized even within articles that concerned the members of minorities and immigrants themselves. Marginalization also happened in the two articles that formed my data sample.

4 DATA AND METHODS

My data sample consists of two articles taken from the web pages of the British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*. I wanted to examine a newspaper that was politically fairly neutral and had wide readership. *The Daily Telegraph* is described as having a circulation of 926,000 in 2004 and of being “...*the newspaper of the establishment*”, as well as being, “...*in tune with middle Britain*” (BBC News: 2004.) Initially I was going to choose 6 to 10 articles to analyze but I soon realized that due to the scope of my study and time limitations, such a number was not a realistic goal. As an alternative I randomly chose a month (December 2008) and searched through the web pages for articles relating to the position of immigrants’ in Britain. I chose two articles from December 2008 as my data sample. The first one was published at the start of the month and the other at the end of December. Both articles address the issue from the point of view of the officials. It would have been more appropriate to have an article written from the point of view of an immigrant but I was not able to find a suitable article from within that period of time.

In the first article Kirkup (2008:Appendix 1) writes about the Queen’s speech where she addresses the situation of immigrants’ in Britain. The Queen plans to create a bill that would alter the process of applying for citizenship. Essentially the bill would create ...*a formal path to citizenship*, which will mean that immigrants must earn their citizenship. As a consequence, bad behavior, such as criminal activity may hinder the application process and good behavior may make the process quicker (Kirkup 2008:Appendix 1 .)

The second article by Khan (2008:Appendix 2) deals with the points-based immigration program. Immigrants need different sets of points based on their skill level in order to enter the UK and to work there for a limited number of times. The system is in place to prevent population growth but according to Khan (2008:Appendix 2), it is not benefiting the country significantly, in terms of the number of people still coming in. Apparently there is still a change in the number of settlement and temporary stay.

This research paper is a comparative study. As a result of that I read through the articles and aimed to find any description that would classify immigrants into the categories that Lamberg’s study (1999:2) had introduced. Secondly I searched for any new identities that might occur within the articles. I listed all the nouns used to describe the immigrants and I

also listed the verbs that the writers had used to describe the actions of the immigrants'. Lastly I considered the implications and assumptions about immigrants that became apparent through the word and verb choices in the articles and discussed the possible new identity categories that could be seen in my data sample. The reason I chose to analyze nouns was because I felt they could give the most information about the representation categories within the texts and the hidden meanings behind the words. As a consequence analyzing verb choices that related to these nouns seemed to be the most logical solution. I chose not to analyze adverbials and adjectives because there were not that many examples of either of these in the texts. In addition I felt that the adverbials and adjectives that were present in the texts did not really contribute a great deal of new or relevant information to my process of analysis.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Naming the immigrants

The first article refers to its subjects as *immigrants, foreigners, they* and *migrants*. Towards the end of the article the writer uses more specified expressions when referring to immigrants. These terms include *would- be British citizens, someone who applies for naturalization, applicant, those who are judged to have behaved badly, those who meet the Home Office's criteria for integration* and *people serving overseas with the Armed forces*.

The second article refers to immigrants mainly according to their skill levels in the British job markets with terms like *non EU-migrant workers, highly skilled non-EU workers, skilled workers, those who are low skilled*. Other nouns used to describe immigrants beyond skill level include *migrants, people, individuals* and *temporary migrants*.

5.2 Verb choices

The first article (Kirkup 2008:Appendix 1) states right at the start that "Immigrant's must earn right to stay" in Britain to qualify for citizenship. Other important verb choices in the article include *will be set back, commit crimes, fail to learn (English), set out (plans), slowed down, don't make an effort to integrate* and *are judged to have behaved badly*.

The second article employs verbs such as *won't work*, *will (only) reduce*, *claims*, *will control*, *stop*, *need (points) to enter*, *can only stay*, *to prove (they have skills not already available in Britain)* and *disputed (the figures)*.

5.3 Representations of immigrants

The first article contains several of the categories Lamberg (1999:48) described in her study. The article seems to view the immigrants as *pawn of the officials*. The government is trying to control the number of immigrants by introducing a system that could delay or advance citizenship based on an applicant's behavior and willingness to learn English.

The article does imply that immigrants can be potential *criminals* who should be denied access to the country if their behavior is considered to be unacceptable. This assumption is not expanded upon in the article but it does appear to be a possible identity.

There are several identities that indirectly become part of the representations of those immigrants who eventually become citizens in the article. The underlying assumption in the article is that those granted citizenship become valuable *work force*. This is an assumption that is not clearly stated in the article. The other identity categories that are not expressed directly in the first article are *settlers* and *people who unite or mix cultures together*.

The second article treats immigrants as *work force* and *pawn of the officials*. The other identity categories listed by Lamberg (1999:48) are not clearly stated in the second article at all. They include *settlers*, *refugees*, *people who mix cultures* and *criminals*.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Nouns referring to immigrants

In the first article (Kirkup 2008:Appendix 1) *foreigner* as a word states that someone belongs to or owes allegiance to a foreign country. *Migrant* refers to someone that

migrates, meaning that his or her stay is not perhaps permanent in the country. The nouns used thus express a state of change when they are used to describe the immigrants. These nouns refer to an unidentified, collective group, which are in line with the findings and terminology of Jauhiainen (2000:57-58) regarding the naming of disabled people in British newspapers. These nouns (*foreigner, immigrants, migrants* and *they*) also express a sense of “Otherness” through their dictionary entries, which is different to the natural born citizens. *Applicant* and *would- be British citizen* refer to the process of applying for citizenship that is yet to be completed. These nouns are more inclusive towards immigrants than previous examples and suggest that there is a possibility to be a part of a nation. The article also differentiates between people who meet the criteria for naturalization and those who do not meet these criteria i.e. behave badly. Such a division reinforces the idea that the process of naturalization is actually part of a larger discourse of earning one’s place in society. Pietikäinen (2000:198) states that describing someone in more detail shows who are treated as significant to the news piece. Obviously people who aim to meet the Home Office’s demands and apply for naturalization to become a part of the British public are treated as more significant in this article.

The second article (Khan 2008:Appendix 2) categorized immigrants based on their skill-level, for example *skilled workers, those who are low skilled*. In this article the word choices do not produce interesting observations about the language itself because they are presumably used to simply describe the skill level of immigrants. They do touch on the usefulness of the immigrants for the government, which means that people are graded according to their skills. *Highly skilled workers* have to earn fewer points to be allowed to stay in the country for a longer period of time. Such categories are formed to stop the population growth and ultimately to benefit the government. The groups remain unspecified and the nouns are employed to establish the nature of the current situation. *Non-EU workers* are specified because the new points based system only applies to immigrant that come from outside the EU.

6.2 Verb choices

The first article (Kirkup: Appendix 1) establishes its’ topic area very effectively in the headline. Immigrants must “*earn the right*” for citizenship before they can enjoy it. Verbs refer to the idea of earning one’s place in the country. One must make an effort to become

a part of the nation so that one can win one's citizenship. The article uses the verb *earn* to indicate that the process is about making an effort to achieve a goal. This goal can be *set back*, in other words reversed, if the immigrants do not measure up to the standard that is required from potential British citizens. The discourse of failure is also present in the article through the statements of the officials. It is possible that some immigrants *commit crimes* or *fail to learn English*. Consequently opposite discourses of winning and losing are established through the verb choices in this article. Ultimately the naturalization process is similar to a competition that needs to be completed in order to be worthy of Britishness. In other words, immigrants are expected to make *an effort to integrate* or their naturalization will be *slowed down*. Presumably these quotations were taken directly from the Queen's speech and therefore it is interesting to observe the power play that is expressed through the verb choices. Immigrants are simultaneously forced to be a pawn for the officials by responding to the requirements of a citizen and are also expected to assume an active role in their naturalization process.

The second article also addresses the issue of control through the verb choices used in the text. The government is trying *to curb*, that is to control or limit, the number of non-EU immigrants coming to Great Britain, in order to prevent population growth. Control is also used, as a verb choice because controlling the amount of immigrants (and the fact that it is not successful) is the core message of the article. Immigrants have to *prove they have skills not already available in Britain* which means they have to prove they are worthy of admission. This is very clearly expressed in (Khan 2008:Appendix 2) *...highly skilled non-EU workers need 75 points to enter Britain...* The immigration minister can only *claim* that the points based system is helpful or *dispute*, that is disagree strongly with the arguments against the points based system. Although control is the main concern of the government, it seems unlikely that it will be achieved through such measures.

6.3 Representations of immigrants

As Lamberg explains (1999:48) immigrants as *pawn of the officials* are not able to much influence their standing in society because they have to obey the law. On the other hand, applicants can be seen as active participants in the process of gaining citizenship because they presumably can influence their own behavior and motivation to learn the

language. Simultaneously they have become both passive and active participants, who have to consider both of these roles as they attempt to gain a citizenship.

The identity category of a criminal is not discussed in detail in the article; rather it is referred to twice through the verb structure *commit crimes*. The word criminal is never used in the article, presumably to avoid controversy. It is however implied that criminal behavior is possible in certain situations and that such a behavior is a problem for an immigrant applying for citizenship. I find it interesting that committing crimes is mentioned twice in the articles. This is probably due to the fact that the Queen wanted to emphasize the effects of possible criminal behavior in her speech.

It can also be assumed that immigrants who have citizenship (Lamberg 1999:53,58) become settlers or able to unite the cultures together in their daily lives. These identities remain in the background and are not clearly stated in the article because this particular article is not meant to report on a personal level. . Refugee as an identity is also not included because the article does not address the issue of refugees in its' topic.

The second article presented immigrants mainly as *work force* for the British government. Immigrants were someone who stayed in the country for a limited amount of time. These representations are due to the topic of the article, which was to specify the effects of the Government's plans. The article does not view the immigrants as permanent settlers and if it is presumed that cultures are mixed within one's home, it is not stated in the article. Immigrants remain simultaneously insiders and outsiders in this article as well, who are expected to earn their citizenship. In both the first and second article immigrants are viewed as active participants in their own lives who have the power to change their situation and status. Despite this immigrants are not given a voice in either one of the articles through direct quotations or opinions.

An interesting identity that emerged from the first article was an immigrant who had earned or deserved his/her right to stay in the country. Such an immigrant is worthy of being called a citizen because he or she has made an effort to immerse oneself in the culture, customs and language of the country. The discourse of earning a place in society is very strongly an issue of interest in the second article because immigrants are basically categorized according to their skill levels. Immigrants can earn(Khan 2008:Appendix 2) a

(temporary) place in society through a points-based system and by providing skills that are not available in the UK. Another discourse related to this was that of winning and losing the opportunity to gain a citizenship. Behavior that was deemed bad had negative effects on the citizenship process and good behavior (the effort to integrate) could speed up the process for applicants.

Ultimately all these emerging identities were connected to the discourse of power in some way. Immigrants had some form of power if they chose to integrate but were under an official power through the immigration bill. If immigrants become settlers or people who unite and mix cultures they are part of the society and gain more personal power. Despite this, power was not given in the articles through direct quotations or interviews, because the point of view was given to the officials. Officials attempted to gain control of the immigrant situation in Britain through legal action and either gain more or extend their existing power.

7 CONCLUSION

I was surprised that the categories listed in Lamberg's (1999:2) study were still very much present even in a smaller sample. I expected to find that the categories would have changed into more varied identities. This is however probably due to the fact that the topic area of the articles was very interconnected. Both articles talked about the number of immigrants coming to Britain and addressed what should be done and if those measures would have any impact on the matter itself. The identity categories are partly so strongly present because the articles were published in the same month and the position of immigrants had presumably stayed in the public eye.

The identity of a criminal was mentioned briefly in the first article but was not touched upon in the second article. The categories of settlers and people who unite or mix cultures were assumed identities that would become part of the immigrant's lives at a later stage if they gained access to the country. In both articles the main identity categories were *pawn of the officials* and *work force* and in these identities immigrants became a commodity to the government.

New identities that arose from my data sample were immigrants who had earned their stay in Britain through skills and efforts to integrate, and very a similar identity of someone who may lose or gain citizenship because of good or bad behavior. Immigrants remained under the control of the government but were participants through their own actions. This study did produce new categories but not as many as I had expected to find. It confirmed that some of the identities existed strongly in my small sample. It did not coincide with Lamberg's (1999: 67) finding that the point of view of the officials' had weakened over the years. In this study I had the opposite results, mostly because of the topic area of the data sample.

Immigrant representations should remain an important part of public discourse if society seeks to improve its approach to the growing number of immigrants coming to Europe. Media may portray concepts that are foreign and opposite to us as "the other", which leads to the marginalization of groups. Natives and immigrants can work against marginalizing, if they are more aware of it. Through awareness the society is able to discuss the current representations and make an effort to change their harmful or outdated views or offer more complex ways of thinking about identities.

There are several factors I could have done differently while conducting my research. First of all I could have chosen a larger data sample. I chose to concentrate on two articles from the time period of December 2008. I could have included articles from the last couple of years, similar to Lamberg's approach in her research. My suggestions for further research would be to use articles from a number of years. This will enable the researcher to see if there have been any significant changes in the reporting about immigrants on a longer time frame. It will be easier to trace any patterns of reporting and what kinds of topics are being presented as part of the discourse of immigrants. A larger data would also make it possible to include content analysis as a part of the research methods to complement critical discourse analysis.

I could have chosen another method of analysis besides critical discourse analysis. Personally I feel it coincided with my area of interest the best because it addresses the issue of different identities in a critical manner. It seemed like to the most natural way to progress with my research. I could have used either linguistic or social discourse analysis

as a framework for my study. I feel that these approaches would not have encompassed all the different levels in my study. As Pietikäinen (2000:93) points out, linguistic analysis concentrates on one area of language and interprets linguistic features. Social discourse analysis on the other hand is concerned with the social and institutional level. Critical discourse analysis seems to combine these two approaches into a suitable framework for the purposes of this study.

Objectivity and authenticity are crucial when one attempts to uncover hidden values from the articles. Sometimes it seemed that I was trying to find some hidden meaning from a text, when in fact there was not anything there. It is very important to provide precise definitions that concern the basic principles of the study, in order for the study to indicate what kind of topics it is addressing.

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9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Queen's Speech: Immigrants must 'earn right to stay' in Britain

Queen's Speech: Immigrants must 'earn right to stay' in Britain
Immigrants will have to "earn their right to stay" in the UK under planned new laws.

By James Kirkup, Political Correspondent

Published: 2:34PM GMT 03 Dec 2008

The Queen's Speech focussed on measures to help Britain through the economic downturn

Photo: PA

Foreigners' attempts to take British citizenship will be set back if they commit crimes or fail to learn English. The measures are part of what ministers say will be a "firm but fair" immigration system.

The Queen's Speech set out plans for a Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Bill that will alter existing rules on granting British nationality.

The centrepiece of the bill will be measures to establish a formal "path to citizenship."

Progress will be slowed down if migrants don't make an effort to integrate or commit even minor crimes, the Home Office said.

New rules could also mean some would-be British citizens see their applications fast-tracked.

At the moment, there is a standard five-year qualifying period for someone who applies for naturalisation.

Under the new rules, qualifying periods for nationality will vary according to an applicants' behaviour.

That will mean those who are judged to have behaved badly will have to wait longer. But those who meet the Home Office's criteria for integration could be fast-tracked to British nationality.

Other changes will allow people serving overseas with the Armed Forces to register their children as British.

The UK Border Agency will also be given more powers, formally taking on the responsibilities of customs officers and the immigration service.

Appendix 2: New immigration system 'won't work', experts warn

New immigration system 'won't work', experts warn

Efforts by the government to curb Britain's population reaching 70 million through a new points based immigration system won't work, experts say.

By Urmee Khan

Published: 2:48AM GMT 27 Dec 2008

The new policy will only reduce population growth by 2.5 per cent, according to a report by the House of Commons library, an independent research facility for MPs.

It says the new system will only reduce the estimated population growth of ten million by as little as 250,000 over the next two decades. This will leaving the population figure still around 70,750,000 by 2031.

Phil Woolas, the immigration minister, claims the points-based system will control the numbers of non-EU migrant workers and stop the UK population, which is currently 61million, to reach the 70 million mark.

"The points based system is the biggest shake-up in immigration for 50 years," he said last month.

Under the points based system, introduced in November, highly skilled non EU workers need 75 points to enter the UK (tier 1). Skilled workers in a 'shortage area', like a nurse, need 50 points and can only stay for duration of contract and bring partner and children (tier 2).

Those who are low skilled, do not need any points and can only stay one year (tier 3).

The House of Commons library however, has produced a detailed analysis on what the impact of the points-based system.

It found an important part of the system, tier 2, which forces migrants to prove they have skills not already available within Britain and the EU, would lead to only 10,500 fewer people entering the UK each year.

The House of Commons library said it put the number migrating to the UK under the work permit scheme at 88,000 a year.

The research paper states: "A 12 per cent reduction would be the equivalent of 10,560 individuals, leaving a net total of approximately 77,500 people entering under tier 2."

It continues: 'On this basis, the population by 2031 may be approximately 250,000 less than current ONS estimates, meaning that the overall population of 70million would still be reached by 2031.'

Shadow Home Secretary Dominic Grieve said: "This proves what we have been saying, that a points system without a limit is pointless. Labour should answer our call to introduce an annual limit on non-EU immigration."

But Mr Woolas disputed the figures.

He told the Daily Mail: "These projections are not accurate."

"The Government can use the power and flexibility of the points system to manage numbers coming here, taking into account the needs of the labour market and the country as a whole."

"The Government is also breaking the link between temporary stay in the UK and settlement, whereas these figures include all people in the country, including temporary migrants."