

Funding the Future

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Boris Johnson was chastised yesterday for the misuse of data. He claimed, again, that £350 million a week could be saved by the UK as a result of leaving the EU. The head of the UK Statistics Authority has described this as a 'clear misuse of official statistics'. I agree, but what he should actually have said is that Johnson was bullshitting.

In a newly published academic article entitled [Post-truth Politics, Bullshit and Bad Ideas: 'Deficit Fetishism' in the UK](#) Jonathan Hopkin and Ben Rosamond expand on the academic concept of bullshit that has existed since 2004, saying:

A lie is a form of utterance that pays heed to the truth. To speak a lie is to knowingly pronounce a falsehood. To bullshit, on the other hand, is to practise a type of speech act that is not triangulated in relation to the truth and which proceeds without effective concern for the veracity of the claim in question.

They could have written this with Johnson in mind. He doesn't lie. Like almost all those involved in the Brexit campaign, he bullshits. And please do not take exception to the language: this is now the academically accepted description for what is going on.