

"A 304-YEAR EXPERIMENT
WHICH WORKED SOME BUT NOT ALL OF THE TIME":
Britain and British identities in three English, Scottish and Welsh
newspapers in 2010 and 2011

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract Britannia ja sen eri maat ovat unionin pitkän historian kuluessa kohdanneet lukuisia muutoksia ja haasteita. Viimeaikaisimmat näistä haasteista ovat liittyneet esimerkiksi siihen miten unionia ja sen maita hallitaan: vuonna 1997 unionin valtaa hajautettiin sisäisille paikallishallinnoille, jonka jälkeen muun muassa Wales on saavuttanut laajemmat oikeudet omien lakien säätämiseen ja Skotlanti on syksyllä 2014 äänestämässä mahdollisesta itsenäisyydestä. Tällaiset kehitykset herättävät kysymyksiä siitä, miten unioni nykyään toimii, kuinka vahvasti sen eri maat ovat sidoksissa toisiinsa, ja miltä sen tulevaisuus näyttää. Tämän tutkielman tarkoitus on tarkastella miten Britanniaa ja brittiläisiä identiteettejä rakennettiin englantilaisissa, skotlantilaisissa ja walesilaisissa sanomalehdissä vuosina 2010 ja 2011, jolloin merkit tällaisista poliittisista kehityksistä nousivat otsikoihin. Sanomalehdet tarjoavat mielenkiintoisen tutkimuskohteen, sillä niiden kautta lukijalle tarjotaan kuvaa siitä millaisia Britannia ja sen eri identiteetit ovat nykyään ja tulevaisuudessa. Tutkielman aineisto koostuu lehtiartikkeleista (148 kpl) jotka on kerätty kolmesta brittiläisestä sanomalehdestä. Metodina toimii kriittinen diskurssianalyysi, jonka pohjalta tarkasteltiin sitä, miten lehdet konstruoivat eri identiteettejä, miten kyseiset identiteetit sekoittuivat ja menevät päällekkäin, ja miten Britannian ja sen eri maiden tulevaisuutta rakennetaan ja kuvataan. Tutkimuksen tuloksista selviää, että sanomalehtien identiteettirakennus oli harvoin yksinkertaista tai ilmeistä. Konstruoitujen identiteettien rajat eivät olleet selkeitä, vaan esille nousseet identiteetit olivat usein päällekkäisiä ja toisiinsa kietoutuneita. Rakennetuista identiteeteistä Wales näytti läpikäyvän muutokautta yhtenäisemmän ja itsevarmemman Walesin suuntaan, joskin myös tämä uusi Wales oli tyytyväinen osaansa yhtenä unionin maana. Vastaavasti skotlantilainen identiteetti ilmeni irtaantuvan muusta unionista ja konstruotui suurelta osin Skotlannin ja muun unionin erojen varaan. Englantilainen identiteetti puolestaan nousi esiin lähinnä vain tiettyjen, nimenomaisten olosuhteiden vaikutuksesta, joskin myös Englanti tuntui ajautuneen tilanteeseen jossa sen oli entistä selvemmin tunnustettava oma erillaisuutensa. Siinä missä yhtenäinen brittiläinen identiteetti oli artikkeleissa läsnä, varsinkin sen rakennus esiintyi varsin tavanomaisena ja luonnollisena prosessina. Lehtiartikkelit myös sallivat lukijansa kuuluvan useampaan kuin vain yhteen identiteettiin samanaikaisesti, mahdollistaen tilanteen jossa lukijan ei tarvitse valita vain yhtä.	
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1 INTRODUCTION

When a newspaper such as the *Guardian* writes about the United Kingdom, calling it “a 304-year experiment which worked some but not all of the time”, there is perhaps a sense of foreboding that makes one question what exactly is happening in the long-standing Union. The United Kingdom has during its centuries-long history endured everything from the rise and fall of the British Empire to two World Wars, has gone from including Ireland to including Northern Ireland, and has given three of its countries - Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - their own devolved executives while it is now facing an upcoming vote on Scottish independence. In the chain of its not by any means uneventful history, Britain seems to be facing yet again some turmoil.

In order to examine more closely what is currently happening in Britain and how this turmoil is influencing the community, the present study aims to illustrate how it is surfacing in an every-day setting. Politically, there have been significant changes in the structure of the Union in recent years: the Conservatives are now the largest party at Westminster after 13 year of Labour leadership, Wales voted in favour of extending its devolved Assembly’s powers in 2011, and the Scottish National Party that openly advocates Scottish independence formed the first majority government in the Scottish Parliament’s 16-year history, leading to the decision to hold an independence referendum. And these are only the latest examples.

Thus, it would appear that the reasons for and the benefits of the Union are in constant state of re-evaluation in all parts of Britain. The Union does not, of course, exist as a self-evident truth but is instead constantly constructed and maintained in different ways in the middle of various political and periodical changes. And it is this process of constructing and maintaining Britain that I am interested in. What makes the countries of the Union stay together while simultaneously conserving their own, nationalistic identities? And moreover, is the status quo going to preserve much longer or are there signs of major changes in the future?

The present study regards Britain as an imagined community, after the definition of Benedict Anderson (2006: 6-7), and as such one of the critical conditions for the continuity of Britain is for the members of the community to keep imagining themselves as part of a group that belongs together. The imagining functions as the glue that keeps the group together. Because of this, the present study is not only

interested in the political climate of Britain, but also in how the construction and maintenance of Britain is conveyed to the people. How is the construction of Britain and British identities present in the every-day lives of British people?

To answer this question, the present study turns to newspapers. I believe that media today plays an important role in shaping the ways in which people view the world around them. Furthermore, news are always produced by someone for a specific audience, and so they can be viewed as cultural products influenced by many different factors (Fairclough 1997: 136). By presenting what is happening in the world in a certain way, news can construct, maintain, reinforce and weaken ideas, power relationships and cultural identities (Fairclough 1997: 10-11). And since newspapers in Britain are, despite the impact television and the Internet have had on the way in which people consume news, still widely read and viewed as serious sources of news, they make an interesting and meaningful object of research. Examining how they construct Britain and different British identities also reveals what kind of constructions and representations people who read them encounter on a daily basis.

In this study, however, I plan to focus only on Great Britain. Great Britain is the largest island of the United Kingdom and refers to England, Scotland and Wales. While Northern Ireland is, of course, an important part of the United Kingdom, its history and politics are also very much entangled with issues of Irish nationalism and religious aspects, and examining Northern Irish identity is a complicated web of Britain and Ireland, unionism and nationalism, Protestantism and Catholicism, peace and troubles. Thus, because of its unique history, I do not feel Northern Ireland can really be studied in parallel with England, Scotland and Wales when it comes to the question of constructing Britain and British identities today, at least not in a limited study such as this one.

British culture, British identities and the Union have all been quite extensively studied in the past (see e.g. Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a, Haesly 2005 and Kumar 2003). I cannot really claim to tread any new paths in this sense. I do, nevertheless, believe that something new can be brought into this field. Britain, its identities and the fabric of the Union is a vast topic, which means reaching the point where there is nothing left to study still seems rather far away. In addition, I believe that examining Britain and British identities from the point of view of news media can bring out interesting

aspects and factors on what Britain today is like, and due to the turmoil currently happening in Britain, there is a wide variety of new data to examine.

And finally, while there has been plenty of research on British newspapers in the past, studies that take into account newspapers from all three countries - England, Scotland and Wales - and specifically their constructions of British identities are still not exactly bountiful. For instance Bicket (2006), Higgins (2004) and Kiely et al. (2006) have concentrated on the construction of Scotland's identity, Kumar (2001 and 2003) and Curtice and Heath (2009) have examined English national identity, and Rosie and Petersoo (2009) along with Bond (2009) have researched both Scottish and English identities. Studies on the construction of Welsh identity particularly in newspapers are few, and while for example Haesly (2005) has published work on identifying types of Scottish and Welsh identities, studies that would take into account all three countries are not easy to find. This is a gap that the present study strives to fill.

I will begin the present study with a look at nations and nationalism in Chapter 2 by introducing United Kingdom and how it has developed during its long history, followed by discussing the question of what is a nation and how nations are maintained with a focus on Anderson's concept of an imagined community and Michael Billig's view on banal nationalism. Chapter 3 concentrates on discourse and its different properties, on how discourse represents and constructs the world around us, and the different ways in which discourse influences and is influenced by politics and media. Next, the present study turns to the concept of identity. Chapter 4 will consist of a look at what is identity, how it is constructed and what are hybrid identities, before ending with a look at British identities and some previous studies on them. To turn the attention to the context of the present study, in Chapter 5 I will elaborate on the research questions in more detail, as well as present the data and the analysis method used. Chapter 6 reports on the findings, before concluding the present study in Chapter 7 with a final look at the results and a discussion on potential further research.

2 NATIONS AND NATIONALISMS

Nations and nationalism are concepts which are used frequently and often without much thought on what they actually mean. A nation can be defined very differently depending on who is asked, and nationalism is easily seen in the outside world but difficult to detect when it exists closer to home. In this chapter, I will first focus on England, Scotland and Wales by taking a brief look at the history which brought these countries together and how the Union between them was formed. Furthermore, I will look at the situation today and at how the Union operates now, over 300 years after it was formed. Then the focus will be turned towards the concept a nation, the different ways in which it can be defined and how the present study utilises Benedict Anderson's view of nations as "imagined communities" as a way of examining the idea of nations. It is considered to be a particularly incisive foundation for the study conducted, since the idea of an imagined community is one that can certainly be applied in the case of the United Kingdom. And finally, Michael Billig's concept of "banal nationalism" is presented in order to shed more light on how nations are sustained once they have come to existence.

2.1 The United Kingdom – England, Scotland and Wales

The United Kingdom was actually formed through several unions, instead of merely one. The Acts of Union in 1536 and 1543 assimilated Wales into England under Henry VIII (Black 1996: 100). This was followed in 1707 by the Act of Union between England and Scotland (Black 1996: 147). And finally, in the beginning of the 19th century the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was created, until in 1921 the Irish Free State became independent with Dominion status, while Northern Ireland remained a part of the Union (Kearney 2006: 207, 281). The United Kingdom today thus consists of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but as mentioned, the present study focuses on England, Scotland and Wales. It is clear already from this how different the situations of Scotland and Wales were historically. Wales was assimilated into England, and it was done already more than a hundred years before Scotland formed its Union with England, facts which had significant

effects for the development of devolution at the end of the 20th century and Wales' relationship with the Union.

The Union between Scotland and England was formed, for a large part, because of England's concerns about the consequences an autonomous Scotland would have for England, which had basically dominated the British Isles from the end of the 17th century (Black 1996: 147). The Union was faced with vehement opposition in Scotland, but due to Scotland's financial difficulties the Act still passed. Black (1996: 147) has also argued that corruption played a significant role in achieving that passage. Furthermore, Kearney (2006: 209) notes that at the time there was a significant division in Scotland between Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism. It was the English government that offered support for the Presbyterians, which in turn led to their commitment for the Act of Union of 1707 (*ibid.*). Thus, there were many reasons for why Scotland formed the Union with England, ranging from financial and political aspects to even religious.

The Union with England brought Scotland a number of benefits, while Scotland still retained its own national Church, as well as its own distinctive legal and educational systems, which meant also a sense of its own separate national identity was easier to preserve (Black 1996: 147-148). However, there were also aspects of that cultural identity that suffered. The Gaelic and Scots languages declined, as particularly the elite saw the English norms and customs as desirable (Black 1996: 148). So when it comes to the language, the Scottish population actually moved closer to the English than the Welsh. After the French Revolution towards the end of the 18th century, the elites in both England and Scotland stood together against the radicalism awakening in their own territory, though Black (1996: 169) notes that such a radical sentiment that could have led to a revolution in Scotland was rather limited: Scotland as a society was very agrarian at the time, which meant that it was also still run by the aristocratic class.

The 19th century was very much a time of nationalism in Europe, but a similar trend did not emerge in Scotland where Britain had become a significant part of the identification process and the famine of the 1840s drove many to emigrate (Black 1996: 230, 232). Instead, the century became a time when a Scottish identity that did not centre on political demands for independence but instead on aspects such as literature and kilts was forged (*ibid.*). It was not until towards the end of the 20th century that

fresh and concrete debate about Scottish independence surfaced again, though this did not mean those sentiments disappeared in the meantime. Instead, whatever discontent existed in Scotland was directed into a vote for the Labour Party instead of into any realistic power shifts (Kearney 2006: 295). But the Scottish National Party (SNP), which was founded 1934, began to steadily increase its vote in the Scottish local elections towards the end of the 1980s. The Conservative Thatcher government that was in power at Westminster all through the 1980s proved to be wildly unpopular in Scotland, fuelling the constitutional debate (Black 1996: 319). By 1999, the SNP had risen to be the second largest party in Scotland.

At the same time, due to its assimilation into England, Wales had never retained such distinct institutions or centralized systems of its own as Scotland had, which meant that the Welsh national identity was experiencing very different struggles as that of the Scottish (Black 1996: 171). As Mitchell (2009: 8) puts it, “Wales was more fully absorbed into the English core than Scotland ever was”. Until the middle of the 18th century, Wales was a conservative, royalist, Anglican territory, where the elite was turning more and more towards the English culture (Black 1996: 170). The use of the Welsh language was declining among the elite, and while still over 80% of the population spoke Welsh and the traditional Welsh culture still preserved, the existing Welsh identity had “no political expression”: a Welsh nationalist movement simply did not exist at the time, nor was Wales in any way politically important to England due to its small electorate (Black 1996: 171-172).

In the beginning of the 19th century a reformation swept over Wales and extinguished what was left of the Welsh traditional plays, fairs and feasts, replacing them with traditions and conventions of the church, which created a steep division between two groups: the Welsh elite that spoke English, and the professional and working class that spoke Welsh (Black 1996: 173). A division between the rural North and the bigger towns of the South was also easy to distinguish, as the industrial revolution meant the importance of agriculture to the society lessened and new industrial centres emerged: for instance Cardiff became a practical melting pot as immigrants from both Ireland and England arrived due to the industry’s demand for more labour force (Black 1996: 225, 226). This also made English increasingly the language of commerce, putting the Welsh language in an even weaker position (Black 1996: 228).

Welsh nationalist sentiment began to emerge at the end of the 19th century with movements such as Cymru Fydd (“Young Wales”), though these still disappeared from existence fairly quickly (Black 1996: 228-229). In 1925 Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalist Party, was founded. It campaigned for self-government, but did not make a significant impression on Welsh politics until towards the end of the century. (Black 1996: 291) There were many reasons for this: first of all, as Wales had lacked distinct, separate institutions of its own, the base on which to build any form of self-governance was much slower to develop than that in Scotland. Second of all, the economy in Wales depended heavily on financial support from England, especially during the inter-war years, which was not a time when demands for self-governance were favourably heard. And third of all, what support Plaid Cymru received came strongly from the rural regions of Wales, highlighting the division between the more rural North and the more industrial South, as well as between the Welsh and the English speaking populations. (Black 1996: 291, 324)

The way in which Wales was divided formed a significant obstacle for Plaid Cymru, since it made forming a nation-wide, unified nationalist movement extremely difficult (Kearney 2006: 295). The division is not an easy one to overcome, and it should also not be overly simplified: for instance the language division between the two groups does not in any way mean that one side of that division would not be Welsh. As Black (1996: 293) points out, “the declining use of the language is not the same as a loss of identity”. The English speaking Welsh are still a part of the Welsh culture (ibid.). Nevertheless, even after the World Wars nationalism in Scotland was stronger than in Wales, and Kearney (2006: 317) argues that it was in fact due to the Westminster government and the pressure they exercised on Wales that any measure of devolution was ever approved in Wales.

Bicket (2006: 147) has called devolution in the United Kingdom a “surprisingly radical experiment”, an experiment in which a government willingly gave up a portion of its power to countries within itself, which seems like a rare occurrence from a government so determined to protect its powers from the European Union. Mitchell (2009: 220), on the other hand, argues that devolution should actually not be seen as a dramatic replacement of an old system but as something that built on the existing constitution. He sees devolution built on the legacy of the Welsh and Scottish offices that were the respective departments in the Westminster government responsible for each region. This

meant there were already measures in place which formed a model on which to demand further territory based changes. (Mitchell 2009: 16, 44).

However one chooses to look at devolution, the fact remains that in 1997 both Wales and Scotland voted in favour of it in a referendum, leading to the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Parliament in 1998. This development meant that while the Westminster government still reserved certain policy legislations to itself, the devolved institutions were now able to legislate on some policy areas without input from Westminster. The previous referendum was held in 1979 when only 20.3% voted in favour of it in Wales, and while 51.6% voted in favour of it in Scotland, due to the low voting turnout it was not enough for the 40% of the total electorate that was required (Mitchell 2009: 155, 126). In contrast, in 1997 a small minority of 50.3% voted in favour of devolution in Wales, while the support in Scotland was an overwhelming 74.3% (Mitchell 2009: 155, 132). It should be noted, however, that while the support in Wales was not as enthusiastic as in Scotland, “the swing compared with that in 1979 was greater in Wales and the constitutional leap was at least as significant” (Mitchell 2009: 166).

England, of course, presents yet again a very different picture. While examining the history of Britain and devolution, it is easy to concentrate on Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and ignore England since it can be such a common confusion even among the English: what is the difference between England and Britain? The English have always been the dominant ones, the ones who conquered and built an empire. On another hand, English independence has never hit the newspapers. But devolution has brought up a number of questions that influence even the English.

There are over 53 million people living in England: in fact, of the people of the United Kingdom, 85% live in England (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 10). This is a very significant portion, and means that while talking about the future of the United Kingdom, a lot of the attention is often focused on other parts of the Union and England gets easily and quite undeservedly ignored. English nationalism is in many ways an enigma. It is something that undoubtedly exists, as confirmed for example by the frequent use of the English flag, the St. George’s Cross, at sporting events instead of the Union Jack. At the same time, however, is not as easily recognized as Scottish or Welsh nationalism. Aughey (2010: 512), trying to address this complicated existence, has

called English nationalism a mood, instead of a movement. English nationalism seems to be a perfect example of banal and mundane, as it is nationalism that at least thus far has been quite covert and taken very much for granted, a character of nationalism that Mitchell (2009: 93) sees as a strength, not a weakness.

Devolution impacted the national identities of Scotland and Wales at least in so far as the setting up of the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament confirmed not only the distinct nature of these regions but also the right of these regions to be recognized and to have at least some measure of self-government. In this sense England presents a problem: it is a significant region of the Union, but does not have its own Assembly or Parliament. Aughey (2010: 509) states that the majority of the English have never been very willing to take territorial politics seriously, that for them the Westminster Parliament easily absorbed also the need for an English Parliament. Furthermore, this association, or confusion of English and British, also helped to support the stability of the Union and has been one of the cornerstones of its continued existence. The lack of a distinction between British and English also blurred the lines of territorial and nationalistic politics. (ibid.)

But moreover, Mitchell (2009: 92) argues that devolution has brought up a number of administrative issues and questions for the English, in the form of accommodating the needs of the devolved institutions and the pragmatic questions of running the Union. In other words, “devolution may have resolved matters of legitimacy elsewhere in the UK but this has occurred only by shifting the problem elsewhere” (Mitchell 2009: 218). One aspect of this problem is often talked about as the West Lothian question or the English Question, referring to the way in which Westminster Members of Parliament from outside of England are still able to vote on issues concerning only England, while Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are able to vote on their own matters in their own respective devolved institutions without any input from the English MPs. And so, the impact of devolution might in fact have been felt the most in England, instead of in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland (Aughey 2010: 509).

While the English aspect may have been left out of some of the constitutional debates leading up to devolution, the situation is different now. Devolution addressed issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but left England in a different kind of a predicament (Aughey 2010: 510). It is not surprising then that many also see the setting

up of an English Parliament as an answer to the problem. A Campaign for an English Parliament (CEP) was founded in 1998 in connection with devolution, and it has managed to raise awareness of the issue but so far there has been no concrete action on the matter. In addition, the question of the English Parliament might soon be influenced by a larger shift in the Union, as the matter of Scottish independence has been raised to the headlines. As McCrone (2001: 106) states, “in many respects, what happens in Scotland is the key”. The Union seems to be in a state of flux, and many of its relationships are changing and being renegotiated.

2.2 Defining a nation

If we look back in history, towards the end of the 19th century, Ernest Renan described a nation as “a daily referendum” (1882, as cited in Hobsbawm 1994: 15). Walter Bagehot, on the other hand, commented that we know what nations are when we are not asked, but we cannot explain or define them very quickly (1887, as cited in Hobsbawm 1994: 9). A few decades later, Josef Stalin defined a nation as “a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make up manifested in a common culture” (Stalin 1950: 22-23). It is difficult to discuss nations and nationalism, let alone conduct a study where these ideas play a significant role, without first clarifying what these ideas actually mean. It is, however, also difficult to define these concepts in an adequate and satisfactory manner, as can be seen already from these definitions.

Ernest Gellner (1983: 7), who was one of the central scholars of nationalism, explains the idea of a nation with two quite simplified definitions: firstly, he states that “two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture”. In this context he defines culture to mean a comprehensive system of ideas, signs, ways of behaving and communicating. Secondly, “two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each as belonging to the same nation”. This obviously places a great amount of importance on the act recognition. The definitions are called simplified, since as Gellner himself mentions, neither of them is quite adequate. Defining culture is just as difficult as defining a nation, which makes the first definition extremely difficult to

apply. But both of the definitions bring focus to important aspects of a nation: will and culture. In other words, will to belong and culture to identify with. (Gellner 1983: 53)

Many agree that nationalism has its origins in the late 18th century Europe (Delanty and Kumar 2006: 2-5). In fact, Hobsbawm (1994: 11) traces the current meaning of the word *nation* to the same century. There are a variety of different reasons provided for the birth of nations by numerous historians and social scientists. For example, Gellner (1983) sees industrialization as the driving force behind the rise of nation-states: industrialization demanded specific, standardized skills which led to centrally controlled systems of education in order to meet that need. This meant that centrally organized states were at an economic advantage in providing this education. Nairn (1977) contributes the rise to the way in which capitalism spread unevenly through different societies. Nation-states were a means to get a place and a share in the modernity that came with capitalism. Also Hroch (1985) sees capitalism in the central role of nation-states: according to him, capitalist economies needed the centralized direction provided by nation-states. Kennedy (1982), on the other hand, highlights the military advantage of nation-states. (All cited in Billig 1995: 22)

According to Hobsbawm (1994: 13-14), when defining nations, it is impossible to find any objective criteria to why some nations come to be and are called nations: the usual criteria - language, ethnicity, common history or culture, and so on - are all too ambiguous and fickle, and furthermore, there are always exceptions to each criterion. Instead, his starting point is the idea that if the members of any large enough group of people consider themselves as members of a nation, the group will be treated as such (Hobsbawm 1994: 17). But of course, in practise nations are not born that simply. The aforementioned criteria that Hobsbawm considered too ambiguous do in fact have a role in the development of nations. A million people, living in different parts of the world that have never met each other, do not speak the same language and have nothing in common, cannot just declare themselves a nation and expect other nations to accept this. Hobsbawm (1994: 18) recognizes this, of course, and argues in the footsteps of Gellner (1983: 55) that nationalism comes before a nation: nations do not create nationalism and states: in truth it is the other way around. This in turn means that, as Gellner (1983: 55) concludes, nations cannot be defined outside the context of the age of nationalism.

When it comes to the question of nationalism, Gellner (1983: 1) defines nationalism as a political principle “which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent”. This leads to the sentiment behind nationalism: it is “the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment” (ibid.). The sentiment is then capable of setting a nationalistic movement in motion. He also points out that the core belief of nationalism dictates that the national state is taken as natural, as the political unit that is right and deserves to exist (Gellner 1993, as cited in Billig 1995: 19). Therefore there is no reason to question it or its existence. It is in the benefit of nationalism to embrace those ways of thinking that make not only nationalism itself but also nation-states seem and feel as natural to us as possible (Billig 1995: 20).

But if nationalism creates nations and states, then what is a state? Gellner begins answering the question with Max Weber’s definition, which marks a state as the entity that holds the monopoly on violence. That monopoly, however, must occur via legitimate authorities. (Weber 1976, as cited in Gellner 1983: 3) While Weber’s definition is widely used, Gellner (1983: 3-4) does not believe it is always accurate: instead he notes that states are still considered states, even if they either do not want to or cannot impose their legitimate violence. And so Gellner (1983: 4) gives another definition for a state: “that institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with the enforcement of order”. At a basic level, nationalism presumes that the state and the nation are depended on each other: incomplete without each other (Gellner 1983: 6).

While nationalism as a force was thought by many to experience a significant decline, the recent decades have clearly shown that is definitely not the case (Delanty and Kumar 2006: 2-5). The questions and effects of nationalism are thus as important and meaningful as ever. However, nationalism today can also be very different from the period that Gellner and Hobsbawm are referring to. Today, there are forces such as globalization influencing nationalism, and the interwoven nature of nationhood and statehood is getting weaker (Delanty and Kumar 2006: 2-5). Previously the view might have been that the goal of nations was to become states (Hegel, as cited in Gellner 1983: 48). But nationalism today can take various different shapes, as can be seen for example in the case of Islamic nationalism, and furthermore, nationalism does not necessarily exist as a specific force anymore but is actually more integrated in culture (Delanty and Kumar 2006: 2-5). This makes examining nationalism a challenging task.

The United Kingdom, by its nature, adds another aspect of difficulty to the task. While the nationalism of individual countries within the Union might be easier to detect, the way in which the Union simultaneously connects the countries to each other and maintains a sense of a British nation makes the situation puzzling. In addition, the existence of the Union means yet another level of definitions. Is the Union simply a Union, is Britain simply a nation, or are they something else completely? For example McCrone (2001: 97-98) calls Britain “a state-nation masquerading as a nation-state”, explaining that in his view Britain was a state before a nation, its sense of nation-ness only forming afterwards. Mitchell (2009: 225) on his part looks at the way in which the United Kingdom is often seen as a union state and argues that the definition is not accurate as the idea of the UK as a union state ignores the way in which the Kingdom was formed through several unions, instead of just one. Instead, the UK should be seen as a state of unions (Mitchell 2009: 6).

The present study is especially interested in how nations not only come to be but are then maintained, referring to the way in which the United Kingdom has existed for over 300 years while the countries within it have simultaneously managed to maintain at least some form of their own nation-ness and national identities. In addition, since the concept of national identity assumes such an important role in the study conducted, a lot of focus is paid on nations as communities and what it means to belong to one, especially in the case of the United Kingdom. Keeping this in mind, the following section moves on from the presented definitions of nations and states, and concentrates on nations as imagined communities.

2.3 Imagined Communities

Benedict Anderson defines (2006: 6) the nation as “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”. He calls the concepts of nationality, nation-ness and nationalism cultural artefacts, and as such they are created to be of a particular kind. It is the cultural systems that existed before them and functioned as the forces from which and against which nationalism was created that make it possible to understand nationalism. These cultural systems were, for a large part, religious communities and the dynastic realm. (Anderson 2006: 4, 12) It is crucial

to note that nations nevertheless did not simply arise from the footsteps of these cultural systems but required a more comprehensive change in order to be born (Anderson 2006: 22). In order to examine this change more closely, it is necessary to start from the very definition of imagined communities.

Anderson (2006: 6-7) calls the communities imagined because there is simply no possible way for every member of the community to meet face-to-face and know each other. Instead, they imagine themselves as a part of the group, due to shared interests and the mental image of shared affinity. It is this shared affinity that in turn marks nations as communities. There is a deep comradeship that exists horizontally throughout the members. According to Anderson (*ibid.*), one of the persistent, mystifying questions of nationalism has been the way it can motivate millions of people to sacrifice their lives for this imagined, limited community. And it is limited, since one of the noteworthy characteristics of the nation is certainly the borders that mark its perimeters and separate it from other nations. Anderson answers this question of willingness to die for the nation with the sense of community and attachment that the members share. The community inspires love, enough so for even self-sacrifice. (Anderson 2006: 7, 141) And finally, the community is imagined sovereign, because as one of the cultural systems preceding them was the dynastic realm, nations were born at a time when the dream was to be free (Anderson 2006: 7).

If the age nationalism did not just grow out of whatever had preceded it, then what commenced the change that made nationalism possible? To begin with, the three certainties that had been the basis of the culture at the time started declining (Anderson 2006: 36). First of these certainties was the idea that a particular language was such an internal part of the ontological truth that only this particular language could offer access to the truth for the few privileged who understood and could write the language. Secondly, there was a belief that it was an inherent part of societies to be built around a high centre – and beneath it. At the time these high centres were, of course, monarchs who had a sort of divine entitlement to rule others. And thirdly, there was a conception of temporality, which for example made it natural for people to think that “the origins of the world and the man [were] essentially identical”. All these certainties working together offered people meaning for the way things were. But as these certainties started their decline, first in the Western Europe, new meanings and explanations for the way in which the world worked were needed. (Anderson 2006: 36-37)

According to Anderson (2006: 42), what made these new meanings and explanations possible, was print-capitalism. Print-capitalism in Anderson's work is the result of the interaction between "a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity" (ibid.). It was this interaction that made it possible to imagine the new communities that we consider nations. Print-capitalism gave people a way to think about themselves and their relations to others in a different way (Anderson 2006: 36). The basic idea behind the theory of print-capitalism as the basis of imagined communities is the way capitalistic movements of the era got printers to start printing their books and newspapers in the vernacular languages that people actually spoke, instead of ancient Latin and other script-languages. But the printing did not happen in every spoken vernacular, instead through the process of finding a form of language that as many people as possible understood and thus was the most profitable, particular languages were chosen as the print-languages that were used. By the expansion of printing, print-capitalism provided the people with a means of "re-presenting" the community they imagined themselves to belong to. (Anderson 2006: 25, 44)

Furthermore, Anderson (2006: 44-45) attributes the emergence of national consciousness to print-capitalism and print-languages. They did this in three distinctive ways: firstly, they were able to find a place between Latin – that was used mainly by those highest in the society – and the numerous vernaculars spoken by everyone else. Between these very different language communities the print-languages created a way for people to communicate and trade. This made people aware of the perhaps millions of others that belonged in their language community. They could be, for example, reading the newspaper with the realization that there were other people reading the exact same words somewhere else. On another hand, it also made people aware that in fact only those that could read the same words actually belonged, and there were millions of others who did not. Secondly, print-capitalism helped to create an image of antiquity by giving language a new sense of stability and permanence which had previously been a character of the religious communities and the dynastic realm. And thirdly, print-capitalism created new power languages, replacing the old administrative ones and thus making it possible for the imagined communities to replace the older hierarchies. (ibid.) In other words, European nations and their national consciousness essentially formed around particular print-languages.

There was a clear divide between the languages used by the ruling classes and by those under rule in Europe. Consequently, the question of how a particular language ended up being the dominant language of each community is an interesting one to examine. As was noted while discussing the different viewpoints and definitions of nation and nationalism, language has usually been largely considered as one of the decisive factors in the birth of a nation. Anderson (2006: 77-78) however disregards the notion of the dominant language following power relations: the process of nationalism is widely seen to have started in Europe, and there power and the print-languages occupied largely different spheres. In general, the choice of the dominant language in European countries - which happened for example in England during the 13th and 14th centuries and in France from the 16th century onwards - was unselfconscious and more about the practicality and convenience than about power (Anderson 2006: 42). It was a gradual process that was very different from the official language policies of the 19th century and systematic imposing of a certain language on to the masses (ibid.). Power shifts followed the emergence of print-languages: those who already spoke the print-language benefited, and as certain dialects of a language were closer to the emerging print-language than others, those dialects ended up dominating the final form regardless of whether the speakers of them held a lot or little power (Anderson 2006: 78, 45).

Then again, the way languages are nowadays viewed as a private property does have its roots in the age of nationalistic awakening. Anderson (2006: 84) points out that there was a lexicographic revolution happening in Europe at the time: a belief that specific groups were entitled to their own language and that these groups in turn had a right to their own, autonomous place. In addition, one of the characteristic properties of nations was the way they could be copied (Anderson 2006: 67). They became something to aspire to. By the beginning of the 19th century there was a model of what an independent nation should be like, and this model soon became pirated by many. But the fact that the model was known also meant that there were standards to what a nation was truly like. For example, the national state meant *all* of the people in that nation, not only the selected. (Anderson 2006: 81-82)

Anderson traces the birth of nations from the 18th century onwards, and as previously mentioned, nationalism has not experienced any regression but is instead as strong as ever. Anderson (2006: 157) agrees, stating that while nationalism has had to go through a variety of changes and adaptation in order to survive all the different political,

economic and social developments, the imagined community has since its origin spread to practically every society that exists. After the World Wars, the progress of nation-states accomplished its full momentum, as Anderson remarks: “since the Second World War every successful revolution has defined itself in national terms” (Anderson 2006: 113, 2). The wars certainly demonstrated the feelings invoked by a nation, in the numbers of people that sacrificed themselves for the preservation of it. And while the idea of a nation and the national consciousness is so deeply a part of practically all contemporary languages, the nation can now be imagined even without the sense of community that comes from a shared language, just out of awareness of what has been possible in the past (Anderson 2006: 135).

When it comes to the United Kingdom, Anderson’s imagined community gives a good foundation to base the present study on. Due to the nature of how the Union was formed, it is difficult to view Britain in the context of nations. The countries within it were all brought into the Union for different reasons under different circumstances. But still the Union remains, despite the struggles it has gone through. It would seem that the United Kingdom is a good example of how the act of imagining functions as glue that brings the community together: the four countries imagine themselves belonging together, at least for as long as they wish to belong together.

Likewise, language presents yet another interesting aspect. While the birth of the Union was different from the nations pictured by Anderson, one could argue that English played a role in keeping the Union together, similarly to Anderson’s idea of print-languages. It quickly became the language of commerce in all of the countries within the Union, the language of industrialization, and thus gave the people of the Union a common ground to build on. Similarly, it seems that those that spoke English, instead of Welsh or Scots or Gaelic languages, benefited from their skills. Before English became more common, it was the language of the elites in both Wales and Scotland. English was the language of the power.

This can be seen also in the way in which Anderson (2006: 90) addresses the question of why a Scottish nationalist movement did not form in the late 18th or early 19th century when nationalism was in the rise in Western Europe. In his view, there were three reasons for this: firstly, there was nothing to keep the Scottish from London, the centre of the Kingdom, which meant that Scottish businessmen and politicians were free to

carry on their business without any obstacles. Secondly, already as early as in the 17th century, a lot of the Scottish population spoke English and thus was in the community of “print-English”. And thirdly, at the time, the English language was not yet “English”, in the sense of belonging to the England. It was simply the language that was used, without too much thought for its nationalistic implications. (ibid.)

On the other hand, the sense of national identity and community preserved in both Wales and Scotland even after the English language took over commerce and politics. Thus it would seem reasonable to assume that there must have still existed a sense of community that excluded England, and for example in Wales the process might have been helped by the preservation of the Welsh language, since for example in 2011 still about one in four were able to speak Welsh despite how drastically the number of Welsh speakers declined during the 19th century (Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census). The Scots and Gaelic languages faced a more difficult faith in Scotland, since in 2011 for example only 1.1% of the Scottish population reportedly spoke Scottish Gaelic (Scotland’s Census 2011). Thus, language could not have been the only factor in the process. While the concept of the imagined community might offer us insight into how the United Kingdom formed its nation-ness alongside the national identities of the countries within it, there still remains an aspect of nationalism to be examined. To end this chapter, the focus is turned towards the question of how the nation might be reproduced and sustained, in order to better understand the national identities of the United Kingdom today.

2.4 Reproducing the nation

What is especially important and interesting in the context of the present study is the question of how nations and national identities are not only constructed but also maintained. Michael Billig concentrates on these questions in his *Banal Nationalism*, which gives a comprehensive view on the many aspects that play into the issue. He argues that if the nation is a social construction, it then has to be constantly reproduced in order for it to survive and the members of it to feel a sense of belonging. Hroch (1993) has previously defined three different stages in nationalism: the first stage is marked by the awakening interest in the national idea, which is in this stage still

mostly scholarly. The second stage includes the expansion of the interest and the attempt to awaken a national consciousness in as many members of the community as possible. And finally, the third stage happens when there is a mass movement in order to transform the idea into an actual nation-state. But as Billig (1995: 44) asks, what happens to nationalism after these three stages? Does it simply disappear? In order for the world of nations to survive, the imagining of community in the process of its birth is not enough. Imagining and remembering nationhood is crucial also for the survival of the nation. (Billig 1995: 17)

2.4.1 Banal Nationalism

As discussed above in connection with Anderson's idea of imagined communities, nations are capable of producing a sense of attachment and value. There has always been a belief among societies that some things are worth dying for. Wars are a very concrete expression of this. But as Billig (1995: 1) states, what is valued changes. For a long time now, nationhood has possessed this place in our world. It is notable that even in the midst of the World Wars of the last century the focus has been on protecting the nations, as opposed to protecting the individuals. (Billig 1995: 3) But it is easy to define and sustain nations in the middle of a crisis. The crucial thing to remember is that nations exist even in between crises. (Billig 1995: 6) Nations do not disappear after a peace has been reached and emerge again in time to fight the next war. According to Renan (as cited in Billig 1995: 95), the nation depends on the members accepting the idea of nationhood, and thus the nation cannot be imposed, since a rejection would topple the whole nation. In other words, nation has to be chosen. But the way in which the members of the nation are reminded to choose its existence even in-between different crises is so mundane and usually overlooked that Billig (1995: 6) calls the process *banal nationalism*, and defines it as "ideological habits that enable the nations of the West to be reproduced". This process of reproduction is daily and almost unnoticeable in the way it has become ingrained in modern societies. (ibid.)

To begin examining this idea of banal nationalism more closely, the first stage is to focus on nationalism. Similarly to Gellner, Billig (1995: 19) also sees nationalism as belonging to a specific socio-historical location. But what is distinctive of Billig is the

way he sees both the obscurity and the obviousness of nationalism. It is easy to recognize nationalism somewhere else, but when it comes to “us” and “here”, it can be almost invisible (Billig 1995: 14-15). In general, nationalism is seen as something that happens “there” and usually as a problem. It is closely connected to right-wing policies and groups that wish to create a new nation or preserve what they see as the “true” nation. The nationalism that happens “here” is largely unnoticed, and this locates nationalism on the periphery, as something marginal and problematical. (Billig 1995: 5-6)

Traditionally, nationalism is theorized in the frame of two different types (Billig 1995: 16-17). First of all, there is a tendency to define nationalism in a very restricted way, as an extreme phenomenon that is an issue only when a nationalist movement emerges and threatens the normal, used-to condition of society. This theory is marked by a sense of projecting: nationalism is seen as a condition that is driven by what seems like irrational emotions, and this condition is mainly projected on to “others”. “We” do not possess this form of nationalism. Second of all, nationalism can also be seen as something natural, as something that is inherent in a sense of loyalty to nations. This loyalty is viewed as a part of the human condition and is thus nothing unusual or abnormal. (ibid.) Both of these types ignore what Billig refers to as banal nationalism. The way in which “we” maintain and reproduce “our” nation is such a normal part of life that it is not really even connected to nationalism but is instead called “loyalty” or “patriotism”. And this banal nationalism that holds “our” nation together is not only a form of non-nationalism; it is also not an issue that should be examined more closely or investigated. (Billig 1995: 17) According to Billig (1995: 55-57), it is extremely easy to naturalize “our” nationalism out of existence. While nationalism has a more negative connotation, “our” patriotism is seen as a positive force that provides stability and a sense of identity and belonging. It can be defended and seen as something beneficial, as opposed to the irrational, aggressive nationalism of “others”. It is to be noted, however, that when it comes to nationalism, everyone claims to be acting in defence or simply doing what is necessary. Nationalism is always “theirs” in the sense that those who claim it as “ours” are very rare. (ibid.)

It is this sense of “us” versus “the others” that makes the nationalistic ideas of boundaries, ownership and the possession of legitimate means of violence feel so natural (Billig 1995: 20). In addition, Billig (1995: 79) points out that “the foreigner”

can be a very specific category. It is not just any “other” but can be found concretely on the other side of the quite novel idea of the borderline drawn on the map. And in the act of distinguishing “us” from “them”, a sort of stereotyping happens. “We” are usually seen as the standard, the normal. “They”, on the other hand, can be ascribed a variety of stereotypic traits. There are certain standards for the behaviour of a nation, but of course not every nation necessarily sees these standards similarly. This in turn can fuel the divide constructed between “us” and “them”. (Billig 1995: 81, 92) But this standardized view of nations is constructed of numerous different assumptions and beliefs that make nations and the way the world is organized around them seem as the natural state. It is the way the world should be. And from the very beginning of nations, there has been an ambition to spread the vision of those more powerful. But in actuality, these depictions that make nations and the ideology of nationalism seem so innate are merely historical creations. (Billig 1995: 21, 36)

Billig (1995: 27) calls these historical creations “invented permanencies”. By this, Billig refers to the sense of timelessness that is present in these creations. The creations are invented but feel as if they have always existed. They are banal in the sense that they seem mundane and are taken for granted, which in turn makes explaining the type of nationalism that relies on these permanencies difficult. (Billig 1995: 29) Languages are an excellent example of this, as language has been and still is often used as the basis for the creation of a new nation. Languages can be used as a foundation, as if they were an established fact, ancient and natural. Moreover, there is an enormous power in writing down a way of speaking. Nationalist movements can attempt to construct a distinct language even from a mere dialect in order to justify its goals, and in fact the boundaries of different language communities have tended to play a part in the birth of nations, in one way or another. (Billig 1995: 32-43) As Billig (1995: 13) states, “social scientists often assume that it is natural that speakers of the same language should seek their own political identity”. But the significance of language in the building of a nation raises an interesting question concerning nations that include members from different language communities. Does the language situation in that case automatically make the nation weaker? (Billig 1995: 14) This is, of course, significant question in the context of the current study, as the United Kingdom certainly includes people who speak something else besides English as their mother-tongue, whether that is the Welsh speaking population in Wales, those who still speak

the Scots or Gaelic languages of Scotland, or the immigrants and the various mother-tongues they have brought into the UK.

But in essence, the central battle of nationhood is a question of hegemony. Walter Benjamin's famous quote (as cited in Billig 1995: 71), highlights the continuous process of re-writing history: "history is always the tale of victors". A nation's history, despite how it would perhaps liked to be presented by nationalists and many others, is never a straightforward account of events and people. There are competing viewpoints, narratives and interpretations, depending on who is accounting the history. And so there is always also a struggle for the right to represent the whole nation, to possess the national essence and speak for it. (Billig 1995: 27, 71) But nationalism today is an international ideology; it does not exist only inside a certain nation's borders. There may be standards for how "we" and "our nation" should be or behave, but that is not all. There are standards for how the whole international community and thus the world should behave and interact with each other. (Billig 1995: 9, 92) Billig (1995: 128) talks about the conflict between the modern and the postmodern era: if nation-states were a product of the modern era, then what happens to them and the whole nationalistic ideology as new politics enter the picture with, for example, the European Union? Globalization can diminish the differences and spaces between nations, and the era of consumerism diminishes differences even inside nations as societies are no longer as defined by the class-system but more by the differences in life-styles. In addition to the primary national identity, members of nations are forming what Billig calls "sub-national identities" and a variety of multicultural ideas are emerging throughout the world of nations. (Billig 1995: 132-133, 148)

But of course, as can be seen all around us, nations are not going anywhere. On the contrary, the trend of globalization seems to create conflicts that can even fuel nationalistic ideas and movements. Billig (1995: 44-45) refers to this development as "hot nationalism". According to him, hot nationalism is specifically driven by strong emotions and is often seen as irrational. It is the clearest during extraordinary moments when nationalist movements begin to rise, which can happen in situations such as in the face of a presumed threat to the nation. In such a case it can function as a psychological reassurance, provide a sense of security. Or it can be the annual celebration of a national day, often done quite lavishly. However, Billig (1995: 46) also notes that hot nationalism is not enough to sustain nationhood. The national day,

after all, comes only once a year, and no nation lives in the middle of never-ending crises. National identity is embedded into the routine, every-day-life that sustains the nation for the rest of the year (ibid.). So the question of how nations survive in the middle of endlessly changing conditions still remains and is perhaps even more significant in the postmodern era than ever. Billig's answer to the question is banal nationalism, the opposite of hot nationalism.

2.4.2 Forgetting and remembering the nation

According to Billig (1995: 37-38) the root of banal nationalism lies in forgetting: the ideology of nationalism includes numerous habits and beliefs that make the world we live in seem natural. By this he means that this naturalism encourages the members of nations to forget the fact that the world of nations, including theirs, is a historically constructed entity. And so the members forget the violence it has perhaps taken for the nation to be born, and also how recently this process actually might have happened. Moreover, Billig notes that on one hand, there is a collective memory that keeps the national identity alive and that is crucial for the survival of the nation. It is perfectly natural for people to have a national identity, in fact, the opposite would be unfathomable. People are also supposed to remember this identity, since the nation cannot exist without its members, after all. But on another hand, the national identity is such a familiar part of every-day-life, the routines and the environment around us, that the act of remembering is rarely conscious. On the contrary, remembering the national identity is so natural and automatic that the act itself is in effect forgotten. (ibid.) While Anderson may see nations as imagined communities, Billig (1995: 77) argues that "the community and its place are not so much imagined, but their absence becomes unimaginable". In other words, the existence of the nation is not depended on its members consciously producing it, but is instead depended on the members taking it for granted and not questioning it, so much so that the alternative is in actuality not a real alternative. It is possible for things to be both present and absent at once, but the actual forgetting needs to be reproduced in order to preserve the almost invisible naturalness of nations (Billig 1995: 42). This reproduction is done in such a mundane, every-day way that Billig calls it "banal".

As the reproduction of the nation is not a conscious act, it can be described more as a reminder of something. It is such a normal act that people forget they are actually doing it, but it is still enough to make sure the members of the nation do not forget their national identity. Essentially, the nationhood is constantly “flagged”, and this flagging reminds the members of the normalness of the current society. (Billig 1995: 7-8) A very concrete example of such flagging is, obviously, the national flag. In the past it might have had functions such as communicating a message by signalling to a ship at sea during a war, but its contemporary function is more symbolic. It signals the nation, as the embodiment of the sacredness of it. After all, burning of the flag is a legitimately punished act in various places around the world. The United States can be looked at as a clear example of the significance of the flag. It is a country where the flag is everywhere, so much so that Billig calls it “the cult of the flag”. (Billig 1995: 40) There is, however, a difference between the waved and the unwaved flag. That is, some flags are raised and celebrated very consciously, whereas some are merely there and not paid any special attention to. (ibid.) For example, the routine flags hanging in front of buildings in the United States signify very different things than the Irish or Unionist flags hanging in Northern Ireland. While the national flag has for so long been a very conscious symbol of nationhood, it is the mindless way it can often be presented that banal nationalism boils down to. It is absorbed into the culture and every-day-life, so routine and numerous that it is more a banal reminder of nationhood than the very essence of it. (Billig 1995: 41, 38)

Besides the national flag, there are a number of other things that can function as banal nationalism. Money is one of the more clear examples, as different nations mark their coins and banknotes with distinctive national emblems (Billig 1995: 41). Even with the introduction of euro, nations still mark them as their own. And in the United Kingdom, Scottish banknotes are different from those in England, and while they are a recognized currency, they are sometimes refused in other parts of the UK due to people’s unfamiliarity with them. One interesting aspect that Billig (1995: 120) takes a closer look at is the sports section in newspapers. They are mainly aimed at men, and have a way of reproducing discourse familiar from warfare. Sports competitions and debates can function as reminders of the conflict in war and the way in which men are supposed to be ready to sacrifice their lives for the success of the nation. Women, on

the other hand, are supposed to love their national heroes, whether that is in sports or in war, thus further glorifying the willingness to sacrifice. (Billig 1995: 124-126)

Furthermore, the national identity is also flagged discursively. There are various habits of language that reproduce the world of nations as natural and that present the nation as the right one. It is these routine, constant, dull reminders of language that people use and hear every day that makes it so easy to take the nation for granted. (Billig 1995: 93) By using national labels such as “we”, “our nation” and so on, the particularity and uniqueness of the nation is constructed (Billig 1995: 73). Every member knows who these “we” are and who belong to “our nation” - and just as importantly, who do not possess the uniqueness of “us”. According to Billig (1995: 94), “the crucial words of banal nationalism are often the smallest: we, this, here”. They place people in categories, situate the nation “here”, not anywhere else. In addition, the definite article “the” designates the nation in question without ever having to mention the name. The article itself is enough to create a familiarity, to eliminate any uncertainty about which nation is in question. This process is called deixis. It is a form of pointing; a way of connecting what is said or written to a particular context (Brown and Levinson 1987, as cited in Billig 1995: 106). For example, the use of words such as “we”, “us”, “here” and “this” makes it possible for discourse to create a very definite place, the homeland. Expressions like “this country” make it unnecessary to even name the nation. It is simply the homeland, and often this deixis is so subtle it goes mostly unnoticed by both the speaker and the recipient. (Billig 1995: 107) This removes the need for particular flagging: the nation is already so ingrained in the routine presentation of the world that just a small word or an article is enough to convey the meaning. (Billig 1995: 118)

This sort of discursive flagging is obviously very common in political discourse. Political discourse is one feature where sporting metaphors, and through them also warfare related discourse, are very much at home (Shapiro 1990, as cited in Billig 1995: 123). The flagging that happens in political discourse is influential on its own, considering how usual it is for political discourse to be broadcasted to mass audiences. However, the discursive nature of banal nationalism does not exist only in political discourse or in sports metaphors. What makes it so effective is the way it is ingrained in the lives of ordinary people. In other words, this kind of banal nationalism is present

also in the discourse of newspapers, TV and radio, and likewise in the discourse people themselves use. (Billig 1995: 105, 94)

Nevertheless, while banal nationalism is usually hidden, almost invisible and often unchallenged, precisely due to the fact that it is so mundane and commonplace in the world of nations, this does not make it any less part of a powerful ideology. Quite the opposite actually, since it is so often ignored, it can also become that much more powerful. As Hannah Arendt (as cited in Billig 1995: 7) points out, banality is not the same thing as harmlessness. The nations that are constantly being reproduced in this way hold a lot of power, and the reproduction ensures they hold on to that power. The significance of banal nationalism makes it crucial to examine its different aspects when looking at nations in contemporary context, where a lot of weight is placed on the survival and maintaining of nations. For that reason, it is also a useful tool for the present study, since the discursive characteristics of banal nationalism can offer perspectives to the construction of the idea of Britain and British identities in the analysis conducted.

3 DISCOURSE

Discourse is a difficult and complicated concept to define, largely because of its broad use in various different theoretical fields of study (Fairclough 1992: 3). The different meanings of discourse can be conflicting and overlapping, depending on who is interpreting it. The present study takes a strong linguistic approach to defining and analysing discourse, but it is done while linking discourse with social change through the ways in which changes in discourse can be seen to reflect changes in societies. I will begin this chapter by defining discourse and what it means in the context of this study, after which I will look more closely at the different properties of discourse. The focus is then turned to the representative and constructive nature of discourse, and especially its strong link with power. The chapter is concluded with a closer look at media discourse, as it is the primary focus in the analysis conducted.

3.1 Discourse vs. discourses

The concept of discourse comes back to social constructivism and the linguistic turn. Social constructivism highlights the question of how our reality is constructed and pays attention also to the way different meanings come to be. With the so called linguistic turn that took place in the early 20th century, the focus was turned towards language as a way of explaining this process of construction. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 12) An important force of the linguistic turn was Ludwig Wittgenstein, who summarised the impact of the linguistic turn well by remarking that the boundaries of language are the boundaries of the world (Schulte 1992: 63).

In a very broad sense, discourse as a concept always refers to language and its use. The questions asked when analysing discourse are, for example, questions of what kind of language is used, how particular types of language are used and why, and if there are differences between different groups of people in their language use. Furthermore, discourse can also be understood in connection with social interaction: language can be used to “accomplish some action in the social world” (Scollon and Scollon 2004: 2). Language use can be seen to have three distinctive functions, and these functions are clearly present also in discourse and its analysis, as can be seen further in this chapter. The first function is textual, where language is seen as a communication medium. Second function is representative, where language is seen as describing the world. And the final, third function is constructive, where language creates social identities and relationships. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 15)

It is important to note, however, that as Michel Foucault (1972, in Fairclough 1992: 40) states, language is not the same thing as discourse. In linguistics, discourse refers to samples of both, spoken and written language (Fairclough 1992: 3). But instead of concentrating merely on the language itself, words and sentences, the field of discourse analysis emphasizes the fact that language use is always a social action. Discourse analysis thus pays special attention to the interaction between those producing and those interpreting the language, the situation in which the language is used, and the way in which the meaning of language is always separately formed in each, particular situation instead of language having just one, permanent meaning (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 12, Fairclough 1992: 3). So whereas language can refer to any piece of words or

sentences we encounter, discourse forms a wider network that considers not only the language, but also various different factors and properties surrounding the language.

Continuing with the ways in which meaning is conveyed and constructed, a very important property of discourse to discuss is context. Van Dijk (2008: 90) defines context as “the mentally represented structure of those properties of the social situation that are relevant for the production or comprehension of discourse”. In other words, these properties include types such as setting, participants, the actions of said participants and their mental representations. If meaning of words is constructed in their use, then it would appear that the situation the language is used in matters a great deal. Discourse is, in fact, analysed and researched as a part of action, reality and society.

Different situations call for different types of discourse. Discourse analysis uses terms situational context and socio-cultural context to describe the external factors that can influence discourse. When looking at situational context, every word is seen as a part of wider language use. While words can have multiple meanings, even that is a limited amount. There are still norms and practices that our language use follows, and situational context restricts the language that is used in that particular situation. This way it can also direct the way the language used is interpreted. In a particular situational context a word may have only one meaning that makes sense, and thus there is only one way it will be interpreted. Socio-cultural context, however, refers to the wider social, cultural and societal environment the language is situated in. Language use is also a societal action: discourse exists in a certain time and place, within certain norms and structures. For example, we speak differently about democracy and freedom in the western world than people perhaps do in parts of Asia. Context can, and usually is, multi-layered: situational context and socio-cultural context work on top of each other. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 18-36) Fairclough (1997: 71) also points out that while context influences and shapes discourse, in the long run it can also work the other way around. People using discourse in new and innovative ways can shape the context particular types of discourse are used in.

Discourse is seen by Fairclough (1992: 3) in a three-dimensional framework. These dimensions are text, discursive practice, and social practice. As has already been stated, discourse in linguistics refers to samples of spoken and written language. In this context,

text is then used as one part of discourse: the product. This means that also a piece of spoken language can be regarded as a text, an object of analysis. (ibid.) When we talk about a text in this way, we talk about *discourse*. This particular text, when looked at from the point of view of language use as a social action, forms a unit where various choices made in its production determine its genre, tone, word choices, and so on. It is produced with a certain purpose for a certain audience to interpret. In contrast, we can also talk about *discourses*. These are types of discourse used in specific social situations by specific social groups. The different ways a particular group uses language can be boiled down to a recognizable set of norms and practices that form a distinctive discourse that is unique to this particular group and situation. These types of discourses are, for example, a media discourse or an academic discourse. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 27, Fairclough 1992: 3)

If text is the product of discourse, a sample of written or spoken language, the second dimension of discourse, discursive practice, is formed from the ways in which discourse is produced, distributed and consumed. Social practice, on the other hand, refers to the ideological and hegemonic attributes of discourse. These mean the certain ways discourse links to power and can be used to present and construct things from very selective points of view. (Fairclough 1992: 73) The ideological and hegemonic attributes of discourse will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter when the link between discourse and power is looked at in more detail. At this point it is important to note discursive practice, since it works complementary along with context in shaping discourse. The distinctive ways a particular text is produced and distributed form networks. These networks are called the orders of discourse. They highlight the relationship and interaction between the different stages and parts of discourse practices. These networks, the orders of discourse, are formed from two sections: genre and discourse. Discourse here means the specific language used to describe the social convention or situation in questions. Genre, on the other hand, refers to a way of using language to construct the social convention or situation. This convention or situation could be, for example, an interview or a review. (Fairclough 1997: 77-78)

A final property of discourse that needs be discussed here is intertextuality. Intertextuality is a term coined by Kristeva in the late 1960s, but it was Bakhtin who originally developed an intertextual approach to textual analysis (Fairclough 1992: 101). Michel Foucault described intertextuality as follows: “There can be no statement that in

one way or another does not reactivate others” (1972, as quoted by Fairclough 1992: 101). In other words, as Fairclough explains, intertextuality refers to the way in which the production and consumption of texts is depended on genres and discourses, how other discourse is situated within the text in question, and how texts are influenced by prior texts they are responding to or future texts that will be responding to them. (Fairclough 1997: 100, 1992: 101) For example, similar discursive choices can run through issues of one newspaper and simultaneously be found in various different newspapers. Sometimes it can seem as they are almost having a discussion between them, reacting to each other’s statements and anticipating each other’s responses. (Fairclough 1997: 124)

Lastly, choices are important in the concept of discourse and have already been referred to briefly here. To expand on the role of choices it is crucial to consider the way language can be seen as a resource. It is as if each of us possesses a certain pool of language: different words and ways of connecting them and conveying what we are thinking. With the act of choosing the preferred type of language from this pool, one single situation can be described in many different ways. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 15-17) If language does not have one permanent meaning, it signifies that the meaning is always somehow constructed to fit the situation. Fairclough (1992: 185) states that when it comes to word meaning, it is always a process of choice that determines how a particular word is used and interpreted. He goes on to conclude that as one word can have multiple meanings, conveying and interpreting the right meaning is not just an individual but a social and cultural process. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 13) agree, determining that meanings and their construction is depended on various social and discursive norms, values and rules. There thus appears to be a bond between variation and regularity when it comes to language use (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 37). There is a constant tension between conformity and change, order and regeneration that is especially apparent in the social side of discourse. Interaction between those producing and those interpreting the language shapes the ways in which language is used. This makes viewing language as not just words and sentences but instead as discourse and a part of our social world especially valuable.

Van Dijk (2008: 15-16) emphasizes the fact that discourse is not only linked with other realms of the world, but also depended on them. He links discourse strongly with society and cognition, and by this he refers, firstly, to how social situations, structures

and conditions always influence discourse. And secondly, he refers to the way in which cognition functions as the interface between discourse and society. He makes a point to note that the field of cognition is, however, still largely a mystery. How audiences, for example, comprehend the news they read in the newspaper and how the act of reading influences their attitudes and opinions is an unknown factor that needs a lot more research and advances in order to fully understand its role in the process. Nonetheless, van Dijk (2008: 15-16) emphasizes all of these realms are necessary and depended on each other. He goes on to point out that even these are not sufficient alone, but that also the realms of history and culture are needed. This illustrates the complex nature of discourse and how integrated and entangled it is with the world around it.

Scollon and Scollon (2004: x) use the term *nexus analysis* to further explain this link between discourse and the social world, by linking the semiotic cycles of how people and objects operate and are operated in discourse with important socio-cultural instances. For them, *nexus* is the connection between different ideas, so *nexus analysis* in turn comprises of examining the links between different ideas and objects. In other words, why and how are particular phenomena linked together? (Scollon and Scollon 2004: viii) They argue that it is precisely the kind of micro-actions of social interaction such as discourse that function as the basis for larger social issues. And so, even the most mundane instances of discourse can be viewed as *nexus* through which these social issues can circulate. This circulation can create semiotic or discursive cycles where discourse becomes action and, consecutively, action turns to discourse. (Scollon and Scollon 2004: 8, 15)

3.2 Representing and constructing reality

The three functions of language use are, as mentioned above, textual, representative and constructive (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 15). The textual function refers to language as a communication medium, as a way of presenting and conveying information. This section is, however, focused on the representative and constructive functions of language. The representative function means the way language describes the world, and the constructive function means the ability language has to create identities and social relationships.

The representative function of language is built upon the way language is used to describe and name things in the world. It offers information about the time, place, society and culture around the discourse. This kind of representation makes it possible to use discourse as a way of analysing how our reality is described, and the point of view and the means through which it is done. Discourse has the power to give something a name, to foreground something or to diminish something. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 13, 56) It is exactly this process of choice that makes representation such an important part of discourse. Choosing what is included and what is not, what is conveyed directly and what is made secondary, and even who is represented and how, means that discourse does not merely reflect the world as it is but is instead a means of conveying a certain representation of it (Fairclough 1997: 136). Through this, examining discourse does not only reveal things about language, but it also reveals things about the society and culture, the time and place it is situated in (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 13).

The final function of language is constructive. It means that discourse does not only describe but also constitutes the world. For instance, according to J.L. Austin (1975: 5), words are not used to describe things, but to do things; he saw the uttering of a sentence as an action on itself. Another way to look at this is to think that as we constantly choose how to describe our reality by choosing one way of language use over another we construct our reality in a certain way. That means that discourse can be seen as a kind of a circle. While it describes what is around us, it can also change what is around us. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 20, 49) Fairclough (1992: 64) lists three aspects of the constructive effects of discourse: firstly, discourse constructs social identities. Secondly, it constructs social relationships. And thirdly, it constructs systems of knowledge and beliefs.

Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 63-64) agree, stating that by influencing our conceptions of ourselves, of each other and of different relationships between people, discourse can construct identities and social relationships. With the ability discourse possesses to assign people to different groups and to influence the relationships between these groups, discourse can transform and renew whole social classes and groups. The representation of people in a certain way is simultaneous with the renewing of the situation in reality. (Fairclough 1997: 238-239) Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 63) go further to examine the way these identities are constructed,

and point out that when it comes to discourse, identities are constructed in every-day language use, in history, media, music, advertisements, and so on. They see identity forming in interaction, through an on-going process of negotiating different identities in different situations. It is important to note also that different discourses construct different identities. This means that discourse can also be used to examine what kind of identities have at particular times been “prominent, possible, or even unwanted”. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 64-65)

3.3 Power and Politics

The last of Fairclough’s constructive effects of discourse is its ability to construct systems of knowledge and beliefs. This is of course linked with questions of power, and so this section looks at the relationship between discourse and power in more depth. Starting from the basis, the power of discourse comes from the ability that language has to describe and thus also construct the world, reality, society and culture. This includes also our conceptions of the world, our social identities and the relationships we have with people around us. Language can describe, limit, define, challenge, transform and position the world and people in it (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 53). It can do this on many different levels: it has situational power through the way in which a single language expression can construct one certain moment of our reality, but on the other hand through the societal and cultural use of discourse it can also be a medium or a goal of power in a larger context (ibid.).

Van Dijk (2008: 17, 21) points out that while power is often seems as inherently “bad”, the reality of it is much more complex. For example, in some situations also legitimate partiality exists. There are many various concepts of power in philosophy and social sciences, but when it comes to the link between power and discourse, van Dijk (2008: 29) uses the term “social power” and concentrates on the issue of power abuse. He sees social power as “a property of the relationship between groups, classes or other social formations, or between persons as social members”. In other words, according to him social power manifests itself precisely in interaction. Moreover, van Dijk (2008: 4) states that language use is in fact the only place where there is enough possibility for variation and choice, the two properties that are crucial for the occurrence of power

abuse. For instance, there is a big difference between the choice of calling a person a terrorist or a freedom fighter. And so he defines social power also in terms of control: power abuse or the illegitimate uses of power happen when a certain group of people have the ability to control the discourse of others. (van Dijk 2008: 9, 17)

Van Dijk (2008: 10-11) names three different ways control plays a part in the reproduction of power in discourse: Firstly, there is context control. This means that certain people or groups have active access to discourse and can regulate it more than others, for example by defining who has access to the news, who is interviewed and quoted, whose actions count as news and whose definition of the situation is accepted. The second way is discourse control. Also structures of discourse itself can be controlled, by defining what can and should be said, how it can and should be formulated, and how the produced speech acts are organized in social interaction. And the third way is mind control. This is connected to the ways in which discourse can influence people's minds and the way they think, though van Dijk is careful to note that this is still a largely unknown field. We do not yet know how discourse linked with personal and social knowledge, attitudes and different experiences dictates the understanding of the world and forming of opinions. (ibid.) This, however, does not mean aspects of mind control should be completely ignored in discourse analysis, since as van Dijk (2008: 92) points out, matters such as how trustworthy and credible people see the source of knowledge influence their tendency to accept this information. Some form or level of mind control through discourse structures certainly appears to be possible.

One way for discourse and power to work together in such a larger, societal context is discourse's ability to construct systems of knowledge and beliefs. Discourse can describe and present something that is happening in the world as the truth. As something is consistently presented as the truth, it forms systems of knowledge, ideologies. Thompson (1984, as quoted by Fairclough 1997: 25) defines ideology as "a meaning that is serving a power". Factors that influence the way ideologies are formed include questions of what kind of cause-effect relationships things are presented to have, what kind of value systems they are thought to be founded on, how different social relationships are constructed, and so on. For example, there can be an ideological discourse produced by "the ingroup", us, that emphasizes the positive traits of our own group but presents the negative characteristics of "the outgroup", the others.

(van Dijk 2008: 5) These ideologies and ideological practices operate through various different institutions, such as education, the church and the media, and they are more often than not formed discursively. (van Dijk 2008: 34, 22)

Furthermore, discourse has the ability to build a hierarchy for things. It can hide and emphasize things, and even dictate who is allowed to describe or represent whom and in what context. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009:53, 56) Fairclough (1997: 64) also points out that ideological representations in texts are usually veiled, rather than presented directly. Often the overt markers of hierarchy are eliminated, but that of course does not mean the possible power asymmetry the markers reflect is disappearing. On the contrary, it just makes it more subtle and harder to detect. (Fairclough 1992: 203)

Fairclough adds that these representations often have a naturalising function. They are meant to make certain ways of using language seem natural, neutral and obvious. These ways of using language that the ideology naturalizes can be connected, for example, with maintaining and forming power and management relationships. More often than not, discourse is used to naturalise the ideologies of the privileged and governing: language can create illusory stability. (Fairclough 1997: 25, 66) Additionally, as Scollon and Scollon (2004: 10) state: “Anything said is said from a point of view or a motive”. This means that every representation also has potential to function as a means of power. Van Dijk (2008: 34) agrees, pointing out that this is in fact a hegemonic form of power use. He goes on to discuss the role of discourse and communication in general in the formation of ideology, pointing out that people use a variety of different discourses and information to form and change their attitudes and opinions. While this forming process may not be immediate, those in control of discourse also control the conditions and factors influencing this process, thus further strengthening the hegemony. (van Dijk 2008: 35-36)

According to Fairclough (1997: 26), these ideological representations can be analysed in the framework of three questions: first of all, what is the societal origin of the presented viewpoint? In other words, where does it come from and who is presenting it? Second of all, what are the possible motivations behind this viewpoint? And third of all, what are the consequences of the representation and how does it affect the intentions of the people in question? In order to answer all of these questions, the audience has to be

aware of multiple social and cultural factors influencing the production of the discourse. And as difficult as that may seem, some members of the audience are aware enough to be resistant to the set up positions that they are supposed to fit in (Fairclough 1992: 136).

The question that arises from such examinations of power and ideologies is, of course, about what kind of people or groups are actually in control and able to influence the different ideological processes. In other words, who are powerful in the world of discourse? Van Dijk (2008: 12-14) answers this question by highlighting such entities as governments, parliaments, the police and mass media. In addition, some experts such as professors and doctors may be in quite influential roles, as well as reporters as a part of powerful organisations. Furthermore, people such as politicians can possess quite a lot of symbolic power that enables them to act as powerful, even if they are not directly in control of access to discourse, discourse context or discourse itself. This kind of power is called symbolic since the people in possession of it do not necessarily need to have the same resources as for example governments or business operators do that socially enable them to exercise their power. These kinds of resources have social value and are not equally spread, such as wealth, rank, authority, status, and so on (van Dijk 2008: 29).

In the context of the present study, it is important not to ignore the link between language, power and politics. If governments and politicians are in a position of power, how does it manifest in discourse in addition to the symbolic power they hold? First of all, it should be stated that there is a particular language, discourse of politics. There are certain terms, phrases and ways of using discourse that are unique to politics. This is well illustrated for instance in the way politics and politicians are often divided simply to three groups: left, right and centre (Beard 2000: 6). The “left” has, in the course of history, belonged to many different groups, starting from socialists and communists, and ending with groups of environmental or civil-rights movements. The “right” on the other hand, has been the home of conservatives and racial supremacists alike. That is quite a broad selection to nestle under such simple terms, but somehow when talking about politics, there seems to be a level of common understanding about who is referred to when such terms are used. Though of course, as with all communication, that is always not the case. These labels can carry both positive and negative connotations with them, but they also carry certain ideologies, which is why

many politicians and journalists use them frequently to describe political positions of others or themselves (Beard 2000: 7).

Second of all, in addition to there being a language of politics, language is also a way of doing politics. One way for that to manifest is rhetoric. Cockcroft and Cockcroft (1992, as cited in Beard 2000: 35) call rhetoric “the art of persuasive discourse”. Similarly, Perelman (1982: 4-5) notes that while for Aristotle rhetoric had been specifically about the skill and technique of those speaking in a public square for the people gathered, what Perelman calls “new rhetoric” is in more general terms about discourse that “aims at persuasion and conviction, whatever the audience addressed and whatever the subject matter”. At the heart of it is a question of argumentation, which is discourse that aims at changing the audience’s opinions or beliefs (Perelman 1982: 11). And while this kind of discourse can of course exist in all forms of communications, it is often linked specifically to politics. When listening to politicians or reading about politics in newspapers, it is precisely this that we run into: speeches and comments that are aimed at persuading others to agree, at forming an agreement about how we believe things should be or how things should be run.

Due to discourse’s link with social change, that is to say the way in which changes in language use are linked to wider social and cultural processes and often reflect said social change, it is important not to underestimate the role of power in discourse. Social structures shape discourse in all levels, whether that is class, education or social relationships. (Fairclough 1992: 1, 64) Furthermore, the production of discourse is always somehow controlled, selected and organized according to whatever possible motivations its producers may have. The production process can establish, sustain or change power relations, which means that discourse is not only the place in which power can happen, but also a significant piece of power struggles in itself. (Fairclough 1992: 51, 67) Furthermore, according to Foucault (1984, in Fairclough 1992: 51), discourse is not only included in power, but is also one of the systems through which power spreads. Those responsible for producing discourse also have the power to confirm its validity.

Analysing these possible ideologies in discourse is very valuable, as it can reveal what kind of aspects of the world the audience is supposed to take for granted and what are highlighted as unusual or abnormal and thus unacceptable. On the other hand,

discourse can work in the other direction as well: discourse can also foreground experiences and questions that would otherwise remain hidden (Fairclough 1997: 25). That means that in the analysis process of discourse the text has to be looked at in all of the three dimensions of language use: not just as a piece of text, but also in its wider representative and constructive context that takes into consideration questions such as who has produced the text and for whom. Furthermore, in the context of the present study, it is important to note the relationship of media and power. As van Dijk (2008: 21) points out, there are certain professional norms in the world of media and news reporting, which dictate that the reporting should not include unbalanced representations of events, groups or people, even going so far as to appoint media the role of a watchdog whose job it is to operate against power abuse of all kinds. Whether that purpose is actually fulfilled or not, is another story. Media discourse, its role and its links with power will all be examined in more detail in the following section.

3.4 Media discourse

The discourse used in different media is a crucial object of research in many ways, and not the least because like any discourse, media discourse has the potential to influence our knowledge, beliefs, values, identities, and so on. What makes it especially important to study media discourse, is the way media discourse can reflect the social and cultural changes that are already happening in the world. Media has the ability to make things more or less significant depending on the way it chooses to portray them. (Fairclough 1997: 19)

Media today plays a very big role in shaping the ways in which people view the world around them. News media, whether that is print media, broadcast news or the Internet, is the tool we use to find out information, to stay on top of what is going on in the world around us and especially how anything new might concern or influence us. It is exactly this pivotal position that media holds in contemporary societies that makes researching and analysing it meaningful and worthwhile. In addition, while we traditionally view the news media as reporting news exactly as they are happening, merely as a communication tool, this is not completely accurate. News are always produced by someone for a specific audience. They do not function as a simple mirror,

but are instead cultural products influenced by many different factors (Fairclough 1997: 136). And so they can construct, maintain, reinforce and weaken ideas, power relationships and cultural identities. Furthermore, the power of media is precisely linguistic and discursive, so the discursive analysis of media texts can offer a lot of important information. (Fairclough 1997: 10-11)

As mentioned, media has the ability to influence things by portraying them in a certain way. This process of representation is always a question of what is included and what is left out, what is put first and what is deemed secondary (Fairclough 1997: 13). Fairclough goes on to point out that there are three important questions when it comes to analysing media discourse, and representation is the first one of these. The second is identity, and the third one is relationships. (Fairclough 1997: 14) These are, of course, not different from the important questions concerning discourse in general. However, media discourse has some special features that are specific to it, and those will be looked at in more detail next.

There are two tensions that run through media discourse and influence the way it works. Firstly, there is a clear tension between the informative and entertaining sides of media (Fairclough 1997: 20). On the other hand, we are used to looking at media as informative and an important part of our society that provides us with knowledge that we need and cannot perhaps get to on our own. But on another hand, with the emergence of the Internet and the changes that are happening on popular culture, there is constantly more and more pressure on media to also entertain. The competition for audiences is serious business, and there is a lot of commercial money that depends on how many followers the media outlets can achieve. There seems to be a consensus in the world of media that it is not enough anymore to just inform the audience, the audience wants to be entertained. This influences the topics chosen by the media, the ways in which they choose to portray certain issues or people, and the way in which information is presented. The conflict is seen for example in the news media, as there are two alternative discourse practices within the news media discourse: the hard news that refer to the supposedly more serious news, and the soft news that consist of topics more related to human-interests (Fairclough 1997: 89). In addition, Habermas (1998, in Fairclough 1997: 63) points out that the changing media is also transforming the role of the audience. They are not seen as participants anymore, but instead as consumers.

Secondly, there is also tension between the private and the public side of media discourse (Fairclough 1997: 18). Media does not only represent and recreate the relationship between the two different sides, but also restructures it (Fairclough 1992: 113). Discourse in general is different in the private and the public domain, but as the media slowly continues to mix the domains together, also media discourse changes. For example, politicians used to be seen more as a part of the political world and featured in the media mostly as key figures in whatever was going on in the society at the moment. However, over the years they have started to be featured in the media also as private figures, their personal relationships and attributes making the news. Furthermore, media discourse is produced in the public domain with public material, but is consumed in the private domain (Fairclough 1997: 54). It influences the way media discourse is produced and consumed, but also transforms the discourse in the private domain: the discourse models of the public domain are taken to the private domain (Fairclough 1997: 88).

Related to media's relationship with the private and public domains is also the way in which media works inside the social structures of our world today (Fairclough 1997: 22). Media is tightly linked to people's every-day-lives on one hand, and to business and trading on another. Media is always present in our lives, whether that is through the TV, the radio, newspapers or the Internet. Media has to fit into the every-day-lives of the average people and families in order to achieve the audience it needs. But then again, it cannot function without a working relationship with the business world around it, which also has influence over the content produced by the media through the money that it controls. Over all, media comprises of organizations pursuing profit: as large audiences as possible with as minimal costs as possible (Fairclough 1997: 60). Fairclough (1997: 22) sees an actual change in the authority relations within mass media: consumers are now often more important than producers and their preferences. The texts produced by media are now seen as commodities, and are thus very vulnerable to potential pressures from the markets (Fairclough 1997: 61). It speaks volumes about the impact of consumerism and popular culture on the world of media today.

The way media discourse is produced nevertheless has a huge effect on the final product, and the crucial features of the production process should not be ignored. No matter how much we might want to view the media as neutral and objective, that is

rarely true. Media is always influenced by the economic and political forces that are present in the production process. (Fairclough 1997: 52) How journalists choose their topics, sources and representations, and in turn which one of these the editors choose to publish is not a process of simply determining what may be interesting to the audience. It is, in fact, a learned process that may favour one group or person over another. (van Dijk 2008: 55) Furthermore, Scollon points out (1998: ix) that there are certain hierarchies in play also in the production of media discourse. While journalists are always expected to bear the responsibility of what they have written and their identity is clearly identified in the bylines of newspaper stories, they still do not have a voice of their own: they do not actually own the words they have written or have the right to dictate how they are used. In other words, they do not have the same rights and privileges in the production process as those higher in the hierarchy.

There is also a sort of spatial and temporal dislocation in the production of media discourse. It is produced by many different people and passes through multiple hands in the process. They all influence the discourse in one way or another. However, when looking at the bigger picture, the discourse is in fact produced by only a few, but it has to be consumed by the masses. In addition, it is produced with the future in mind: for example in the case of newspapers, they are written today and read tomorrow, or optionally written yesterday and read today. (Fairclough 1997: 53)

The different communication techniques between different media also matter. Radio and television can make the meaning they are conveying feel and seem more personal than newspapers and other printed media (Fairclough 1997: 56). Radio and television can speak to the consumer in a way that the written word cannot always achieve. But on another hand, some studies have shown that when people read a piece of news from the press, they are more likely to recall it than if they have seen it on television (Robinson and Levy 1986, as cited in van Dijk 2008: 55). Then again, it is important to remember that the media we use continues to develop and transform constantly as new technological advances are made. Scollon and Scollon (2004: 7) point out how closely linked the discourse people use and the technologies they use to communicate are. What follows is the fact that however one of them may change, that change is always somehow reflected in the other one as well. It has also been argued that a text does not have one permanent meaning but the meaning always varies according to the interpretation. Consequently, a lot of research with media discourse has been done in

the form of reception studies, where the text itself plays a smaller role and the main focus is on the consumers and how they interpret and view the text. (Fairclough 1997: 28)

Scollon (1998: vii) points out, however, that between the sociolinguistics analysing the text, and the media studies analysing the reception and audience behaviour, there is a distinct gap. He argues that media texts should in fact be understood as forms of social interaction in order to consider also the increasing role they play in daily interactions and in the construction of social identities. On one hand, he points to the social interaction among journalists, printers and other producers of the texts. (Scollon 1998: viii) For instance, instead of writing to the readers, journalists tend to write for each other, attempting to find their own positions among each other and those who own the media (Scollon 1998: 5). For the reader, on another hand, the primary interaction happens with others also reading the texts, using the act of reading as one feature in the construction of their social interaction and identities. Keeping this in mind, the texts and even whole newspapers could be analysed from the point of view of interaction: journalists, editors and publishers as the key players and the readers as spectators. (Scollon 1998: viii-ix)

Then again, when it comes to media discourse, it is important to note the nature of mass media. The participants in the actual communication process are the reporters, the audience, and various “third participants” who consist, for example, of experts used in the story as sources. However, the actual media situations are more like monologues of sorts: often there is no immediate feedback from the audience. The important question to ask here is how the identities and relationships of the participants are constructed and presented? (Fairclough 1997: 57) Media consistently constructs both individual and societal identities for all the three participants in the discourse it uses, and it has the ability to influence the relationships between these different groups. The fact that the public is so large – it is not called the mass media for nothing – increases the power and influence of the media. The media in turn can further confirm and strengthen the power of social actors with the way in which these actors are portrayed in the media: for instance, power holders that are routinely given space in the media only receive further legitimation for their power status. This illustrates the role of media in social power structures. (van Dijk 2008: 55)

In effect, media can blur the lines between the majority of people and those making the decisions, since it has the ability to make whatever seems to be the dominating ideology in the society at the time to seem natural and given to the consumers (Fairclough 1997: 143). And when something is so systematically and widely presented as natural, it makes questioning and challenging that ideology seem that much more difficult and pointless. Sometimes it even makes it seem unnecessary. The same is true, of course, also for the dominating power relations in the society. Media relies heavily on sources that are official or at least widely respected, whereas everyday-people are allowed merely to react or offer their own experiences, which are then dismissed as not as relevant as the official expertise. This results in an image that primarily presents the view of the dominant societal structure. (Fairclough 1997: 66-69) Van Dijk (2008: 38) agrees, noting that the traditional professional ideologies of news value and newsworthiness tend to favour certain elite groups, whether that is different institutions, social classes or nations. As media discourse can influence also other types of discourse, it is extremely important to ask questions about how the power relationships at work in the society influence the media, and of course, how the media influences the power relationships: the type of relationship between media discourse and such social factors as class, gender or ethnicity can reveal how media discourse works on an ideological level (Fairclough 1997: 23).

Fairclough (1992: 196) uses election campaigns as examples of the effect media discourse can have on the world it is situated in: the media can significantly simplify what is happening on the campaign through their choices of how to select and represent the complicated issues and events that arise. It is easy to reduce the interaction of the campaign to straightforward arguments that follow each other, react and answer to each other. The consumers, however, do not see this process: they only see the end product that is presented as the reality that is merely just reflected to them. But in order to stay on top of the game, the political parties then start to shape their campaigns in order to fit them into the process, to make sure the end result is as positive for them as possible. Thus the media can influence the picture portrayed of the campaigns to the audience, and through the process also influence the campaigns themselves. It is a very clear example of the constructive effect that media can have and of the way it is hidden.

4 IDENTITY

Identity as a concept is one that is difficult to describe, to take apart and explain. It is something that we all seem to have, all seem to possess and that we even take for granted. But ask us to explain it and like with nations, we run into the same problem of not having the words for it. (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 5) In this chapter I will present a few descriptions of identity to help understand it and its role in the society. I will look at how identity can be constructed and its link with discourse to better illustrate what analysing discourse can tell us about identity. The focus will then be turned towards examining the concept of a national identity and how it could be changing with the demands of a constantly more globalised, more multicultural world. Finally, I will end the chapter with a look at British identities and some previous studies on them.

4.1 Identity – what is it?

The Oxford English Dictionary defines identity, referring to individuals, as follows: “The sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition of being a single individual; the fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality.” Of course the concept is more complicated than its semantic definition, but from this we can see a very common, widely held perspective on identity: it is something we naturally have, an essential quality we carry through life. But looking at identity in more detail it becomes clear there is more than that to the concept.

Stuart Hall (1999: 11) states that identity is, from the very beginning, an invention. Zygmunt Bauman (1996: 18-19) sees identity similarly, calling it a modern invention that was “born as a problem”. So instead of the essentialist view on identity as a sort of a natural quality, both Hall and Bauman see identity as something that has been invented, or constructed. Bauman (1996: 18-32) describes the evolution of identity as he sees it with the different phases of identity and what identity meant in each of these phases: when identity was first invented, at the Pilgrim phase, the problem concerning identity was how to build or construct an identity in the sand, and following that, how to preserve it in such an unstable environment. That was the modern problem of identity. But with the move to the so called postmodernism, the problem instead became about

how to make or keep identity as something *not* permanent. So at the Tourist phase, the goal was to make sure an identity would not stick. Bauman (ibid.) describes the phase beyond that as the Player phase, where the question is about how to switch between different identities, as options are open and one fixed identity may not be seen as something desirable or worth pursuing.

When it comes to the place that identity is born out of, identity is often seen as being recognized through difference, produced and narrated in a controversial relationship with someone or something else, the “Other” (Hall 1999: 12, 1996a: 4). Robins (1996: 79) asks the question: “what would an identity mean in isolation?”, explaining that it is often exactly through comparing and mirroring who other people are and what they stand for that we find out the same about ourselves. The fact that identity can be seen to be constructed specifically through difference means that identity is just as much about the things that one is not as it is about the things one is. Saukkonen (1996: 10) agrees, stating that since identity is not born out of nothing, it is necessary for there to be an Other for an identity to be constructed. However, it should be noted that the existence or presence of the Other is not always necessarily clear and obvious, and similarly the construction of identities is not necessarily a very obvious process. As Billig (1995: 109) argued about national identity, it is “a routine way of talking and listening... A form of life which habitually closes the front door and seals the borders.” So while drawing the differences between ourselves and the Others may be an instrumental part in the origin of our identities, it can also be a very unconscious and ordinary process.

Another way to look at identity is to see it as a system. For instance, Reicher et al. (2009: 19) talk about the gap between rationality and emotionality, knowing and feeling, and about how it is always necessary for us to have both sides of these elements in order to find our place in the world and to imagine the future. Identity, according to them, works as “the psychological process which brings these two elements together and makes behaviour meaningful” (ibid). So instead of looking at identity as an object or a singular thing, they see identity as a system that guides not just how we see ourselves but also how we behave and interact with others, as well as how we interpret the things around us. (Reicher et al. 2009: 19-21)

Similarly, Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 193) look at identity as a process: “not so much a noun (identity) as a verb (identify with)”. So instead of identity being just

something we carry with us or something that we are, it operates as a verb and is more about what we *do*. Furthermore, they separate three different aspects of identity, three different ways in which manifests: first is the content of identity, which influences what kind of action is seen as legitimate or illegitimate, what kind of goals are pursued and what are abandoned. The second manifestation is the boundaries of identity, which dictate who is seen as the Other and who is accepted as a part of the social identity group. And finally, the third manifestation is the salience of identity, which influences what place is considered home and what place is considered foreign and how strongly. (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 190-191) So while we often consider identity a singular thing, this illustrates how many different sides there are to the concept.

Notably, Reicher et al. (2009: 20) also talk about two different levels of identity: personal identity and social identity. While personal identity consists of the things that make us one of a kind as individuals, social identity consists of the things that make our group one of a kind. Social identity in particular is interesting, since it is through it that we look at not just ourselves but the world and people around us. Hence, it has massive influence on the way in which we relate to, interact with and behave towards others. As Reicher et al. (2009: 20-24) point out, there is thus also social power in social identities: they are “world-making things”. Furthermore, Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 190) state that identity is not about just culture, but instead has an effect on multiple issues, including those of political, economic and civic nature. So as identities have power and they affect things outside of themselves, they also matter.

With the idea of social identities comes also the notion that we do not have just one single, all-encompassing identity. But instead, as we all belong to more than just one group, whether that group is formed based on our nationality, age, status, job, hobby or something else, we all need different social identities at different times (Reicher et al. 2009: 20). That indicates that identity is not simply something permanent and rigid, but instead more dynamic and capable of change (Reicher et al. 2009: 38). Saukkonen (1996: 10) is of the same opinion, stating that identities are never perfect or stationary, but constantly go through interaction and regeneration. On the other hand, there are also other explanations for these fluent and dynamic identities, compared to the more essentialist view of all-encompassing identities. Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 192) talk about the process of fragmentation that has followed the rise of individualism: the traditional, collective social identities are going through a phase where they are

fragmenting, individuals placing more importance on their personal identities. Hall (1999: 58) sees the same phenomenon happening as the result of globalisation, where the traditional collective identities are perhaps suffering through disintegration, as a result of which new hybrid identities are forming.

These hybrid identities will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, but for now it is important to note that viewing identity as static or fixed does not give us the whole picture but instead just limits our understanding on this complex concept. Wodak et al. (2009: 11) even go as far as to point out that using identity as “a completely static idea, the concept wrongly suggests that people belong to a solid, unchanging, intrinsic collective unit because of a specific history which they supposedly have in common”. Instead, they remind us that people keep changing, and thus identities do as well: in practise, the essentialist “absolute sameness criterion” of identity runs into too many problems to function properly in our society (ibid.).

4.2 Discourse and the construction of identities

The previous section illustrated how identity can be seen in two different lights, either according to the essentialist view of identity as an absolute, natural quality or alternatively according to the postmodern view of it as a constructed and a more fluent concept. While the discussion on the nature of identity and what it actually is could be continued, for the present study it suffices to say the analysis is conducted from the perspective of identity as a construction that is capable of change and thus influenced by a variety of individual and social factors. Next the focus is turned towards the question of how exactly can identities then be constructed.

In Chapter 3, we looked at discourse and especially its constructive nature, at how discourse has an ability to not only represent and reproduce but also to construct reality. This is true also when it comes to identity. Lacan (in Hall 1999: 41) stated that identity is built similarly to language. Billig (1995: 60) describes identity as the “ways of talking about the self and community”, a statement in which identity itself is constructed through the process of discourse. Similar sentiments are often understood even more clearly in the field discourse analysis, where there seems to be a consensus on the fact that discourse can influence the way we see ourselves and each other, and

can thus also construct identities. Scollon (1998: vii), for instance, describes how social identities are constructed in discourse, especially in those discourses that are a part of our interaction: moderated and controlled by different social practises. So in the context of discourse, identities can for example be seen to be born, constructed and transformed in everyday interactions such as language use, history, media, music and advertisements (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 63). Hall (1996a: 4) agrees, stating that “identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse”.

The link between identity and discourse becomes even clearer when it comes to the topic of national identity. As seen in Chapter 2, nations can be viewed as “imagined communities”, built as social constructions. Saukkonen (1996: 16) discusses the discursive character of our concept of a nation, stating that “nation” is something built on narratives and mental associations and actually, does not necessarily counterpart with anything concrete in reality. So how then are national identities born? Hall (1999: 47) calls national culture a discourse, arguing that discourse can construct national identities by giving people a nation to identify with. Similarly, Wodak et al. (2009: 22) bridge the gap between the imagined community and the individual identities of those belonging to that community with the idea that the community “is constructed and conveyed in discourse, predominantly in narratives of national culture. National identity is thus the product of discourse.”

This strongly supports the role of discourse in identity construction. Among others, for instance specifically Wodak et al. (2009: 3-4) have researched national identity as a discursive construction, assuming discourse is the tool through which national identities are produced and that different discourses of national identity are possible due to varied cultural and political factors. Following this idea, remembering that discourse can change depending on the situation, one can conclude that thus different discourses can also construct different kinds of identities. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 64) agree, noting that in addition, discourse could then also be used to challenge and transform identities: we are who we are at least partly due to what is narrated about us and how we narrate ourselves. If that narration changes, so does our image of ourselves. This means that discourse can also be used to examine what kind of identities have at particular times been “prominent, possible, or even unwanted” (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 64-65). Analysing discourse can provide us with

information about identities, about their construction and about the hierarchy behind different identities.

4.3 National and hybrid identities

Looking at national identity in more detail, we come back to the question of nationalism. For instance Smith (1991: 11) sees nationalism as formed through history. According to him, there is no need for the members of the group to be all alike since there can still be a bond formed amongst them through other factors, such as shared ideology, religion or civic culture. These factors transform that history into a sense of common identity, a national identity. Arnason (2006: 44) also comments on the connection between nationalism and national identity, pointing out that it is the articulation of national identity that truly is such an important part of nationhood. In addition, Hroch (2000, as cited in Delanty and Kumar 2006: 44) stated that “there is no nation without national consciousness” and that it is exactly the fact that those belonging to the nation acknowledge their membership in it and see the membership in an esteemed light that makes the nation. This illustrates the importance of national identities and the value in analysing and depicting them.

As mentioned in the previous section, national identity is often seen as the product of a national culture. Hall (1996b: 613-615) describes the five fundamental aspects in the narration of national culture that make the belonging and membership of nationhood possible: firstly, there is the narrative of the nation, which consists of national narratives easily found in everyday things such as literature, music and media. It has the ability to connect different stories, symbols, rituals and so on, and bring them together as representations of shared experiences, triumphs and defeats. The second aspect is origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness, which refers to the way in which the narratives present the national identity as “the original identity”. It presents national character and national identity as an unchanging and unbroken entity. The third aspect is the invention of tradition, which is a concept originally presented by Hobsbawm and Ranger. It is a way of explaining the chaotic, sometimes even disastrous aspects of history into something shared and understandable, of creating community out of that confusion. The fourth aspect is the myth of origin, which refers

to the presented origin of the nation and the way in which it quite often does not actually exist in reality. Instead, it exists somewhere in myths. And the fifth and final aspect is the idea of a “pure, original people”, which is a way of emphasising and supporting the national identity and its status. With these five fundamental aspects, a narrative of a national culture is born. (ibid.) And through that narrative, there exists a discourse that makes a national identity possible.

But Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 1-2), while remarking that national identity “comes with the territory”, also discuss the question of whether or not national identity is something that everyone in fact has. And if so, is it something we “get” because of the place we are born in and something that is constructed and manufactured by the state, or something that we develop ourselves? Their answer is actually both, since they argue that identity can be seen as “the hinge between structure and action”, meaning that how people define their own or others’ identities is in no certain terms a simple process, merely handed down from somewhere above but instead consists of negotiation and mobilising by both, individuals and state. (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 3, 8-9) This makes national identity something that is constructed by multiple actors in multiple different situations.

When it comes to the identity of a state or a nation, Saukkonen (1996: 12) lists things necessary for the creation and survival of a national identity, starting with the recognition of the nation by itself and especially by others. This is reinforced and maintained with national symbols, such as flags. In addition, the ability of nation to externally distinguish itself from other nations is important, and this is done with borders. The nation also needs common history and experiences to create a sense of community through the past. And finally, the nation can only survive if there are no internal political disputes threatening the existence of the nation. These are all interesting points in the context of the present study, since one of the research subjects is the idea of Britain and its construction. Britain is built of regions with their own flags, inhabited by people who, on all sides of the regional borders, might consider themselves British or alternative English, Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish, and which lately has been the subject of an increasing number of internal political disputes, not the least of which is the constant discussion on Scottish independence.

Researching Britain and British identities has its difficulties since despite the regional borders, there are no clear boundaries between the different identities contained inside the Union. Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 1-2) ask the familiar question of “What is the difference between ‘British’ and ‘English’, ‘Scottish’ or ‘Welsh’?” They offer the simple answer of British being a so called “umbrella identity” under which the regional identities can peacefully exist, and argue that the different identities do not need to be seen as contradictory but can be viewed as nested and complementary. However, they go on to note that in practice, in the recent decades in Britain there can be seen an increase in the amount of people disagreeing with this notion. Instead, it seems that people might be placing more and more importance on their regional identities. (ibid.) The different British identities and their role in Britain today will be discussed more comprehensively in the next section as previous studies on the subject are presented, but the blurriness of British identities and their boundaries turns the discussion towards Stuart Hall’s concept of hybrid identities.

When discussing identity and what it is, it was noted that identity can be seen on two different levels: on the level of individual identity and on the level of social identity. And that since we all belong to more than just one group, we also need more than one social identity (Reicher et al. 2009: 20). Wodak et al. (2009: 16) write about a similar phenomenon, about how we all belong to different regional, linguistic, ethnic, religious, political etc. groups, the result of which is that we possess what they call “multiple identities”. Hall (1999: 71) on another hand talks about the concept of hybrid identities.

Bauman (1996: 23-32) talked about identities in the postmodern era from the point of view of a Tourist or a Player: identities that we do not want to be stuck with but instead would prefer to switch between, go back and forth. Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 192) blamed this development on individualism and the way in which it has resulted in the fragmentation of social identities. But Hall (1999: 58) sees it as an impact of globalization, and notably does not see it solely as a bad thing. For Hall (ibid.), the new hybrid identities he describes do not necessarily mean the weakening of identities but instead a new form that can even be a sign of strength. He sees these hybrid identities as identities that draw from several different cultures at the same time and that are products of the complex and multi-layered mix of these cultures. People with these hybrid identities were shaped by unique cultures and traditions, and while their identities might never be uniform or consistent in the traditional sense of the

words, they will belong to multiple “homes” simultaneously. (Hall 1999: 71) So these multiple and hybrid identities can also be seen as an opportunity. Wodak et al. (2009: 17) agree, stating that multiple or hybrid identities can be seen as “a potential corrective element”.

Keeping this in mind, the present study looks at the possibility of multiple or hybrid identities as something quite ordinary in the context of Britain and in the data of the analysis conducted. As Bechhofer and McCrone (2009b: 93) remark, national identity is a very personal concept. The mere presence of the Union has demanded its people to navigate their way through not only their individual and social identities, but also through the presence of their national identities which surely do not always consist of easy either/or -options. Thus it would make sense to expect the data to reflect such possible overlapping and mixing of identities as well.

4.4 British identities

In this section I will take a closer look at British identities and the ways in which they have developed, as well as present some previous studies on them. While the data in the present study is quite recent and the goal of the study is to examine the current developments of British identities in print media, it is still important to provide some background for the identities and their statuses in Britain. This is needed in order for the findings of the analysis and the conclusions reached to find their place and reasons in the context of British identities.

4.4.1 National identity in Britain

When it comes to what we call here the “British identity”, referring to British as the already mentioned umbrella -identity, sitting on top of the regional, English, Scottish and Welsh identities, there have been several different explanations for its birth. Here I will present two of them. Firstly, McCrone (2001: 98) states that Britishness was invented during a war with France, between 1707 and 1837. That is quite a long period, but it is a good example of how a relationship with the Other plays a part in the process

of constructing an identity, as was discussed in the previous chapter relating to identity and how one can be developed or constructed. Britain needed to forge a state identity in the course of the war, to unite its perhaps divided people following the Act of the Union of 1707 that brought Scotland into the Union. McCrone (2001: 97-98) points out that accordingly, Britain is “a state-nation masquerading as a nation-state”, meaning that Britain became a state first, and the forging of the nation, at least in the sense of community and a sense of identity, came only later.

The second explanation behind the British identity comes from imperialism. Kumar (2001: 45) argues that while traditionally national identity came as a result of an institutional collective such as the Church or the Parliament, this did not happen in Britain. In Britain, “British” overrode these institutions, and one reason for that is the way in which imperialism demanded that everyone included in the British Empire be brought under the same Crown, whichever part of the world they were from. As McCrone (2001: 104) notes, “British” was born to be an inclusive concept, not an exclusive one as many other national identities: if they were considered a British subject under the Crown, they were British “whether they liked it or not”. Kumar (2001: 46-47) points out the extent to which traditional nationalism during imperialism was quite foreign to the British, meaning that as the British saw themselves as a “world civilization”, nationalism was something beneath them, completely unnecessary, “puny... for lesser nations”.

Kumar (2003: 242) also notes the umbrella identity of Britain, the celebration of a multicultural Britain which is not about separation but instead about something completely new, something that could “bode well for the future health and vitality of British culture”. When it comes to the political aspect of British identity, Kumar (2001: 52) highlights the Labour Party and the national Labour movement, describing it as “quite unmistakably British” and commenting on how it played an important role in connecting the different regions of the UK, more so than any other movement or political party before or after it. The British identity did not go on to triumph forever, however. Kumar sees also the decline of Britishness, the threats to the British identity. By 1960s, there had started a movement in politics, which before this decade had only appeared in culture, that for instance in England brought Englishness to the forefront again (Kumar 2001: 52). One indication of this was the New Right Conservative politicians (*ibid.*). McCrone (2001: 105) sees this development starting already after

1945, following the Second World War, where the “loss of the empire, the decline of political influence and waning economic standing highlighted the uneasy marriage” of the Union and thus also threatened the prominence of the British identity.

This is what Kumar considers the background for what is sometimes seen as the rather slow emergence of English national identity. He (2001: 43) argues that the English identity should be seen in the context of Britain’s imperial history which, against the traditional view on it, is actually double sided: not only did there exist the British empire and its colonies, but there was also a so called “internal empire”, consisting of the United Kingdom under which Wales, Scotland and Ireland were subject to the Crown. And thus, according to Kumar (2001: 44), the English identity is “a kind of residue; the response to and the result of England’s engagement with its imperial venture”. As a result of this history, many see English nationalism a problematic idea, since for some there is no such thing. Instead, they talk about patriotism, royalism and imperialism (ibid.). First signs of an English identity did not emerge until towards the end of the 19th century, and at the time the movement was clearly cultural: it was seen in fiction, folklore, historiography and literary studies, among others (Kumar 2001: 47-48). And it stayed cultural, until the aforementioned movement in politics after the 1960s as the British identity started to decline.

During its imperial history, England and the English had no reason to examine more closely themselves, to ask questions about what it meant to be from England. England had bigger aspirations. (Kumar 2003: 250) But as questions started to arise from other parts of the UK, as differences were drawn between England and Scotland, as the sense of Scottishness that had been kept alive through the forming of the Union and the Empire arose, and as the reasons why Wales lacked similar incentive to break away from the Union became clear, it became also evident in England how serious the effects of any developments regarding the break-up of the Union would be. All of these things “provided the English with an identity” of its own. (Kumar 2003: 244-250) It broke England apart from the image of the Union and the Empire, made it ask the question: who are we?

That does not mean that the English identity, such as it were then or such as it is now, would be a simple, clear thing. Quite the contrary. There still certainly exists difficulty in distinguishing between the English and the British identity (Kumar 2001: 41,

McCrone 2001: 103). The English, after all, were not the ones brought under someone else's rule, but instead always saw themselves as the driving force behind both the Union and the Empire. It is not surprising, then, that for some the difference between British and English may just seem like "a change of label for what they see as the same thing" (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 10). However, as Curtice and Heath (2009: 41) note, devolution should have at least in theory made the English more aware of the difference by now. To find out if that was indeed the case, they decided to look at the different identity developments in England in recent years.

In the study in question, Curtice and Heath examined trends in English national identity, focusing especially on whether or not devolution had brought any significant change with it. As their data, they looked at the British Social Attitudes Survey from both before and after the implantation of devolution. As British identities have been researched quite extensively in the past, information on them is readily available. One example is the British Social Attitudes Survey, conducted yearly by the National Centre for Social Research. Every year, the Survey uses random probability sampling to interview over 3,000 people all over Britain (British Social Attitudes 30, 2013). The survey's goal is to find out what people living in Britain think about life in Britain and how they think Britain should be run. In the survey, the respondents can also be asked, for example, whether they would identify themselves as British, English, Scottish or Welsh. Usually they do not have to pick just one answer, but are able to pick several at the same time. Surveys such as this provide important information on how residents of the United Kingdom themselves see their identity, which identity is seen as the most prominent, and which is valued while another might even be discarded.

Curtice and Heath looked at only the respondents living in England, since it was specifically the difference between "English" and "British" they were interested in. They found that there were signs indicating that perhaps the English identity was becoming slightly stronger, or at least more common, following devolution (Curtice and Heath 2009: 48). However, when asked in 2007 to choose between "English", "British" and "both", multiple picks being possible, more of the English respondents still chose "British" than "English": 68% chose "British", 57% "English", and 34% chose "both" (Curtice and Heath 2009: 43). And when asked to choose just one, 48% chose "British" and 39% "English" (Curtice and Heath 2009: 44-45). From this it becomes very clear that when forced to choose between "English" and "British", the

proportion of people who choose “English” decreases significantly from those who choose “English” when they are able to choose multiple options at the same time. So the willingness to define oneself as simply “English”, without a connection to being also British, did not seem very strong in 2007.

What is especially noteworthy in Curtice and Heath’s (2009) study were the responses given when choosing options on the Moreno Scale. On the Moreno Scale respondents are able to choose between options that also indicate a degree to which they identify with being either British or English: they can choose for instance that they are “wholly British” or “more British than English”. Here the responses showed that when people were able to express some form of multiple or hybrid identity, the majority did so. However, the proportion of people who here chose either “wholly English” or “more English than British” had in 2007 slightly increased, a development which Curtice and Heath (2009: 45-48) dated to around the time of devolution. However, interestingly while the English identity might have become more common, there was no corresponding decline in the proportion of people who chose “British” or other form of multiple identity as their own (ibid.). Thus the study did not provide any evidence to prove that the British identity would have been declining, despite the hints of a stronger English identity.

Unsurprisingly, the findings when looking at the way in which Scots answer similar questions are very different. Both Wales and particularly Scotland have had a significant control over their own civil society, in other words for example the organisation of education, the running of the legal system and the status of the church, which enabled the perseverance of their own national identities within the Union (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 13). So when it comes to Scotland, an interesting study was conducted by Bechhofer and McCrone (2009b: 67) where they looked at how people prioritised their identity by asking respondents in England, Scotland and Wales to choose their first choice of identity from a list which consisted of almost thirty different social and national identities, including for example choices such as parent, wife or husband, woman or male, and of course British, English, Scottish and Welsh. Both in 2001 and 2003 when responses were collected, the Scots were the most likely to choose their national identity, “Scottish”, compared to the English and the Welsh choosing their own respective national identities. And similarly, the Scots were also the least likely to choose “British” as their primary identity. The differences in the

statistics were very clear on these two questions, according to Bechhofer and McCrone (ibid.), making it very clear that the Scots identified themselves primarily through being Scottish. Moreover, McCrone (2001: 107) goes as far as to argue that the Scots in the recent decade are now “more strongly Scottish in their political self-identification than they have ever been”, claiming that as Scottish nationalism has now found a place and a platform in both, its cultural and political aspects, there is a dialectic that allows them to strengthen and intensify each other.

However, while Curtice and Heath might have seen signs of devolution’s impact on the English national identity in their study, Bechhofer and McCrone do not detect similar influences from devolution on the Scottish national identity. While it is clear from their findings that for the Scots being Scottish matters and is highly rated, it also seems that this appreciation existed just as strongly already before the setting up of devolved institutions. (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009b: 70, 73) And furthermore, their study also does not detect any particular hostility towards the British or towards being British from the part of the Scots. While the Scots would also choose the Scottish flag over the British one if asked, they do not see the choice necessarily as an either/or - choice or express any resentment towards the British flag. And while their primary identification is clearly “Scottish”, they are not hostile towards the idea of being British or see it as a bad thing. For them, being Scottish is just simply the primary choice. (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009b: 76, 91)

Predictably, the Welsh answer the questions differently from both the English and the Scots, and end up somewhere in the middle. In the British Social Attitudes Survey in 2003, 18% of the Welsh respondents chose “mainly British” as their answer, while 8% in Scotland and 23% in England chose the same. In Wales, 40% chose “mainly Welsh”, while the corresponding percentage in Scotland was 69 for “mainly Scottish” and in England 40 for “mainly English”. (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 199) The difference between the Welsh and the Scots is interesting, and again brings up questions about why there is such a divide between these two different countries. Kumar (2003: 244) notes that compared to the Scots and the Northern Irish, the Welsh have been the most integrated people of the UK, both socially and politically. Haesly (2005: 257-259) points out that while there are certain similarities between Wales and Scotland, for instance the pride taken in their national cultures and the way in which it is possible for them both to clearly distinguish themselves from England, there are also

numerous differences. The biggest of these is the way in which the bond between the people and the country in Scotland is much more tangible than that in Wales, where the bond is mostly emotional. In Wales, the notions about Welshness are more complicated and contested, and thus also further away from people's every-day lives. (ibid.) Scotland is seen as a unique nation, and thus also the answer to the question of what is Scotland and Scottishness is easy and has specific answers, but in Wales similar questions often bring up only further questions (Haesly 2005: 260).

In practise, Haesly (2005: 248-251) sees this in his study, in which he examined the academic division between civic and ethnic national identities in Scotland and in Wales. He found three different types of Scottish national identities and three different types of Welsh national identities. In Scotland these were called Civic, Nationalistic and Proud. Interestingly, the Nationalistic identity type is completely missing from Wales, according to the findings of his study. Instead, the three different types of Welsh national identities were Civic, Proud and Superficial. According to Haesly (2005: 256), the lack of the Nationalistic identity type and instead the presence of the Superficial type suggested that in Wales, the imagined community requires such stretching of imagination that it is approaching the point of even breaking. The Welsh know they are Welsh, are sure of that fact, but at the same time there is "no shared idea about what precisely Wales is or who is Welsh" (ibid.).

Haesly (2005: 257) also points out that when looking at the Welsh identity in more detail, it becomes clear that one of the core ingredients is its link to the British identity. The Welsh identity, lacking the Nationalistic identity type, is not about excluding the idea of being also British but is actually about the complete opposite. While the Scots were also open to the idea of multiple identity, the Welsh even emphasise the idea. Being Welsh is compatible with being also British, and that is seen as a good thing. This, together with the other differences drawn here between Wales and Scotland, offers also good reasons for why in the recent years the talk about independence has come from Scotland, not Wales. Kumar (2003: 243) states that it is quite apparent the Welsh do not have big aspirations for breaking up the Union, but instead the goal of nationalism in Wales has been more about protecting and preserving the Welsh cultural heritage. Moreover, where the Scots have their oil in the North Sea, the Welsh lack similar key natural resources that would give them a reason and a way of

separating, instead profiting at least to a certain point from the subsidies from the UK government (Kumar 2003: 244).

4.4.2 National identity, politics and media

But even while keeping all of this in mind, it is quite clear that the developments that have come in the form of devolution and all the debate about the future of the Union must have had its effects on Wales and the Welsh people as well. Both Wales and Scotland are now in a stage where they are “redefining their relationship to the British state” (McCrone 2001: 107). In the context of identities, an important question then becomes the relationship between identity and any potential political developments. Does identity change politics, or do politics change identity? Was devolution driven by a potential decline in the British identity and strengthening of the nationalistic identities, or did devolution cause the aforementioned developments? Or both? It was stated above while discussing previous studies on Scotland that it did not seem like devolution had had much impact on the Scottish national identity, possibly because the identity was felt so strongly already before. And that may very well be true. On the other hand, it was also mentioned that there were some signs devolution may have had an impact on the English national identity, by making the difference between England and Britain clearer. And again, there is no reason to doubt this, illustrating that the question is by no means a simple one but seems to be depended on many different variables. It seems safe to assume that the pursuit of devolution was driven, at least to some extent, by Scotland and Wales. Whether that was because of any development in their national identities is more difficult to pin down. After all, even devolution itself can be seen from two different perspectives: on one hand it can, for instance in Scotland’s case, be seen as the first step toward independence, while on another hand it can be seen as the end product, the end of the road (Higgins 2004: 467).

Turning towards studies focused on the link between national identity and politics, there seems to be a quite clear consensus on the fact that the link between them is, in fact, quite weak. Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 2) state that one cannot predict the way people vote, their preference for the future of the Union or even their general politics based on how they see and construe their identities in their every-day lives. For

example Bond (2009: 95-96) conducted a study into the link between political attitudes and national identity in Scotland and England, using the responses of the British Social Attitudes Survey in 2006. He discovered that while there may be signs of respondents' national identity and their constitutional preference being slightly more linked in Scotland than in England, based on the fact that those who identified themselves in the "wholly Scottish" category were more likely to support Scottish independence than others, the link is still relatively weak: both in Scotland and in England retaining the status quo was the most popular choice when asked if respondents would prefer Scotland became independent or if the country should continue as before (Bond 2009: 101). Similarly, while the supporters of the Scottish National Party were the most likely to identify themselves as "wholly Scottish" and those supporting the Conservative Party were the most likely to identify themselves as "wholly British", for instance a larger proportion of Conservative supporters still identified themselves as "wholly Scottish" than "wholly British" (Bond 2009: 103-104). Thus, Bond (2009: 104) maintained that whatever stance a political party may have on constitutional developments, it cannot be used to detect the identities of their supporters. This is supported by Curtice and Heath (2009: 60), who stated in their study of national identity in England that whether people identify themselves as English or British, it did not seem to make a difference in regards to their view on how England should be governed.

And when it comes to news media and national identity, for instance Alex Law (2001: 308) examined the link between banal national identity and newspapers in Scotland. He studied the daily press sold in Scotland through Billig's concept of banal nationalism, and came to the conclusion that while at the time no major newspaper supported the idea of an independent Scotland, the Scottish identity was never forgotten. Instead, the newspapers managed to find a balance between "political Unionism and Scottish identity" (ibid.). Not surprisingly, the study also found that while banal British nationalism was not apparent in the newspapers, Scottish national identity was more overtly enunciated through detailed, articulated pointing (Law 2001: 314). And continuing with Scotland, where the media has been quite extensively studied following devolution, a study conducted by Higgins (2004: 463) looked at the ways in which nation was articulated in the Scottish press, particularly in a political context. While examining how a number of Scottish newspapers used location

formulation, the study found that references to nation centred on Scotland's constitutional position, on Scotland relative to rest of the Kingdom. Covering an election for instance, the newspapers could choose to emphasise either the Scottish or the British dimension of it, or alternatively find a balance between these two. The study showed that the ways in which nation was articulated played a significant part in the newspapers' political coverage. (Higgins 2004: 477-478)

Bicket (2006: 158), on the other hand, studied the constructions of different political identities given to Scotland in a sample of news articles published in two Scottish newspapers in 1999. He found that there were several different framing devices used – such as metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases and depictions – and through them, four different “packages” emerged: “Modernized Scotland and Britain”, “Fear Appeal”, “Aspirational Scotland” and “Realist Scotland” (Bicket 2006: 162). Of these, all four saw a necessity for devolution, and excluding the Aspirational Scotland the rest of them showed some degree of caution towards what that would mean for Scotland (Bicket 2006: 178). The Aspirational Scotland package was the only to view devolution and the Scottish Parliament in a decisively positive light, emphasising how the Parliament could assist and promote new positive articulations and representation of the Scottish national identity (Bicket 2006: 170). That did not, however, refer explicitly to an independent Scotland but was seen as a goal that could be achieved both as an independent state and as a sub-national unit within the Union (ibid.).

The next big question then is on how do the newspapers reflect their audiences and represent the world they are situated in? For example Rosie and Petersoo (2009: 122) examined media in Scotland and England after devolution, focusing on what kind of a relationship existed between national identities and media in these countries. Newspaper readers in Britain are constantly forced to re-imagine their community, depending on whether they at any given moment situate themselves in the local or the national context, not to mention the question of whether that national refers to Britain or for instance Wales. Thus there also exists the option of situating yourself to two different communities at once, to both Britain and Wales. (Rosie and Petersoo 2009: 123)

But how does this conflict appear in the newspapers? What Rosie and Petersoo (2009: 129) found was that the newspapers do not restrict themselves to just one community

but instead the national context can “wander” from one context to another within a single article, or even sometimes within a single paragraph. There is, however, a clear difference between Scotland and England in how explicit national references are used. While there was an absence of overt referents to England/English in the papers, similar referents to Scotland/Scottish were more common in papers sold in Scotland (Rosie and Petersoo 2009: 132, 128). Similar tendencies were also found in Wales, although to a lesser extent than in Scotland, while referents to Wales/Welsh were rare in both England and Scotland (Rosie and Petersoo 2009: 128, 131). Their overall conclusion, however, was that there existed a notable absence of *deliberate* nationalist agendas despite the way in which both regions’ newspapers tended to focus on the respective countries in which they were sold (Rosie and Petersoo 2009: 134, 142) In this they saw a fragmentation of news agendas, which could have possibly led to a movement of drifting apart between Scotland and England (*ibid.*).

Overall, the conclusion from the studies presented here seems to be that at least at the time they were conducted there were no clear signs that the British identity is completely disappearing or even seriously declining, as sometimes is feared in the wake of devolution and increasing talks of Scottish independence. However, it seems that the British identity is perhaps losing significance in the sense of people putting more weight on their so called national, English, Scottish or Welsh, identities over their British identity (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 190, 200). Moreover, there are certain things that can be seen as threatening to the tradition British identity, mainly the presence of the European Union and the historically relatively recent ethnic identities that have come forth with the immigration movement into Britain. Combined these threats can cause vulnerability that leads to the more nationalistic identities raising their heads, and in turn them turning into the more exclusive identities that British was not born to be (Kumar 2003: 241-242). Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 7, 201) point out that identity is never an issue until faced with a crisis, and that while the British identity might not be as strong as it once was, multiple identities are still a strong possibility, making the threat of a serious problem seem quite small. Whether that is still true, approaching the referendum on Scottish independence in the autumn of 2014, remains to be seen.

5 AIMS, DATA AND METHOD

In this chapter, I will clarify the aims, data and method of the present study. First, the research questions are presented, taking a closer look at what the present study hopes to achieve. Following this, the focus is turned towards the data which is composed of newspaper articles from different British newspapers. In order to provide some background for the data, there will be a brief look at the history and characteristic features of British newspapers before the data used for the present study is lined out. The chapter will end in a presentation of the analysis method, Critical Discourse Analysis, and a look at how the present study utilised it in the analysis conducted.

5.1 Research questions

The purpose of the present study is to analyse how Britain and different British identities are constructed in English, Scottish and Welsh newspapers. Moreover, the aim was to illustrate what possible differences there might have been between the constructions of different countries, how the newspapers dealt with the possibility and sometimes even the necessity of simultaneously constructing both the idea of Britain and each of the nationalistic identities, and finally, how the newspapers constructed and presented the future of Britain.

The three research questions of the present study are, then, the following:

- 1.) How are Britain and the different British identities linguistically constructed and maintained in English, Scottish and Welsh newspapers?
- 2.) How does the idea of Britain co-exist with the nationalistic identities of England, Scotland and Wales, and how and where do the constructed identities conflict or overlap?
- 3.) How do the nationalistic identities of England, Scotland and Wales appear to develop, and how is the future of the Union presented?

5.2 Newspapers in Britain

Newspapers in Britain have a long and varied history and they have always been a significant part of the political sphere, in one way or another. In this section I will first take a brief look at press history in Britain, followed by identifying and explaining some characteristics that make British newspapers different, in some cases even unique in the Western world. And lastly, while presenting some previous studies on the topic, I will examine the link between newspapers and the political world, the ways in which they are connected and intertwined.

While the history of newspapers in Britain can be traced back as early as the pamphlets and posters and first printed newspapers of the 17th century, the starting point for the press we now know began with the changes of the late 18th and early 19th century. The ideal image people tend to hold of newspapers is that of an independent, neutral party that functions outside of government, political parties and the financial gains of the business world. The first steps into a politically independent press in Britain happened as the advertising business expanded in the turn of the century, as the additional income from advertisements meant newspapers became less dependent on subsidies and secret service grants, were able to offer better wages to journalists which in turn reduced the amount of bribery connected to news stories, and were able to improve their methods of gathering news. (Curran and Seaton 1988: 10)

These steps were not enough to separate the press from the political sphere, however, as in the 1860s and onwards modern political parties began forming in Britain (Curran and Seaton 1988: 10). This in turn meant a closer link between the newspapers and political parties, as it was not uncommon for the owners of newspapers to also be Members of Parliament, while some newspapers still received subsidies from political parties or their supporters (*ibid.*). It is easy to see how dependent these papers really were on the political parties when compared with the radical press of the late 18th century, which did not attain noteworthy financial support from advertisements but were still independent from any parliamentary parties and the government (Curran and Seaton 1988: 11).

Not surprisingly, the radical press was faced with suppression from the administration, first in the form of prosecution of journalists for libel and then by a number of taxes

meant to drive up the publishing costs high enough to restrict the ownership of newspapers. (Curran and Seaton 1988: 11) But the radical press persisted, and it was not until the middle of the 19th century that a new tactic arose, one that proved more effective: the emergence of a capitalist, market-based press. There was a belief that free trade and a capitalist press would be a more effective way of controlling than whatever control the administration could uphold, and that seemed to hold true: while the half century that followed was a period of expansion for most of the press in Britain, the radical press slowly disappeared (Curran and Seaton 1988: 28, 30). Many historians attribute the disappearance to the way in which public attitudes changed during that period - the Liberal Party absorbed a number of radical activists, the economy started improving which meant also workers were now better off, and the lack of support for the left meant it was difficult to raise money from the working-class - but Curran and Seaton (1988: 30-31) do not agree. Instead, they turn towards Virginia Berridge's explanation of the "commercialization of the popular press", meaning that the newspapers became more of a business than before, resulting in the search for bigger readerships through entertainment (ibid.). Radical press simply could not compete with their audiences.

The next step in the course of the British press was industrialization, as new print technology was developed to help make printing more efficient. It did not, however, help the left press that had been struggling for its existence, as the printing costs increased significantly which meant that owning a newspaper was now out of reach of the working class (Curran and Seaton 1988: 35). This meant that in the late 19th century, the left press consisted of only specialist periodicals and local community papers (ibid.). The big national newspapers, on the other hand, continued on under the new press barons, who in the late 19th and early 20th century created press chains that allowed for a few papers to dominate over others (Curran and Seaton 1988: 46-47). The press barons have often been seen as the ones who brought in political propaganda and used their newspapers as tools for their political agendas, but Curran and Seaton (ibid.) point out they in fact merely followed the inclinations that had existed already before them. Instead, it was actually the press barons who finally broke the ties between the commercial press and the political parties: they favoured entertainment over politics, and in general the political power they had was used more against political parties than in support of them (Curran and Seaton 1988: 46, 54).

While the left press had continuously had to battle for its existence, the Second World War brought some relief to its position. The war affected the attitude of journalism in Britain and newsprint rationing had freed the papers from their dependence on advertisements, which meant the papers were now able to focus on working-class audiences, resulting in a move to the left with better representation and varied publishing (Curran and Seaton 1988: 75-76). But despite this, the centralization of newspapers ownership increased post-war, which was not surprising considering the way in which the whole leisure industries became much more centralized, leading to pictures, entertainment and sports conquering more and more attention from traditional news (Curran and Seaton 1988: 84-85, 101). Today there is no shortage of entertainment offered in newspapers, though the upscale broadsheet papers have kept more to their commitment to serious political news.

Turning to the question of what makes the British press so distinctly British, the first point to make is the extent to which it has been concentrated in London (Tunstall 1996: 2). Most of the leading newspapers are London published, which creates a competition more brutal than in any other European city, and as a result they lack the restraints present in most other countries (*ibid.*). That is not surprising in the light of the fact that the British press is different from its European counterparts also in the way in which there really does not exist much outside regulation controlling their work. What regulation there does exist usually comes from the press itself, and thus the British press is unusually self-regulated, a point which explains a lot about its unrestrained nature. (Tunstall 1996: 391)

Another characteristic British press is known for is its national tabloid newspapers, more concentrated on entertainment and the personification of stories than its broadsheet counterparts (Tunstall 1996: 9). There is quite a big difference between these two ends of the spectrum, the tabloids and broadsheets of the British press, but in addition to the broadsheets' commitment to serious political journalism and the tabloids' focus on entertainment, their differences can be explained by the different ways in which they finance themselves: while the tabloids rely on and aim at big audiences and sales, the broadsheets are financed mostly by profits from advertising which allows for their more serious content as broadsheets can charge higher advertisements rates due to their elite audiences (Tunstall 1996: 12).

Scotland also poses an interesting deviation to the norm. Due to its location in the north, such a long distance away from London, Scotland has formed its own daily press. (Tunstall 1996: 63). In fact, in 1966 Scotland was the host to a circulation war bigger than any such in London as a number of London-based newspapers were competing for Scottish readerships, but later in the same year one of the biggest national papers, the Daily Mail, moved away from Scotland and started a whole wave of retreats (ibid.). To this day, however, Scotland continues to be the exception in Britain, having significant national daily, evening and Sunday papers of its own, which also deviate from the London-norm in their reflection of Scottish culture, history and politics (Tunstall 1996: 64). Bicket (2006: 155) agrees, stating that while the framework in which the press in Scotland operates may still be seen as British, it is in a position in which it can cover Scotland in a way that is often ignored by the press in London: there is extensive background content and possibilities for analysing Scottish issues. Wales, on the other hand, has a much more limited press. There are multiple local newspapers published in Wales, but the only Wales-based national newspaper is the *Western Mail*. Thus there is also not a great deal of available information on how different the Welsh news coverage is from that of other national newspapers, as there has not been much material for previous studies.

One of the aspects that make newspapers such an interesting and useful object of research is the fact that newspapers have power, often much more than their owners would care to admit (Tunstall 1996: 2). For instance, as Tunstall (1996: 1) notes, it is often “the newspapers, not television, which go for the politician’s jugular”. How powerful newspapers really are, is visible in multiple different ways. To illustrate this, I will first take a look at how the powerful the press in Britain has historically been before examining the current situation.

As mentioned above, the links between the press and the political sphere in Victorian and Edwardian Britain were quite strong, often realised through the ownership of each paper (Curran and Seaton 1988: 10). Similarly, the left press struggled for its existence throughout British press history, while the right was strongly represented. For example, in the 19th century, with the emergence of the so-called new daily press, there were clear signs of how the newspapers encouraged their readers’ identification with the political parties that were supported and controlled by those in power (Curran and Seaton 1988: 42). According to Curran and Seaton (ibid.), between 1855 and 1860 ten

new local daily papers were born that were connected to the Liberal Party, while between 1860 and 1870 eighteen new newspapers were connected to either the Conservative or the Liberal Party, and finally, in the following decade already 41 newspapers were connected to these two big parties. The effect this had helped to turn these political movements of those of a small minority – the ruling class – to a mass movement (ibid.).

During the era of the press barons there did not exist as strong links between the newspapers and political parties as before, since advertising revenue at this point meant the papers were not depended on outside sources of financial aid. The barons were business men, newspapermen, and thus they were interested firstly on their circulation and profits. However, the major press barons were still Conservatives, and thus the political view of the papers did not change much during that time. (Curran and Seaton 1988: 55) Instead of overt propaganda, the barons' influence on the political sphere was more about how they “helped to maintain the dominant consensus by stigmatizing radical opponents of the political order” (Curran and Seaton 1988: 58). The change came during and after the Second World War, a time when also the *Guardian* established its position in the left; remaining the only left-of-centre national broadsheet as by the 1970s it had found a stable foothold for itself with its young readership (Curran and Seaton 1988: 52-53).

While the *Guardian* may have remained firmly in the left, the other newspapers in the late 20th century did not change their Conservative viewpoints but instead showed increased partisanship. According to Tunstall (1996: 240), the national newspapers' support for the Conservative Party in the years following the 1979 UK General Election was devoted and even overwhelming: for instance in the 1992 UK General Election, 70% of the national dailies supported the Conservatives while the Labour Party had only 27% of the support despite the fact that the difference in the parties' support among the voters was only 8 percentage points. A study that examined daily newspapers in April 1993, looking at partisanship in the news coverage, found that “biased coverage of the Conservative and Labour parties in the Sun, Daily Express, Daily Mail, and Daily Mirror outweighed neutral coverage by nine to one” (Tunstall 1996: 241-242).

It is important to note here, however, that while the newspapers might display signs of clear partisanship, their agenda is still not necessarily the same as that of the political parties (Curran and Seaton 1988: 233-234). There is no simple explanation for the way in which newspaper can influence the public and its opinion, since there may for instance be groups that are more easily affected while others are not affected at all (ibid.). Similarly, the power of the newspapers is not necessarily dependent on obvious political involvement (Curran and Seaton 1988: 221). Instead, for example the way in which news stories have in the past decades been, and still are, often told through the prisms of personalities, of individual dramas, newspapers can give readers an impression of subjectivity and inconsistency in the surrounding world. But in fact, this tendency of looking at the world in a way that leaves out any possible structural factors in the events means that “the human interest stories of the tabloid press [have] contributed as much as political commentary to sustaining the social cohesion of post-war British society”. (Curran and Seaton 1988: 112)

The power that the British newspapers possess does not seem to be going anywhere either. While in the 1960s 85-90% of adults in Britain read a daily newspaper, in the 1990s about 85% still read a newspaper weekly (Tunstall 1996: 223). In 2013, the research firm YouGuv published a report on media consumption in Britain, according to which on average 84% of the population had read a daily newspaper in the past year (Changing Media Summit Report 2013: 5). The percentage might have remained the same throughout these decades, but the frequency of reading the papers has definitely changed: while in the 1960s many of British adults read newspapers daily, in the 1990s that frequency had dropped to weekly. But what should not be forgotten, however, is that after the 1990s newspapers have broadened their scope to the Internet, hosting comprehensive archives and offering an online version of their paper. While the number of people that read a printed newspaper daily may have decreased, that is not the only way to read the news anymore.

What has become clear through this look at the British press is that it is powerful, competitive, and despite its move toward consumerism in the recent years, still very politically engaged. But as mentioned above in Chapter 4, despite this political aspect, the relationship between politics, national identity and media consumption is not in any way static: someone identifying themselves as “Scottish” or “British” does not tell us which newspapers they read, and neither does it tell us which political party they

support (Kiely, McCrone and Bechhofer 2006: 489, Bechhofer and McCrone 2009a: 2). But newspapers still matter and their power should not be ignored. As Tunstall (1996: 427) noted, the British press “will continue to be extremely powerful both within the media and across the broad range of public policy and public life... The newspapers are likely to remain the most politically interested, most policy focused, most partisan, and most potent of the mass media.”

5.3 Data

Newspapers were selected as the object of the present study, since it would be impossible to examine all news media - consisting of print media, broadcast news and the Internet - in a limited study such as this one. Especially since the topic covers quite a broad area in the sense that the data has to reflect all the different countries of the topic: England, Scotland and Wales. Many of the reasons that make newspapers a good research topic have already been discussed in the previous chapters, including the fact that despite the impact television and the Internet have had on traditional print media, newspapers are still widely read and viewed as very serious and respectable sources of news. This makes the possible strategies they have for constructing Britain and British identities all the more significant. Furthermore, many of them are easy to pinpoint to a certain region in Britain, which is of course a crucial requirement for this study.

Since the point of this study is more the comparisons between the different countries and newspapers instead of the differences between the political left and right, there is not really room for analysis across the whole political sphere. Instead, all three newspapers were chosen to represent a somewhat centre-left political orientation. There were two reasons for this. First of all, the centre-left category leaves perhaps a bit more room for the more nationalistic identities of England, Scotland and Wales to emerge. In order to get a more comprehensive view on British identities, this was important for the present study. The second reason, however, is considerably more practical in the case of Wales.

As mentioned above, the amount of newspapers produced in Wales is currently quite limited. While there are numerable newspapers that appear in Wales, many of them are so regional that their circulation was not really applicable to this study. In addition, all the newspapers were accessed through the NELLI portal that allowed their viewing

also from Finland. This also limited the choice of newspapers available. In the end, the *Western Mail* was chosen as the newspaper from Wales. It describes itself as “the national newspaper of Wales”, though its circulation in northern Wales is perhaps not quite extensive enough to merit that title, at least according to those living in North Wales. Its circulation is, however, the broadest of the newspapers available and it is the only Wales based national newspaper in Britain. It was founded in Cardiff in 1869, and is often described as pro-Wales for the political stance it has taken on different issues in the past. This pro-Wales tendency was seen also in the present study, as will be illustrated in the findings.

After the *Western Mail* was chosen to be included in the study, it also limited the other newspapers from Scotland and England to the centre-left category. The same prerequisite about the availability of the articles also in Finland through the NELLI portal naturally applied also here. For Scotland, the *Herald*, which was founded in Glasgow in 1783 and has the biggest circulation of Scottish daily newspapers, was chosen. And for England, the *Guardian* that was founded in Manchester in 1821 was chosen. Its circulation falls behind the more conservative the *Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, but because of its centre-left orientation it suited the present study perfectly. All three newspapers are national and issued daily. Since the newspapers were accessed through NELLI, pictures were not available. For that reason, the analysis concentrates on the texts of the articles and excludes pictures.

Choosing a possible timeframe for the data collection was not an easy task. Instead of just determining a certain time period to focus on, the data is centred on specific political events that have taken place in Great Britain during the last few years. This was done in the hopes of reaching news articles which truly reflect the possible ways of constructing and maintaining Britain while simultaneously allowing room for the more nationalistic identities of England, Scotland and Wales.

In the case of Wales, the data consists of articles that deal with the devolution referendum that was held in Wales on March 3rd 2011. The Welsh Assembly has never had taxation powers unlike the Scottish Parliament, which already on its own illustrates how limited the Assembly’s actions have been. However, also its other legislative powers were limited before the 2011 referendum. The Assembly’s different legislative areas are divided into 20 subject areas and while the Assembly could make

laws on some matters of these areas, in others it could not do so without agreement from Westminster, the Parliament of the United Kingdom. The process of gaining this agreement from the Parliament could in some cases take several years. The devolution referendum in 2011 sought to change this, and the official question asked in the referendum was ultimately “Do you want the Assembly now to be able to make laws on all matters in the 20 subject areas it has powers for?” The result in the 2011 referendum was 63.49% in favour, with 21 of the 22 Welsh unitary authority areas voting “Yes” with only one, Monmouthshire, voting “No” with a narrow 320 vote difference.

For Scotland, the articles collected are about the Scottish Parliament General Election of 2011 where the Scottish National Party that openly pursues independence for Scotland won by a landslide and formed a majority government. The Scottish Parliament in Holyrood in Edinburgh has 129 seats, and 65 are needed for a party form a majority. The most recent General Election was held on May 5th 2011. The Scottish National Party (SNP) won the most seats it has ever held, 69, forming a majority government. The Scottish Labour Party, which had dominated a lot of Scotland’s politics in recent decades, had its worst election result ever, losing seven (7) seats but remaining the second largest party in the Parliament with its 37 seats. The third party in the election was the Scottish Conservative Party with its 17 seats. Prior to the 2011 elections, the Scottish National Party had since 2007 been a minority government in Holyrood with support from the Green Party on some issues, since it had been unable to find a coalition partner to form a majority government with. Before 2007, the two parties in government had been the Labour Party and Liberal Democrats.

The third event was chosen to be as inclusive as possible of the whole of Britain in order to ensure also the presence of the idea and identity of Britain. Thus the final articles deal with David Cameron becoming the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on May 11th 2010, after a week of negotiations following the results of the 2010 UK General Election. None of the major political parties managed to achieve an overall majority, resulting in the first hung parliament in the UK for 36 years. The Conservatives, led by David Cameron, got 36.1% of the votes and won 306 of the 650 seats in the House of Commons. That was 20 seats short of the 326 needed for a majority. The second party was the Labour Party which prior to the election was the majority party in the House of Commons, but this time received only 29% of the votes,

losing 91 seats and ending up with 258 seats. The third party was the Liberal Democrats who received 23% of the votes and 57 of the seats.

As can be seen from the fact that the last time a UK General Election ended with a hung parliament was in 1974, it has been a rather rare occurrence in the UK. Before the 2010 General Election, the Labour Party had been the governing administration for 13 years, first with Tony Blair as the Prime Minister from 1997 to 2007, followed by Gordon Brown as the Prime Minister from 2007 to 2010. Prior to that, there was a Conservative Prime Minister from as far back as 1979: first Margaret Thatcher until 1990, then John Major until 1997.

The three major parties started negotiations to form a coalition government, and it was clear from the very beginning that it would be the Liberal Democrats, led by Nick Clegg, that would make or break any possible deals. In the end, after 5 days of negotiations, David Cameron and the Conservatives offered the Liberal Democrats a deal which they accepted, and so the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats formed the first UK coalition government since the Second World War. David Cameron became the Prime Minister and Nick Clegg the Deputy Prime Minister - a post that had not actually existed before they came up with it.

In the beginning of the data collection process the articles were in each case collected from two weeks before and two weeks after the official event. It soon became apparent, however, that the amount of articles would in this way grow too large and too unbalanced. For instance in the case of the Scottish Parliament General Election, the amount of articles from the *Western Mail* remained very small while the amount of articles from the *Herald* would have been so extensive that their analysis would not have been too challenging. The same but in reverse was also true for the Welsh referendum. So for practical reasons, the maximum amount of articles from each paper for each event was limited to approximately 25-30. The goal was to gather approximately the same amount of articles from each paper, and let the way in which they divided between the different events be a part of the analysis results. In the end, the amount of articles included in the present study turned out to be 148 in total. They divided between the different newspapers and different events as follows:

	The Welsh Referendum of 2011	The Scottish Parliament GE	David Cameron – the new PM	In total
The Western Mail	25	4	19	48
The Herald	1	25	21	47
The Guardian	4	20	29	53
In total	30	49	69	148

As can be seen from this, the amount of articles published about David Cameron becoming the new Prime Minister (69) was significantly larger than the amount of articles dealing with the other two events (30 and 49). This result was no surprise, since the event in question had the largest national impact of the three. Similarly, since the circulation of the *Guardian* is the broadest of the three newspapers and thus it would be natural for it cover also regional events more extensively than perhaps the other two papers, it was not surprising that the amount of articles included from it (53) was slightly larger than the other two papers' (48 and 47). As the difference in the amount of articles from each paper is quite slim, it did not interfere with the conducting of the analysis.

The differences between the amounts of articles published about each event are, on the other hand, very clear. While the differences did not on one hand necessarily make the analysis more difficult but instead contributed to the process, they did make answering all of the research questions in a satisfactory manner impossible in some cases. The low amount of articles published about the Welsh referendum in the *Herald* (1) and the *Guardian* (4), and on the other hand the low amount of articles published about the Scottish Parliament General Election in the *Western Mail* (4), meant that the present study was unable to comprehensively address the differences in the way each newspaper constructed the more nationalistic identities of Scotland and Wales. Due to the limited amount of articles in these instances it simply was not possible to draw any general conclusions that could be applied to the broader media discourse in these newspapers. Instead, in these cases the focus of the analysis was turned more towards how each of the newspapers constructed their own country's identity.

5.4 Analysing Newspapers - Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis studies language, whether that is written, spoken or perhaps even signed. It is not, however, limited only to language but in addition studies the people producing the language, the situation the language is produced in and through context of the language also the culture and society in which the language is situated in. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 21) Fairclough (1997: 29) describes discourse analysis as an attempt to review and map the systematic ways in which texts connect with socio-cultural practices through different conventional or innovative discourse practices. It is an attempt to combine the analysis of language with social analysis. The way in which discourse analysis can help in understanding life both at the interpersonal and the institutional level makes it a very useful and powerful analysis tool (Scollon and Scollon 2004: 8-9).

The field of discourse analysis has evolved through various different stages, and the emphasis of analysis has varied slightly through all these stages. For example textual analysis, or content analysis, studies the content of communication and is popular especially in social studies. (Fairclough 1997: 27) Critical linguistics is especially interested in media discourse, and emphasizes the significance of word choice and the way events, people and groups can be forced to fit into pre-existing constructed entities (Fairclough 1997: 39-42). Intertextual analysis focuses on how the production and consumption of texts include, influence and even transform other texts (Fairclough 1997: 100). Also the methods of analysis have varied, from a more content focused analysis to micro-analysis that is interested in even the smallest units of language and how the form of language alters and is used (Fairclough 1997: 138).

The present study, however, utilizes a perspective on discourse analysis that is based on discourse as social interaction. Sociolinguistics emphasizes the way language use is shaped socially and how factors such as social relationships, social interactions and the goals of such social activities influence the discourse used (Fairclough 1992: 63). This view enabled the consideration of different socio-cultural forces at work beyond the text, such as financial or political spheres, and by giving way to the social practices of discourse it was the basis behind the three-dimensional framework in which discourse is seen as in the context of the present study: discourse through the three dimensions of text, discursive practice and social practice (Fairclough 1997: 85, 1992: 73). With

this development, the focus shifted from textual analysis to what we now consider discourse analysis (Fairclough 1997: 44).

Discourse analysis is also not a distinct method on its own, more of a scholarly practice (van Dijk 2008: 2). According to Fairclough (1992: 231), discourse analysis should “show features, patterns and structures which are typical of certain types of discourse, restructuring tendencies in orders of discourse, and ways of using these conventional resources”. In order to accomplish this, the appropriate methods of analysis should always be chosen to suit the aims of the study, the nature of the data and the emphasis of research questions, and these appropriate methods can naturally overlap, combine and complete each other. These sorts of methods are, for example, grammatical, pragmatic, rhetorical, stylistics or semiotic analysis types. To put it simply, discourse analysis utilises any relevant method, and instead of being any one, particular method, it should be viewed more as a variety of ways of doing discourse analysis. For this reason, van Dijk calls it discourse *studies* instead of discourse analysis. (van Dijk 2008: 2-3)

Since the present study is specifically interested in the process of identity construction in media discourse and thus also concerned with issues of power and power structures, Critical Discourse Analysis was chosen as the methodological framework for the analysis. What makes CDA significantly different from discourse analysis, in other words critical, is the view that language and power are always inherently linked. CDA focuses on how language is connected to social practise and how social and political power is visible, used and perhaps even spread through discourse. And in turn, how social and political power influence and shape discourse. (Fairclough 1992: 12, 36)

The CDA that the present study utilizes was first developed towards the end of 1980s by the Lancaster school of linguists such as Norman Fairclough. Fairclough’s aim in developing CDA was to bridge the gap between linguistic discourse analysis and the analysis done by social sciences that links social and political thought with discourse (Fairclough 1992: 62). Van Dijk (2008: 85) describes CDA as “a reaction against the dominant formal paradigms of the 1960s and 1970s”, with the purpose of offering a different perspective that focuses on “the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in society”. So instead of merely describing different discursive practices, CDA aims to illustrate how

the link between discourse and power works, and in addition emphasizes how discourse can affect social identities and relations, and contributes to the formation of ideologies (Fairclough 1992: 12).

But even the field within CDA is not unanimous and homogeneous. For instance, van Dijk takes a different view from Fairclough to power and develops the links between power and discourse from a different angle. Instead of being concerned with any kind of power and its influence on discourse, van Dijk emphasizes the fact that critical discourse analysis, or critical discourse studies which he prefers, focuses on the abuse of power and the illegitimate uses of it. (van Dijk 2008: 1, 17) As most CDA theorists, he sees discourse structures and social structures inherently linked through complex relations, and argues that text and talk can influence and have distinct social conditions and consequences (van Dijk 2008: 4). He goes one more step further, however, and positions CDA scholars firmly in favour of dominated groups, noting that researchers who recognize their own position in society cannot claim to be neutral, but in order to actually fulfil the criteria of “critical” in CDA, should conduct their studies from the perspective of the dominated (van Dijk 2008: 6). The present study aims to be as neutral as possible, and instead the focus is turned towards what kind of identities the articles construct, how and if power and power relationships are visible in them, and what kind of differences there can be seen between the different newspapers.

Focusing specifically to the analysis of news media, van Dijk (2008: 58) remarks it is important to pay attention to the schemata, topics and the style of whatever news piece we are analysing in order to make visible and understand the political, economic, social and cultural factors influencing the discourse. In addition, other potential objects of analysis are the syntax and lexicon of the text, local and global sentence and topic meanings (for instance us vs. them positions) and rhetorical devices (van Dijk 2008: 104-105). Rhetorical devices can include, for example, devices such as irony, metaphors and metonyms. Beard (2000: 19) describes metaphors as “when a word or a phrase is used which establishes a comparison between one idea and another”. For political language, this happens often with themes connected to sports and war, for instance boxing, launching attacks, and so on. (Beard 2000: 21). Metonyms, on another hand, refer to “replacing the name of something with something that is connected to it, without being the whole thing” (Beard 2000: 19). For instance, in the United Kingdom

this happens often when “Number 10” is used to refer to the Prime Minister, as the Prime Minister’s residence is located at 10 Downing Street.

Fairclough (1997: 136) points out that when it comes to analysing representations, it is important to note the choices reflected in the text about what has been included and excluded, what is stated directly and what is not, and what is given a primary and what a secondary position in the discourse. Additionally, analysing newspapers adds another level to the analysis, since there are certain characteristics that are typical to newspapers. Newspapers can influence the nature or status of a story first of all with the amount of space the story is given in the paper, and second of all, with the placement of the story in the paper. Stories placed on the front page are considered the most important, while placing a story further in the paper can be seen as a way of positioning the story and its participants in a limiting or repressive fashion (Scollon 1998: 4).

The analysis of the present study was conducted along the following steps: first, the data was read through carefully, identifying the larger themes that emerged in connection with the research questions, which offered insight into the types of identities that were being constructed. It should be noted that while the analysis treated the identity constructions as something that could be separated and analysed individually as well as together, this does not, of course, reflect the situation in reality since the identity constructions present in the newspapers are just that: a way of these identities to be constructed and represented in writing. Thus the analysis can only consider the kind of constructions that emerged from the data, which allows one to see them as more coherent and comprehensive than they perhaps are in practise. The next step was to look at the data text in more detail, identifying the linguistic techniques used in the construction process, as well as any linguistic markers of possible conflict or overlapping and confusion regarding these identities - in other words, the points on which the identities offered insight into relationships and interaction. Attention was also paid to political discourse and its influence on the constructed identities. And lastly, the data was examined with the intention of trying to identify what might be next for the identities in question and for the Union: how were devolution, nationalism and independence portrayed and represented, and how might these processes develop in the near future? These findings are presented in the following chapter.

6 SEEKING BRITISH IDENTITIES – THE FINDINGS

6.1 Constructing identities

I will begin this chapter on the findings by presenting what kind of identity constructions emerged from the data. These constructions are divided into Welsh identity, Scottish identity, English identity and British identity. The English and British identity constructions are presented here under the same subtitle, since the identities were so closely linked, interwoven and depended on each other that presenting them separately would have been ineffective as can be seen from the section in question. In addition to presenting the constructed identities, I will also examine how they were constructed and why they seemed to emerge from the data so strongly.

6.1.1 A grown-up, united Wales

In the case of Welsh identity, how it was constructed and represented formed quite a clear and coherent picture. The Welsh devolution referendum of 2011 seemed to mark a significant change in the way Wales was portrayed, though this was seen only through one newspaper. As was mentioned previously, the low number of articles about the Welsh referendum in the *Guardian* and the *Herald* meant that it was impossible to draw any general conclusions about how they constructed Wales and Welsh identity. This of course already offers insight into the relationships within the Union: the devolution referendum decided on a significant issue regarding the way in which Wales is governed but despite this, the event was not widely reported in either the *Guardian* or the *Herald*. Quite the opposite, in fact, as the referendum was covered in only four articles in the *Guardian* and one in the *Herald*. This implies that while the construction of Welsh identity in the *Western Mail* represents a process of self-identification, that identity construction was not mirrored or recognized by the other newspapers, meaning that the significant changes in the way Wales was portrayed were limited within Wales. Because of this, the focus of the analysis was turned towards the *Western Mail*, and so the following constructions mainly emerged from its articles with the other newspapers brought in when applicable.

Wales, the Welsh Assembly and its situation before the referendum were portrayed quite negatively. While discussing the Assembly, the most often used adjectives to describe the situation before the referendum were “slow” and “time-consuming”, each of which appeared multiple times. In addition adjectives such as “hamstrung” and “cumbersome” appeared. From this it is clear that the legalisation process before the proposed change was viewed above all as slow, lengthy and even a bit feeble. There was a sense in the articles that the Assembly was not able to do everything it perhaps should and definitely could do because of the forced task of seeking agreement from Westminster before laws could take effect.

Furthermore, in addition to being slow and lengthy, the system before the proposed change was definitely seen as “inferior”. The descriptions used for the Assembly before the referendum included “second class”, which occurred almost as many times as “inferior”, as well as “a pale imitation”, which was used to describe the system less often but still occurred a few times. There did not seem to be lot of confidence or trust in the Assembly and especially in its status alongside the Northern Ireland Assembly or the Parliament of Scotland. The *Western Mail* definitely painted the process of the Assembly not being able to legislate on its own as something childish and not equal to other parts of the Kingdom. The fact that the Assembly had to seek agreement from the Westminster Parliament for its decisions was often described in terms of Wales having to go “cap in hand” to “beg for permission”. This description occurred multiple times both before and after the voting. On one occasion, it was even described as “a national disgrace”.

Considering this view, it is not surprising that the victory of the “Yes” vote on the referendum was painted in positive terms. As mentioned above, the *Western Mail* is known for its somewhat pro-Wales stance in some issues, and this was clear also in the articles included in the present study. The paper published at least two articles where it clearly announced its backup for the “Yes” vote and urged its readers to vote “Yes”. The amount of articles from the *Guardian* was low, which makes it impossible to comment on what kind of discourse it generally constructs for Wales, but in this matter also it seemed to have a clear stance. It painted the referendum itself as “frustrating” as it did not view the question asked as “necessary” or “fundamental” enough to warrant a referendum, but notably stated frankly that it is “clear” the result should be “Yes”.

The success of the devolution referendum changed the situation and how Wales and Welsh identity were constructed and represented. This was interesting, since prior to the voting the point and purpose of the referendum was questioned and even criticised not just in the *Guardian* but also in the *Western Mail*. The single most often used description of the event was “a technicality”, which was used as a negative thing. The referendum was seen as a technicality of internal administrative politics that was not worth of an actual referendum. It was argued that referendums should be used “sparingly” and that the issue in question in 2011 was not “significant enough”. In direct contrast, then, the result of the referendum was constructed as a significant event with a considerable effect. It was not just about the Assembly’s ability to make laws, but instead about how the people saw Wales and themselves.

Since the opinion presented in the *Western Mail* about the referendum was so clearly in favour of a “Yes” vote, it was expected that it would also present the situation after the referendum and the victory of the “Yes” vote in positive terms. The most often used adjectives in this regard were “efficient” and “effective” which appeared often and throughout all of the articles collected from the *Western Mail*, both individually and combined. “Efficient” was used ten (10) and “effective” eight (8) times in the 25 articles included. Other frequent adjectives used to describe what Wales or the Assembly would be like after the proposed change were “confident”, which was used eight (8) times in the articles collected, and various adjectives in the line of “faster”, such as “quicker” and “swifter”. What emerged from the referendum was an efficient and effective Welsh Assembly that would finally be able to do what needed to be done for Wales and its people.

As a result of this, looking beyond the Assembly, Wales after the referendum was above all seen as “grown-up”. It was a nation that had suddenly shaken its childish, inferior status off its shoulders and emerged as capable and mature. There would be no more seeking approval from Westminster, or like the *Western Mail* put it prior to the vote, having another nation keeping an eye on Wales. As the Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones put it in a statement quoted by all three newspapers, with the referendum vote “an old nation came of age”. As can be seen from the following quote, the result was seen as a show of confidence, and not just as a show of confidence in the Assembly but as one that extends all through Wales and the Welsh people:

“We’ve seen people voting Yes all across Wales and we’ve seen a significant victory and a vote of confidence by our people in themselves.”
 - Carwyn Jones in the *Western Mail* on March 5th 2011

In addition to the effectiveness, efficiency, and confidence that Wales gained with the “Yes” vote, Wales also seemed to reach certain sense of unity, as can be seen already in the above quote. The vote was reported as having been delivered by “the people of Wales”, despite the fact that the eventual turnout was only 35.6%. When the result was reported, there were comments on how Wales had now united together, having voted in agreement all over Wales. These comments came from both the *Western Mail* itself and from individual people that were quoted, for instance:

“From the coast to the border, the north to the south, our country is united in a way that perhaps it wasn’t back in 1997.”
 - Carwyn Jones in the *Western Mail* on March 5th 2011

This new sense of unity was a stark contrast to the way in which the nation had been divided in the 1997 referendum. These divisions, which were discussed in Chapter 2 in connection with the history of Wales, seem to play a significant role when it comes to Welsh identity, both in the past and in the present. The possible divisions between east and west, north and south, rural and urban, and Welsh and English speaking areas and people were brought up in the articles quite often. Welsh identity in the past appeared quite split and fragmented, while after the referendum, the new united Wales was emphasised.

However, a part of the perceived unity appeared in the analysis to also come from the representation by the *Western Mail*. In addition to it being clearly in favour of the “Yes” vote, it also constructed a discourse in its articles that did not leave a lot of room for the voices of those in favour of the “No” vote. In the 25 articles it published and that were included in the data, there were 59 people quoted either directly or indirectly. Of those 59 people, 33 were clearly in favour of the “Yes” vote. Only four (4) were distinctly in favour of the “No” vote. The difference between the two perspectives offered here is very stark, and there is not much doubt about whether it was by choice or not. It should be noted, however, that a part of the reason for this division is also the newspaper’s choice of people it quoted. While there were 59 people quoted, only approximately ten (10) of those were quoted more than once or twice. On one hand, it does naturally mean that among the 59 people quoted there are also people that are not

politicians or active campaigners for either the “Yes” or the “No” vote. But on another hand, it also means there are about ten people that get access and space for their voices repeatedly and more than others. This kind of process that controls who is quoted and who is not is called context control, which is one of the ways in which power is reproduced in discourse (van Dijk 2008: 10) Notably, of these ten people that the *Western Mail* gave regular access and space to, only two (2) were in favour of the “No” vote.

As a comparison, also the people quoted in the *Guardian* and in the *Herald* were looked at in more detail. Of course, since the amount of articles from both of these newspapers was significantly smaller than the amount of articles from the *Western Mail*, it is difficult to compare the numbers. But in fact, in the four (4) articles included from the *Guardian*, there were twelve (12) people quoted. Of these, seven (7) were in favour of the “Yes” vote and three (3) in favour of the “No” vote. So the number of people in favour of the “No” vote was almost equal to the corresponding number in the *Western Mail*, despite the difference in the amount of articles. While this fact naturally cannot be used to draw any major, general conclusions from, it does indicate that if the *Guardian* quoted almost as many people in favour of the “No” vote in its four articles, there certainly should and would have been more room for this opinion also in the *Western Mail*. Instead, that space was given to those in favour of the “Yes” vote.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this is the fact that as the “Yes” vote was so clearly favoured, the result described in such a positive way and the effect of it seen as such a significant step for Wales, it means that there was room given specifically to this image of a new Wales in the *Western Mail*. The new, grown-up, confident and united Wales was accepted and even encouraged. So in every way, this was also the Welsh identity most prominently constructed in the data.

6.1.2 Differing Scotland

If the Welsh identity constructed in the *Western Mail* was clearly and easily depicted, the case was quite different for Scotland. Whereas Wales was often described in certain ways or certain aspects related to its identity were highlighted, in the case of Scotland its identity emerged more through articles that related or compared Scotland

to the rest of the Union or to the political processes happening. This was a similar finding to that of Higgins (2004: 477), who concluded in his study that nation in the Scottish press was centred on Scotland's constitutional position. This made analysing the construction of Scottish identity more challenging and meant that the identity that emerged was not as well defined or as easily describable as Welsh identity.

One way to examine the aspects of Scotland that were favoured was to look at the reasons why the Scottish National Party achieved such success at the Scottish Parliament General Election of 2011. As an answer to this question, the *Herald* highlights the tone of the different campaigns leading up to the election. The SNP's campaign is repeatedly described as positive and optimistic, whereas the campaigns by the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats especially are seen as negative and pessimistic. The parties definitely employed different strategies in the election, as for example the Labour Party painted any possible independence for Scotland in negative terms and used it as a warning to drive voters away from the SNP. On the other hand, the SNP was described in the *Herald* to be looking to the future, while the Labour Party and Liberal Democrats were seen stuck somewhere in the past. While the voters were choosing between the different political parties, the SNP seemed to be able to find a message that spoke of a promising future and an optimistic Scotland that resonated with the people. The Scotland that the SNP was constructing was not afraid of issues such as deciding on independence or favouring renewable energy, which were, as an example, aims on the SNP's agenda. The Scottish National Party's Scotland was ready to move forward, and so were its voters.

This contrast with the past appeared also in the *Herald's* attitude towards the SNP. It notes in its articles that the overall majority gained by the Scottish National Party in the 2011 election should have technically been impossible:

“The electoral system was designed to prevent any prospect of the SNP being able to form a majority Government, or so it was thought.”
- The *Herald* on May 7th 2011

The Scottish Parliament uses mixed member proportional representation system for the election of its members. The system is designed to result in an elected body where the total amount of elected party members is proportional with the total amount of votes the party receives. The voters in Scotland were given two votes: one for a specific candidate, and one for a specific party. Most of the 129 seats, 73, were elected to represent first

past the post constituencies, the voters choosing a member to represent their own constituency. The remaining 56 seats were then elected by an additional member system, designed to make the overall result more proportional. No party has ever won enough seats to form a majority government before the SNP's victory in 2011.

If it seems to be common knowledge that the electoral system of the Scottish Parliament was put in place precisely to keep the SNP from gaining an overall majority, as was claimed also in the *Guardian* more than once in the articles collected for the present study, it speaks volumes of the SNP's position in the political playing field and of the attitudes directed at it. However, as the results came in and it became clear just how big a majority the SNP had achieved, the three newspapers all praised the SNP's victory. The *Western Mail* called the result, for instance, "unprecedented", "historic", "resounding", "a triumph" and "a revolution". The *Guardian* continued on the same track, calling it "amazing", "remarkable", "extraordinary" and "the most stunning victory in recent Scottish political history". The *Herald* described the election as "one of the most dramatic nights in Scottish election history", and described the SNP's result as "triumphant", "staggering", "impressive" and "game-changing".

The *Herald* noted that it was not just the attitudes of the voters or the dynamic between the parties that had changed, but that in fact even the style of reporting among the Scottish press covering the election was very different from for example the election in 1999. At the time the SNP even temporarily published its own newspaper, "Scotland's Voice", in order to get its voice heard since the hostility of the press towards the SNP was so strong the party stopped holding press conferences. In 2007, the *Daily Mail* called Alex Salmond "the most dangerous man in Scotland", as noted by the *Herald*. In contrast, in the 2011 election there were several newspapers that backed Salmond for First Minister. In addition, overall the language used to describe the SNP remained very moderate in all three newspapers included in the present study. There were instances where their proposals were called "radical", and prior the Election Day the opposing party leaders described the possibility of the SNP winning as "dangerous". These instances were extremely rare however, and their number remained at less than a handful.

This contrast with past attitudes and representations is significant, as is the fact that particularly the *Herald* was now more comfortable with the SNP and willing to tote

how the party had “overcome vitriol” of the past. The Scottish National Party seemed to have worked its way to the top of Scottish politics, and thus also into a position where it has a say in what Scotland in the future looks like. It is difficult to say how well this change mirrors changes also in Scottish identity, but it certainly should not be underestimated either.

Another context that underlined Scotland was its relationship with the Union and especially England. The relationships and the ways in which the identities of different countries were tangled and overlapped each other will be expanded on in the next section, but what is particularly interesting regarding Scotland is the way in which there appeared a lot of conflict between it and the others. While the *Western Mail* and the *Guardian* seemed comfortable representing and constructing Britain, using words such as “the country”, “our country” and “this country” to refer to the whole of the Union, these appeared much less frequently, if at all, in the *Herald*. Instead, in the *Herald* words like “country”, “here” and “home” were strong markers of Scotland. It is words such as these - “our”, “this”, “here” - that Billig (1995: 94) described as the small but important words of banal nationalism that situate the nation to the desired context. The way these words were used was consistent with the findings of for instance Law (2001: 314), who found that Scottish national identity was often overtly enunciated through detailed pointing in Scottish newspapers.

Furthermore, Scotland was separated from the Union and England also much more concretely. The issue of the border came up often; expressions such as “north of the Border” and “south of the Border” were very common in the *Herald*. This kind of discourse can create a concrete division and enforce the difference - whether literal or constructed - between the sides. It makes them “Them” and us “Us”. In addition, while discussing the Westminster General Election of 2010, the descriptions used in the *Herald* to describe Westminster politics were at times quite demeaning. The MPs were described as “Westminster hacks”, the press reporting on the events as “the circling hacks” and the confusion of the governmental negotiations as “high drama” and a “Whitehall farce”. Here the discourse can create distance, steal away some of the credibility of the Westminster politics and give the impression of “better” or more serious politics happening in Scotland.

This is consistent with the *Herald's* attitude toward the coalition government that came out of those negotiations, which can at best be described as mistrustful and doubtful. The government was not seen in a positive light, the difficult history between the Westminster and Scotland governments was highlighted, and while the fact that the new Prime Minister David Cameron's visit to Scotland was seen as a sign of respect, the *Herald* saw also possibilities for conflict in the future. The paper was not alone in this, as also the *Guardian* used similar "north of the border" and "south of the border" expressions to distinguish between Scotland and England, as well as predicting that there might be "a battleground" ahead for the new Westminster government as Scotland prepared for its 2011 General Election. The amount of articles from the *Western Mail* concerning Scotland was low enough that it is impossible to conclusively comment on its role in constructing Scottish identity. However, it should be noted that when describing relationships between the Westminster government and Wales and Scotland, the *Western Mail* seemed to view Scotland as the troublemaker while Wales itself aimed for a more neutral approach. Scotland's difficult relationship with Westminster was thus apparent in all three newspapers.

As can be seen from this, Scotland, its characteristics and Scottish identity were not as explicitly stated in the articles as was the case with Wales. However, this certainly does not mean that Scottish identity would be any weaker, but instead can be viewed as a sign of the contrary. While Wales seemed to be building and constructing almost a new identity, the Scottish identity may simply be such a constant that it does not need to be as overtly stated and highlighted. As McCrone (2001: 107) concluded in his study, the way in which the Scots are now identifying themselves as Scottish is stronger and clearer than it has been in years. Instead, what emerged was a Scotland that seemed to be ready to move forward, and this moving forward was perhaps designed for Scotland that was quite divergent from the others. The analysis suggests that in Scotland there was a clear need to distinguish between the Union and Scotland, to distinguish between the two governments, between the politics, between the different sides of the border. But more than just a need, it is also a way to make that distinction, to draw the line. And just the fact that the line is drawn, and drawn more strongly now than in years, tells of the shifting identities within Scotland and in the way they see the other countries and the Union.

6.1.3 England and Britain – understated

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, the English and British identities are presented here together, since separating them in the data proved to be difficult. Since none of the events the data was centred on was specifically about England, the construction of English identity was not overtly apparent but instead emerged through specific conditions or circumstances. Britain, on the other hand, was mostly talked about in connection with the future of the Union, with questions about how devolution would continue to develop and would Scotland seriously pursue independence. Because of this, the construction of British identity was not very straightforward either.

In general, there appeared to be very little room in all three newspapers for England only for England's sake. Instead, England and English identity emerged mainly for two reasons: first of all, in connection with politics, as a part of the political "game" that was taking place in the Union. And second of all, as a counterbalance or an opposite to Scotland and Wales. When talking about England coming up in connection with politics, it is done referring to the way in which for example the Conservative Party was argued to have been "focusing on English and over-taxed private sector workers", or how, when the negotiations about the Westminster government in 2010 were still ongoing, the *Guardian* remarked that a Lib-Con coalition "may work locally but never nationally". England does exist, it does play a part in the politics and is an essential part of the Union, but its interests, aims and characters seem to be quite limited to the interaction of the political parties in the representations of the *Guardian*. While the nature of the data and the way in which it limits the topic to the political has to, of course, be taken into account here, what is surprising in this is that even the *Guardian* did not bring up the role of England more strongly, not even in connection with the governmental negotiations in 2010.

The *Guardian* was not, however, the only paper that constructed England so strictly through the political. This was true also for the *Herald*, as can be seen from the following example:

"If the English had England to themselves, they could vote Tory to their hearts' content".

- The *Herald* on May 11th 2010

The *Herald* painted England as deeply Conservative, which was in stark contrast with Scotland where the Conservatives are only the fourth party in the parliament. The fact that there was not really other representations of England present illustrate the way in which the *Herald* compresses England to just its political tendencies, instead of giving more room for the people of England or other aspects of it. The *Western Mail*, on its part, never even brought up specifically England when reporting on the Westminster governmental negotiations of 2010, but instead framed the event through Britain and the Union.

The second point, England as a counterbalance to Scotland and Wales can be seen, for instance, in how the *Guardian* discussed the Scottish National Party's victory in Scotland and framed the possible Scottish nationalism in an English context. The *Guardian*, on one hand, did see Scottish nationalism as a threat, calling the SNP's success "the most serious threat to the UK", but on another hand also seemed to see logical and reasonable sides to it. This was done from an English point of view: in an article arguing that the Prime Minister Cameron had no reason to fight Scottish independence, the *Guardian* claimed Scotland's role in the Union had not benefited England in any way but that instead Scotland, led by Alex Salmond, had cost England significantly:

"He has milked England, and England has allowed itself to be milked, terrified of partition."

- The *Guardian* on May 11th 2011

The *Guardian* also described Scotland as "England's first empire", and commented that Scotland had supposedly for years "decided who ruled England". So when the focus was on a Scottish issue that could potentially influence all of the countries within the Union, the arguments were made from the point of view of England, not Britain or the Union.

Moreover, the question of England not having its own Assembly or Parliament when Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all do, was brought up quite often. The *Guardian* reported that there perhaps should be considerations on the issue of "setting up an English assembly as a counterbalance", and noted the problem of Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish MPs being able to vote on England-only matters at Westminster. This issue is often talked about as the West Lothian question, as mentioned above in Chapter 2, and will be examined more closely later in this chapter.

However, the presence of this issue and the reporting on it means that it is an aspect of England that has become more important. The Westminster parliament is no longer seen as sufficient for the needs of England, which indicates that there is now recognition for the unique, English nature of some issues on the agenda and a desire for those issues to be decided on by the English themselves.

Britain and its identity emerged mainly from the different attitudes towards the Union present in the newspapers. Moreover, of the three newspapers, the *Guardian* was clearly the one where Britain was most present and most easily constructed, though this was not always done very overtly. Instead, Britain and the Union could be portrayed as quite natural and appeared in some cases taken for granted. This is in line with the way Billig (1995: 38) described national identity so embedded in the everyday-life of people that the actual remembering of the identity is, in fact, almost forgotten. Britain and British identity often did not require overt pointing to be present.

One of the ways in which this presented in the articles was how there was definitely room in the *Guardian* for news that were primarily about Scotland or Wales, but they were clearly marked as belonging to those places. The headline of such stories would already point to the specific country, as for example on the case of the Scottish Parliament Elections in 2011:

“Scotland: Polls suggest SNP will come out on top”
- The *Guardian* on May 2nd 2011

On one hand this of course means that these countries, Scotland and Wales were marked as different in the articles, were marked as separate already in the headlines. But on the other, since in the case of discourse the question tends to be as much about what is omitted as it is about what is included, it also means that such overt pointing was not necessary for news concerning Britain. News that were so to speak British, that were about matters important to the whole of the Union, were not marked separate in this way. Instead, they were expected to be read by all, with equal amounts of attention.

Another way in which this illustrated was how, when reporting on the governmental negotiations of 2010, both the *Western Mail* and the *Herald* tended to focus as much on the question of how the new government would impact Wales and Scotland as they did on the actual process of forming a government. As a contrast, the *Guardian* framed

the event strictly in a British context, discussing the matter in the framework of “*British* politics” and how the new government could cause a “major *UK* realignment”. This meant that despite being an English newspaper, when the matter at hand was clearly a British one, the *Guardian* favoured primarily a British point of view. England and an English context appeared when Scottish politics entered the discussion, with questions raised about how a right wing government could serve the Scottish voters. So in this as well, England rose to the foreground over Britain only as a counterbalance or opposition to Scotland.

When looking at the other two newspapers, the construction of Britain was very different. While the *Western Mail* seemed at the very least neutral towards the idea of Britain and the Union, the *Herald* exhibited quite a lot of conflict in the relationship between Scotland and the rest of the Union, as discussed above. On one hand that meant that Britain was present also in the constructions of the *Herald*, but there were definitely differences in the construction processes between the three newspapers. This can be seen in the following analysis of the word choices the papers used when referring to Britain. Notably, this analysis was done with the articles that dealt with David Cameron becoming the new Prime Minister, since this was the event that was expected to depict Britain the best.

First of all, quite big differences came up when the use of the word “country” to refer to Britain was looked at in detail. While the *Guardian* and the *Western Mail* used the words “the country” 12 and 16 times each to refer to Britain, the *Herald* only used it 5 times. The *Guardian* and the *Western Mail* used also the words “this country” (3 and 6 times each), “our country” (6 and 7 times each) and “the whole country” (once in each newspaper). These words never appeared in the articles included from the *Herald*. This difference could not be explained in any way by the number of articles included from each newspaper, since the amount of articles included from the *Western Mail* and the *Herald* were roughly the same (19 and 21 articles each). This would suggest that the *Guardian* and the *Western Mail* were more at ease with representing and constructing Britain as such a unanimous entity, and that such an identity was more accepted in them and among their readers. Furthermore, the use of the pronouns “the”, “this” and “our” speaks of a sense of belonging and owning, meaning that the identities created were felt, at least to some extent, as their own.

On the other end of the spectrum, the uses of words such as “United Kingdom” or “Union” were examined. Not surprisingly, all three newspapers did use the words “the UK” and “United Kingdom” quite regularly, though to be fair the most common word used to describe Britain was, clearly, “Britain”. Nonetheless, big differences came up here as well. While referring to the new government, the *Guardian* typically described it as “the government”, “the new government”, “the coalition government”, or something similar. There was no need to specify which government. In Scotland and Wales however, where there was a local Parliament and Assembly respectively, the distinction may not always be as clear. Granted, both the *Herald* and the *Western Mail* did use those same descriptions as the *Guardian*: “the new government” and “the coalition government” worked just as well in them as in the English newspaper, since the UK General Election was the only election going on at the time and the government was about to change only at Westminster. But the Scottish and the Welsh newspapers did also include the phrase “the UK government” in their articles, which illustrates how the distinction is made when it is felt necessary.

Continuing on examining the use of the words “the Union” brought up another notable variety in the newspapers. While the *Western Mail* used the word “the Union” to describe Britain only once, the *Herald* used it 12 times. That is a big difference, especially compared between the two regions that could possibly be seen as entertaining nationalistic ideals. While we should be careful to draw any definite general conclusions from this, it could be argued that the fact that the *Herald* would prefer to use “the Union” instead of portraying Britain as a more unanimous entity with words such as “the country” could be because the word Union carries with it a reminder that Britain is, in essence, a Union of multiple countries. And as such it would also be another device in Scotland’s discourse that separates it from the rest of the Britain.

The *Guardian* never used “the Union” to refer to Britain, and the total lack of it suggests there simply was not a need for that. While the Union has obviously formed into an established institution in the course of its history, the signs of its cracks, however little, are in today’s world making it to the surface as has been seen for instance with the independence debate in Scotland. But in the English newspaper, produced in England but read quite extensive in Britain, the Union appeared to be almost taken for granted. Alternatively, one could argue that it could be, at least partly,

a conscious decision to eliminate the reminders of the Union, of the fact that the different countries do not automatically and irredeemably belong together. That may of course be the case, but in general the *Guardian* did not shy away from also criticising the Union or from publishing opinions in favour of breaking up the Union. And so it would seem that at least in many instances, for the *Guardian* and its readers, the state of Britain was quite ordinary and habitual. The situation was similar in Wales where the idea of Britain and the Union co-existed quite peacefully alongside Wales and Welsh identity, while in Scotland this was definitely not the case but instead the feelings towards Britain were more foreboding.

6.2 Overlapping and entangling – hybrid identities

Next, I will examine the points on which the constructed identities overlap and get entangled. These are the points where the so called hybrid identities exist and where there might be some confusion about the boundaries and content of identities. I will look at how the identities overlap, what seems to influence this confusion, and how this process appears in the three newspapers.

6.2.1 “For the good of the country” – but which country?

A lot of attention was paid on what kinds of words were used to describe Britain and its different countries in the newspaper articles during the analysis conducted. These reveal the ways in which the newspapers represent and construct these regions, and furthermore, what kind of identities are accepted, shared and perhaps even favoured. For example, who was it that got a new Prime Minister when David Cameron was handed the keys to No 10 Downing Street? Does this affect the people in Britain differently depending on where they live or how they identify themselves in the middle of the tangled British identities? And how do these identities overlap?

There were some phrases that kept repeating throughout the articles when reporting on the governmental negotiations of 2010. First of all, the phrase “for the good of the country” appeared numerous times, both quoted and directly. It is easy to see why,

since of course the goal in the process of forming a government - in the whole election in fact - was to find an administration that was competent and would benefit everybody. However, it also raises the question of which country? Or whose country? One could question the use of the phrase, since depending on who is asked, the good that should be aspired to might not be the same for every country within the Union. Not every party sees eye to eye on what should be done and what should change, and not every potential Prime Minister views the Union and its countries the same.

Another noticeable phrase that kept coming up was “national interest”, which appeared in total 21 times in the articles collected on David Cameron becoming the new PM. There did not seem to be a decisive difference in how many times it appeared in each newspaper, though it did come up slightly more often in the *Western Mail* than in the other two papers: while the phrase was repeated 4 times in the *Guardian* and 7 times in the *Herald*, it appeared 10 times in the *Western Mail*. It is important to note here, however, that when it came to the articles published about the governmental negotiations, the *Western Mail* quoted different politicians noticeably often, and even published word-to-word the speech David Cameron gave once he officially became the new Prime Minister. Thus, since the phrase “national interest” was a key word in a lot of the statements issued by numerous politicians, no conclusions can be drawn from the number of times it was used in the paper. Again, it is not surprising to see the phrase used so often in the middle of governmental negotiations and its meaning is quite clear. One can wonder, though, about how similar the national interests around Britain are and whether there maybe are conflicting interests underneath. These conflicting interests might simply not show to the surface in such a crucial time, or they might be purposely kept hidden in order to present a consistent image to the readers.

Apart from the phrase “national interest”, the word “nation” was used to describe Britain in the articles that focused on the new Prime Minister. “The nation” was used 8 times in the *Guardian* and 7 times in the *Herald*. “A nation” was used once in the *Guardian* and “the nations” once in the *Herald*. None of these appeared in the *Western Mail*. The use of these words is not necessarily remarkable due to the low quantities that they were used in, but examining the use of them more closely, an interesting aspect appears. While examining how they were used across all of the articles included in the data, not just the ones collected about David Cameron, the use of them changes.

It appears that in all of the three newspapers, the meaning of the words “nation” and “country” depends on the context. When the focus of the article was on David Cameron, “nation” and “country” were often used to refer to Britain. When the focus shifted away from Westminster, the words were used to refer also to Scotland and Wales, as can be seen in the following examples.

On May 11th 2010, the *Herald* wrote about “the best outcome for the country” in the governmental negotiations, referring to Britain. But a year later, on May 5th 2011, the paper wrote about the Welsh referendum and referred to it with “the country’s referendum”, where the country was obviously Wales. And a couple of days after, on May 7th 2011, the paper wrote about the SNP’s success “right across the country”, referring to Scotland. Similar instances were found also in connection with the word “nation”

The *Western Mail*, on its part, did not seem to use the words “nation” and “country” quite as much as the *Herald*, but instead favoured naming the region which was in question, for example stating clearly if they were talking about Wales or Britain or something else. Similar instances were, however, present in its articles as well. On May 14th 2010 it wrote about the new Westminster government’s need to tackle “the country’s record £163bn deficit”, where the country in question was Britain. But on March 2nd 2011, while reporting on the need for the Welsh referendum to pass, the paper wrote that “our country is grown up enough” to make its own decision, referring to Wales. Again, similar instances were found also in connection with the word “nation”.

The same trend was found also in the articles included from the *Guardian*. On May 7th 2011 the paper wrote about “the long-term problems the country faced”, where the country in question was Britain. But just a day earlier, on May 7th 2011, the report on the Scottish voters’ “swing to the Scottish National party across the country” referred to Scotland, while on April 23rd 2011, the paper referred to both Scotland and Wales when it wrote about the coming vote “in the two countries”. And again, similar instances were found in connection with the word “nation”.

While it is quite natural for the point of view of the articles to change depending on the context and the topic, the way in which it is done through such simple word uses and without much fanfare does illustrate quite well how the identities the newspapers

construct could in some cases overlap and cause confusion fairly easily. But when taking the analysis a step further however, some variations between the newspapers emerged.

Firstly, while the way in which the meaning of “nation” and “country” depended on the context was true for all of the papers, most of this confusion happened in the *Guardian* and the *Herald*, whereas the *Western Mail* often also specified by name which region it was referring to, as mentioned above. One possible reason for this could be found in the way in which the Welsh identity seemed to be going through some level of transformation or was only just growing stronger in the newspaper constructions. Thus it would not be surprising if the region in question was deliberately emphasised in order to lessen any possible confusion. The way in which the *Western Mail* also used words like “our”, “this” and even “home” noticeably often while referring to Wales would support this conclusion.

Secondly, while it was noted in the previous section that there seemed to be a need in the constructions of Scotland in the *Herald* to clearly distinguish between Scotland and the rest of the Union, the paper still allowed the same overlapping here as what appeared in the other two newspapers. The *Herald* might not have always been at ease with representing and constructing Britain as a unanimous entity and Scotland as a part of it, and did so less frequently than the other two papers, but it still did it. As a contrast, the *Guardian* was definitely the paper in which the words “nation” and “country” were most often used to refer to Britain, and thus the paper in which that construction process happened most often. It was to be expected, but the lack of England in these constructions was, in turn, unexpected. However, as can be seen from the following sections, the overlapping and entanglement of Britain and England still existed, only through different linguistic constructions.

6.2.2 “Wandering” identities

All three newspapers seem comfortable reporting news about the other countries and do so quite naturally and effortlessly. This is consistent with the findings of Rosie and Petersoo (2009), who looked at English and Scottish newspapers and found that they do not restrict themselves to just one community but instead the national context

“wanders” from one context to another. The present study found this to be true also for the Welsh newspaper. The way in which the words “nation” and “country” were used differently depending on the context is one of the ways in which such wandering can manifest.

When looking at the question of such wandering identities in more detail, however, it became clear that there was one paper where such wandering happened more often and effortlessly than in the others, and that newspaper was the *Guardian*. Compared to the *Western Mail* and the *Herald*, in the *Guardian* the national context wandered not just between the different events, for example adopting a British context for the articles about the new Prime Minister and a Welsh context for the Welsh referendum, but also between articles on the same event and within a much shorter time span.

For instance, on March 1st 2011, the *Guardian* published an article titled “The anti-state right takes the Welsh for idiots who mustn’t be left alone”. Right in the beginning of the article the context is set to Britain instead of Wales: “Elsewhere in the world, people are mobilising to demand more powers. *Here in the UK* inventive campaigns are mobilising to demand less.” This is followed by referring to two different votes with two different contexts - the Welsh referendum where only the Welsh voted, and changing the voting system for Westminster elections which would impact all British voters - as both nevertheless belonging to all: “would have *us* vote” and “they take *us* for idiots”. The context changes quickly, however, as only a couple of days after, in an article titled “Wales ‘comes of age’ with yes vote for assembly’s lawmaking powers” the context is set to Wales: “*The people of Wales* have wholeheartedly endorsed giving *their* assembly more power to make laws...”

As another example, on April 23rd 2011, the *Guardian* published an article titled “Scotland and Wales: Different drums” where right from the beginning the national context is set to Scotland and Wales, apparent already in the headline and in the first sentence: “Look back, this St George’s Day, to 1999, when *Scots and Welsh voters* first elected *their* new devolved governments”. But only a couple of weeks later, the paper published an article on May 9th 2011 where it refers to Scotland electoral history by starting with “*Here* the west voted Labour, the north voted Lib Dem...” and continued on to note: “Each nation has a set of associated personality traits. *Ours* just changed”. There is no mistaking the Scottish context here. Yet, a couple of days later,

on May 11th 2011, the *Guardian* is back to a British context, commenting on why Scotland should perhaps be allowed to leave the Union and how Cameron might be wrong to want to fight to keep Scotland with noting that “it is bizarre to champion local autonomy abroad, yet ‘fight it with every fibre in my body’ at *home*”.

Besides just wandering between British, Scottish and Welsh national contexts, this wandering also happened between British and English contexts. On May 11th 2011, the *Guardian* published an article titled “It is time for England’s first empire to get independence”. This article set the national context to England already in the headline and re-enforced it by remarking that “Scotland’s economy sucks England’s taxpayers of £8bn in annual subsidy” and on how Scotland’s governing sinews have “grown apart from England”. However, the context starts to get tangled very quickly as Britain is brought into the picture and the article notes that the Scottish elections was “not between British parties but against English ones”, followed by remarking that “the United Kingdom is a union of four very different entities”. And finally, the article concludes with comparisons between Britain and the rest of the world, stating that “*Britain* lectures the world, and even bombs it, in the cause of regional self-determination” and propositioning that it was insensitivity to the political ambitions of self-rule “that lost *Britain* Ireland in the last century”. While such wandering between British and English contexts occurred multiple times in the *Guardian*’s articles and was one of the ways in which English identity not only overlapped with British identity but even emerged in the first place, in this example the wandering happens within a single article and is thus quite overt.

As can be seen from this, “wandering” identities are definitely present in the *Guardian* as its reporting clearly changes context and perspective between different articles – and in a few cases even within a single article – even when writing about the same event or topic. In this way, the *Guardian* not only constructs different identities for the different countries as all three newspapers do, but also offers points on which there is no need to choose, to set definite boundaries to said identities. This is exactly how hybrid identities are constructed and maintained, and the *Guardian* was the newspaper where this process was the most apparent and common.

6.2.3 Your news, my context

While the newspapers included in the data were identified as English, Scottish and Welsh, all three of them are still national daily papers and report on national news. What was interesting about that, however, is the way in which national news or news about another country were often reported through a local context. That means that it was not only certain words and their meaning that varied depending on the context, but that even bigger events could be framed through specific, local point of views. This framing was apparent in all three newspapers, and connected to all three events.

While the governmental negotiations at Westminster were in full swing in 2010, both the *Western Mail* and the *Herald* speculated on how the new government and Prime Minister would affect Wales and Scotland. Both papers reported similar concerns. There were fears about how well the new government would be able to represent all the different countries, how its decisions would influence the goals of the Welsh Assembly and the Scottish Parliament, and most of all, what kinds of cuts would be imposed on the Welsh and Scottish economy. Moreover, the relationships between the different administrations and their leaders were a topic of discussion.

Scotland's big question as the negotiations were going on was, simply put, what would be the best result for the people of Scotland? In addition, there seemed to be signs of Scotland feeling overlooked and underappreciated. When questions arose about the practicalities of a coalition government, here is the *Herald's* response to the reservations expressed in other parts of the Union:

“These issues of coalition protocol were mostly resolved 10 years ago during the first Holyrood coalition... Coalition only looks strange because no-one in Westminster looks beyond College Green”.
- The *Herald* on May 13th 2010

College Green is a park in the City of Westminster, officially called Abingdon Street Gardens. The park is behind Westminster Abbey and next to the Houses of Parliament. During elections and other major political events the park is often the host for media reporting the story, and was reportedly even more packed than usual during the 2010 General Election and the following negotiations. The quote is a good example of the how Scotland's standing with the UK was described in the *Herald*. There was a feeling that “the Scottish dimension” was overlooked and that the negotiations failed to

consider Scotland at all, instead only caring about what happens in Westminster, in front of the cameras.

In Wales the news of the coalition government was met with a bit more moderation. The *Western Mail* commented on the deal on May 12th 2010 with “we have a new government and it’s not quite the one voters were expecting”. But similarly to Scotland, there was a lot of worry in Wales about the possible spending cuts and how the new government would impact the Welsh economy:

“It will be crucial that any new government protects Wales from the brunt of excessive spending cuts”.

- Carwyn Jones in the *Western Mail* on May 11th 2010

While it was not excessive stated anywhere, one could consider part of the reason for the fear of spending cuts to be, both in Wales and in Scotland, the approaching local elections the following year. If drastic cuts would have to be made immediately, it would leave the voters with a bad taste of the administration enforcing those cuts. But as can be seen from these examples, both in the *Herald* and in the *Western Mail*, the news reporting was focusing on how the new government would impact Scotland and Wales, instead of discussing the Westminster Parliament purely in a British context.

This same trend repeated when the *Western Mail* reported on the Scottish election in 2011. Of the four (4) articles that were actually included from the *Western Mail* in the data of the present study, two were actually just as much about Wales as they were about Scotland. They did report the election results and discuss the situation in Scotland as much as the articles from the other newspapers, but in addition to that they also discussed the effects this result would have on Wales.

There was a lot of concern about how the SNP’s victory would impact Welsh politics, and how the SNP’s plan of an independence referendum would affect Welsh nationalism:

“It is inevitable this will embolden supporters of Welsh independence: The Scottish Nationalists’ resounding election success raises the i-word and will have major implications for Wales”.

- The *Western Mail* on May 9th 2011

The Scottish election results were seen as having quite an impact on Wales, and it is safe to say that the possible changes for the Union were not taken lightly in the *Western Mail*. The results in Scotland were called a “revolution” that would

“send regular tremors through the United Kingdom over the next five years and Wales will feel the full force of each shock-wave”.

- *The Western Mail* on May 9th 2011

It was predicted that the future independence referendum would also motivate the nationalists in Wales and that would have big effects on Welsh politics as well, for instance forcing the nationalist party Plaid Cymru to clarify and step up its aims and goals regarding independent Wales. And in this way, the news about the SNP's victory did not belong to just Scotland, but instead was Welsh news as well.

Such shifts in the context and point of views were also one of the ways in which English identity constructions emerged, and this was true especially in connection with Scotland. When reporting on the possibility of Scottish independence, the *Guardian* framed the question in an English context. While there was still some discussion on what Scottish independence would mean for Britain and the Union, there were also very strong depictions on what it would mean for England, particularly economically. This indicates that when something came up that could have a significant impact on both Britain and the different countries within it, something that could by some be seen even as a threat, it seems to function as one of the triggers for the emergence of English identity in the *Guardian*.

England emerged as a counterpoint for Scotland also in the *Herald*. For instance, the *Herald* portrayed English nationalism through Scottish issues, and very differently from Scottish nationalism. This was most clearly seen as the so called West Lothian question was discussed: while the West Lothian question is most often seen as a question of whether or not England and its issues are processed in a manner they should, the *Herald* asked on May 13th 2010 does “the West Lothian question undermine Scottish influence at Westminster? Could it undermine the Union?” While the question of Scottish independence was not portrayed in the *Herald* as a threat and its impact on the Union was not discussed, at least not in the time period the data was formed of, England and its concerns sparked discussion on these very matters. English nationalism, “Their” nationalism, was portrayed as a threat, which is not surprising considering how Billig (1995: 6) noted the easiness of recognising nationalism as a problem over “there” while simultaneously overlooking the possible problematic nature of “our” nationalism.

These conventions of news reporting between the three newspapers created an interesting juxtaposition. While on one hand the news appeared to belong to all, so to speak, meaning that whatever was happening around the Union appeared to be of interest and to have significant consequences for every country involved, on another hand there were still boundaries and distinctions about the uniqueness of each country. By reporting on what was happening around Britain, the newspapers are able to bring these matters closer to “home”. By framing the news in local contexts, the newspapers create a situation where every country appears to be linked to each other. But at the same time, by answering Scottish independence with English nationalism, and by portraying English nationalism as a threat to Scotland, the newspapers also simultaneously draw the line between the countries, enforcing their own particularity.

6.2.4 The politics and relationships of identity

When examining identity in the articles and identifying the spaces where possible overlapping and entangling happened, it became clear that the identity constructions were influenced by not just linguistic choices and how the countries themselves perhaps wanted to present their identities, but also by the relationships between the countries and the political events taking place at the time the articles were written. Since there is a lot of history between the countries and the Union, it is natural for some aspects of that history continue to influence the relationships and identities in the present as well. Then again, due to this history, also some political boundaries and affiliations seemed to be quite distinctly linked with the countries and their attitudes towards each other. To clarify these relationships and the political impacts, the ways in which the three newspapers regarded the issue were studied.

When paying attention to the relationships between the countries, it was apparent that in many ways Scotland and Wales constructed their positions in the Union through their relationships with England. Scotland, on one hand, seemed to want to emphasise its difference from England, as seen in the *Herald* and discussed earlier in this chapter. On the other hand, Wales seemed more eager to retain its good relationship with England and the *Western Mail*'s the attitude towards the relationship remained quite neutral

throughout the data. These relationships were affected and disturbed, however, as soon as something politically unexpected occurred, as can be seen from the following.

It was apparent from the articles that there was a deep-seated division between the different countries and their political spectrum, especially between England and Scotland. While Scotland saw England as inherently Conservative, the home of the “left” was seen to reside in Scotland and Wales. This balance was disturbed both with the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government of 2010, which Scotland seemed to view as a government that did not and could not truly represent Scotland and its interests, and with the landslide victory of the SNP, which meant a whole new majority government in Scotland.

Focusing on the Westminster coalition government of 2010 and its reception in the papers, it was the attitude of the *Herald* that best illustrates the complicated relationships and political identities in Britain. While the *Herald* may have in general been more positive towards the left than the right, its attitude towards the Labour Party in the days after the Westminster elections was still far from positive, calling the New Labour the “true successor to Thatcherism” and commenting on the “pitiful, abject failure of the English left”. That meant the *Herald* at the time did not see even the Labour Party as a party that could have stood up for Scotland, commenting on how the English left seemed to have betrayed the rest of the British left. And when it comes to the Conservatives, the *Herald's* attitude was more than clear. The Conservatives were said to have “no function in Scotland” and considered “pariahs”, along with the Liberal Democrats for joining them in the coalition.

Additionally, what the newspapers and their articles on the governmental negotiations clearly showed was how tied the different identities were to the political parties when it came to the election and the discussions about it. The *Guardian* and the *Western Mail* displayed some, though not in any way overtly blatant, negativity towards the nationalist parties, which was in line with the way in which they appeared more accepting of the Union and more comfortable constructing Britain as an entity than the *Herald*. And on another hand, the *Herald* was quite clear about its dislike for the Conservative and about how clearly it saw the party specifically as a part of England with no place in Scotland. And while the *Western Mail's* attitude towards the Conservatives was not as hostile, the Welsh Labour Party has won the largest share of

votes in every Assembly Election since the Assembly was first set up, illustrating how also Welsh politics seem to reside more on the left than the Conservatives. And so from Welsh and especially Scottish perspective, England got what it wanted with the Tory government:

“England voted one way, the rest another.”
- The *Herald* on May 12th 2010

But this led to a situation where the Westminster government was formed of the two parties that were only the third and fourth parties in both Scotland and Wales, which meant that it was difficult, especially in Scotland, to view the new government as representative of the whole of Britain:

“We still occupy the strange limbo in which a British General Election matters to Scotland yet leaves swathes of policy and most of the political landscape untouched”
- The *Herald* on May 15th 2010

Perhaps as an answer to these concerns, as soon as it was confirmed David Cameron was the new Prime Minister, he made a promise to treat Scotland with respect. There were some doubts expressed in Scotland about this, largely due to the strained, almost non-existent relationship that had prevailed between Westminster and Holyrood while Gordon Brown was the Prime Minister. Cameron, however, talked about building a relationship that consisted of regular links between not just himself and the Scottish First Minister, but also at a parliamentary level. As a start of that relationship, Cameron visited the Holyrood Parliament and had a meeting with Alex Salmond just a few days after he became the Prime Minister. The *Herald* described this visit as “bridge-building”, but there were warnings issued to the new coalition government about the impact the coalition could have in Scotland:

“The coalition will need to be careful with some policies of major significance for Scotland which run the risk of a backlash which may feed nationalist sentiment.”
- The *Herald* on May 13th 2010

Whether it was because Cameron shared this fear or because of some other reason, during his visit Cameron appeared to yield to at least some of Salmond’s demands, for example releasing to Scotland the £180 million fossil fuel levy held in London that had been the subject of much debate.

Like in Scotland, in Wales there was also focus placed on the relationship between the new government and the local Assembly. The situation was interesting, since at least for the first year before the next Assembly Elections, the new government was up against the left in Wales. However, the Welsh First Minister Jones made it very clear he did not want the relationship between Westminster and Cardiff Bay, between Cameron and himself, to be a battlefield. This was contrasted with the quite proactive approach of Alex Salmond in Scotland, where Salmond prepared to the meeting with Cameron with a rather long list of demands and issues Scotland felt strongly about:

“While Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond had been making bellicose statements about how Scotland will not be a ‘helpless bystander’... Carwyn Jones will take a more businesslike approach.”
- The *Western Mail* on May 13th 2010

For Jones, this meant wanting to construct a direct relationship with Cameron, and standing up for Wales without looking for a fight at every opportunity.

When it comes to the victory of the Scottish National Party in 2011, as soon as the results of the Scottish Parliament Election were published, there began immediate speculation on how and why the SNP had reached a majority when it was thought technically impossible. The relationship between Scotland and England came up even in this, though not always with the same argument: on one hand, Labour was claimed to have attempted to make the elections in Scotland into a battle about the future of the Union, but failing as the voters seemed to be concentrating on Scottish politics instead of the whole UK. Whereas on another occasion the election was described to be “not between British parties but against English ones”, as reported by the *Guardian* on May 11th 2011, implying that a vote for the SNP was a vote against England. So instead of regarding the Scottish Parliament Elections as a purely Scottish issue, the politics of both England and the Union were brought into the debate.

Furthermore, the *Guardian* also published an article a couple of days after the Scottish Parliament Election Day where it claimed it was precisely the Labour Party that created the opportunity for the SNP to reach such an unprecedented majority in the Scottish Parliament. The Labour Party was instrumental in the birth of the Scottish Parliament in 1997, since its establishment had a significant role in the party’s platform. And since the *Guardian* argued that while nationalistic parties can often seem quite irrelevant in elections concerning the whole UK, the Scottish Parliament

gave the SNP the perfect place for its aims and rhetoric to prosper. In addition, the SNP's commitment to the Scottish Parliament was much greater than the Labour Party's, the SNP switching all of its MPs to Holyrood as Labour kept almost all of its existing and experienced MPs at Westminster, thus giving the SNP ample opportunity to gain control of Holyrood. Somehow, the SNP had managed to alter the balance of the political parties in Scotland, where the Labour Party had been the leading party since the setting up of the Parliament, and by doing that, had also altered the balance in the Union. If the true "home" of the left was regarded to be in Scotland and Wales, its home base had just changed dramatically.

Notably, this tells a lot not just about the relationships Wales and Scotland had with the government at Westminster, but also about the relationship between Wales and Scotland. They may belong to the same Union and they share a lot of the same ambitions and fears, but they have very different approaches to handling that relationship and where they would like it to go. The *Herald* described the situation between Scotland and England on May 15th 2010 as "two nations divided by a common political language", but this is just as true for the situation between Scotland and Wales, or England and Wales. They are all linked through the Union, but Scotland and Wales' primary contact is not with each other but with the government at Westminster. Similar indications could be seen also in the fact that there were very few articles in the *Western Mail* that were about the Scottish Parliament Election, and likewise, only a few articles in the *Herald* concerning the Welsh devolution referendum. But despite this, they are all forced to define, to some extent at least, themselves, their relationships with the other countries, and their status in the Union not just by themselves but through their relationship and interaction with each other, a lot of which is centred on political and economic decisions and incentives. The emerging definitions and relationships tend to turn out fairly differently, which is very clear in the cases of Wales and Scotland.

6.3 Evolving identities - What's next?

In this section, the point of view is turned towards the future and the third research question. I will examine what exactly seems to be the impact of the Welsh referendum

result and the general attitude in Wales towards nationalism and independence. I will then take a look at the situation in Scotland and try to see just what the Scottish National Party's success tells us about Scotland's future. Following this, the focus will be turned towards England and how English nationalism appeared in the three newspapers, in addition to its implications on English identity. The chapter will be concluded by taking a look at the Union and the future of devolution.

6.3.1 "Slippery slope to independence"

While Wales voted on the referendum of 2011 that would give the Welsh Assembly more powers, some of the reporting on the *Western Mail* turned the focus towards independence and how the referendum would impact the issue. This revealed a very interesting attitude towards Wales, independence and the Union, one that seems slightly surprising in the current climate of the Union where the future is filled with questions.

First of all, in the days leading up to the referendum, Rachel Banner, the leader of the "No" campaign voiced her fears that the proposed change in the referendum would lead to more concentration in Cardiff, away from the more rural areas of Wales, which would compromise how well the whole of Wales was represented. These are familiar concerns that reflect the old, historical divisions of Wales that have already been discussed in more detail above. But she also commented on fears that the change would be just the first step towards independence, something which she clearly saw in a negative light and that she considered a warning. The juxtaposition is interesting here, since on one hand there is concern for the matter of representing the whole of Wales, while at the same time expressing reservations towards separating from the Union that others see problematic, among other reasons, for the very same representation issue.

Second of all, and more surprisingly, similar attitudes were expressed also by those voting "Yes". For instance Russell Goodway, who is the former Labour leader of Cardiff council, proclaimed a few days before the vote that he would be voting "Yes" after being convinced by the Welsh Labour conference that the proposed change would not be "a stepping stone to independence" and that it would not be immediately followed by another referendum seeking more powers. He was not alone in articulating

this assurance, and even the *Western Mail* commented in its referendum analysis where it urged its readers to vote “Yes” that they could be confident this change would not lead them to independence. This meant that even those clearly in favour of placing more powers on the Assembly were not publicly promoting independence in any way, but instead reassuring the people that it would not be on the agenda.

Similar concerns came up in the *Western Mail* also in connection with the Scottish parliament elections. When reporting on the results and the SNP’s success, the concern in the *Western Mail* was very much for how the situation in Scotland would impact Wales and, as was discussed in the previous section, leading to predictions that Scotland voting on independence might also motivate the nationalists in Wales. The reluctance towards independence in Wales was still clear, however, and instead the situation was looked at as a possibility for reinforcing the status of Wales and finding its own political ground while remaining a part of the Union. It was speculated that Scotland’s result would undoubtedly mean that the Welsh politicians “cannot afford to be left out of this debate” but instead of leading to the rise in nationalistic idealism in Wales this could also mean that the Labour party has an excellent opportunity to establish a new direction for Welsh politics, to

“carve out a politics in Wales that contrasts with the nationalism now dominant in Scotland and the centre-right policies pursued in England”
- The *Western Mail* on May 9th 2011

In addition to the wary attitude towards independence, there was also nervousness for the future of the Union. Unlike in the *Guardian*, which published a couple of articles about how England would benefit if Scotland were to leave the Union, there was no talk in the *Western Mail* about how the break-up of the Union would be a good thing for anyone. Instead, there was concern for the Union and what would happen in the future. Moreover, it seemed that the realization that the Union is not an automatic constant but something that has to be actively built and sustained seems to have hit home:

“The idea that the different parts of the UK are linked by the principle of consent and not some impermeable constitutional cement”
- The *Western Mail* on May 9th 2011

As can be seen from these examples, Welsh independence was not portrayed as something desirable, not even in the pro-Wales *Western Mail*. Instead, Welsh

independence was described as something to be careful of, something that should not be accidentally slipped into. The articles did not offer many explanations for why Wales is not as attracted to independence as Scotland for example seems to be, but the reasons that came up ranged from the financial support Wales has received from the Union and the current economic climate to the large numbers of English living on Wales' side of the border.

Whatever the reasons for the Welsh attitude towards independence, it is such a contrast from Scotland that it raises interesting questions about the reasons behind the attitude, as well as about the relationship between Wales and the Union. Furthermore, it was apparent that while nationalism elsewhere in the Union was seen as a threat, nationalism in Wales was not really present at all. It supports the idea of a Welsh identity that at the time the articles were written was transforming and emerging, an identity that was not based on separating from the Union but instead on building a Wales that was both a part of the Union and had an identity of its own. This was consistent with the findings of Haesly (2005: 257) who concluded in his study that the Welsh identity was compatible with simultaneously being also British. And so while the Welsh Assembly was allowed more powers in the 2011 referendum, it was more about achieving a functioning Wales that was able to represent and serve itself than it was about possible independence or distancing itself from the Union. Wales, to all appearances, seemed to be secure and determined in its position in the Union.

6.3.2 “Yes” to the SNP, “Yes” to Scottish independence?

Holding an independence referendum has always been on the Scottish National Party's platform. One could argue that one of the obstacles the party has had to overcome has been to show it can promote and achieve also other goals, and to do it with plausibility and credibility. And many argue that this is exactly what the SNP managed to do during its four years in parliament prior to 2011: it showed the voters they could contribute to Scottish politics outside of the independence question and was successful in convincing the voters of the positive future it was aiming to bring for Scotland. But how big a role the independence referendum they were aiming at actually played in the election results of 2011 was the topic of much discussion in the articles.

Alex Salmond seemed to be playing it down in the face of other political issues. On May 5th 2011, the *Herald* quoted him stating that “an early priority would not be the independence question but to get economic teeth into the Scotland Bill currently going through Westminster”. The *Guardian*, on the other hand, highlighted his statement from the previous week: “a second term in office would be a mandate to hold a vote on independence” (May 7th 2011).

Gordon Brown and other party leaders did not seem to approve of the independence referendum, and even used it as a warning to the voters before the election. The *Herald* quoted Brown stating on May 3rd 2011 that the independence referendum would place “a massive roadblock on Scotland’s path to economic recovery”, and also noted that the SNP were “utterly distracted by their obsession with independence”. The Conservative leader Annabel Goldie, on the other hand, was quoted claiming only she “can keep the threats of nationalism and socialism in check”. The issue of independence and the Scottish nationalism the SNP was perceived by the other parties to promote was clearly portrayed as a threat by these parties. But since it was the people of Scotland that would ultimately make the final decision, how did the voters feel?

In regards to this question, there seemed to be some conflicting opinions about what it actually meant to vote for the Scottish National Party. Was it equal to voting for Scottish independence? The general consensus was clearly “no”, though the competing parties tried to make that answer into a “yes”, perhaps aiming to scare voters from voting for the SNP. Following the comments on the dangers of independence, the *Guardian* called the Labour Party’s attitude an attempt “to run this campaign into a battle about the future of the UK”. The Liberal Democrats’ Scottish leader Tavish Scott in turn claimed that “an SNP vote is for independence and five years of a permanent political campaign for separatism”. However, despite the warnings from the other parties and Alex Salmond’s claim the result gave him “moral authority” to hold a referendum on the issue, it was also pointed out that the voters could decide for themselves what they were voting for:

“People could distinguish between voting for Mr Salmond because he was their best choice for First Minister and choosing to say ‘no’ when he gets around to holding an independence referendum.”

- The *Herald* on May 7th 2011

The *Guardian*, too, speculated that “some voters at least gave backing to a party with whose central agenda, independence, they disagree” (May 7th 2011). Hence the general attitude seemed to be that a vote for the SNP did not equal a vote for independence.

Furthermore, there was a clear difference between the *Herald's* and the *Guardian's* view on how an independence referendum might turn out. It was clear from the start that despite the SNP's victory, they would not want to push for the referendum immediately. Instead, the referendum would be held closer to the end of the new government's term, presumably to give the SNP time to show what they could do for Scotland and its people and thus boosting the “yes” vote in the referendum. In addition, Salmond announced a few days after the Parliament Election that he would also prefer to offer a third option on the referendum instead of a simple “Yes” and “No” vote. This third option would be for some form of “fiscal autonomy”, giving Scotland more financial freedom while Scotland would still remain a part of the Union. According to some interpretations, this was because the chance of losing straight out with a “Yes” and “No” vote was too great, but this third option would guarantee Scotland - and the SNP - a lot more power in future years.

In every article included in the present study that was focused on the Scottish Parliament Election, the *Guardian* mentioned the independence referendum or the possibility of Scottish independence in one way or another. When referring to the outcome of such a referendum, the paper was quite clear on how it believed the result would turn out. The paper stated in an article on May 7th 2011 that “the SNP dominates Scotland even though only a third of Scottish voters support their headline policy of withdrawal from the United Kingdom”. It even went as far as to state that Scottish independence was “more popular in England than Scotland”. As can be seen from this, the *Guardian* was quite confident the referendum would not pass and there was a demand to “call Salmond's bluff”. Many believed that instead of letting the SNP pave the way for the referendum, there should be a snap vote where the referendum result would lean towards a “No” vote and the matter would be dealt with.

The *Herald*, however, published an article a couple of days after the election titled “Now is the time for Salmond to call independence referendum”. It also argued for a snap vote without years of waiting, but interestingly with a belief for a very different outcome. It stated that the voters “allowed themselves to believe, for the first time, that

a vote for the SNP was neither a betrayal nor an invitation to the end of the world”. And furthermore, that the SNP had managed to run an optimistic and positive campaign that would win over the Unionist parties’ appeal to apathy and fear. And so the article asks a different question: “Why wait?” The SNP’s victory was so sovereign that “this historic moment might be as good as it gets”, thus there being a good chance the vote would now be “Yes”.

This difference between the *Herald* and the *Guardian* tells more about the *Guardian* and its overall attitude than it does about the *Herald*. The *Herald* claimed to be neutral on the issue and at least in the articles included in the present study seemed to succeed in that, though it did allow quite a lot of room for opinions that supported independence. That could be expected from a Scottish newspaper, however. In this case it is the question of the *Guardian*’s attitudes towards Scottish independence that particularly raises interesting points. The *Herald* does not really get into much discussion about the fate or the future of the Union outside the general context of an independence referendum, whereas the *Guardian* brings up the question of the Union quite often. After the results were published, the Scottish National Party was seen as “a threat” to the Union, as can be seen from this quote describing the result and the prospect of an independence referendum:

*“Potentially the most serious threat to the UK in its 310-year history
moved a step closer to fruition”
- The Guardian on May 7th 2011*

The conclusions to be drawn from this would indicate that while Scottish nationalism and an independent Scotland were perhaps understated in the articles from the *Herald*, the *Guardian* definitely identified them as a threat to the Union. It seems impossible to know just how significant a role independence played in the parliament election, but it certainly opened the door for a very uncertain future. The SNP proceeded to announce an independence referendum to be held in the autumn of 2014, which gave the majority government more than three years to build the road to the vote. David Cameron has been adamant about his and the Westminster government’s desire to keep Scotland in the Union and to retain the status quo. Whatever happens in the referendum in 2014 will have a significant and lasting impact on the Union, and Scotland has definitely emerged not only as a much more separate entity than Wales, but also as the deciding factor on what the Union will look like in the future.

6.3.3 "If the English had England to themselves..."

England and its future in the Union present a very different picture than Wales and Scotland, as it so often does. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the Union was often taken for granted particularly in the articles from the *Guardian*, not leaving an awful lot of room for the emergence of an English identity. Furthermore, a great number of the times when English nationalism was brought up, it was done as a counterbalance or as a response to Scottish nationalism. This meant that an English identity that could be compared to those of the Welsh and the Scottish was difficult to identify. This did not mean, however, that there were no signs of such an identity, or that England was completely ignored in the articles, as was already noted above. But turning to the future of England the question of where English nationalism is headed, the Union of course plays an important role in the process.

When talking about the ways in which England seemed separate from the Union, the political climate is the first thing to come forth. While English nationalism might have been rare to arise, the differences in the way the countries voted and supported the different parties was not overlooked. As mentioned, after the UK General Elections in 2010, it was very clear from the articles in the *Herald* that the general feeling in Scotland was that it was England that voted for the Conservatives, definitely not Scotland. But furthermore, the *Herald* saw also major impacts on the Union in the election results. First of all, even before any deal was made regarding the coalition, its headline on May 11th 2010 read "Union could be in jeopardy if the left doesn't get it right". As the article painted the picture, the Conservatives winning the election was a sign of the political separation that marked the relationship between Scotland and England, a separation that was clearly seen as a threat to the Union. And the solution to the problem was simple, according to the argument:

"Break up the Union. If the English had England to themselves, they could vote Tory to their hearts' content."
- The *Herald* on May 11th 2010

This is a comment that seems to sum up a lot of the political situation between England and Scotland and the way in which affects the future of the Union.

Looking at the situation from England's perspective, the *Guardian* also published two different articles after the results of the Scottish Parliament election were published that

questioned PM Cameron's decision to campaign to keep the Union intact. The first was titled "It is time for England's first empire to get independence: In a fit of Anglo-Saxon machismo, Cameron has vowed to fight Scottish self-rule 'with every fibre I have'. But why?" The article argues that England does not actually have any reason to fight to keep Scotland in the Union. This is backed by arguments such as "Scotland's economy sucks England's taxpayers of £8bn in annual subsidy", clearly insinuating that there is nothing coming to England in its turn. Edinburgh is described as the capital of a "proper" country that has "grown apart from England" in fields such as education, medicine, law, and even football. And the reporter definitely does not view Salmond in a positive light, claiming that Salmond has "milked England, and England has allowed itself to be milked, terrified of partition". And as if just the loss of money is not enough justification: "For 13 years, Scotland has decided who ruled England".

The second article is titled simply "Why oppose Scottish independence?" The writer professes to be a supporter of Scottish independence, and sees Scottish independence as good for both sides. If the Scots think they will do better without the Union and the English feel they would save that £8 billion, then the result should be "a win-win situation". The only outcome would be "the end of a 304-year experiment which worked some but not all of the time". That the *Guardian* would publish these two articles that not only question the Prime Minister's stand on the issue but also clearly state England would not miss Scotland if it became independent shows the attitude of the newspaper. The *Guardian* sees the benefit for England, should Scotland decide to leave the Union.

More than just political affiliations, there was another question that came up frequently and that illustrates how devolution and the Union are impacting England. This was the West Lothian question. On one hand, many even outside England agree that the practise of Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish MPs being able to vote on matters that only affect England is unfair, since English MPs do not have a say on the issues handled in the Welsh and Northern Irish Assemblies or the Scottish Parliament while especially the Scottish MPs' vote has often been decisive at the Westminster Parliament. This happened for instance with the vote on student tuition fees in 2004 that caused great controversy. After the Higher Education Act of 2004, Universities in England could charge their students up to £3000 a year starting from the academic year 2006-2007, the convention which was introduced also in Northern Ireland and Wales

around the same time. Scottish students attending Scottish universities are not charged any fees. The *Scotsman* reported in 2007 that the Scottish MPs were the decisive votes that got the measure through at the Westminster Parliament in 2004.

While the *Western Mail* did not comment on the West Lothian question, which was included in the new Westminster government's coalition agreement as there were plans to set up a commission to look at the question, the *Herald* questioned its impact on the Union:

“Will the promised commission on the West Lothian question undermine Scottish influence at Westminster? Could it undermine the Union?”
- The *Western Mail* on May 13th 2010

It is interesting how Scotland, which seems to be very adamant about keeping England out of its own matters, is at the same time concerned about losing its influence on England. Clearly, the *Herald* does not see the nationalists in Scotland and in Wales as the only threat to the Union. As can be seen from its view on the West Lothian question and from the way in which it sees England as so inherently Conservative, in its eyes there is a similar threat to the Union forming in England:

“It will be ironic if the Union eventually breaks up not because of anything the Scots or Welsh achieve but rather because the English... have had their fill of outsiders spoiling their Tory party.”
- The *Herald* on May 11th 2010

It may have a point, since in addition to creating the commission to take a look at the West Lothian question, the *Guardian* also reported on the coalition government looking into the possibility of forming another commission whose task would be examining if there should be an English Assembly set up as a counterbalance to Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish devolution. While no solution has yet been found to the West Lothian question and there has not been any steps taken to actually set up an English Assembly, it could be argued that just starting talks on the matter means the current devolution system is not working sufficiently enough for England.

In addition, while in the past the English have often been seen to perhaps be more depended on their British identity than the Scottish and the Welsh, it may no longer be true. Instead, the discontentment in England on especially the tricky relationship with Scotland and the frustration on the decision-making process might have led to some

level of new emphasis on the uniqueness and particularity of England, which historically is rarer in the case of England than with Scotland or Wales. Moreover, considering the power relationships influencing the identities, one could wonder about the effect the emerging and transforming Welsh identity and the separating Scottish identity are having on the development of the English identity. Does the sense of withdrawal of the Welsh and the Scottish create a situation that forces the English to more clearly realize their own distinction from the British umbrella identity, and to develop a more unique identity of their own to rely on? If the English have in the past, as Aughey (2010: 509) stated, been in a position where they have not needed to take territorial politics seriously, it would seem that the shifts in the status of the Union are now forcing them to do just that.

Whether these developments actually lead to the English embracing England and their English identity more than before, let alone to any further separation of the Union, is impossible to know based on the articles included in the present study. But there certainly is sufficient foundation and incentive going on under the political and economical turmoil for that to happen, especially should Scotland vote in favour of independence in 2014.

6.3.4 Democratic deficit?

A very interesting aspect that repeated in the case of each of the countries and their relationship with the Union and devolution was the phrase “democratic deficit”. When the discussion turned towards the current state of the Union, every country was naturally the most concerned about their own status and how the Union was impacting what they felt would be the best for them. And more than that, every country seemed to be feeling they were worse off than the others, that they were not receiving everything they should from the Union, whether that was financially or having a voice and sufficient representation in how things were decided on and run.

This kind of democratic deficit came up, of course, when talking about the West Lothian question and whether or not English issues were being handled the way they should. In addition to that, the *Herald* reported in 2010 on the UK General Election and the situation where England had largely voted for the Conservatives who ended up

having to form a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats after having been “denied the prize by the anti-Tory voting of other parts of the Union”, as having ignited English complaints about democratic deficit (May 11th 2010). From this perspective, the fact that England was unable to have a Tory government due to votes from the other countries was a sign that the system was not working for England, and interestingly this perspective came from the *Herald* instead of from the *Guardian*. Even in this, Scotland’s call for separation manifested strongly.

This was true also for the way in which the *Herald* saw the situation in Scotland following the formation of the coalition government. The coalition agreement meant that the Union was run by the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, which meant that Scotland was now “ruled by two parties who came third and fourth in the popular vote here”, an equation which the newspaper called a democratic deficit (May 13th 2010). Moreover, Scotland seemed to feel very clearly that they had not gotten everything they deserved financially, starting for instance with the £180 million fossil fuel levy held in London that Scotland argued belonged to them and that was later promised by Cameron to be released.

In Wales these feelings manifested in the problem of the Welsh Assembly not being able to make its own laws without permission from the Westminster government, a situation which caused the country to feel like the proverbial little brother of the Union. In addition, in 2010 also Wales expressed similar concerns as Scotland about the Conservative - Liberal Democrats coalition in Westminster. The new government caused insecurities in Wales about how the government would treat Wales and how it would respond to the call on more powers. Wales’ relationship with the Union, which was certainly not as conflicted as that of Scotland’s but still held some concerns, was summed up well in the *Western Mail* on March 3rd 2011:

“The long years of the Conservative administration from 1979 to 1997 created what has been described as a democratic deficit in Wales”.

This illustrates just how unbalanced the situation had been felt under the Conservative government, and how unfair it seemed to the Welsh. There was no desire for a similar situation in the future.

These examples show how such discontent came up in the articles included in the present study, and though the relationships and democratic processes of the Union are

certainly more complicated than just a few examples, it does raise interesting questions about the state of the Union, devolution, and what their future looks like. If there is such discontent in all of the countries in question, when does the proverbial camel's back break and the Union becomes too unstable to sustain itself? Of course, Scotland voting on its independence in the autumn of 2014 is a significant indication that such a process has already started forming. Not knowing what the independence referendum's result will be means no one can project what the Union looks like in the coming years. But no matter what happens, it will probably look very different:

"The Union may survive. But the old ties no longer bind as tightly as before."

- *The Guardian* on April 23rd 2011

7 CONCLUSION

The present thesis has aimed to examine and depict the ways in which three English, Scottish and Welsh newspapers have constructed Britain and British identities. The analysis revealed that the construction processes were rarely simple, often fairly mundane and natural, and that each of the identities was constructed through some unique, characteristic features. Furthermore, the different identities seldom had clear boundaries, but instead the identities overlapped and entangled on multiple points and in multiple ways. I will now summarise the results of the present study, followed by pointing out a few ways in which the present study could have reached more comprehensive results. And finally, I will conclude with some propositions for further study.

The case of Wales presented a slight deviation in the analysis. Since the articles published in the *Guardian* and in the *Herald* about the Welsh devolution referendum of 2011 were quite few, they could not be used to draw any general conclusions about how the two papers constructed Wales and Welsh identity. Thus, the issue was analysed through the articles published in the *Welsh Western Mail*, and because of this, the emerged identity construction was also more coherent and more easily depicted than the constructions in the rest of the analysis. Above all, the Wales that was constructed was new, modern, and different from the past. It had grown up, moved

past the old historical divisions between rural and urban, northern and southern, and Welsh and English speaking populations. If Wales before the referendum had been feeling inferior, after the vote in favour of more powers for the Welsh Assembly, Wales emerged as confident, efficient and united.

Nevertheless, this new Wales did not appear any more interested in being independent than it had been in the past. Instead, independence was portrayed as something to be careful of, something unwanted. So while Wales emerged from the referendum confident in its status and character, and the Welsh Assembly was now seen as more able to serve and represent its people, the Wales that was being constructed was still very much a part of the Union. The Welsh identity constructed was not incompatible with being British, but on the contrary, being both was portrayed as a rather natural and positive state of affairs. Wales, in the *Western Mail*, seemed quite content exactly where it was.

Scotland, on its part, was a very different case. How Scotland and its identity were constructed in the newspapers was not as clearly defined as Wales was. Instead of such overt constructions, the Scottish identity emerged mostly through comparisons and relations with the rest of the Union, particularly England, and through the political processes happening at the time. The Scottish National Party won the 2011 Scottish Elections with a landslide, and the Scotland it was promising its voters was distinctly optimistic, positive, looking forward to a promising future, and not afraid of moving on to such issues as deciding on independence. Moreover, there seemed to be a deliberate line drawn between Scotland and the rest of the Union. Particularly the *Herald* constructed Scotland as “home” and was not as comfortable as the other two papers in constructing Britain as a unanimous entity and Scotland as a part of it, instead often remarking on the differences between Scotland and England - whether that was in politics or in culture. In addition, the division was also clearly marked linguistically with discourse that included expressions such as “north of the Border” and so on.

On one hand the victory of the SNP and the way in which the difference between Scotland and the rest of the Union was sometimes emphasised could indicate some level of shifting identities, of Scottish identity moving further away from Britain. But based on the data of the present study it is impossible to say just how significant a

change that might be and how the future of Scotland will turn out. As has been previously concluded by both Bond (2009: 95-96) and Bechhofer and McCrone (2009a: 2), the link between national identity, how people vote and their constitutional preference is, at best, weak. This was true also in the context of the present study. The fact that the SNP reached a majority in the 2011 elections still does not tell us whether people voted for them in the hopes of an independent Scotland or for other issues on the SNP's agenda, and the articles included in the data did not shed any more light on this question. Thus, despite how the SNP and Scottish nationalism were identified as a threat to the Union in both the *Guardian* and the *Western Mail*, Scotland's future still remains unsolved, at least until it is time for the independence referendum.

When looking at England and English identity, it became clear they mostly emerged through fairly specific conditions. Firstly, England was brought up in the articles in connection with politics, as a part of the political debate occurring in the newspapers at the time. This meant that England was often compressed merely to its political aspirations and tendencies, instead of giving room for more aspects of it. And secondly, it was brought up as a counterbalance or an answer to Scotland and Wales. When Scottish nationalism raised its head, instead of looking at it from a British point of view, the *Guardian* tended to look at it through an English context. Similarly, the *Herald* also tended to portray England as the opposition for Scotland. In some ways, England in the data was articulated as a response to others, not as an entity on itself.

However, the one way through which England and its identity raised its head was the so called West Lothian question and the debate on how matters concerning only England should be handled. It was brought up frequently in the articles, and indicates a shift in attitude from the time devolution was first introduced in the UK. Unlike the other three countries of the Union, England does not have its own Parliament or Assembly but instead its issues are decided on at the Westminster Parliament. Now, however, there appears to be new recognition on the fact that England's situation is different, and the Westminster Parliament does not seem to be fulfilling its job as well as it used to from the perspective of England. There is recognition on matters that are uniquely English and should thus be handled by the English themselves. The questions raised about the possible necessity of an English Assembly to better serve the English seems to indicate that devolution is no longer working as efficiently and satisfactorily for England as it used to. Additionally, it is possible that the shifts in the Union are

now forcing the English to take territorial politics more seriously than before and are thus also creating a situation where the English have no choice but to more clearly realize their own distinction from the British umbrella identity.

And finally, the constructions of Britain often emerged through discussions on the future of Britain. Due to the nature of the events that the data of the present study was centred on, it is not surprising that it would spark debate on how the future of the Union should turn out. But such debate also meant that Britain was very much present in the data, though rarely very overtly or emphatically. Instead, despite the questions about its future, Britain at its current state appeared rather natural and even taken for granted. While the countries in question, England, Scotland and Wales that is, were sometimes clearly articulated and overtly pointed, that was not the case with Britain. Of the three newspapers, Britain was most evidently constructed in the *Guardian*. For it, Britain was something that did not need explicit articulation, but instead was rather habitual and appeared in the paper both through linguistic constructions and through the contexts in which the paper framed its news. From the other two papers, the *Western Mail* seemed more comfortable than the *Herald* in constructing Britain as a unanimous entity, which was not surprising considering how accepting the *Western Mail* was of the peaceful co-existence of both Wales and Britain in its articles. Regards to the question of the future of Britain, the situation is currently wide open. In many ways its development will depend on how Scotland votes in its upcoming independence referendum.

Despite the way in which the findings on the constructed identities were presented here separately and clearly distinct of each other, the identities in fact overlapped and entangled in the data quite a lot. The fact that all three newspapers were national meant that the papers reported on a wide variety of news from all over Britain. In this way, the newspapers were able to bring these issues and, at the same time, the other countries closer to “home”. It makes the news matter. What’s more, the newspapers also tended to frame news in their local contexts. This meant that news about what was happening in Scotland could suddenly be just as much about Wales and how it would be affected as they were about Scotland. In addition, all three newspapers also included so called “wandering” identities, where depending on the topic, the point of view could change between the different countries, sometimes even within a single article. This kind of wandering was sometimes clear even in the case of specific words. The

meaning of words such as “country” or “nation” would vary depending on the context: sometimes “the country” in question was Scotland, sometimes it was Britain. Through constructions and representations as these, the newspapers also built space for multiple or hybrid identities. This means that the reader does not necessarily have to choose between different identities but can choose to be, for instance, both “English” and “British”, if they so want to. Of the three newspapers, especially the *Guardian* allowed and facilitated the presence of hybrid identities, though such possibilities appeared in the other two papers as well.

While conducting the analysis, it became clear that there were some instances where, through different choices, the present study could have reached more comprehensive results. Due to the way the data was centred on specific events, some identity constructions remained lacking. As mentioned above, due to the low amount of articles published about the Welsh devolution referendum in newspapers outside of Wales, no conclusions could be drawn about how Wales and Welsh identity were constructed in England and Scotland. To fill this gap, a different set of data would have been needed. Moreover, since there was no event included that would have centred on England specifically, England and English identity did not emerge as strongly as they perhaps could have. Of course, since England does not have its own Assembly or Parliament, the nature of the possible event would have had to be slightly different from the events chosen for the present study. How much that would have impacted the analysis is difficult to say, but it seems that some questions about England and English identity may have been left unanswered in the present thesis.

Since the present thesis had to limit its focus on England, Scotland and Wales, this naturally means that further study is needed in order to unravel the case of Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the current data was limited to just three papers, one each from the countries in question. This means that all conclusions presented in the present thesis are also limited to these papers. A more extensive study is needed in order to find out whether these conclusions hold true also when a wider selection of newspapers is examined.

And finally, it should be noted that the present study also restricted itself to a rather narrow timeframe, since all of the data included was from 2010 and 2011. This means that the conclusions drawn are thus also rather temporal. The turmoil in the United

Kingdom, however, is still ongoing. While the present study hopes to have contributed to the discussion on what is happening in the United Kingdom and to have provided information on Britain and British identities, especially on how they are presented to the public through news media, there is still much left to uncover. The future of the Union is uncertain, and thus also Britain and British identities will keep changing and transforming, leaving more questions to be answered.

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APPENDIX: Articles included in the data

The Western Mail:

1. 08.05.2010: "Deal or no deal?: Cameron picks up the phone to Clegg – and all Brown can do is wait"
2. 08.05.2010: "Brown may have to become 'Captain Oates' says Rhodri"
3. 10.05.2010: "Deal edges closer as Cameron and Clegg talk teams"
4. 10.05.2010: "Tories and the Lib Dems move closer to deal to give Cameron keys to No 10"
5. 10.05.2010: "Tory-Lib Dem pact will benefit Welsh Labour"
6. 10.05.2010: "Welsh party members hesitantly accept a Tory-Lib Dem deal is likely"
7. 11.05.2010: "Brown's final bombshell: PM says he'll quit as Labour leader so party can begin Lib Dem talks"
8. 11.05.2010: "Various voting systems on offer"
9. 12.05.2010: "Cameron in No. 10 as coalition deal agreed"
10. 12.05.2010: "Plaid blames MPs' 'tribal loyalties' for failure to get deal"
11. 12.05.2010: "Dawn of new approach to many old problems"
12. 13.05.2010: "The happy couple: Clegg and Cameron love-in heralds new era in British politics"
13. 13.05.2010: "A happy couple – but how long for the David and Nick love-in?"
14. 13.05.2010: "Opposition rounds on 'non-Welsh' secretary"
15. 13.05.2010: "Critics slam new Government for giving women so few positions"
16. 13.05.2010: "Carwyn seeks to forge a direct relationship with David Cameron"
17. 14.05.2010: "Cameron starts on debt legacy with cuts in Cabinet pay"
18. 14.05.2010: "We need to make sure that the wrinkles in devolution are smoothed out..."
19. 14.05.2010: "The males running the country as a job share? It'll never work"
20. 28.02.2011: "Poll turnout so vital to Wales"
21. 28.02.2011: "Assembly legitimacy 'will be damaged' by low turnout"
22. 28.02.2011: "Former council leader will cast Yes vote in referendum"
23. 28.02.2011: "Whatever the result, a poor turnout will be harmful"
24. 01.03.2011: "67% will vote 'Yes' in referendum, says poll"
25. 01.03.2011: "'Just Say No' Tory leader now Just Says YES"
26. 01.03.2011: "Tories row as party logo lends a hand to 'Yes' vote"
27. 02.03.2011: "'Yes' vote will help sell Wales to the world, says Carwyn"
28. 02.03.2011: "Voters to deliver a big Yes says poll on more powers"
29. 02.03.2011: "Leaders urge Wales to go out and vote 'Yes'"
30. 02.03.2011: "The stronger the 'Yes' vote, the greater will be our nation's influence"
31. 03.03.2011: "One day. One answer"
32. 03.03.2011: "Our country is grown up enough to make our own decisions"
33. 04.03.2011: "Counting begins as Wales expects a 'Yes' verdict"

34. 04.03.2011: "Poll turnout looks split between the East and West, as some areas struggle for voters"
35. 04.03.2011: "So what happens next?"
36. 04.03.2011: "If people say 'Yes' then it's time to reform funding"
37. 05.03.2011: "What lies ahead in exciting new era for Welsh politics?"
38. 05.03.2011: "The day that Wales said... YES: Comment on nation's historic vote"
39. 05.03.2011: "What lies ahead in exciting new ear for Welsh politics?"
40. 05.03.2011: "'From the coast to the border, the north to the south, our country is united' –Carwyn"
41. 05.03.2011: "Political leaders across the UK welcome result"
42. 07.03.2011: "A little-known law could thwart the result of referendum"
43. 07.03.2011: "The referendum's most heart-lifting result was 1997's tribalism no longer mattered"
44. 07.03.2011: "'It's a vote of confidence by the people of Wales in themselves'"
45. 07.05.2011: "Comprehensive SNP win paves way for vote on independence"
46. 07.05.2011: "Wales and Scotland go down divergent paths"
47. 09.05.2011: "'It is inevitable this will embolden supporters of Welsh independence'"
48. 09.05.2011: "Scotland looks for more powers before holding referendum on independence"

The Herald:

1. 11.05.2010: "Union could be in jeopardy if the left doesn't get it right"
2. 11.05.2010: "Brown bombshell pulls rug from under Cameron"
3. 11.05.2010: "Gray quick with tribute to fallen leader, but Scots Tories maintain silence"
4. 11.05.2010: "Drama as Brown falls on his sword"
5. 12.05.2010: "Brown bids farewell as new coalition takes over No 10"
6. 12.05.2010: "A lost opportunity or a Whitehall farce?"
7. 12.05.2010: "In whose interest, really, was this political deal negotiated?"
8. 12.05.2010: "Salmond pays tribute to 'force of nature' Brown and offers congratulations to Cameron"
9. 13.05.2010: "They're partners in England but pariahs now in Scotland"
10. 13.05.2010: "LibDems pledge to hand more powers to Scotland"
11. 13.05.2010: "A new team for a new era of politics in Britain"
12. 13.05.2010: "We must all hope the coalition can succeed"
13. 14.05.2010: "Cameron makes bridge-building visit to Scotland"
14. 14.05.2010: "New coalition faces rebellion over 'fix' to remain in power"
15. 14.05.2010: "Salmond in £700m demand to Cameron"
16. 15.05.2010: "Cameron in £180m pledge for Scotland"
17. 15.05.2010: "Salmond 'impressed' by Cameron meeting"
18. 15.05.2010: "Tories attack key coalition proposal"
19. 15.05.2010: "Two nations divided by a common political language"

20. 15.05.2010: "Cameron launches his charm offensive"
21. 15.05.2010: "David Cameron: I promised that if I became Prime Minister..."
22. 05.03.2011: "Devolution vote hailed a historic day for Wales"
23. 03.05.2011: "Brown in election swipe at independence plans"
24. 03.05.2011: "Brown warns SNP win will hurt recovery"
25. 03.05.2011: "How Salmond has overcome vitriol of the Scots press"
26. 04.05.2011: "Labour leader was not swamped but he still failed to run the tide"
27. 04.05.2011: "Poll gives SNP big lead after televised debate"
28. 05.05.2011: "One final push as race for Holyrood draws to a close"
29. 05.05.2011: "Voters are beginning to see through Alex Salmond's claims about his record"
30. 05.05.2011: "Goldie: I'll rein in the threats of SNP and socialism"
31. 06.05.2011: "Dramatic night gives Salmond the remit to achieve his big goals"
32. 06.05.2011: "First Minister in the driving seat as leaders go to polls"
33. 06.05.2011: "Defining moment that altered course of campaign"
34. 06.05.2011: "Heavy price paid for getting in bed with the Tories at Westminster"
35. 07.05.2011: "An eye to the future but a heart to forgive: Triumphant Salmond's vow after historic win"
36. 07.05.2011: "Labour strongholds fall right across the country"
37. 07.05.2011: "Battle looms over extra powers for Holyrood"
38. 07.05.2011: "SNP victory can be traced to campaign team without a flaw"
39. 07.05.2011: "Henry: lessons must be learned"
40. 07.05.2011: "Where it all went wrong for an unprepared party"
41. 07.05.2011: "Greens endure poll woe"
42. 07.05.2011: "If Labour is to recover, it has to get radical"
43. 07.05.2011: "SNP has the strength of 10 as rivals tumble"
44. 07.05.2011: "Kingdom united in its support for the SNP"
45. 07.05.2011: "Now is the time for Salmond to call independence referendum"
46. 07.05.2011: "A victory of seismic proportions"
47. 09.05.2011: "As you were, as Salmond picks his Cabinet"

The Guardian:

1. 11.05.2010: "Rollercoaster as Tories try to trump Brown's promise"
2. 11.05.2010: "MPs hail Tory party offer of referendum on voting system"
3. 11.05.2010: "Lib-Lab: a democratic outrage"
4. 11.05.2010: "The election proved it. Only one coalition is legitimate"
5. 12.05.2010: "Cameron moves in: Tories and Lib Dems form first full coalition since 1945"
6. 12.05.2010: "It's Cameron and Clegg: Tory-Lib Dem coalition takes power after Labour talks fail"
7. 12.05.2010: "Toughest hand of cards ever dealt a new prime minister"
8. 12.05.2010: "The handover: No lap of honour for Brown – just a quick and dignified exit"

9. 12.05.2010: "Cameron swallows a hard bargain but gains decisive Lib Dem vote for pact"
10. 12.05.2010: "Sceptical rightwing MPs and Lib Dem discipline biggest challenge for Tory chiefs"
11. 12.05.2010: "A political crapstorm, but no new world"
12. 12.05.2010: "Cameron circle 'failed to get message across': 7,000 word account fuels Tory recriminations"
13. 12.05.2010: "Bothered? No, but it was time to sort it out"
14. 12.05.2010: "As a fraught Tory-Lib Dem era begins, Labour must renew itself once more"
15. 12.05.2010: "Congratulations, Mr Cameron. Now learn the lessons of a dismal campaign"
16. 12.05.2010: "The new PM will need the guile of Disraeli. And the luck"
17. 13.05.2010: "The happy couple at No 10: So, Prime Minister, what's changed since you described your new political soulmate as a joke?"
18. 13.05.2010: "A Shakespearean exit: the critic's view"
19. 13.05.2010: "Rivals then, colleagues now, leaders set out shared future"
20. 13.05.2010: "May emerges as the big winner in Team Cameron"
21. 13.05.2010: "Women appointed but UK still lags behind"
22. 13.05.2010: "How it will work: Does two into one really add up?"
23. 13.05.2010: "Fixed five-year parliamentary term will tie both the leaders' hands"
24. 13.05.2010: "The start of a very special relationship?"
25. 13.05.2010: "A coalition that holds out hope for all three parties"
26. 13.05.2010: "Cameron's clause IV moment – a bid to seize centre ground permanently"
27. 13.05.2010: "Glamorous, pregnant... and normal: why Sam may be all Dave needs to connect"
28. 13.05.2010: "Salmond presses Cameron to hand more power to Holyrood"
29. 13.05.2010: "A new kind of politics? With a top table looking like that?"
30. 01.03.2011: "Welsh fail to engage in vote on more powers"
31. 01.03.2011: "The anti-state right takes the Welsh for idiots who mustn't be left alone"
32. 01.03.2011: "Wales: Wrong question, right answer"
33. 05.03.2011: "Wales 'comes of age' with yes vote for assembly's lawmaking powers"
34. 23.04.2011: "Scotland and Wales: Different drums"
35. 02.05.2011: "Scotland: Polls suggest SNP will come out on top"
36. 03.05.2011: "By high road or low, SNP may be in Edinburgh afore all"
37. 04.05.2011: "In the Highlands, Alex is king of the Scottish Optimists"
38. 05.05.2011: "Salmond bullish as SNP set for victory"
39. 06.05.2011: "Salmond eyes a landslide for SNP, but Plaid braced for slump in vote"
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