

Abstract

This thesis' research question was: "how has identity politics influenced the construction of the concept "British national identity" in the, Scottish and London-based, printed press analysing data gathered during the Brexit election, held on the 23rd of June 2016, and the Scottish independence referendum held on the 18th of September 2014". The thesis focused on editorial, comment and opinion pieces gathered from a selection of newspapers published in Scotland, and London. These were analysed using coding and Discourse-Historical Approach. Through this analysis, it was discovered that identity politics could be said to be an integral part of the construction of an 'we' and 'other' in connection with national identity in the two cases. Furthermore, the analysis presented results that suggest that the Scottish papers and the London-based papers construct their readers in different terms in regards to nationality. The discussion focused on the conflicting narratives that were presented in the analysis and argued that these discrepancies suggest that the notion of a 'British National identity' is closer to an illusion than reality. Furthermore, the discussion argued that the question of EU membership, has, in part, been imperative in exhibiting the inaccuracies of the concept. In conclusion, this thesis argues that identity politics have influenced the concept of a 'British National identity' to the extent, that there is little agreement on the concept. The results of the thesis indicate that the British identity covers over the more uncomfortable question of 'who are we' for the four nations within the UK.

Keywords: Identity politics, Discourse, Coding, Printed Press, British National Identity.

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Who are ‘we’?:

A Critical discourse analysis of National identity politics used in the printed press during the Scottish independent referendum and the British European referendum.

0. Introduction

“Who are we?” is a question that through different periods of time can preoccupy the citizens of a given nation. This question might be posed during events dealing with politics, society or indeed nationality. The search for identity, as this question invites to, becomes relevant in connection to elections. Where parliamentary elections often deal with an identity based on political convention, there is a different type of election that can be closely connected to the concept of national identity – referendums. Referendums are often based on constitutional changes and is a question that is posed to the electorate, instead of the parliament. In the last four years, the UK has held two referendums that dealt with significant questions of government, sovereignty and, as this paper will show, identity. With the 2014 referendum on Scottish Independence (IndyRef) and the 2016 Referendum on the continued membership in the EU (Brexit), the UK citizens have been through two major political campaigns that might have made them ask themselves: “Who are we? British, English, Scottish, European or something completely different?”. During large political campaigns, the media is a vital assistant for both the campaigns to spread their ideas, but also for the people to express themselves. This role is significant during referendums, as the questions are often posed as ‘yes/no’ in relation to significant governmental or, indeed, international changes. Such changes calls for reflection on likely consequences and what these could mean for the nation. It is during such reflections that identity politics might be applied, which here means that, identity is used as a basis for a political opinion. Political opinion can be expressed many places, but the printed press has a variety of genres that invite the author to express opinion rather than relaying events: Editorials, opinion pieces and comments. This thesis has therefore decided to use articles from the printed press as its primary data.

Additionally, this choice of medium was chosen to assist in answering the hypothesis of there being a correlation between placement of the paper, and how identity is constructed. This thesis’ research question can be summed up thusly “how has identity politics influenced the construction of the concept “British national identity” in the, Scottish and London-based, printed press analysing data

gathered during the Brexit election, held on the 23rd of June 2016, and the Scottish independence referendum held on the 18th of September 2014?”

1. Literature Review

The study of national identity has in the last couple of decades gained attention, as nationalist movements across the western world – UkiP, Front Nationale, and Trump’s presidency bid – have made their entrance on the political stage. Researching how the media takes part in the construction of a national identity through identity politics is not a new phenomenon, particularly when talking of the press. Thus, it could be argued that this field of study does not invite further investigation. However, given the recent rise in nationalist movements, it could be argued that the field deserves an extra look. Indeed, there seems to be a persistent assumption within this field, of the media playing a significant role in the construction of national identity, despite researchers such as Philip Schlesinger (1987;1991) criticising this notion adamantly. This research will not be dealing with this assumption, per se, but will rather look at how the press can be said to take part and facilitate identity politics of and for the concept of a British national identity. Additionally, this thesis will discuss the validity of the usage of a British national identity in connection with the findings of the data. However, before engaging with this topic, it is important to look closer at previous studies that have analysed the relationship between mass media – particularly, the press – and the construction of national identity politics.

1.1 the Role of the Media

There is a prevalent assumption that the mass media play a significant role in the construction of national identity, which is primarily based on the reach of the media, and how this *must* mean that television, the press and broadcasts all play a crucial part in the construction and repetition of national identities, which is exemplified in multiple studies (such as, Anderson 1983: Billig 1995: Yumul & Özkirimli 2000). Such an *a priori* assumption can be problematic, as argued by Philip Schlesinger, who criticised Benedict Anderson’s work *Imagined Communities* (1983), stating that the theory of media effects utilised by Anderson was outdated, as it assumed that the media’s construction of the identity affects their audience, without giving any evidence for this (1987: 259). This is particularly true to national identities with a rich tradition that pre-dates the era of mass media, for example, French and British national identity (Meech & Kilborn 1992: 245). Based on this criticism, there have been attempts at rectifying this neglect of evidence through further research to establish if the media

does affect their audience through their constructions of national identity. The focus will primarily be placed on research dealing with British national identity and Scottish national identity. Furthermore, there has been conducted extensive research on this particular subject; as such a review will help to uncover, and thus avoid, pitfalls, assumptions, and biases that this thesis could otherwise have been subject to.

Rosie et al. (2004) analysed such an assumption, as they attempted to shed light on the notion of a singular British national press, presented by Michael Billig in his renowned work on 'Banal Nationalism' (1987); this was done in their extensive study of national identity constructions found in the British media. Through a systemic analysis of over 2500 sampled articles gathered on 12 days from October 2000 to January 2003, Rosie et al., addressed national representation through a comparison of newspapers available in England and Scotland, to establish if a correlation between the degree of 'flagged' national identity and the nations in which the papers were distributed – England, Scotland, or both – could be uncovered (2004:439). The results of the research showed a correlation between the regional reach, the origin of place of the newspaper, and the national flags which were detected in the analysed articles. Thereby, suggesting that the application of a single British national identity, and in turn the notion of a British press, is debateable, as their analysis showcased a difference in how identity was constructed depending on the reach and place of origin. A Scottish national identity was more prevalent in newspapers distributed within Scotland, whilst a British national identity recurred at a higher frequency in papers printed in England (ibid: 454); thereby opposing Billig's theory.

Rosie et al. (2006) further dispute the idea of a singular British press in a later study, stating that "There is not (and probably never has been) a single, metropolitan-centred news agenda within the UK's press" (336). This study was conducted to further analyse data – two dominant press stories - from the extensive study on 2500 articles (Rosie et al. 2004). These dominant stories were further explored, to analyse if there were divergent 'national' agendas within the British press. Rosie et al. argued that because of the British devolution in 1997 – Wales and Scotland received their own assembly and parliament, respectively – a shared coding of news became difficult. This is exemplified through politics, as territorial limits of a given office – e.g. education – mean that the Secretary of Education only passed laws in England, rather than the rest of Britain, as a result of devolution; thereby making it difficult to talk of British secretary (Rosie et al. 2006: 339). However, it is important to note that the analysis chose to work with a story that was predisposed to divergent covering, as the subject was territorial decided – therefore forcing the Scottish papers to explicitly state that the

Secretary of Education was English, so as not to be confused with the Scottish Cabinet Secretary of Education and Skills. This study could be criticised for using data that confirmed their theory of a singular British press being obsolete, rather than using a national press story that was not territorial limited. Yet, both studies (Rosie et al. 2004;2006) demonstrate that the notion of a singular British press is limited in its coverage and problematic as it ignores the diversity of the sub-nations within the British nation. This is concurred by the findings in Connell's study (2002) on the Scottish-ness of the Scottish-based press, which found that the Scottish press had a tendency to underrepresent subjects from the UK parliament that pertained solely to England, whilst over-representing the extent to which Scotland was a topic in the UK parliament (203). However, whilst this is argued in various studies utilising the theory of banal nationalism (Rosie et al. 2004, 2006; Brookes 1999), there is still a tendency to refer to 'British press coverage' and 'British editorials', thereby, not rejecting the notion of a homogenous British press (Law 2001: 303).

1.2 the Conundrum of the British National Identity

In more recent studies, there appears to be an overall agreement on using the term 'British national identity' as being homogenous is problematic, as such a construct does not take into account that the union constitutes multiple nations (e.g., Thomas & Antony 2015: Heath & Tilley 2005: Wodak 2016). Thomas and Antony explore this in their study on the construction of British national identity in the press, during the coverage of the Olympic opening ceremony in 2012; their results show that a singular British national identity is improbable (2015). Using open coding on a small data sample of 91 articles gathered over a period of two weeks from the 28th of July 2012 – the articles gathered were opinions and editorials, as these were expected to be dialogic and reflective (Thomas and & Antony 2015: 495). The results revealed that depending on the newspaper, the opening ceremony was viewed as a celebration of the indefinable British national identity, or as a narrative of the nation's identity as a whole (2015: 500). Additionally, Thomas and Antony found evidence of the constructions of multiple British national identities, which are subject to both the source – the newspaper – and the audience (ibid: 501). This is concurred by Kiely et al. (2005), who concluded in their research on Britishness, which was based on data from interviews with Scottish and English individuals, that the notion of a single British identity present, as the results from their analysis presented different and, sometimes, competing forms of Britishness and British identity (80). This poses the question: if most research agrees that there is little evidence of a singular British national identity, then why continue conducting research on the subject?

In the words of Kiely et al. (2005): “To understand the ongoing identity politics of the UK, [researchers] still need to seek out new ways of unmasking and tracking the inherent complexity of Britishness” (80). Thus, the ongoing investigation of British national identity is needed to continue understanding and retracing the origin of the different versions. Furthermore, the concept of national identity helps to uncover how the media – in this case, the printed press – projects their own version of identity unto their audience (Thomas & Antony 2015: 501). Depending on a newspaper's readership, the versions of a British national identity can be said to be shared between source and audience. This theory of a shared identity between the press and its audience also extends to the construction of identity between the different regions within the UK. As argued by McCrone (2002) English and British identities have been fused together so securely that the duality of them, separate the English from the rest of the nations within the UK, as their national identity is less defined. From a Scottish perspective, British and English are synonyms, and thus, they are both casts as being part of the ‘Other’ to the Scottish ‘We’ (ibid: 309). This distinction is an example of how national identity is context-based and has different definitions depending on the source and the audience. Given the context-based definition, most studies have utilised a discursive method in analysing the data. From a narrow-coding analysis of the national ‘flagging’ in newspaper, which was proposed by Billig (1995) which has been replicated extensively (e.g., Law 2001; Rosie et al. 2004; Brookes 1999; Yumul & Özkirimli 2000), to a more open coding method that takes the context of region and audience into consideration (Thomas & Antony 2015; Rosie et al. 2006); that is to say, a story that deals with Scottish news in an English paper, and the same news story printed in a Scottish paper. Here, using an open-coding method ensures that the analysis is not blinding itself to presupposed frames of national identity, but is instead noticing frames as they are being coded. In their study on Austrian national identity, Wodak et al. (1999) argued that national identities are constructed, produced and reproduced discursively (4); which means that text, be that verbal or non-verbal, is the main actor in constructing any national identity. This research will try to combine the theory of national flagging proposed by Billig (1995) and that of open-coding used by Thomas and Antony (2015), as these decrease the risk of researcher bias, as the context is taken into consideration when coding, rather than basing it on a “gut-feeling”. Furthermore, this project will work with the construction of a British national identity in connection to two elections: The Scottish independence referendum and the British EU referendum. These two elections are yet to be analysed thoroughly in the field of discourse studies; particularly from the perspective of British national identity. This thesis will attempt at filling that space.

2. Theory

2.1 Nationalism and national identity

The term ‘national identity’ can be misleading, as the academic community has never found a consensus on the definition of the term. A reason for this could be the relation to ‘nationalism’ and ‘nation’, thus, the definitions of these terms are imperative to the understanding of national identity. The term “nation”, which is not to be confused with the territorial and official term *state*, is fundamental to this paper as nationalism is dependent on the nation. "A nation is a socially mobilized body of individuals, believing themselves to be united by some set of characteristics that differentiate them (in their own minds) from outsiders, striving to create or maintain their own state." (Hass et al. 1986: 726). The nation is then, according to Hass et al, seen as being a group of individuals who are united by a certain set of characteristics, be that religion, language, race or territorial location. The difference between a nation and a state is the official recognition of a state as a sovereign entity, whereas a nation covers a mobilised body of individuals. Not all nations have states, but all states have nations. This is important to consider when applying the term nationalism, as indicated by Hobsbawm and Kertzer, when they state that nationalism is “a political programme [...] [which] holds that groups defined as ‘nations’ have the right to [...] form territorial state” (1992:4). Indeed, this programme deals with the continuing sovereign control over a territory with defined borders and its commonly homogenous population (ibid). This is concurred by Gellner and Breuilly, who explains that nationalism is based on the principle of “the political and the national unit [being] congruent” (2008: 1). Karl Deutsch, however, defined nationalism differently, stating that: “nationalism is the preference for the competitive interest of [a] nation and its members over those of all outsiders in a world of social mobility and economic competition” (1953: 169). Here, nationalism is defined as being inherently biased, in that it tends the needs of its own people with lesser regards to those that are deemed to be outside of their ‘group’. Furthermore, by talking about social mobility and economic competition, Deutsch also theorises that nationalism can be seen as a defence against the continued globalised world.

Nationalism can be separated into two ideal types, termed “Civic nationalism” and “ethnic nationalism”. Civic nationalism is based on territorial boundaries, as opposed to societal boundaries created through social customs and culture (Keating 1996: 7). Indeed, this type of nationalism can be seen as inclusive, as it is based on the common goal of the continued survival of the state and does,

therefore, not initially exclude any individuals from within the society, as anyone can join the nation regardless of origins (ibid 5-6). Contrastingly, ethnic nationalism is inherently exclusive, as it is based on ethnic boundaries. These boundaries often pertain to ascriptive identities that individuals are given rather than choose; for example, race and gender, or, in some cases, religion (Keating 1996: 3-4). These two ideal types of nationalism can be summed up thusly: ethnic nationalism is based on birth or race, whereas civic nationalism is based on individuals, who voluntarily constitute themselves as a collective – an example of this could be the origins of the US. These terms are important to understand, as they are the basis onto which national identity is founded.

National identity does not hinge on a demand or wish for a state, nor is it predisposed, at least not universally, to favour one national identity over another; instead national identity tries to construct the concept of a nation into a social identity. Bell argues that representational practices are linked to the process of national identity construction, as such an identity has the purpose of creating a sense of unity with others from the same nation, whilst also creating emotive resonance within the group (2003: 67-69) Furthermore, as stated by Benhabib: “Since every search for identity includes differentiating oneself from what one is not, identity politics is always and necessarily a politics of the creation of difference.” (1998: 87-88). Therefore, national identity is dependent on the notion of otherness and the divide between groups. Stuart Hall agrees with this interpretation of identity, and argues that any form of cultural identity is constructed through its relation to the ‘other’; through the differentiation of characteristics, the need for separation between identities is created (Hall 1996: 4-5). This is restated in Schlesinger’s critique of national identity theory, where he states that national identity “requires [...] [an analysis] process of inclusion and exclusion” (Schlesinger 1987:260). Thus, it appears that there is some agreement on the term dealing with the comparison to an “Other”, and a need to create a collective identity, in which certain attributes are deemed important – such as language and ethnicity. Indeed, this is important in regards to the concept of identity politics as “[it] assumes that one among the many identities [there is] one that determines, or at least dominates our politics: [...] being a Catalan, if you are a Catalan nationalist.” (Hobsbawm 1996: 41). Identity politics are, thus, to be understood as politics that relate to only one identity, whilst disregarding the rest.

There are, however, different aspects which national identity can be based upon. From the abstract concepts of a shared history and language to that of ethnic kinship, the different approaches to defining national identity ranges considerably (Bell 2003: 67). National identity should be seen as a product of culture, which deals with the traditions and history of a self-proclaimed nation; as a

national identity relies on “the continual, selective reconstruction of “traditions” and of “social memory”. (Schlesinger 1987: 261). However, it is important to note, as stated by Melucci, that any form of collective identity is a concept, rather than a “thing” with a “real” existence; indeed, collective identity should be seen as a lens through which reality is perceived (1989: 51). The idea of a national identity being a concept rather than an object, is also presented by Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* where he theorises that a nation is “*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members [...] yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” (1983: 15). This talk of communities can be directly transferred to that of national identity, as a collective identity can be perceived as a community. In regards to the definitions of national identity, it is important to state that the term should be viewed as too abstract to have one available definition. Instead, national identity should be cautiously used to describe constructions that utilise membership categorisations regarding nationality. Furthermore, it is important to note that any national identity is partisan, as it cannot fully incorporate the richness of a community’s history, thus national identity – even in civic terms – will exclude certain parts of a community (Parekh 2000: 7).

In regards to national identity, this thesis perceives it as being constructed through discourse. This is based on the notion presented by Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, who states that the imagined community of the nation reaches the mind of those who believe in the nation by being constructed and conveyed in discourse (2009: 22). Thus, national identity is viewed as being constructed through a specific narrative that provides meaning to society for a certain group of individuals (De Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak 1999: 155). This can also be termed as categorisation, given that identities are formed on the basis of the “other” – categorisation is based on shared history, knowledge, beliefs, roles and ideologies that are shared between the actors of the interaction (Van Dijk 2011: 275). Thus, it is important to view national identity as being constructed through discourse, with a foundation in multiple of factors that are related to the context of the nation.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

The school of critical discourse analysis (CDA) has over the last couple of decades gained traction within the field of discourse studies; however, given the vastness of CDA, there is a need to specify, which specific programme within that school is being utilised by this thesis. Furthermore, a definition of discourse and what it entails is needed before the research can go forward. This thesis will utilise the discursive-historical approach (DHA), thereby making it imperative to differentiate between the

definitions used in this study as opposed to those used by other approaches and methods, as there are certain discrepancies between the definition of the term within the field of study. For this research, the term ‘discourse’ is understood as a ‘social practice’. This entails a dialectical relationship between a discursive event and the situations, institutions, and social structures that frame it. The discursive event is, therefore, both shaped by the social structures, whilst simultaneously shaping them (Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 258).

When using the term ‘discourse’, it is important to distinguish between the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘text’, to avoid confusion. “[texts] are parts of discourses. They make speech acts durable over time and thus bridge two dilated speech situations, i.e. the situation of speech production and the situation of speech reception.” (Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 89-90). This means that text – visualised, written, or oral – are the objectification of linguistic actions, whereas discourse is how spoken and written language are used in a social context. This differentiation between text and discourse is not used by all CDA researchers, as the English-speaking world is prone to use ‘discourse’ as an umbrella term, whereas German and Central European fields of discourse studies differentiate between the two terms according to the traditions from text linguistics and rhetoric (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 6). This thesis identifies national identity as being reliant on shared history and traditions, which makes the historical context important when conducting the analysis. This is the main reason for using DHA, as it takes four levels of context into account: 1) the immediate context: language or text-internal co-text and co-discourse 2) the intertextual and –discursive relationship between utterances, discourses and texts 3) the institutional frames of a specific ‘context of situation’ 4) the broader socio-political and historical context, which the discursive practices are embedded in and related to (Wodak & Reisigl 2009: 93). However, given the limitations placed upon this thesis in terms of scope and length, the primary focus will be placed on 1, 3, and 4 as these are the most prevalent to further research in connection with the problem formulation.

Some of the main principles of DHA, which are defined by Ruth Wodak and Rudolf Reisigl, state that the approach is interdisciplinary, problem-oriented, and deals with the study of numerous genres and public spaces. Furthermore, categories and tools are not fixed, but elaborated according to the specific investigation, to help decrease bias, much in line with that of open coding (Wodak & Reisigl 2009: 94-96). The discursive strategies that will be analysed and the tools used in the analysis will be explained and defined in the method chapter.

3. Method

3.1 Discursive-Historical approach

This thesis will utilise discourse researchers Ruth Wodak and Martin Reisigl's definitions of DHA, outlined in their chapter "The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)" in *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis* (Wodak & Meyer 2009). However, as will be explained, not all aspects of the approach, particularly that of categories and strategies, will be utilised, as not all are relevant to this study. Additionally, Wodak and Reisigl's study analyses discourses that deal with climate change through the analysis of speech acts, whereas this project will analyse national identity discourses presented in the press. Despite this difference, the main methodological aspects will follow that of Wodak and Reisigl. DHA utilises a three-dimensionality approach, through the following three steps: "after (1) having identified the specific *contents* or *topics* of a specific discourse, (2) *discursive strategies* are investigated. Then (3), *linguistic means* (as types) and the specific, context-dependent *linguistic realizations* (as tokens) are examined." (Wodak & Reisigl 2009: 93). However, most attention will be paid to the identification of content and the investigation of the discursive strategies, because of space and time limitation placed upon this project. That is not to say that linguistic means are not examined, but rather that limited time will be spent on these, as a consequence of the scope of the research.

To ensure a high level of transparency in regards to potential bias, this analysis will be undertaken heuristically by focusing on answering five questions, proposed by Wodak and Reisigl, in regards to each text being analysed. 1) How are persons, objects, phenomena and actions named and referred to linguistically? 2) What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to these? 3) What arguments are employed in the discourse in question? 4) From what perspective are these nominations, attributions and arguments expressed? 5) Are the respective utterances articulated overtly; are they intensified or mitigated? (ibid: 93-94). This paper's focus is primarily placed upon 1, 2 and 4 as these are of particular interest and perceived as being beneficial in answering the research question. The concept of discursive strategies is important when DHA is applied, as these refer to the "plans of actions with varying degrees of elaborateness [...] which can range from automatic to conscious" (De Cillia et al. 1999: 160), which refers to the way in which a topic is realised through discourse. In this paper, focus will primarily be placed upon: constructive strategies and perpetuation/justification strategies. This is based on the relevance that these have in connection with national identities and the policing of these, as these places emphasis on difference, discontinuation, or similarities and continuation – depending on the context (De Cillia et al 1999: 160). Constructive

strategies involve linguistic acts that build and establish a national identity. The sub-strategies that are formed under constructive strategies, promotes unification, identification, solidarity, whilst also putting emphasis on differentiation (Wodak et al 1999: 33). These sub-strategies tied to the concept of an ‘in-group’, usually referenced through the use of deictic pronouns ‘we’, and ‘us’, whilst also creating distance to the ‘out-group’ often referred to as ‘others’ and ‘them’ (De Cillia et al. 1999: 160). Perpetuation strategies place emphasis on the need for continuity; for example, stay in the EU or staying as a part of the UK; whereas, justification strategies are primarily employed to maintain and defend a problematic narrative of ‘national history’ (ibid: 161). Justification strategies are often employed to restore and depend on a specific ‘national self-perception’ that has been ‘tainted’ in some way (Wodak et al. 1999: 33). In addition to the investigation of strategies, the thesis will use content analysis to help create comparisons between the data, whilst being a supplement to the coding process (Baker & Ellece 2011: 21)

However, before the analysis can be conducted, it is important to formulate the assumptions held by the researcher, to help the creation of a high level of transparency; with the additional opportunity to test these (Wodak & Reisigl 2009: 96). The main assumption made in this project can be seen in the research question, which goes as follows: “how has identity politics influenced the construction of the concept “British national identity” in the, Scottish and London-based, printed press analysing data gathered during the Brexit election, held on the 23rd of June 2016, and the Scottish independence referendum held on the 18th of September 2014”. Here, it is assumed that identity politics has had an influence on the construction of ‘British national identity’; moreover, it is assumed that the concept “British national identity” was used during the Brexit election and the Scottish referendum election. The thesis also assumes, based on previous studies (Law 2001; McCrone 2002; Rosie et al. 2004), that there will be a difference in how Scottish and London-based papers utilise the discursive strategies of nomination and predication – how the audience is addressed, and if they are perceived as being British, English, Scottish, or something entirely different.

To test these assumptions, the research will perform a pilot analysis on a random selection of data sample, as to help develop and specify the codes and strategies that will be applied to the texts (Wodak & Reisigl 2009: 96). Additionally, the aim of the pilot study is to improve upon the analytical instruments – as the pilot study helps to illuminate potential redundancy in categories and other aspects of the method (ibid: 100). The pilot study will include 12 texts, six from both the Brexit election and six from the Scottish referendum, which will help to outline the codes that the paper will use in the analysis. After having coded the data, an investigation of the discursive strategies used in

these codes will be initiated to help uncover how identity politics have influenced the construction of a 'British National identity'. The pilot study will be conducted through a content analysis using coding, which is explained below.

3.2 Coding

This paper will utilise coding to assist the application of DHA. This method helps to organise the data, which will be cumulated through the analysis. The software NVivo will be used to store and code in, given its user accessibility. NVivo was largely used as a software to assist with organising the data, and it is, therefore, important to note that a majority of the possibilities offered by NVivo were not explored. Before outlining the method of coding that will be used in this thesis, it is important to define the term 'code' and how it will be applied to the data. A code is most commonly a word or a short phrase that "symbolically assigns a summative [...] attribute for a portion of language based or visual data" (Saldaña 2015: 4). Additionally, the process of coding is heuristic, as it is exploratory without a specific formula to initially guide the analysis (Saldaña 2015: 9). This means that codes are used to assign a theme or a topic to a specific section of, in this case, language, which assists the research in spotting patterns and having the data organised.

In this thesis, a manual approach to coding will be adopted, instead of automatic coding, which is often performed through word searches. This is done to decrease unsubstantiated coding, which is imperative to the approach used in this thesis, as context-dependent analysis requires a thorough analysis of the data. Furthermore, using manual coding, rather than automatic coding, ensures that certain themes and codes are not left out, because they are obscure or somewhat hidden within the text, thereby requiring the context to facilitate understanding. Before beginning the analysis, a pilot study will be conducted through the use of open-coding on a random sample of data, to help to find recurring themes and codes. This is done to decrease researcher bias, by disregarding the use of pre-established codes and themes, whilst also encouraging the creation of codes that are related to the data. Open-coding tends to be detailed and helps to provide an initial impression of the data, making it the first step towards understanding the data. This is followed by selective coding, where the codes from the random sample are evaluated to find the frequently occurring codes together with the codes that could potentially help reveal more about the data (Bryman 2012: 569). The method of coding, when used to analyse qualitative data, is often criticised, as it creates the risk of losing the context when analysing fragments instead of the whole text (*ibid* 577). To ensure that the context is not lost while coding the data, this will be combined with a perspective to the events that the data are dealing

with. It is important to note that coding is primarily done using classification reasoning, with the addition of tacit and intuitive senses of the researcher to determine if the data ‘looks alike’ or ‘feels alike’ (Saldaña 2015: 10). Given this, it is important to note that the researcher conducting all the coding is not a UK citizen, thus increasing the possibility of missing certain nuances of the national identity politics being used in the texts.

3.3 Data Collection

The primary data collected for this paper were newspaper articles on the subject of IndyRef and Brexit. This thesis put limitations on the type of articles that would be collected, based on the assumption that editorials, opinion pieces and comments would have a higher degree of identity-based language. The time frame chosen for the data was set at covering 21 days for IndyRef and 23 days for Brexit, as the short time frame would help to limit the amount of data. Additionally, it was assumed that coverage on the subject would exponentially grow, as the elections grew closer, which was why it was decided to focus on the last three weeks of the referendums. The data was collected within a three-week frame in connection with IndyRef and Brexit, respectively 31/8/14-20/9/14 and 2/6/16-25/6/16. Both time frames cover before, during and two days after the referendum, as editorials and opinion pieces are assumed to also have been published after the election; particularly pieces that refer to national identity and identity politics. This assumption is based on the regional differences in connection with Brexit where a majority of the Scottish population voted for the UK to stay in the EU, whereas a majority of England voted to leave.

The News Archive *LexisNexis* was used as the main portal for collecting data, as it had a vast amount of both London-based and Scottish-based newspapers archived. As can be seen in Table 1. the data is compiled of three different types of newspapers: nationwide (London-based), Scottish edition (London-based), and Scotland-based.

Table 1. Scotland-based and London-based newspapers.

Nationwide – London based	Scottish edition – London-based	Scotland-Based
The Guardian, The Sun, Daily Mail, The Observer, The Daily Telegraph, The Times, Mail on Sunday	Scottish Daily Mail, Scottish Daily Mail on Sunday	The Herald, Daily Record, Scotsman

It is important to note that, whilst the London-based papers that are distributed nationwide can be perceived as being the ‘British’ press, they are still London-based, and thusly expected to be somewhat English-centric. Furthermore, if a semi-autonomous Scottish press is assumed, then it must

also be assumed that the concept of a nationwide British press is weakened (Law 2001: 303). This makes the terming of a British press problematic, yet, given that it is distributed nationwide, it is difficult to completely dismiss the usage of the term. The data sample for this thesis consisted of 60 articles (editorials, opinions, and comments collected from 11 papers, respectively 30 articles regarding the Indyref (see Table 2) and 30 articles for Brexit (See Table 3). The small data sample was collected on the basis of limitations set for the scope of the research.

The distribution of the data was slightly skewed, as a number of opinions, editorials and comments varied from paper to paper. Furthermore, there was an overweight of data from London-based papers in both cases. Given that the London-based papers were distributed nationwide, it was argued that these would therefore also be available to Scottish citizens. Furthermore, the data was initially skewed as it was collected from 6 London-based papers and 5 Scottish papers (Scottish-edition and Scotland-based). If more time had been available, this could have been avoided, but given the limitations of this paper, some aspects had to be relegated to make room for others. The distribution of the data within both samples is presented in Table 2 and 3.

Table 2. Data distribution for Independence Referendum

Nationwide – London-based	Number of Articles	Search Terms
The Guardian	4	Referendum, Independence, Britain, (HLEAD) Union ¹ , (HLEAD) Referendum, Nation, State
The Times	2	Referendum, Nation, State, Union
Daily Mail	2	Independence, Referendum, Britain, (HLEAD) union, Nation, State
The Sun	2	Referendum, Nation, State, Union
The Daily Telegraph	4	Referendum, Nation, State, Union
Mail on Sunday	2	Referendum, Nation, State, Union
Total no. of articles	16	
Scottish Edition – London Based		
Scottish Daily Mail	4	Referendum, Nation, State, Union, Independence, British, (HLEAD) Union
Scottish Daily Mail on Sunday	2	Referendum, Nation, State, Union, Independence, British, (HLEAD) Union
Total no. of articles	6	

¹ HLEAD is an abbreviation for “header lead” and covers all Leaders with the term in their header.

Scotland Based		
The Herald	3	Referendum, Nation, State, Union, Independence, British, (HLEAD) Union, (HLEAD) Referendum
Scotsman	3	Referendum, Nation, State, Union, Independence, British, (HLEAD) Union, (HLEAD) Referendum
Daily Record	2	Referendum, Nation, State, Union, Independence, British
Total no. of articles	8	
<i>Total no. of articles in data sample</i>	30	

Table 3. Data distribution for Brexit

Nationwide – London-based	Number of Articles	
The Guardian	3	Brexit, British, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit ² ,
The Times	3	Brexit, British, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit,
Daily Mail	2	Brexit, British, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit
The Sun	3	Brexit, English, British, Nation, (LEAD) Brexit
The Daily Telegraph	3	Brexit, British, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit,
Mail on Sunday	2	Brexit, British, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit,
Total no. of articles	16	
Scottish Edition – London Based		
Scottish Daily Mail	4	Brexit, English, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit, British,
Scottish Daily Mail on Sunday	1	Brexit, British, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit
Total no. of articles	5	
Scotland Based		
The Herald	3	Brexit, English, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit, British
Scotsman	3	Brexit, Nation, (HLEAD) Union
Daily Record	3	Brexit, Nation, (LEAD)Brexit, British,
Total no. of articles	9	
<i>Total no. of articles in data sample</i>	30	

² (LEAD) is an abbreviation that covers the term 'leader', which means that this together with the term will appear in the Leader segment of the article.

Some of the articles presented in Tables 2 and 3, had a higher number of search terms or different search terms, as there was a difference in a number of articles that each search term yielded. Because of this, some papers needed more specific search terms, to be identified in the midst of a number of articles, that the more generic search terms generated. Furthermore, some of the searches conducted on *LexisNexis* were lucky, as they yielded editorials, opinions, and comments without the addition of s specified search terms.

During the collection phase, articles from Reuters, and BBC newswires were disregarded, on the basis of being more objective. Given that the research deals with subjectivity and identity politics, ‘objective’ data could potentially skew the data. Furthermore, it was important that the articles were generated with the purpose of being read by citizens, rather than journalists and people within the media – as newswires are used as a basis for articles, rather than being published in the newspaper.

3.3.1 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted on a randomly selected sample of the total data set, to create a guideline for the selective coding process, as a pilot study “yields concepts, which are later [...] grouped and turned into categories” (Bryman 2012: 569). The pilot study utilised open-coding, which meant that it was conducted without a pre-decided set of categories, and instead coded all the themes and concepts that appear to be relevant to the overall research. This meant that there were certain codes that were not used more than once, whereas others were repeatedly used. However, by using open-coding on a random sample, the paper tried to ensure that all the codes and categories that would be used in the analysis had relevance the topic of the thesis.

The pilot study was structured thusly: six random articles were chosen from each case – Brexit and IndyRef – with three articles from Scottish papers and three from London-based papers. This was done to ensure that categories and themes that were exclusively relevant either London-based or Scottish papers were not overlooked. The criteria for the sample was that the articles in the IndyRef sample all had to come from different papers, and the same was done for the Brexit sample. Other than that, the papers were picked without having been pre-read. The articles all differed in length, which could correlate with the variety in references and codes for each article. In NVivo, the term *node* is used as an umbrella term to cover: themes, codes, and concepts; the term *reference* refers to the number of times a node has been applied in each of the articles.

Table 4. Coding distribution in pilot study

Brexit	Articles	Nodes	References
London-based	The Daily Telegraph	7	24
	The Daily Mail	8	45
	The Times	11	42
Scottish editions and Scottish-based	Daily Record	11	57
	Scottish Daily Mail	14	119
	The Herald	13	73
IndyRef London-based	Daily Mail	11	88
	The Daily Telegraph	16	54
	The Sun	14	41
Scottish editions and Scottish-based	Scotsman	10	61
	Scottish Daily Mail	12	88
	The Herald	12	38

As can be seen in Table 4, a higher amount of nodes were generated in the Scottish editions, and Scottish-based papers, than in the London-based papers, in regards to Brexit, whereas a number of references were more equal in the case of IndyRef. The distribution of references is somewhat diverse, depending on which referendum the articles are related to (see table 5). Furthermore, some of the nodes that had been used in the open coding process, were found to have few references outside of the first – e.g. media discourse and Commonwealth – which is why these were disregarded from the final count that is presented in table 5.

Table 5 Nodes and reference distribution in pilot study for IndyRef and Brexit³

Nodes	Brexit		IndyRef	
	London Based	Scottish editions and Scotland based	London Based	Scottish Editions and Scotland based
British	48	47	30	34
Scottish	-	28	46	71
English	3	13	25	17
Divide	7	3	18	21
Political establishment	4	4	6	8

³ It is important to note that not all nodes are present in this table, as some nodes were only referenced once in a single source, whereas those shown in Table 5 had relevance to the study.

British Identity	-	6	4	-
Loss of Sovereignty	10	6	-	2
Sovereignty	2	8	-	1
Independence negative	-	-	6	7
Nationalism	2	8	-	1
Separatists	-	-	7	5
Discourse				
- Spatial reference	5	4	6	4
- Analogy	3	-	1	1
- Metaphor	7	3	7	6
- Personification	3	6	1	4
Leave				
- negative	1	4	-	-
- Positive	4	1	-	-
Remain				
- positive	2	7	-	-
- Negative	3	3	-	-

The pilot study was conducted to test assumptions made by the research in the problem formulation. The assumption that the concept “British national identity” would be used and constructed in connection with Brexit and IndyRef, seemed to be supported by the high number of references coded for the node “British”. Furthermore, it seems from this pilot study that the assumption that Scottish papers (editions and Scotland-based) and the London-based papers use distinctive different nomination strategies, is not unfounded; there appears to be a difference between how the nationalities - British, English or Scottish – are applied. This exemplified for the Scottish nomination for Brexit, as it is not used in the London-based papers, whilst being present in the Scottish papers and editions.

The pilot study generated a significant amount of nodes, which resulted in some of them being repetitive; this is why a pilot study was conducted as it gave the opportunity to either construct new nodes or umbrella terms that could contain multiple nodes. To avoid making the coding process laborious, some of the categories were also deleted as they were found to be irrelevant to the study, whilst others were incorporated into umbrella terms, to hopefully result in a more cohesive study (see

Table 6). Additionally, new categories were created, with the hope of making the coding results easier organised and more cohesive.

Table 6. Nodes created for coding based on the results of the pilot study

Nodes	Justification
Others	- To keep track of when a 'national identity' is invoked, it was stated by Schlesinger that an analysis of inclusion and exclusion was needed (1987: 260). To help to organise this, the nodes 'Others' and 'Us' were created as umbrella terms with the inclusion of the sub-nodes: 'British', 'English' and 'Scottish'.
British	
English	
Scottish	
Us	
English	
Scottish	- The discourse umbrella term is used to help to uncover the forms through which national identity realised. Furthermore, coding this will help in the more in-depth analysis of national identity politics.
British	
Discourse	
Metaphors	
Spatial Reference	- The nodes 'loss of sovereignty' and 'sovereignty' were combined, as the number of references was deemed low, and it was therefore decided that having both categories would be redundant as the nodes were used in combination with other, thereby making it easier to categorise them, and then analyse them afterwards in connection with the context.
Personification	
Sovereignty	
Nationalism	- Separatists and Nationalism were combined into the node 'nationalism'. This was done as the articles did not differentiate between the two terms, therefore making it impractical for the thesis to do it. This might be a result of separatism being categorised as 'minority nationalism' (Keating 1996: 18), thereby making it related to the umbrella term of nationalism.
Leave	- 'Leave' and 'Remain' were kept as umbrella terms, as these helped create patterns for the use of 'us' and 'them' – and how negative and positive opinions on could Brexit have a potential effect on the use of 'us' and 'them' and their sub-nodes. These nodes also helped with given an overview over the data for the analysis.
Negative	
Positive	
Remain	
Negative	
Positive	
Independence	- 'Independence' was turned into an umbrella term, to help to uncover if there was a pattern for the use of 'us' and 'them' when it was coupled with the negative and positive opinions on IndyRef
Negative	
Positive	

The criteria for choosing these nodes were a mix of frequency of references in the pilot study, and the relevance that they were perceived to have in answering the problem formulation of the thesis. The thesis does stipulate that it is possible that other nodes might have been created if a different sample of data had been used for the pilot study; however, new nodes will not be created during the

analysis, as this could not only confuse the data but would make the coding process potentially never-ending, as new categories would result in the recoding of already coded data. This thesis acknowledges that a closed-set of nodes, could potentially result in aspects being neglected during the analysis phase. Yet, a defined and closed set of nodes was deemed necessary based on the limitations placed on the research, as open-coding on all 60 articles could result in a shortage of time for interpretation and analysis of the data.

3.4 Research design

To answer the research question satisfactorily, this paper will analyse qualitative data through a deductive comparative multiple case study design, as this allows the results found of the data samples for Brexit and IndyRef election to be compared and contrasted. The research is referred to as being a multiple case study, in line with Bryman's claim that when "the comparative design [is] be applied in relation to a qualitative research strategy [...] it takes the form of a multiple-case study" (2012: 74). Additionally, the multiple case study offers an opportunity for examining general causal mechanisms in multiple contexts (ibid). The rareness of the cases chosen⁴ does give evidence of the case study being unique, which lowers the replicability of the study, as the situation is specialised. However, based on the explanation of the data collection, and the coding scheme, it could be argued that a research manual has been created to be applied to a different case. The usage of a comparative multiple case study design also ensures that the data will be analysed separately and in-depth, whilst also being analysed with more or less identical methods, thereby decreasing the risk of incompatibility when comparing results (Bryman 2012: 72).

Reliability and validity are difficult measures to establish in qualitative research, as these were founded in the quantitative tradition. Furthermore, it is difficult to freeze a social setting, making reliability established through replication difficult; yet, given that this study deals with data that is not collected through interviews or surveys, but rather 'objectified' data in the form of editorials and opinion pieces collected from the press in a systematic manner, there is an increased level of external reliability, as other researchers can collect the same data as this thesis (Bryman 2012: 390). The need for reliability is not imperative to the research, as it is a case study that deals with the uniqueness of

⁴ The British Referendum on the 23rd of June, 2016 was the first time a sovereign state had decided to leave the EU. The Scottish Independence Referendum, 18th of September 2014, was the first time that the Scottish people voted for sovereignty, rather than the devolution referendum in 1979, from the British State.

the situation being studied. The research acknowledges that the study has a low level of reliability and thusly validity. However, it is important to note that aim of this study is not to uncover a trend of national identity politics in London-based and Scottish papers as a whole, but rather to investigate a trend of national identity politics regarding the specific cases of the Brexit election and the Scottish independence referendum, and the thesis is, therefore, not concerned with having a high level of replicability.

The decision to use a qualitative data set is not without its limitations based on its subjective nature; because of this, the results can be argued to have an inherent bias. This bias could be related to the data collection, or bias held by the researcher in the form of the political opinions – which in this case is that of a pro-EU ideology. Furthermore, difficulty can be had with establishing how the research was conducted, and how a conclusion was reached (Bryman 2012: 406). The research has tried to counter this with the use of coding, as it gives insight into how certain conclusions were reached. Indeed, by using open-coding through a pilot study, there is an increased level of transparency, as the research displays how the categories that the coding uses were first decided upon.

3.5 Epistemology and Ontology

This paper's epistemological stance is that of interpretivism, as it deals with finding the subjective meaning of social actions (Bryman 2012: 28), as opposed to the objectivity needed when applying positivism – which is inherent to the field of CDA as the results are interpreted rather than observed. Furthermore, the use of DHA attempts to rectify the subjectivity, by placing the texts within a context; which should help increase the reliability of the overall results, as they will be based on context, rather than solely on the researcher's own interpretations. By taking an interpretivistic stance, the research acknowledges that reality is inherently subjective and that there can, thusly, be different interpretations of the same event.

Together with the epistemological stance, the paper has taken the ontological stance of constructivism as it “asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman 2012: 33). Furthermore, this stance takes bias into consideration, by including the notion that the account of the social world presented by any research is a construction – thus, the research presents a specific version of reality, rather than a definitive one (ibid). Indeed, following how CDA views language and meaning, constructivism perceives meaning as being constructed through interaction, suggesting that the social world and categories are not external, but rather built up and constituted in and through interaction (ibid: 24)

3.6 Data considerations

Choosing to work with data that is generated by the printed press creates certain authenticity issues, as the authorship can be unclear or unknown (Bryman 2012: 553). This is exemplified in editorials, opinions and comments, where the author is often not disclosed, thereby making it difficult to establish a high level of reliability. However, as this paper is not dealing with the accuracy of a given account of events, but rather how identity politics have an effect on the usage of a ‘British national identity’ in a variety of papers published in the UK, this authenticity issues is greatly decreased, though not removed. Editorials are without a single author, but rather seen as the ‘voice’ of the paper, and are used as a way to present the “newspaper’s” opinion on a recent event (Van Dijk 1989: 231). It was assumed by the thesis, that using this type of articles the papers would be more prone to state their subjective opinions regarding the referendums; this could result in the usage of terms such as ‘nation’, ‘we’, ‘them’, and ‘British/English/Scottish’, given the difference in readerships – i.e. Scottish papers primarily being aimed at a Scotland-based audience versus London-based papers being aimed at a nationwide audience (Rosie et al. 2006: 333).

Additionally, it is important to note that newspapers are wont to endorse various political parties (Croucher, ibtimes.co.uk: 2015), thereby indicating that the papers would publish editorials that would adhere to the stances put forward by the various newspapers – e.g. The Guardian endorses Labour, and could, therefore, be assumed to recommend a ‘remain’ vote in the Brexit referendum (ibid). This divide between papers based on who they endorse – with the divide being between Conservatives and Labour in England, and between SNP, Labour and the Conservatives in Scotland – has the consequence of distorting the results if this is not taken into consideration, in both the data collection phase and in the analysis. Endorsement of different campaigns, therefore, had to be researched, so the sample would not end up with a skewed distribution of either ‘Remain’ or ‘Leave’ in the case of Brexit. However, this was not possible to avoid for IndyRef as only one paper endorsed an independent Scotland – the Sunday Herald (Carrel, theguardian.com: 2014.). The Sunday Herald was, therefore, excluded from the data sample, both on the basis of it becoming an outlier and as a consequence of the paper not having been used for the Brexit sample. Arguably, the choice of only analysing IndyRef articles from papers that endorsed the ‘better together’ could be said to create a biased sample; because of this, care was taken to include articles that argued for both sides of the referendum.

Finally, it is important to be aware of the potential pitfalls of analysing documents, as there might be a penchant to “assume that documents reveal something about an underlying reality so that the

documents [...] are viewed as representations of the reality of that [paper]” (Bryman 2012: 554). Such an assumption is risky as newspapers have a tendency to be contradictory in their coverage of a given subject – e.g. endorsing the leave campaign for Brexit, but still publishing opinions and comments arguing for the remain campaign (Bryman 2012: 553). Such contradictions could result in discrepancies in the results of an analysis, that was conducted on the premise that articles could reveal something about the reality within the organisation of a newspaper. Documents should instead be analysed in terms of their context and the implied readership, as this assists in uncovering the aims of the articles (ibid 555). This context is, in part, what this thesis will try to uncover and analyse through the application of DHA, as this method works with the intertextuality of the given data (Wodak & Reisigl 2009: 90). Such context is not only the events that the articles are dealing with – i.e. Brexit and IndyRef – and the regional reach of the papers, to name a few.

4. Historical Background

To fully understand the context behind the two referendum votes, a closer look at the history of subject of the votes is warranted. However, as the historical background for these votes could easily have been the main topic for a thesis project, this chapter will be short and to the point, which could potentially result in the overlooking of certain details. Thus, this chapter should only be viewed as a primer that contextualises the referendums, thereby, ensuring a better understanding of the articles that will later be analysed.

4.1 The Scottish Independence Referendum

In 1707, when the Act of Union was passed in both the Scottish and the English Parliament, it was stated that: “the two Kingdoms of Scotland and England, shall, upon the first Day of May next ensuing the Date hereof, and for ever after, be united into one Kingdom by the Name of Great-Britain” (Union with England Act, Article 1). That would be the last Scottish Parliament until almost three centuries later, where the devolution Act of 1998, reinstated both the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh national assembly, which were given the power to control certain aspects of their own nations governing without interference from the British Parliament in Westminster (McGarvey 2015: 35). However, Scotland had, despite uniting with England in 1707, kept certain aspects of governance in place – legal system, education, and religion – (ibid 34); these maintain aspects of an independent nation within the British state, thereby, creating an idea of the construction of potential sovereign Scottish state. This idea was fuelled by the birth of the Scottish National Party (SNP), who declared

in their political manifest that they worked towards a Scottish devolution from the British state that would ultimately lead to Scottish independence; however, though the party only gained attention after it won a small, but important, victory of gaining seven seats in the British Parliament in 1974 (McGarvey 2015: 35). This victory planted the seeds for what would be the first Scottish referendum on devolution in 1979 – a referendum that dealt with the question of reinstating a Scottish parliament, and delegating power from Westminster to Scotland – which failed to secure the support of the 40% of the electorate (Dekavalla 2016: 795). However, as dissatisfaction with the conservative government grew among the Scottish population, SNP slowly gained members and attention, which resulted in the second Scottish referendum, almost 20 years later in 1997, as a result of the Labour victory in the parliamentary election earlier that year (ibid).

After the devolution in 1997, SNP continued gaining traction with the Scottish population, which culminated with the party's victory in the 2011 Scottish Parliament election, where it won a majority of the seats (Dekavalla 2016: 796). The SNP had run on a political programme that included a commitment to having an independence referendum; because of this, negotiations with the British Parliament were initiated, and resulted in the 'Edinburgh Agreement' which set out the terms for a third referendum – though this time dealing with full independence, rather than devolution – that would be held on the 18th of September, 2014. (McGarvey 2015: 36). It is important to note that a majority of polls only had about a third of the Scottish population wanting Scottish independence from the UK, whilst a third wanted status quo and a third wanted more devolution – though short of independence (Adam 2013: 49). This divide might have been part of the reason that the 2014 referendum ended with a 'No' to an independent Scotland, as two-thirds of the country did not want to secede from the British Union. The vote ended in 55,3% for 'No' and 44,7% 'Yes' with an 84% turnout for all Scottish voters (McGarvey 2015: 36). However, despite the referendum being a victory for the unionists, the Scottish question is not yet settled. After the British population decided to leave the EU in 2016, a call for a second independence referendum has flourished with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon stating that she would “seek the approval of the Scottish Parliament to agree with the UK Government [on a] procedure that will enable the Scottish Parliament to legislate for an independence referendum.” (gov.scot 13th of March, 2017).

4.2 The Brexit Referendum

To understand the origins of Brexit, it is imperative to take a closer look at the relationship between the UK and the European Union. The apprehension towards the European project could be related to

the difficulty the UK had with being accepted as a member of the, then named, EEC. The UK submitted their first application for membership in 1961, but was vetoed by France in 1963; the second application was submitted in 1967, and was again vetoed by French President De Gaulle (Ichijo 2003: 47). However, the French veto was not the only reason for the late UK membership. Ichijo suggests that by avoiding occupation during WWII, the UK did not need of assurance of peace that the European integration offered (2003: 48). These factors combined resulted in the UK having to wait until 1973 before a membership of the union was official; however, just two years later a referendum was held to gauge the public opinion on the membership; here 67% voted for a continuation of the membership (Qvortrup 2016: 62). This referendum was held as a response to the growing displeasure among the public about the country having entered the EC without the people being consulted – as the membership was agreed upon solely by the British parliament (Butler & Kitzinger 2016: 25). Yet, despite the public voting for staying in the EEC, there was still traces of resistance towards the European project present amidst some the parliament members and among parts of the population. Particularly, in the Conservative party, there would continue to be a divide between the pro-EU members and Eurosceptics (Hübner 2016: 5). This scepticism towards the EU would also define aspects of the UK's membership of the EU, as the country opted out of the monetary union and the Schengen agreement (Wallace 2012: 540). Through this, it can be said that the UK has been wary about the European integration into domestic policy making. Indeed, Britain has been perceived as an ‘awkward partner’, which has been based on attributes such as the geographical distance to the continent, the late entry into the union, and the fact that “Britain has never seen European integration as an answer to its political problems” (Menon, Minto & Wincott 2016: 175).

This ‘awkward partner status’ could also be said to be fuelled by a British political environment that has been deeply divided over the European question ever since joining in 1973. This divide became clear in 2013 when Prime Minister David Cameron promised to hold a referendum on the EU, if he continued as Prime Minister after the 2015 general election. This was based on premise that the European project had changed drastically since the first referendum in 1975, and that such changed warranted a new referendum, so the public could have a say in the continuance of a membership (Menon, Minto & Wincott 2016: 175). Yet, Cameron did not advocate for leaving, but rather to remain within an EU with renegotiated terms (ibid). After winning the general election in 2015, Cameron started renegotiating the terms of membership in the EU for the country. However, the renegotiated terms did manage to reunite the polarised factions within the Conservative party, as a predicted 130 MPs were said to defy Cameron and back the “leave” campaign in the referendum

that followed (Menon, Minto & Wincott 2016: 176). The divide within the conservative party was flanked by others that became clear in the aftermath of the referendum; particularly, the difference in how the EU was regarded by the different constituents in the UK (see table 7).

*Table 7. Brexit results divided by nation*⁵

	Remain	Leave
England	46.6%	53.4%
Scotland	62%	38%
Wales	47.8%	52.5%
Northern Ireland	55.8%	44.2%
United Kingdom (Total)	48.1%	51.9%

The European referendum resulted in the UK population voting to leave the EU on the 23rd of June, 2016. This resulted in Cameron resigning as Prime Minister, to be proceeded by Theresa May – who would postpone the triggering of Article 50, the official marker of the Brexit terms, until the 29th of March 2017.

5. Analysis

5.1 introduction

In this section of the thesis, the 60 articles will be analysed using content analysis and coding. The cases of IndyRef and Brexit will be dealt with separately and the results will be discussed subsequently. For chronological reasons, IndyRef will be analysed first, as there is chance of the referendum being mentioned in connection with Brexit, and this order will, therefore, decrease the occurrence of repetitive explanations regarding IndyRef. The analysis will first draw on the data cumulated from the coding that was conducted with the help of the software NVivo. This will be developed upon through an in-depth content analysis of some of the articles that had been coded. These articles will be analysed through the combination of DHA and content analysis, which will help examine the strategies utilised in the construction of national identity. This will involve the identification of constructive discursive strategies in the form of ‘us’, ‘we’, ‘others’, and ‘them’ constructions, together with the identification of justification/perpetuation strategies. These will be

⁵ The data presented is from the BBC website, where the network posted the results on the eve of the vote. The data is received from the local counting authorities in the 382 counting areas. The data in table is derived directly from http://www.bbc.com/news/politics/eu_referendum/results which was accessed on the 18th of April, 2017

identified and investigated in the terms of how they are related to identity politics. As the articles are collected from an online source, they are missing page numbers; thus, these will be referred to by *Author* and *date* in the instances where an author is mentioned. However, as a majority of the articles are editorials, most will be referred to by *Newspaper* and *date*. All the articles can be seen in full length in the Appendix (A), and the articles cited will be present in the bibliography.

5.2 the Independence Referendum

The IndyRef was presented by the papers as deciding the future of the British union, rather than the future of the Scottish nation. This can be seen in the titles of some of the data: “Yes vote would break British hearts” (Peterkin 2014: Scotsman), “A day of destiny for our United Kingdom” (The Daily Telegraph 2014: 18th September), “The United Kingdom is a great nation and I believe we are stronger together” (Smith 2014: The Daily Record). The mentioning of “British hearts”, “our United Kingdom” and “stronger together” which all build upon the official ‘vote no’ campaign that had the tagline ‘better together’. It might have been assumed that London-based papers would be more lenient towards using union-themed words in the header of the articles, but difference between the London-based papers and the Scottish papers was nine articles against seven, respectively. With a margin of two, it would be difficult to proclaim the presence of a significant difference in the titling of the articles depending on the place of origin. Furthermore, given that the search terms used in *LexisNexis* for collecting the data included ‘Union’ and ‘British’, these words were expected to be present in the header of a considerable amount of the data. The focus on a British ‘we’ in the tagline of the articles does suggest that the papers are nominating their audience as British rather than Scottish and English. However, this will have to be investigated further, as this is connected to one of the main assumptions presented by this thesis. Before any analysis had been conducted, this thesis assumed that there would be a difference in use of nomination strategies between London-based papers and Scottish papers. This assumption was based on a variety of research (e.g. Law 2001; Rosie et al. 2006; Anderson 1983; Billig 1995); yet, given that this thesis dealt with new cases, there was a need to test this out on the data collected.

5.2.1 Us and them

The data sample included articles from both Scottish papers and London-based papers. The category “Scottish editions” was, for the sake of simplicity and overview, grouped together with the data derived from Scottish papers. The coding was heavily reliant on the context, as some of the

articles changed the nomination of the deictic pronoun ‘we’ up to three times within the same sentence. Additionally, some of the deictic pronouns identified in the data referred to the paper or the author of the article, rather than a particular national identity, which did muddle the coding process somewhat. However, as presented in Table 8, a difference in how the articles constructed the ‘we’ in terms of a nationality (British, Scottish or English) and how they constructed the ‘other’ (English, British or Scottish), was identified.

Table 8. national identity references coded in the data for IndyRef

	London-based		Scottish Papers	
	<i>No. of references</i>	<i>No. of articles</i>	<i>No. of references</i>	<i>No. of articles</i>
<i>Others</i>				
- Scottish	185	15	43	5
- British	2	2	21	9
- English	7	4	25	11
<i>We</i>				
- Scottish	48	6	234	13
- British	140	15	121	14
- English	148	13	30	5

The biggest difference between the London-based and the Scottish papers is in how Scottish and English identity is constructed through the identified flagging of ‘we’ and ‘other’, as such flagging, suggests that the papers presuppose the national identity of their audiences. A significant majority of the references of a ‘we’ identified for the London-based newspapers are flagged as British and English, whilst ‘other’ is almost exclusively flagged as Scottish. This contrasts with the Scottish papers, that refer to themselves and flag their audience as being ‘Scottish’ and, to a lesser degree, British. Interestingly, Scottish papers, similarly to London-based papers, flag ‘others’ as being Scottish to a higher degree than British and English, which conflicts with the simultaneous referral of the ‘we’ as Scottish. However, a closer examination of this disparity uncovers that the Scottish ‘we’ and ‘other’ are dependent on the actor producing them.

In many of the instances, where the Scottish papers are construction a Scottish ‘others’, it is done on the basis of referencing speeches produced by individuals from the ‘better together’ campaign. This can be seen in an article from the *Scottish Mail on Sunday* (Blackley 2014: 14th September) where David Cameron is referred to as having “pleaded with those from the rest of the UK to help keep Britain together by calling up people in Scotland and urging them to vote No”. Here ‘calling up people in Scotland’ and ‘them’ are constructed as Scottish individuals. However, this is done through

the reproduction of Cameron's construction of a Scottish 'other' rather than the paper constructing this. Cameron's construction of a Scottish 'other' has to be understood in the context of the 'we' being exclusive to part of the UK population that cannot vote in the referendum. Thus, the Scottish 'other' becomes a reproduction of a construction that is produced by a different source than the author of the articles.

Indeed, this is the case for all the references coded for the Scottish papers where pronouns and phrases construct a Scottish 'other' – e.g. “I say all this because I [do not] want the people of Scotland to be sold a dream that disappears.” (Peterkin 2014: Scotsman). This excerpt refers to the same speech by David Cameron mentioned in the *Scottish Daily Mail on Sunday*. Here, Cameron constructs 'the people of Scotland' as being excluded from the group, he is a part of – which could be a British 'we'. This reproduction also displays how Cameron constructs the Scottish 'other' to the 'we'; as the exclusion of the Scots from the 'we', shows the IndyRef is a political question on identity, rather than political sovereignty; thereby, making the IndyRef question more about being British or not. This is particularly clear, as Cameron is referring to 'the people of Scotland' in the scenario that the 'Yes' campaign won, which – based on his plea for Scotland to stay in the UK – requires him to construct a Scottish 'other' corresponding to the established framing of IndyRef as being based on identity politics. Thus, the usage of flagging Scottish identity as the 'other' in Scottish papers is reproductions, rather than the paper's own construction of a Scottish 'other'. However, by reproducing these constructions, the papers are confirming the construction of a Scottish 'other' if they vote to leave, thereby assisting in the establishing of a dominant narrative, where IndyRef is based on a question of identity. Additionally, this claim is reinforced by the fact that all the Scottish papers used in this thesis backed the 'Better together' campaign; thereby, having an interest in maintaining the construction of a Scottish 'them' as this would reinforce the idea of identity being on the ballot, rather than self-governance. This could also explain the small amount of British and English 'other' construction in these papers, as these could potentially assist the 'Yes' campaign, by reproducing their constructions of an exclusive Scottish 'we', rather than the inclusive Scottish-and-British 'we' that the papers are trying to construct. This also concurs with Rosie et al.'s statement on newspapers being institutions that encourage “their reader to see the world in [...] specifically national terms [and] to remind them of their own nation.” (2004: 437).

The London-based papers construct a Scottish 'other' on a larger scale than the Scottish papers, whilst shifting between constructing the 'we' as either English or British. This significant difference – 43 references in the Scottish papers to 185 in London-based – can be seen in an article by *the Daily*

Mail, which is also the article with the highest number of references to ‘Other/Scottish’ nodes in the London-based papers. The high number of references is based on repetitive nominative pronouns, which is exemplified in: “If the Scots are to be granted what seems nothing less than home rule, they must no longer be allowed to brandish their claymores over English taxpayers through Westminster. Few of us in the South want yet another layer of legislators and bureaucrats” (Hastings 2014: Daily Mail). The application of the collective plural, “the Scots”, and the following referrals of ‘they’ and ‘their’ assist in constructing a divide to towards the ‘we’. The ‘we’ is not nominated in the first quote, thereby making it unclear if it should be flagged as English; this does, however, become explicit in next sentence as the spatial reference realised through the prepositional phrase ‘few of us in the South’, which refers back to ‘English’. Furthermore, based on the proximity to ‘English’, it seems more probable that Hastings is here constructing himself – and possibly his audience – as being English, rather than British. The usage of “they must no longer be allowed” (Hastings 2014: Daily Mail), shows a utilisation of the constructive sub-strategy of discontinuation (Wodak et al. 1999: 38), which constructs the idea of a stronger Scotland in the UK negatively by the author of the article; thereby, further reinforcing the construction of a Scottish ‘other’ in the article. The choice of constructing an English ‘we’, that is exclusive to the speaker and addressee, appears to depict the consequences of the IndyRef on the English, rather than the UK as a whole. “The United Kingdom cannot simply go back to being what it was before [...] The English will find it hard to forget the abuse [...] by some Scots” (Hastings 2014: Daily Mail). Again, the discontinuation strategy is employed to display that the Scots have changed the status quo of the British national identity, thereby reproducing the IndyRef as being a question of identity, though with a focus on the English.

The tendency to use distal and proximal focal references to construct the identity of the reader and the paper is prominent in the London-based articles; this could be a result of the London-based papers being distributed not only in England but also in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Alex Law states that in the London-based papers “Britain is simply reported as *the nation* whereas other nations need to be explicitly specified” (2001: 302), thereby implying that the construction of a British ‘we’ is implicit, whereas the national identities within the UK has to be explicitly stated, to be fully comprehended. This could explain the need to re-establish the English proximity through deictic flagging, which is exemplified in *The Daily Telegraph*, where the focus is placed on the English perspective on the Scottish referendum; stating that “the time is coming for the people of England to have a say in their future as a nation.” (Johnston 2014: 16th September). The deictic pronoun ‘their’ is a personal reference to ‘the people of England’, which does suggest a flagging of an English ‘other’.

However, the singularisation of the English, does appear to be based on the construction of a Scottish ‘other’: “If the Scots do vote for independence then, [...], there will be a marginally smaller UK based overwhelmingly on England (Jonston 2014: 16th September), this is correspondent with the headline, which states: “It's time the people of England had a say in their nation's future; If there is to be a federal UK, then the largest country must be allowed to govern itself” (ibid). Despite, the application of the application of the reflexive pronoun ‘itself’, the article appears to reconstruct an English ‘we’ from a sub-national identity to that of state-identity instead. The singularisation of England as ‘the largest country’ together with the modal verb ‘must’ helps to position the author in relation to ‘itself’, in what appears to be an in-group construction. This becomes clearer with the addition of the phrase “But why should England be balkanised in order to allow Scottish national identity to flourish within the Union?” (ibid). ‘England’ is here constructed as being a victim of ‘balkanisation’ as a consequence of Scottish independence; the focus on the consequences that IndyRef might have on England does assist in constructing a Scottish ‘other’ to an England ‘we’ despite this being stated in impersonal terms. This is implied through the emphasis of an alleged discontinuation of the status quo of the Union, and establishing autonomy for the English through lexemes such as “govern itself” and “had a say in their future” (Johnston 2014: 16th September), as these help to construct difference and, thereby, further establishing the English as being the in-group identity shared by the paper and its audience (Wodak et al. 1999: 38).

There is a distinct difference in how the English and British ‘we’ references are constructed in the articles from London-based papers. The British ‘we’ is primarily constructed to highlight unity, and in connection with reproducing constructions that were produced by the ‘better together’ campaign. Examples of this are varied “But together we have been stronger, more prosperous and more secure; apart we would both be diminished.” (The Daily Telegraph 2014: September 18th); here the ‘we’ appears to be British. However, the addition of ‘both’ does suggest that this construction of ‘we’ excludes all but England and Scotland. *The Guardian* does not mirror this exclusion of Wales, but reproduced the campaign slogan of ‘better together: “[...] Britain can indeed confront its many defects better together than apart” (2014: 20th September). Indeed, the articles are prone to construct a British ‘we’, both through the use of deictic pronouns such as ‘we’, and the explicit use of ‘Britain’; this helps to construct what Wodak et al. states are the “emphasis on unifying common features [...] and on the will to unify” (1999:38). This is done through the repetitive use of the phrase ‘better together’- which establishes the ‘British national identity’ as being not only unifying but as superior, through the explicit positive emphasis on a united Britain, rather than a federal union with four

separated nations. These examples can also be said to reproduce the identity politics used by Cameron, as the constructions are based on the assumption that one identity among the many identities individuals have is what dominates their politics (Hobsbawm 1996: 41)

The slogan ‘better together’ is reproduced in a majority of the articles: “There must now be a healing [...] and a desire to make the Union work for all four nations. Feelings are still running high but we now all need to work together for a better future.” (The Sun 2014: 20th September), Here, the use of ‘the Union’ and ‘all four nations’ contextualise the ‘we’ as being the British population, rather than English or Scottish, this is based on the implicit use of ‘the Union’, which is understood as being ‘the UK’ without it being flagged as such (Rosie et al. 2004: 438). This is realised through the use of the constructive strategy of continuation that puts emphasis on international similarity and uses personal pronouns – e.g.. ‘we’ – as a form of realisation (Wodak et al. 1999: 37). The application of ‘all four nations’ construct the ‘we’ as being inclusive towards all the members of these nations, rather than referring to specific parts of the UK. Yet, whilst the application of a British ‘we’ is inclusive and referring in the three abovementioned examples, further research will show that the construction of national flagged ‘we’ can be exclusive – which will be showcased in the coding of London-based papers and their flagging of ‘we’ as being English.

In contrast to the unifying constructive strategies applied in connection with the British ‘we’, the strategies used to construct the English ‘we’ in London-based articles, differs to a certain extent. This can be seen in *The Daily Telegraph*, where letters to the Editor, include phrases such as: “How kind of the Scots to decide they would like to stay in the UK. Perhaps the English could now have a referendum on our own independence” (2014: 20th September). However, here it is important to note, that letters to the editor are written, not by journalists, but by unknown individuals, who have written to the editor; it is, therefore, unknown if these letters reflect the opinion held by the paper, or if they are a reproduction of the opinion of a single individual. By applying the constructive strategy of discontinuation, which presupposes international differences through the usage of personal pronouns such as ‘they’ and synecdochical anthroponyms such as ‘the Scots’ (Wodak et al. 1999: 38), this letter to the editor creates a separation between the Scottish and the English. This is further established through the usage of the ‘the English’ together with deictic ‘our own’ which construct an exclusive ‘we’, as it presupposes that the ‘we’ is different from the UK. Furthermore, the English also becomes exclusive from the UK, through the use of ‘our own’; thereby implicitly suggesting that ‘the English’ are viewed independently and separate from the rest of the UK.

Yet, there does not have to be a deictic pronoun present to signify an ‘in-group’ construction, which can be seen in *The Daily Mail*, where the English perspective on IndyRef is at the forefront: “If the Scots are to be granted what seems nothing less than home rule, they must no longer be allowed to brandish their claymores over English taxpayers through Westminster.” (Hastings 2014: 20th September). Here, the ‘the Scots’ are referred to as ‘they’, which constructs a Scottish ‘other’; this is further underlined by ‘their claymores over English taxpayers’ which refers to an old Scottish sword type used by Highlanders in the 16th century. This construction creates a hostile representation of ‘the Scots’, the English is perceived as the victim, thereby utilising a strategy of justification, which deals with the placement of blame (Wodak et al. 1999: 36); in this instance, it is placed upon ‘the Scots’. Despite the explicit construction of a Scottish ‘other’, the ‘we’ is implicit. Yet, this is later presented as “However, the overwhelmingly English majority in this island should not now punish [the Scottish Nationalists] for doing so, but nor should we buy them new baubles.” (Hastings 2014: September 20th). Here ‘we’ refers back to ‘English majority’, thereby creating a context for the ‘English taxpayers’ found earlier in the same article. Additionally, this gives evidence that the ‘50 million residents of England’, ‘The English taxpayers’ and ‘Southern voters’, which were earlier presented in the same article (ibid), are all related to the constructed ‘we’ in this article. This shows that context is crucial to understanding how the press produced and reproduces identity politics, as phrases such as ‘Southern voters’ could have been termed ambiguous, had it not been for the nominative strategy of flagging ‘English majority’ as ‘we’ (Hastings 2014: 20th September). Indeed, this context is important as it shows that the mentioning of nationalities – such as ‘English’, ‘British’ and ‘Scottish’ – in isolation, are problematic to identify as being the nominative constructions of ‘we’ or ‘other’; without this context, the validity of the findings is, at best, weak (Rosie et al. 2004: 442-443). Moreover, these findings also present how the English ‘we’ and the British ‘we’ are used to denote different qualities, and indeed perspectives on identity politics, in the London-based papers. Here an English ‘we’ is primarily used to denote an exclusive and closed group, that is seen in contrast to the rest of the nations within the UK, whereas the British ‘we’ is inclusive towards all the nations with the union.

The Scottish papers construct the Scottish ‘we’ and the British ‘we’ differently – as can be seen in Table 8 – where the ratio is 2:1, respectively. The phrases and words that refer to, and construct, a Scottish ‘we’ in the Scottish papers does initially appear to correspond with the exclusivity of the English ‘we’ from the London-based papers. This is exemplified in the *Scottish Daily Mail*: “we cannot ignore the fact that our decision will affect people across Britain.” (2014: 19th September - a).

Here the ‘we’ and ‘our decision’ is contrasted to ‘people across Britain’, which suggests that the Scottish ‘we’ constructed in opposition to the British ‘others’. The ‘we’ is implicitly Scottish, given that ‘our decision’ refers to the Scottish voters’ decision for IndyRef. Yet, despite the initial differentiation between the Scottish and the British, the editorial goes on to state that “Scotland's departure would leave Great Britain a lesser place”, thereby, ambiguously suggesting that Scotland – and thus also the Scottish – is part of Britain. This ambiguity is not surprising, given the topic of the editorial, that deals with the referendum on before any results were made public.

This construction of unity is not singular to the *Scottish Daily Mail*, as it is also constructed in *the Herald*, where it reads: “We are urged through our native audacity to break up Britain for an assumed Utopia.” (11th September 2014). ‘We’ refers to the Scots, as is implied in the title: “Whatever the outcome, we can be confident Scots will do their best to heal society” (ibid). Additionally, no other part of the UK was given a vote in the referendum, which does give evidence of the construction of a Scottish ‘we’. Yet, ‘Britain’ is not constructed in opposition to a Scottish ‘we’, but rather presented as being an ‘other’ to the SNP, rather than the ‘we’. This is done through the use of the justification strategy of a victim-perpetrator scenario, which realised through e.g. anecdotes and stories (Wodak et al. 1999: 36). In this instance, the Scottish ‘we’ is urged to ‘break up Britain’ for what ‘an assumed Utopia’ which, based on the addition of ‘assumed’, indicates that *the Herald* views this as being unconfirmed. Indeed, this construction removes the categorisation of ‘other’ from both the Scottish and the British and places it on an unknown third entity. The ‘other’ is not explicitly constructed, but it could be argued that it refers to the SNP as they are campaigning for Scottish independence. Thus, the Scottish ‘we’ is, despite its initial appearance, constructed and used differently than the English ‘we’. This difference can, perhaps, be explained in the overall backing of the ‘better together’ campaign by the Scottish papers – thereby, giving the papers an incentive to reproduce the Scottish ‘we’ as being inclusive towards the British identity.

The same inclusiveness is present in the construction and flagging of a British ‘we’ in the Scottish papers, which is exemplified in an article from *the Daily Record*, where Smith states that she “believe[s] wholeheartedly in [the United Kingdom’s] future; we are stronger together than we are apart” (13th September, 2014). ‘We’ refers to the citizens of the UK – thereby, also referring to the British in inclusive terms. Interestingly, both uses of ‘we’ refer to the British, despite the first use is associated with unity and the second with separation. This suggests that a British identity is inclusive, even after separation. However, this contrasts with an excerpt from the *Scottish Daily Mail*, which indicates that the inclusivity of Britishness within the Scottish ‘we’ would have been lost, if the ‘Yes’

campaign had won; “those of us who did all in our power to fight for the Union can take a moment to savour our success and give thanks for the delivery of the UK from the clutches of separatists.” (2014; 19th September- b). In the excerpt ‘those of us who did all in our power’ refer to the Scots that voted ‘No’, thereby affirming themselves as being both Scottish and British. This is further established by the addition of ‘fight for the Union’, which does reproduce the identity politics constructed by Cameron, as the IndyRef is viewed from the perspective of the union, rather than the independence of Scotland. Furthermore, the use of ‘the separatists’ instead of flagging these as being ‘Scottish’ indicates that the separatists are constructed as an ‘other’ to the Scottish identity; thereby, potentially stating that wanting to leave the UK is un-Scottish – which can be seen as a variation of the reproduction of the identity politics used by Cameron.

In summary, it can be said that, whilst the Scottish papers sampled for this thesis are more inclined to construct and flag the national identity of the paper and their readers as being Scottish, they also produce a construction that allows for a British ‘we’, which could be why the British ‘we’ utilised in the articles is connected to the Scottish ‘we’. This contrasts to the London-based papers that have a tendency to construct a Scottish ‘other’, and, despite the addition of an inclusive British ‘we’. The English ‘we’ is exclusive, as it primarily refers to the English gaining their own parliament or independence within the UK.

5.2.2 War and Identity

Identity is constructed through a variety of means – this can be through the use of pronouns, anecdotes and metaphors (Wodak et al 1999: 43). Indeed, these can help to strengthen the construction of said identities, be it increase the positive connotation to the ‘we’ or to further alienate the ‘other’. The following analysis will look closer at the discursive strategies that are used in the articles regarding IndyRef, and the linguistic means, particularly metaphors, memories and frames, through which these are realised. One of the themes that is repeatedly used by both the Scottish and the London-based papers is that of war – this is realised through the use of framing and metaphors. The war metaphor is present in many aspects of everyday life, particularly in the political arena. Here war is associated with various things: an argument is ‘fought’, elections use ‘battle strategies’ and campaigns can be ‘defeated’ by the opposition. This is related to what Dekavalla termed a ‘game frame’ in her paper on the framing used by the printed press during IndyRef, where she stated that the game frame included: “emphasis on the strategy of the Yes and No sides; use of war, game and horse-race language; emphasis on who is winning or losing.” (2016: 800). According to Dekavalla,

the usage of a game frame is not unexpected, as it is often utilised by the press in governmental elections (ibid: 806). However, in contrast to Dekavalla, this thesis will attempt to look closer at how war-related metaphors, language and stories are used in the construction of the national identity that is presented by the papers as being either 'we' or 'other'.

5.2.21 *Britain's 'Finest Hour'*

Unity was a common theme in the press coverage during the IndyRef, and it was used by both the Scottish and the London-based papers to construct and flag the British 'we' in the articles. This was for instance done by referencing history, and victories of the past; which in the case of the UK, often refers to WWII. This reproduction of past victories, can be found in a speech by David Cameron, who connected historical events to the IndyRef, to potentially gain Scottish support for the continuation of the union: "It would be the end of a country that launched the Enlightenment, that abolished slavery [...] that defeated fascism." (Peterkin 2014: *The Scotsman*). The reference – 'the country that defeated fascism' – helps to reproduce the sentiment from WWII, a war in which Britain and the other allied nations, were the victors. However, as the US and Britain were not invaded, their victory is perhaps perceived differently than that of the allied nations from continental Europe, who were all invaded. Furthermore, Cameron indicates that this history is lost if Scotland leaves, thereby reproducing the 'better together' identity politics of IndyRef. The legacy of WWII and Britain's part in the victory does appear to have affected how the nation identifies itself; this is concurred by Ichijo, who describes WWII as having "conditioned the ideas about Britain. The ideas that Britain was different from the continent, that the British constituted an Island race, and that it stood for democracy" (2003: 37). This idea of difference and uniqueness might have shaped the overall mythos of the British national identity being powerful and victorious; furthermore, the WWII narrative has been a central theme for Unionism (MacKenzie 1998: 228), which does explain the application of this specific historical event. Unionism is at the forefront of the IndyRef, as all the papers back the 'better together' campaign; it can, therefore, be theorised that the reference to WWII is, in part, to continue the unionist narrative of greatness together. Yet, while the usage of WWII might only be based on a unionist framing, the continued reference to the WWII, does suggest that it is an integral element to the construction of a British National identity.

War is revisited by Cameron, in the abovementioned speech, as he states that "[the rest of the country would be] utterly heartbroken to wake up on Friday to the end of the country we love. To know Scots would no longer join the English, Welsh and Northern Irish in our army, navy and air

force.” (Peterkin 2014: *The Scotsman*). Here, war and the military are intertwined with the construction of a British ‘we’, which suggests that the British identity is related to national myths reliant on the reproduction of historical event dealing with military victory won through unity. Given the repetition of WWII as a historical reference to unity, the argument is not without merit. In the *Scottish Daily Mail*, the focus is placed on the accomplishments of the Union: “Consider all that we have achieved together, in the only major European nation that has never succumbed to conquest or dictatorship, setting an example of tolerance and respect for others which has been envied throughout the world.” (2014: 17th September). In this excerpt, the British ‘we’ is constructed through the use of two constructive sub-strategies: unification and singularisation. The unification strategy is realised through the emphasis on “common unifying features” (Wodak et al. 1999:38), which is realised through the use of the personal pronoun ‘we’ and the repetition of what the union has ‘achieved together’. Through these strategies, the British ‘we’ is constructed in connection to past glory, and tries to unify through nostalgia. Additionally, the strategy of singularisation is applied to emphasise national uniqueness (ibid). This is realised through phrases that signify uniqueness: “only major European nation”, “setting an example of”, and “envied throughout the world.” (*Scottish Daily Mail* 2014: 17th September). These phrases imply that Scotland would lose these unique national aspects if the country voted for independence. The war topic is, thereby, used to strengthen and reproduce the identity politics of the IndyRef as these excerpts imply that the IndyRef is related to identity rather than sovereignty and form of governance.

WWII does not have to be explicitly connected to a British ‘we’, to convey a British unity; which is exemplified in an editorial from *The Sun*: “We all took our responsibilities seriously - from the 16 and 17-year-old firsttime voters to the World War Two veterans who fought Hitler under the Union Flag.” (2014: 20th September). The ‘we’ in this excerpt is Scottish, as it refers to those who could vote in the IndyRef. However, the use of the prepositional phrase ‘under the Union Flag’ challenges such a conclusion, as the phrase refers to the WWII veterans that fought for Britain, which could be identified as the usage of a unifying constructive strategy. This is based on the emphasis that is placed on the union, by explicitly stating it, rather than implicitly referring to the union through the use of ‘Britain’. Such a lexical choice helps to construct a British ‘we’, in connection with an already explicit Scottish ‘we’. Here, the context of when the article was written is important, as it is after the fact – which means that it was written after Scotland had chosen to be both Scottish and British. Here, the context is important, as it removes the need to explicitly state a British ‘we’, as the phrasing of voters

who “took [their] responsibility seriously” (The Sun 2014: 20th September) already implicitly indicates this. However, WWII does not only signify unity, as it can also be applied to undermine it.

An article from the *Daily Mail*, describes how WWII has gone from being a building block in the construction of a ‘United’ Britain, to signify an exclusive English ‘we’: “When the generation who had defended the UK from German invasion passed away, their collective memory of the geopolitical need for British unity went with them. All that remained were the Anglocentric legends of the Finest Hour, which to younger generations of Scottish and Welsh people seemed to be another example of English arrogance.” (Hastings 2014: 20th September). This stark contrast between then and now is a product of the divide between a past generation, and a younger one that is far removed from the memory of the need for a ‘British unity’. This focus on the past and present, is part of the constructive sub-strategy of discontinuation, as this strategy is built on the notion of putting emphasis on differences (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). This strategy is realised through the suggestion that an ‘Anglocentric’ perspective on WWII has reshaped the mythos of the unifying ‘legends of the finest hour’ and has instead become an ‘example of English arrogance’. This indicates that whilst WWII to older generations is founded on a context that constructs a need for the continuance of the British Union, it, contrastingly, becomes a picture of the divide between the nations within the British state for the younger generation, where this context is lost. Here, WWII is not a synonym for a British, but rather an English ‘we’ that has Scotland and Wales as the ‘other’. Indeed, Hastings’ article seems to suggest that the British ‘we’ is has become obsolete: “this referendum campaign has laid bare the decline of British identity - something that has been happening since the end of the Second World War.” (2014: 20th September). However, WWII is here stated as having been the last time that the British identity peaked, which does give some strength to the argument that WWII has been used as a theme to create a context for the continuance of the Union. Interestingly, it is only the *Daily Mail* – a London-based paper – that mentions these inconsistencies between the application of a WWII narrative and a British ‘we’, whereas Scottish papers such as *the Scotsman* and *Scottish Daily Mail* use WWII as a foundation upon which they can construct unity, to assist the ‘better together’ campaign. However, the *Daily Mail* article was written after the votes had been cast, which removed the possible risk of influencing the outcome of the IndyRef, as the paper endorsed the ‘better together’ campaign; this could explain the difference in usage. Yet, while WWII was used almost exclusively to construct a British ‘we’, war frames and metaphors were also applied to different constructions within the data.

5.2.23 *The Battlefield of the Election*

Lakoff and Johnsen, in their famous work on metaphors, “Metaphors We Live By” (2008), tried to uncover the naturalness in which metaphors occur in everyday life; one example was that of an argument being like war. Such a metaphor constructs arguments as being a verbal fight that can be either won or lost – thereby, giving instructions to how an argument should be performed (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 4). This concept of arguments being like war can also be transferred to elections being like war, i.e. there is a winner and a loser; the losing party is defeated and power is gained by the winner. A war metaphor also helps the construction of ‘we’ and ‘other’, thereby assisting the national identities that have already been constructed.

War is expected to result in wounds, if not death. A verbal war, such as an election, is no different, albeit with “wounds” serving a metaphorical purpose rather than a literal one. References to wounds are used to dramatise the results, as is stated in Hastings opinion piece, titled *Raw Wounds that won't heal: What an unholy mess*, with constructions such as “It will require sustained statesmanship [...] to heal the red wounds opened by the battles of the past few months.” (Daily Mail 2014: 20th September,.) and “Wounds have been opened that will not quickly heal” (ibid). ‘red wounds’, ‘raw wounds’ and ‘wounds’ are all metaphorical constructions that refer to the aftermath of the referendum – these wounds can refer both to the losing ‘yes’ campaign, or to citizens in the rest of the UK, who felt discarded by those who voted to leave the union. Yet, the use of ‘wounds’ instead of ‘hurt feelings’ constructs the ‘we’ as having suffered in a tangible manner, as ‘wound’ is a physicalisation of ‘resentment’ (Ferrari 2007: 614). This physicalisation of ‘RESENTMENT IS PHYSICAL PAIN’ helps to construct the United Kingdom as a person, rather than a state. This is affirmed, as Hastings states that the UK “cannot simply go back to being what it was before” (Daily Mail 2014: 20th September) because of these wounds. Furthermore, ‘wounds’ being inflicted on a person, does implicitly hint at there being a perpetrator, thereby stating that there is an ‘enemy’ to the hurt party (Ferrari 2007: 615). If the ‘we’ is British, then who could the ‘other’ – the enemy – be? In this instance, the ‘ELECTION IS WAR’ metaphorical concept creates a better understanding of the ways that ‘we’ is implicitly constructed and how the ‘other’ emerges. In much the same way as Lakoff and Johnson argue that ‘ARGUMENT IS WAR’, the metaphorical concept of ‘ELECTION IS WAR’ works because it is partially structured by the concept of war: “We can actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack [their] position and defend our own.” (1980: 4). Arguments and debates are a vital part of elections, as they involve two opposing parties that are fighting against each other to win the public’s vote. This means that one will lose, and one will be the victor. Thus, like arguments, elections are “partially structured, understood, performed

and talked about in the terms of WAR” (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 5). Understanding elections through this concept assist the thesis in identifying the implicit ‘we’, which is exemplified by Hastings in *the Daily Mail*: “Defeated Nationalists are already parading their resentments. The English will find it hard to forget the abuse heaped upon them by some Scots.” (Daily Mail). The ‘defeated nationalists’ are the SNP, which makes them the ‘enemy’ given that they were defeated. Additionally, ‘the English’ are portrayed as the victim, as they were abused, which conflicts with Hastings explicit reference to a British ‘we’ in the beginning of the article; which is later reconstructed to indicate that the wounds are primarily felt by the English, rather than the British. Based on this, the ‘ELECTION IS WAR’ metaphor is part of a larger justification strategy, which, through the construction of a victim-predator scenario, helps to not only underline but also justify, the usage an exclusive English ‘we’ rather than an inclusive ‘British’ we. As "some Scots", who can be said to be part of the British ‘we’, wounded the English; the ‘we’ is transferred to the English, to underline the divide that is found with the British ‘we’. Thus, it can be argued that the usage of metaphorical language connected to the ‘ELECTION IS WAR’ metaphor strengthens the overall construction of an English ‘we’ in the abovementioned article by the *Daily Mail* (2014: 20th September), as it constructs the opposition as the enemy, who wounded the ‘we’.

The lexical choice of ‘victory’ helps to underline the application of the ELECTION IS WAR metaphor. The difference between ‘winning’ and ‘victory’ is, perhaps, best described in *The Herald*: “The Unionists have just won the battle but victory in the broader constitutional war is entirely another matter” (Torrance 2014: 20th September). In this excerpt, winning denotes a ‘battle’, whilst victory is connected to ‘the broader constitutional war’, this juxtaposition of winning and victory suggests that the referendum was not the end, but rather a break in the debate of the continuance of the union. Replacing the lexemes constitutional debate with ‘war’, constructs a need for the continuance of identity politics, as the British ‘we’ is not yet ‘safe’. As stated by Steinert: “The war metaphor [...] is widely useful in politics of mass appeal. [It] creates pressure for unity, solidarity, mobilization of people and resources for the common good (against the foe).” (2003: 268). This pressure is useful, as it helps to maintain the perception that a British ‘we’ is under attack from the Scottish nationalist ‘other’. This is repeated in a different Scottish paper – *The Scottish Daily Mail* – where it uses a similar construction: “We have won the fight to stay within the Union. True victory now will be in a greater battle.” (2014: 19th September - b). The in the excerpt the ‘we’ refers to the fusion of the Scottish ‘we’ and the British ‘we’, as those that have ‘won the fight to stay within the union’ have essentially declared themselves as both British and Scottish. This construction is only

applied by the Scottish papers in the data collected. Indeed, the ELECTION IS WAR metaphor is applied differently in the London-based papers.

In an article from *The Sun*, the word ‘victory’ is applied similarly to how the Scottish papers used the construction: “Senior SNP sources admitted the fight was all but lost as early as 2am after just two counts. But victory was formally declared for No at 6.08am after Fife declared in favour of staying in the UK.” (Musson et al. 2014: 19th September). Using “The fight was all but lost” does not initially suggest that SNP is constructed as the ‘other’, as the fight is constructed from a SNP perspective; this does not change within the context of a ‘victory’ being declared for ‘No’. However, whilst these instances appear have been produced without constructing a ‘we’ and an ‘other’, the next sentence in the article changes this: “finally snuffing out pro-indy hopes.” (ibid). Here the lexical choices expose a preference towards the union, as the modal adverb ‘finally’ indicates that the authors backed the ‘better together’ campaign, as the adverb is positively related to ‘snuffing’. The usage of the phrase ‘snuffing out’ indicates that the Yes campaign, not only lost but that their hope was ‘finally’ killed. Lexical choices such as ‘finally’ and ‘snuffing out’ helps explicitly constructing the SNP as the ‘other’. This construction is realised through the usage of the temporal reference ‘finally’, as this adverb puts emphasis on the difference between then and now, whilst also holding a preference for the now. The usage of ‘victory’ in *The Sun* creates a feeling of finality, with the metaphorical construction of the ‘killing’ of the ‘pro-indy hope’. Whilst, the *Scottish Daily Mail* and *The Herald* talk of ‘winning the battle’ but not the victory of the ‘constitutional war’, *The Sun* indicates that ‘the war’ is over, and that ‘better together’ is victorious, as the ‘yes’ campaign has – metaphorically – been killed. This difference shows how a British ‘we’ in Scottish papers is also inclusive towards the Scottish ‘we’, thereby having to tone down the rhetoric, as such constructions could potentially alienate parts of the readership; whereas the British ‘we’ in the London-based papers excludes the pro-indy voters from their ‘we’ and instead construct them as the ‘other’ by insinuating that their cause has been killed by the British ‘we’.

In summary, it can be said that the usage of the metaphorical concept of ‘ELECTION IS WAR’, supports the theory that identity politics has an influence on the constructions of ‘we’ and ‘other’. Furthermore, the metaphors assist the identity constructions of ‘we’ and ‘other’. The results of the investigation indicate that there are discrepancies in how the Scottish and London-based papers flag and construct the national identities of ‘we’ and ‘other’ in their articles. The biggest difference was how Scottish papers constructed British ‘we’ as an umbrella identity that included the Scottish ‘we’, whilst the London-based papers were prone to focus on the exclusivity of the English ‘we’. Yet,

despite these differences in audience and regional reach, there is still a high degree of the usage of the British ‘we’ across the data. The results of the analysis suggest that the papers use different construction strategies to flag a nationality for the ‘we’ and the ‘other’, as a result of the different audiences and agendas; particularly since it was only the Scots who were given a vote in this referendum. This thesis will now turn to a more recent referendum where the whole of the UK voted, to investigate if this disparity in constructing identity found for IndyRef is a result of the different levels of involvement that was required by the UK population, or if there is more to it.

5.3 The Brexit Referendum

Brexit was by the London-based papers constructed as being a question of sovereignty, loss of identity, or unification, depending on which side of the referendum the papers supported. “The EU credit card has cost us our sovereignty. So now let's cut it up” (Lawson 2016: *The Times*), “Flee EU before it drags us down” (Trevor 2016: *The Sun*), “Risks of Remain are unacceptable to the British psyche” (Napier 2016: *The Daily Telegraph*), and “we need to embrace common sense and hope again” (Stewart, 2016: *The Guardian*). Phrases such as ‘cost us our sovereignty’, ‘drags us down’ and ‘unacceptable to the British psyche’ indicate that Brexit, in line with IndyRef, was constructed by the press as being influenced by identity politics. Furthermore, these articles utilised a ‘we’ that from the headlines was difficult to determine as being either British, English or Scottish. In contrast to IndyRef, the London-based papers were divided in connection with the campaigns that they endorsed; whilst the *Mail on Sunday*, *The Times*, and *The Guardian* all backed the Remain campaign; *the Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail*, and *The Sun* all backed the Leave camp. This divide is important to note as it could have contextual effect on the flagging used in the papers.

The Scottish papers constructed Brexit in different terms, as they focused on Brexit as a threat to the nation: “Brexit threat to UK should be heeded” (*The Herald* 2016: 10th June), “Major: A vote for Brexit will help SNP tear apart the UK” (*Scottish Daily Mail* 2016: 10th of June), “True BeLeavers have Britain at the exit door” (Crichton 2016: *Daily Record*) and “I’m utterly sick of elections, of being pushed to opposite sides, of being forced to focus on what divides rather than unites us” (*Scottish Daily Mail* 2016: 25th June). Here, Brexit is constructed as a threat to unity, in stark contrast to the London-based papers. However, this divergence could be a result of a less divided Scottish press. *The Scotsman*, *The Herald*, *Daily Record*, and *the Scottish Daily Mail on Sunday* all endorsed the Remain campaign, whilst *the Scottish Daily Mail*, in contrast to its sister paper *the Daily Mail*, decided to not openly back either side of the campaign. Thus, the Scottish papers were generally more

focused covering the disadvantages of Brexit than the London-based papers were. This could explain the difference in the identifiable themes from the headers of the articles. Furthermore, as will be examined in the discussion chapter, nine articles from the Scottish papers dealt with the chance or risk – depending on the angle – of a Brexit triggering a second IndyRef. This had the effect of creating a different narrative in the Scottish papers than in the London-based papers. In contrast to the IndyRef, this referendum was, on the surface, less based on British identity politics, and, instead, focused on the concept of a European identity. Because of this difference, there was an assumption that the data concerning Brexit would be less divisive in how the ‘we’ was constructed. However, the difference in how many papers endorsed each campaign could potentially result in this assumption being wrong.

5.3.1 Us and Them

The data sample included 16 articles from the London-based papers and 14 articles from the Scottish papers. The third category titled “Scottish editions” was – as done for the IndyRef data – grouped together with the data derived from Scottish papers. Moreover, in line with the chapter on IndyRef, the coding process was dependent on context, as there were numerous instances of the nominative pronoun ‘we’ changing multiple times within the same sentence. Yet, as can be seen in Table 9, there was a significantly lower amount references for the British, English and Scottish ‘other’ nodes in Brexit, than for IndyRef (see Table 8). Furthermore, to illustrate the difference in the campaigns that were endorsed by the London-based and the Scottish Papers, Table 9 also includes the number of times that each of the campaigns was referenced either positively or negatively.

Table 9. national identity references coded for Brexit

	Scottish Papers		London-based papers	
	<i>No. Of references</i>	<i>No. Of Articles</i>	<i>No. Of references</i>	<i>No. Of articles</i>
Us				
- British	156	13	172	16
- English	4	2	12	5
- Scottish	121	11	0	0
Other				
- British	17	7	3	2
- English	39	10	10	4
- Scottish	1	1	10	4
Leave				
- Negative	34	10	12	7
- Positive	6	5	29	9
Remain				
- Negative	2	2	33	10
- Positive	25	10	18	7

The biggest differences found in the coding for the London-based and the Scottish Papers are the amount of references, and how the ‘we’ had been flagged in terms of nationality. While the London-based papers adhere to an almost exclusive British ‘we’, the Scottish papers alternates between constructing the ‘we’ as being either British or Scottish. Notably, the London-based papers do not flag a Scottish ‘we’, and only flag an English ‘we’ 12 times. Furthermore, the construction of an ‘other’ is limited to 23 references spread across all three categories for the London-based papers, whilst that number is almost tripled for the Scottish papers. Given this difference in the construction of a nationality-based ‘we’ and ‘other’ applied in the articles, this part of the analysis will investigate how the construction differs, and if this difference is, perhaps, based on the audience.

The three London-based papers that endorsed the Leave campaign, used a variety of strategies to construct the ‘we’. In *the Daily Telegraph* journalist John Napier writes that: “National social traditions and identity will be subsumed by the concept [that] we are Europeans first and foremost. Is this what the British want? I believe not.” (2016: 22nd June). Here, the ‘we’ is constructed in part through the use of the perpetuation strategy of defence – in which political change is perceived as being a necessity (Wodak et al. 1999: 40). This is done by emphasising the perceived consequences of a continued British EU membership, which is realised through the lexical choices of ‘subsumed’ and the phrase ‘we are Europeans first and foremost’. Which ‘National social traditions and identity’ that will be ‘subsumed’ is not implicitly stated, but the proximity to the phrase ‘is this what the British want?’, indicates that the ‘we’ is constructed as British. This is based on the ‘danger’ that the European ‘other’ poses, as it is constructed in terms of ‘subsuming’ – thereby, overtaking – the national traditions and identity of the British ‘we’. This sense of ‘danger’ is already constructed in article’s header: “Risks of Remain are unacceptable to the British psyche” (Napier, 2016: 22nd June). While the London-based papers are more reluctant than the Scottish papers to explicitly construct an ‘other’ in terms of nationality, it is still present, though constructed in connection with different terms and aspects. Napier appears to construct the Remain campaign as the ‘other’ to the British ‘we’, by stating that risks of remain are ‘unacceptable to the British psyche’. The British ‘we’ is constructed in exclusive terms, as those who vote Remain are removed from the British ‘we’; yet, despite the ‘other’ being constructed in terms of political conviction, rather than nationality, it can still be argued that identity politics are at play. By linking being British and voting leave, it is indicated that a British identity hinges on voting leave, thereby removing Remain from being part of this identity.

In an article by *the Sun*, which is the reproduction of an interview with Conservative politician and leave campaigner, Boris Johnson, the differences between the British ‘we’ and the implicit ‘other’

are underlined: “If we do this, we’ll be speaking up for democracy not only in Britain but throughout Europe and it will be a fine thing that will echo through the ages.” (Wooding, 2016: *The Sun*). The strategy of singularisation is applied to this construction, as it puts emphasis on uniqueness (Wodak et al. 1999: 38), which is realised through the phrases ‘a fine thing that will echo through the ages’ and ‘throughout Europe’. Such phrases draw on a post-WWII Britain, as it was based on “the ideas that Britain was different from the continent, [...] and that it stood for democracy” (Ichijo 2003: 37), which could indicate that Johnson is reproducing this narrative to support the identity politics that he is applying to his constructions. Additionally, the fact that *The Sun* is a strong Leave supporter is important, as stated by *The Guardian*: “[the Sun] has been consistently Eurosceptic for almost 40 years.” (Greenslade 2016). This context helps emphasise the construction of ‘we’ as a hybrid identity of British and those that vote to Leave, which is exemplified in: “We’ll be speaking up for democracy not only in Britain” (Wooding, 2016: *The Sun*). Here, the two-sidedness of the ‘we’ becomes clear, as it is constructed as British, given the spatial reference that is realised through the prepositional phrase ‘for democracy [...] in Britain’, whilst also referring to the ‘we’ as being those that agree with the Leave campaign. This construction is a clear example of identity politics, as the Leave campaign is claiming ownership over the British identity, by implicitly constructing the other as being opposed to ‘democracy’ – which is a significant part of how ‘British national identity’ is defined (Ichijo 2003: 41).

This sentiment is mirrored in the same article, from *the Sun*, which refers to Johnson stating that “[The Referendum] is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to take back control of our democracy from an unelected, undemocratic, unaccountable and unreformed European Union.” (Wooding, 2016). The usage of the phrase ‘take back control’ is a reproduction of the Leave campaign called ‘Vote Leave, Take Control’ (Hobolt 2016: 1262). The phrase ‘take back control’ argues that control has been lost, which indicates that Johnson is here applying the constructive strategy of autonomisation, which puts emphasis on national independence and autonomy (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). Utilising this strategy helps to construct the British ‘we’, as being independent and sovereign, and the other as being the opposite. This is further emphasised as Johnson frames the ‘other’ as supporting the continuation of “an unelected, undemocratic, unaccountable and unreformed European Union”. However, it is important to note that these constructions are reproductions of Johnson’s constructions and it could be argued that they are therefore not related to how *the Sun*’s flagging of the ‘we’ and the ‘other’, and instead only showcase how Johnson constructs these.

Yet, excerpts from a different *the Sun* article present similarities between these constructions, despite these being produced by a journalist, rather than a politician. This article presents arguments for voting leave, where Kelvin MacKenzie writes that: “Under the EU, Britain has become a county council, not a sovereign nation. That moment will be over.” (2016: 18th of June). The constructive strategy of autonomisation is, as by Johnson, applied through the emphasis on sovereignty and how this is not possible as a member of the EU. Contrastingly, whereas Johnson constructed remain voters as the ‘other’, MacKenzie places focus on the EU as the primary ‘other’, as it has overruled the independence and autonomy of the British ‘we’. The phrase ‘that moment will be over’ establishes, not only, a discontent with the EU, but also hints at the changing of this – which suggest that the pro-leave British ‘we’ is confident that they will win. This is a prime example of using identity to mediate politics, as leave is not mentioned by name, but rather as Britain, thereby, using identity as the prime motivator. This construction of the EU as a perpetrator and the UK as its victim, is a form of justification strategy, as it insinuates that ‘harm’ has come to Britain, thereby, giving just cause for action to be taken (Wodak et al. 1999: 36). These two excerpts give insight into the difficulty of identifying the national identities that were flagged by the papers in connection with Brexit. As this paper’s focus was placed on Scottish, British and English identities and how these were flagged, coding was not conducted for a European identity. This could explain the lower amount of references for a nationality-based ‘other’ than for IndyRef. Furthermore, given the more political-based identification of an ‘other’, it became difficult to code a nationality-based ‘other’; as the ‘other’ was often removed from the ‘we’ without being constructed in terms of a different nationality, but rather in terms of ‘not part of us’. The analysis conducted above presents the difficulty of a British ‘we’, as it is, per definition, both exclusively and inclusively, is used as a state and national identity simultaneously, which creates conflicting narratives. However, this will be further investigated in the discussion chapter.

In contrast to the exclusivity of the British ‘we’ used by pro-leave London-based papers, pro-Remain papers made use of more inclusive British ‘we’, at least in the London-based papers. In the pro-remain paper *the Guardian*, an opinion piece concludes on the referendum that: “Let this just be a passing insecurity, and let us once more embrace reality, philosophy, common sense and hope for our country.” (Stewart 2016: 2nd June). ‘us’ and ‘our country’ are deictic references to the British people and the United Kingdom, respectively, based on an earlier paragraph from the same article, where it is stated that: “when [...] the UK became a member [Of the EU], it was for me a triumph [...], and here we were paving the way with the beginnings of collaboration across Europe and

learning the lessons of our own history.” (ibid). Stating that it was a personal ‘triumph’ when the UK became a member of the EU, and following this up with ‘we were’ and ‘our own history’ does give strong indication that the ‘we’ is constructed as British in this article. This lexeme ‘triumph’ is, somewhat, mirrored in the phrase ‘let us once more embrace’ (Stewart 2016: 2nd June) as it utilises the perpetuation strategy of continuation (Wodak et al. 1999: 39), by emphasising positive continuity, which is realised through the application of ‘common sense’, ‘hope’ and ‘reality’. In addition to the positive angle on remaining in the EU, the British ‘we’ is also constructed in different terms than found in the pro-leave articles. The phrase ‘passing insecurity’ constructs the Leave voters as being part of the British ‘we’, and that their political conviction is based on a feeling of ‘insecurity’, rather than nationality. Thus, the ‘other’ is, in contrast to pro-leave papers, not constructed through the use of deictic pronouns, which makes it difficult to identify the ‘other’ from a surface reading.

However, there are some hints, as the phrase ‘the passing insecurity’ refers back to the proximal demonstrative of ‘this’; which is referential to “this thirst for isolationism.” (Stewart 2016: *The Guardian*). It could, therefore, be argued that ‘this’ refers back to the Leave campaign, as it is placed in opposition to the British ‘we’. Yet, the ‘other’ is, despite being placed in opposition, still not constructed in terms of nationality, which further underlines the results from the coding (see Table 9). This is repeated by Stewart, as he states that: “Nevertheless the fact that so many fellow British citizens want to leave Europe is shocking” (2016: 2nd June). The construction of ‘fellow British citizens’ suggests that Stewart is refraining from applying identity politics, as he is not constructing the other in terms of nationality, but rather in terms strictly related to political ideology. This construction of an inclusive nationality that instead differentiates between ‘we’ and ‘other’, on the basis of political conviction, is not limited to *the Guardian* as an article from *Mail on Sunday*, makes similar use of this political construction. In an article from *Mail on Sunday*, dealing with the aftermath of the murder of the British pro-EU Labour politician Jo Cox, similarities to the political ‘other’ that were created in *the Guardian* are present. “Project Hate has brought us to the brink. Britain - the country we live in this morning - stands on the edge.” (Hodges, *Mail on Sunday*, 2016: 19th June). The ‘other’ in this excerpt is constructed as ‘Project Hate’ as they are positioned in the role of antagonist by doing something *to* ‘us’; this is coupled with the metaphor of PROJECT HATE IS PERSON, which helps to personify the ‘other’. However, the ‘other’ is still not constructed in terms of nationality, though it is separated from the constructed British ‘we’. Thus, despite the ‘other’ not being constructed in terms of nationality, it is still removed from the British ‘we’. Thus, while focusing on the political differences in the construction of ‘we’ and ‘other’, Hodges reproduces the

identity politics that were found in *the Sun*. Constructing the British ‘we’ as being pro-remain, rather than pro-leave, shows how the usage of an exclusive British ‘we’ can result in conflicting narratives. However, while the London-based papers are careful to avoid constructing the opposition in terms of nationality, and instead excludes the ‘other’ from constructed ‘we’, there are few passages, where the ‘other’ is defined as being English

In *The Daily Telegraph*, Dominicza et al. write that: “voters preparing to back a Brexit are “quitters”, “little Englanders” and do not love Britain, David Cameron suggested last night.” (2016). Here, the ‘other’ is constructed as English with the addition of the negative lexeme ‘quitters’; where the previous excerpts were hesitant to link political opinion of the opposition to nationality, Cameron constructs pro-leave as being English. This notion of ‘little’ is also used in *the Guardian*, where the prospect of a second IndyRef is hypothesised: “Pretty soon it may only be England and Wales left: we are becoming little Britain.” (Freedland 2016). However, in contrast to *the Daily Telegraph*, Freedland’s reference to ‘little Britain’ is only mentioning England and Wales, thereby implicitly stating that ‘we’ does not include Scotland and Northern Ireland. Furthermore, in contrast to ‘little Englanders’, which is constructed in terms of the ‘other’ whereas ‘little Britain’ is constructed as the ‘we’. Such lexemes indicate that *The Guardian* views its readership as being English and Welsh, rather than including the other two nations within the UK. However, this could also be based on the fact that this article was published after the result of the referendum was official. Little Britain refers to Wales and England, as these were the two nations that voted overwhelmingly to leave the EU, whilst Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to stay. *The Guardian* constructs the British ‘we’ to be exclusive towards the two nations that voted to leave, thereby implicitly referring to a Scottish and Northern Irish ‘other’. Yet, it could be argued that *the Guardian* is subversively constructing the ‘we’ and the ‘other’ as the article is focusing on the negative effects of Brexit. This can be seen from how Freedland states that “our country feels diminished.” (2016: 25th June). ‘Our country’ constructs relation to ‘little Britain’, which suggests that despite the result being different than what the paper campaigned for, *The Guardian* is not trying to create distance to the British ‘we’, but rather display, that others might; as Freedland suggests, Scotland and Ireland would leave Britain, to stay within the EU. Yet, where the London-based papers focus primarily on constructing a British ‘we’ and an ‘other’ that is based on political convictions, the Scottish papers are more prone to use nationality, flagging the in-group and the out-group.

The Scottish papers are, when compared to London-based papers, more prone to flag national identity, which is exemplified in the following excerpts: “once again we return to the polling booths

to cast votes that will [...] affect generations of Scots yet unborn” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 22nd June), “In Scotland, we voted to remain and we voted comprehensively so.” (Daily Record 2016: 25th June), and “those of us grieving the loss of the EU, and questioning our national identity.” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 25th June). *The Daily Record* explicitly constructs a Scottish ‘we’ through the proximity to the prepositional phrase ‘in Scotland’, which gives context to the deictic pronoun. Furthermore, the addition of the word ‘comprehensively’ helps to construct ‘we’ as being unifying through the emphasis on cooperation (Wodak et al. 1999:38). In contrast, *the Scottish Daily Mail* are less obvious in its construction of the ‘we’. In the editorial from the 22nd of June, the flagging ‘we’ is realised through the application of the phrase “will affect generations of Scots yet unborn” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016). However, it can be argued, that since Brexit was a nationwide referendum, the votes from the three other constituents of the UK also affected the Scots; thus, the ‘we’ could be identified as ‘British. The focus on ‘Scots’ rather than ‘Britons’, does suggest that *the Scottish Daily Mail* is trying to focus exclusively on Brexit from a Scottish perspective. As this article was published the day before the referendum, the reason for narrow scope of the effects that the referendum might have could be viewed as a construction to enhance the locality of the referendum, thereby making it seem more prudent to vote. Indeed, it could be argued that this focus on a Scottish ‘we’ is an application of identity politics, as the focus on the Scots imply that the identity is at stake. Focusing on the Scottish perspective, rather than that of the British, could also suggest a divide between the explicit Scottish ‘we’ and an implicit British ‘other’, as they are subtracted from the ‘votes that will affect generations of Scot’. This is, somewhat, in the third excerpt, also from the *Scottish Daily Mail*, where the ‘we’ is referred to as those that grieve ‘the loss of the EU’ and are ‘questioning their national identity’ (2016: 25th of June), despite the absence context in this excerpt to explicitly construct the ‘we’ as Scottish, there is context within the article, that suggest that the ‘we’ is implicitly Scottish. An example of this is “Scotland and Northern Ireland are firmly Remain.” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 25th June). Here Scotland and Northern Ireland are established as not only having voted to Remain but also *being* Remain, thereby equalising Remain to ‘Scottish’; such a comparison could be said to utilise identity politics, as the linkage between identity and political conviction is established. Furthermore, this creates context for the ‘we’ from “us grieving the loss of the EU.” (ibid), being Scottish, as Northern Irish seems improbable. This is, however, somewhat questioned by a statement found later in the article: “I am Scottish, yes, but I am also British.” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 25th June). The unification of Scottish and British underlines the difficulties of working with clear-cut and divided national identities for the UK, as these are often used in cooperation with

each other based on the nation within state structure. Yet, the addition of British, does appear to construct this as a sub-identity, rather than an identity on par with the Scottish, particularly when it is paired with the following phrase: “yet where [British] once felt like an identity printed firmly onto each strand of my DNA, it now feels more like a large, painful bruise.” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 25th June). Here, comparing the British identity to a bruise creates the metaphor BRITISH IS INJURY as it is compared to a hurtful mark that is the resulting incident. It can, therefore, be argued that this article is still primarily constructing the ‘we’ as Scottish, while ambiguous about the inclusivity towards the British identity. This ambiguity could be based on the result of the referendum which was to the Leave campaign’s advantage (see table 7); this is at odds with that of a pro-remain Scottish identity. It could, therefore, be argued the identity politics applied by the leave campaign, as showed previously, excludes a Scottish identity from a British one; this could explain the comparison of a British identity to a bruise.

Yet, there was still a considerable amount of the Scottish papers that flagged a British ‘we’ in the articles. In an article by the *Scottish Daily Mail*, the node British ‘we’ is referenced 42 times, which is the highest number in that Scottish-Brexit sample. Here, the ‘we’ constructions are quite explicit: “Tomorrow, the British people will make one of the most important decisions of our lifetimes” (Hastings 2016: 22nd June). ‘British people’ creates context for ‘our’, and helps to establish unity, by constructing a ‘we’ that is inclusive towards all of the UK. This is further underlined in a different excerpt that states “We cannot recapture a lost past. We must instead cope with the messy but - let us never forget - amazingly prosperous here and now.” (Hastings 2016: 22nd June). The verbal phrase ‘must instead cope’ indicates a united ‘we’ that, with the context from earlier excerpts, is British. Furthermore, Hastings mentions ‘a lost past’ which could be understood in terms of the historical context of the British Empire. Despite the end of British Empire, there are still remnants of it within the Britain of today – from the Commonwealth nations to the construction of a British identity. The British Empire had a significant role in forging the British project where the four nations worked towards a common goal (Ichijo 2003: 42). Indeed, the idea of this ‘lost past’ could be a reference to British national identity, “as the core of British nation state identity compromised meanings attached to [...] a particular understanding of national sovereignty.” (Marcussen et al. 1999: 626). Thus, when Hastings mentions that “we cannot recapture a lost past” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 22nd June), it could be argued that he is not only referencing the ‘glory’ of the British Empire but more presently to a Britain outside of the EU. Indeed, the focus on the “here and now” (ibid) and its messiness and prosperity, could refer to the relationship between the EU and the UK. This is likely, given that

Hastings is advocating for the British people to vote leave stating that: “I shall vote Remain tomorrow because I believe this offers the best prospect for future generations.” (Scottish Daily Mail 2016: 22nd June). It could, therefore, be argued that the British ‘we’ constructed in this article, is distancing itself from an exclusive British identity – the remnants of the imperial past – to instead embrace the now; which, according to Hastings, could mean a new definition of the British ‘we’ that is more inclusive.

This construction of the British ‘we’ is repeated in the *Daily Record*: “Two weeks from now we wake up to a changed country, either having renewed our bonds to a common European future or casting ourselves off for a lonely journey on the world's oceans.” (Crichton 2016: 10th June). ‘We’ is here constructed as British, which is realised through the lexeme ‘changed country’ which does lean more towards a British ‘we’ than a Scottish. Furthermore, Crichton is careful to include most of England and Scotland in the ‘we’, as the article proceeds “Perhaps viewed from politics exhausted Scotland or London [...] the sucked-in whistle of Labour MPs coming back to Westminster from English constituencies.” (ibid). This diverse description suggest the construction of an inclusive British ‘we’, rather than a Scottish – this adds context to the ‘we’ established in the first sentence; thereby, underlining that it is a British ‘we’ that might be “casting ourselves off for a lonely journey on the world's oceans” (Crichton 2016: 10th June). The phrase ‘on the world’s oceans’ could refer to the British Empire, back when Britain ruled ‘the waves’. However, the lexemes of ‘lonely journey’ could also imply, that where the British Empire ruled the waves, this journey will be different as Britain would lose its connection to the continent with a leave vote; thereby, making the UK an island nation both geographically, and politically. As found by Marcussen et al. in their study on national identity and Europe, the British political discourse has continued to identify Europe “with the Continent and perceived [it] as the, albeit friendly, ‘other’ in contrast to Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism” (1999: 625). With this in mind, it could be argued, that whilst Crichton put emphasis on constructing a British ‘we’, regardless of the result of the referendum, there is a different outlook, depending on the result. For a potential leave vote, the constructive strategy of discontinuation is applied to put emphasis on the differences between now and then (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). This is further established in the ending paragraph of the article where Crichton writes that: “I hope they turn their back on a fortress mentality and the fantasy of nostalgic Britain where only the passports were black and everything else overwhelmingly white.” (Daily Record 2016: 10th June). The mentioning of ‘fortress mentality’ and ‘nostalgic Britain’ could all mean the British Empire as they seemingly refer to a time when Britain was the major player in global political. ‘The fortress mentality’ could also refer to the ‘lonely journey’ as it suggests an isolationist approach to international relations.

Furthermore, the ‘we’ has been replaced with an English ‘other’: “For the English, this is getting uncomfortably close to a question of identity.” (ibid). This indicates that the nostalgia towards the British Empire and the Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism is constructed specifically in terms of English rather than British. This could indicate, the British ‘we’ is constructed in inclusive terms, whilst the English ‘other’ is exclusive. However, there is a certain level of discrepancy in this divide, as ‘London’, ‘Westminster’ and ‘English constituencies’ are used as spatial references that help to realise the construction of the British ‘we’. It can, therefore, be argued that the removal of English from ‘we’, is a consequence of their perceived political opinion being in conflict with constructed British we’.

The coding process showed that the Scottish papers were more prone to use nationality as a marker (see Table 9) when construction an ‘other’ compared to the London-based papers. The English are primarily constructed as the ‘other’ which is exemplified in *the Daily Record*: “for the English this is getting uncomfortably close to a question of identity [...] I hope they will look at themselves in the mirror and see they are a tolerant and open people” (Crichton 2016: 10th June). The words ‘tolerant’ and ‘open’ are used as synonyms for remain, thereby indicating that those who voted leave are the opposite, i.e. intolerant and closed; which divides the opposing opinions of the referendum into simple terms: remain is good, and leave is bad. This binary construction of the English ‘other’ as an enemy to the Scottish ‘we’ is also present in an article from *The Herald*, where the English ‘other’ is likened to a monster: “The bogeymen were not only the affluent denizens of the home counties. Most of England north of the Severn and Trent line also voted for Brexit.” (Devine 2016: 25th June). By villainising those that voted leave by likening them to a man that hides in the night, Devine manages to separate the ‘we’ implicitly from this group by utilising the perpetuation strategy of contrasting comparisons (Wodak et al. 1999: 39), which offers a black and white portrayal of a given situation.

Furthermore, this phrase is filled with England-related terms such as ‘home counties’, which refer to the counties that surround London, and ‘denizens’ is a synonym for inhabitants; thus, these terms refer to those individuals that lived outside, yet close to, the capital. However, Devine states that the ‘bogeymen’ label, is not exclusive to the home counties as ‘most of England north of the Severn and Trent line’ (The Herald 2016: 25th June) also backed the leave campaign. this refers to the two largest rivers in England, which creates a line through the English Midlands, thereby also constructing the Northern part of England as the ‘other’. Given that Northern England is mostly perceived as Labour-land, a party that backed the Remain vote, this area was expected to vote remain, rather than leave (Hobolt 2016: 1261). Thus, despite the regular political divide between the different parts of England during a governmental election, the Brexit referendum united England, as a majority of the nation

voted to leave (see Table 7). However, utilising a binary construction as this means that the 46% of England who voted to remain are not taken into account; thereby unwillingly being constructed as villains, despite them having voted for the same as the majority of Scotland. This shows that identity politics have the downside of constructing the whole on the terms of some.

In summary, the data for Brexit had less of a tendency to construct an ‘other’ in terms of nationality, but rather through political ideologies; often, the ‘other’ was excluded from the constructed ‘we’ identity, without presenting the alternative nationality. However, despite this, there were still examples of Scottish, English, or British being constructed as ‘other’. Indeed, the Scottish papers had a higher frequency of doing this, particularly when it came to an English ‘other’. Much in line with the Scottish papers analysed for IndyRef, the English ‘other’ was constructed in exclusive terms, whilst either the Scottish or British ‘we’ was defined in much broader terms. The London-based papers were more prone to construct the ‘other’ in terms of political conviction – however, the ‘we’ was often constructed through identity politics, with either Leave or Remain using the British identity to underline the correctness of their politics. Furthermore, there appears to be a link between how the Scottish and the London-based pro-remain papers construct an English ‘other’, whereas a Scottish ‘other’ is mostly found in connection with talks of a second IndyRef in both pro-remain and pro-leave papers.

5.3.2. IndyRef: take two?

There is one aspect of Brexit, that is repeatedly mentioned by both the London-based and the Scottish papers, and that is the possibility of a second IndyRef as a consequence of Brexit. 12 of the 14 Brexit articles from Scottish papers either mentions the possibility of a second IndyRef or has it as the main subject of the article. In contrast to how the articles from the sample for IndyRef were all endorsing the campaign to stay in the UK, there is some disparity between the opinions of 2014 and those dealing with the post-Brexit UK in 2016.

The Herald suggests that “A situation where Scotland is forced to leave the EU in defiance of the expressed will of its people has regularly been cited as a potential trigger for another independence vote.” (2016: 10th June). To understand why a leave vote could be perceived as a ‘trigger’ for a second IndyRef, it is important to understand how the SNP – the majority party in Scottish parliament – has presented the EU. Where the SNP had once been against the idea of the UK joining the EC, the party later chose to change its direction on the EU in the late 1980s, as the union appeared to be a “real alternative [to the UK], a safety-net which could guarantee that a greater measure of autonomy would not result in socio-economic misery” (Thomsen 2010: 86). Using metaphors is a way to explain and

understand one thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 5); thus, when the metaphor EU IS SAFETY-NET is used, EU becomes something more than a parliament in Brussels. This European safety-net was used by 'No' campaigners during IndyRef, to strengthen their argumentation for Scotland to stay in the union – e.g. the UK government had already in 2013 stated that Scotland "would not inherit any of the UK's current memberships or agreements" (Adam 2014: 58). Thus, leaving the union would result in the loss of the safety net, leaving Scotland in potential danger with no immediate prospect of help. Thus, by stating that Scotland would lose EU privileges, the 'No' campaigners were trying to appeal to the pro-European Scots, to make them vote to stay in the UK. However, the prospect of a majority leave vote would make this argument void, as the Scots would lose the membership – the safety-net – despite not having voted for it.

Indeed, Cameron was quoted in *the Scottish Daily Mail*, as having used this argument: "the SNP has already said it will use a Brexit vote to kick-start its independence plans. So, just at the point when doubts over Scotland's constitutional future were being erased, a Leave vote tomorrow would take Scotland back to square one." (2016: 22nd June). Thus, a leave vote would result in a repeat of the constitutional uncertainties from 2014, according to Cameron. Furthermore, Cameron's statement suggests that a Scottish national identity is somewhat intertwined with a European identity, as he argues that a Scottish identity is seemingly more reliant on the EU rather than the UK, based on the statement 'a Leave vote tomorrow would take Scotland back to square one'. Cameron is talking about a Scottish 'other' – by excluding himself and emphasising Scotland rather than Britain – that is in opposition to an undefined 'we'. Yet, as the phrase 'constitutional future' refers to Scottish independence from the union, the 'we' could be constructed as being British. Particularly, since Cameron uses the constructive strategy of singularisation, as the emphasis uniqueness, and how this could be lost in the event of a leave vote, if Scotland decided to leave the UK; the subtlety does, however, make it unclear if this strategy is applied.

A potential second IndyRef appears to have influenced the strategies utilised to construct a Scottish 'we'. In *the Herald*, Scotland is "forced to leave the EU in defiance" (2016: 10th June), which constructs the Scottish 'we' as losing autonomy, rather than gaining it. Furthermore, the 'we' is inclusive, at least towards the EU, as it does not perceive the EU as a threat to sovereignty, but rather as a part of it. Indeed, the EU appears to be integrated with the concept of a Scottish 'we', which is implied in article by *the Daily Record*: "Scotland is facing up to the reality that [the outcome of the EU referendum] means another look at our relationship with the rest of the UK. This morning, Scotland and England have never felt politically further apart." (2016: 25th June). Here the

constructive strategy of dissimulation is used to emphasise the difference between the nations of Scotland and England which is realised through the phrase ‘never felt further apart’ as a result of the referendum. Thus, the European question appears to have a crucial role in the continuation of a British union, which is underlined later on in the same article, where it is argued that “After all, Cameron previously insisted that only by staying part of Britain could Scotland guarantee its place in the EU. It’s an argument that has come back to bite unionists on the behind.” (The Daily Record 2016: 25th June). Thus, the first IndyRef might have resulted in an ‘intact’ union; but this result is suggested to have occurred on the basis of Scotland also staying within the EU. Yet, where the Scottish ‘we’ was constructed as relying heavily on also being British in connection with IndyRef, and as being inclusive towards a sub-identity of European in connection with Brexit; the British ‘we’ constructed by pro-leavers appeared to be defined through different terms.

Where the Scottish papers construct the result of the Brexit vote in terms of lost autonomy, different construction strategies are utilised by pro-leavers. As described in an article by *the Guardian*, there were different reactions to the referendum results: “we learned of our decision. For some, that has meant jubilation. Witness Nigel Farage’s call for 23 June to become a public holiday: independence day.” (Freedland 2016: 25th June). When talking about independence days, references are often made to the 4th of July in the US; such days mark the anniversary of the day when a state gained independence from the rule of either a monarchy, empire or a dictator. Thus, Farage, then leader of UKIP, implies that leaving the EU is synonymous to the overthrowing of a dictator, as the EU is constructed as undermining the British government. While the EU was perceived as a safety net for Scotland, it might be viewed as the fishing net that had trapped the UK, at least by the pro-leave campaigners; this notion is, similarly, found in an article from *the Sun*: “Under the EU, Britain has become a county council, not a sovereign nation. That moment will be over.” (MacKenzie 2016: 18th June). The notion of a less than sovereign Britain is here constructed in vein with Farage’s call for an independence day, with the addition of constructing the UK in provincial terms towards the EU, instead of a sovereign member of a larger union. Interestingly, MacKenzie uses the justification strategy of scapegoating (Wodak et al 1999: 36), as the EU is blamed for Britain’s loss of independence, despite the UK joining the union freely in 1973, and the public voting for staying in 1975. This indicates that in relation to the pro-leave campaigns, the British ‘we’ is produced and constructed in opposition to the EU, which is viewed as a suppressor of British sovereignty, rather than an international partner. In the same article by *the Sun*, there is a new perspective regarding the possibility of a second IndyRef.

As a perceived incentive for voting leave, the article mentions that "Scotland will demand another referendum to leave the United Kingdom so it can stay in the EU - and everybody south of the border will say: "Don't bother voting, just go." (MacKenzie 2016: 18th June). Corresponding with constructions already analysed above, *the Sun* also sees Scotland as being intertwined with the EU, to such an extent that Scotland is told to 'just go'; indeed, such a scenario is presented as a positive reason for voting leave in Brexit. This suggests that the English 'we' is constructed as being exclusive towards Scotland in this article; an interesting development, as this constructs Scotland as an obstacle in reaching British sovereignty. However, the EU is not the only reason for the positivity towards the UK without Scotland: "We can then stop sending English taxpayers' money to Jockistan⁶, as they receive £1,600 a year more per head than we do." (MacKenzie 2016: 18th June). This excerpt produces a new 'us' and 'them' construct of a Scottish 'other' in opposition to an English 'we'. Indeed, by mentioning that Scotland receives English taxpayers' money – despite the nations being bound together through a unitary parliament – MacKenzie places focus on the money being English, rather than British. This indicates, that he, in this instance, perceives the Scottish 'other' taking from the English 'we' rather than being a part of the larger cooperating British 'we'. Similarly, to the EU, Scotland is perceived as being an obstruction to English independence in parliamentary matters. However, this focus on an English 'we' rather than a British 'we' is atypical for the data, as it is only constructed in one other London-based article. Yet, despite this explicit construction being an outlier, there are traces of it present in other papers.

In *The Guardian*, this notion of a closed-off UK is used to highlight the possible reasons for a second IndyRef: "Scotland voted to remain in the EU and is about to be dragged out against its will. It makes perfect sense for the Scots to break free of Farage's UK to stay in the EU." (Freedland 2016: 25th June). Here, 'Farage's UK' refers back to 'independence day', which was stated earlier in the same article, which somewhat mirrors MacKenzie's notion of Britain becoming a 'sovereign nation' again (*the Sun* 2016: 18th June). However, where MacKenzie constructed this as a positive development, it appears that Freedland sees it as a diminution of Scotland's autonomy, as they could be said to become a 'county council'; much in the same way as MacKenzie construct the UK in connection with the EU (2016: 18th June). This comparison is based on the notion that Scotland, with Brexit, has been left without much of a say, as they are being 'dragged out against their will' (Freedland 2016: 25th June). Freedland constructs the Scottish 'other' in terms of having lost agency,

⁶ Jockistan is a form of crude slang for Scotland – often used in relation to the Scottish welfare system.

rather than gaining it – in stark contrast to the independence gained by those agreeing with Farage’s construction of an independent UK. Indeed, Freedland subverts British independence as Scotland’s subjugation, by stating that Scotland will have to ‘break free’; this suggests that where the EU was a safety-net to Scotland, the UK is a constraint; something that Scotland has to ‘break free’ from to gain a level of autonomy, which is somewhat a mirror on how Farage presents the EU.

5.4 Summary

In summary, it can be said that the analysis of IndyRef and Brexit found a disparity between how the Scottish and the London-based papers constructed national identity in terms of ‘us’ and ‘them’. Whilst the Scottish papers were more prone to apply nationality to the identity of the ‘we’, the London-based papers varied between the identity that they constructed; in contrast a majority of the ‘we’ construction be Scottish and ‘other’ English, in the Scottish papers. The London-based papers almost had a 1:1 ratio between between the constructions of an English, and a British ‘we’ for IndyRef, whilst there was an overweight of a British ‘we’ for Brexit, with a minimum amount of an English ‘we’. Furthermore, the Scottish papers were more evenly divided between constructing an English and a British ‘other’, for both IndyRef and Brexit, whereas the London-based papers almost exclusively had a Scottish ‘other’ in connection with IndyRef and had a minimum amount of any nationality being constructed as ‘other’ for Brexit. These results indicate that the identity politics have a distinct effect on how identity has been constructed in the printed press, as both cases have distinct differences in how nationality is constructed. Furthermore, the case of Brexit shows that the concept of a British national identity is difficult to pin down, as it appears to have conflicting uses and constructions.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, the findings from the analysis will be discussed with a focus on the different narratives that are established by the press, and how these can be perceived as being in conflict with each other. Furthermore, these findings will be discussed in relation to a British identity, and how this could either enhance or muddle the overall definition of such an identity. Before beginning the discussion, it is imperative to outline what is meant by a narrative. As defined by Baker and Ellece, narratives are "descriptions of circumstances in which [...] events occur" (2011: 73) – given that descriptions

can vary depending on the narrator, conflict between narratives can take place – thereby challenging each other.

6. 1 The difference between unions.

When can a union be said to undermine national independence, and when does it strengthen, not only democracy but also the agency of the individual nations within? Such a question could be posed in connection with IndyRef and Brexit, as the two referendums are alike – at least on the surface. Both deal with a nation that considers leaving a larger union – a union that has been entered through democratic means rather than force – and both nations have political agency and representation within the union. However, how the press presented IndyRef and Brexit differed, and the narratives that were constructed for each of the referendums varied. When Nigel Farage called for the 23rd of June to become the British independence day (Freedland 2016: 25th June), he did so on the basis of the idea that a united British ‘we’ voted to leave the EU – despite this being a simplification, rather than the whole truth. To Farage, the British ‘we’ was free from the ‘suppression’ of the EU, and could now embrace its regained independence. This narrative was repeated by Leave campaigner Boris Johnson who argued that “[Brexit] is about whether we believe in British democracy or are content to see it steadily eroded and lost to unaccountable, unelected people overseas.” (Wooding 2016: 19th June). Again, the EU is constructed as the ‘other’ that is diminishing the British democracy, by ruling over the UK from the outside. Interestingly, this narrative of gaining back independence is in stark conflict with how the narrative of IndyRef was constructed. “We - the English, Scots, Welsh and Northern Irish alike - have avoided a humiliation in the eyes of the world, which has watched in bewilderment as a nationalist campaign rooted in hatred and economic fantasies sought to lie and bludgeon a path towards independence.” (Hastings 2014: 20th September). Here, the potential of an independent Scotland is said to be a humiliation for Britain, rather than gaining back control for Scotland – indeed, the campaign is presented as being rooted in hatred and fantasies. This begs the questions: Why is Scottish independence so different than British?

Perhaps, this has to be viewed from the perspective of IndyRef being a referendum that was exclusive to the Scottish voters. As shown in an article by *the Daily Telegraph*, where letters to the editor were printed, the reason for the difference could be found in the fact that the fate of the British Union was decided by a fraction of its overall population: "just over 3.6 million citizens have taken part in a "democratic process" which could have resulted in lasting damage to the whole country. They gave a welcome but hardly ringing, endorsement of the status quo. Would anyone in

Westminster care to hear the views of the other 58-millions of us?” (2014: 20th September). Indeed, it appears here that the British ‘we’ is based on the notion that Scottish independence is a British matter, rather than only Scottish. This sentiment is repeated later in the same article, where a reader of *the Daily Telegraph* writes: “How kind of the Scots to decide they would like to stay in the UK. Perhaps the English could now have a referendum on our own independence.” (ibid). Indeed, it appears that there is a high level of animosity towards Scotland having a say over its own independence – it appears that Scotland’s independence came at a cost to an overall British sovereignty. This could be, perhaps, because the narrative of the British ‘we’ applied here, is based on parliamentary sovereignty, rather than parliamentary democracy, which is argued by Parekh to be consistent with the devolution of powers (2000: 12). This idea of England, in particular, having a decreased influence over their own government, was also addressed by David Cameron in *the Daily Telegraph* after the IndyRef, where he states: “we have heard the voice of Scotland and now the millions of voices of England must also be heard.” (Dominiczak et al. 2014: 20th September). This statement is related to the West Lothian question, which deals with the fact that Scottish MPs are able to vote on English domestic legislation, whilst English MPs are not offered the same opportunity (Bogdanor 1999: 189). Thus, it could be argued that England has lost a certain amount of sovereignty, as MPs, unelected by the English, have a say in affairs that does not affect themselves. This could explain why the pro-leavers view the EU as an obstacle for the continuance of British sovereignty, in the same way, that Scotland's bid for independence was seen as going against the idea of British sovereignty.

Indeed, by having Scotland decide ‘the fate’ of the union, without any influence from the rest of the UK, it could be argued that the continuance of the British union is being decided by ‘outside forces’. However, it is important to note, that IndyRef could be argued to place the rest of Britain in the same position, as the EU has been placed for Brexit – in a powerless position. Both positions are held by a union. But where the British union was placed primarily in a role of ‘we’ in a majority of the papers, the EU was continuously constructed as the ‘other’ to the British ‘we’. Thus, one type of independence is good, whilst the other is bad, based on which Union the ‘we’ is constructed for. IndyRef saw Scotland take the role of an ‘other’ to the British ‘we’, which could explain the overall focus on the referendum could have an effect on ‘the whole’ country. As written in a different *the Daily Telegraph* article “the Union could be broken by a simple majority of those who voted, meaning that the fate of the entire country was at the hands of fewer than two million people.” (2014: 18th September). Thus, it appears that the ‘we’ dictates whether independence is constructed in positive

or negative terms; indeed, it influences how a referendum is perceived, as the whole concept of IndyRef had a higher chance of being constructed negatively, if the ‘we’ was situated outside of those in influence – i.e. the Scots who could vote. This narrative is also present in the pro-leave papers, as they appear to utilise a narrative that constructs the EU as having power over the UK, with the British ‘we’ being subjugated as a secondary authority within its own nation.

6.2 the Case of Scotland

Where the London-based papers and the pro-leave papers appear to have conflicting narratives towards unions and how these affect sovereignty, the Scottish papers construct conflicting narratives on the consequences of leaving the UK. In some of the articles from the IndyRef sample, a subtle mentioning of Scotland losing its membership in the EU if it left the British union is found. In a plea for unity from the *Daily Mail* published in *The Scottish Daily Mail*, it is suggested that, as a consequence of a Yes vote, "everything from the currency to EU membership, border controls and defence [will be] thrown into the air" (2014: 17th September). Thus, the EU is viewed as being a positive for the continuance of the British union, something that is also mirrored by David Cameron: "The people of Scotland need to know that if you leave the United Kingdom, [...] you leave the EU and you leave NATO" (Blackley 2014: 14th September). Yet, why is the continuance of the EU membership used as an argument to gain support for the ‘better together’ campaign? This has to be found in the significant level of support for the EU by Scotland, as the nation took steps after devolution in 1997, by creating committees, establishing a Scottish office in Brussels, and creating comprehensive reports on the ‘Scotland in the EU’ (Minto et al 2016: 184). Thus, the ‘better together’ campaign used the uncertainty of an independent Scotland gaining a membership in the EU, as an argument for staying in the British union. An argument that is also applied in the London-based papers, where a comment in *Mail on Sunday* argues that “given they won’t be in the EU from the start” (Jonnes 2014: 31st August), which repeats the narrative that an independent Scotland will be without the support of the EU. However, this narrative becomes problematic after Brexit.

In an article by *the Herald* it is suggested that despite IndyRef resulting in a No vote because of the overall economic argument, “the economic argument for Scotland remaining in the EU is strong, and those voters who were unconvinced by the economic arguments of the SNP and other independence supporters last year might be equally readily persuaded that independence in the EU would now be in the nation's best interests.” (2014: 10th June). Again, the linkage between the EU and Scotland is utilised as a factor that could decide if Scotland is part of the UK or not. However,

where the UK was presented as being necessary for a continued membership in the EU during IndyRef, it appears to be the opposite regarding Brexit. However, it is not clear that the Scots' desire to remain in the EU would be enough for the SNP to gain a majority for the independence bid (Minto et al 2016: 184). Yet, despite this uncertainty, there is a narrative portrayed in a variety of remain-papers – both Scottish and London-based – that Scotland will leave the UK, if the UK decides to leave the EU: “As if to deepen the despair, we know now that the United Kingdom is set to unravel [...] Scotland voted to remain in the EU and is about to be dragged out against its will.” (Freedland 2016: 25th June). This notion argued in *the Guardian* is mirrored by *the Daily Record* where it is implied that “the prospect of Scots returning a Yes vote in a second referendum is [...] alive. After all, Cameron previously insisted that only by staying part of Britain could Scotland guarantee its place in the EU.” (2016: 25th June). Indeed, where *the Guardian* highlights the conflict between how Scotland and the rest of the union voted, *the Daily Record* deals with the conflict between what was promised in 2014 and the reality of a post-Brexit UK. Thus, Brexit becomes a conflict between the disparity between national opinions and in the narratives presented before and after Brexit. This difference is, perhaps, highlighted by the *Herald* where it stated in an editorial that “while this newspaper advocated staying within a reformed UK at the independence referendum, we, like many others, would have to reconsider our position in the event of a vote to pull-out of Europe.” (2016: 10th June). This continued narrative of the EU as significant aspect of the continuance the British Union with Scotland, could be said to imply a much deeper conflict within the UK – that of the British identity.

6.3 A question of identity

As the analysis in this thesis has shown, the concept of a British national identity that covers the whole country is difficult to define, particularly based on the four nations within the country. This difficulty in agreeing upon a universal definition can be found in the data, as the papers present conflicting narratives describing Britishness. Bell describes national identities as being created with the purpose of glorifying the nations, whilst also constructing emotional based resonance within the group (2003:67). However, there appears to be a disparity between what it perceived as being glorifying and what others see as damaging. This is exemplified in *the Daily Telegraph*: “Remain says that we are stronger as a country by pooling sovereignty with our European cousins. Leave says sovereignty pooled is actually self-government lost.” (The Daily Telegraph 2016: 11th June). Sovereignty appears to play a significant role in how the British identity is shaped by both political

campaigns. A reason for this can be found in how British politics have historically been based on the Anglo-Saxon notions of political order, in which emphasis was placed on parliamentary democracy and external sovereignty (Marcussen et al. 1999: 628). Here, it is important to note that the usage of the term 'external sovereignty' refers to sovereignty outside of a state's border, rather than internally. This idea of external sovereignty being incorporated into that of internal sovereignty is promoted by Boris Johnson in *the Sun* where he states: "The fundamental question is: do we trust ourselves to govern ourselves or do we want to be increasingly run by people we don't elect?" (Wooding 2016: 19th June). To understand why external and internal sovereignty are both linked with the Parliament, it is important to note that the monarchy symbolised independence from the European continent – external sovereignty – whilst the parliament was the internal sovereign entity that was opposed to the King, which in modern day England means that both rest with the Parliament. Thus, the interdependence on the EU becomes a loss of external sovereignty, which in turn results in loss of internal (Marcussen et al. 1999: 626). Given the linkage between sovereignty and the British identity, Johnson's questions are fundamentally based on a sense of Britishness: are we British or are we European? Yet, where Johnson is focusing on the loss of Britishness by staying in the EU, the Remainers have a different interpretation of the British identity and the EU's effect on it. In an article for *the Daily Record*, Crichton uses a similar construction of the two choices for the Brexit referendum: "Two weeks from now we wake up to a changed country, either having renewed our bonds to a common European future or casting ourselves off for a lonely journey on the world's oceans." (2016: 10th June). Here, a common European future is cast in a positive light, whereas a Leave vote is presented as a lonely journey, rather than the gaining of sovereignty. This disparity between the two narratives shows that sovereignty is defined in different terms and that this in turn has an effect on the construction of a national identity.

This conflict in the narrative is, though only from a Remain perspective, best summed up in an excerpt from *the Herald*: Brexit sees a complex organisation as a conspiracy against Britain; independence, not interdependence; sharing sovereignty as interference; narrow nationalism over internationalism; competition over cooperation; isolationism over solidarity; and cynicism over idealism. (McCann 2016: 17th June). Here, it is argued that loss of external sovereignty happens as a consequence of interdependence between the EU member states – thus, the identity of Britain is in danger, as outside forces are, to some extent, in charge of parliamentary decisions within the nation. However, whilst the leave campaign's narrative sees the EU as an outside force, there is a conflicting narrative established by the Scottish papers: "Scotland faces an even more challenging "democratic

deficit" than that of the Thatcher years. Our future international relations with Europe have been dictated by the will and priorities of another nation." (Devine, *The Herald* 2016: 25th June). It could here be argued that Scotland has lost external sovereignty, at the cost of internal sovereignty – thereby, being in direct contrast to how the Leave campaign has constructed their narrative of sovereignty. Does this then mean that Scotland, given its majority vote for remaining in the EU, is an 'other' to the rest of Britain, as a majority of Britain voted 'leave'? Indeed, could it be argued that the UK has become to Scotland, what the EU was constructed by some as being to the UK – a supranational power that results in the loss of external sovereignty? And if so, what does that say overall about the British national identity?

After the result of the Brexit vote became public, Nicola Sturgeon, the Scottish First Minister, mentioned the possibility of a second IndyRef, which was commented on in *The Scotsman*: "She seemed to be saying that unless there was a mechanism by which the democratic vote of the people of Scotland could result in Scotland having some relationship with the EU, even if England does not, then it follows we get into indyref 2 territory." (Garavelli 2016: 25th June). This creates a correlation between the continuance of a membership in the British Union and loss of external sovereignty, thereby giving new life to the argument of independence, as it follows the argumentation used by the Leavers for Brexit. Additionally, based on the conflicting views on EU between the Scottish and the English and Welsh populations, it could be argued that there is a stronger incentive towards a second IndyRef. The conflict between Scottish and primarily English political ideologies exhibits a fundamental problem with using the concept of a British national identity as a catch-all identity for the country.

The British national identity utilised by the Leave campaign correlates with how the political right in the UK has generally constructed said identity – i.e. the Tories – which hinges on both individuality and parliamentary sovereignty (Parakh 2000: 11). This notion, however, rings false, as Scotland – part of the British nation – is forced to leave the EU, based on a majority of the population within their own union. This loss of external sovereignty for Scotland is, thusly, comparable to the loss of sovereignty that the right has blamed on the EU. This suggests a double standard, where the loss of external sovereignty within a union is perceived as hurting the nation, though only when it is done to the nation rather than done by the nation. Thus, viewing the EU as interference, whilst the UK becomes an example of shared sovereignty.

The incoherence suggests that the UK is having difficulties with defining the British national identity in terms that are inclusive towards a globalised international community. This is, perhaps,

best described by *the Times*: “Brexit is born of a glaring disconnect between council estates and leafy London terraces; between farmers and fishermen and bankers and estate agents; between solid country folk and bearded hipsters; between Scottish nationalists who feel the EU speaks for them and English nationalists who don't.” (2016: 25th June). Here, this tension between English and Scottish views can be said to highlight that the main conflict for the British identity is found in this difference. Indeed, the British identity could be said to be facing problems, because of its main attachment to the somewhat elusive English identity. Where the other three nations within the UK have strong national identities, with the addition of the British state identity, England is somewhat placed in an ambiguous position where its population perceives themselves as being British both on a national and a state level. As stated by David Cameron: “Scratch an Englishman and you don’t have to go very deep until you find an absolute passionate Briton and someone who believes in the UK.” (Owen & Blackley, Mail on Sunday 2014: 14th September), where Cameron might have stated this to indicate that the English are not against the Union, it could also be theorised that he in this instance displays the inconsistencies with the British identity.

The English identity has often been presented as a weak and undefined national identity, given its strong ties to the British identity – indeed, as the English are yet to have their own parliament, in contrast to the three other nations, it does blur the line between a British state and an English nation. This suggests that to the English population, the British identity is stronger, because it is viewed less as an extra layer of government, and rather as *the* government. This contrast with how the Scottish are more prone to identify themselves as a Scottish first, and British second; this could explain the more Europhile tendencies in Scotland versus England.

In essence, it can be argued that the British identity is, as with the European identity, supranational, given that the UK oversees a multinational union. Yet, where the EU sits ‘on top’ of all the member states' governments, the UK is confusingly interwoven into the concepts of both state and nation, based on the lack of an independent English government, in contrast to the devolution of power to the three other nations within the union. This is where the conflict between the definitions of the British identity is founded. Where the Scots might see a union of quasi-sovereign nations, the English are more prone to mix the notions of state and nation together into a British-English identity hybrid. Thus, the EU becomes an ‘other’ because it appears to be in stark contest with the British identity and state for the English, whilst the Scots view the EU as being a union in which sovereignty is shared rather than lost – much as they did during IndyRef when they voted to stay in the UK. The Scots seemingly have no problem in identifying themselves through the multiple identities of Scottish,

British, and English, whereas the English see the addition of a European identity as a loss of Britishness. Does this mean that a British identity is in upheaval? Probably not. Rather, it shows that the British identity is problematic given the multifaceted history of its nations and the fact that the identity in itself has different ties to each of the four nations. Indeed, what Brexit and IndyRef have shown, is that the British national identity is going through a period of negotiation wherein the nations of the UK are trying to reach a conclusion. This might result in a more inclusive identity through the devolution of power to England, or it could result in a new IndyRef – all of this is as of yet, unknown. What is known is that the disparities between the narratives suggest that change is coming.

7. Conclusion

The main purpose of this thesis was to investigate how Scottish and British identity politics have influenced the construction of the concept of "British national identity" in the printed press, by analysing data gathered from IndyRef and Brexit. This was done through the application of national identity theory and CDA with the methods of coding and DHA. The analysis of the IndyRef data found that the Scottish papers were more prone to construct the identity of the paper and its readers as being Scottish, rather than British – however, when a British ‘we’ construction was produced, it was a fusion of both British and Scottish, thereby being inclusive. This inclusivity was in line with how the London-based papers constructed a British ‘we’ – however, the London-based papers produced constructions of a Scottish ‘other’, which contrasted with how the Scottish papers took care to include the Scottish identity within a British ‘we’. Furthermore, the London-based papers constructed an English ‘we’ that excluded the rest of the UK, as it primarily referred to the English gaining a parliament autonomous from Westminster. Furthermore, the application of war metaphors and imagery assisted the overall construction of ‘we’ and ‘other’. The IndyRef data also showed that the location of the vote was important, as the Scottish papers were more prone to using a Scottish ‘we’ to mobilise voters, whilst the London-based papers constructed a Scottish ‘other’ as a primary percentage of their readers were not given a vote.

The results from the Brexit data differed, as there was less of a tendency toward construction an ‘other’ through nationality, but rather in connection with a political conviction. Yet, by not constructing a nationality for the ‘other’, there was a tendency to apply identity in form of identity politics, where a political conviction was the foundation for being included under a certain national identity; thereby making the ‘we’ exclusive, rather than inclusive to those that lived in the nation.

Where the London-based papers had a low amount of 'other' being constructed in terms of nationality, the Scottish papers had a higher frequency of producing constructions of an 'other' in terms of nationality. Furthermore, the Scottish papers constructed a British or a Scottish 'we' in inclusive terms, whereas the London-based papers often applied identity politics, to create an exclusive 'we' as either British or English. Additionally, an English 'other' was often constructed by pro-remain papers, which suggest that the Leave campaign was constructed in terms of being exclusively English rather than British. A Scottish 'other' was, both by the Scottish and the London-based papers, most frequently constructed in relation to the prospect of a Second IndyRef.

The discussion looked closer at the conflicting narratives that appeared as an effect of the usage of the concept of a "British national identity". This uncovered the fact that the concept of this identity appears to be based on the fusion of external and internal sovereignty. This might explain the distrust towards the EU, as it is perceived as being a threat to the external sovereignty of the UK – however, as was suggested, the UK can be said to be in the same position in connection with Scotland, as it is the union that is diminishing external sovereignty of a Scotland that voted to stay in the EU. Indeed, the Brexit question has seemingly uncovered some of the inconsistencies in the utilisation of the British identity. As the UK was vital for the Scottish to stay in the EU during IndyRef, only to become the reason for Scotland losing its membership after Brexit. This also indicates that the identity politics used in connection with the British identity assist in creating these different and conflicting definitions of the British identity, particularly when they are reproduced in the press.

In conclusion, it can be argued that given the small data sample, there is a need to conduct further research to be able to establish a clearer correlation between the identity politics and the usage and construction of a British national identity in the printed press. However, this thesis has tried to uncover how identity politics has affected these constructions; it can be argued that it has displayed the overall divide in definitions, and further illustrated the divide in how a British national identity is understood and used. This is particularly clear in results from the Brexit sample. Perhaps, the question is not so much 'who are we?', but rather 'who are we not?'. To the Scottish, that question was answered in 2014 with a resounding 'we are not only Scottish but also British', and again in 2016 with 'not only British but also European', whilst the English majority answered it with a clear 'not European'. This disparity might result in a British identity crisis – or, perhaps, results in a nation's reflection on how the times have changed, while their identity has stayed static. Either way, if there is one thing that this thesis has showed, it is the fact that the British identity is a muddled concept

that, on most days, is not clearly defined, but rather seen as an umbrella identity that holds together a divided set of nations to stave off the uncomfortable question of 'who are we really?'

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