'Identity' and 'belonging' in the personal lives of high-status professionals living in the UK: a shift from conflicted 'self' and 'other' relations and a move towards the centrality of human to non-human relations

By

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Abstract

This study explores the ways in which a group of high-status professionals in the UK who happen to be academics, and who come from other 'national backgrounds' construct their 'identities' and 'belonging' in their personal everyday lives, *outside* of the context of academia.

It reveals the necessity to rethink the way researchers present participants, and how far we perpetuate naïve categorisation of them. It also demonstrates that 'identity' is constructed in relation to processes involved in 'self' and 'other' relations where, according to the coparticipants, perceptions of them by 'some white British' people based on 'race' and 'accent' are omnipresent. As such being 'British' is suggested to be defined by these markers. There is multiplicity in how 'belonging' is constructed through the concept of 'home'. It reflects 'place belongingness' and demonstrates 'hybridity', which by implication resists 'politics of belonging' manifested in the discriminatory perceptions based on 'race' and 'accent'. Furthermore, the data reveals that 'identity' is also constructed in relation to non-human categories.

It, therefore, contributes to the 'politics of labelling' by interrogating political concepts. It also contributes to the study of 'identity' by showing its complexity in terms of the processes which emerge in 'self' and 'other' relations, as well as by emphasising the significance of human to non-human relations. Another contribution concerns emphasising the multiplicity of 'belonging'. A further contribution is illuminating the deep prejudice in society.

I situate this study within the broad field of intercultural communication, and I use three main theories: critical cosmopolitan theory, critical posthuman theory, and a theory of 'belonging'.

Before moving to the implications of this study I would like to emphasise the fact that it could have been conducted with a different group of high-status professional people outside of academia. Nevertheless, one of the major implications is that, despite the co-participants' high status, the discrimination they encounter interrogates the assumption that their high professional status protects them from prejudice; this indicates the extent to

which prejudice is deeply rooted in society. The second implication is that there is racism in the institution the co-participants belong to.

Chapter One: Introduction to the thesis

In this chapter, I provide a general overview of the whole thesis.

1.1. The scope of the study

This study focuses on the lived experiences of a group of professionals, who possess high status, and who happen to be academics. They are well-established male and female university lecturers and have come from 'different nationalities'. They belong to different areas of specialism and have mostly been living in the UK for a significant number of years. The study investigates how they construct their 'identities' and 'belonging' in their personal everyday lives, *outside* of the context of academia- not about their experiences in the university context, but rather about their 'identities' and 'belonging' when their professional status as academics is not highlighted. Throughout, I refer to them as co-participants due to their interactive relationship with me as a researcher in co-constructing knowledge which is mainly based on what they say. This is further explained in the following chapter, in section 2.2.

This study maintains that 'identity' and 'belonging' are complex because of the ways in which they are constructed by the co-participants, regardless of where they come from and how far this is different from the UK. For this reason, I do not specify the countries that the coparticipants come from, their religion, their areas of specialism or other concealable information which might reveal their identity to maintain their anonymity only, but also because I do not see that specifying this information is crucial to the data analysis. This, in my understanding, allows us to look at the co-participants' lived experiences beyond their 'national backgrounds' and what they look like, for example.

Having said this, there is a complication regarding the expression 'high professional status' which I would like to clarify. While Giddens and Sutton (2017, p. 491) pose the question of the nature of the connection between our social class and our occupation, this interrogation of the relationship between these variables made me realise that the expression 'high professional status' might trigger in a way or in another an association with the notion of 'social class'. I would like to stress that my use of the former expression does not refer

to the latter term, and that the relationship between these terms is beyond the scope of the study.

1.2. Research Questions

The following are research questions which depict the core focus of the study.

1. In what way(s) do the co-participants construct their sense of 'identities' and 'belonging'?
2. What is the role of non-human categories in the ways in which the co-participants make sense of their 'identities'?

Data in relation to these research questions is discussed briefly below, and in detail in chapter three, four, five, six, seven and eight. This discussion is restated in chapter nine, section 9.2.

This study shows the need to reconsider how we, as researchers, present the people we work with, as well as clear-cut definitions of who they are. It also reveals the omnipresence of, what I interpret as, 'some white British' people, in the way the co-participants talk about their sense of 'identity' which is situated with 'self' and other' relations. This is in the sense that when the co-participants talk about themselves, they also draw on how they believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people, who I also refer to as 'the other'. This relationship between both the co-participants and 'some white British' which I discuss in relation to the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, agency, and resistance is characterised by conflicted perceptions of who the co-participants are and on what basis. Skin colour, which I interpret as 'race', alongside the category of 'accent' are central categories in the way they feel excluded from 'British society', as well as from being identified as 'British', and appear to be markers of 'British identity'. These imposed categories of 'race' and 'accent' become less salient to the co-participants, and 'new' categories emerge. This is to say that the more the co-participants move away from talking about 'the other', the less perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' become central to them. This shift in categories which I interpret as highlighting freedom is manifested in the ways in which 'belonging', and 'identity' in relation to non-human entities are constructed.

There is multiplicity in the ways in which 'belonging' is constructed. It is manifested in relation to the notion of 'home' which is used to refer to the places the co-participants come from, Britain, and other places they feel connection with. This use of the concept of 'home' represents one dimension of 'belonging', which is 'place belongingness' and it alludes to the seconds dimension; 'politics of belonging' (Antonsich, 2010), in such a way that this 'hybrid' sense of 'home' challenges implicitly perceptions of exclusion which the coparticipants experienced when they encounter 'the other'. Also, the way the co-participants interact with non-human entities indicate that these categories are central in their sense of 'identity'. This is to say that non-human categories serve as ties through which the coparticipants project and maintain their connection with the places they come from, as well as with Britain. This emergent way in which the co-participants articulate their sense of 'identity' does not only emphasise the social nature of 'identity', but also brings to the centre the relevance of human to non-human relations in the process of constructing this highly contested concept.

In other words, the relational nature of 'identity' is not exclusively social, that is limited to 'self' and 'other' relations, but also accommodates human to non-human relations.

I use the expression 'some white British' people, instead of 'white British' people, as it is dangerous to assume that all 'white British' have issues with 'race' and 'accent' in the way it is evidenced in my study. I use this expression because reference to 'white British' people has been made by the co-participants explicitly, as well as implicitly throughout the data.

This organisation of the findings, i.e., talking about 'identity' in terms of 'self' and 'other' relations, then moving to 'belonging', after that discussing 'identity' again, but in terms of human to non-human relations is connected with my interpretation of the data and the thread that connects the data together. This is in the sense that the data focuses on the conflicted relationship between the co-participants and 'some white British' people where perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' are central in the ways in which the co-participants believe are perceived by 'some white British' people. This 'self' and 'other' relation and the centrality of 'race' and 'accent' become invisible to the co-participants and 'new' categories emerge the more they move away from discussing their relationship with their

social environment. This shift, in my interpretation, implies freedom in that there is movement from categories imposed on the coparticipants by others, to categories chosen by the co-participants to reflect their own self-understanding. This shift is manifested in the notion of 'belonging' which the co-participants associate with the concept of 'home' and is further manifested in the non-human categories which the co-participants draw upon in reflecting on their 'identity'. This presentation of the findings is discussed in detail in the following chapter in section 2.11.

Having introduced what my study is about, I move to situating it within the literature.

1.3. Situating my research in the literature

Before discussing key concepts of this study, I would like to clarify which field it is situated in. This study is situated within the broad and interdisciplinary field of intercultural communication. Therefore, I will refer to non-essentialist researchers such as Dervin, Holliday, Ros i Solé, and Woodin. I will also draw on the contributions of other non-essentialist researchers in other fields such as Delanty, Hall, and Wodak. The reason this study is situated within the field of intercultural communication is not because the co-participants come from different 'cultures' to the 'culture' they live in, which is 'British culture'. Rather, it focuses on the ways in which they interact with the wider world, including their social environment, and the impact of this interaction on their self-understanding.

'Identity' has been discussed in academic literature mainly from two different research paradigms: essentialist and non-essentialist. On the one hand, an essentialist or a 'primordial' understanding of 'identity', (Gleason, 1983), also referred to as 'enlightenment subject' (Hall, 1995), conceptualises the notion of 'identity' as fixed, internal, and self-centred. This understanding of 'identity' is problematic because it assumes that 'identity' is the same through time and that it revolves solely around 'the self', hence, people's sense of 'identity' is the same throughout their lives. This view of 'identity' is also problematic because it overlooks the social environment of individuals and its role in how people make sense of themselves and each other. On the other hand, a non-essentialist or an 'optionalist' understanding of 'identity' (Gleason, 1983), which is also referred to as 'sociological subject' (Hall, 1995), emerged as the result of the realisation of the complexity of the world

and individuals' sense of who they are, which is overlooked in the former understanding of 'identity'. This view of 'identity' conceptualises it as emergent and constructed in relation to others (Hall, 1995).

Even though I subscribe to the latter view of 'identity' which emphasises its complexity and its social nature, it still does not fully inform how 'identity' is manifested in my study. This non-essentialist (sociological) view of 'identity' presented above tends to lack a substantial element, which is how the complexity of 'identity' is manifested, in terms of the processes which are involved in 'self' and other' relations. Some of the literature I use in theorising 'identity', which appears to subscribe to the sociological understanding presented above, and to which this criticism applies, is Hall (1991a; 1995; 1996) and Jenkins (2014). The other nonessentialist literature used in my study is Bucholtz and Hall (2005); and Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin (2011). It tackles processes of 'identity' construction within discourse studies and the processes identified are more or less different from the processes discussed in my study. This is further discussed in chapters three and seven.

The other reason this non-essentialist approach to 'identity' does not fully inform my study is because it situates 'identity' in relation to the social environment and appears to overlook how it is constructed in relation to other non-human entities, which are fundamental in my study. The relationship between 'identity' and non-human categories is discussed in chapter five and section 8.7. Therefore, in my study, I discuss 'identity' construction in two different, but related ways. The first interpretation revolves around the processes involves in 'self' and 'other' relations, and the second interpretation concerns human to non-human relations.

Having briefly clarified the concept of 'identity' in relation to the broad literature and the reasons I find the way it is discussed problematic; I approach the notion of 'belonging' from the same perspective. This debatable concept which is another key term in my study is discussed in the literature in different ways, such as being used more or less interchangeably with the concepts of 'identity', 'citizenship' or with both in such a way that its meaning is left ambiguous. Examples of works which use 'belonging' as such are Anderson and Taylor (2005); Bond (2006); and Clark (2009). In these works, the notion of 'belonging' can be said to be taken for granted in the sense that its use lacks theoretical

'definition'. Additionally, its interpretation in relation to 'identity' and citizenship' is left ambiguous. This is not to say that the way 'belonging' is used in these studies is wrong, but it lacks clear unpacking of what it means, if it means anything, on its own and in relation to other debatable concepts that is used interchangeably or in association with.

This understanding of 'belonging' differs from the perspective I am using to interpret this notion. This is because I do not use the terms 'identity' and 'citizenship' interchangeably with 'belonging'. As explained briefly above and is explained in section 1.11, as well as will be explained in chapters three, five, seven and eight, 'identity' in my study is interpreted in two different but related ways. The first interpretation focuses on the processes involved in how the co-participants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by others, and the second interpretation revolves around the relevance of non-human entities in the coparticipants' make-up, while 'belonging', explained elaboratively in chapter four and eight, is interpreted in relation to the notion of 'home' which the co-participants use to refer to various places they feel connection with. The notion of 'citizenship' is not in my understanding relevant to my study.

Moving to other conceptualisations of 'belonging', I use the Anthias (2006); Yuval-Davis (2006); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008), to situate my interpretation of 'belonging' in the literature.

Anthias (2006); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008), conceptualise 'belonging' is in similar way. This is in the sense that they explain this concept in terms of interrelationship between 'internal' and 'external' relations which refers to an individual's self-projection and his/her positioning in relation to others. This understanding of 'belonging' is socially orientated in that it is merely associated with people's relations and does not accommodate the relevance of other entities such places, which is the perspective from which 'belonging' is manifested in my study. The analysis of 'belonging' by Yuval-Davis (2006) distinguishes between 'belonging' as a personal feeling of 'home', and 'politics of belonging' which involves 'boundary maintenance' (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Even though there is acknowledgment of the relevance of place to people's sense of 'belonging', it is not elaborated on. The focus is mostly on the 'politics of belonging', which is not quite relevant to my study.

Drawing more or less on the above contributions, Antonsich (2010) conceptualises

'belonging' in terms of 'feeling 'at home' ('place-belongingness')', and 'politics of belonging'. The former dimension refers to people's personal attachments to places, and the latter refers to the discursive ways by which people respond to social and spatial inclusion and exclusion, such as by claiming and/or rejecting inclusion and exclusion. This analysis of 'belonging' is of close relevance to my study because 'belonging' is constructed in terms of feeling 'home', a term which the co-participants use to refer to different places they feel connection with. The way in which this term is used shows that the co-participants' 'belonging' is 'hybrid' in that it is not limited to one place, only. This way of situating themselves in various places alludes to the second dimension of 'belonging' being the 'politics of belonging' by resisting others' perceptions of them in terms of 'either/or' and whether they 'belong' or not.

In a similar vein, academic literature about 'academics' and other high-status professionals, who live in places different from where they come from, whether in relation to their everyday personal lives or their professional context, is based on an essentialist and a non-essentialist approach. To start with literature on academics from an essentialist perspective, I use the works of Selmer and Lauring (2009); Selmer and Lauring (2016); and Moemken (2017). In these works, the academics' lived experiences in relation to the new environment are measured and interpreted quantitatively. These studies also use the contested term 'expatriate academics', without interrogating it. Second, there is a non-essentialist academic literature about academics and other professionals of high-status, who live in places different from where they come from, in that it uses a qualitative research design to explore the academics in their new social environment and appears to be cautious when talking about contested terms such as 'identity' and 'intercultural experience'. Examples of these studies are: Richardson and McKenna (2002); Kusek (2015); Friesen (2016); Mahmud (2016); and Minocha, Shiel and Hristov (2019). However, like the essentialist studies presented above, they use highly contested labels to refer to the academics; 'non-native speakers', 'expatriate academics', 'international academic staff', '(im)migrants', and 'immigrant professionals' without questioning them and their implication on the non-essentialist research paradigm which they appear to subscribe to.

I dissociate my study from both academic literature because the former is essentialist in nature, while the latter, even though it situates itself within a non-essentialist research paradigm, it uses highly political and discriminatory labels to refer to professionals, including academics without interrogating them. In my study, I interrogate these terms and urge for the need to reconsider how we, as researchers perceive the people we work with by not labelling the group of professionals in my study, who happen to be academics. My stance towards how academics and other professionals are framed in the literature has emerged mainly from the data in that, as will be evidenced by the data, it is unlikely that the co-participants refer to themselves using the labels above or other labels which are discriminatory in nature.

1.4. Why the study matters? Contribution to knowledge development

The study makes contributions at different levels. It contributes to the politics of labelling by resisting to situate the co-participants within an already existing literature, which frames them using contested terms, such as '(im)migrants' and 'expatriates', as well as by interrogating these and other labels ascribed to research participants by researchers and other people they encounter in their everyday lives. In doing so I add my voice to calls by other non-essentialist researchers such as Dervin, and Woodin to rethink how researchers interact with research participants. This study also contributes to the study of 'identity' and 'belonging' by showing how the former is constructed in terms of processes involved in 'self' and 'other' relations, as well as in terms of moving away from this binary relationship and moving towards acknowledging the relevance of human to non-human relations in the ways in which 'identity' is constructed. Contribution to the study in relation to the latter term ('belonging') lies in emphasising its multiplicity, which is manifested in the notion of 'home' wherein the ways this term is used represent one dimension of belonging; 'place belongingness' (Antonsich, 2010), and alludes to the second dimension; 'politics of belonging' (ibid.). Another important contribution concerns despite the co-participants' high professional status, they are discriminated against in their everyday lives, probably, in similar ways to other people, with what can be described as a 'lower' professional status. This has significance for our understanding of the deep prejudice within society.

1.5. Why is this study important? Why do we care?

The importance of this study relates to the last point in the section above. Because the coparticipants are academics, they are presumed to have high-status and not encounter such unsettling experiences of 'othering'. However, what they report shakes this understanding of the relationship between their high professional status and othering. Therefore, it is important to shed light on the personal lived experiences of people who possess high professional status, including but not limited to academics, because it allows to gain an understanding of how far 'racism' is rooted in society and that if we do not address prejudice against this type of professionals, that is, high-status professionals, whose profession implies some sort of status, then how far we as researchers are really getting at the bottom of prejudice in society? This is not to say that research about people who we 'assume' are prone to discrimination such as those with low professional status is less important, but it is crucial to interrogate and illuminate how people with high professional status are received in their personal everyday lives, when this status is not salient. A further implication which I infer from this study is that, despite this study is not about academics' experiences in their workplace, there is racism in that institution.

1.6. Brief overview of the theoretical underpinning and conceptual framework of the thesis

Broadly speaking, this thesis is informed by three main theories, being critical cosmopolitan theory (Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; and Delanty, 2006, 2009), critical posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013, 2019), and the theory of 'belonging' (Antonsich, 2010).

I use a critical cosmopolitan theory which emphasises individuals' multiple allegiances to the world, as opposed to the enlightenment version of cosmopolitanism, which defines the world from a 'Western-centred' perspective. More specifically, I use an approach to critical cosmopolitanism called the transnational movement approach (Delanty, 2006, p.28). This approach concerns key concepts which are central in my thesis, such as 'mélange' and/or 'hybridity' from a cultural perspective, as opposed to other approaches to critical cosmopolitanism; cosmopolitanism as a political philosophy, and cosmopolitanism as liberal multiculturalism, which have a more political orientation.

I use this theory because it converges with the constructivist approach used in my study, in that they both promote multiplicity and fluidity in the ways in which we interact with the wider world. I also use this theory because it is situated within the conflict between 'self' and 'other', a relationship which is central in my study as indicated in the previous sections, and will be further demonstrated in the following chapters. The relevance of critical cosmopolitan theory to my study is further discussed in more detail in chapter seven.

Similar to critical cosmopolitanism, critical posthuman theory critiques a 'Eurocentric' organisation of the world which argues that 'White Man' is the core of existence. It does this by promoting relationality and difference in that we share the same physical world, but we are different from one another. However, it goes beyond criticising hierarchy of social relations by further criticising the hierarchy of species and emphasising connection between human and non-human relations.

I use this theory because, like the critical cosmopolitan theory discussed above, and broadly speaking, it converges with the constructivist approach I used in my study in that it shakes an understanding of who we are as fixed, and rather promotes plurality. I also use this theory because it does not only focus on interrogating hierarchy of human relations, but goes beyond this relationship, to emphasising the relevance and the centrality of non-human entities, such as objects and non-object entities, in the ways in which we, as individuals, make sense of who we are. The role of entities such as technology, climate change and animals, which are central in critical posthuman theory, are beyond the scope of this research. Therefore, in my study, the discussion about critical posthuman theory is concerned with human to non-human relations that have emerged from the data.

The role of critical cosmopolitan theory and critical posthuman theory in my study is, in my opinion, complementary. Both theories decentre a 'Western-centred' definition of the world and promote relationality and multiplicity in how we interact with the wider world in which we live, but in different ways. While critical cosmopolitan theory tackles the conflicted relationship between 'self' and 'other', critical posthuman theory goes beyond this relation and acknowledges the centrality of non-human entities in the make-up of humans. This discussion on critical posthuman theory and its relevance to my study is in more detail in sections 7.2., and 8.7.

In making sense of the notion of 'belonging' in light of the literature, I use a theory by Antonsich (2010), which also meets with the orientation of the constructivist approach I use in that, this theory of 'belonging' acknowledges subjectivity and multiplicity in how we articulate our connection with the wider world. I also use this theory because it has close relevance to the way 'belonging' is manifested in my study. This is further discussed in sections 7.2., and 8.5.3.

Therefore, broadly speaking, these three main theories converge with each other in their orientation of interrogating rigid understandings of highly contested terms, being 'identity' and 'belonging'. They also converge with the literature by other researchers that I use throughout my study. This is because, regardless of their different approaches, the promotion of plurality, and decentring fixed understandings of 'identity' and 'belonging' is what they, and I, endeavour to achieve.

1.7. Methodology

This study uses a constructivist approach and a qualitative research design to collect data. Constructivism is used because of a number of reasons. My own lived experience, as well as my encounter with Kim, Leo, and George, which will be discussed in the following section, made me question my understanding of 'reality' and the 'truth', and how far our understanding of the world around us, including ourselves and others is subjective. So, I carried this understanding to the research and settled on using a constructivist approach because it acknowledges the plurality of 'reality' and challenges the idea that there is one 'truth' in how we make sense of ourselves and the world around us. This understanding of the world also converges with the way the co-participants construct their sense of who they are, as well as their sense of place in the wider world in the sense that they are highly subjective and dynamic. Constructivism also fits in my relationship with the co-participants in the sense that, as explained in section 1.2., we; me as a researcher, and them as research co-participants, contribute to the construction of knowledge based on our roles in the study. This will be further explained in the following chapter, section 2.2.

In a similar vein, my choice of a qualitative research design derives from my understanding of my experiences some of which are discussed in the following section,

where subjectivity in how we make sense of who we are is omnipresent. This subjectivity which I bring to the research is a characteristic of qualitative research which acknowledges the researcher's worldviews and their interaction with the participants' opinions. I also use qualitative research because it does not look for clear-cut definitions and/or answers to our inquiry necessarily but tries to problematise and shake rigid understandings of the social world.

The data is collected using mostly semi-structured interviews, and a little data is generated from my research diary and an email exchange. Interview in general, allows for spoken interaction between me and the co-participants to take place. Because listening to and observing how the co-participants talk about themselves is a crucial element in my study, opting for face-to-face interviews allows me to observe patterns and generate questions based on what the coparticipants talk about. More specifically, I use semi-structured interviews to gain an understanding of how 'identity' and 'belonging' are constructed because semi-structured interviews are flexible in nature. They allow for a give-and-take interaction between me and the co-participants which is central in constructing the knowledge of this study. This is by putting my assumptions and beliefs into interactions with those of the co-participants. Therefore, how I engage with the data converges with the social constructivist approach I use in this study in the sense that the data is socially constructed by my and the co-participants' worldviews.

The data is analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The data chapters are organised around major themes and sub-themes, as explained in the following chapter, section, 2.11. I suggest that data analysis began when I first met the co-participants before the interview meetings. This is because I could identify some elements, which were later discussed in the interview meetings. There are other aspects, which emerged in the interview meetings. I also suggest that there was a back-and-forth process between the various stages of thematic analysis that I used.

1.8. Motivation for researching 'identities' and 'belonging' of a group of high professional status.

This section shows how this research has emerged. This is to say that this study is triggered by my own lived experience, as well as by observed experiences as will be shown below. Even though the term 'high professional status' was not an attribute relevant to me, in that I did not have a high professional status nor established my life in the UK, the lived and observed experiences presented below made me wonder about the ways in which high-status professionals talk about themselves and their surrounding environment in contexts where their professional status is not highlighted.

1.8.1. Intercultural clash

The following is an illustration and an explanation of my own lived experience which made me endeavour to explore my research topic.
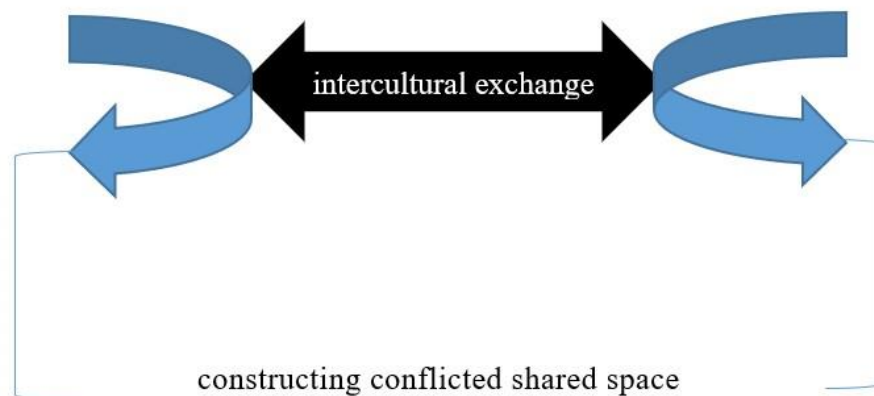
Figure 1.1   Conceptualisation of my lived experience: intercultural clash.

My own lived experience represented in the diagram above is concerned with the topic of who I am and where I come from, which involved me and the people I was surrounded by who claimed authority to define who I am and 'my culture'. I label this interaction as 'intercultural exchange' as indicated in the diagram above and it was characterised by opposing views about myself and the place I come from, because of others' perceptions of where I come from. This conflicted relationship is demonstrated in the opposing arrows

which seem to indicate distance and divergence because each of us had opposing views regarding who I am and where I come from. However, looking carefully at the way this type of relations operates, that is, conflicted 'self' and 'other' relations where power dynamics mediate such type of relations, I suggest that both myself and the people I was surrounded by co-created a shared space which we inhabited through our conflicted views and resistance of each other's opinions about myself and the place I come from. This space is reflected in the diagram above and labelled as 'constructing conflicted shared space'.

The following is a discussion of my own lived experience with an example which illustrates the above:

In this section I talk about the country that I come from in two different ways. The first way refers to how the people I was surrounded by constructed it, being 'the Middle East' because of assumed 'cultural sameness'. The second way refers to how I construct it myself, by referring to it as 'the country that I come from'. My own construction of where I come from is based on what I seem to know about it from my exposure, as this might be different from someone else from the same country. The reason I attribute being stereotyped to the preconceived ideas that these people had about where I come from is because, despite some of them had never heard of the country that I come from and some others had never been there, they tended to assume 'cultural sameness' between this place and the Middle East.

This is illustrated in a conversation with Louis (pseudonym), who said that when his friend visited a country in the Middle East, she was asked to dress in a particular way that conformed to the way women in that particular country dressed.

The example below may be conceived as 'banal', hence discussing it might be considered as naïve. However, what is important are the dimensions of what Louis said, which are claiming 'the truth', as well as authority in defining who I am and where I come from, rather than what he said per se.

Louis: Why do women in 'your culture' cover their head?
Me: Not all women in 'my culture' wear the hijab.
Louis: Do you wear it [the hijab] in your country?
Me: No, I do not. In 'my culture' it is optional to wear the hijab or not to.

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Louis: Maybe, because you are different from them, or because you have changed when you came here.

The perceptions Louis has about 'women' where I come from, a place he associates 'culturally' with the Middle East, frames us as a 'chunk of culture'. In his understanding, we; 'women', where I come from are all the same because we come from the 'same culture'. In this intercultural encounter, there is resistance from me and Louis of each other's claims in that each of us tries to assert their opinions about where I come from. Also, this exchange shows that I was not only categorised as someone 'different' because of perceptions of where I come from, but I was also detached from it. This is because for Louis, being a member of where I come from, appears to mean that I should 'conform' to his expectations of how women in the Middle East look in the way they dress.

To comment on what has been said about dress code in places mentioned in this discussion, they are related to different reasons, such as 'personal', 'cultural', 'religious' and 'political' practices. However, the issues I want to emphasise in this encounter are claiming 'the truth' and authority, which are manifested in me being perceived as an exception or 'fake', as well as in the way where I come from was 'culturally' associated with the Middle East. How Louis appears to respond to my statements can be paradoxical. On the one hand, he tends to think that I am 'representative' of 'my culture', which he associates with the Middle East, when he asked me about women and the hijab, using the term 'your culture'. On the other hand, he tends to eliminate my opinion about 'my culture' because it interrogates his stereotypes, by framing me as 'an exception' to the rest of women or as 'fake'.

This intercultural exchange, illustrated in figure 1.1, made me wonder about the personal lived experiences of high-status professionals who have come from other countries and live in the UK; especially how far experiences of 'othering' in their personal everyday lives are relevant to them or not.

The concept of 'immersion', discussed in chapter three and seven, was generated from this lived experience, which in my understanding was jeopardised by how I was framed. This is to say that I did not experience 'British culture' 'properly' as I was encountered by

stereotypes about where I come from by some people, which to some extent limited who I interacted with.

1.8.2. Observation of how some people talk about themselves

The other lived experience which made me curious to explore intercultural 'identities' and 'belonging' of people of high professional status is my encounter with Kim, Leo, and George (pseudonyms) in Britain. Both Kim and Leo live in Britain, but they both have come from two different places outside Britain, while George was born in a country different from where his parents come from.

When they talked about the places they come from and where they live, Kim and Leo used the binary categories of 'we' and 'they' interchangeably. According to them, people in the countries they come from tended to perceive them as 'westerners', which Kim and Leo totally rejected. Also, they reported that in some situations they felt that they did not 'belong' to Britain because they were distinguished from 'white British people' in the way they looked. George, expressed identification with the country his parents come from, despite the fact that he spent more time in the country that he was born in.

Therefore, even though I did not have the chance to pursue this interaction, I was fascinated by the way these people talked about themselves and I become interested in further exploring the way 'belonging' to two 'different cultural backgrounds' is handled by people who are more or less similar to Kim, Leo and George.

1.8.3. Choice of the co-participants
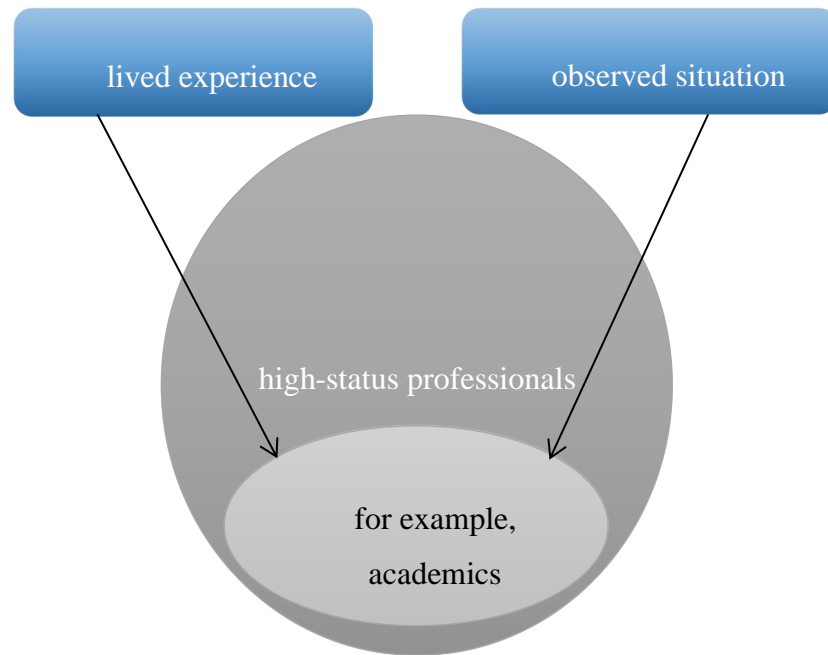
Figure 1.2 Drawing connections: establishing the context of the study.

The diagram explains the relationship between my own lived experience, my encounter with Kim, Leo and George, which I have discussed in the previous section, and the choice of the co-participants. From these encounters, that is my 'personal experience' and 'observed situation' (represented in the rectangles), I was curious to explore the ways in which people of high professional status who have come from 'different national backgrounds' talk about their lived experiences in their personal everyday lives, when their professional status is not highlighted. This is because their profession implies some sort of status. This connection between what happened around me and the broad category of high-status professionals is represented in the largest circle labelled 'high-status professionals', which is placed underneath 'my 'personal experience' and 'observed situation''. These 'high-status professionals' happen to be academics in the sense that my status as a PhD student in the UK facilitated access to them. I was able to invite them to take part in this study and establish rapport with them in a safe environment. This process of establishing the setting in terms of choosing which specific category of 'high-status professionals' I

work with is reflected in the arrows which extend from my 'lived experience' and 'observed situation' to the smaller circle labelled 'for example academics', which is situated within the bigger circle 'high-status professionals'.

In other words, this study is not about academics per se, it could have been conducted about other people of high professional status, such as engineers or doctors, if the circumstances of my status were different.

1.9. Researcher positionality

Having explained the way this study has emerged, which is due to my personal lived experience and my encounter with Kim, Leo, and George, and even though this study is not about me, I am aware that these experiences, my background, beliefs, biases, and understanding of the world are omnipresent in crafting this study. This is to say that this study is not an 'innocent practice' (Denzin, 2000, p. 256), but rather it is highly subjective where my views are in constant interaction with the co-participants' beliefs and ways of constructing their 'identities' and 'belonging'. Nevertheless, there are factors which make me an outsider. Some of these factors involve the reality that I am not an academic with a high professional status as the coparticipants do, I have not spent a considerable number of years living in Britain, and I do not belong to the same age groups of the co-participants. Also, some choices that I have made in crafting this research have shifted me from being an insider to being an outsider and *vice versa*. My positionality in terms of insider/outsider, and its impact on the research process is further discussed in the following chapter, in section 2.2.1.

1.10. Thesis Structure

While the standard structure of a doctoral thesis would normally place the literature chapters before the data chapters, in my research I have placed the data chapters before the literature chapters for two main reasons. The first reason is that the data led me to the literature in the sense that I did not approach the topic under investigation from a pre-determined theory or theories which I have used as a lens to generate data. I rather let the data direct me to the literature, which is used to crystallise my understanding of the data,

as well as position my study in relation to the field of intercultural communication. The second reason for organising my thesis in a different way from the convention is because I refer to some key data in the literature chapters. Therefore, placing the data chapters before the literature discussion serves as a context for the content of the literature chapters.

Therefore, I present how this thesis is organised as the following:

Chapter Two: Research methodology: This chapters presents the research process, in terms of the research approach, the nature of study, data collection and analysis, and some issues related to the analysis. It also presents how the data is constructed.

Chapters three, four and five concern the data chapters. These chapters are organised around three main themes: 'multiplicity in 'identity' perception', 'negotiating 'belonging'', and 'ties'.

Chapter three: 'Multiplicity in 'identity' perception'. It deals with the ways in which the co-participants talk about how they perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by their social environment, represented in 'some white British' people and their family members. It also deals with how the notion of 'immersion' is constructed by the co-participants. This chapter is evidenced by data from semi-structured interviews.

Chapter four: 'Negotiating 'belonging''. I analyse how the co-participants construct, what I interpret as, 'belonging' in relation to the places they come from and Britain, as well as other places they connect to. This chapter is supported mostly by data from semi-structured interviews, and a few data which comes from the research diary.

Chapter five: 'Ties'. I analyse the relevance of non-human categories in the way the co-participants talk about their 'identities'. The data used in this chapter comes from semi structured interviews, research diary and an email exchange.

Chapters six, seven and eight deal with literature review and theory. They are organised around three main headings: 'How do I refer to the university lecturers in my study?', 'who is who and on what basis?: processes of 'identity' construction in relation to 'self' and 'other'', and ''belonging' and the significance of human to non-human relations in 'identity' construction'. These chapters serve to situate my study and crystallise it.

Chapter six: 'How do I refer to the university lecturers in my study?' This chapter reviews and reflects on relevant literature on academics and other professionals, who live

in places different from where they come from, and how they are labelled. It serves to situate my research in relation to this body of literature.

Chapter seven: 'Who is who and on what basis?: processes of 'identity' construction in relation to 'self' and 'other''. I discuss relevant literature and theory on key concepts, such as 'identity', 'race' and 'accent', and 'immersion'. I discuss the notion of 'identity' in relation to 'self' and 'other' relations.

Chapter eight: ''Belonging' and the significance of human to non-human relations in 'identity' construction'. This chapter also concerns relevant literature on central notions in this study, like 'belonging', 'home', and the significance of non-human entities in how the co-participants make sense of their 'identities'.

Chapter nine: Conclusions and implications. This final chapter summarises key findings and their interpretations which have developed in the data chapters. It also restates the thesis's contributions to knowledge and its importance. Further, this chapter reiterates how the study emerged and my positionality. Following this, I offer some limitations of the study, and offer avenues for possible future research. Finally, I conclude the chapter by offering final reflections.

1.11. 'Definitions' of key terms

In this study, the notion of 'identity' and 'belonging' are key terms. Throughout, I use them between inverted commas as they are subjective interpretations, as well as to show my awareness that they are highly contested notions. The following is an explanation of how I use them.

As explained in section 1.3., I subscribe to a sociological view of 'identity' as constructed and emergent, a view which is maintained by many non-essentialist scholars such as Hall (1991a, 1995, 1996); and Jenkins (2014). More specifically. In my study, I approach, 'identity' in terms of the processes involved in the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by others. In discussing this manifestation of 'identity', I use critical cosmopolitan theory as the main theory (Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; and Delanty, 2006, 2009). I also approach 'identity' from the perspective that it is not only limited to the social environment ('self'

and 'other' relations), and that human to non-human relations are also central in how people make sense of themselves and the world in which they exist. I use a critical posthuman perspective (Braidotti, 2013, 2019), to discuss the relationship between people's sense of who they are and non-human categories.

I use the understanding of 'belonging' by Antonsich (2010) which is explained in terms of two dimensions; 'belonging' as a personal sense of attachment to a place manifested in the notion of 'home' ('place belongingness'), and as a discursive resource that interacts with social and spatial inclusion and exclusion, such as by resisting and/or claiming them ('politics of belonging'). These two dimensions of 'belonging' overlap in the sense that the way the social environment responds to an individual's sense of 'belonging' facilitates or hinders a person's feeling of 'place-belongingness'.

This overlap between the personal and the social is relevant to my thesis in a somewhat different way. How the co-participants situate themselves in relation to the places they come from, and Britain, as well as other places they feel connection with, which they call 'home' implies resistance to the perception of others as to whether they 'belong or not' which is based on the categories of 'race' and 'accent'. This is to say that the second dimension of 'belonging' is invoked through the first dimension. Therefore, in my study I talk about 'belonging' in terms of the dimensions explained above, especially in relation to the first dimension.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

2.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the research process of this study. I begin by explaining in more detail the term 'co-participants' and its connection with my philosophical stance. Then, I situate this study within a constructivist approach and a qualitative research design by providing the rationale for the approach taken. In the next section, I describe the research tools and the rationale for using them. Following this, I present the co-participants, the process of recruiting them and the negotiation of the interview setting. After this, I discuss thematic analysis, challenges encountered and how I used thematic analysis in my study. The rest of the chapter deals with data construction, writing the data chapters and ethical considerations.

2.2. The term co-participants and its relationship with my positionality

Before discussing the term 'co-participants', which I use throughout to refer to both myself and the participants in this study, I provide literature on labelling research participants and its influence on the researcher's philosophical orientation.

Edwards and Holland (2013) state 'what those who are researched are called are not just neutral terms, but also indicate ways of thinking about them and how they are understood as relating to the interview, and consequently reflect the philosophical stance of the researcher' (p.4). This statement suggests that the labels used in reference to the people who take part in a study are to an extent bound by the approach of the study and the type of phenomena studied. These labels include terms such as 'subject', 'respondent', 'informant', 'interviewee' and 'participant' (ibid., p.5). This naming activity underwent a process of evolution grounded in the philosophical orientation of studies and moved from presenting people in these studies as passive entities to active members (ibid.). This transition is illustrated in some fields of studies that adopt particular labels to demonstrate their positionality. For example, Edwards and Holland (2013) argue that the term subject tends to be used in structured interviewing to convey a level of objectivity and unbiased stance by the researcher; 'respondent' and 'informant' are used in ethnographic methods

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which seek data represented in numbers; 'interviewee' is associated with interviewer where this similarity in labelling extends to suggest a balanced or equal relationship between the former and the latter, and the term 'participant' is argued to be grounded in ethnographic methods and more specifically with participant observation in which the researcher moves between insider and outsider positions (ibid.).

As far as my research is concerned, I consider both myself and the group of university lecturers as co-participants. I use this term to refer to our roles which involve co-constructing the knowledge of the thesis, which is highly influenced by our experiences and worldviews. I am a co-participant in the sense that this thesis has emerged from my own personal encounters. I am also a co-participant in the sense that I have put my own questions and assumptions into interrogation by directly asking the co-participants about them. Further to this, I am a co-participant in terms of engaging with the co-participants during the interviews by generating further questions and guiding the discussion in a way which I believe maintains the core focus of the research. The group of professionals in my study are co-participants in the sense that they are the centre of this research. Their lived experiences and the ways in which they articulate their sense of 'identity' and 'belonging' are what this thesis revolves about. This is to say that despite the fact that this research was triggered by own personal experiences and that I had assumptions which I asked the co-participants about, the focus of the thesis is not me, it is rather about this group of professionals.

This approach towards research in general and towards co-participation more specifically reflects my understanding of 'reality' as shaped and reshaped, and that as a researcher my worldviews are omnipresent in the research process. This acknowledgment of the subjective nature of this thesis converges with the social constructivist paradigm and the qualitative approach explained in section 2.3., and 2.4. This is in the sense that the knowledge of this thesis is highly subjective and shaped by the co-participants' understanding of the world, including my own worldviews which are constructed by what happens around us. This, as argued above and throughout the thesis, emphasises the constructed nature of 'reality' and that it is multiple, emergent and in constant articulation.

In this regard Charmaz (2014) argues: 'If we start with the assumption that social reality is multiple, processual, and contested, then we must take the researcher's position,

privileges, perspectives, and interactions into account as an inherent part of the research reality' (p.13). Also, Edwards and Holland (2013) argue 'both researcher and researched bring with them concepts, ideas, theories, values, experiences and multiply intersecting identities, all of which can play a part in research interaction in the qualitative interview' (p.5). This intersubjectivity in qualitative research is further acknowledged by other researchers such as Creswell (2014) who states that researchers' biases, background and experiences shape their interaction with the participants who also bring their own views and biases into the research (pp.187-188).

Examples of the ways in which the notion of co-participation is manifested in my study concerns the relationship between my own personal experiences and the reason I have decided to research the lived experiences of a group of high-status professional in the UK. This is shown in section 1.8., and further illustrated in section 1.8.1., and 1.8.2. This is in the sense that my study emerged from my own personal experience and other encounters that I observed, which I conceptualised in relation to the lived experiences of this group of professionals, who happen to be academics. In other words, this study was triggered by encounters which I experienced, but I shifted the focus from me to these professionals. Therefore, I am part of the research in such a way that I co-participate in the meaning-making process, along with the co-participants through our worldviews, as well as through the decisions I have made throughout the research process to ensure that the co-participants' voice acquire the centre. This can be shown in the second example about how co-participation is manifested, which concerns putting my own assumptions into interrogation through asking the co-participants directly about them. This is reflected in, for example, the notion of 'immersion', which as I have explained in section 1.8.1, and section 3.4., was generated from my own personal experience. A further example about co-participation can be demonstrated through the way I have approached and conducted the interviews. This is in the sense that I had prepared some questions, see section 2.11.1, and 2.11.2., which were elaborated on in such a way that I generated further questions based on the co-participants' responses. This is to say that during the interviews, I was engaged with the construction of meaning along with the other co-participants through asking questions, generating further questions, and maintaining the core focus of the study.

Having said this, this approach of treating both myself and the research participants as

co-participants enabled me to acknowledge my assumptions and stereotypes, address them in the data collection, and minimise their impact and my bias on the data analysis, as well as remain committed to letting the co-participants' views to be the focal point of the thesis. This is by interrogating the pre-conceived ideas that I had and look at them from the co-participants' perspectives. Also, this approach enabled me to demonstrate the complexity and the highly subjective nature of our 'realities' which are reflected in the ways in which we apprehend the world around us, including ourselves. Therefore, it is difficult to untangle my own beliefs and my assumptions from this study, hence, I am aware that this study is inevitably subjective, and that I am part of the meaning making process where my background and my experiences interact with those of the co-participants.

2.2.1. Elaborating on my positionality

My positionality has been briefly explained in the previous chapter, section 1.9. In this section I discuss it in more detail. In this study, I am both an outsider and an insider. I have also shifted from being an insider to being an outsider and *vice versa*.

Being an outsider lies in the fact that I am not an academic with a high professional status in 'British society' as the co-participants do, I have not been living in the UK for a significant number of years, and I do not belong to the co-participants' age groups or come from the same countries that they come from. I am also an outsider in that I am not the focus of the research.

Being different from the co-participants' in these terms was in my understanding going to hinder my communication with them, as well as the ability to understand their 'realities'. However, this perception changed when I interviewed them in that, regardless of our difference, I was able to relate to their experiences in a broader sense. This is in the sense that, like the co-participants, I live in a place different from where I come from, and I have experienced being othered by people who claimed authority in defining who I am, as shown in section 1.8.1. I also relate to some individual co-participants, such as Kyle and Ryan in chapter four, where I draw on my personal experience explained in section 1.8.1. Furthermore, I relate to other co-participants in chapter five, such as Alex in terms of the significance of material and non-material entities in our sense-making. It is important to

remind here that my own lived experience is not what this thesis is about, nor is it used to claim absolute knowledge of the co-participants' experiences because I also experienced being othered. This is to say that my own lived experience is a trigger and is used to show how this thesis has emerged.

My insider position can be further manifested in the theoretical framework of this thesis, which has emerged from the data. This is in the sense that, on the one hand, this theoretical framework, which is critical cosmopolitan theory, critical posthuman theory, and the theory of 'belonging by Antonsich (2010), acknowledges the co-participants' plurality and multiplicity in how they talk about themselves, regardless of where they come from, as well as captures a bigger picture of the data by allowing the co-participants' views to acquire the centre.

On the other hand, this choice of the theoretical framework shifts me towards an outsider stance. This is in the sense that, as a researcher, I have made choices which might not 'match' with the co-participants' perspectives on the thesis. An illustration of this is the co-participant Alex, who, in one of my presentations, suggested that I use postcolonial theory to inform my thesis. Because I have a different insight to him on my thesis, and since the co-participants come from different 'cultural' and historical backgrounds, Alex's suggestion seemed, in my opinion, limiting. This is because the theory he suggested tackles issues which he and other people of similar background may encounter, but does not, in my opinion, get to the core of what all the co-participants talk about.

Therefore, I have chosen the above-mentioned theoretical framework, as, in my view, it encompasses a bigger picture of my data, including Alex's lived experiences.

Moving to how I shifted from an outsider position to an insider position. I was an outsider in a naïve way, which Woodin (2016) cautions against. This is in the sense that before meeting the co-participants, I applied what Woodin (2016) refers to as 'outsider categories' (p.108) by naming the co-participants using the terms of '(im)migrants' and 'long-term residents'. I was less critical of these terms and opted for clear-cut definitions of the co-participants, a stance which I criticise in relation to a body of literature in chapter six. After analysing the data, I shifted from applying these 'outsider categories' (ibid.), which seemed relevant to me before meeting the co-participants, to what can be called

'insider categories' by allowing the co-participants' perspectives on who they are to 'come into representation' (Hall, 1991b, p.34). This is in the sense that I moved away from imposing my own perceptions of who the co-participants are, which was manifested in my use of the terms 'long-term residents' and '(im)migrants', to allowing their self-conceptions to occupy the centre. This is illustrated in my decision not to use my own labels for the co-participants, but, instead, refer to them based on their role in this thesis as co-participants.

The shift from 'outsider categories' (Woodin, 2016 p.108) to 'insider categories' can also be manifested in my assumption that 'bilingualism' was salient in the data, because of my belief that since the co-participants are 'bilingual' it would be central to the data. This prejudice, which was forced onto the data analysis, was overcome by stepping back from the data and sharing my data in research forums. This idea of forcing the data is further discussed in section 2.9.1.

2.3. Type of the study: A constructivist approach

The choice of a constructivist approach for this study is informed by many factors. First of all, because my own lived experience, as discussed in the previous chapter, was characterised by 'conflicting' opinions about who I am because of how I was framed by others. The people I encountered claimed 'authority' to categorise me according to their beliefs, which I resisted; as a result, I started to question the notion of 'reality' and 'truth'. These two highly debatable notions were omnipresent in my encounter, where I and the people I met claimed that our 'conflicting' perceptions of each other represented the 'truth'. In this regard, Berger and Luckmann (1966) state 'everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world' (p.33). This relates to the 'fact' that my views and the views of those I encountered, were significantly associated with our beliefs that we held with us in relation to 'self' and 'other'.

This intersubjective relations between individuals in the ways in which we construct our 'realities', which influence how we make sense of the world, is also discussed by Ibn Khaldun (Translated by Rosenthal, 1967) who argues that the individual learns how to make sense of the world through experience with other people and that the individual's existence depends to a large extent on 'his fellow man' (chapter VI, vol. 2, section 3, p.417). Therefore, our 'realities', and the interpretations we make of things are highly influenced

by our relations with other people and the society in which we are. Also, in this regard, Ibn Khaldun (Translated by Rosenthal, 1967) states: 'Man is a child of the customs and the things he has become used to. He is not the product of his natural disposition and temperament' (Chapter II, vol.1, section 5 p.258). This is to emphasise that we are socially shaped by what Ibn Khaldun (translated by Rosenthal, 1967) calls 'social organisation' that we establish and share with others as 'social knowledge' (ibid.). For more information see (Ibn Khaldun, Translated by Rosenthal, 1967, chapter II, vol. 1, p.258 and chapter VI, vol. 2, p.417).

Second, the ways in which Kim, Leo and George, whose experiences were also discussed in the previous chapter, signalled the perceptions they had of being distant from where they live, as well as from where they come from, was by drawing on different entities. This act of constructing who we are also pertains to the way the co-participants talk about themselves. They perceive and position themselves in relation to the places they come from and Britain differently depending on the contexts where '"their identities" emerge from the dialectic between individual and society' (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p.195). Therefore, I chose to follow a constructivist stance in exploring [this] study because '[it] … assumes multiple, apprehendable, and sometime conflicting 'realities' that are the product of human intellect…' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.111). In this regard, Burr (1995; 2015) also argues that meaning and experience are produced and reproduced between individuals rather than existing essentially within them in the sense that 'it is through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated' (p.4).

The third reason for using a constructivist approach extends from the quotes above from Berger and Luckmann, (1966); and Guba and Lincoln, (1994) in that it accommodates people's multiple realities and the entities they draw upon in the process of making sense of themselves and the world around them. This allows me to discuss non-human categories, which are central in the ways the co-participants articulate their understanding of themselves. This is to say, a constructivist approach tends to emphasise the plurality of 'truth' and our sense-making, and acknowledges that this sense-making is highly subjective and relative.

The fourth reason for using a constructivist approach relates to the nature of my relationship with the co-participants, in that we construct the knowledge of this study on the basis of our roles. In this regard, Creswell (2014) argues that 'the constructivist worldview seeks understanding of the world in which [individuals] live, and how they develop subjective meanings of their experiences directed towards certain objects and things' (p.8). Therefore, as stated in the previous chapter in section 1.9., this study is not an 'innocent practice' (Denzin, 2000, p. 256), but it is shaped by the co-participants' subjective opinions, as well as by my own beliefs, in such a way that they are put into constant interaction.

2.4. The nature of the study: A qualitative design

In a similar vein, my choice of a qualitative research design derives from my understanding of my experiences some of which are discussed in the following section, where subjectivity in how we make sense of who we are is ubiquitous. This subjectivity which I bring to the research is a characteristic of qualitative research which acknowledges the researcher's worldviews and their interaction with the participants' opinions. I also use qualitative research because it does not look for clear-cut definitions and/or answers to our inquiry necessarily, but tries to get at the bottom of things.

The thread to a qualitative design is, like the type of the study, triggered by my own experiences. This is when the people I met and I, discussed in the previous chapter, attributed meaning to ourselves and to each other in different ways by drawing on different entities, such as 'culture' and physical traits. Boyatzis (1998), argues 'qualitative research involves emotional, value-laden, and theoretical preconceptions, preferences, and world views' (p.8). I carried this highly subjective way through which we make sense of who we are and who others are to how I perceive the ways in which the co-participants interpret their own 'realities', by questioning what categories they will draw upon in constructing their sense of who they are. Hence, as argued earlier, knowledge that shapes this study is co-created by bringing my background and those of the co-participants into interaction and negotiation. Also, this knowledge is constructed by our encounters in our daily lives during

which making sense of what the co-participants say is constantly shaped. Therefore, I state that the qualitative research design suits this study because:

> [It] stress[es] the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraint that shape inquiry' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p. 14). Also, because qualitatively oriented study assumes that 'reality' is a continuous construction of gradual pictures that reflect approximate interpretations grounded in our subjective sense making of 'reality', rather than claiming representations of what is real (Holliday, 2016a, p.6).

In other words, I did not apply the categories that were salient in my own lived experience, 'my culture', and the entities that Kim, Leo and George draw upon in talking about themselves, physical traits, citizenship and country of birth, to the co-participants' experiences. I rather let the categories they draw on emerge from the data. This approach to research meets the orientation of qualitative research which:

> …looks deep into the quality of social life. It locates the study within particular settings, which provide opportunities for exploring all possible social variables, and set manageable boundaries. An initial foray into the social setting leads to further, more informed exploration as themes and focuses emerge. (Holliday, 2016a, p.6)

In addition to this, the research questions presented in the previous chapter, establish the context of the study, as well as inform how this study will be conducted. This is because they are exploratory in nature and interrogate how the co-participants construct their 'identities' and 'belonging'. This approach of bringing my own interpretations and background into interaction with the co-participants' 'realities' illustrates the qualitative nature of this study, which acknowledges multiple 'realities'.

2.5. Research tools

In this study I use interviews as my main tool. More specifically, I use semi-structured interviews to gain understanding of the ways in which the co-participants construct their 'identities' and 'belonging'. A little data is generated from research diary and an email exchange. The following is an explanation of the way I use semi-structured interviews and the rationale for using them in collecting data.

2.5.1. Interviews

I use interviews as a medium of sharing with the co-participants how they construct their 'realities' through spoken language. This is because, I wanted to experience listening to and interacting with them in person to see how they manifest their 'realities' and their feelings when they talk about themselves. In this regard, Perakyla (2008, p.351) and Kvale (2007, p.1) argue that conversation serves as a vehicle to people's lives and their experiences through which we learn what feelings and beliefs they hold to the world they live in. Also, as discussed earlier in this chapter and in the previous chapter, I am interested in the co-participants' perceptions of who they are, as well as having assumptions and beliefs that are grounded in my own experiences and my background, which shape my understanding of what 'reality' is. This means that verbal interaction is one of the most suitable means to put my beliefs into interaction with those of the co-participants. This negotiation of taking part in the process of how the coparticipants make sense of who they are meets qualitative interview-oriented research, which stresses that it starts with a broad generated idea of the research along with the interviewees' own perspectives (Torkar, *et al.* 2011, p.43).

Furthermore, the use of interviews in this study matches with the philosophical orientation of a constructivist approach used in the study, which maintains that investigator and respondents construct meaning through interaction. This is also because, the notion of 'interview' is argued to be 'literally an inter-view' where interlocutors interchange their views and construct knowledge in relation to a shared topic (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.111; Kvale, 2007, p.1; p.7). This use of interviews is 'contextually bound' (Fontana, and Frey, 2008, p.115) in such a way that researchers and the social setting which they investigate are in constant interaction and mutual meaning-making (ibid., p118).

2.5.1.1. Semi-structured interviews

Like all interviews, I use semi-structured interview in order to explore the coparticipants' views about their sense of who they are. This is also because, as stated in the previous section, semi-structured interviews allow space for me and for the co-participants to bring our views into interaction and explore them. These views are represented in the questions I asked the co-participants, as well as in the discussion I had with them during the interview meetings, which centred on how they construct their sense of who they are. Interaction with the co-participants varied from one co-participant to another. That is, the sequence of the questions I asked was not identical in the interviews I conducted. I rather pursued what the co-participants said in relation to the research topic. Edwards and Holland (2013), state that the questions that the researcher wants to cover in a semi-structured interview are guided by how and when the questions are addressed to the interviewee, which gives flexibility to interviewees to respond on their own ways (p.29).

This flexible nature of the ways in which semi-structured interviews operate 'conform' to the qualitative nature of this study and to the way knowledge is constantly constructed. In this regard, some prominent scholars made shared statements about the nature of semi-structured interviews, how they operate and the purpose behind using them. For example, Atkinson and Silverman (1997), argue that open-ended interview allows an 'authentic gaze into the soul of another', as well as serving to share understanding and support between researchers and researched (p.305). Also, Kvale (2007), holds that semi-structured interview offers ways to understand the 'realities' of the lived world of the subjects from their lenses, as well as to make interpretations of their world based on the meaning that they attribute to their lived world (p.11).

Therefore, the purpose behind using interviews, and more specifically semi-structured interviews in this study is to be able to access the ways in which the co-participants construct their 'realities' of who they are by putting our views into interaction.

2.6. Presentation of the co-participants

This study includes nine co-participants, male and female. In order to protect their anonymity, I have taken a set of measures. As briefly explained in section 1.1., and further

elaborated on in this section, I have anonymised details about the co-participants, such as their 'national backgrounds', their religious affiliation, their department affiliation and areas of specialism, as well as explicit information which includes reference to their physical traits and 'accent'. I have also anonymised the co-participants' real names by assigning gender-neutral pseudonyms to them. This is not only to protect their anonymity, but also because none of the variables which have been obscured are important in the analysis. This is also because by interrogating this information, the focus will be directed towards the co-participants as individuals, regardless of where they come from, and what they look like, for example. In order words, unconscious bias can be reflected in the temptation to attribute characteristics to the co-participants on the basis of our assumptions about, for example, where they come from, how they speak and what they look like; and this unconscious bias can be minimised by obscuring the specificity of these and other pieces of information.

I had tried to keep the co-participants' gender anonymous, because it is not relevant to my thesis, by using the pronoun 'they'. However, this made it very complicated and difficult to read. I have also tried to apply some guidelines suggested by the university known as 'avoidance'. The problem with this strategy is that the co-participants' voice would be hidden and there will be lack of accuracy as a result of restructuring their sentences where the subject becomes an object or an article, for instance. As a result of this, I have considered another option which is numbering the co-participants or using letters, such as co-participant one, coparticipant two… etc or co-participant A, co-participant B. I believe, this way of referring to the co-participants is not 'human' in that it objectifies them and does not account for their central role in the research, which I have emphasised previously.

Having considered various options and how far they can be used in my thesis, I have decided to keep the variable of gender for clarity reasons, and use gender pronouns ('he' and 'she' randomly, instead of the pronoun 'they'. I also use gender-neutral names to refer to the co-participants. The names are randomly listed as follows: Alex, Sam, Jo, Ryan, Jordan, Kyle, Ashley, Eli and Charlie.

The way I have used singular gender pronouns was by using 'gender-random generators' website. These are the steps I followed in choosing random gender for the co-

participants: I registered on the web site 'random generators'. I clicked on 'Search' on the right side of the page. I entered the term gender in the column 'Search Term:', then, I clicked on 'Search' (underneath). I chose 'Gender Picker', which was the second option among many options on the list. I clicked on 'Gender Picker' option and it provided the following details in a vertical way: 'Gender Picker' (on the top), 'Reference Name': Gender-Picker ID 4396 (underneath). Below this reference there was a table with two columns and three lines. The first column was called 'Roll' was presented in numbers '1' and '2' and referred to the movement of these numbers backward and forward in relation to each other. The second column called 'Result', referred to 'male' and 'female'. 'Roll 1' corresponded to 'male' and 'roll 2' corresponded to 'female'. Below this table there was 'Roll Random Result' which, by clicking on it, took me to 'Results for Gender' Picker'.

On a piece of paper, I listed the co-participants' pseudonyms randomly and I assigned each co-participant the gender ('male' or 'female') they 'correspond with' by clicking on 'Roll Again' which moves back and forth from 'Roll number 1' to 'roll number 2'. The results of this randomisation are as the following: Alex (male); Sam (female); Jo (male); Ryan (female); Jordan (male); Kyle (female); Ashley (male); Eli (female); Charlie (male). By using singular gender pronouns ('he', 'she'), it might occur to the reader that there is something specific about gender that this study examines. This is not the purpose of these pronouns. I, rather, use 'he' and 'she' to make the thesis clear and less complicated to read through. Some people might disagree with this perception and might suggest that there is something about 'gender' in the study. Their perception might be 'right', but I am not looking at gender nor pursuing it if it does exist in the eyes of some readers. This discussion relates to the constructivist nature of the research, where it is shaped by my own beliefs and orientation. In this vein Geertz (1973) argues that 'what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to…' (p. 9).

The following is a table which includes details about the co-participants and the dataset used in the study.

Co-participants	Interviews dates	Duration of the interviews	Locations of the interviews
Alex	16/05/2018	56 minutes and 11 seconds	An office in a university setting
Sam	22/05/2018	1 hour, 45 minutes and 34 seconds	Sam's office in a university setting
Ashley	29/05/2018	1 hour, 3 minutes, and three seconds	An office in a university setting
Kyle	29/05/2018	1 hour, 8 minutes, and 31 seconds	An office in a university
Eli	06/06/2018	1 hour, 18 minutes, and 15 seconds	Eli's office in a university setting
Charlie	25/06/2018	1 hour, 28 minutes, and 30 seconds	A café in a town centre
Jo	28/06/2018	1 hour, 27 minutes, and 5 seconds	Jo's office in a university setting
Jordan	19/07/2018	1 hour, and 18 seconds	An office in a university setting
Ryan	03/08/2018	1 hour, and 23 seconds	Ryan's office in a university setting

2.7. Recruitment of the co-participants

I was able to identify some of the co-participants through some research events, while some other co-participants were suggested by my supervisory panel. I sent an e-mail invitation to fourteen academics asking them if they were willing to take part in this study (see Appendix one). I had nine positive replies. After I heard back from the co-participants, I suggested that we meet individually, in order to introduce myself and talk to them about the research, as well as to establish rapport with them. Despite the fact that I had explained who I am, and the research focus in the e-mail invitation I sent to the co-participants, I sought to meet them before the interview meetings as it did not sound 'right' to me to meet them on the day of the interviews. Also, prior to meeting the co-participants, I sent them the ethics documents which consist of a co-participant information sheet, which contains open information about the research and the ethical considerations that I will take to ensure

their full anonymity and protection. I also sent them the consent form, which they signed after the first meetings. Copies of these documents are in Appendix two.

2.7.1. Establishing rapport- first meeting

The first meeting with the co-participants was an open discussion that lasted between seven minutes and one hour. Most of the meetings took place at a university and one meeting in a café in a public place. The co-participants and I negotiated places for the meeting to ensure their comfort. In these meetings, I arrived earlier at the site and I chose to sit in a place where I could see people coming to the site from all directions. After each first meeting, I took notes about what the co-participants talked about. The following is a brief account of the first meetings and the notes I took afterwards. The meetings with the co-participants are presented on the basis of where they took place.

The first meetings with Alex, Kyle, Sam, Jo, Ashley and Jordan took place separately at a university site. The meeting with Alex lasted for an hour. The prevailing notions that he talked about were his physical traits, skin colour, language, 'accent', 'culture', 'colonialism' and family. The duration of the meeting with Kyle was approximately twenty minutes. She talked about terms, such as 'colonialism' and 'postcolonialism', skin colour, 'accent', and 'Britishness'. I met with Sam for forty-five minutes. What she talked about was physical traits in general, the intersection between her academic profile and her personal profile, the importance of religious sameness. She also talked about the place she comes from and, what she referred to as, 'British culture'.

I saw Jo for twelve minutes. In this meeting he did not talk much, he just asked me what I wanted him to do. The meeting with Ashley lasted for approximately forty-five minutes. Among the things that he talked about were feeling 'home' in 'Britain', affiliation with the country that he comes from and dissociation from it in some other cases, and 'British superiority as a 'legitimate'. The meeting with Jordan lasted for half an hour and the things that he talked about were 'belonging', 'accent', and the relationship between his lived experiences and his area of specialism.

The first meeting with Eli and Ryan took place in their offices, separately. The meeting with Eli lasted for seven minutes. Among the things that she talked about were 'home' country, physical traits, 'accent' and drawing boundaries between where she comes from

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and 'Britain'. The duration of the meeting with Ryan was about eight minutes. In this meeting, I could clearly see that she was reserved. Last, but not least, I met with Charlie in a café for approximately an hour. The things that he talked about were language variation where he comes from, language as an important aspect in self-identification in addition to food, and the notion of 'home'.

What I interpret as emotions were prevailing in these meetings in that they were common among the co-participants and expressed differently in their ways of talking about themselves. Emotions are an important part of how I make sense of the data. This is also discussed in section 2.11.

At the end of these meetings, I asked the co-participants to sign the consent forms, which I signed as well. Also, I negotiated with the co-participants dates and locations for the interview meetings.

2.8. Negotiating the interview setting

I asked the co-participants about the times and the places that they felt comfortable conducting the interview. I suggested a small office, which I was offered by my supervisor to conduct the interviews at. Four co-participants preferred to be interviewed in their offices, whereas another four agreed to meet in the place that I suggested (a small office). One coparticipant wanted to be interviewed in a café.

2.8.1. Interview meetings: semi-structured interviews

The duration of the semi-structured interview meetings was between fifty-six minutes and an hour and forty-five minutes. Having met the co-participants before the actual interviews, created a comfortable atmosphere during the interview meetings. Also, what some of the coparticipants said in the first meetings, mentioned in the previous section, was a thread to pursue the interaction in a more elaborated way. Therefore, pursuing the interaction with the coparticipants was triggered when I first met them, where I began to see how they construct their 'realities' of who they are, and which continued throughout the research process.

2.8.2. Dealing with the semi-structured interviews

After each interview meeting, I took notes of the prevailing ideas that the co-participants stressed when talking about themselves. This helped me keep updated and refreshed with the aspects that the co-participants drew upon to construct their 'realities'. Also, when transcribing and reflecting on the first two semi-structured interviews, there were some aspects that emerged which were investigated in the interviews with other co-participants.

Another way of dealing with the semi-structured interviews concerns the pseudo names for the co-participants, which are discussed in section 2.6. In the first meeting with the coparticipants, I discussed with them how they want to be presented in the study. The majority of the co-participants suggested that I choose pseudo names for them, whereas two coparticipants said that they do not mind revealing their names. I have decided to anonymise all the co-participants' names by choosing gender-neutral names, which I have selected randomly, as explained in section 2.6.

Furthermore, as I have shown in section 2.6., I have anonymised details about the coparticipants that could identify them, such as their 'national backgrounds', specific reference to skin colour and 'accent', their professional affiliation and areas of expertise. This is by using general references to these and other specific information in square brackets. I also use '…', which indicates that some of the original words were cut, because, in my understanding, they are not important to the analysis.

In the following section, I discuss the thematic approach which I have used to make sense of the data.

2.9. Definition of thematic analysis

In this study I approach the data thematically to uncover the ways in which the co-participants construct their 'identities' and 'belonging'. The use of thematic analysis to present the data in a form of patterns is influenced mainly by Braun and Clarke (2006). Before moving to explaining how this approach operates, the following are closely similar definitions by Boyatzis (1998) and Braun and Clarke (2006), which set the ground for using thematic analysis in this study: Boyatzis (1998) defines thematic analysis as 'a way of seeing', which is performed in three stages; 'Recognising an important moment (seeing)…,

encoding it (seeing it as something) and finally interpretation…' (p.1). He also argues 'thematic analysis is a process for encoding qualitative information. The encoding requires an explicit "code"' (ibid., p. 4)**.** Braun and Clarke, (2006) state 'thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data' (p.6).

Boyatzis (1998) distinguishes between three approaches to consider in the application of thematic analysis; 'theory-driven', 'prior data or prior research data' and 'inductive or data-driven' (p.29). The first and the second approach are called 'deductive' ways of generating themes' because the themes are grounded in 'theory and prior research' (Boyatzis,1998, p.4). These two approaches are conducted through stages: sampling and design issues, developing themes and a code, which has three steps (generating a code, reviewing and revisiting the code in the context of the nature of the raw information, and determining the reliability of the codes and therefore the code), and validating and using the code, (Boyatzis,1998, pp.35-37).

The third approach concerns 'data-driven' (ibid b., p.29), or inductive thematic analysis, which this study uses. Boyatzis (1998) outlines a set of stages which are: sampling and design issues, developing themes and a code, which has five steps (reducing the raw information, identifying themes within subsamples, comparing themes across subsamples, creating a code, and determining the reliability of the code) and validating a code which consist of two steps (coding the rest of the raw information and validating the code statistically or qualitatively) (ibid., pp.41-50). (For more information, see Boyatzis, 1998, pp.29-53).

The codes in the 'data-driven' approach are grounded in the 'raw information', and the researcher interprets the meaning of the information they code to 'construct a theory' (ibid., p.30). The themes that I have identified and interpreted are based on the 'raw information', as well as on the way I perceive and make sense of this information. The themes identified led me to the literature, which is used to crystallise my understanding of the data, as well as position my study. Therefore, I approach the data inductively and I use Braun and Clarke (2006) approach because of its flexible stages.

Before discussing this approach and the way I use it in the following section, I discuss some challenges I faced when conducting inductive thematic analysis.

2.9.1. Challenges encountered in analysing the data inductively

During data analysis I encountered some challenges which mainly concern 'forcing the data', or what Boyatzis (1998) refers to as 'projection', which he explains as an attribution of a set of features which are our own construction to a person (pp.12-13). This mainly relates to my initial research interest in 'bilingualism' and 'identity', and the belief that because the co-participants are 'bilingual', it would be a salient element in the data. Even though the co-participants did not talk about the way they perceive themselves in relations to the languages they speak per se, I carried to the data analysis the assumption that 'bilingualism' is 'there'. The act of forcing the notion of 'bilingualism' into the data was overcome by stepping back from the data and trying to look at it through a less biased lens, as well as by sharing it after having anonymised it with research fellows in research forums.

2.9.2. Ways of thematic analysis: Braun and Clarke (2006) approach

The first step that Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest is concerned with the researcher's familiarisation with the data through immersion. This involves 'repeated reading' and identification of patterns by coding them (pp.16-17). The second phase deals with generating initial codes where the identification of as many codes as possible is encouraged, because these codes will be revised later during advanced stages of analysis (ibid., pp.18-19). The third stage of doing thematic analysis 'begins' when the codes identified in the second phase are organised into initial themes and combined with the relevant extracts (ibid., p.19). In this stage Braun and Clarke (2006), state that the relationship between themes starts to evolve (ibid.). Furthermore, the fourth stage is concerned with checking and refining those themes by revisiting the codes and the relevant extracts, as well as by reviewing the validity of these themes to the whole data (ibid., pp.20-21). In addition to this, the fifth stage deals with having a 'satisfactory thematic map', as well as with 'defining' and 'refining' the identified themes, which mean having a full picture of the 'essence' of individual themes, by revisiting the data extracts for each theme, writing about every theme and the story of each theme (ibid., p.22). The final stage lies in having a 'fully-worked-out' themes which include the story that the data tell, eternally and externally, as well as the argument of the research (ibid.).

In suggesting the principles of thematic analysis discussed above Braun and Clarke (2006), citing Patton, (1990), state that these outlined processes are 'not rules' (p.16). They rather represent 'basic precepts' to be applied flexibly in relation to the research questions and data set (ibid.). Also, other researchers such as Coffey and Atkinson (1996); and Atkinson and Delamont (2008), suggest that there is no single way of analysing qualitative data, and that researchers should engage with the analysis in a rigorous and creative manner (pp.51-52; p.285).

2.9.3. The research approach of using thematic analysis

In this section I present the way I approached thematic analysis which is, as stated earlier, influenced by Braun and Clarke (2006). While they propose six steps presented in the above section, my analysis of the data is organised around two main phases, and each phase consists of steps which I have taken to enable myself to generate data and organise it in a way that forms a storyline. The first phase is about analysing the co-participants' discussion when I met them for the first time, as well as during the interviews. This consists of writing notes of interesting points, pursuing these notes and generating further questions in the interview meetings. The second phase of data analysis revolves around further analysing the data after the interview meetings. This was accomplished by transcribing, indexing, drawing connections between the data, revisiting the whole data, organising the selected data into a table, and further arranging this data in A3 paper.

Having said this, I have discussed thematic analysis around two main phases instead of applying the six stages suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) because there is no one way of doing thematic analysis, and that these two phases, including the steps of each phase, demonstrate the ways in which I have responded to the emergence of the patterns in the data, and how I have organised it to capture the core focus of the thesis. The two phases of thematic analysis are further explained below.

2.9.3.1. Analysis during the research meetings: generating questions

The analysis of the co-participants' interaction began when I met them for the first time for an open discussion. Braun and Clarke (2006) state 'the process starts when the analyst

begins to notice, and look for, patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in the data – this may be during data collection' (p.15). When pursuing this interaction, which might be considered as a sort of analysis, I could clearly notice that some of the aspects that the co-participants drew upon in the first meetings were emphasised in the semi-structured interview meetings. However, there were some other entities that emerged in these meetings. Therefore, I suggest that I got engaged in the data analysis at different levels during the data collection process. For example, as stated earlier, I took notes after every meeting with the co-participants and these notes were used to pursue, as well as to prompt interaction with the co-participants.

During the semi-structured interview meetings, I was constantly working out what the coparticipants say and trying to generate questions from what they said. For example, there were some ambiguous moments where I could not work out what the co-participants meant. In order to address this ambiguity, I sometimes rephrased their statements in ways such as 'so, if I get you right by (what the co-participant said) you mean (what I seem to understand); 'so, what you are saying is (make an interpretation of the co-participants' statements).

Also, in some situations the co-participants made statements followed by physical gestures that readers might not understand because, I think, the meaning of what the co-participants said resides in the non-verbal expressions they made. I had to 'push' them to explain what they meant by prompting them to turn their gestures into words. An example of this is Kyle, who while saying that she thinks of herself as 'British' because she has a British passport, made a gesture with her shoulders (shrugging them) and, what I interpret as, a relaxed and challenging facial expression, which I found ambiguous.

As I felt the necessity to get this non-verbal expression translated into words, I asked Kyle: 'So, as long as you have a British passport, you are British?'. This is not because Kyle's physical expression and body language are not important, but because I wanted this non-verbal communication to come into articulation in her own words. Her explanation of this statement is discussed in the following chapter. The reason I highlight these instances is to show with illustration that working out the interaction with the co-participants takes different forms and is part of analysing the data, because it involves trying to understand the meaning of what is said verbally, as well as non-verbally.

2.9.3.2. Analysis after the interview meetings: transcribing and indexing

The analysis of the data continues to operate, but at the different level of transcribing and indexing, which I have done simultaneously. After every interview meeting, I transcribed the interviews, which allowed me to experience details of the interview meetings again. This made it easy to make sense of the transcripts and remember details such as such physical gestures and laughter, which are important to the analysis. While transcribing, I put notes and comments under the extracts, which I found important. Also, during the transcription phase, I revisited other interview transcripts that I had already transcribed to draw connections between the data. I suggest here that there is interconnectedness between these different phases of the data analysis, in that they were not worked out in transition. This is supported by the statement which explains that thematic analysis is not a linear process and that it rather requires a back-and-forth process throughout the analysis phases (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.16).

When I finished transcribing the interviews, I was, to a certain extent, familiar with the content, as well as with some specificities of the interviews in terms of who said what; how frequently some aspects were talked about and when. This gave me a general idea about where the study was heading in relation to the data. I moved to look at the data in deeper and organised ways by creating a table, which I named 'a table of thematic analysis'. In this table I grouped the extracts, that I have identified during the transcription phase and other extracts, which I have identified after reading the transcription multiple times, into potential chapters and sections. The table helped me begin to identify the data chapters and it has constantly changed throughout the analysis. The final version of the table of thematic analysis, which matches with how the data chapters are sequenced, is provided in Appendix four.

The table of thematic analysis was very long, and it was difficult for me to follow the link between the data. Also, making changes in the table was difficult as the table format kept changing. Therefore, I cut the grouped themes, sub-themes and the relevant interview extracts that constitute each chapter into separate pieces, and I stuck them into A3 paper using blue tack, see Appendix five. This strategy helped me to look at the data holistically

by putting the chapters next to each other and reading them altogether. This strategy also enabled me to move the themes and sub-themes, as well as the extracts easily.

 After establishing the data chapters with the relevant themes, sub-themes and interview extracts, I moved some of the themes and interview extracts around. Some of the interview extracts are used more than once. I also revisited the data set to see how far I covered the 'full' picture of the themes. This discursive process emphasises that 'analysis involves a constant moving back and forth between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data that you are analysing, and the analysis of the data that they you are producing' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.15).

Based on this discussion, I suggest that the way I approached the data in this study relates to the outlined principles by Braun and Clarke (2006). This is because the way I analysed the data is based on the stages they suggest, which involves a back-and-forth process in understanding the data set, identifying the 'realities' that form the core of the data; analysing the relevance of those 'realities' and the implications they hold in relation to the study by revising the data and the passages identified to depict the picture of the data (ibid., p.22). The final stage which is the writing-up (ibid.) will be presented in section 2.11.

Having said this, in this process of identifying themes and interpreting them in relation to the focus of the study, I am heavily involved in the thematic interpretation of the data in the sense that themes do not 'systematically fall out or suddenly appear but are 'extracted by the researcher' (Germain, 1986, p.158). This view is also supported by Braun and Clarke (2019) who suggest that themes and their analysis are 'creative and interpretive stories about the data' created by the researcher (p. 594).

2.10. The construction of the data

This study has undergone a change in focus as a result of what has emerged from the data. As explained in section 2.9.1., I began this thesis with the assumption that, what I interpret as, 'bilingualism' might be one of the major aspects of the thesis because of my own interest in this area, as well as the co-participants' 'bilingual' background. However, when I asked the coparticipants about the contexts in which they use English language and the other languages they speak, which relate to where they come from, and how far the use of these

languages relates to how they perceive themselves, they did not talk about 'bilingualism'. They rather talked about 'accent' and therefore a different image has emerged. This new image, which I have pursued, based on what has emerged from the data, concerns 'accent' a lens through which the coparticipants believe they are perceived. The discussion about 'accent' and other major aspects which have emerged from the data are discussed in the data chapters, and further discussed in light of the literature in chapter six, seven, and eight.

Also, in this study I do not investigate the individual stories of the co-participants just to gain an understanding of each co-participant's experiences. I rather bring their lived experiences together and put them into interaction by juxtaposing them in constructing a storyline (Geertz, 1973, p.6). Pursuing the co-participants' stories by bringing the instances they have talked about together into interaction allowed me to construct a holistic picture of the data. Further, the construction of data resides in an interactional process between me, as a researcher, and the co-participants, which I have emphasised throughout. Therefore, I am aware that my background and my lived experiences influence the interpretation of the data. However, by pursuing the co-participants' stories, rather than my own assumptions, enables me to analyse the data less subjectively.

2.11. Writing the data chapters

I suggest that there is a degree of ethnographic engagement in this study which concerns the emotions I was able to observe when the co-participants talk about themselves. This observation is important to note as it is omnipresent in how I interpret the interview extracts and some of the notes I took in contexts other than the interview meetings. This is in the sense that the images of the co-participants of how they talk about themselves, and their lived experiences are part of my field notes. The element of emotions was a common term that I noted in my diary after each interview meeting, as explained in section 2.7.1.

The ways in which the co-participants talk about their lived experiences in terms of being othered and how they situate themselves in the world was characterised by calmness and resistance. Despite this atmosphere of calmness in the way in which they talked, their emotions were strong enough to make me sense them and become omnipresent into how I look at the data. In this regard, Ahmed (2014) argues that emotions are 'shaped by the

contact we have with others' (p.4). These emotions were projected in different ways to communicate resistance and ownership of self-identification. The co-participants' tone of voice and body movement varied throughout the interviews. Sometimes their voice went down and in other instances their tone could be strong. Sometimes they sat still and 'just' talked, where their voice and how they looked when they talked spoke out. In other moments they used gestures and facial expressions while speaking. In this vein, Ahmed (2014) argues 'emotions' are 'intentional' [and that] '… "the aboutness" of emotions means they involve a stance on the world, or a way of apprehending the world' (p.7). This observation of how the co-participants engage with what they talk about is an important part of the way in which I interpret the data.

The other way of writing about the data chapters concerns how they were arranged the way they are. I have arranged the themes and sub-themes a number of times, which enabled me to have a clearer picture of the data and construct a storyline. In this regard, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) argue that 'analysis is not simply a matter of classifying, categorising, coding, or collating data. [It] is about the representation or reconstruction of social phenomena' (p.108). The data is organised into three chapters by pursuing the different bits of the data that connect together. Each chapter includes one main theme and sub-themes. In chapter three, under the thematic heading 'multiplicity in 'identity' perception', I have presented perceptions of the coparticipants from different perspectives; how they perceive themselves which also involves how they believe they are perceived by, what I interpret as, 'some white British' people and their family members. This is presented under the sub-headings: 'dialectic 'identity' perception: centring and decentring physical traits' and 'who the co-participants' are in their families' eyes?'. Then, I present data about 'the co-participants' 'realities' of 'immersion'' which is also constructed by talking about how they believe they are perceived. In this chapter the categories of, what I interpret as 'the other', 'race' and 'accent' as salient in how the co-participants talk about themselves.

Chapter four and chapter five are constructed via pursuing the data by asking questions about what has previously emerged, as well as by grouping the bits of data that connects together, which has emerged without me asking about it.

Chapter four, which is thematically established as 'negotiating 'belonging'' is a continuation of chapter three with a different, but related content. It draws from some

themes which have emerged from chapter three. The categories of 'the other', 'race' and 'accent', which are salient in the previous chapter, are also salient in the first section of chapter four. It then moves away from 'self' and 'other' relationship and towards the co-participants' self-identification with the wider world where 'new' categories emerge, such as the notion of 'home'. Section 4.2. 'disturbed 'integration'' has emerged from section two, in chapter three, which I have decided to pursue by asking the co-participants about their perceptions of 'integration'. I have also pursued the sub-theme in section 4.3., ''hybrid' sense of 'home'', which has emerged from section 4.2., chapter four. I have pursued this sub-theme by grouping the data about the notion of 'home' together. Further to this, I have pursued the data in section 4.4. and section 4.5., which have the sub-headings of 'the familiar stranger' and 'a personal interest in the subject matter', respectively. This is by asking the co-participants for further details, grouping the data that corresponds to each sub-theme and using notes from my research diary.

Chapter five, under the sub-heading, 'ties', is also a continuation of the previous chapter, in that it moves away from the co-participants' sense of who they are in relation to their social environment, to empathising the significance non-human entities in the process of making sense of themselves. It is organised into four sections. Section 5.2., 'the significance of names', as well as section 5.3., 'virtual presence in the places the co-participants come from', both emerged from the interviews, and I decided to pursue them by asking the co-participants about their relevance, as well as by using notes from my research diary. Section 5.4., under the sub-theme, 'does dying or resting somewhere specific matter?', was triggered by the sub-theme in chapter four, section 4.4. in that, I assumed that that the co-participants longing to go back 'home' after retirement might probably mean that they want to be in these places forever. I associated this assumption with death, which I have put into interrogation by asking the co-participants about whether or not they have somewhere specific that they want to die or rest in. Last, but not least, section 5.5., 'food', has emerged in chapter four, section 4.5., which I have pursued by asking the co-participants, as well as by using notes from my research diary.

Having said this, I have organised the data chapters in relation to each other and within each chapter by making decisions about pursuing the data that, I believe, depicts the focus

of this study.

The following section further demonstrate this.

2.11.1. Initial interview questions and the development of themes in the interview

In this section I provide the list of initial interview questions, and I explain how themes were developed from these questions in the interviews. In doing this, I draw on an excerpt from the co- participant Kyle.

1.   Can you tell me about yourself? how do you think of yourself?
2.   What could you say about your 'immersion' in Britain?
3.   How do you perceive yourself in relation to being bilingual?
4.   How do you position yourself in Britain and in the country you come from?
5.   Do you think the practice of naming is important in our self-perception?

The following first interview question has resulted in an articulation of the way Kyle perceives herself and the way she believes she is perceived by 'some white British' people. This interview question has also yielded a projection of Kyle's sense of 'belonging' which she constructs in relation to the non-human category of 'home'.

Researcher: Can you tell me about yourself? how do you think of yourself?

Kyle: I come from [a continent] and I have been living here since [a long period of time]. Before coming here, I always felt I belong here even before I experienced living here.

Researcher: Ok

Kyle: I sometime go about culture and Britain, and how the idea of my own identity. I say [reference to a skin colour] person is ascribed in my skin that once people see me, the first thought is not associate me being British or English or whatever. They associate me with somebody who does come from outside. Now, for a white person it doesn't matter if your parents have been and whatever or wherever you are or where they come from, whereas, for us even that association is not there. So, for me, the identity is ascribed. Before I even speak, you will already put me somewhere and the same with the whole thing about being British. You tell people you are British; they say oh no, but where are you from? I'm like;

I'm British. Where are you from? I'm what do you mean where I am from? I'm from [a place in Britain]. I live in [a place in Britain]. They want you to say that I'm from [the country Kyle comes from], yeah. So, you get this kind of people who are just ignorant people.

Researcher: Ok

Kyle: I am British because I have the passport (making a physical gesture of shrugging shoulders and facial expression, while laughing).

Researcher: So as long as you have the British passport, you are British?

Kyle: well (deep breath) yes, no, I mean identity is a very em fluid thing isn't it? It changes as well. Well, I always felt I mean see don't get me wrong. I mean, legally this passport is the legal thing that's OK you're British. When the British came to colonise most of the colonised world, I mean really [the country Kyle comes from] particularly, we were told that we are British subjects.

Kyle: We were subjects of the crone we were not [a nationality reflecting the country Kyle comes from] per se in fact we were told that we are British subjects so what change when did that change, did he ask for permission to change that? did they did he ask if we want to be British subject right it was by force.

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I argue that the following data, answers interview question four: 'how do you position yourself in the UK and the country you come from?' without me asking Kyle directly about it.

Kyle: Well, I grew up kind of with whole notion that, you know as from colonies, the wealth of the colonies, the wealth of our people was used to build this country. So, I always thought I had a place here…. I mean, if you think of it, the whole colonial interference was about, you know, taking raw material from [a continent] and elsewhere and bringing it here to build all the great things you see today. So, for me, it was always like, well, a part of home that didn't quite know about and I have never experienced before. So, it was the first time, but I always knew I kind of belong there (laughing). I always felt I had a stake, you know, to have a stake (gesture with hands that shows something that is rooted). So, I have something, I could have a claim to be here.

Researcher: Ok

Kyle: I like em history and I read a lot about people who fought colonialism and stuff like that, so yeah, I'm at home in [the country Kyle comes from] and I'm at home here, em, maybe is my personality. Wherever I feel comfortable in a place its home, but I'm talking about home in terms of not just where I'm good there, where I feel comfortable. But is that kind of home in the sense of feeling strange, which I felt about coming here. I felt like it was my home. I had a stake to it, but I didn't know how anything was, everything was confusing and stuff like that.

Kyle: Well, there is always a [reference to where Kyle comes from] thing. I think, when people come from any culture, there is always something about that culture that stays with them. So, there is always a [reference to where she comes from] thing, but I don't resent anybody because, for me, I think, is pointless. I mean the people that did the terrible things of slavery and colony are long dead. It's not about the people; it's really about the establishment.

While the first part of the data above revolves around the theme; 'multiplicity in 'identity' perceptions' (chapter three) in terms of 'self' and 'other' perspectives wherein 'race' is the category through which Kyle is perceived by others, the second part of the data concerns the theme of 'negotiating 'belonging'' (chapter four) , which has emerged in relation to the concept of 'home', and which has become a sub-theme in itself. This manifestation of the notion of 'home' emerges in a way which reflects Kyle's sense of 'belonging' in the UK, the place she comes, and other places. The way the data emerges in relation to each other and within each other indicates a shift from human relations, where perceptions of Kyle through the lens of 'race' by others are salient, to human to non-human relations manifested in the way Kyle projects her self-positioning in relation to the non-human category of 'home'. This is to say that there is movement away from 'self' and 'other' relations in the way Kyle articulates her sense of 'identity', and instead there is movement towards projecting her own sense of place by interacting with non-human entities, such as the notion of home.

From the above data, I emphasise my argument that Kyle's sense of 'belonging' which she constructs in relation to the notion of 'home' has answered interview question four:

'how do you position yourself in the UK and the country you come from?' without me asking Kyle directly about it. This is because she constructs her sense of 'belonging' in various places by drawing on the notion of 'home'.

Researcher: What could you say about your 'immersion' in Britain?

Kyle: For me, I think immersion in society is about, it's a deliberate thing. I mean let me give you an example. I will hold to [the country she comes from], I talk about people from [the country she comes from] because I know them better. I was an adult when I came here and some of them were adults when they came here. Well, I still speak with my (X)[5] accent. They speak with a British accent. To them, that's immersion because you listen to them you think they were born here. I made a deliberate choice that I am not going to try and learn the accent. I'm just going to try my best to speak as clear as I can, but I'm not going to try and copy the accent.

Kyle: So, I think immersion, for me, is more about you choose how you want to relate with the society you live in. But, knowingly that immersion doesn't mean, you know, obliterating and cleaning your own culture (gesture with hands, scrubbing one hand with the other). It's really seen as how your culture can intermingle, overlap and all that with the community you are living in (gesture with hands showing interconnection).

Researcher: Ok

Researcher: In what areas do you feel you are influenced by, and, do you feel you are influencing 'British culture'?

Kyle: In terms of the curriculum within my [a particular] programme, one of the things I have done is to introduce [a show about a continent]. Within that, some students would never know that [a continent] is somewhere. They think it is a city and stuff like that. Suddenly, they come across this module, you know, and they all study about the culture. They [an activity which relate to] that culture, you know, and have discussions around how things work within that culture and how it is different or similar to your own culture. For me, that's a massive influence on people because my students, some of them come from, even these students [from an ethnic group]. By [an ethnic group], I mean people whose parents are here maybe [some nationalities] and all that. Some of them come to our course and they learn things they've never learned before, you know. That's for me a massive way

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of influencing. I have friends as well who maybe, you know, they see something when they come to my house. I make, I don't make English food when they come to my house, I make [food where Kyle comes from].

The interrelationship between her area of expertise and her personal interest in it emerges here, which has become a sub-theme in itself; 'A personal interest in the subject matter', section 4.5. Also, the notion of food, which is a non-human element emerges here and has also become a sub-theme in itself; 'Food', section 5.5.

From this data, while Kyle discusses what 'immersion' in Britain means to her, she draws on other categories, which are her personal interest in teaching matters related to the country she comes from to her students in the UK, as well as the importance of the non-human category of food in her self-understanding and in projecting this to people around her. Therefore, these elements, that is the interrelationship between the personal and the professional, and the salience of food in Kyle's self-projection, have become sub-themes in themselves under different main themes; 'negotiating 'belonging', and 'ties', respectively.

Researcher: 3. How do you perceive yourself in relation to being 'bilingual'?

Kyle: I speak [a language spoken in the country Kyle comes from)

Researcher: When do you speak (a language spoken in the country Kyle comes from)? And when do you speak English? And how does this shift in language use makes you feel?

Kyle: I speak (a language spoken in the country she comes from) when I meet with my friends, and English. We mix our English, so we kind of half-half. With my family back home we speak (a language spoken in the country she comes from), my sisters, my parents. With my husband we speak English in (a language spoken in the country she comes from). So, it's kind of mixed again.

Researcher: How does this variety of language use make you feel?

[Silence]

Researcher: Do you think it has to do with showing an aspect of your identity?

Kyle: It's not really about showing anything, it's just who I am. It doesn't make me feel anything apart from, the only thing I can say in terms of feeling or anything is obviously

with (a language spoken in the country she comes from) is a richer language. You are able to express yourself in ways that sometimes you can't express in English.

Researcher: Mm

Kyle: So, I mean that's the only thing really. I don't feel anything about when I speak it or when I don't speak it.

The relationship between 'bilingualism' and Kyle's 'identity' perception does not appear to be relevant to her and other co-participants. What is important is rather 'accent' as shown in the data above, and throughout the thesis.

Researcher: 4. How do you position yourself in Britain and in the place you come from?

As shown above, I argue that this question is answered implicitly when Kyle talks about her sense of 'belonging' which she expresses in relation to the notion of 'home. Kyle's positioning is further manifested in the way she constructs the significance of names and food in projecting her sense of who she is, as shown below.

I have directly asked Kyle about the significance of naming in individuals' sense of who they are:

Researcher: 5. Do you think names are important in our self-perception?

Kyle: Em, so, names have meaning to the parents primarily, and what they believe at that time. Now some people can choose to behave like their names define them, that's fine, but, again, I think, that's because people think these are fixed. My name is 'Thank God' and I want to think I'm thankful all the time, but I know there are somethings that I don't feel thankful about. Now, does it mean my name is not my name? So, I mean, you can try to give up your name. I think, that's a good thing to aspire to do, but you should also be reflective well enough because life is not fixed.

Researcher: You have said that the names people have relate to the beliefs that their parents have in relation to what names they choose for their children. Can you tell me how this relate to your case?

Kyle: Because they are not English. Well, ok, not them, they are English because they were born here. I'm not English. Maybe, what reinforced for me was right from [the country Kyle comes from]. When I met my husband, I already said to him when we have kids, we are not going to have any doubts back in [where Kyle comes from]. So, I really had this thinking, but living here also reinforces it, for me, that, actually, they were born in this society, in England. One thing I wanted them to, if nothing else, is always remember where those names come from. For me, that's really important that's why I always say to them: well, I was the one who do so, and I make sure they do it as well.

Kyle: I know people who have come here and, actually, they've changed their names to English names, you know. Some people are here and mentally they are here and their kids, oh! we don't want people having difficulty calling their names and they give them English names. They even change their own names. I know people who have done.

Kyle: You know, I watch TV a lot and there are some really difficult names, aren't there? And they call them right all the time at least. I think, why is because they think they are important people. So, the fact that you don't get my name right and you call me something else; tell me that you don't think I'm important.

Researcher: You said that some people are mentally and physically here. Are you physically here but mentally there? Here I intervened in an attempt to go back to the previous statement (the one above the last extract) by generating a question from what Kyle has said to further explore Kyle's positioning in the UK and the place she comes from through naming.

Kyle: No, no, I want to be here mentally. I'm here mentally and physically, but what I'm saying is that my mental identity is not stuck in [the country Kyle comes from]. It's here. I'm here, but I recognise that I'm not going to whiten my identity to become British. I want to use my identity to become British. I want my identity to merge, to interact with it.

This question of the relevance of naming in our perception of who we are indicates that this non-human category is a central practice in Kyle's life. This is in the sense that it serves as a tie through which she maintains connection with the place she comes from, as well as interacts with the British context. Therefore, the theme 'ties' was developed to accommodate many sub-themes, including 'the significance of names', as shown above, as well as 'food', as will be shown below.

The notion of food and its close connection with the way Kyle projects herself has emerged above when she responded to my question: In what areas do you feel you are influenced by, and, do you feel you are influencing 'British culture'? I have pursued this connection by going back to Kyle's statement above about food. Having pursued the relevance of food in Kyle's personal life and the way she projects herself through this non-human entity has yielded more insights into this human to non-human relation, as well as an elaborated construction of this type of relationship.

Researcher: You have said that when have you British friends, you cook food [from the country Kyle comes from], instead of 'British food'. Can you tell me more about this?

Kyle: But I realised that if I were to be friend with some of the people I was meeting, who were British, I have to accept their food. They invite me to their house, I think, it needs bit salt. When people invite you to their house, you know, you just cover their food with salt and pepper. Gradually, I kind of said well, I've got and I actually began to enjoy food that way, because I find too much salt and pepper, are not good anyway.

Kyle: I don't find British food bland. When I first came, I used to put lots of pepper and salt. Now, I can eat it without, and I make it in my own house and things like that. So, I think immersion is about allowing some of what's in the culture to influence you, but also allow yourself to be an influence within the cultures, and people can learn and take this from you as well.

2.11.2. How I engaged with the co-participants during the interviews

The following is an example from the same excerpt that I used in the above section, which shows how I have engaged with the co-participants during the interviews. Following this, I offer a reflection on the possible influence of my questioning on their responses. After that, I also offer a reflection on my presence as a co-participant.

Researcher: Can you tell me about yourself? How do you think of yourself?

Kyle: I come from [a continent] and I have been living here since [a long period of time]. Before coming here, I always felt I belong here even before I experienced living here.

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Researcher: Ok

Kyle: I sometime go about culture and Britain, and how the idea of my own identity. I say [reference to a skin colour] person is ascribed in my skin that once people see me, the first thought is not associate me being British or English or whatever. They associate me with somebody who does come from outside. Now, for a white person it doesn't matter if your parents have been and whatever or wherever you are or where they come from, whereas, for us even that association is not there. So, for me, the identity is ascribed. Before I even speak, you will already put me somewhere and the same with the whole thing about being British. You tell people you are British; they say oh no, but where are you from? I'm like; I'm British. Where are you from? I'm what do you mean where I am from? I'm from [a place in Britain]. I live in [a place in Britain]. They want you to say that I'm from [the country Kyle comes from], yeah. So, you get this kind of people who are just ignorant people.

Researcher: Ok

Kyle: I am British because I have the passport (making a physical gesture of shrugging shoulders and facial expression, while laughing).

Researcher: So as long as you have the British passport, you are British?

This question, which I have generated based on what Kyle has said, serves to decode her physical gesture which is obviously not visible to the reader. I wanted the physical gesture she made to be translated into words. My interrogation of her physical gesture led to the following further explanation by Kyle:

Kyle: well (deep breath) yes, no, I mean identity is a very em fluid thing isn't it? It changes as well. Well, I always felt I mean see don't get me wrong. I mean, legally this passport is the legal thing that's OK you're British. When the British came to colonise most of the colonised world, I mean really [the country Kyle comes from] particularly, we were told that we are British subjects.

Kyle: We were subjects of the crone we were not [a nationality reflecting the country Kyle comes from] per se in fact we were told that we are British subjects so what change when

did that change, did he ask for permission to change that? did they did he ask if we want to be British subject right it was by force.

Kyle: Well, I grew up kind of with whole notion that, you know as from colonies, the wealth of the colonies, the wealth of our people was used to build this country. So, I always thought I had a place here…. I mean, if you think of it, the whole colonial interference was about, you know, taking raw material from [a continent] and elsewhere and bringing it here to build all the great things you see today. So, for me, it was always like, well, a part of home that didn't quite know about and I have never experienced before. So, it was the first time, but I always knew I kind of belong there (laughing). I always felt I had a stake, you know, to have a stake (gesture with hands that shows something that is rooted). So, I have something, I could have a claim to be here.

Researcher: Ok

Kyle: I like em history and I read a lot about people who fought colonialism and stuff like that, so yeah, I'm at home in [the country Kyle comes from] and I'm at home here, em, maybe is my personality. Wherever I feel comfortable in a place its home, but I'm talking about home in terms of not just where I'm good there, where I feel comfortable. But is that kind of home in the sense of feeling strange, which I felt about coming here. I felt like it was my home. I had a stake to it, but I didn't know how anything was, everything was confusing and stuff like that.

Kyle: Well, there is always a [reference to where Kyle comes from] thing. I think, when people come from any culture, there is always something about that culture that stays with them. So, there is always a [reference to where she comes from] thing, but I don't resent anybody because, for me, I think, is pointless. I mean the people that did the terrible things of slavery and colony are long dead. It's not about the people; it's really about the establishment.

Researcher: What could you say about your 'immersion' in Britain?

Kyle: For me, I think immersion in society is about, it's a deliberate thing. I mean let me give you an example. I will hold to [the country she comes from], I talk about people from [the country she comes from] because I know them better. I was an adult when I came here and some of them were adults when they came here. Well, I still speak with my (X)5 accent. They speak with a British accent. To them, that's immersion because you listen to them

you think they were born here. I made a deliberate choice that I am not going to try and learn the accent. I'm just going to try my best to speak as clear as I can, but I'm not going to try and copy the accent.

Kyle: So, I think immersion, for me, is more about you choose how you want to relate with the society you live in. But, knowingly that immersion doesn't mean, you know, obliterating and cleaning your own culture (gesture with hands, scrubbing one hand with the other). It's really seen as how your culture can intermingle, overlap and all that with the community you are living in (gesture with hands showing interconnection).

Researcher: Ok

Researcher: In what areas do you feel you are influenced by, and, do you feel you are influencing 'British culture'?

My question led to the emergence of the interrelationship between Kyle's personal and professional personas, which I called 'a personal interest in the subject matter' in section 4.5., as well as to the emergence of the importance of food in the way Kyle projects in her sense of who she is, which has become a sub-theme in itself, section 5.5.

Kyle: In terms of the curriculum within my [a particular] programme, one of the things I have done is to introduce [a show about a continent]. Within that, some students would never know that [a continent] is somewhere. They think it is a city and stuff like that. Suddenly, they come across this module, you know, and they all study about the culture. They [an activity which relate to] that culture, you know, and have discussions around how things work within that culture and how it is different or similar to your own culture. For me, that's a massive influence on people because my students, some of them come from, even these students [from an ethnic group]. By [an ethnic group], I mean people whose parents are here maybe [some nationalities] and all that. Some of them come to our course and they learn things they've never learned before, you know. That's for me a massive way of influencing. I have friends as well who maybe, you know, they see something when they come to my house. I make, I don't make English food when they come to my house, I make [food where Kyle comes from].

Researcher: How do you perceive yourself in relation to being 'bilingual'?

Kyle: I speak [a language spoken in the country Kyle comes from)

Researcher: When do you speak (a language spoken in the country Kyle comes from)? And when do you speak English? And how does this shift in language use makes you feel?

Kyle: I speak (a language spoken in the country she comes from) when I meet with my friends, and English. We mix our English, so we kind of half-half. With my family back home we speak (a language spoken in the country she comes from), my sisters, my parents. With my husband we speak English in (a language spoken in the country she comes from). So, it's kind of mixed again.

Researcher: How does this variety of language use make you feel?

[Silence]

Researcher: Do you think it has to do with showing an aspect of your identity?

Kyle: It's not really about showing anything, it's just who I am. It doesn't make me feel anything apart from, the only thing I can say in terms of feeling or anything is obviously with (a language spoken in the country she comes from) is a richer language. You are able to express yourself in ways that sometimes you can't express in English.

Researcher: Mm

Kyle: So, I mean that's the only thing really. I don't feel anything about when I speak it or when I don't speak it.

Researcher: How do you position yourself in Britain and in the place you come from?

As I have argued in the above section, this question is answered implicitly by Kyle above when she drew on the notion of 'home' and 'belonging' in projecting her self-perception.

I have directly asked Kyle about the significance of naming in individuals' sense of who they are:

Researcher: Do you think the practice of naming is important in our self-perception?

Kyle: Em, so, names have meaning to the parents primarily, and what they believe at that time. Now some people can choose to behave like their names define them, that's fine, but, again, I think, that's because people think these are fixed. My name is 'Thank God' and I want to think I'm thankful all the time, but I know there are somethings that I don't feel

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thankful about. Now, does it mean my name is not my name? So, I mean, you can try to give up your name. I think, that's a good thing to aspire to do, but you should also be reflective well enough because life is not fixed.

Researcher: You have said that the names people have relate to the beliefs that their parents have in relation to what names they choose for their children. Can you tell me how this relates to your case?

Kyle: Because they are not English. Well, ok, not them, they are English because they were born here. I'm not English. Maybe, what reinforced for me was right from [the country Kyle comes from]. When I met my husband, I already said to him when we have kids, we are not going to have any doubts back in [where Kyle comes from]. So, I really had this thinking, but living here also reinforces it, for me, that, actually, they were born in this society, in England. One thing I wanted them to, if nothing else, is always remember where those names come from. For me, that's really important that's why I always say to them: well, I was the one who do so, and I make sure they do it as well.

Kyle: I know people who have come here and, actually, they've changed their names to English names, you know. Some people are here and mentally they are here and their kids, oh! we don't want people having difficulty calling their names and they give them English names. They even change their own names. I know people who have done.

Kyle: You know, I watch TV a lot and there are some really difficult names, aren't there? And they call them right all the time at least. I think, why is because they think they are important people. So, the fact that you don't get my name right and you call me something else; tell me that you don't think I'm important.

Researcher: You said that some people are mentally and physically here. Are you physically here but mentally there?

Here I intervened in an attempt to go back to Kyle's previous statement about people being mentally in the UK by generating a question from what Kyle has said to further explore Kyle's positioning in the UK and the place she comes from through naming.

Kyle: No, no, I want to be here mentally. I'm here mentally and physically, but what I'm saying is that my mental identity is not stuck in [the country Kyle comes from]. It's here.

I'm here, but I recognise that I'm not going to whiten my identity to become British. I want to use my identity to become British. I want my identity to merge, to interact with it.

As shown above, the notion of food and its close connection with the way Kyle projects herself emerges while she articulates the interrelationship between her area of speciality and her own personal interest in it in a way which appears central in her life. I have pursued this connection by going back to Kyle statement about food. This pursuit led to more insights into the relationship between food and Kyle's self-positioning, which has become a sub-theme in itself.

Researcher: You have said that when you have British friends, you cook food [from the country Kyle comes from], instead of 'British food'. Can you tell me more about this?

Kyle: But I realised that if I were to be friend with some of the people I was meeting, who were British, I have to accept their food. They invite me to their house, I think, it needs bit salt. When people invite you to their house, you know, you just cover their food with salt and pepper. Gradually, I kind of said well, I've got and I actually began to enjoy food that way, because I find too much salt and pepper, are not good anyway.

Kyle: I don't find British food bland. When I first came, I used to put lots of pepper and salt. Now, I can eat it without, and I make it in my own house and things like that. So, I think immersion is about allowing some of what's in the culture to influence you, but also allow yourself to be an influence within the cultures, and people can learn and take this from you as well.

From the above example of the way I interacted with Kyle, it is evident that, as I have stated and demonstrated in section 2.2., I am a co-participant and my 'realities' are omnipresent in the meaning-making process. This can be manifested in the following reflections of the influence of my questions on Kyle's responses and on my presence as a co-participant:

The first question, which is broad in nature, serves as an introduction into the interview and sets up the scope of the research in a greater or lesser extent. Based on Kyle's responses, I generated questions as shown above. When Kyle made a physical gesture of shrugging her shoulders and facial expression, while laughing (see above), I found this form of

communication crucial in the way Kyle talks about herself. Therefore, I generated the question of 'So as long as you have the British passport, you are British? as an attempt to decode her physical gesture, which is obviously not visible to the reader. I wanted the physical gesture she made to be translated into words through which further insights into the relationship between being 'British' and having a British passport can be explored. My interrogation of her physical gesture led to a more elaborated discussion of how Kyle talks about herself (see the transcript above).

Another reflection on the influence of my questioning on Kyle's responses concerns the leading questions about 'immersion', and the relationship between 'bilingualism' and self-perception, and the relevance of naming in our sense of who we are. Even though I have acknowledged that these questions reflect my own personal interest in exploring them in relation to the co-participants' experiences, there are some implications of this. The first implication is that the way I asked about these entities might suggest that I have in a way stirred the discussion to these areas which I wanted to explore and assumed these are relevant to the co-participants. The second implication concerns the idea that the data about these categories would probably have not emerged if I did not ask specifically about it, and rather other data could have emerged. However, I have mitigated this influence by letting the co-participants' views, as shown in the example above with Kyle, acquire the centre by making the discussion about these entities reflect the way that they are constructed by the co-participants as will be shown throughout the data chapters.

A further reflection of my questioning is about my choice of the information which I have pursued. This is in the sense that, during the interviews Kyle and the other co-participants talked about many things. However, I have decided to pursue specific information by asking them about it, while leaving out some other information. This is shown above when I explicitly asked Kyle to elaborate on the idea of her influencing 'British culture' and letting herself be influenced by it. Moreover, my influence on Kyle's responses is also manifested in my interest to pursue the importance of 'food' in Kyle's self-projection by bringing back her previous statement about food in my own terms: 'You have said that when you have British friends, you cook food [from the country Kyle comes from], instead of 'British food'. Can you tell me more about this?. My question enabled me to gain more understanding of the importance of food in Kyle's self-understanding.

My questioning has influenced my position as a co-participant in the sense that I have learnt from the co-participants' 'realities', including my own 'realities' that contested concepts such as 'identity' and 'belonging' are open questions, and that the way in which such entities are constructed is dynamic and constantly shaped and reshaped by various factors. Also, as demonstrated in section 2.11.1., in the sense that there is a give-and-take relationship between the co-participants and myself, the questions which I have asked and generated during the interviews have enabled me to reconsider my views on the co-participants. This is in the sense that, as I have shown in section 2.2.1., and further demonstrated in the data chapters, I have shifted from perceiving them as 'long term' residents, and '(im)migrants', and I have instead embraced and foregrounded their own self-labelling and positionality in the world which transcend these labels. Further to this, as shown and emphasised in section 2.2., 2.11.1., and this section, my questioning has certainly shaped the meaning construction of the thesis. This approach to interviews stresses the subjective nature of this research, as well as the inevitable interconnectedness between my worldviews and the co-participants' viewpoints, which I have stressed and demonstrated throughout the thesis, such as in in section, 2.2., and 2.11.1.

2.12. Challenges in writing about the data

One of the challenges I encountered in presenting the data was dealing with the length of some of the interview extracts. I preserved the length of some extracts because of my perception that their length shows interconnectedness between various important bits of the data. However, I have reduced the length of some other extracts in which I found unnecessary information. By doing so, I have tried to create a balance between the extracts and the analysis as in some instances the extracts could outnumber the analysis because of some information which is unnecessary.

The other challenge concerns maintaining the focus of the study, while presenting data about discrimination against some of the co-participants in a university. The university setting happens to be among the contexts which they chose to talk about in terms of being othered. In other words, even though I have discussed some data about perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' in a university setting, the thesis does not investigate the experiences of the

co-participants within the context of the university. It is, rather, an investigation of their 'identities' and 'belonging' in their personal lives, *outside* of the university context.

Therefore, overall, the data that I will discuss in the following chapters concerns largely non-university context, which serves as the focus of the study. Whereas, the data about what some of the co-participants tend to experience at a university in terms of being perceived on the basis of 'race' and 'accent', is an example of what might happen in others contexts, such as the workplace.

2.13. Ethical considerations

I conclude this chapter by discussing ethics in this study. Throughout this research I have considered ethics at the level of complying with the university formal procedures, such as university ethics committee's approval to pursue this research, see appendix two. I have also considered ethics at the level of practice; I ensured the co-participants' protection during the research process and that no co-participant came to harm 'as a result of the actual process of doing the research and/or through publications of the findings' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.213). This is achieved by ensuring their comfort and agreement to meet in the places I suggested, respecting their preference to meet in the places they suggested and their willingness to share with me what they chose to say about their lived experiences, which can be, in some cases, personal. As explained in section 2.6., I have anonymised the co-participants' 'identity' by using pseudonyms and not revealing other information which might identify them, such as their 'national backgrounds', areas of specialism and specific description of what they look like and so forth.

I also shared the data, my interpretation of it, and the way I refer to the co-participants with five of them. Three co-participants gave me the permission to use their data without them reviewing it. These are their replies to my email asking them if they wanted to review their data and my interpretation of it: Eli: 'I trust you with the analysis, I don't need to see it, but if you want, you can send it by email', (email exchange). Alex: 'Don't worry about sending me the extracts, I am sure you will have interpreted them fairly', (email exchange). Ryan: 'I am happy not to review your data and interpretation', (email exchange). Charlie did not reply to my email which I sent twice to him. I informed him that in case I do not

hear back from him, I will assume that he gives me permission to use his data and my interpretation of it without him reviewing it.

As far as the other people I talk about in this research are concerned, such as Louis, Kim, Leo and George, I have also anonymised their real names, and I only kept information which serves the purpose of section 1.8.2., which is to show how this research has emerged by referring to where these people come from in a broader sense.

Chapter Three: Multiplicity in 'identity' perception

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I explore, what I interpret as, multiplicity in 'identity' perception, which involves the processes involved in the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves, and how they believe they are perceived by their social environment. In the second and third sections, under the thematic headings of 'dialectic 'identity' perception: centring and decentring physical traits', and 'who the co-participants are in their families' eyes?', I examine how the coparticipants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by, what I interpret as, 'some white British' people and their family members. In the fourth section, which is sub-headed: 'the co-participants' 'realities' of 'immersion'', I discuss the ways in which they construct 'immersion'. I use the notion of 'immersion' in an attempt to make sense of the ways in which they navigate their ways into Britain regardless of perceptions which might alienate them.

The data in this chapter shows that perceptions of skin colour, which I interpret as 'race', alongside the category of 'accent', which I theorise in relation to 'native speakerism' in chapter seven, are salient categories in how they appear to be perceived by 'the other', a term that I use to refer to 'some white British' people, as well as the co-participants' family members. These categories are talked about in the sense that they appear to be markers of, what I interpret as, 'British national identity'. The data also shows that the co-participants construct their 'identities' in ways which involve the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance and agency. Relationality manifests itself in terms of the omnipresence of 'the other' in how the co-participants talk about their 'identities', which are situated within 'self' and 'other' relations. They appear to position this relationship within authoritarian power dynamics that tries to impose upon them, what I interpret as, whether they 'belong' or not. This is by ascribing to them an 'identity' based on what they look like and their 'accent', which they do not necessarily relate to.

Resistance and agency are exhibited by the co-participants because of how they are categorised, by labelling themselves in different ways, in response to the labels 'some white British' people ascribe to them. Further to this, the data indicates that the concept of

'immersion' is hugely associated with 'race' and 'accent', and that it interrogates an established conception of this term, which is associated with travelling abroad for a limited period of time, learning from curricula about 'the culture' of the new place and applying this knowledge outside the learning institution.

3.2. Dialectic 'identity' perception: centring and decentring physical traits

In section, 2.1., I have stated that I refer to the people that some of the co-participants refer to as 'British people' as 'white British'. Throughout, I use this term as a result of the ways in which some of the co-participants refer to these people; sometimes this reference is explicit in the data, whilst at other times this reference to 'white British' people has been inferred from the data.

This section explores the ways in which the co-participants tend to construct, what I interpret as, their 'identities' vis-à-vis, either explicitly or implicitly, how they believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people, who I also interpret as 'the other'. They do so via the processes identified above, and by drawing on various categories such as their physical traits, names, nation and, what some of them refers to as, 'culture' in their self-articulation.

The following extract shows how Alex perceives himself, and how he thinks he is perceived, where 'race' and religion are salient:

> What was more important was that the kind of stuff I was doing with [X][1] or [Y][2] groups. So, for me, more than my race or religion… What was important, was ideas and that sort of I was at the university to interact with. So, I will have thought of myself as being fairly internationalist. So, there is a consciousness in my mind, with sort of, I'm conscious of the fact that I am [reference to a 'race'] looking and I have a [religious] name. Whereas, it never used to be. It was never important to me. (Alex, interview)

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[1] (X) is an anonymised reference to a political organisation.

[2] (Y) is an anonymised reference to a local institutional body.

Alex talks about himself from two different perspectives. On the one hand, he asserts that he does not perceive himself through 'race' or religion, which seems to be imagined by others from his name: 'for me, more than my race or religion'. On the other hand, he self-identifies with the ideas he shares with people who 'belong to' the same mind set as him through how they engage with society and contribute to change at an international level.

The notion of resistance is evident in how Alex articulates himself. He asserts that he perceives himself beyond the properties of 'race' and religion, which appear to be imposed upon him by others, and that he rather associates himself with his intellectual orientation and his relationship with the wider world. He shows how he relates to the world by referring to himself as 'being fairly internationalist'. This label that he attributes to himself serves as positionality, through which he asserts his 'identity' as an entity which is not defined in terms of 'race' or 'religion'.

Therefore, these categories, which tend to be viewed as 'essential' characteristics of who Alex is, become accentuated when he reflects on how he is perceived by others, who I infer from the following section as 'white British' people. The same categories become less salient to Alex and others emerge as a result of how he thinks of himself within the binary relationship of 'self' and 'other', which is omnipresent in how he articulates his sense of who he is.

This relationship between Alex and 'the other', which I infer as 'white British' people can also be noticed in other interview extracts where he explicitly refers to the authority of 'white British' people in 'evaluating' how he interacts with, what he refers to as, 'white middle-class British culture' and how far he is part of it, such as in the following section. Therefore, here I am assuming that the people he refers to as 'white British' in the following section, are the same people he talks about in the above extract.

Like Alex, in the next extract, Kyle implicitly refers to 'British people' when she talks about how she is perceived. She states that she is categorised by people who she implicitly refers to as, 'British people' on the basis of her skin colour, which she resists by claiming to be 'British':

> I sometime go about culture and Britain, and how the idea of my own
> identity. I say [reference to a skin colour] person is ascribed in my skin that

once people see me, the first thought is not associate me being British or English or whatever. They associate me with somebody who does come from outside. Now, for a white person it doesn't matter if your parents have been and whatever or wherever you are or where they come from, whereas, for us even that association is not there. So, for me, the identity is ascribed. Before I even speak, you will already put me somewhere and the same with the whole thing about being British. You tell people you are British; they say oh no, but where are you from? I'm like; I'm British. Where are you from? I'm what do you mean where I am from? I'm from [a place in Britain]. I live in [a place in Britain]. They want you to say that I'm from [the country Kyle comes from], yeah. So, you get this kind of people who are just ignorant people. (Kyle, interview)

In making sense of how she is perceived, Kyle talks about big concepts; 'culture', 'Britain' and 'identity'. She appears to interpret how these entities operate in Britain by drawing an analogy between how, she believes, she and people who she refers to as 'white' people are perceived, in that she tends to be 'racially' identified. She talks about a forced ascribed 'identity' which seems to be associated with her skin colour by what appears to be 'white British' people. This is evident in her statements: 'I say [reference to a skin colour] person is ascribed in my skin, that once people see me…they associate me with someone who does come from outside'. Whereas, according to her, the people she refers to as, 'white' do not tend to be interrogated about, what I interpret as, whether they 'belong' to Britain or not, because they are 'white'. A statement by Kyle which demonstrates this is: 'for a white person it doesn't matter if your parents have been and whatever or wherever you are or where they come from'.

Even though she does not explicitly state that she feels excluded from 'British culture', the association she makes between the notion of 'culture', what she looks like, and the 'identity' which is imposed upon her by 'British' people who perceive her on the basis of her skin colour, make me argue that she appears to be excluded from 'British culture' because the association the people she refers to make between 'British culture' and her physical traits. This exclusion on the basis of 'race' can also be evident in her use of 'us',

which implies 'them' in: '…for a white person it doesn't matter if your parents have been and whatever or wherever you are, whereas, for us, even that association is not there'. This is in the sense that she appears to talk about perceptions of 'white' people and other people whose skin colour is similar to the one she has, by highlighting inequality between these two 'groups' on the basis of 'race'.

'Race' is also evident in how she talks about, what she refers to as, being 'British' and the attitude of people she meets, who appear to interrogate her self-perception as a 'British'. These people, which are interpreted as 'white British' people seem to be provoked when she presents herself as a 'British'. This is shown in how they respond to her by persisting on questioning where she comes from.

I interpret this exchange between Kyle and the 'white British' people she talks about in a sense that, it seems that the way in which she self-identifies contradicts their perception of 'British' people, to which she responds by emphasising that she is 'British', as well as by asserting that she comes from a place in Britain. In this process of 'self' and 'other' categorisation, both Kyle and these 'white British' people resist each other's statements of who she is, which can be understood in a sense that in these people's eyes', her claim of being 'British' does not 'fit in' with what she looks like.

The following extract is another statement by Kyle, which I interpret as a comment on her previous statement of self-identifying as a 'British':

> I am British. I have the passport (making a physical gesture of shrugging
> shoulders and facial expression, while laughing). (Kyle, interview)

This statement could be interpreted as a response to the 'white British' people she talks about above, who do not seem to 'approve' her claim of being 'British'. This statement seems to be another way through which she resists these people's perceptions of her, by recourse to the British law and the fact that she has a British passport to make her self-identification as a 'British' 'legitimate'. The facial expression, which I interpret as relaxed and challenging, and the physical gesture that she made when she talked about having a British passport, hence she is 'British' were ambiguous. I understood this non-verbal communication as if she was saying something like; there is nothing that can disprove the

fact that I am 'British' because I have a British passport. However, because I wanted to know about her perspective in a form of verbal communication, I interrogated her previous statement by saying that as long as she has a British passport, she is British.

She responds to my question as the following:

> Well, (deep breath). Yes, no, I mean identity is a very fluid thing, isn't it? It changes as well…Well, I always felt, I mean, see, don't get me wrong. I mean, legally, this passport is the legal thing that's, OK, you're British. When the British came to colonise most of the colonised world, I mean, really, [the country Kyle comes from] particularly, we were told that we are British subjects. (Kyle, interview)

Kyle tries hard to negotiate and make sense of, what she refers to as, 'identity' in relation to having a British passport, by simultaneously making affirmative and negative statements about the extent to which having a British passport means she is 'British'. She constructs 'identity' as 'very fluid' and that 'legally' she is 'British' because of the passport she has, which is a legal and a formal entity that entitles her to claim to be 'British'.

She further talks about being 'British' by drawing on colonialism and how the people in the country she comes from were regarded by British colonialism; 'British subjects'. She appears to carry with her the colonial history, which her country was subjugated to, by articulating her 'British identity' as forced on her and defined by the coloniser who deprived her from the entitlement to claim ownership of her own self-identification.

The following is a further explanation of how far she is influenced by British colonialism in how she self-identifies, which she talks about by emphasising her claim of being 'British':

> We were subjects of the crown. We were not [a nationality] per se. We were told that we are British subjects. So, when he did that change, did he ask for permission to change that? Did he ask if we want to be British subjects? It was by force. (Kyle, interview)

She uses the term 'subjects' repeatedly, to refer to how people who come from the same country as her were perceived. This tends to show that these people's right to have a say of where to 'belong' and how to self-identify was taken from them by being forced to 'belong' to Britain. She also uses the category 'we', which implies 'they', which indicates that she appears to identify with these people whose, by inferring from the above extracts, 'identity' was forcedly altered by British colonialism.

The way in which she seems to consolidate her statement of being 'British' could be interpreted as a counterargument to the 'white British' people who questioned her self-perception as a 'British', which I have discussed in the extract above. This is by interrogating, what I infer from her extract in the following chapter, section 4.3., 'the British establishment', which forced 'her' to 'become' 'British' in her 'own land', in a sense that it cannot have a double standard attitude by considering her 'British' at a given time and not 'British' at other times.

In the next extract, Sam talks about perceptions of her by different people in different contexts, which seem to be based on her physical traits:

> We are human beings. We, in a way, become acclimatising to different things. We have certain perceptions, you know. So, that's what I sometimes feel. I might not be true or correct, you know, but what I feel is, you know, when I go into students who have never seen me or have never interacted with me. They all look at me, oh! This is alien, you know, who's this guy? It's just, you know, because I look different. It's just like that. The same reason whenever I travel to the USA, I am always randomly selected. I don't mind, I used to feel upset, you know, but that's very interesting. (Sam, interview)

I interpret this extract in a sense that Sam seems to perceive how people relate to each other is by adapting to various conditions around them, which they seem to create through how they perceive each other. However, she tends to interrogate this perception by personalising it in a way that it reflects her own beliefs, which are subjective.

She tries to make sense of her lived experiences of being dissociated from the 'mainstream' group because of how she looks, by being cautious in how she interprets others' perceptions of her. This can be said to be signalled in: 'So, that's what I sometimes feel. I might not be true or correct…' One of the instances where her physical traits seem to be accentuated was in a classroom, where she felt that her students perceive her on the basis of her physical features, which made her feel, using her words, 'alien'. The other situation which makes her feel, 'different' was in the airport. She attributes the way she is dealt with when she travels to what she looks like, which seems to make people 'suspect' her.

The way in which she interprets these experiences of being positioned as 'different' and 'alien' because of how she looks is by acknowledging the different ways people use in making sense of other people, which includes how she is constructed by some people around her based on, what I interpret as, 'race'. This is shown in her statements: 'it's just like that' and 'I don't mind'. These lived experiences relate to how Alex and Kyle, who I have discussed earlier, are perceived in that their 'identity' is formed by others on the basis of what they look like.

In the following extract, Sam further explains how she thinks of herself, which is clearly beyond what she looks like, which I interpret as 'hybrid':

> I'm neither a British nor a [nationality of the country Sam comes from], you
> know, because I'm a chain person…I think, now I am neither [the country
> Sam comes from] nor British. I have tried to take the good things from both
> cultures. (Sam, interview)

She articulates, what I interpret as, her 'identity' by merging, what she refers to as, 'British culture' and the 'culture' she comes from, as well as by resisting categorising herself in terms of 'either/ or', which she emphasises throughout the passage. She manifests the interrelationship between these two 'cultures' by describing herself as 'a chain person'. I interpret this label as an entity which signifies continuity and interconnectedness in how she appears to construct her 'identity'. Another way through which this continuous and dynamic 'identity' construction is manifested is in her use of 'now'. I interpret this adverb

as a device which serves to contextualise her self-perception, as emergent and changing throughout time.

I argue that this mélange in terms of merging and negotiating different 'cultures' shows 'hybridity' in how she positions herself in relation to both 'British culture' and 'the culture' she comes from, which defies national boundaries and fixed understanding of 'identity' and 'belonging'.

Like Sam, in the following interview extract Jordan articulates, what I also interpret as, 'hybrid' 'identity' by moving beyond his national background:

> I have a massive problem with the idea of nation. I cannot understand why I cannot pick. I love the concept of transnationality. When this concept started operating, I just, it felt some hope. It felt so much of home. Of course, I love my city where I was born. It's always like anything, you love your bedroom when you were a child, you know. It has all that sentiments and things like that… I think of myself as transnational… . (Jordan, interview)

Jordan criticises the categorisation of people, including himself on the basis of the 'nation' they come from, by identifying as a 'transnational'. This stance towards the idea of 'nation' and 'transnationality' can be interpreted in a sense that the former seems to be imposed, arbitrary and restrictive, while the latter seems to be a decision that he makes for himself, which relates to his sense of place in the world.

The other way through which he positions himself as a 'transnational' is by equating his feeling towards this term with his feeling towards the place he was born in, which he constructs both as 'home'. A term which holds a sense of attachment and strong connection. Therefore, according to Jordan, it appears that, what I interpret as, 'belonging' to 'a national background' does not necessarily mean that he cannot 'belong' to other places different from where he comes from. This is emphasised throughout the interview extract, in a way that, like Alex, Kyle and Sam, he resists being framed based on categories he did not choose, such 'national background', by rejecting national boundaries and creating his own ways of relating to the wider world. The notion of 'home' is discussed in the following chapter, in section 4.3.

In this section I have examined the subjective ways in which the co-participants articulate, what I interpret as, their 'identities'. Skin colour, which I interpret as 'race', is salient in how they believe they are perceived by, what I interpret as, 'some white British' people. Also, the category of 'nation' and 'culture' are central to the co-participants' understanding of who they are, in that they resist being defined within these categories, including 'race', by labelling themselves in ways which decentre others' perception of them.

Therefore, how the coparticipants talk about themselves shows relationality in terms of the omnipresence of 'some white British' people in how they talk about themselves, as well as in terms of labelling themselves in ways which defy others' framing of them. This way of asserting one's sense of 'identity, which implies resistance and agency relates to a critical cosmopolitan understanding of 'identity' which emphasises the interaction between the local and the global (Delanty, 2006), as well as acknowledges that how we make sense of ourselves in the wider world 'emerges neither from 'the native culture' nor from the 'culture' of the other, but from the interaction of both' (Delanty, 2009, p.11). This idea is further discussed in chapter seven in relation to how 'identity' is constructed in terms of the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance and agency involved in the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by others.

In the following section, I explore how family members of the co-participants perceive them and what the co-participants think of how they are perceived, where the same processes identified previously are more or less manifested.

3.3. Who the co-participants are in their families' eyes?

In this section, Alex and Jo talk subjectively about instances from their daily lives with their family members; children and partners, which I also interpret as 'the other', which show how they believe they are perceived by them. The processes of relationality and positioning are manifested in how these two co-participants talk about themselves.

In the following extract, unlike in section one, Alex makes explicit reference to 'white British' people and 'white British culture' when he talks about how he is perceived by his children:

> My kids are the latest thing…. These days, they've started making fun of me because I have started baking sourdough bread. There is this bread called sourdough, which is a very sort of middle-class white British thing to do, and I make it very regularly and… you have to keep feeding it (laughing). I think this is a very postcolonial thing. We want to be accepted as ok… So, the sourdough bread, because it's such a symbol of middle-class white culture, my kids told me that it's a new thing that I am doing to feel accepted (laughing). (Alex, interview)

The way Alex talks about his children's' perception of him in relation to his habit of making sourdough bread is by making fun of himself. This reveals that he is aware of the impact of baking sourdough bread and making it part of his daily practices on how he is perceived. Also, he attributes the feeling of seeking acceptance among, what he refers to as, 'white British middle-class' to postcolonial history, which might have ingrained in him the desire to become part of 'white British middle-class culture'.

From this, I argue that baking sourdough bread appears to be a significant 'cultural' practice in Alex's self-perception in that, he carries with him his 'cultural background' which tends to be influenced by British colonialism to, what I interpret as, 'British culture', which is evident in his attempt to become a member of 'white middle-class British culture'.

I wanted to explore his perspective on his children's perception of him by asking him about what he says to them, and the following is his response:

> …they are right, but I don't know. I enjoy eating bread, but they are right. This is a standard postcolonial thing. We try really hard to be accepted. You know, my wife is English, she learned enough [language spoken where Alex comes from], but very basic. As far as I'm concerned, if I was living here and if I had come to this country and live to sixteen years and my English

was as basic as her [language spoken where he comes from] was, then people would say you are not assimilating. That's the postcolonial baggage we carry for us. It's different if we come here and we quickly don't speak the language. Well, then we are just for it and you're told that you are either not assimilating or you're not refined enough, or British enough. People would say, you know, you are not trying hard to assimilate to the British culture and value. So, it's ok for white people to do that and my family will be really over the moon that she could even speak three sentences. That's absolutely right. But that's the postcolonial baggage we carry for us. We try really hard to be accepted. (Alex, interview)

Alex acknowledges the perception of his children that he wants to be accepted among, what he has referred to as, 'white British middle-class culture' by asserting their opinion as right, as well as by emphasising the influence of colonialism on his desire to become part of the 'white British middle-class culture'. I interpret how he interacts with 'white middle-class British culture' by seeking membership in this 'culture' through certain 'cultural' practices, such as baking sourdough bread as a 'normal' practice. This is evident in his words such as: 'this is a standard postcolonial thing', which shows that his endeavour of being accepted as part of 'white British middle-class culture' is, perhaps, how he grew up.

This idea of seeking acceptance among 'white British middle-class culture' as ingrained by colonial and postcolonial influences is further manifested in the way he positions himself in relation to his wife, where perceptions of the colonised by the coloniser and *vice versa* are salient. He is positioned within a binary relationship where he is categorised as the 'colonised other', who has to be told how to be part of 'British culture', whereas he tends to categorise his wife, to whom he refers using the term 'white people', as a manifestation of 'the coloniser's authority and privilege' in telling others what and how to be.

He uses expressions, which demonstrate this positioning which show the extent to which postcolonial influences are part of how he perceives himself, such as: 'you're told that you are either not assimilating or you're not refined enough, or British enough. People would say, you know, you are not trying hard to assimilate to the British culture

and value, and: 'it's ok for white people to do that and my family will be really over the moon that she could even speak three sentences'.

The following is a response by Jo to my question of how he thinks his partner perceives him:

> I don't' know what [Jo's partner] would think. That's an interesting question. I think [Jo's partner] would say I am very [national background] when I support [a national] football team, that's the moment when your '…ness' (reference to the country Jo comes from) comes out of me. So, but, I don't know what [Jo's partner] would say. [Jo's partner] would probably say something around the fact that I'm very well integrated, and that I am, you know, very much behaving, let's say, like a native. But there are also moments where she notices that I am, you know, not, and it's a stupid thing. Usually, it's like talking about children TV series like a cartoon series. They are different in the UK to the ones I saw, right, or singing children songs, or like we sometimes go to the pub, right. Sometimes we spend time there and, then, they ask some stupid questions about East Enders[3] and I'm like what the hell, who knows that and [Jo's partner] is like, I know the answer, you know, this is (laughing). (Jo, interview)

Jo negotiates how his partner perceives him. He talks about instances where he is perceived differently depending on the context. On the one hand, he positions himself in relation to the place he comes from when he supports his national football team. On the other hand, he negotiates how he believes he is perceived in relation to, what I interpret as, 'British culture' by attributing a sense of, what he refers to as, 'integration' to himself. This is in

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[3] EastEnders is BBC One's flagship continuing drama, having gripped the nation for over three decades with its much-loved characters, realistic treatment of sensitive topics and flair for creative storylines. Set in the fictional London Borough of Walford, the BBC One drama airs four times a week, 52 weeks of the year.

the sense that he articulates himself as someone who is integrated into 'the culture', which is manifested, according to him, in his 'native-like behaviour'.

However, this perception of how far he is 'integrated' in 'British culture' is interrogated in other situations, where, what I interpret as, his 'cultural baggage' differs from others' cultural baggage. This in the sense that he does not feel part of their 'culture' when it revolves around TV series, such as East Enders and children related programmes.

It can be argued that in this process of negotiating the different opinions about how he is perceived by his social environment, different categories, which relate to cultural baggage, become salient in different contexts. This is evident when he, in some situations, self-identifies with his 'national identity', and, in other situations, he identifies as someone who is 'integrated' in 'British culture', as well as someone who behaves like, using his term, a 'native'.

In the following interview extract, he further describes his partner's perception of him by focusing on, what he refers to as, 'integration' in 'the culture':

> I like to think otherwise. She would say I'm reasonably well integrated in my local community and the community I live in. I'm not necessarily part of the culture, I'm deepening into the culture, but I am reasonably well integrated. I speak the language, I, you know, pay my taxes, I engage with my neighbours and my friends, I volunteer for an organisation, right. So, I do what native British people do. I don't go to the pub very often and drink my pint there, I don't do that. But other than that, I do a lot of things that I would say I'm, you know, reasonably well integrated. (Jo, interview)

In this passage, which follows a negotiation of different perceptions of Jo, he stresses his self- perception as someone who is integrated into 'the culture', which he makes sense of by distinguishing between, what he refers to as, being 'part of the culture' and 'deepening into the culture'. He positions himself in relation to the latter, where he manifests this positionality through his behaviour in the community in which he lives. This is in the sense that he seems to associate how he behaves with a set of practices that, using his words, 'native British people' perform such as paying taxes and contributing to the community he

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lives in. Therefore, it could be interpreted that 'integration' for Jo appears to be associated with his perception of what 'native British' people do, which involves participating in the community he lives in. The notion of 'integration' is further explored in the following chapter, in section 4.2.

In this section I have explored the ways in which Alex and Jo seem to be perceived by their family members, which they talk about by drawing on various categories. However, their statements seem to converge by centring relationality and positioning which is manifested in the influence of 'the other' in how they talk about themselves. These co-participants talk about the practices they perform, which they associate with 'culture', through which perceptions of who they are are made. For example, Alex is perceived by his children as someone who seeks acceptance among, what he has referred to as, 'white middle-class British culture', which he also acknowledges. This endeavour of becoming part of the 'white British middle-class culture', which he attributes to postcolonial influences, is manifested in practices, such as baking sourdough bread. The other example is Jo, who constructs the way he is perceived by his partner, by drawing on his cultural baggage in a way that he positions himself relatively in relation to where he comes from and 'British culture'. On one side, he self-identifies with the place he comes from in situations such as, supporting his national football team. On the other side, he has referred to himself as someone who is 'integrated' in 'British culture' through his 'native-like behaviour'. This section is also discussed in chapter seven, in relation to the processes of 'identity' construction.

In the following section I investigate the ways in which the co-participants construct, what I interpret as, 'immersion'.

3.4. The co-participants' 'realities' of 'immersion'

As explained in chapter one, in section 1.8.1., the term 'immersion' is generated from my own lived experience of being stereotyped because of perceptions of where I come from. These perceptions, which portrayed me and where I come from as 'different' from the people I met, made it difficult for me to immerse myself in the 'culture' I was in. Therefore, I use the notion of 'immersion' as an attempt to make sense of the ways in which the co-

participants talk about how they navigate their ways into the new place. They respond to my question about 'immersion' by constructing it in relation to the categories of 'race', 'accent', which are associated significantly with being 'British'.

I asked the co-participants separately about their perspective on 'immersion' in Britain. I discuss their responses below:

Ashley responds by talking about, what I interpret as, 'race', as well as acceptance into 'British culture':

> I think, we spoke about this, the fact that I do believe, and I know for a fact that, you know, sort of our physical traits, accent, everything, you know, says that I'm not British. You will always be in that sense an outsider. I personally think that's the case that sort of thing, but it doesn't bother me because I've never felt necessarily as a barrier, and also because I think is natural. There are certain things that you can't change or can't fight. I only in a way never be, you know, British in that sense because I'm not, but I think I've got a good understanding of the culture, I feel accepted. (Ashley, interview)

Ashley seems to construct and navigate 'immersion' by categorising himself in two different ways. The first categorisation appears to be on the basis of the way he looks and sounds, which are, according to him, not 'British' features. In this categorisation, which he seems to attribute to his own opinion, he dissociates himself from being 'British' by referring to himself as 'outsider'. The second categorisation concerns understanding 'the culture', as well as a feeling of acceptance, where he positions himself differently from when he talks about physical traits and 'accent'.

There are a number of interpretations which I make from this extract. The first interpretation concerns what can be said to be an imagined conception of what it means to be 'British', which Ashley tends to associate with physical traits and 'accent'. This is reflected in his statement: 'I do believe, and I know for a fact that… our physical traits, accent, everything, you know, says that I'm not British'. This distinction between him and other people, whom he refers to as 'British', in terms of physical traits and 'accent' is

emphasised in other statements throughout the extract, such as 'I only in a way never be, you know, British in that sense because I'm not'. From this it can be stated that, for Ashley, 'immersion' is partly constructed around the categories of physical traits, 'accent' and dress, which also tend to be associated with being 'British.

The second interpretation I make relates to his identification with, what he refers to as, 'the culture', which I interpret as 'British culture' by inferring it from the context. This identification with 'British culture' seems to be another way through, which he manifests 'immersion' in Britain. I consider his statement: 'I feel accepted' to be a significant utterance; it implies that there seems to be interaction between him and other people where the perception of how far he understands 'British culture' might depends on these people. Therefore, here I am assuming that there is a relationship, between his feeling of acceptance in 'British culture' and these people's perceptions of him. This makes me question 'who these people are?' And how far do they play a role in how he talks about being 'British, which appears to be constructed in terms of perceptions of physical traits and 'accent'?

I do not attempt to answer these questions as much as I want to emphasise that in this process of categorisation, Ashley appears to construct and navigate 'immersion' in 'British culture' differently by drawing on the categories of physical traits, 'accent' and dress, and his social environment, which tends to play an important role in how he positions himself. This is in the sense that he appears to have a fixed conception of, what he refers to as, being 'British', which he appears to associate with skin colour and 'accent'. Also, in this process of categorisation where he affiliates himself with 'British culture' because of a feeling of acceptance, authority and interconnectedness can be highlighted in a way that 'the other' appears to be omnipresent in how Ashley positions himself in this culture in that, the latter's positionality seems to depend on the former's perception.

Like Ashley, in the following extract Eli responds by talking about the extent to which what she looks like and how she sounds play a role in how far she is 'immersed':

I think it has something to do with how you're received in the UK, like you are not one of us, you come from somewhere else. I am very aware that I am a foreigner here. I'm actually very aware of that. I wasn't born here; obviously the moment that I start talking people know that I am not from

here. I mean it's obvious that I am not English, you know. They just have to look at you and they just have to hear you talk. I am aware of my accent, I am aware of the way I look, I am aware of it. It doesn't bother me, it doesn't bother me at all, but I am aware of it. I don't think I look like an English person. I think, you know, we (gesture with hands) look Mediterranean. (Eli, interview)

Eli tends to construct 'immersion' by stressing the extent to which her physical characteristics and 'accent' are the lens through which she is perceived. She refers to herself as a 'foreigner', a label she seems to emphasise, by asserting her awareness of how she looks and sounds through repeating statements such as, 'I am very aware that I am a foreigner here. I'm actually very aware of that'; 'I am aware of my accent, I am aware of the way I look, I am aware of it'.

When she repeats these statements which accentuate her physical traits and 'accent' in such a way that these features do not 'conform' to, using her term, how 'English' people look and sound, she appears to adopt the perception of the people she talks about, who seem to exclude her from 'British society', because of 'difference' in her physical traits and 'accent'. This might communicate that she is reinforcing the imagined conception of what it means to be 'English', by acknowledging that her features are not 'English' and are rather 'Mediterranean', hence she is not 'English'. However, I argue that this is not what Eli thinks of herself necessarily, and that how she talks about the categories of being 'English', physical traits and 'accent' reflects her belief of how she is perceived by others. This is also because in the following chapter, in section 4.4., she claims ownership of how she positions herself in 'British society' and emphasises her membership in it by highlighting her position as an academic, which by implication decentres perceptions of her on the basis of physical traits and 'accent', which are ascribed features.

I also argue here that we all have characteristics, whether linguistic, physical, 'cultural practices'… and so forth, that we grow up with, which relate more or less to the places we come from. However, what is problematic is how these categories are used to frame people, such as in the relationship between 'race' and 'national identity', which has been salient in

how the coparticipants talk about how they believe they are perceived in that, being 'British' or 'English' appears to be defined in terms of 'race' and 'accent'.

In the following response by Jordan, he talks about instances where he was maltreated by people around him because of his accent:

> As a foreigner, I think, the worst moment was, of course, around Brexit referendum[4].... I was coming from a conference and I was in the train...I was on the phone talking. There was only one young woman on the train. When she heard my accent on the phone, she looked at me with so much hatred, but she didn't say anything. There was just so much hatred (change of tone-emphasis). So, that was the moment when, you know, I felt really bad. The other moment when I didn't know how to handle the situation was at my GP. What happened was when I was walking out of the GP, a young person, pretty young, passed me and said under their nose: fucking foreigner. (Jordan, interview)

Jordan describes himself as a 'foreigner', a label which seems to depict how he is perceived by the people he encountered on the train and at the general practitioner (GP). According to him, this perception of him is based on the 'accent' he has, in that these people appear not to tolerate the way he sounds. This is reflected in his tone of voice when he talks about the look he had from a woman on the train, where he emphasises that these looks were full of hatred. The other incident was when he was implicitly addressed using discriminatory terms, such as 'fucking foreigner' by another person at the GP.

I interpret the way Jordan seems to portray himself in this extract; 'a foreigner', as a mechanism through which he highlights inequality based on his 'accent', and that, similar to Eli, the label; 'foreigner', seems to be a construction of him by others, rather than his own construction of himself. I make sense of this interpretation by bringing how he

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[4] Brexit is a portmanteau of the words "British" and "exit" coined to refer to the U.K.'s decision in a June 23, 2016 referendum to leave the European Union (EU). Brexit took place at 11 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time, Jan. 31, 2020.

perceives himself, which I have discussed in section 3.2., into interaction with how he is labelled in this extract. In section 3.2., he self-identifies as a 'transnational' where he manifests agency in articulating himself by resisting being framed based on nation, whereas in this extract, he uses the term 'foreigner', to indicate how he is perceived in the eyes of the people he met, who perceive him as such, because of his 'accent'.

The point I want to make is that he is framed by these people as someone who does not 'belong' because of his 'accent', which he does not necessarily identify with, and he, rather identifies beyond his 'accent', which is manifested in his self-perception as a 'transnational'. The following is another example of 'accent' as a lens through which he is perceived, but this time the person who seems to have issues with his 'accent' is his colleague. Even though the following example concerns discrimination at a university, the thesis is not about what happens at the university per se, and the instances of discrimination reported at the university context are examples of might happen in other places, including the university, as argued in the previous chapter in section 2.12.

> The weirdest thing that ever happened was that I was living in [the country before [a number of years] and I have some influence of [an accent] in my own accent… When I came here, and there's one of my colleagues very senior, like age wise. He could not understand me, he kept correcting me. That, you know, was frustrating and annoying, but also a lot of what he was correcting was the [pronunciation of words in a regional accent] influences. So, I would say [a name of a place, [with /u/], and he say [the same name, [with /ʌ/] (change of tone, stronger tone]. (Jordan, interview)

In this extract Jordan talks about his colleague who appears to intervene in the way he pronounces words, an act of which he does not seem to approve. This is shown in how he responds to being corrected by referring to this experience as 'frustrating'. Also, the way Jordan's colleague appears to respond to Jordan's pronunciation shows that this colleague does not seems to approve how Jordan speaks, which is influenced by an 'accent' spoken in a place different from the UK.

From this, it can be said that Jordan's colleague perceives the 'accent' that Jordan has as not conforming to the 'accent' he has, which is, according to the extract below, associated with Britain. This attitude towards 'difference' in pronunciation and the belief that this colleague's 'accent' is 'the norm' gives him authority in evaluating how Jordan speaks. Authority, I assume, comes from a belief of superiority in that, this colleague appears to claim ownership of 'English' by telling Jordan how he should pronounce words, as well as by stressing 'difference' in pronunciation in a way that the former's 'accent' is 'the norm'.

In the following extract, the tension between Jordan and his colleague in relation to 'accent' continues and becomes framed as a question of 'adaptation':

> This person said: well, in Britain you should adapt a little bit. So, things like that. I think, it really destroyed my confidence and, you know, you feel constantly, you somehow, need to give more in terms of, you know. I don't really know how to make up your own accent. That made the struggle worse, but, then, I began to have a therapy. On the other hand, it made me engaged very much of [a political activity in an institution] and think how I can change that. It made me more interested in [a field of studies which looks at accent] in [an area of expertise] It was not very bad, but it made me feel pretty shitty honestly (laughing) for a long time. (Jordan, interview)

The statement 'in Britain you should adapt' shows that for this colleague, 'accent' might be crucial in adaptation. This statement might also suggest that in this colleague's eyes, the 'accent' that Jordan carries with him conflicts with the new place. Therefore, it seems that this colleague makes the decision for Jordan by suggesting that he should convert in order to 'conform' with the new place. By doing so, this colleague, who tends to construct adaptation in relation to 'accent', seems to draw boundaries between people by confining them to features such as their 'accent', which he appears to consider to be relevant in one place, but not to the other. He seems to attempt to transmit this perception to Jordan, who, in section 3.2., stresses his self-perception as a 'transnationalist' and resists boundaries because of where people come from, by asking him to change the way he speaks to conform with the new place.

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The impact of such experience on Jordan made him question his self-esteem, as well as feel less able than others, which made him undergo therapy. This challenge yielded resistance which he manifests in getting involved in a political activity at a university, as well as by developing an interest in exploring 'accent' in his area of expertise as platforms for making his voice heard and highlighting 'racism' in society. The relationship between his lived experiences and his area of expertise, including other co-participants is discussed in the following chapter in section 4.5.

In the following extract, unlike some of the co-participants in the previous extracts, Kyle responds by explicitly referring to 'immersion' which she also relates to 'accent':

> For me, I think immersion in society is about, it's a deliberate thing. I mean let me give you an example. I will hold to [the country she comes from], I talk about people from [the country she comes from] because I know them better. I was an adult when I came here and some of them were adults when they came here. Well, I still speak with my (X)[5] accent. They speak with a British accent. To them, that's immersion because you listen to them you think they were born here. I made a deliberate choice that I am not going to try and learn the accent. I'm just going to try my best to speak as clear as I can, but I'm not going to try and copy the accent. (Kyle, interview)

Kyle appears to construct 'immersion' as a choice. She tends to make sense of this by drawing an analogy between herself and other people who come from the same country as her in terms of how they both choose to 'immerse' themselves in Britain, which appears to revolve around 'accent'. While in section 3.2., she uses 'we' to show identification with these people whose 'identity' was forcedly altered by British colonialism, in this section she uses 'I', which shows a shift towards a more personal account. This in the sense that she dissociates herself from these people by resisting their practice of copying of 'British accent' through choosing to maintain her own 'accent' and make it as clear as possible.

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[5] Anonymised reference to the 'accent' that Kyle speaks with.

Therefore, from this extract it can be said that the notion of 'accent' is a significant element in that it is crucial in 'immersion', but it is approached differently by Kyle and the people she talks about as shown in the differentiation above. This differentiation is further expressed below in much stronger terms.

In the following last extract in this chapter, she makes a further statement about her perception of 'immersion' by associating it with, what she refers to as, 'culture':

> So, I think immersion, for me, is more about you choose how you want to relate with the society you live in. But, knowingly that immersion doesn't mean, you know, obliterating and cleaning your own culture (gesture with hands, scrubbing one hand with the other). It's really seen as how your culture can intermingle, overlap and all that with the community you are living in (gesture with hands showing interconnection). (Kyle, interview)

She expresses her opinion on the relationship between these two contested entities by showing disapproval of people, who, using her term, 'obliterate' 'the culture' they come from and adopt the 'culture' of the new place. She rather constructs 'immersion' as an interaction between, what I interpret as, 'cultures', which is reflected in: 'immersion doesn't mean you know, obliterating and cleaning your own culture'; 'it's really seen as how your culture can intermingle, overlap and all that with the community you are living in'. These statements were accompanied with a gesture with hands in a way which stresses her construction of 'immersion' in terms of interconnection between 'cultures, rather than one 'culture' 'dominating' the other.

I argue that the way she talks about, what she refers to as, 'immersion' and 'culture' connects with the previous extract, when she appears to criticise people who changed their 'accent' to a 'British accent'. I make sense of this by making connection between her opinion on how she and the people she has previously talked about appear to immerse themselves in terms of the decision they make regarding entities such as, 'accent'.

It appears to me that she implicitly addresses these people by framing their choice as a denial of 'the culture' they come from. She also seems to implicitly respond to their decision by sticking to her own 'accent' and putting it into interaction with the British

context, as well as by emphasising interconnection between 'cultures'. This practice shows relationality and interrelationship between both the place Kyle comes from and the British context.

In the last section of this chapter, I have investigated the subjective ways in which some of the co-participants construct, what I interpret as, 'immersion'. Their construction of this term relates to each other in that, physical traits and 'accent' are salient. Ashley and Eli seem to relate 'immersion' to what they have referred to as being 'British' and 'English', respectively, which they associate, with physical traits and 'accent'. Ashley seems to attribute the perception that what he looks like and how he sounds are not 'British' characteristics to his own belief, while Eli and Jordan tend to accentuate these features when they talk about the way they believe they are perceived by others, where labels such as 'foreigner' and 'outsider' become salient to them. Also, Kyle constructs 'immersion' in relation to 'accent', by resisting copying a 'British accent' to 'fit in' 'British culture'.

From the data discussed above, I want to emphasise the lesser likelihood of the idea that the discriminatory labels used might be the co-participants' own construction of themselves, or that the co-participants might be expecting discrimination based on these properties by the other. This is because by bringing various extracts of these co-participants into interaction, as well as by looking carefully at how they talk about themselves in different places throughout the thesis, these labels appear to emerge as a result of how most of these co-participants believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people, rather than their own construction of themselves. Also, the subjective labels some of them use in the previous section to refer to themselves in their everyday personal lives are in response to how they are labelled.

Therefore, I do not label the co-participants and I only use the term co-participants which refers to their role as explained in the previous chapter. In addition to this, how 'immersion' is constructed tends to question its traditional meaning of being associated with travelling to a new 'cultural environment' for a specific period of time and learning 'the culture' of that place through curricula. It is rather situated within the struggle of who the co-participants are and on what basis, which they encounter in their everyday personal lives. This is in such a way that perceptions of 'race' and 'accent', which are notably associated with 'British national identity', are salient to them.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined 'multiplicity in 'identity' perception', which involves the processes involved in the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by their social environment. I have also explored how the notion of 'immersion' is constructed.

The data in this chapter reveals that the co-participants construct their 'identities' discursively, by talking about how they perceive themselves, and how they believe they are perceived by, what I interpret as, 'some white British' people. In this interactive process between 'self' and 'other', 'the other' is omnipresent in the ways the co-participants construct their sense of 'identity' in such a way that their relationship is characterised by conflicted perceptions of who the co-participants are and on what basis, as well as by power dynamics, which is manifested in processes, such as relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance and agency. Physical traits, which I interpret as 'race', alongside the category of 'accent', which is theorised in relation to 'native speakerism in chapter seven, are the lens through which the co-participants are perceived. This is in a sense that these categories appear to be imposed on the co-participants, rather than reflect their own self-perception, and appear to be marker of being 'British' or 'English' which I interpret as 'national identity'. This racialised conception of 'national identity' (Phoenix, 1998, p.118), frames the co-participants within the categories of 'either/or' and dissociates them from identifying with and 'belonging' to 'Britain', except Ashley, who, according to him, feels accepted in 'British culture'. Therefore, I do not use labels to refer to the co-participants. This act of not labelling the coparticipants is discussed in light of the literature in chapter six.

Furthermore, the data shows that 'immersion' is contextualised within the conflict of who the co-participants are and on what basis, which they encounter in their everyday personal lives because of perceptions of 'race' and 'accent', rather than being limited to a period of time and learning about the 'culture' of the new place from the curricula, which seems prevalent in the literature. The notion of 'identity' in terms of the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance, and agency involved in 'self' and 'other' relations, as well as the notion of 'immersion' are further discussed in light of

the literature in chapter seven. Also, the notion of 'culture' which has been referred to by few co-participants will be discussed in light of the literature in chapter eight, sections 8.2., and 8.3.

Chapter Four: Negotiating 'belonging'

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have investigated, what I interpret as, the co-participants' 'identities' from multiple perspectives where 'race' and 'accent' are evident in how the co-participants believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people.

In this chapter, I examine, what I interpret as, negotiating 'belonging' by pursuing how the co-participants position themselves in relation to the places they come from, Britain and other places they feel connection with. I use the expression of negotiating 'belonging' to refer to the dynamic and multiple ways in which the co-participants construct their sense of place. In section 4.2., under the thematic heading 'disturbed 'integration'', I pursue the notion of 'integration', which has emerged in the previous chapter, in section 3.3. In section 4.3., which is entitled ''hybrid' sense of 'home'', I also pursue how the co-participants construct the notion of 'home' in relation of the places they feel attached to, which has emerged in section 4.2. In section 4.4., under the sub-heading 'the familiar-stranger', I further pursue the way in which they construct 'home', but in relation to their profession. I use the term 'familiar-stranger' to refer to the opposed ways in which the interrelationship between the co-participants' professional status in Britain and their emotional bond with the places they come from tends to inform how they situate themselves in both places. In section 4.5., 'a personal interest in the subject matter', I present data about another interrelationship, which is between the coparticipants' personal experiences and their areas of specialism in how they talk about who they are.

The data reveals that the co-participants construct the notion of 'integration' subjectively and that perceptions of skin colour and 'accent' are also salient in how this contested term is constructed. It also shows that 'integration' is constructed as a 'one-way process' in the sense that the co-participants make efforts to become 'integrated' in 'British society'. Further to this, there is a shift from these imposed categories of 'race' and 'accent' to categories which have been chosen by the co-participants to articulate their relationship with the wider world. I interpret this shift as freedom, and it is manifested in the concept of 'home' which demonstrates that the co-participants' sense of 'belonging' is dynamic and

multiple. This in the sense that this notion, of 'home' is used to refer to many places the co-participants feel connection with. This term which signifies attachment and emotions towards places represents more or less two dimensions of 'belonging'.

In addition to this, the data reveals interrelationship between the co-participants' professional status in Britain and their bond with the places they come from in terms of how they situate themselves in both places. Last, but not least, there is another level of interrelationship between the co-participants' areas of specialism, and their personal experiences in that they bring them together to make statement about who they are, which in a one way or another responds to the way they believe they are perceived by others. These interrelationships, which bring to the centre the co-participants' experiences in their professional setting are beyond the scope of this study, because as stated earlier, this study is *not* about the co-participants' lived experiences in the university context.

4.2. Disturbed 'integration'

In this section, I investigate the notion of 'integration' which has emerged from the interview extract with Jo in the previous chapter, in section 3.2. I wanted to explore what 'integration' means to the co-participants, if it means anything, by explicitly asking them. 'Integration' is constructed differently by drawing on different aspects, and as a 'one- way process' in that it is the co-participants who make efforts to 'integrate' in the British context. It is disturbed in the sense that it does not have one single meaning to the co-participants. However, like the previous chapter, perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' appear to be salient in this section as well.

In the first meeting with Charlie, he stated that language is significant in what he has referred to as 'integration'. During the interview, I wanted to know more about his perspective by asking him to tell me more, and the following is his response:

> Language is essential in integration, but is not everything, you know. I think,
> apart from the fluency of language and even the cultural depth, I claim to
> suggest that the good understanding of the history of the social context… In
> the context of [a city in Britain], I see these places as my, you know, space
> of origin. I'm very comfortable with them. So, in a way, I feel integrated,

but, on the other hand, you know, there is always that element of where you put your own barrier with a certain integration. For instance, in my case that has got to do with the fact that after all my identity is not British and I don't want to be British, and it's never going to be, you know. I have that sense that Britishness has become an element because of my long encounter with the situation. All my entire adult life, you know, has been based here pretty much (laughing). But on the other hand, I also have got this sense that leaving my home country is what made me [association with the country he comes from] because of the sense that it made me point out some of the traditions, some of the specificities and reinvent them from a new perspective. It made me more critical and more reflective from this new position and I embraced my [qualities associated with the place he comes from] …ness in a different way. So, in a way, I feel both integrated and not integrated, both in the [the country he comes from] and in the British context. I feel like I'm some sort of borderline with both of them. (Charlie, interview)

Charlie constructs 'integration' in relation to language, understanding the 'culture' and the history of the new place. He appears to situate these categories in relation to his lived experience of coming from a different place and living in Britain by negotiating his 'belonging' in such a way that he is situated 'in-between' these places.

On the one hand, he constructs a place in Britain by referring to it as a 'space of origin' where he feels 'integrated'. He also articulates his relationship with Britain by associating himself with, what he refers to as, 'Britishness' in such a way that living in Britain for a long period of time seems to make him claim 'Britishness', probably, as part of who he is. On the other hand, he seems to moderate how far he 'integrates' himself in the British context by refuting being identified as, what he refers to as, 'British'. He rather shows identification with the place he comes from by referring to it as 'home country'. This identification with 'home country' is, according to him, rediscovered and reconstructed as a result of living abroad.

Therefore, I wish to argue here that he appears to disturb 'integration' by negotiating what I interpret as 'belonging' to Britain and where he comes from by bringing his background, which seems to be a combination of where he comes from and the British context into interaction. This can be illustrated in his statement: '… leaving my home country…made me point out some of the traditions, some of the specificities and reinvent them from a new perspective', 'and in the context of [a city in Britain], I see these places as my, you know, space of origin'. He also seems to disturb 'integration' by positioning himself relatively in relation to these places in such a way that he appears to be 'in-between' them. This also can be shown in his statements: 'I feel both integrated and not integrated…' and 'I'm some sort of borderline with both of them'.

In the next response by Jo, he relates 'integration' to language, skin colour and religion:

> Language is an important element, but it's not the only element. I mean, even here in the UK, I know, I'm a foreigner, but it would be even more extreme let's say in [a place in which people have a different skin colour and are known for their religious beliefs], because there would be things like skin colour, religion. That would make very clear I'm foreign. (Jo, interview)

Similar to Charlie, Jo considers language to be an important category in 'integration, However, he also regards other elements such as skin colour and religion as significant. These features which he talks about are employed to indicate how he is perceived in various contexts. He uses the expressions 'foreigner' and 'more extreme', which indicate hierarchy of perceptions of him in places such as the UK and the other place he refers to, respectively.

It seems that this hierarchy of 'foreignness' is relatively situated in that, it depends on the context. This can be shown in the example Jo gives where his skin colour and the element of religion appear to become accentuated in the second place, he refers to in the extract above, while they appear to be subtle in the UK. From this example, it seems that skin colour and practices such as religion are significant in how far Jo feels integrated in various places.

Therefore, like Charlie, Jo also tends to disturb 'integration' by positioning himself relatively in different contexts where various categories become salient at different times.

In the next passage, he further constructs 'integration' in relation to perceptions of, what he refers to as, 'culture' and being 'British', which are also connected with perceptions of 'accent':

> There is a difference between being a member of a culture and being able to participate in a culture. Because as I said, I speak the language, I can go to a pub, I can eat fish and chips, I can, you know, celebrate, I don't know, Saint George's day, I can, you know, enjoy typical British traditions. I can be part of this culture, but I'm not really a member of this culture, right, because I am not British. One thing is most British people will hear that I'm foreign the moment I speak, because I have an accent. So, they will say, ok, you're not British. (Jo, interview)

Jo distinguishes between, what he refers to as, 'being a member of a culture' and 'being able to participate in a culture'. He appears to perceive speaking the language and other practices such as going to pubs, eating fish and chips and celebrating national holidays as practices that he performs in Britain, which enable him to be part of, what he refers to as, 'the culture'. However, he seems to be excluded from this 'culture', because of his 'accent', which appears to be perceived by people, who he refers to as, 'British people' as a 'non-British accent'. This can be shown in his statement: 'I'm not really a member of this culture… because I am not British… because I have an accent… they will say, ok, you're not British'.

Like the co-participants in the previous chapter, Jo tends to be excluded by, what he refers to as, 'British' people because of perceptions of his 'accent'. It appears that in the eyes of these people his 'accent' does not 'match' their perception of being 'British'. Therefore, as I have argued in chapter one, I argue here again that being 'British' tends to be defined in terms of categories such as 'accent'. This conception of the term 'British' jeopardises Jo's full engagement with 'British culture' in that he positions himself as someone who is not a member of this 'culture' because in the eyes of others he is not

'British', which is associated with 'accent'. I asked Ryan if the way she looks like helps her integrate, and the following is her response:

> I suppose yes, I mean I think people with, you know, (hesitation) black would have more difficulties than me in terms of integrating. Now, how people look in [the country she comes from] tend to be more brown than I am and with brown eyes. So, I mean [where she comes from] is very mixed nation. But here most people when they don't know where I come from and that happens often, they think I'm from [a place which is different from where she comes from]. I think because I'm [describing how she looks]; I never met anyone who guessed I'm [where she comes from]. I mean British people think I'm from [a place which British people associate her with, because of her physical characteristics, which is different from where she comes from]. People just go for you know, stereotypes. I'm [describing what she looks like], and I've got accent must be [from a place British people think she comes from which is different from where she actually comes from]. (Ryan, interview)

Ryan also talks about the role of skin colour and 'accent' in 'integration'. She makes an analogy between how she looks and how people who she refers to as 'black' look, which shows that she tends to find it easy to integrate compared to 'black' people. She also talks about being associated with a place, which is different from where she comes from because of the perceptions that, what she refers to as, 'British people' have of what she looks like and how she sounds.

The way in which she makes sense of how far she is integrated in Britain appears to connect with Kyle, who, in the previous chapter, section 3.2., has stated that she is ascribed an 'identity' on the basis of her skin colour and that, what she has referred to as, 'white people' are not interrogated about where they come from because they are 'white'. This connection between Ryan's and Kyle's statements can be made from their statements: 'I think people with, you know, (hesitation) black would have more difficulties than me in terms of integrating' (Ryan), and '…I say [reference to a skin colour] person is prescribed

in my skin…. Now, for a white person it doesn't matter if you're parents have been and whatever or wherever you are or where they come from…' (Kyle). This is in the sense that there appears to be a hierarchy between these co-participants on the basis of 'race'.

This racial hierarchy can be shown in how Ryan and Kyle believe they are perceived in relation to each other by, what Ryan refers to as, 'British people', and, what Kyle has referred to as, 'white people', as well as in how Ryan is perceived in relation to 'British people'. This is in the sense that Ryan appears to be less visible compared to Kyle, who appears to be excluded from, what I interpret as, 'British culture' because of perceptions of her skin colour. However, what Ryan looks like and how she sounds seems to be highly visible compared to how 'British people' look and sound in that, she is associated by them with a country that she does not necessarily relate to. This interrogates the fixity of hierarchy between Ryan and Kyle, which the latter seems to have suggested when referring to how 'white' and 'non-white' people are perceived.

Therefore, because 'British people' appear to associate what Ryan looks like and how she sounds with a country different from where she comes from, it can be said that such a perception might connect with the experience of Kyle of being ascribed an 'identity' based on skin colour. This is in the sense that like Kyle, Ryan tends to be ascribed an 'identity', because of perceptions of her physical traits and 'accent'.

I had the impression that I led the discussion when I asked Ryan specifically about how far her physical traits relate to her being integrated in Britain, so I generated a more general question about what 'integration' means to her.

The following is her response, which is different from how she has responded above:

> Well, integration is I suppose in that sense is how I felt integrated in sort of
> the everyday life in terms of where you shop, where do you go out, who you
> socialise with, what do you do as a sort of a social activities, you know what
> do you do in spare time and things like that which wasn't a huge difference
> where I came from, in [the country she comes from]. It was different and it
> wasn't different, yeah, in terms of integration that's what I meant. (Ryan,
> interview)

How Ryan is perceived by, what she has referred to as, 'British people' in the previous extract tends to be not salient in how she rearticulates integration in this passage. She appears to have agency in how she interacts with the British contexts in terms of the choices she makes in her everyday life. These choices relate to how she practises her daily life in terms of the activities she performs and her social circle, which according to her, are not very different from where she comes from. She also refers to this process as different and not different at the same time, which suggest ambivalence.

The way in which she talks about how she integrated herself in Britain and how she used to practice her life where she comes from indicates that she made choices of how she interacts with these places. Therefore, I wish to argue here that the ways in which she appears to make sense of herself in these places is by negotiating herself in these contexts and by making decisions, which shows that such interaction is constructed, but not given or already there regardless of where she comes from.

In the next extract, Eli responds by talking about 'integration' as multifaceted. One of the facets appears to relate to how Ryan integrated herself:

> I suppose, people talk about two forms of integration. One is at a more sort of general level; do you feel that you are ok in the country, do you understand the culture, and do you know a little bit about the culture, have you accepted (laughing) the culture, you know, are you part of that. And then, there is a more kind of personal level like who are your friends, who you socialise with, who you talk to, do you have kind of some kind of social circle. So, maybe, you could talk about integration in those two different ways. (Eli, interview)

Eli tends to offer an understanding of 'integration' by referring to how other people seem to interpret it. This is in the sense that she distinguishes between two facets of 'integration', which she attributes to other people. On the one hand, she refers to the first facet, using the expression 'general level', which seems to relate to people's impression and knowledge of, what she refers to as, 'the culture' they are in. On the other hand, she constructs the second facet of 'integration as more personal by situating it at, using her term, a 'personal level'.

This level of 'integration' is associated with the social environment of the person and seems to relate to how Ryan 'integrated' herself in the British context, in that it involves choices that people make in how they interact with where they are, such as choosing their social circle.

I wanted to explore Eli's own perspective on 'integration' by asking her where she stands in how people seem to perceive 'integration'. She responds as follows:

> So, for me, I think I've become quite accustomed to being in the UK. I think, over the years, I mean, I have a love-hate relationship with this country. Over the years, sometimes I loved it, sometime what I am doing here? I wish I go back home. Or sometimes I feel no, I don't want to go back home. I prefer to stay here. So, it's just kind of various things depending on whatever is happening at the time… . (Eli, interview)

She appears to respond to my question by disturbing the notion of 'integration' in that it is unsettled and is, rather, emergent through negotiating her sense of, what I interpret as, 'belonging' in the UK and where she comes from. This is in the sense that there is ambivalence as to whether she 'belongs' in the UK or where she comes from and *vice versa*. This is manifested in her relationship with the UK, which she constructs as a 'love-hate relationship', and in the expression she uses to describe where she comes from; 'go back home'.

She attributes these uncertain conflicted feelings to the circumstances happening in these places, which appear to disturb her sense of 'integration' and make her uncertain whether to stay or, using her words, 'go back home'. In this process of negotiating her sense of place in the UK and where she comes from, she appears to interact with these places by constantly articulating her relationship with them, which makes this process of negotiating 'belonging emergent and changing.

Therefore, like Charlie, Eli also appears to position herself in-between Britain and where she comes from depending on the events happening in these places and how she responds to them.

In the following extract, which is the last in this section, she further positions herself in relation to the UK and where she comes from by reconstructing them using terms, such as 'own country' and 'home country':

> …Because it's a little bit like my own country, it's not my home country, but it's where I live. It's where I work; it's where I've spent most of my adult life and where I will probably spend most of my life or also going forward. So, of course, I care about it and I am part of that society and, you know, of course, you have to care, at the end of the day you are contributing to that. (Eli, interview)

Eli makes a clear distinction between how she considers the UK and where she comes from, which informs her relationship with both places and how far she 'belongs' in them. This is evident in how she describes these places as: 'a little bit like my own country' and 'my home country', respectively. These labels indicate some sort of hierarchy in that Eli appears to have a sense of 'belonging' where she comes from more than in the UK and that her relationship with the latter tends to be maintained through her profession via which she contributes to society. She emphasises this connection by stressing that she is part of 'British society' because of the role she plays in it.

The ways in which she asserts this seems to convey, what I interpret as, 'authority' and 'agency' in that she appears to have a say in how she positions herself in 'British society' at the level of profession. This tends to contradict how she appears to be perceived in the UK when she has talked about 'immersion', in the previous chapter, in section 3.4., in that she appears to be excluded from the UK because of perceptions of her physical traits and 'accent'.

Therefore, the way Eli positions herself in both the UK and where she comes from is multiple and complex. Her professional role in 'British society', the way she is perceived by others, and the emotions she has towards the place she comes from play a huge role in this process of negotiating and constructing her sense of 'belonging'. The relationship between the co-participants' profession in the UK and their bond with the places they come

from in how they situate themselves in these places and negotiate their 'belonging' is further discussed in more detail in section 4.4.

In this section of 'disturbed 'integration'' I have discussed the subjective ways in which the co-participants construct 'integration', a term which has emerged in the previous chapter, in section 3.4. It is constructed as a 'one-way process' in that it is the co-participants who make efforts to 'integrate' themselves in 'British society'. They also appear to constantly negotiate their sense of 'integration' in Britain by bringing their relationship with this country, as well as their relationship with where they come from into interaction. This is in the sense that they position themselves in Britain and where they come from relatively by moving backward and forward between these places. In other words, 'integration' in this study is emergent and constantly negotiated. Perceptions of 'integration' in terms of physical traits and 'accent' are also recurrent in this section in that some co-participants; Jo and Ryan, appear to be excluded because of their different characteristics to, what they have referred to as, 'British people'. However, there is a shift from these imposed categories of 'race' and 'accent' in that they become less salient to the co-participants, and a 'new' category emerge which reflects their own construction of themselves as shown in the following section.

Having said this, I relate to the experience of Kyle of being interrogated about how she self-identifies, which I have discussed in the previous chapter and in this section, in that, as discussed in chapter one, section 1.8., I was also questioned about the statements I made about myself and the people where I come from, by the people I met, in such a way that how I perceive myself did not conform with how they perceived me, which led them to question my statements. Also, the experience of Ryan of being associated with a group of people that she does not necessarily identify with by, what she has referred to as, 'British people', because of the assumptions they have about the way she looks, and sounds resonates with me. This is in the sense that, I was also associated with people that I do not necessarily think of when I talk about myself by the people I met, whose perceptions of where I come from were hugely associated with the Middle East. The notion of 'integration' is further discussed in light of the literature in chapter eight, section 8.4.

In the following section I examine the notion of 'home' which has emerged in this section from the ways in which the co-participants have talked about 'integration'.

4.3. ''Hybrid' sense of 'home''

This section manifests the shift in categories mentioned above which I interpret as showing freedom. This is in the sense that this section focuses on a 'new' category which the coparticipants choose to draw upon to talk about themselves, which is beyond 'race' and 'accent'. Therefore, this section examines the ways in which the co-participants use what they have referred to as 'home' in the previous section to articulate, what I interpret as, their sense of 'belonging'.

I use the term 'hybridity' to refer to the ways in which the co-participants articulate their sense of 'belonging' which involves merging their sense of 'home' towards Britain and where they come from, as well as towards other places that they feel connection with. This manifestation of the notion of 'home' which is multiple and dynamic in nature is a means through which the co-participants challenge perceptions of them as 'either', 'or' on the basis of their physical traits and 'accent' as shown in the previous chapter.

In this interview extract, Charlie shows a desire to go back to where he comes from, which he constructs as 'home':

> I feel very happy back home. Well, of course, I was considering going back totally and every now and again I do it, you know. I think of it, and I think if I had pursued a different strand of my career, I may have done that. But I think in the context of the type of academic research that I am into, I don't think that I could do that in [a place he comes from]. And pretty certainly will be not only difficult but also potentially quite limiting. (Charlie, interview)

Charlie's use of 'home' to describe his feeling towards where he comes from indicates that he has a sense of, what I interpret as, 'belonging' to this place. This can be shown in his statement: 'going back totally', which also appears to indicate that he has a connection with this place even though he is away from it. It seems that being away from where he comes from is not because he wants to be distant from that place, but because of his profession which makes him stay in Britain temporarily. This is because it appears that there is less potential that he can professionally survive in the place he comes from.

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Therefore, it seems that even though he belongs professionally to Britain, he 'belongs' to where he comes from with his feelings and attachment, which he manifests in his desire to return to it one day.

In the next passage, he reconstructs his 'belonging' in a way which I interpret as 'hybrid' by merging his feelings towards a city in Britain that he has lived in for many years and where he comes from:

> [A city in Britain] is my home, as well as [the country he comes from]. You know, because they were just as integral in my evolution as a person (smiling), but I wouldn't make kind of assumption, you know, that the UK as a whole could be my home. I think, If I have a space that I consider as a space of origin it's, it's (a city in Britain), you know, in the UK context. (Charlie, interview)

What I call 'hybridity' can be explained in the way in which he enacts, what I interpret as, his 'belonging' by merging his sense of, what he refers to as, 'home' towards a place in Britain and where he comes from together, as well as by situating himself within this mélange without drawing boundaries between these places. This can be shown in his statement: '…they were just as integral in my evolution as a person…', which appears to indicate that there is interaction between these places in that they are interrelated and they both play an important role in how he appears to project his 'belonging'.

In the following passage, what I interpret as, 'hybrid' 'belonging' is also manifested in Ryan's perception of her dual citizenship, as well as in her perception of Britain and where she comes from as 'home':

> I've got dual citizenship, [a citizenship of Ryan's national background] and Britain. All my kids have got dual citizenship. I don't feel either of countries are important. I don't feel I'm more at home in one place than in the other. I suppose, in a way, because I work here and I lived here so long of my adult life, Britain is more home in that sense. If I wanted to go home tomorrow, I think I would struggle to find a job in a similar sort of role to what I am here,

because things work differently there. I am not sure if that makes sense.

(Ryan, interview)

Similar to Charlie, Ryan seems to articulate her sense of 'belonging' in a 'hybrid' way by combining her feeling of 'home' towards Britain and where she comes from, which tends to be reflected in the term 'home' that she uses to refer to both places. This term can be understood in relation to her perception of the equal value of the dual citizenship that she and her children have in that, she situates herself in relation to Britain and the place she comes from without necessarily distinguishing between them. Even though she appears to align herself with Britain because of her profession and the significant period of time she has spent in the UK, she seems to have a desire to return to the place she comes from which, like in the case of Charlie, tends to be hindered by how the profession she has in Britain seem to operate where she comes from.

In the following extract, which has also been discussed in the previous chapter, in section 3.2., Jordan appears to manifest, what I interpret as, a 'hybrid' 'belonging' in how he self-identifies; 'transnational', where he constructs, what he refers to as, 'transnationality' as 'home':

I have a massive problem with the idea of nation. I cannot understand why I cannot pick. I love the concept of transnationality. When this concept started operating, I just, it felt some hope. It felt so much of home. Of course, I love my city where I was born. It's always like anything, you love your bedroom when you were a child, you know. It has all that sentiments and things like that… I think of myself as transnational… . (Jordan, interview)

In section 3.2., I have discussed this extract in relation to how Jordan perceives himself. I have stated that Jordan rejects identification on the basis of 'nation', and rather identifies with the wider world, which he appears to project via the label he has used to refer to himself; 'transnational'. Closely related to this, in this section I use the same extract to discuss, what I interpret as, 'hybrid' 'belonging'. Jordan appears to resist perceptions of 'belonging' on the basis of 'national background' by self-identifying as a 'transnational', a

label which he constructs as 'home'. This notion; 'home', communicates a sense of attachment and bond in a way which defies boundaries between places and people, and rather suggests ownership of how Jordan interacts with the world and how he situates himself in it.

As argued in section 3.2., having a sense of 'belonging' to where an individual comes from, does not necessarily mean that 'belonging' is restricted to this place, only. I want to emphasise here that, in the example of Jordan and other co-participants, what I interpret as, 'belonging' to or having a 'national background' does not necessarily indicate they 'belong' to their 'national background' only. Therefore, I wish to argue that this entity; 'national identity' can be arbitrary and imagined in that we did not choose our 'national backgrounds', and it is limiting, as well as can be essentialist to frame 'belonging' in terms of 'national backgrounds' because it confines people within geographical boundaries which are defined and redefined due to various reasons, such as political reasons.

In the following extract, Kyle talks about the impact of colonialism on how she feels towards Britain by using terms such as 'home' and 'belong':

> Well, I grew up kind of with whole notion that, you know as from colonies, the wealth of the colonies, the wealth of our people was used to build this country. So, I always thought I had a place here…. I mean, if you think of it, the whole colonial interference was about, you know, taking raw material from [a continent] and elsewhere and bringing it here to build all the great things you see today. So, for me, it was always like, well, a part of home that didn't quite know about and I have never experienced before. So, it was the first time, but I always knew I kind of belong there (laughing). I always felt I had a stake, you know, to have a stake (gesture with hands that shows something that is rooted). So, I have something, I could have a claim to be here. (Kyle, interview)

Like Alex, who I have discussed in the previous chapter, in section 3.3., whose endeavour to 'belong' to, what he has referred to as, 'white middle-class British culture' appears to be ingrained by postcolonial history, Kyle also appears to have an ingrained sense of, what I interpret as, 'belonging' to Britain due to colonialism. This sense of

'belonging' is evident in what seems to be an ever-strong imagined connection with Britain even before she actually settles in it. This can be shown in her statements: 'it was always like, well, a part of home that didn't quite know about and I have never experienced before… I always knew I kind of belong there'.

She appears to emphasise what seems to be an imagined connection with Britain by claiming to have, what she refers to as, 'a stake'. The physical gesture she made while stating that she has a stake in Britain shows rootedness and authority. This authoritarian way in stating how she felt connected with Britain appears to be in response to British colonialism which, according to her, took wealth from her country and other places to build Britain. This authoritarian manner also appears to be a way through which she tends to legitimise her claim of having a place in Britain by showing the extent to which the idea of, what I interpret as, 'belonging' to Britain is ingrained in her, like Alex, by colonial practices.

Therefore, the way in which Kyle shows connection with Britain relates to how she has self-identified, in the previous chapter, in section 3.2.; 'a British'. This is in the sense that she appears to attribute the claims of being 'British' and having a stake in Britain to British colonialism which, according to her, altered the identity of people where she comes from, including her, and forced them to become using her terms, 'British subjects'.

In the next extract, she seems to negotiate, what I interpret as, 'hybrid' 'belonging' through her perception of, what she refers to as, 'home', which she uses in relation to places other than Britain and where she comes from:

> I'm at home in [the country Kyle comes from] and I'm at home here, em,
> maybe is my personality. Wherever I feel comfortable in a place its home,
> but I'm talking about home in terms of not just where I'm good there, where
> I feel comfortable. But is that kind of home in the sense of feeling strange,
> which I felt about coming here. I felt like it was my home. I had a stake to
> it, but I didn't know how anything was, everything was confusing and stuff
> like that. (Kyle, interview)

Kyle appears to negotiate, what I interpret as, 'belonging' by situating herself in a way which I also interpret as, 'hybrid'. Like other co-participants in this section, she situates herself in relation to the places she connects with by merging them together without necessarily distinguishing between them. In this context, what I interpret as, 'hybridity' refers to the fluid manner in which she positions herself in relation to different places in that she refers to them as 'home' and she broadens the horizon by going beyond identifying with Britain and where she comes from.

Therefore, like Jordan, who broadens the horizon by challenging perceptions of who people are, including himself, based on nation through his self-identification as 'a transnational', Kyle 's sense of, what she refers to as, 'home' also appears to show a broadening of the horizon by moving beyond identifying with Britain and where she comes from, only. This also suggests an open and constantly constructed sense of 'belonging' through constant interaction with different places.

In the following extract, which is the last passage of this section, she makes statements about how far she 'belongs' to where she comes from by referring to 'culture' and 'British establishment'.

> Well, there is always a [reference to where Kyle comes from] thing. I think, when people come from any culture, there is always something about that culture that stays with them. So, there is always a [reference to where she comes from] thing, but I don't resent anybody because, for me, I think, is pointless. I mean the people that did the terrible things of slavery and colony are long dead. It's not about the people; it's really about the establishment. (Kyle, interview)

Kyle talks about people's 'cultural background', including her own 'cultural background' which, according to her, stays with them wherever they go. She appears to manifest this perception by saying that there are cultural elements from the place she comes from that she still carries with her wherever she goes, regardless of the huge influence of colonialism on how she constructs her sense of who she is as well as her sense of place in the world. In

doing so, she appears to criticise, what she refers to as, 'the establishment' which appears to relate to British colonialism.

In this section I have explored a 'new' 'category' which goes beyond the imposed categories of 'race' and 'accent', which are central in the previous section, as well as in the previous chapter. This 'new' category revolves around the ways in which the co-participants use the notion of 'home' to reflect their sense of 'belonging'. They merge their sense of 'home' towards Britain and the places they come from, as well as other places they feel they connect with together, in such a way that the boundaries between these places are blurry. The coparticipants negotiate this mélange by situating themselves within this process without necessarily drawing boundaries between these places. This construction of the notion of 'home' represents more or less two dimensions of 'belonging' discussed by Antonsich (2010). This is further discussed in light of the literature in chapter eight, in section 8.5.3.

Some of the co-participants have talked about their profession in a way that it appears to be a crucial factor in their decision not to 'go back home'. This is going to be discussed in the following section.

4.4. 'The familiar-stranger'

In sections 4.2., and 4.3. I have briefly discussed the interrelationship between Eli's and Jordan's profession in the UK and their attachment to the places they come from when they talked about how they position themselves in both places. In this section I discuss this interrelationship in more detail. Even though this relationship is important because it allows an understanding of the complexity of the co-participants' relationship with where they come from and Britain, it is beyond the scope of this study. This is because the data of this section focuses on the co-participants' experiences in their workplace, which is not the focus of this study. The following is a more elaborate discussion on this interconnection.

In the following interview extract, Charlie appears to 'fit in' in the British university where he works, but 'belong' emotionally to the country he comes from:

> I definitely love [the country Charlie comes from]. I miss my parents, they
> are getting old, you know. So, there is also the personal element that's quite

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strong there. But, on the other hand, I think that professionally, in terms of colleagues, in terms of research opportunities when you do something as niche as [a type of research] and you've got this place to do it somewhere and that is definitely what you want to do, then, you know, it's also propitious especially when you devoted such a lengthy time investing in, you know, specialising in that field. It's not an easy thing to say, you know, that I'm just gonna have a career, change it and do something else, no. (Charlie, interview)

Charlie negotiates between his sense of 'fitting in' in British academia and his attachment to where he comes from. He appears to be living in a dilemma of wanting to go back, to what he has referred to as in the previous section, 'home' because of his emotional attachment to this place, but at the same time he feels that he does not 'fit in' in academia where he comes from. This is evident in how he situates himself in these places in that he belongs to Britain at the professional level, but he 'belongs' emotionally to the other side of the world that he comes from.

Therefore, I wish to argue here that there is interrelationship between professional background and attachment to the place Charlie comes from in how he appears to negotiate his 'belonging' in that what seems to be a familiar place at some level can be strange at another level. This is in the sense that even though Charlie seems to 'belong' with his thoughts and emotions to the country he comes from, he does not appear to 'fit in' there at the professional level.

In the following extract, like Charlie, Eli also expresses her desire to go back to the country she comes from which seems to be hindered by her perception of not 'fitting in' in the university system where she comes from:

If I have a permanent job in [the country Eli comes from], I will go back. I haven't even tried to get a permanent job in [where she comes from], because I just read the news and see that people have no jobs… I suppose also because I've worked quite a few years now in the British university system and I know people in the [university in the country she comes from].

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So, I know how things work over there and it's just different as well, you know…. But, I'm just not sure that I will be comfortable working in a [university in the country she comes from] based on the things that I know about how things work over there… . (Eli, interview)

Unlike in the previous chapter, section 3.4., when Eli has dissociated herself from, what she has refers to as, 'the UK' because of others' perceptions of her, in this extract she appears to 'belong' to the British context by identifying with the British university system. She associates herself with Britain, because of her sense of 'fitting in' in the university system, which she does not seem to have towards where she comes from. The discussion in the previous chapter shows that Eli is perceived in the UK as, using her words, 'a foreigner' because of others' perceptions of her physical traits and 'accent'. However, at the professional level she appears to 'fit in' in Britain, rather than where she comes from as shown in this section.

Therefore, what seems to be familiar in one context appears to be strange in another context in that, even though Eli has identified in previous interview extracts with the country she comes from, she does not feel she 'fits in' there at the professional level and despite situating herself as 'a foreigner' in the UK at the level of what she looks like and sounds, she appears to 'fit in' professionally in 'British society'.

From the above extract, I deduced that she intends to go back to, what she refers to as, 'home' one day. So, I interrogated this assumption by saying to her that there is this idea of going back 'home' one day, and the following is her reply:

Oh! yeah, as soon as I can afford it. I will retire and go back home (laughing). I will be one of those British people, (laughing) going back going to [the country Eli comes from] just to retire. I will retire as a foreigner in my own country, (laughing). I was thinking about that and I will not only be back home, but actually back to my mum's village, specifically where my roots actually are. (Eli, interview)

The desire of going back 'home' is evident in Eli's decision to retire in the country she comes from. She appears to make fun of herself or show an ironic resonance by equating her act of returning 'home' with the tendency of 'British' people who settle in the country she comes from after they retire. From the ways in which she shows her bond with the place she comes from, it is evident that the reason for going back 'home' is her attachment and sense of 'belonging' to these places which she seems to maintain regardless of the years she has spent abroad. However, her return 'home' appears to be perceived by people where she comes from as though she comes from a different place in that her strong connection with 'home' might not be recognised, and rather interrogated. This is evident in how she refers to herself: 'a foreigner in my own country', which shows that she might be perceived as someone who does not 'belong' even though she strongly connects with this place, which she maintains a bond with through her imagined return.

Therefore, like Charlie, the interrelationship between Eli's professional role in the UK and her bond with the place she comes from influences how she situates herself in both places. This is in the sense that she appears to 'belong' to where she comes from emotionally, but she also appears to 'belong' to Britain professionally. This 'familiar-strange' relationship appears to influence the way she feels and the way she might be perceived by others after she returns to, what she refers to as, 'home' in that, according to her, she is going to be perceived as a 'foreigner' in her own country.

In this section, I have discussed the interrelationship between the co-participants' profession in the UK and their attachments to where they come from in how they situate themselves in these places. Based on the data, it appears that their longing for returning to the countries they come from is hindered by their profession, because they appear to 'fit in' in the British university system as opposed to the university system where they come from. This 'familiar-stranger' relationship shows that their sense of 'belonging' is complex and is relational in the sense that they are emotionally connected with the places they come from, which they manifest in their desire to return 'home'. However, this longing appears to be postponed due to their feeling of 'fitting in' in the British university system and not in academia where they come from.

4.5. A personal interest in the subject matter

This section explores the relationship between the co-participants' lived experiences and their professional orientation. This interrelationship is two dimensional in the sense that some coparticipants bring their own lived experiences of being prejudiced based on, for example, 'race' and 'accent' in their areas of specialism to make statements about their self-perception, while another co-participant uses his own area of specialism in manifesting the way he situates himself in the world. Like the previous section, this section is also beyond the scope of the study as it deals with the co-participants' experiences in their professional setting which is not what this study investigates.

In the interview meeting with Jordan, he mentioned that 'accent' is very important. During the interview meeting, I wanted to pursue this point by restating his statement, and the following is his response:

> Yes, well that's my research and that came like that's how my experiences in a sense inspired my research. It's about performance of identity through language; it's about the accent right. So, in terms of my personal experience that inspires it, like in [a show] when I was [a performance] in [a country] and somebody saying; Oh! I don't understand what he's saying, and I'm thinking, really! At the beginning I was getting upset about it, but then I started thinking, in [a country] when you have two people from [a region], for example, no one can understand and, yet you put them on [a show] and it's a great [an accent spoken in a region]. So, it's the idea that native speakers have the right to not be understood. I'm thinking how you perform foreignness and how, also, you know, the lack of representation of accents in [an area of research] and public space. Because, in general, in English language the foreign accents are spoken for, right, not spoken for themselves. They don't have that agency of representing themselves. (Jordan, interview)

In the previous chapter, in section 3.4., I discussed the impact of Jordan's lived experiences of being discriminated against in Britain because of perceptions of his 'accent' on his research agenda. This is in the sense that he got involved in a political activity at a university, and he became interested in investigation discrimination based on 'accent' in his area of expertise as a way of highlighting and responding to this form of inequality. In the same vein, in this extract this relationship between his lived experiences and his research trajectory is further illustrated.

In the example he provides, it is evident that he is categorised by a member of the audience in such a way that he does not 'belong' to the community, because of difference in 'accent'. This experience and other experiences, which I have discussed in section 3.4., of being ascribed an 'identity' and perceived as, what Jordan refers to as, 'a foreigner' on the basis of his 'accent' appear to trigger agency and resistance which Jordan manifests by bringing these experiences of discrimination to the centre via his area of specialism.

Inequality in this example can be said to be reflected in hierarchical perceptions in terms of the way this member of the audience appears to perceive Jordan and his colleagues because of their 'accents'. Jordan seems to be far more dissociated from the community in which he lived than his colleagues whose 'accent' is also 'different', but, probably, because the latter 'belong' to the same country as this member of the audience, they are less problematic compared to Jordan.

From the way in which Jordan responds to this experience by pointing to issues around, what he refers to as, 'native speakers' in his area of specialism, it seems that this can possibly be explained in terms of geographical closeness in that, even though the 'accent' of these people, that is, Jordan's colleagues and the member of the audience, is different, they 'belong' to the same country. Unlike Jordan whose 'accent' comes from a place that does not 'belong' geographically to their country.

I am aware that in contexts such as the UK as well as, probably, elsewhere, 'accent' is perceived differently among people whose 'accent' relates to the place they come from. Nevertheless, in the case of Jordan, he appears to be more excluded than others because of his 'accent', which 'comes from' a country that, apparently everybody else in this example does not come from.

Therefore, based on these experiences I argue that Jordan manifests, what I refer to as, his 'cultural identity' through his area of specialism, which is shaped by his lived experiences of being discriminated against because of perceptions of 'accent' in various contexts as shown throughout the data.

In the next extract, Kyle projects her 'belonging' by manifesting it discursively through her profession and food:

> The curriculum within my [a particular] programme, one of the things I have done is to introduce [a show about a continent]. Within that, some students would never know that [a continent] is somewhere. They think it is a city and stuff like that. Suddenly, they come across this module, you know, and they all study about the culture. They [an activity which relate to] that culture, you know, and have discussions around how things work within that culture and how it is different or similar to your own culture. For me, that's a massive influence on people because my students, some of them come from, even these students [from an ethnic group]. By [an ethnic group], I mean people whose parents are here maybe [some nationalities] and all that. Some of them come to our course and they learn things they've never learned before, you know. That's for me a massive way of influencing. I have friends as well who maybe, you know, they see something when they come to my house. I make, I don't make English food when they come to my house, I make [food where Kyle comes from]. (Kyle, interview)

Like Jordan who draws on his personal lived experiences in his field to highlight discrimination and assert his self-perception, Kyle appears to project, what I interpret as, 'belonging' to, what she refers to as, the 'culture' she comes from by introducing it to her students who come from different 'cultural background'. In this extract she tends to identify with the continent that the country she comes from geographically belongs to. She also appears to take the responsibility to promote this place and to introduce 'the culture' of this place to her students by performing activities which relate to that 'culture'.

This activity which might be motivated by her personal interest of making her students experience others' 'cultures', has intercultural dimensions in that she appears to address prejudice about the other by making her students engage with 'culture' critically and look at it from others' lenses.

She further manifests 'belonging' to 'the culture' she comes from by talking about the significance of food in how she projects herself to others in that she chooses to cook food of where she comes from rather than, what she refers to as, 'English food' for her British friends. The relationship between entities, such as food and how the co-participants make sense of who they are will be further discussed in the following chapter.

From this extract, it can be said that the way in which Kyle articulates 'belonging' to the place she comes from, which is transmitted through her subject of specialism, is by introducing the place she comes from to her students, as well as by highlighting the importance of cooking food of where she comes from. This act of bringing one's 'cultural background' and put it into interaction with the new place can be said to relate to her perception of 'immersion' in section 3.4., where she constructs this term in terms of interrelationship between 'culture'. This also appears to connect with what I interpret as, 'hybrid' 'belonging' which I have discussed in section 4.3., where her understanding of 'home' is not limited to geographical boundaries, but rather to her feelings towards places.

Therefore, I wish to argue here that Kyle further manifests her sense of 'belonging' through her profession by bringing her experience of putting the culture she comes from into interaction with the British context.

The following is a statement by Alex about the way he once introduced himself to his students which alludes to how they might perceive him:

> My name is [Alex], and I don't have a bomb with me (raising his hands in
> the air and laughing). (Notes from research diary)

This statement by Alex of the way he believes his students perceive him connects with how he introduced himself to me, as a non-strict person in terms of religion and that he perceives himself, using his words, as 'fairly internationalist'. This connection which I make between the way he introduced himself to his students and to me communicates that he is aware of

stereotypes that people, including myself might have because of his name and what he looks like, and that he resists these preconceived ideas by making statements which address them in way or in another.

In the next extract, like Kyle, Alex stresses prejudice on the basis of perceptions of his name and what he looks like, which he fights against through his profession:

> One short cut that people use in this country now is that when they look at you and your name, they immediately think, ok, you are a [reference to a religious group] and they start wondering what your views are and where your sympathies lie. So, it is really important to make students see the world through international lenses. I think, we need a lot more anthropology and lot more ideas of how different ideas and societies view the world and that's ok. You might not like it, but that's ok. Ideas are powerful and it's important that students, children, young people are exposed to all kinds of identities so that they can make up their minds in what they believe in and why, and also for the sake of co-existence and tolerance. (Alex, interview)

Like in the previous extract, in this extract Alex sheds light on, what I interpret, as an ascribed 'identity' which tends to be based on his name and his physical features. I interpret this event as 'racialisation' in the sense that people associate the way he thinks with his name and what he looks like, which have a particular reference to a religion. He responds to this imagined conception of him by decentring it, and he rather emphasises his international perception of himself and of the world through his profession.

This world view relates to how Kyle addresses her students' unfamiliarity with where she comes from in that, Alex also fights against prejudice by bringing his personal conception of the world into interaction with students' perspectives and allowing them space to view the world through, what he refers to as, 'international lenses'. Further, his international orientation is manifested in his call for research agenda that brings people together by encouraging tolerant perceptions of difference among people.

Therefore, like Jordan and Kyle, Alex bring his own life experiences and how he perceives himself into his area of specialism which he uses to address prejudice about who he is and emphasise his self-perception.

In the following extract, Ashley draws on his area of expertise, as well as on his own beliefs in situating himself in different places he seems to identify with:

> You know, every nation has things that they are proud of and they need to, because what I know again from my sort of discipline and my background that people cannot cope with a negative identity, right. People can't think of themselves as not being good because everybody has got something that is good and you need to enhance that, fine. But, I also understand that, you know, is all relative and if you take a wider perspective there are certain things that and so, for me, the British actually are quite up there in terms of where as human race. We ought to be developing towards. And, I think, my only other experience, not even experience, but, you know, belief of nation that if there is anything better is, probably, the Dutch, you know, if there is another place where I would like to live it would, probably, be the Netherlands because I got the sense they even got, you know, a little bit further ahead, you know. Denmark, probably, as well and this Scandinavian although they got other issues. (Ashley, interview)

Ashley talks about, what he refers to as, 'identity' from the point of view of his discipline, and he uses terms such as 'negative' and, what I infer as, 'positive'. Even though he appears to acknowledge that people can have a 'negative', as well as a 'positive' 'identity' perception, he appears to associate, what he refers to as, 'the British' with a 'positive' 'identity'. This is because it seems that he believes that their 'positive' qualities surpass others' 'positive' qualities. This can be shown in his statement: '...the British actually are quite up there in terms of where as human race. We ought to be developing towards'.

However, he reconstructs his perception of 'the British' in a way which suggests hierarchy between people who he refers to as 'the British' and 'the Dutch'. He appears to consider the latter to be 'better'. This is manifested in his statements above which signify

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that he considers the Netherlands to be, using his terms, 'a little bit further ahead'. Through these statements he positions himself in these places, as well as in others, which also appear to be highly regarded by him, such as Denmark by moving between them and trying to situate himself in them based on his beliefs of these places. This is to say that he discursively identifies with these places using his area of expertise, as well as his own beliefs of the various places he talks about in making sense of his relationship with them.

The way in which Ashley perceives, what he refers to as, 'the British' above appears to connect with how he described them in the first meeting: 'British superiority is legitimate'. During the interview, I wanted to dig deeper in into this perception by asking him to tell me more, and the following is his response:

> Yes, that's something I really, really feel strongly about. You see, I think, part of the reason why the British society is or at least my experience of it, at least, you know, sort of a tolerant. I'm not saying that there is no prejudice. I'm saying that, you know, and that happens everywhere, but that's also mixed up with you know social economic status, financial situation as we were saying. Now, what I'm saying is that when you have all the ideal situations, I find it a really tolerant country and, I think, that is the case because they are genuinely superior in terms of their, you know, their civilisation, in terms of their understanding, their appreciation in terms of their values. And I think, the British feel comfortable and feel that this superiority is legitimate in the sense that other people recognise it and accept it as such. So, the values of this country are the ones that are actually always universal, are the ones that, I think, everybody across the world would take as fundamental. (Ashley, interview)

I use this extract to help me understand what Ashley means by the comparison he makes in the previous extract in terms of, using his terms, 'the British' being better as 'a human race'. He draws on his personal experience of living in Britain and interacting with 'the British' in expressing his perception of, what he refers to as, 'their civilisation' and '[them]' as 'superior'. He uses the term 'British superiority', which he refers to as 'legitimate' because

of, according to him, the universality of 'British' 'values'. This is evident in how he responds to these values by praising and promoting them in such a way that these values appear to be peculiar and exclusive to the 'British', but not to other people.

Hence, I argue here that his conception of, what he refers to as, the 'British' and 'British civilisation' connects with his perception of 'the British' as a better 'human race' in the previous extract and that people from others part of the world need to learn 'British values'. This stance towards 'the British' and 'British values' which is attributed to his personal experience might be formed because of his feeling of acceptance by 'the British', which I have discussed in the previous chapter, in section 3.4. This is in the sense that even though he perceives himself as, using his word an 'outsider' because of his 'accent' and his physical traits, he feels accepted because of his understanding of what he has referred to as 'the culture'.

Therefore, Ashley's perception of 'British civilisation' and the 'British' as 'legitimately superior' seems to contradict Kyle's perception of what she has referred to as 'British establishment' in section 4.2., where she appears to criticise the way in which she believes 'British society' is established, which relates to colonialism.

In this section I have explored the relationship between the co-participants' lived experiences and their areas of specialism in how they talk about themselves. I have shown that they bring both their personal lived experiences and their areas of specialism together to make sense of themselves, as well as to emphasise their self-perception, which explicitly or implicitly respond to others' perceptions of them which are mostly discriminatory.

The interrelationship between the co-participants' experiences and their professional trajectories resonates with my own experience. This in the sense that, like these co-participants who use their personal experiences and beliefs in their areas of specialism to make statement about themselves in relation to others and the wider world, my study is used to explore a topic which was triggered by own lived experience and my observation of what was happening around me, which I have discussed in chapter one, in section 1.8. In other words, both the coparticipants and I use our experiences and beliefs in our areas of specialism in different ways to communicate ideas which represent our intellectual orientations and our understanding of our relationship with the world in which we exist.

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored, what I interpret as, 'negotiating belonging' through the ways in which the co-participants position themselves in Britain and the places they come from, as well as in other places they feel connection with.

The data I have presented in this chapter reveals that the co-participants' understanding of the notion of 'integration' is subjective and fluid. They construct this notion as a 'one-way process' in such a way that it is the co-participants who make efforts and find ways to become 'integrated' in 'British society'. They also construct this term by drawing on many entities, such as language, everyday life practices, 'the culture' of the new place, as well as by positioning themselves relatively in the places they come from and Britain. Where they come from is omnipresent in the sense that they constantly negotiate their sense of place in these places by moving between them. Also, the data indicates that skin colour and 'accent' are recurrent in how 'integration' is interpreted. These two contested categories, which are associated with perceptions of the co-participants by 'some white British' people, are less salient in how they talk about themselves in this chapter. The more the co-participants move away from talking about how they believe they are perceived by others, the less the categories of 'race' and 'accent' are salient to them, and 'new' categories emerge.

I interpret this shift in categories as demonstrating freedom in the sense that there is movement from categories which have been imposed on the co-participants by others to categories which have been chosen by the co-participants to emphasise their own self-understanding. This shift is reflected in the data about 'belonging' in section, 4.3., in the sense that a 'new' category has emerged, which is the notion of 'home'. This term which I interpret the way it is used as 'hybrid' demonstrates that the co-participants' sense of 'belonging' is dynamic and multiple. This is in the sense that, the notion of 'home' is used to refer to different places the co-participants feel connection with, which, by implication, responds to the categorisation of the co-participants in terms of 'either/ or', which was salient in the previous chapter. This use of 'home' represents more or less two dimensions of 'belonging', which are 'place belongingness', and 'politics of belonging', discussed by

Antonsich (2010). The notion of 'integration', as well as 'belonging', will be discussed in light of the literature in chapter eight, in section 8.4., and 8.5.

In addition to this, the findings demonstrate interrelationship between the professional role of the co-participants and their bond with where they come from which influences their positioning in both places in that they 'fit in' in the British university system, but they emotionally 'belong' to the places they come from. There is also another level of interrelationship which concerns the interaction between the co-participants' areas of specialism and their personal experiences in articulating their world views about who they are, which by implication responds to others' perceptions of them. As stated earlier, even though these interrelationships inform the ways in which 'belonging' is manifested by the coparticipants, they are beyond the scope of the study because they focus on the co-participants' experiences in their professional environment.

In the following chapter, I continue the movement from imposed categories to 'new' categories, which I have explained above, by highlighting the centrality of non-human entities in the co-participants' sense of 'identity'.

Chapter Five: Ties

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I explore the second interpretation of 'identity' which revolves around the significance of non-human categories, which the co-participants draw upon to articulate their sense of 'identity', as well as to maintain, what I interpret as, 'ties' with the countries they come from and other places such as Britain.

As in the previous chapter, this chapter also moves away from the relevance of the coparticipants' social environment in the ways in which they construct their sense of who they are, and towards analysing other ways through which they articulate their self-perception by focusing on the relevance of non-human categories**.** This is to say that this chapter is a further manifestation of the shift in categories explained in the previous chapter, which I interpret as demonstrating freedom. In section, 5.2., under the thematic heading 'the significance of names'**,** I explore the importance of names in the way the co-participants' maintain connection with the places they come from, which also extends to how they perceive their children. In section 5.3., under the sub-heading 'virtual presence in the places the co-participants come from', I examine the importance of things such as news, voting, and poetry for the co-participants to be 'present' in the places they come from. In section 5.4., under the thematic heading 'does dying or resting somewhere specific matter?', I investigate the meanings that the co-participants attribute to death in relation to their sense of who they are. In section 5.5., under the thematic heading 'food', I explore the significance of food in the way they articulate their sense of who they are, and how they interact with Britain and the places they come from.

The data reveals that these non-human entities which the co-participants draw upon to project their sense of 'identity' in relation to the countries they come from, as well as Britain serve as ties which the co-participants use to maintain connection with these places. My argument, which I have made in chapter one and four, that the tension of who the co-participants are and whether they 'belong' or not, which is salient in chapter three and seven, tends to 'fade' the more they move away from talking about their social environment; this is also pertinent to this chapter. This is in the sense that the omnipresence

of 'some white British' people in the ways the co-participants talk about themselves is almost non-existent in this chapter. There is rather a shift from 'self' and 'other' relations to human to non-human relations whereby the coparticipants express their self-understanding.

Another crucial finding concerns the relational nature of 'identity' in the sense that it is not only social, that is, limited to 'self' and 'other' relations, but it also involves human to nonhuman relations which will be discussed below. This is to say that 'identity' is not constructed solely in relation 'self' and 'other' relations.

5.2. The significance of names

In this section I explore the significance of names in the way the co-participants express their bond with the places they come from, which also communicates the way they perceive themselves, as well as their children.

In the interview meeting with Kyle, she mentioned that her children have names which are associated with the community she comes from. I wanted to pursue this by asking her and other participants about the relevance of names in their lives.

I asked Kyle to tell me about her beliefs regarding the choice of names for her children by reminding her of her statement that the names people have relate to the beliefs that their parents have in relation to what names they choose for their children. The following is her response:

> Because they are not English. Well, ok, not them, they are English because
> they were born here. I'm not English. Maybe, what reinforced for me was
> right from [the country Kyle comes from]. When I met my husband,
> I already said to him when we have kids, we are not going to have any doubts
> back in [where Kyle comes from]. So, I really had this thinking, but living
> here also reinforces it, for me, that, actually, they were born in this
> society, in England. One thing I wanted them to, if nothing else, is always
> remember where those names come from. For me, that's really important

that's why I always say to them: well, I was the one who do so, and I make

sure they do it as well. (Kyle, interview)

Kyle shifts between what appears to be contradictory perceptions of her children's 'identity' on the basis of their names and where they were born. She seems to rectify her statement that her children are not, using her term, 'English' by revoking it and rearticulating her belief that their 'identity' is 'English'. Her self-perception, which she refers to as 'not English', is salient in the ambivalent manner in which she constructs her children's 'identity'. This is in the sense that, unlike in chapter three, section 3.2., where she asserts that she is 'British', in this extract she rather self-identifies with the place she comes from by expressing allegiance to the names, which appear to 'belong' to the place in question. Kyle's connection with the place that she comes from appears to be manifested in her attitude towards her deliberate choice of names for her children. This can be shown in her statement: 'For me, that's really important that's why I always say to them: well, I was the one who do so, and I make sure they do it as well'. This describes perpetuating her choice of names in her children; in my interpretation this also implies an endeavour to pass these names on to future generations.

Therefore, Kyle's self-perception is projected in the names she gave her children. These names appear to be central in maintaining ties with the place she comes from as she asks her children to pursue the 'tradition' of passing on these names, so they survive in future generations.

In the next extract, she appears to disprove the choice of other people who change their own names, as well as their children's names to 'English' sounding names:

I know people who have come here and, actually, they've changed their

names to English names, you know. Some people are here and mentally they

are here and their kids, oh! we don't want people having difficulty calling

their names and they give them English names. They even change their own

names. I know people who have done. (Kyle, interview)

I am assuming that Kyle disapproves when people change their names and their children's names to English sounding names, because of the difficulty in pronouncing the original names properly. This assumption is based on the extracts below where she seems to associate substituting original names for English ones with, what she refers to as, 'whitening' her 'identity', as well as with her perception of not being important in people's eyes when they do not pronounce her name correctly.

The next extract is a response to my question by Kyle about whether she is mentally in the place she comes from, but physically in Britain, which I generated from the extract above:

> No, no, I want to be here mentally. I'm here mentally and physically, but what I'm saying is that my mental identity is not stuck in [the country Kyle comes from]. It's here. I'm here, but I recognise that I'm not going to whiten my identity to become British. I want to use my identity to become British. I want my identity to merge, to interact with it. (Kyle, interview)

She responds to my question by positioning herself in relation to both, Britain and where she comes from through bringing her identification with these places into interaction. She appears to resist being perceived as though she is mentally 'stuck' where she comes from or as someone who wants to become, using her word, 'white'. This is evident in her statements: '…my identity is not stuck in [the country she comes from]' and '… I'm not going to whiten my identity to become British'. She rather creates her own ways of situating herself in both contexts by bringing her background into interaction with the British context.

The way in which she responds to the idea of changing names to English sounding names connects with the way she has responded to people who substitute their 'accent' for, what she has referred to as, 'British accent', which I have discussed in chapter three, section 3.4. This is in the sense that, like in that section where she has resisted, what she has referred to as, 'wiping out' her 'culture', which she has associated with 'copying British accent', in this extract she also appears to exhibit resistance to changing her name to an English sounding name, which she appears to associate with what she calls 'whitening' her own 'identity'.

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In the next extract, she seems to impose her name by expressing dissatisfaction when people do not pronounce it properly:

> You know, I watch TV a lot and there are some really difficult names, aren't there? And they call them right all the time at least. I think, why is because they think they are important people. So, the fact that you don't get my name right and you call me something else; tell me that you don't think I'm important. (Kyle, interview)

I interpret the way Kyle appears to perceive the way people pronounce each other's names in a way that they are 'able' to pronounce each other's names in the right way, regardless of its 'difficult' nature, but they choose to do so depending on their perception of each other. This is because, for Kyle, uttering her name in the wrong way shows that she is not important to people, because if they perceive her otherwise, they would pronounce her name properly.

Therefore, far from being associated with difficulty, Kyle perceives pronouncing her name correctly or in the wrong way as a choice that people make which, according to her, indicates how far she is valued by them.

In the next interview extract, I asked Ryan about the relevance of her name in the way she perceives herself. She responded by explaining the Latin origins of her name and that she does not feel comfortable with the idea of changing her name after marriage. Then, she moved to talking about the choice of names she gave her children, which I find interesting to discuss:

> I gave [reference to the country Ryan comes from] first names to my children on purpose. So, they are proper [reference to the country Ryan comes from] names. We didn't want one which then they will be Anglicised or, you know, I didn't want Robert, for instance, as a [reference to the country Ryan comes from] version and English version, because he will be just Robert or something. So, they have got very typical [referring to the country Ryan comes from] names. They can't deny, they can't hide, laughing. (Ryan, interview)

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Like Kyle, Ryan deliberately chose names for her children, which appear to 'belong' to where she comes from. Her intention of choosing, what she refers to as, 'proper' names for her children, which cannot be converted into English names, appears to indicate that she wants to preserve, what I interpret as, the 'uniqueness' and the 'originality' of these names. This choice of names appears to be a means via which Ryan is making statements about her relationship with the country she comes from, as well as her perception of her 'children's 'identity' in that, like Kyle, she appears to endeavour to pass on, what I interpret as, her sense of self-identification and connection with the country she comes to her children through the names she gave them.

Therefore, Ryan also appears to maintain ties with the country she comes from by carrying the names which are associated with the country she comes from with her to Britain and making sure they remain 'original' through passing them on to her children.

In the following extract, Eli describes her experience of omitting part of her surname in order to 'fit in':

> There was a time when I started using my first surname just to make my life easier because you only have one surname then, you know, it's easier than having to say; okay; so, my surname has two words [saying each part] (in a funny way). Then, at one point I thought why would I do that? My name is my full name, why should I have to (silence) kind of I don't know. Why should I do something to my name just to make it fit? If you don't like it, just deal with it. Why should I take my grandfathers' surname out of, you know, it's part of who I am. Why should I have to delete it for your sake? No, I said; okay, it's a little bit more uncomfortable in practical terms, but it doesn't matter, it has to be full. (Eli, interview)

What seems to be a difficulty in dealing with Eli's surname by people around her because of its 'different' nature appears to push her to omit part of it in order to make it 'fit in' with the way people seem to use their surnames in Britain. She appears to make fun of the way these people seem to respond to her full surname by adopting their reaction when explaining

the reason, she decided to use one surname, only; 'you know, it's easier than having to say; okay; so, my surname has two words [saying each part] (in a funny way)'.

This reaction indicates that Eli is aware of these people's perception of the nature of her surname, which she resists by rebelling against it. This is in a sense that she questioned and reproached herself for omitting part of her surname, just because others find it difficult to deal with, and she rather rearticulates her connection with this part of her surname to which she refers as 'part of who I am', by imposing it.

In the following extract, she makes further statements about the significance of her surname, and the names she would choose for her children in her sense of 'identity'.

> The only one that I actually feel proud of is my last surname because it's the one from my mum's part of the family (showing emotions). It's the one that I actually feel a proper connection to. So, really, I messed up my relationship with my name (laughing). It's linked to their identity, and I actually think about that even though I don't have any children, but if or when I have them, they will have (names which relate to where Eli comes from). (Eli, interview)

She expresses a bond with her mother's side of the family which she identifies with, by keeping her mother's surname. She projects this connection by expressing emotions which show the significance of this part of surname to her sense of 'identity' and the extent to which she is connected to her mother's side of the family. This is in the sense she appears to maintain what she refers to as, the 'identity' of her mother's part of the family by preserving their surname regardless of others' perceptions of the nature of her surname.

In the same vein, she projects her identification with the place she comes from by showing her intention to give her future children names which 'belong' to that place. Like, Kyle and Ryan, who I have discussed above, Eli's surname, and the names she intends to give her children in the future are interpreted as ties through which she projects her sense of 'identity' and keep connection with where she comes from.

In this section I have examined the significance of naming in the way the co-participants articulate, what I interpret as, their 'identities'. I have shown that names are

powerful means through which the co-participants maintain ties with the places they come from and project their 'identities', by bringing their cultural background to Britain. I have also shown that the names that they gave or will give their children serve as a continuity of this tie that the co-participants want to maintain.

5.3. Virtual presence in the places the co-participants come from

In this section I investigate the significance of things such as news, voting and poetry through which the co-participants show, what I interpret as, virtual presence in the places they come from. The relevance of news to the way the co-participants express their bond to where they come from has emerged from the interview below with Sam. I have pursued this by asking the co-participants separately if they keep up with the news about where they come from.

In the following interview extract, Sam expresses emotion when she talks about the country that she comes from in which she appears to be virtually present:

> These days I am following very religiously (deep breath, showing emotions). I really pray because, you know, [people from Sam's country] at the intellectual level, you know, are very, I would say, talented but also a bit misguided and corrupted as well (laughing). The election is coming in [a specific month] and, em, if he [a candidate in the election] wins then the country will take a positive and a different direction. (Sam, interview)

Sam shows mixed emotions of concern and hope towards the situation in the country she comes from, where there were elections approaching in the time of conducting the interview with her. She seemed positive towards a candidate, who she believes is suitable to rule the country. The emotions I was able to sense when she was talking about the situation in her country reveal that even though she is not physically in that place, she appears to be virtually there via keeping up with the news and having a political opinion about who she believes is suitable to lead the country. This shows attachment to the country she comes from and caring for its future.

In the following extract, which is a response by Jordan to my question, he also appears to be virtually present in the place he comes from through waking up with the news:

I wake up in the morning to [where Jordan comes from] radio and [news where he comes from] news, but then in the evenings we watch channel 4 news. So, we mix. (Jordan, interview)

He shows attachment to the place he comes from, which he seems to maintain by virtually visiting it through keeping up with news. This can be shown in the way in which he responds to my question by describing his daily routine, where there appears to be a hierarchy in terms of which news comes from first and which news comes second. This hierarchy might be associated with emotional closeness to where Jordan comes from.

Like Jordan, in the next response by Jo, he also appears to be virtually present where he comes from via news:

Not only [news about where he comes from], it's also world news. So, I will first read the news [about where Jo comes from] and only if something that I think is related to the UK, then, I might check the BBC or The Guardian as well. But news wise, I still keep up with news [where Jo comes from]. (Jo, interview)

Like Jordan, Jo appears to be present where he comes from via news. There also seems to be a hierarchy in the way he approaches news in that, he appears to prioritise news which relates to the country he comes from over news about the UK and other parts of the world. He seems to deliberately choose to read news about other parts of the world, including the UK, only if there is something about these places in the news, which triggers him. However, the way he appears to approach news about where he comes from, it seems that it is part of his daily routine to check what is happening there.

This priority in reading the news appears to be central as it communicates a sense of caring about what happens in the country he comes from, which he remains informed about by constantly reading the news.

Below, Charlie responds by expressing his bond with the place he comes from, which is manifested in his virtual presence there via news and voting:

> I do read news about [where Charlie comes from], and, of course, if I told you, I vote. If I am someone who votes, I need to know what the hell is going on in that place. I vote from here, but if I'm in [where Charlie comes from] I vote from there. So, if I'm honoured to have the right to, you know, vote as a [Charlie's national citizenship], then, I think it's my obligation to be informed. (Charlie, interview)

Charlie's decision to keep himself informed regarding the news in the place he comes from, as well as his participation in voting there, both appear to be evidence of, what I interpret as, his 'virtual presence' in that place. He manifests his pride to be a national of the country he comes from by showing a sense of responsibility towards it in that, even though he does not live there, he contributes to it from far by having a say in how it operates through voting.

Therefore, he appears to maintain a bond with the country he comes from by being there virtually via keeping up with the news and participating in the socio-political life through voting.

In the following extract, Ryan also expresses her sense of responsibility towards the country she comes from through voting:

> I try to follow the [news where Ryan comes from] as well. Although there was an election in [a specific month] and the party I don't like won. I had to go to London to vote. Since then, I read less news (laughing). (Ryan, interview)

Like Charlie, Ryan also appears to be virtually present in the country she comes from through having a say in the political life there. She manifests disappointment and disapproval of who won in the election in the country she comes from by cutting down on reading news about that place. This reaction, which, probably, emanates from a sense of responsibility towards the country she comes from, seems to indicate that even though she

is not physically living there, she continues to care about life there, and that she is, like Ryan, virtually present in that society by contributing to it from far.

The following are notes from a cultural event, which show that Alex is emotionally attached to the place he comes from, and he is virtually there.

In this event, Alex gave a poem in his first language, which talks about being away from, what he referred to as, 'home'. Before performing the poem, he gave the following introduction:

> The poem is about being away from home, and it applies to all people who are like me, who are thousands of miles away from home. I have made a new home in this country, and we struggle, we struggle with looking back and thinking the door is still open. At the end of the poem he [the poet] says my heart tells me, perhaps, you should go back before that door shuts and you will no longer be able to go back. (Notes from research diary)

It appears that Alex lives in a dilemma of going back to, what he refers to as, 'home' or staying in the UK to which he also refers as 'home'. He seems to be in-between these places, trying to figure out the right decision. He uses this poem, which resonates with his personal experience of being away from 'home', to express his longing for 'home' and his attachment to it.

The poem created an atmosphere of nostalgia which was felt during the event where many people, including Alex, projected their connection with, what I interpret as, the 'homeland'. The significance of the poem in this context could be explained in terms of how it was used and what it was used for in that, it served as a means through which Alex imagines 'home', to which he expresses emotions and attachment, as well as longing to be there.

As in the above section, in this section I have also explored the significance of other nonhuman categories such as news, and other practices like voting and poetry in the way in which the co-participants express their bond with the places they come from. They interact with these elements in such a way that they are vital in 'accessing' the places they come from, without necessarily being there physically, as well as in projecting and

maintaining their connection with these places. Therefore, I argue that through these entities, the co-participants are virtually present in the places they come from.

The relationship between the co-participants and these things has a particular resonance with my own experience of bringing 'stuff' such as specific kitchen tools to Britain. Interacting with these objects through using and seeing them helps me to overcome missing my country in such a way that I live the imagination of being 'home' through these things. Having these elements around me, also allows me to do things in the same way I used to do them back 'home', but the reality is different; I am not physically 'home'. In addition to this, my 'identity' as an 'Algerian' becomes sub-consciously accentuated whenever these tools are displayed. This made me reflect on my own perception of them before and after coming to the UK.

Before coming to the UK, I used to perceive the significance of the tools I brought with me and other things that we use back 'home' in terms of practicality, in that they are essential because of the way 'we' do things. However, a different perception of their significance started to emerge when packing my 'stuff' and leaving for Britain. They became among the priorities to bring with me because they are part of how I practice my daily life, which connects with who I am. Besides this connection, my perception of the same tools has also become associated with the emotions I attach to these things and how I use them, because they come from and remind me of 'home'. They allow me to bring a part of 'home' by imagining it through these tools.

5.4. Does dying or resting somewhere specific matter?

In this section I explore the ways in which the co-participants construct death in relation to their sense of who they are. The notion of death has in a way emerged from the way the coparticipants, in the previous chapter, in section 4.3., have talked about the places they come from, which they have referred to as 'home'. This is in the sense that I had the impression that there might possibly be a link between their longing for returning 'home' and my assumption that it is in these places that they want to be forever, which I have associated with death. I interrogated this assumption by asking the co-participants individually if there is a specific place where they desire to die. Below is a discussion of

their responses to my question.

In the following response by Ryan, she seems to associate the place of retirement with the place she might rest in:

> Oh God, I haven't thought about that (laughing). I suppose, because I'm planning to retire probably in (where Ryan comes from), I would imagine. It's interesting. My mum died when I was pregnant with my second child and that, it was quite hard. In (where Ryan comes from), there is more culturally and expectations, but also other people go and visit relatives in a cemetery regularly. I don't find it here. So, I think if I die here no one will visit me anyways (laughing). (Ryan, interview)

Ryan is obviously surprised by my question; however, she tends to pursue the question by responding discursively. First, she talks about not thinking about where she might want to die, which she seems to relate to her intention to retire in the place she comes from. This can be shown in her reply: 'I haven't thought about that (laughing). I suppose, because I'm planning to retire probably in (where Ryan comes from), I would imagine.'

From this response, there seems to be a sub-conscious link between the place of retirement and the place where she might want to die in that, retiring in the country she comes from might, possibly, mean that it is the place where she chooses to be for ever.

Second, she highlights difference between the way people in Britain and where she comes from relate to dead people, where she seems to lean toward the rituals performed in the country she comes from. This is in the sense that she appears to feel 'abandoned' when she imagines the case in which she is buried in the UK, unlike in the place she comes from where she might be visited on a regular basis, which tends to be a cultural practice there.

Below, she pursues the question I previously asked by rethinking it:

> Where do I die? Yeah, I don't know, I suppose it depends where I am at the time (laughing). Yeah, God, yeah! I didn't talk to my husband about it actually, because we keep saying, yeah. I don't know, we haven't decided

yet. Hopefully, I've got a while to go (laughing). That's a very good question though. (Ryan, interview)

In this response, she appears to try hard to situate herself in relation to the question I asked by pausing and asking herself the question again: 'where do I die?'. It appears that even though this question was unexpected, it triggered her curiosity to figure out where she might want to rest, which she pursues by trying to rethink her previous response.

In the following extract, Charlie responds by constructing death in relation to his connection with a specific place in a relative way:

> That's great (silence), preferably, I haven't thought about this quite frankly. Firstly, I'm not sure that I will wanna a grave. I haven't necessarily thought about it, but I'd rather not. Because after few maybe a generation or so, it becomes bit of a burden, unless I'm famous. Now, if I'm famous, I can totally have grave. Most of it would be my mum's hometown, you know, probably, because some of the landscape, the mountains are beautiful. My mum's family I linked to a lot of my nice child memories. The side of the family that I know better probably as well. (Charlie, interview)

Charlie appears to sub-consciously discard thinking about where he might want to die, and he also appears to deliberately discard thinking about this when asked about it. However, how far he does not really think of it is questionable. This is because he responds by relating death to his connection with his mother's village. On the one hand, he seems to be unsure whether he might want to have a grave or not, because of his status as a lay person. On the other hand, he rearticulates his response in such a way that where he dies matters. He constructs a scenario of him being famous, in which case having a grave in a specific location tends to be significant.

In this case, his bond with his mother's village becomes salient in that, he expresses his desire of resting there because of nature and the memories he has in this place. So, the significance of where he might want to be buried appears to be relative in that, it seems to depend on whether he is popular or not, as well as on his bond with the place he chooses to rest in.

In the next extract, he further points to his bond, but with various places, which reflects his self-understanding:

> But I wouldn't necessarily like to be buried there like a specific location. If, maybe, some ashes could be scattered there like, some quite pretty, ah shit like may be like, a bit in [a place in Britain]. I do bits the same as (not finishing the sentence). I'm describing myself now as somebody who, you know negotiates different locations. I probably have to pay someone, you know, to just go and deal with, you know, spreading a bit here, spreading a bit there. Where I'd like to die like, preferably (hesitation) I don't know whether it's a new place or a place I know very well, you know, as long as it's got a pretty view. (Charlie, interview)

Charlie appears to display his self-perception in a way which is similar to the way he has projected his sense of 'belonging' in the previous chapter, in section 4.3. This is by moving between the place he comes from and a place in Britain, which he has referred to as 'a space of origin' in section 4.3. I interpret the way in which he attempts to negotiate the significance of these places in relation to where he might want his ashes to be scattered as 'messy' in that, at times, he seems to have specific places in mind, and in other times, he appears to be open about where he prefers his ashes to be scattered. This can be shown in his response when he pauses and asks himself where he would like to die in such a way that he seems to rearticulate himself differently, by leaving the answer open, as well as by showing the prospect of relating to new places.

Therefore, I interpret the way in which he appears to make sense of death as a continuous articulation of his sense of place in the world, which is manifested in his choice of scattering his ashes in various places he has connected or might connect with.

Unlike Ryan and Charlie, in the following extract, Eli appears less surprised by the question of where she wants to rest which she associates with her bond with her mother's village:

> I will probably live somewhere else, but I think as I get older, I think, I wanna be buried in my mum's village. I wanna be in that cemetery. In that

cemetery, I wanna be there. It's not where I was born, but it's where my mum's family comes from and, again, it's where I see the connection, where I feel. So, that's where I want to be eventually. You know, the roots actually call you. They call you back. (Eli, interview)

The way in which Eli responds appears to me as if she has thought about the question before. She seems less surprised compared to Ryan and Charlie, and she also seems to have decided on the place she wants to rest in, by showing her intention to be buried in her mother's village. The way in which she talks about death and her bond with this place connects with her desire to go back, to what she has referred to as, 'home' after retirement and settling in her mother's village, which she constructs in this extract and in the previous chapter, in section 4.4., as 'the roots'. Her intention to rest in her mother's village, which is evident in her longing for going back to, what she refers to as, 'the roots', is another way through which she shows her bond with this place which she carries with her. This in the sense that she tends to maintain her connection with this place through names, which I have discussed in section 5.2., and she also appears to continue articulating this bond by choosing to be buried in this specific place.

Therefore, like Charlie, Eli's sense of 'identity' appears to be further projected even after she dies; this is by choosing to rest in a specific place to which she has strongly showed 'belonging' in the previous extracts.

In this section I have investigated the extent to which choosing where to die relates to the co-participants' longing for going back to what they have referred to as 'home'. I have made this link, which I have explored in this section, because, as I have explained at the beginning of this section, I had a feeling that the participants' longing for settling in the places they come from might probably mean that it is in these places that they want to be for ever, which I have associated with death.

The data I have discussed in this section reveals that the co-participants respond by relating the idea of dying somewhere specific to their perceptions of, what I interpret as, their 'identities'. Ryan, Charlie and Eli appear to relate the idea of death to their perceptions of who they are, and their bond with the places they connect with, including the place where they come from, to which they have expressed a desire to go back after they retire, and have

also referred to as 'home' in the previous chapter, section 4.3., and 4.4. This is in the sense that they project a sense of identification with these places through their choice and/or desire to die in these places. Therefore, I argue here that there appears to be a continuity of displaying who these coparticipants are in the ways in which they seem to point to the relevance of dying somewhere specific to their sense of who they are.

5.5. Food

In this last section of the last data chapters I examine the significance of food in the ways in which Kyle and Alex make sense of who they are.

The importance of food in the way the co-participants project who they are was first talked about briefly by Kyle in the previous chapter, in section 4.5. In that section, she appeared to project her connection with the place she comes from in two different ways. The first way concerned introducing, what she has referred to as, 'the culture' of the continent she comes from to her students through teaching them about it, and the second way involved cooking food of where she comes from, instead of 'English' food to her 'British' friends when they visit her.

I have pursued the significance of food in the way she perceives herself by asking her to tell me about what it means to her to cook the food of where she comes from to her 'British' friends instead of cooking 'English' food, and the following is her response:

> But I realised that if I were to be friend with some of the people I was
> meeting, who were British, I have to accept their food. They invite me to
> their house, I think, it needs bit salt. When people invite you to their house,
> you know, you just cover their food with salt and pepper. Gradually, I kind
> of said well, I've got and I actually began to enjoy food that way, because I
> find too much salt and pepper, are not good anyway. (Kyle, interview)

Kyle responds by rearticulating her previous statement in section 4.5., of choosing to cook food which is associated with the country she comes from rather than cooking 'English' food in a different way. She reconstructs her perception of 'English' food by embracing it and regarding it as significant in maintaining her friendship with her 'British' friends. This

significance appears to be evident in her statement: 'I realised that if I were to be friend with some of the people I was meeting, who were British, I have to accept their food'.

Therefore, in this extract she seems to interrogate her old perception of 'English' food, which she appears to associate with specific quantities of salt and pepper, by reconstructing food as a symbol of tolerance and friendship, as well as by rethinking the implications of having too much salt and pepper on her health.

In the following extract, she further makes a statement about the significance of food in the way she interacts with the British context by explicitly referring to 'culture' and 'immersion':

> I don't find British food bland. When I first came, I used to put lots of pepper and salt. Now, I can eat it without, and I make it in my own house and things like that. So, I think immersion is about allowing some of what's in the culture to influence you, but also allow yourself to be an influence within the cultures, and people can learn and take this from you as well. (Kyle, interview)

She appears to emphasise her earlier statements of embracing 'English' food, to which she refers in this extract using the term 'British', by bringing her perception of 'immersion' into display. This is in the sense that, in chapter three, section 3.4., she constructs 'immersion' in terms of bringing elements from the place she comes from, such as 'accent', and put them into interaction with, what I infer as, 'British culture'.

This idea of negotiating categories from both contexts is further manifested in this extract in such a way that food appears to be a means through which she negotiates her relationship with both where she comes from and the British contexts. In other words, there is a give-and- take relationship between both contexts where food appears to be a significant vehicle through which she 'immerses' herself in 'British culture'.

Therefore, the articulation of food as a symbol of interconnectedness and tolerance is emphasised in such a way that it is an important element in the way in which she interacts with 'British culture'.

In the following extract, I discuss the significance of food, such as sourdough bread, in the way Alex projects himself:

> My kids are the latest thing…. These days, they've started making fun of me because I have started baking sourdough bread. There is this bread called sourdough which is a very sort of middle-class white British thing to do, and I make it very regularly and… you have to keep feeding it (laughing). I think this is a very postcolonial thing. We want to be accepted as OK… So, the sourdough bread because it's such a symbol of middle-class white culture, my kids told me that it's a new thing that I am doing to feel accepted (laughing). (Alex, interview)

I have discussed this extract in chapter three, section 3.3., in relation to the way Alex is perceived by his children because of cultural practices, such as baking sourdough bread. I have shown the significance of sourdough bread in the way Alex identifies in that, it appears to be a means through which he articulates his longing for, using his terms, 'becoming' 'white' and accepted among, what he refers to as, 'white British middle-class culture'.

In this section I also emphasise this significance by bringing his perception of this practice together with his perceptions of other practices such as, grinding coffee beans and making artisan gin, discussed below, in highlighting the importance of these things in his self-perception.

The following is an e-mail exchange with Alex, where his longing for 'becoming white' is manifested in his perceptions of practices which involve coffee beans and artisan gin:

> I was thinking of our discussions the other day and laughing because my latest attempt to become a white middle-class person is that my wife has bought a coffee grinder. So, we have started buying coffee beans and grinding them fresh each time for a cup of aromatic coffee! First, the sourdough and now coffee beans… I wonder what will be next. Artisan gin, I guess. Then, one day, I will look at the mirror and realise that despite all my attempts at being white on the inside, I am at best a coconut and still

brown on the outside and the disillusionment will send me to despair.!

(Alex, email)

The significance of baking sourdough bread, grinding coffee beans, and making artisan gin appears to be crucial practices in Alex's self-image of wanting to 'become white', which he talks about by making fun of himself. This attitude of making fun of himself seems to communicate a sense of awareness of the way he perceives himself and, probably, and how others might perceive him, including his children, which I have discussed in chapter three, section 3.3. This is in the sense that, based on this extract, what he looks like from, what he refers to as, 'the outside' does not appear to 'conform' with these practices.

In other words, according to Alex, these practices tend to be associated with 'white' people, from whom he is dissociated in a way or in another. This is evident in how he positions himself in relation to this: 'one day, I will look at the mirror and realise that despite all my attempts at being white on the inside, I am at best a coconut and still brown on the outside and the disillusionment will send me to despair!'.

Therefore, I interpret this positioning in terms of two conflicted perceptions, which are competing. These perceptions are based on perceptions of his physical features *versus* what he feels, using his term, 'on the inside'. This is in the sense that he appears to look at himself from two dimensions, where what he looks like on, using his word, 'the outside' tends to prevail on how he feels inside; 'white' in that, he cannot be 'fully white', regardless of the extent to which he practices his life as a 'white' person or performs things which are associated with 'white' people, because he 'does not look white'.

The following is a description of an instance which happened with Alex when I first met him, which has become significant data after reflection:

After the first meeting with Alex, he invited me to his office to borrow a book from his bookshelf. There were many books, and I was reluctant to choose a book as I wanted him to choose for me because I thought his choice might be data in and of itself. He chose a book called 'Black Skin, White Masks' by Franz Fanon. I thanked him and left his office. (Notes from research diary). Before conducting the interview with Alex, I was not really able to see the significance of the book, yet I sensed that it might be an important entity. I read some parts of the book to try to figure out the link between the book and the topics he

discussed in the first meeting. I was able to see some threads starting to come together in relation to the content of the book and the way he talks about himself in terms of the influence of British colonialism on his self-perception. However, the significance of the book became evident and more powerful to me during the interview meeting, when he talked about some of the practices I discussed above.

When I reflect back on how it began, I perceived the instance of Alex choosing to lend me this specific book of 'Black Skins, White Masks' as a beginning, which might or might not be fruitful. However, after pursuing this by bringing together the role of postcolonialism in the way he constructs his self-perception, others' perception of him, and the significance of cultural practices in these perceptions, I began to perceive the act of Alex choosing to lend me ''Black Skins, White Masks' as a powerful data, which mirrors almost everything he has talked about. This in the sense that, overall, the book of 'Black Skin, White Masks' talks about the lived experiences of 'black' people in 'white societies. 'Race' and 'racism' are central in this book in a way that 'black' people are perceived as inferior by 'white' people because of their 'race'. The book also shows that 'black' people or people of 'colour' are 'pushed' to 'become white' by 'white' people, who encourage them to 'become white'. However, 'black' people or people of 'colour' are deceived because of the perception of 'white' people that the former are not 'fully white'.

The stories in this book appear to converge with the way in which Alex talks about himself and how he interacts with the entities I have discussed above. This is in the sense that, and based on his statements, he desires to 'become white' and accepted among, what he refers to as, 'white British middle-class culture' by doing what 'white' people do. However, what he looks like, using his words, from 'the outside' appears to be the lens through which he is perceived, which appears to be the most salient perception, in which case his efforts to 'become white' fail. Therefore, I argue here that, like baking sourdough bread, grinding coffee beans and making artisan gin, the book of 'White Skin, Black Masks' is, also, of huge significance. This is because it appears to reflect Alex's lived experiences of the impact of colonialism on the way he perceives himself and the way he is perceived, where perceptions of physical traits tend to be the basis upon which he is looked at.

In this section I have explored the importance of food in the ways in which Kyle and Alex talk about themselves and interact with what they have referred to as, but in their own ways, 'British culture'. From the discussion above, it appears that food plays a significant role in the lives of these co-participants in that, it appears to be a means through which they make statements about who they are. These statements connect with the way they have talked about themselves in the previous chapters.

For example, in the case of Kyle food appears to be a tool through which she shows acceptance of and tolerance towards her 'British' friends. It also tends to be a vehicle through which she 'immerses' herself in, what she has referred to as, 'British culture'. The way she 'immerses' herself in 'British culture' through food relates to the way she constructs 'immersion' in chapter three, section 3.4., in that, she brings categories from 'Britain' and from the place she comes from into interaction with each other. In the case of Alex, his longing for 'becoming white', which I have discussed in chapter three, section 3.3., is also articulated in this section, but through practices which relate more or less to food, which he associates with, what he refers to as, 'white British middle-class culture'.

Therefore, the significance of food appears to lie in being a means through which Kyle and Alex project their sense of who they are and the way they interact with 'British culture'. I discuss the notion of 'culture' in light of the literature in sections 8.2., and 8.3.

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the significance of non-human entities in the ways in which the co-participants make sense of their 'identities'.

The data in this chapter reveals that these non-human categories serve as ties through which the co-participants maintain connection with the places they come from and Britain. It is important to reiterate the argument that the omnipresence 'some white British people', which is characterised by conflicted perceptions of who the co-participants are on the basis of 'race' and 'accent', which is while salient in chapter three, tends to be less central in this chapter, as well as in the previous one. This is to say that the more the co-participants move away from talking about 'the other', the less perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' become central to them. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, as well as in the previous chapter,

I interpret this shift in categories as displaying freedom in the sense that there is a movement from categories ascribed to the co-participants by their social environment, to categories asserted by the co-participants to articulate their sense of who they are. Another crucial argument which is deduced from this relationship between the co-participants and these non-human entities, is that the relational nature of 'identity' is not exclusively 'social', that is, limited to 'self' and 'other' relations, but also involves human to non-human relations as discussed in this chapter. The significance of these non-human entities in the ways the co-participants project their sense of who they are is further discussed in chapter 8, section 8.7., using a critical posthuman perspective (Braidotti, 2013, 2019).

Chapter Six: How do I refer to the university lecturers in this study?

6.1. Introduction

In the summary of section 3.4., as well as in the conclusion of that chapter (3.5.) I have emphasised the idea of not labelling the co-participants, and I have stressed that the discriminatory labels used by them, in chapter three, are less likely to be their own construction of themselves, nor are used to '[anticipate] exclusion… by the other' (Bond, 2006, p.611). Also, I have argued that these labels become salient to the co-participants when they talk about the way they believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people, and that the subjective labels they use to refer to themselves are in response to how they are perceived. This idea of how labelling operates and its relevance to my study is further elaborated upon here in relation to a body of literature, which frames academics and other professionals living in places other than where they come from using labels, which I find problematic.

The aim of this chapter is to situate my research, and more specifically my stance in terms of how I view the university lecturers who are part of this study in relation to the various literature discussed below. As such, the labels used in the studies below will be interrogated rather than adopted in my study. How I view the co-participants, that is, not labelling them has emerged from the data as explained throughout, for example in chapter three.

6.2. 'Expatriates', 'non-native speakers', 'international academics', 'sojourners', '(im)migrants' or 'immigrant professionals', or what?

The title refers to labels that some research, which has direct and indirect relevance to my study, uses about academics or professionals living in a country other than the country they come from. I use these labels to help me clarify a very important point in my study which is their ambiguous relevance in my research. This is because, as shown in the data chapters, the coparticipants have not referred to themselves using the above labels or any other labels which are discriminatory in nature. They have rather talked about themselves in ways which

defy framing them, and have expressed 'belonging' to the UK, the countries they come from, and other places they feel connection with.

Having said this, the question that might arise here is why refer to works that use these labels if their relevance is unclear? I argue that these works explore academics' experiences in a new place from different perspectives and using different approaches. However, they all appear to share the tendency of using labels, such as the ones in the title, without interrogating them. In my study, I try to interrogate these labels and others which have emerged from the data because they are, in my understanding, complex and politically situated. In other words, based on the data of my study, I argue that the co-participants did not refer to themselves using labels such as the ones presented above, but they rather used labels which they think portray how 'the other' perceives them, as well as subjective labels, which articulate their own self-perception, and which opposes 'the other's' perception of them. For this reason, I do not use any specific label to refer to the co-participants.

In the following sections, I discuss some works on academics and other high-status professionals, who live in countries different from the ones they come from, which use essentialist and non-essentialist approaches.

6.2.1. Research on academics

To start with, I am going to discuss some academic literature about academics in the UK and in other countries who have come from 'different national backgrounds', because it has direct relevance to my thesis. This literature looks at the experiences of academics in the new environment where issues connected with, for example, 'culture' and 'interculturality' are salient.

The studies that I discuss in this section, and regardless of their essentialist and nonessentialist orientation, have something in common which is the tendency of using contested terms without interrogating them. This approach to researching individuals' perceptions of themselves is, in my understanding, limiting and misses the complex nature of people's self-perceptions and what shapes our understanding of the world around us.

Conversely, my study uses a constructivist approach and a qualitative research design, which helps me interrogate my own prejudice and perceptions by interacting with the

coparticipants' perceptions and allowing unexpected threads. This can be manifested in the way I present the co-participants by trying to move beyond labels such as 'expatriate academics', 'non-native speakers', (im)migrants', and so forth, which frame them within a picture that they do not necessarily identify with, as well as deny their voice.

To start with essentialist research, I refer to a study by Selmer and Lauring (2009), which uses a positivist approach. This study examines cultural similarity and adjustment of, what they refer to as, 'expatriate academics'. These academics are affiliated with science faculty departments in 34 universities in Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands. The researchers of the study explore the applicability of some findings based on empirical studies on 'business expatriates' to other groups of 'expatriates' such as 'expatriate academics'. They argue that cultural similarity might possibly be difficult to adjust to in the same way as cultural dissimilarity. To examine how far these findings are applicable to their research, a quantitative survey is used, which they claim to be the first large-scale quantitative survey that deals with adjustment of 'expatriate academics' (p. 430). They suggest that there is similarity between their own research and research on 'business expatriates' in that, they both claim that cultural similarity can be difficult to adjust to as cultural dissimilarity. Also, they argue that the findings of their study can be applicable to cultural similarity and adjustment of 'expatriates'.

As I have explained above, these researchers' stance which informs how they examine the academics' lived experiences in the new place and how they perceive them; 'expatriate academics', contradicts my perception of the academics in my study, as well as how I explore their lived experiences in the UK.

This criticism is pertinent to another study by the same researchers, Selmer and Lauring (2016), which explores the relationship between engagement and intercultural adjustment of, what they refer to as, 'self-initiated expatriate academics' in China, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, and Taiwan. The researchers define 'self-initiated expatriate' as 'a person who is hired individually on a contractual basis and is not transferred overseas by a parent organization' (p. 33, citing Andresen *et al*. 2012; Cerdin and Selmer, 2014; Glassock and Fee, 2015; and Makkonen, 2015). This study includes 640 academics and uses questionnaires to inform the hypothesis that the three work engagement variables of absorption, dedication and vigor have positive effect on intercultural adjustment of 'the

self-initiated expatriate academics' (ibid.). Overall, the findings suggest that these variables have different influence on intercultural adjustment.

Like the previous study, this study is also informed by a positivist approach where the relevance of the variables of absorption, dedication and vigour to intercultural adjustment of academics, who are defined as 'self-initiated expatriate', was explored through testing. This might reflect the researchers' view of knowledge as accessible through experimenting. Also, the researchers argue that the findings may not be generalised due to some limitations. This might suggest that there is an intention to generalise the findings to a wider population, but it is hindered by the limitations of this study. Therefore, I emphasise that this study, which is essentialist in nature, does not inform my study due to difference in research paradigms and my stance of interrogating the labels used instead of adopting them in my study.

The third research which is essentialist in nature is by Moemken (2017). It is about 213 German academics, some of whom worked within in the UK higher education (HE) sector and some others had previously worked within UK HE but had repatriated. Moemken (2017) refers to these academics as 'expatriate academics' and they are defined within the broad category of 'self-initiated expatriates', which the researcher defines as 'individuals who relocate across a national border, for an extended period of time, of their own volition, for work purposes' (p. i). This study draws on social capital theory to understand how networks and access to resources, both in the host and home country influence the 'expatriate academics' decision to repatriate. It is informed by a positivist and post-positivist approach and uses quantitative and qualitative methods. An online questionnaire survey was used first to test the hypotheses of the study, then semi-structured interviews were employed to further investigate the themes that emerged from the quantitative survey.

The findings of this study suggest that factors such as national identity, network density and societal hierarchy play a central role on, what the researcher refers to as, 'expatriate academics'' decision to repatriate.

Having said this, I argue that the above study can be also understood as an essentialist investigation of 'expatriate academics' which suggests that their lived experiences in the new place, as well as their beliefs about their status as 'expatriates' are measurable. This orientation of gaining knowledge about subjective ideas, which manifest Moemken's

(2017) perception of knowledge as 'observable and collectible' (p.118), contradicts my approach, as explained above, which offers space for the co-participants to express their views on matters that challenge others' perceptions of them. One of these challenges include associating the coparticipants with notions such as 'expatriate', which this study, as well as the studies below does, without interrogating them. In other words, my study differs from these studies in terms of approach in that, it resists ascribing 'identities' to the co-participants using a constructivist approach which acknowledges subjectivity and 'messy' 'realities'. This argument is pertinent to the studies below.

As stated above, and broadly speaking, despite these works tackling issues connected with 'culture' and how academics who live in countries other than the ones they come from respond to being in a new environment, they offer essentialist views on these issues by testing hypotheses and using quantitative methods in collecting and interpreting the data.

Moving to research which uses a non-essentialist approach, I draw on the work of Richardson and McKenna (2002); and Mahmud (2016). I refer to these studies because even though they are situated within a non-essentialist paradigm, both researchers define the academics in their studies as 'academic expatriates' and 'non-native English speakers', respectively. These highly contested terms are used throughout without explaining what they might mean if they mean anything, as well as without interrogating them and showing their ideological dimensions. In my study, I try to be cautious about such statements because of their implications, which might serve to separate and perpetuate stereotypes, by questioning these terms and trying to move beyond them.

I will present these studies, then restate my criticism of them.

The former study is qualitative in nature and explores the use of metaphors to understand the motivations for travelling and the experience of expatriation of 30 British academics in New Zealand, Turkey, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, whom the researchers refer to as 'expatriate academics'.

The findings of this study show that the metaphors used by the 'expatriate academics', which explain their motives for going abroad differs from one 'expatriate' to another. These metaphors are: being an explorer in the sense of exploring new places and cultures, being a refugee by seeking good quality of life and good professional life, being a mercenary by seeking high salary, and being an architect by building career. As for how these British

academics experience expatriation, the findings suggest that they regard themselves as explorers in that, they travel and experience living in new places and new cultures as outsiders in the sense of feeling isolated from the rest of the community, as tightrope walker which shows insecurity and uncertainty about their jobs, and as student in the sense that by being in the new environment their relationship with their families and friends changed due the academics' personal change.

The latter study, which is conducted by Mahmud (2016), concerns the cultural identity of four, of what she refers to as, 'non-native English lecturers' at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. They are, as presented by the researcher, one Chinese male lecturer, one German male lecturer, and two Greek female lecturers. She uses a qualitative research design along with open and semi-structured interviews to examine the cultural identity of, what she refers to as, 'non-native English lecturers', and how far they claim multiple identities. The participants of this study, based on the interview extracts presented, drew on various categories such as, profession, gender, nation, region, language, and politics when they talked about how they self-identify. The researcher of this study states that 'non-native English lecturers' have multiple identities; 'professional, gender, national, regional, language and political' (p.32), and 'according to the data, [they] have multiple and complex identity' (p.31).

I do agree with the researcher that the participants talked about different elements, which they consider to be a lens through which they perceive themselves. However, the researcher did not address how far the participants claim multiple identities despite it being the focus of the study. This is because, based on the data, each participant talked about a category that they self-identify with, rather than talking about many categories and navigating them depending on the context. Therefore, from my reading of Mahmud's BA dissertation, it could be said that the participants of this study have multiple identities, an argument she makes on (p.32), but compared to each other in that they make sense of themselves differently by drawing on different categories. Yet how far they claim multiple identities remains unclear.

In the above study, Mahmud (2016) refers to the participants as, using her term, 'non-native English lecturers', a term that I do not use in my study, because, as stated in section 6.2., the co-participants have not referred to themselves as such. Also, I do not use other

terms that have similar function, like 'expatriate academics' used above by Richardson and McKenna (2002), because this naming frames the co-participants in a picture that they do not associate themselves with.

Examples of other essentialist and non-essentialist studies, which refer to academics as 'expatriate academics' or 'self-initiated expatriates' are Richardson (2000); Froese (2012); Selmer, and Lauring (2013); Selmer, Trembath and Lauring (2017); Jonasson, Lauring, and Guttormsen (2018); and Richardson and Wong (2018). As for the studies which use the term 'non-native speaker' in reference to academics from outside the UK, they, but note Mahmud (2016) discussed above, focus on academics' professional 'identity, which is outside the scope of my study.

The works that I will briefly present below focus on the same category of professionals presented above; academics but refer to them as 'sojourners' and 'international academic staff'. These works are situated within the field of internationalisation of UK higher education. These contributions are different from my study in that, they are concerned with academics' lived experiences in the university context, while my research focuses on how the co-participants' construct and articulate their 'identities' and 'belonging' in their personal every day live- *outside* the university setting.

First, I will present few studies which use the above terms ('sojourners', and/or 'international academic staff', then I will discuss their findings and the relevance of these studies to my study.

The first example is Luxon and Peelo (2009), who explore the experiences of 32 academics in a British university, whom the researchers refer to as 'sojourners', using a qualitative approach. The second example is a study by Walker (2015), who uses the terms 'international academic staff' and 'sojourners'. She defines 'international academic staff' as 'academic staff educated and enculturated in one system of education and currently teaching and researching in another' (p.61). This study concerns an examination of the lived experiences of newly appointed 'international academic staff' on their professional practice in a university in London. The third example of research on 'international academics' is Minocha, Shiel and Hristov (2019), who define 'international academic staff' as 'individuals who have relocated from their home country to take up either teaching or research roles in the UK, who have been introduced to UK HE teaching and learning

practice, and who have had at least six months' experience of this context which thus enables them to share their reflections and experiences' (p.947).

This definition is closely similar in meaning to 'self-initiated expatriates'. They use focus groups and in-depth interview with 34, of what they refer to as, 'international academic staff' from more than 15 countries to investigate the ways to involve them in internationalisation processes. The findings of these studies contribute to the field of internationalisation of higher education by shedding light on the difficulties that, what is referred to as, 'sojourners' and 'international academic staff' encounter, such as pedagogic and cultural issues due to differences between UK higher education and higher education in the places these academics come from or had previously worked in. Examples of other studies on academics which are situated within the area of internationalisation of Higher Education in general, and which use the terms 'international academics' and/or sojourners are Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013); Da Wan and Morshidi (2018); Antoniadou (2020); Larbi and Ashraf (2020); and Kaur and Singh, (2021). These are some examples which illustrate a different way of looking at academics in the UK, who have come from 'different national backgrounds' by defining them as 'international academic staff' and/or 'sojourners'. This is by focusing on their experiences from a different dimension to my study, which is internationalisation of UK higher education.

So far, I have discussed some studies on academics which are, in my view, problematic because they do not interrogate the highly contested terms they use. To consolidate my view, I use Kunz (2019), who argue that terms such as, 'expatriate', discussed above, and '(im)migrants', which I will discuss below, are political notions and are used to distinguish between people or group them together depending on the context. For this reason, there is a need to rethink these terms, as well as similar notions in function because of their impact on relations between people and, hence how they are positioned in their social environment. This is in the sense that power relations come into display due to naivety in using these notions and reiterating them in ways which reinforce stereotypes and create division between people. To illustrate this, I use Kunz's argument (2019), which is empirically based, that 'expatriate' could be associated with 'White' 'Western Male', and the term '(im)migrants might invoke relationship of power and inequalities. From this, I emphasis my argument that the labels used in these studies are debatable and have political

implications, which need to be interrogated instead of reiterated in such a way that creates and perpetuates conflicts and division between people.

6.2.2. Research on other professionals of high-status

In this section I present two works on other professionals of high-status in different fields and settings, where the labels of '(im)migrants' and 'immigrant professionals' are used. Then, I will discuss their relevance to my study. This research has indirect relevance to my study in that the co-participants are like these professionals, which means, they live and work in a place different from where they come from. However, like the studies discussed in the previous section, the following works also define professionals using terms which are debatable in nature, such as '(im)migrants'.

Kusek (2015) uses terms such as, 'migrants', 'an elite migrant group' and 'professional migrants' to refer to the seventeen Polish professionals in the UK who she was able to interview; among the professions these interviewees represented were banking, journalism, medicine, information, technology and academia, and so forth. The findings suggest that these professionals do not perceive themselves as members of, what the researcher refers to as, the 'Polish migrant community' and they disassociate themselves from, what is also referred to as, 'Polish migrants' who work in 'low-skilled jobs'.

My interpretation of these findings is that the notion of 'migrant' appears to have different associations regardless of shared 'national background'. This is in the sense that, even though the professionals in the study above come from Poland and live in England, they do not identify with other 'Polish' professionals from lower socio-economic background, who also live in England. It seems that the former group resists identification with the latter group, because of perceptions of social class.

Friesen (2016) investigates the lived experiences of eleven 'immigrant engineers' in Canada in relation to their transition from being 'newcomers' to 'legitimate participants' in Canadian engineering profession through focus groups and interviews. The findings reveal that their personal identity and their professional practice undergo change which contributed to transitioning from the status of newcomers to being legitimate participants in the engineering profession in Canada. The way labels such as 'newcomers' and

'legitimate participants' are used indicates the fluidity of these terms in that, a person who might be regarded as a 'newcomer' might no longer 'fit in' this category due to some kind of change. This has in turn implications on how people such as the engineers in this study are perceived in the Canadian society, which might be understood as a shift from being less recognised to being 'fully' recognised.

I refer to these works on the notion of '(im)migrant' to, again, clarify my position towards academics in my study, which is trying to be alert to naïve statements which deny complexity by interrogating them and trying to move beyond them. Examples of other studies which use terms such as (im)migrants in relation to high-status professional are Fortney (1972); Scott, (2003); Phan *et al.* (2015); Crowley-Henry and Al Ariss (2018); and Kaushik, and Drolet, (2018).

In summary, I have presented some relevant works on academics, as well as on other professionals with high-status in the UK and other places, who have come from different countries. As I have stated earlier in this section, throughout these studies I emphasise my argument that, regardless of the different approaches used to examine professionals' experiences in the new environment, they all use contested labels in a way which might be interpreted as naïve and less interrogative. In my study, I try to shed light on the complex nature of these and other concepts because they are not, in my understanding, mere linguistics labels, but they have political dimensions. In other words, these terms are not naïve, but are heavily loaded.

6.3. Conclusion

Regardless of the different approaches used in the studies discussed above, essentialist or nonessentialist, they use contested labels to refer to the academics and other professionals, who live in places different from the countries they come from, and as such frame these professionals in ways which can be problematic. These studies help me situate my own stance towards the university lecturers in my study and shed light on the importance of how researchers present their research participants. Therefore, I emphasise my argument that, based on the data of my study, the co-participants did not refer to themselves using labels such as the ones discussed above, but they rather used labels, such as 'foreigner', which

they think portray the way 'the other' perceives them, as well as subjective labels which articulate their own self-perception in response to how they are framed by others. For this reason, I do not use any specific labels to refer to the co-participants.

In the following chapter, I discuss how the notion of 'identity' is constructed by the coparticipants in terms of the processes involved in 'self' and 'other' relations, where the notion of labelling is salient. I also discuss the notion of 'immersion'.

Chapter Seven: Who is who and on what basis?: processes of 'identity' construction in relation to 'self' and 'other'

7.1. Introduction

I begin this chapter by clarifying some crucial points to the study, such as choice of the literature and how and why I use terms such as skin colour. Then I move to the following: In section 7.2., under the heading, 'theoretical underpinning of the thesis', I present in more detail the broad theoretical framework of the thesis, which is also embedded throughout. In section 7.3., which is entitled 'theorising 'identity', I discuss the relevance of some works by non-essentialist researchers on 'identity' to my study. In section 7.4., under the heading, 'conceptualising 'identity'', I situate my own interpretation of the term 'identity' in relation to my study, as well as others' works, by drawing on literature to support my own interpretation of 'identity' in relation to the processes involved in 'self' and 'other' relations. As argued in section 1.3., and below, 'identity' in my study can be said to be talked about in two different, but interconnected ways. The first concerns how the co-participants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by 'the other', who I interpret as 'some white British' people. The second involves the co-participants' relationship with non-human entities. In this chapter, I focus on the first interpretation of 'identity', and I present the processes through which it is constructed, where perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' are central. In section 7.5., which is entitled, 'what does 'immersion' mean?', I discuss the notion of 'immersion', and I attempt to offer a different understanding of it based on my interpretation of the data. Perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' are also salient in how it is discussed.

First, in shaping this thesis, I have made choices which include the literature to help me further make sense of the data. This thesis is situated within the broad and interdisciplinary field of intercultural communication. Therefore, I will be referring to nonessentialist researchers such as, Dervin, Holliday, Ros i Solé, and Woodin. I will also be drawing on the contributions of other non-essentialist researchers which are situated in, for example, sociology, cultural studies, and discourse studies. Examples of these researchers are Delanty, Hall, and Wodak. The reason this study is situated within the field

of intercultural communication is not because the co-participants come from different 'cultures' to the 'culture' they live in, which is 'British culture'. Far from being associated with difference because of where the co-participants come from and their 'cultural background', this study is situated within the field of intercultural communication because it focuses on 'how people from different "cultural" backgrounds interact with each other and negotiate… differences perceived or made relevant through interactions, as well as the impact such interactions have on group relations and on individuals' identities, attitudes and behaviors' (Hua, 2016, p. 3).

The second point I want to clarify is that I explore the co-participants' perceptions of their 'identities' from their own perspectives. Even though there is a constant reference by the coparticipants to people who I interpret as 'some white British' people, who are omnipresent in how they make sense of themselves in relation to 'self' and 'other' relations, the focus of this study is on their interpretations of how they perceive themselves and how they think they are perceived by others. In other words, this study explores the 'insider perspective', that is, the coparticipants' views, rather than being 'an investigation from outside' (Wodak, 2008, p.55), relating what others think of the co-participants.

The third point concerns how I talk about skin colour. In section 2.6., and 2.13., I have stated that I have anonymised information about the co-participants, which might reveal who they are. This includes explicit reference to skin colour. However, how I talk about it might question how far I have anonymised this information in that, it may give clues about its specificity, which might also reveal the skin colour of the co-participants. The way I discuss this category is closely tied with how the co-participants talk about it in that, they make explicit association between what they look like and how they believe they are perceived by others. Specificity of skin colour is an inevitable category in this study in the sense that regardless of my efforts to make explicit reference to it less visible, I am aware that in some parts it can be deduced from the context.

This observation is also pertinent to the categories of colonial and postcolonial relations between the countries a few of the co-participants come from and Britain. Even though I have concealed direct reference to the countries they come from, these categories are difficult to render invisible due to their explicit use by the co-participants. Therefore, I am aware that these entities may trigger curiosity and, probably, speculations about who

the co-participants are, which I attempt to disturb throughout by moving away from framing them within these categories. I rather use them to make sense of how they are talked about in the process of constructing the co-participants 'identities', and sense of 'belonging'.

Last, but not least, as explained in chapter one, section 1.1., I do not specify the countries that the co-participants come from, and other categories such as their names, what they look like, and their religion, and so forth for the purpose of preserving their anonymity only, but also because these elements do not form the basis of the data analysis, in the sense the analysis is not affected when this information is obscured. I believe this allows us to focus on the lived experiences of the co-participants regardless of where they come from, rather than viewing them through the lens of, for example, 'national backgrounds' and religious affiliation, which may lead us to ascribe to them characteristics that we might imagine because of our conception of these categories. In this regard, Woodin (2007) argues 'the very naming of cultural groups we are to some extent ascribing essential qualities to them' (p.213).

7.2. Theoretical underpinning of the thesis

As briefly explained in section 1.6., this thesis is informed by three main theories which are: critical cosmopolitan theory (Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; and Delanty, 2006, 2009), critical posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013, 2019), and the theory of 'belonging' proposed by Antonsich, (2010). Before, explaining the relevance of these theories to my study and in relation to each other, as well as to wider literature I use throughout, I need to clarify briefly which form of cosmopolitanism is employed in my thesis. I use a cosmopolitan perspective which recognises multiplicity, and the interaction between the local and the global in the construction of the social world, as opposed to the enlightenment version of cosmopolitanism, which has a universalistic orientation, and which defines the world from a 'Western-centred' perspective. Therefore, the cosmopolitan perspective which I use in my study emphasises what Hall (1991b) calls '"the margins" to come into representation' (p.34), as well as resists 'Western-centred' cosmopolitanism.

The relevance of critical cosmopolitan theory to my study lies in the following key points: Firstly, the constructivist approach, explained in section 2.3., which informs how I

approach the co-participants views, embraces ambivalence, multiplicity and the constructed nature of key terms in this study such as 'identity', and 'belonging'. Secondly, there are two concepts which are central to my study which I would like to highlight. The first is the existence of those who I interpret as 'the other', who appear to have a say in the ways in which the co-participants construct their sense of 'identity'. In this way, 'the other' appear to influence the terms regarding whether the co-participants have the right to claim identification with Britain, and/or self-identify as 'British'. The second concept which I would like to highlight is the tension which this interaction engenders because of the conflicting perceptions of who is who, and on what basis.

This manifestation of 'self' and 'other' relations, which is a salient element in my study, converges with what can be understood as a core principle of critical cosmopolitanism, where focusing on change in self-understanding, being situated within immanent tensions of 'self' and 'other', and problematising the various views instead of taking them for granted (Delanty, 2009, p.12-17) are crucial tenets of critical cosmopolitanism. More specifically, among three approaches to critical cosmopolitanism by Delanty (2009, p.4) which are: cosmopolitanism as a political philosophy, cosmopolitanism as liberal multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism as transnational movements, I use the transnational movements approach because it focuses on hybridity, the mixed nature of cultural phenomena and stresses new modes of identities and communication (ibid.), which is the angle from which I examine 'identity' and 'belonging'. This is also because the other two approaches are, in my understanding, more political and have a different focus to this study in that, the former approach concerns world citizenship and establishing justice and democracy in the world by moving beyond nation-state, whereas the latter focuses on political community and embracing plurality and difference in its creation (ibid.).

This is not to say that these approaches are not relatable. They do relate to each other in their orientation of challenging rigid conceptions of people's relationship with each other, as well as with the global world, but they do so from different angles as shown above.

Having said this, I will be drawing on works with a cultural orientation which manifest the cosmopolitan transnational approach used in this study, instead of works in political science, which I believe could be said to relate more to the other two approaches. This

explanation of the relevance of critical cosmopolitanism and the notion of 'identity' which is situated within 'self' and 'other' relations is further discussed in more detail in this chapter.

Critical posthumanism is used because, similar to the critical cosmopolitan theory explained above, it also converges with the orientation of the constructivist approach I use in my study, which, as explained above and in section 2.3., acknowledges the emergent and the relational nature of 'identity' and accommodates multiple 'realities'. This theory is also used to make sense of the relevance of non-human entities, which are central in my study, in the ways in which the co-participants articulate their 'identities'. This theory goes beyond 'self' and 'other' relations to include human to non-human relations in examining the ways in which we make sense of ourselves and situate ourselves in the wider world. Similar to critical cosmopolitanism, critical posthuman theory criticises a universalist perception of the world, which is 'Western-centred' in nature, however, it extends its criticism to hierarchy of species which maintains that humans are superior to other species.

Therefore, posthuman theory is explained as posthumanism which involves the rejection of the idea that 'White Man' is the 'universal measure of all things', and as post-anthropocentrism which criticises human superiority and 'species hierarchy' (Braidotti, 2013, pp.67-68; and Braidotti, 2019, pp.31-32). As explained in chapter one, I use this theory to explain the significance of non-human entities in my thesis, such as food, names, and death. This is discussed in section 8.7. Other non-human categories, such technology and climate change which are relevant to this theory are beyond the scope of my study.

Having said this, the way both critical cosmopolitan theory and critical posthuman theory operate in my study is, in my view, complementary. While the former situates itself within 'self' and 'other' conflicts, which is a central element in my thesis, the latter goes beyond the social to emphasise the importance of non-human categories in our sense of who we are, which are also a central aspect in my study.

Antonsich (2010) theory of 'belonging' is used because it also agrees with the constructivist approach used in my study in that they both acknowledge people's multiple allegiances to the world and the fluidity of people's positioning in the wider world. This dynamic construction of the concept of 'belonging' is discussed, in the work of Antonsich

(2010) in relation to the notion of 'home' which refers to multiple places; this reflects how I interpret it in my study. This discussion of 'belonging' is further elaborated on in section 8.5.3.

These are the main theories which I use to interpret the key terms of 'identity' and 'belonging'. Overall, these theories converge in their orientation with each other and with the constructivist approach I use in my study, which is to promote multiplicity and subjectivity, and destabilises an understanding of who we are and our relationship with the wider world in terms 'either/or' (Beck, 2006, Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Delanty, 2006, 2009; Delanty, Jones, and Wodak, 2008; Antonsich 2010; and Braidotti, 2013, 2019). Also, the relevance of these main theories to the wider literature by other non-essentialist researchers that I use throughout, lies in the convergence of their understanding of key terms in my thesis, such as 'identity' and 'belonging' as multiple and emergent categories. This is in the sense that regardless of their different approaches, we all promote plurality and decentre rigid understandings of such key terms.

7.3. Theorising 'identity'

As stated in chapter one, section 1.3., and 1.11., the concept of 'identity' has been discussed mainly from the perspective of two research paradigms, essentialist and non-essentialist. In the various contributions on 'identity', it is explicitly or implicitly discussed under these terms: essentialist and/or non-essentialist. This is because positivist/postpositivist influences are still highly pertinent to intercultural research (Holliday and MacDonald, 2020, pp.621-622). An illustration of this manifestation of 'identity' in academic literature is a 'primordial' and an 'optionalist' (Gleason, 1983), conceptualisation of this contested term. On the one hand, a 'primordial' view of 'identity', which is also called 'enlightenment subject' (Hall, 1995), argues that it exists within the core of the individual and remains the same throughout the individual's existence. This view of 'identity' also considers 'ethnicity' as given, fixed and a central constituent of one's 'identity' (Gleason 1983; Hall, 1995). On the other hand, an 'optionalist' perspective of 'identity', which is also referred to as 'sociological subject' (Hall, 1995), rejects the former understanding by acknowledging that 'identity is constructed in relation to 'significant others', fragmented,

messy and in constant change, (Hall, 1995; and Bauman,1996, p.19). This is also by decentring the relevance of 'ethnicity'. Instead of analysing 'ethnicity' as a basic element in individuals' 'identity', this sociological view of 'identity' argues that 'ethnicity' is contextual in that, it can be emphasised and/ or de-emphasised depending on the situation (Hall, 1995).

Having said this, I subscribe to the second understanding of 'identity', which is nonessentialist in nature. 'Identity' in this study is examined in terms of how it is constructed by the co-participants, rather than what it is. In other words, I am not interested in what 'identity' is, but how it is talked about. In the various literature I have reviewed about the concept of 'identity', many definitions and interpretations of how it operates were suggested, some of which I agree with because of the non-essentialist approaches used in offering an understanding of this contested term, as well as its close connection with how I interpret 'identity' in my study. Examples of some works on 'identity' by non-essentialist researchers are Hall (1991a, 1995, 1996); Rojek (2003); Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008); Childs (2013); and Jenkins (2014).

Some of these researchers differ among themselves on some aspects of how 'identity' is approached. For example, Jenkins (2014) responds to Hall's argument that difference is the category through which 'identity' is constructed and that it is not constructed through perceptions of 'sameness' by highlighting the salience of the notion of 'sameness'. This is in the sense that when people dissociate themselves from identifying with each other, they, by implication, communicate an act of identifying with each other, which implies some sort of 'sameness'.

Also, Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008) respond to Davis's and Cooper's suggestion of abandoning the term 'identity' by calling for 'conceptual unpacking' of it, instead of abandoning it totally. However, despite this difference in opinion, they share relatively the same understanding of 'identity'. It is explained as a concept which involves a process of constant change, as a result of interaction and connection with the world. They challenge the understanding of 'identity' as fixed, static and determined through predictions. This view of 'identity' is compatible with how I interpret it in my study, where it is constructed through ambivalent and 'messy' 'realities'.

Nevertheless, I think, these works lack a substantial theorization of how 'identity' is constructed in terms of the processes which are involved in its construction, which my study focuses on. This not to say that how the researchers presented above approach or theorise 'identity' is superficial or less complex, but it does not really focus on the possible processes involved in its construction, which is, as I stated above, the angle from which I analyse and interrogate 'identity'. Also, the above understanding of 'identity' is limiting in my understanding, in that, as argued in chapter one, it overlooks the relevance of human to nonhuman relations in the construction of this term. This is to say that 'identity' appears to be highly associated with 'self' and 'other' relations and tends to lack a consideration of relationships between individuals and non-human categories in its construction which are central in my study.

Other examples of some works on 'identity' by non-essentialist researchers, who view it as constructed and negotiated among people in various contexts in their everyday lives include Bucholtz and Hall (2005); and Bamberg, De Fina, and Schiffrin (2011). Both works focus on the processes involved in 'identity' construction, which my study also focuses on. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) argue that the processes of indexicality, relationality, and partialness are involved in 'identity' construction. Although these processes are more or less different, they overlap and share the same orientation which is, to emphasis the dynamic nature of 'identity' formation and challenge rigid conceptualisation of this term.

Similarly, Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin (2011) also argue that indexicality, local occasioning, positioning and dialogism, and categorisation are processes through which 'identity' is formed, which allow for a deeper understanding of the way it operates. Each of these categories is used to highlight an aspect which is associated with 'identity' construction in discourse, and they all relate to one another in trying to offer an understanding of the dynamics in 'identity' construction.

In my study, I draw on various disciplines in discussing the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance, and agency which are involved in 'identity' construction. These processes were introduced in chapter three and are further discussed in light of the literature in this chapter.

7.4. Conceptualising 'identity'

As I have stated in sections 1.3, and 1.11., in my study, the notion of 'identity' is interpreted in two different, but related ways. The first interpretation concerns the processes involved in the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves, as well as the ways they believe they are perceived by others. This interpretation is closely connected to that of Storry and Childs (2013), who suggest that 'identity' might have two sides in that it concerns 'who people take for themselves to be and who others take them to be' (pp.4-5). It concerns the omnipresence of what I interpret as, 'some white British' people, who I also refer to as 'the other', in how the co-participants talk about themselves where perceptions of being 'British' on the basis of 'race' and 'accent' are prominent. This relationship between the co-participants and 'the other', more particularly, what I interpret as 'white British' is characterised by tensions and resistance from both sides. The second interpretation of this 'contested term' ('identity') (Robertson, 1991, p.71) focuses on the significance of non-human entities such as, naming, food, death, and so forth in the co-participants' sense of who they are, where the tensions of who is who and on what basis experienced in the first interpretation of 'identity' tends to 'fade', and, instead, 'new' categories emerge.

In the explanation of the model below, I focus on the first interpretation of 'identity' which focuses on conflicted perceptions of who the co-participants are because of how they believe they are perceived by 'the other', who are 'white British' people. As I have stated in sections 7.2., and 1.11., I interpret this manifestation of 'identity' using critical cosmopolitan theory as the main theory (Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; and Delanty, 2006, 2009). In the next chapter, I discuss the co-participants' perception of their 'identity' in relation to their relationship to non-human categories using a critical posthuman perspective (Braidotti, 2013, 2019).

The following is a model of the processes involved in 'identity' construction, which I have developed based on the data of this study.
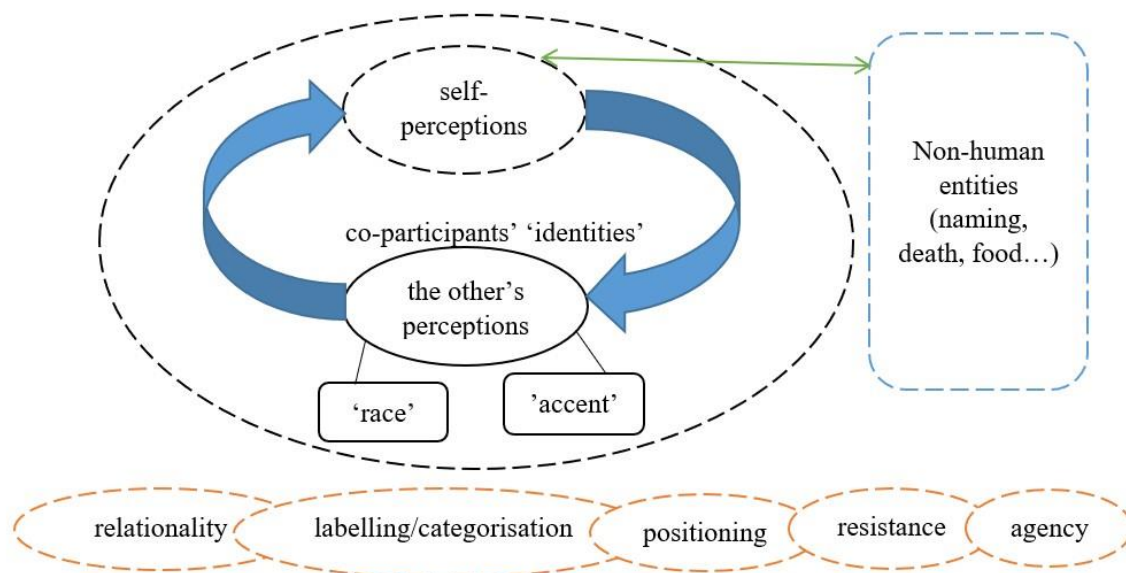
Figure 7.1   The processes of 'identity' construction

Figure 7.1 represents a model of my interpretation of how 'identity' is talked about by the coparticipants in terms of the processes involved in its construction. This is a highly subjective representation and interpretation of 'identity' construction. The way the model is constructed reflects, on the one hand, an essentialist and, on the other hand, a critical cosmopolitan view of 'identity'. The big circle represents a space of the co-participants' 'identities' and the dashes around it mean fragile boundaries and non-fixed parameters of what constitutes 'identity'. Within this non-defined space, there is 'self' and 'the other's' perceptions which constitute the perspectives from which the co-participants' 'identities' are created. The former refers to the co-participants' perceptions of themselves, and the latter refers to how the co-participants believe they are perceived by others. The boundaries of the circle on the top (self-perceptions), as well as the square on the right side (non-human entities) are also blurred and allow for constant interaction with various categories, such as food, places, names and so forth, through which the co-participants make sense of themselves. All of this supports a view of critical cosmopolitanism of a constant dialogue with the world around us, which allows for continuous rearticulation of our understanding of who we are (Delanty, 2009, p.17).

Conversely, the boundaries of the circle at the bottom (the other's perceptions) along with the categories connected to it ('race', 'accent') are solid and defined, which suggest a fixed understanding of 'identity'. Such a view of 'identity' is essentialist in nature, because it ascribes an 'identity' to the co-participants based on what they look like and how they sound, which appears to represent the stance of 'British' people the co-participants talk about, who I interpret, as 'some white British'. The arrows refer to the interactional relationship between the coparticipants and 'the other' because of how they believe they are perceived, which is characterised by the processes presented at the bottom in interrelated circles. These processes in which 'identity' is constructed are difficult to untangle because, based on my analysis of how the co-participants talk about their 'identities', one process invokes the other in a way or in another.

The categories presented in this model such as 'race', 'accent', and non-human categories are not an exhaustive list, but, based on my interpretation of the data, they represent recurrent elements drawn upon by the co-participants when they talk about their 'identities'. The same argument applies to the processes of 'identity' construction in this study, which are discussed below, in that they are identified on the basis of my interpretation of the co-participants ways of responding to how they perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived.

7.4.1. Relationality

By relationality I mean the omnipresence of 'the other' in how the co-participants talk about themselves, which emphasises the social nature of 'identity'. The interaction between the coparticipants and 'the other' is characterised by conflicted perceptions of who the co-participants are and on what basis. As shown in figure 7.1, and based on my interpretation of the data, the categories of 'race' and 'accent' appear to be the lens through which the co-participants are perceived by others. This is in the sense that for 'the other'; 'some white British', it seems that the co-participants are not entitled to identify as 'British' or claim identification with or 'belonging' to Britain, because they do not look or sound 'British'. In this regard, Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin (2011) explain relationality in terms of 'who we are is often defined in terms of who we are not or who we are similar to' (p. 271). This

communicates a sense of 'difference' and similarity or 'sameness', which can be assumed through perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' in my study. This is to say that for 'some white British' people that the co-participants talk about, in order for a person to be 'British', they have to be 'white', but not any 'type' of 'whiteness', their 'whiteness' has to be 'British', and they also have to sound 'British'.

An illustration of this is Ryan who states that she is dissociated from where she comes from, and rather associated with another 'national' group because of perceptions of her physical traits and 'accent' which 'some white British' people attach to this group. Garner (2007) argues 'whiteness has two simultaneous borders: one between white and Other and the second separating grades of whiteness' (p.10). The way perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' operate indicate the belief that 'identity' can be based on perceptions of 'sameness' and 'difference', which Jenkins (2014) emphasises in response to Hall's (1991a; 1996) claim that 'difference' is the category through which identity is constructed. My view on this is that both researchers' interpretations can be right as far as this study is concerned.

To start with Hall (1991a; 1996), he specifically addressed the belief of 'identity' as something that exists based on 'sameness' in physical characteristics, feelings and how people refer to themselves, which is how 'some white British' people seem to perceive the coparticipants, by rejecting such an understanding of 'identity', and he instead argued that it is 'constructed through, not outside difference' (1996, p.4-5). I agree with Hall that 'difference' is a fundamental element in 'identity' construction and that basing our understanding of who we are on a traditional conception of 'identity', that is, on 'sameness' of physical characteristics and 'national' background, for example, is problematic because it reduces people to these categories and fixes them into neat and prescriptive structures. However, I do not discard the category of 'sameness' totally, because even though it is imagined in that, even within the 'same' group there are differences based on, for instance, social class, gender, sexuality, coming from urban or rural places among other factors, it is a resource that people draw on when distinguishing themselves from others. Also, in my understanding, 'difference' implies 'sameness' and *vice versa*.

Here, I align my view with Jenkins (2014) who argues that our self-conception is based on distinguishing ourselves from each other, which creates a dual relationship of 'us' not being 'them', as well as the closely linked relationship between 'differentiation from' and

'identification with' (p.21). This relationship between 'sameness' and 'difference' is salient in my thesis, in that, from the perspective of some of the 'white British' people that the coparticipants talk about, you have to look like 'us' and sound like 'us' in order to be entitled to claim 'Britishness'. This indicates a binary relationship of 'us' and 'them' which is based on perceived 'similarity' and 'difference', which also extends to communicating that 'British whiteness' and 'British accent' tend to operate as markers of 'British identity'. This interpretation of 'British identity' in relation to 'race' and 'accent' is developed further below.

7.4.2. Labelling/ Categorisation

The notion of labelling is another salient element which is involved in the process of identity construction. By labelling, I mean the lexicon or expressions used to refer to the co-participants, which reflect how they believe they are perceived. It is used in a relational way (Hancock, 2016, p.164) in that the co-participants label themselves such as, 'internationalist', 'a chain person', 'transnational', 'hybrid' and 'British'. This is to resist perceptions of them on the basis of the binary category of 'either/or', as well as how they are labelled; 'foreigner', and categorised using other expressions, which signify perceptions of exclusion such as, 'you are not one of us' and 'you come from somewhere else'. According to Berk (2015), 'labelling theory emerged as the dominant perspective in the study of deviance in the 1960s' (p.50). The latter can be said to go back to Durkheim's work on suicide in (1897), which can be defined…as 'norm-violating behavior, such as crime, delinquency, suicide, alcoholism, etc., or…as actions or people that elicit social disapproval, condemnation, rejection, or exclusion' (ibid., pp.150-151). 'Labelling theory, [also] focuses on the manner in which society defines and creates deviance' (Raybeck, 1988, p.371).

In this study, the way I discuss the notion of labelling is different from what can be said to be a traditional conception of it, but they might converge somehow. This is in the sense that, I do not really associate labelling with deviance, and I rather use the notion of labelling to refer to naming that reflects rejection and exclusion by 'some white British' people, because of their conception of 'Britishness', which they appear to base on perceptions of 'race' and 'accent'. This might imply a sense of 'deviance' in that, being

'white' and sounding 'British' can be said to be regarded as the 'norm' in the eye of these people, but what the co-participants look like and how they sound is considered as 'deviant' from the 'norm', which is linked to being 'white British' and sounding 'British'. In this regard, Rogers and Buffalo (1974) argue that using negative labels to refer to people is an accusation of deviance… (p.102).

How the co-participants are labelled connects with the works on academics and other professionals that I have discussed in the previous chapter in that, regardless of the different labels used to refer to both the co-participants and other professionals, they serve to categorise and frame them, as well as in the case of my study discriminate against them. These labels appear to impose an image on the co-participants, and probably, on the professionals discussed in chapter six, which they do not associate themselves with, which is the case in my study.

This is not to say that labelling, which implies 'racism' is peculiar to the British context. In Algeria, for example, labels are also used in everyday life to refer to people based on their skin colour. Examples of this are terms such as, 'blanc', 'blande' or 'blanda' (white male and female, respectively), 'roux', 'requine', or 'rouge', 'rougia' ('red headed' male and female, respectively), and 'babay' or 'kahlouche', and 'kahloucha' ('black' male and female, respectively). These labels are very common where I come from, Constantine, as well as in other places in Algeria. In contexts where the person is local, labels such as, 'babay' or 'kahlouche' and 'kahloucha', can be said to be used as a feature, but, I think, not to exclude people from being from Constantine or 'Algerian'.

In other cases, if the person who is referred to using these labels comes from a region different from, for example, Constantine, such as, the South, they tend to have exclusionary dimensions, in which case these labels can mean 'El Abd' (slave, inferior) (Khiat, 2021). In the first case, from my encounter with the situation, it appears that these labels are 'normal' and 'benign' in the eyes of those who use them. Another example, of labelling based on skin colour in Algeria is the term 'Les Africains' ('Africans'), which is used to refer to Sub-Saharan 'refugees' in Algeria. It can be said that, again based on my encounter with the situation, this term may be used by some 'Algerians' to refer to them as aggressive and violent.

The reason I presented these examples, which I suggest require a thorough

investigation, is to show that perceptions based on physical traits, which are manifested in labels and which imply 'racism' are pervasive not only in Britain, but also in other places such as, Algeria.

7.4.2.1. Categorisation

In this study, labelling implies categorisation. Woodin (2010), argues 'by labelling someone as "French" or "Spanish", we are also by implication categorising them as "not Greek", for example' (p.226). Also, Antaki and Widdicombe (1998, p.2; p.5); Paoletti (1998, p.171); Widdicombe (1998, p.53); Wooffitt and Clark (1998, p.119); and Jenkins (2014, p.12) argue that categorisation is immanent in the everyday life reality of groups. Based on the data, categorisation can be said to operate via labelling in two ways. The first is essentialist in that, it limits and frames the co-participants because of others' perceptions of them on the basis of 'race' and 'accent'. The second, however, permits going beyond these perceptions and, as in the interactional tandem context described by Woodin (2010), which refers to a learning exchange between two 'native speakers', where both groups assist each other in the process of learning each other's language, it allows for a negotiation of perceptions and opportunities in ways which broaden perspectives, rather than limit them (p.227; p.240). This can be manifested in the labels used in the previous section by the co-participants about themselves ('internationalist', 'a chain person', 'transnational', 'hybrid' and 'British'), which indicate fluidity in how they situate themselves in the world, which defy 'national' and 'cultural' boundaries.

Having said this, labelling and categorisation can be said to be 'normal' processes which we use automatically in our everyday life to make sense of our complex relations with our peers and the world in which we live. In this vein, Rogers and Buffalo (1974), argue that labelling is not necessarily 'evil' because it could be used to organise and process information (p.103). Similarly, Woodin (2010) and Jenkins (2014), both argue that categorisation is an inevitable process and is central in communication between humans, as well as how we make sense of our social relations (p.225; p.107). However, they become problematic when they are used to divide people, ascribe 'identities' to them and exclude them, which is the case in my study.

The same argument is pertinent to the categories of 'race' and 'accent' in that these elements are not the issue per se, because we know that as humans, we look and speak differently, and we come from different places that we are not responsible for, but the issue is how this difference is used, which is also the case in my study.

7.4.2.1.1. The salience of 'race' and 'accent'

In this study, even though skin colour, which I interpret as 'race', alongside the category of 'accent', are two of the emergent themes, I do not tend to make the whole thesis solely around them. This is because, besides these emergent categories, there are also other important elements which have emerged such as, 'hybridity' and the significance of non-human entities in the co-participants' sense of who they are. This is also because, even though the coparticipants talk extensively about the relationship between 'race' and 'accent' and how they believe they are perceived by others on the basis of these categories, they move beyond them and articulate their self-understanding by melting these boundaries.

By focusing only on issues of 'race' and 'accent' and their relationship with being 'British', which is a recurrent and a central theme, I believe, I would miss a valuable opportunity to uncover the many ways that the co-participants use in dissociating themselves from this rigid and limiting perceptions of them. Therefore, I discuss perceptions of the co-participants on the basis of 'race' and 'accent' sufficiently, but it is not the only essence or the centre of this study for the reason explained above.

I use 'race' and 'accent' between inverted commas because they are contested terms. I analyse the former term as a construct, which takes different meanings in different places and at different times (Frankenberg, 1993, p.236; Roediger, 2002, p.336; Garner, 2004, 2007, p.7, p.16, and p.1; and Karla, Kaur, and Hutnyk, 2005, p.117). 'Accent', in this study, is interpreted in relation to 'native speakerism', which is also analysed as a social construct (Holliday, 2017). By treating these concepts as social constructs, I do not underestimate their dimensions. In fact, in my understanding, 'the real' thing about such constructs is their effect on people's lives. I use these notions, because they are, as argued above, central in 'identity' construction by the co-participants. This is in the sense that they are the lens through which they believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people, as well as

appear to operate as markers of 'British identity'. As such, the co-participants are both objects and agents. This means that they are ascribed 'identities' by others through centring 'race' and 'accent', but they resist such 'identity ascription' (Antaki, 1998) by decentring these categories and moving beyond them through for example, labelling themselves in ways which challenge others' perceptions, which shows their open and borderless identification with the world. This process of 'identity ascription' (ibid.) entails positioning, which is another process in 'identity' construction that is discussed below in section 7.4.3. The notions of centre and decentre are discussed in section 7.4.4.

This interactional relationship is characterised by power relations, 'as "racism" by definition involves a power relationship' (Garner, 2004, p.8). What I interpret as, 'some white British' people appear to have a say whether the co-participants 'belong' to Britain or not. Associating 'race' and 'accent' with 'racism' does not mean that they are the only categories involved in 'racism', because 'racism' takes different forms in different contexts (Essed, 2002, p. 178, p.190; Lentin, 2008, p.104; Masoud, 2008, p.305; Elam and Elam, 2010, p. 186; and Spencer, 2014, p.34). However, in this study 'racism' tends to be closely related to perceptions of 'race' and 'accent'. In this regard, Garner (2004) argues 'racism… embraces elements that can and often include skin colour, yet, does not do so exclusively' (p.190).

7.4.2.1.2. Power Relations

Going back to power dynamics; these can be said to involve hierarchy between the coparticipants *versus* 'some white British' people. It might appear that this hierarchy positions the former as marginalised in such a way they are absent from the scene and are under the control of 'some white British' people to position them as they want, but it is not always the case as far as my study is concerned. One cannot deny the influence of the latter's power ('some white British' people) which is reflected in their omnipresence and authority to name or label the coparticipants, but the co-participants resist the way they are categorised, and they claim ownership of how they self-identify with the world, including Britain. This interrogates the perception that the 'core' dominates the 'periphery', represented by 'some white British' people, and the co-participants respectively. Researchers such as Abu Lughod (1991); and Delanty (2009) stress that this polarised

relationship is multidimensional and emerging, instead of static in the sense of being framed within an understanding that the core dominates the periphery. An example of this is Eli, who talks about her relationship with Britain from the perspective of 'some white British' people where, if not paying close attention, it seems that it is her own perception:

> … you are not one of us, you come from somewhere else. I am very aware that I am a foreigner here. I'm actually very aware of that. I wasn't born here; obviously, the moment that I start talking people know that I am not from here. I mean, it's obvious that I am not English… . (Eli, interview)

However, in the extract below she strongly rearticulates her relationship with Britain by claiming 'belonging' to it, and she positions herself in it as a 'legitimate' member, because she contributes to 'British society' through her profession, as well as because she lives in it for a long time.

> …it's where I live. It's where I work; it's where I've spent most of my adult life and where I will, probably, spend most of my life or also going forward. So, of course, I care about it and I am part of that society and, you know, of course, you have to care, at the end of the day you are contributing to that. (Eli, interview)

Hall (1991b) also talks about the 'margins' coming into the 'centre' and reclaiming space within it: 'our lives have been transformed by the struggle of the margins to come into representation. Not just to be placed by the regime of some other, or imperialising eye but to reclaim some form of representation for themselves' (p.34). Therefore, despite hierarchy, the co-participants are exhibiting resistance from a bottom-up stance to decentre their perceptions on the basis of 'race' and 'accent' and locate themselves within the core.

7.4.2.1.3. 'Accent'

As argued above, 'accent' is another salient category through which the co-participants are perceived, which I interpret in terms of 'native speakerism'. I borrow this term which has

been mostly discussed in the field of English Language Teaching, to shed light on its ideological dimensions, where the notion of 'native speaker' is associated with 'superior culture' and 'individualism', while the term 'non-native speaker' is linked to 'inferior cultures', 'collectivism' and the inability of people who are labelled as such to think for themselves (Holliday and Aboshiha, 2009; Petric, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2016; and Holliday, 2017).

However, in my study, and based on my interpretation of the data, I use 'native speakerism' in relation to 'British identity' because, as argued above, the co-participants are made distant from 'belonging' to Britain or claiming to be 'British', and/or identification with Britain because they do not sound 'British'. In other words, the ways in which the co-participants talk about 'accent' does not, in my understanding, relate to perceptions of 'superior or inferior culture', nor to perceptions of 'individualistic' or 'collectivist' communities. It is, rather, talked about in relation to 'Britishness' as a 'national identity', which is discussed below.

Despite this difference in perspectives, broadly speaking, there is similarity in how the notion of 'native-speakerism' operates in my study, as well as in the works above. This is in the sense that besides labelling people, the term 'native-speaker' or reference to it through exclusion on the basis of 'accent' as evidenced in my study, is used to 'other' people and frame them. It is also used to limit and narrow their potential in how they interact with the social environment in which they live, which is the case in my study. For example, in his article 'the decolonial option in English teaching: Can the subaltern act?', Kumaravadivelu (2016), who has spent a long time in the United States, and who has come from an Indian background, explains that he was not able to pursue the field of English language teaching methods, which he has always been passionate about, because of 'native academics'' perceptions of him as a 'non-native speaker'. His lived experience is similar to that of the co-participants in that, they are dissociated from 'British society' because they are not 'natives'. Therefore, regardless of the different contexts, the co-participants, as well as Kumaravadivelu are discriminated against and excluded from their social environment, be it academia or society in general, because, in the eyes of 'natives', they are 'non-natives', hence they do not 'belong'.

Since the MacPherson report (1999), the question of why a person or a group of people discriminate against other people is of less importance than its influence on those who receive discrimination. This means that it does not matter if the person does not intend to be racist, but how it is received by the addressee is what matters. In my study, I argue that the co-participants feel discriminated against because of others' perceptions of them based on 'race' and 'accent', which is manifested in the other's gaze, as well as in the language used to talk to them. This argument is based on the data where there is clear evidence that the co-participants are explicitly, as well as implicitly othered and discriminated against.

7.4.3. Positioning

Positioning can be said to be an omnipresent mechanism in the ways in which we interact with people. This is because we constantly situate ourselves and mark our stances in relation to the world, including people in ways which might differ throughout time. In this study, I argue that positioning is pervasive in how the co-participants respond to being ascribed an 'identity' that they do not necessarily relate to, as well as in how they articulate their relationship with places such as, where they come from and Britain, which can be ambiguous and difficult to track sometimes. Thus, positions are shifting and may differ during the process of interaction (Deppermann, 2013, p.3). In this chapter, as explained throughout, I focus on the relationship between the co-participants and 'the other'. This interaction is characterised by multifaceted positioning in that, when the co-participants position themselves against how they are positioned by 'some white British' people, they are not only positioning themselves, but others as well. By implication, this means that when these 'white British' people position the coparticipants as not 'belonging' to Britain and not having a claim to identify with Britain, they are also positioning themselves as, probably, the decision makers and as members of society who are entitled to say who 'belongs' and who does not.

Baraldi (2009) argues that speakers' positioning of themselves entails positioning of their interlocutors (p.6). Similarly, Eide (2010), argues that by defining ourselves, we tend to define others (p.74). This 'self' and 'other' positioning emphasises the social nature of positioning which is involved in 'identity' construction in my study, in the sense that people

draw on 'narratives' (Amadasi and Holliday, 2017, p.258) in 'producing' each other, including themselves as 'social beings' (Bamberg, 1997, p.336). These narratives centre on perception of 'British national identity', which, as explained throughout, appears to be highly associated with 'race' and 'accent'. This is as far as my study is concerned.

7.4.3.1. 'National identity'

Billig (1995) introduced the notion of 'banal nationalism' to show that nationalism is ubiquitous in everyday life habits and that the practices through which nationalism is reproduced are banal, but not innocent. In this study, I argue that 'banal nationalism' is manifested in perceptions of 'national identity' in an essentialist way as has been shown throughout. This in the sense that being 'white British' and having a 'British accent' can be said to be among the markers of British national identity'. In other words, 'Being British' appears to be defined by 'accent' and 'race'. This essentialist and racialised view of 'national identity', which can also be referred to as 'methodological nationalism' promotes division between people and emphasises the 'either/or' binary of nationality (Beck and Sznaider, 2006, p.9).

These findings, which are based on my study, converge with the findings of a study by Eide (2010) on the representation of, what the researcher refers to as, 'minority groups' by Norwegian 'mainstream media', and a study on a group of young Londoners' perception of 'whiteness' by Phoenix (1996), as well as another study on 'white' women's construction of 'whiteness' by Frankenberg (1993). This is in the sense that in the first and second studies, 'whiteness' is regarded as a fundamental category in the construction of 'Norwegian-ness', as well as 'Englishness', (p.64; p.194), respectively. In the third study, 'whiteness' is the lens through which 'white' women construct their perceptions of themselves, as well as others, in which case, 'non-whites', are consciously or subconsciously othered by these 'white' women.

However, the ways in which the co-participants respond to this construction of 'British national identity' is by resisting it and rejecting being perceived through 'race' and 'accent', and they rather claim 'belonging' to Britain. This reaction to being excluded from 'British society' connects with critical cosmopolitan view of 'national identity' in the sense of

defying 'national' boundaries and having entitlement to claim ownership of 'Britishness' and participate in 'British society'. This view converges with Storry's and Childs's (2013) conceptualisation of 'Britishness' that it is complex, multiple and debatable (p.7). Therefore, discursive 'national identity' is dynamic in that, it is articulated in ways which are dependent on people and the context in which they are produced (Zimmerman, 1998, p.94; Omoniyi, 2006, p.4; Suleiman, 2006, p.53; Hanauer, 2008, p.202; and Wodak *et al*. 1999, p.3).

7.4.4. Resistance

Day (1998) suggests that, on almost every occasion where a speaker is offered or ascribed the categorization of an interlocutor, resistance is an omnipresent category (p.161). Resistance, in this study, can be said to be individual in the sense of being enacted and displayed from individuals in an individual way, rather than by groups in a form of social movements, such as Antiapartheid. Nevertheless, its effect extends to what can be said to be a bigger picture of resistance in that, it is part of a collective struggle; discrimination, which is in turn constituted of individual experiences. The relational positioning between the co-participants and 'some white British' people is, in my understanding, encountered by resistance. This is to say how both parties respond to each other's positioning, which I interpret as resistance, can be interpreted differently (Jocelyn, Hollander and Einwohner, 2004, p.543). It can be said that, based on the data, resistance is displayed from both sides. The terms 'centre' and 'decentre' are the mechanisms used to enact resistance which, regardless of their 'opposition', communicate mutual rejection of both parties' positioning.

On the one hand, according to the data, 'some white British' people appear to centre 'race' and 'accent', which extends to 'national identity' by ascribing an 'identity' to the coparticipants based on these categories. By centring, I mean using such categories as the lens or the measure in making sense of who the co-participants are. On the other hand, the coparticipants tend to decentre this perception of them, by rejecting the idea of being framed within these categories. In a study on intercultural positioning between English and Spanish Tandem learners, Woodin (2007) uses the term 'decentre' to refer to these learners' mutual understanding and awareness of each other's perspectives (p. 214).

However, in my study, in the context that the co-participants and 'some white British' people attempt to assert their viewpoints on who the co-participants are, 'decentre' means rejection of each other's views and sticking to one's perception. It can be said that the coparticipants are aware of the opinion of 'some white British', in that they acknowledge having 'different' physical characteristics, as well as 'accent', but they reject being discriminated against and dissociated from 'British society' because of this difference. Whereas, it can also be said that 'some white British' people appear to consciously or unconsciously overlook the co-participants' viewpoint in a way or in another, and instead impose their own opinion on the co-participants. In this give-and-take process, the centre becomes decentre and the other way round.

Here, I draw on the term 'symbolic violence' to show that racism, in my study, is expressed in ways which are not necessarily explicit, such as in the example of Eli in section 7.4.2.1.2., but it can also be covert. This is the sense that it is articulated through expressions which can be regarded as mundane or seem naïve but imply discriminatory thinking. In this regard, Wodak *et al.* (1999) argue that power relations and forms of dominance are not always overtly expressed through language, but they can also be used through the same medium to enact covert racism and conceal it (p.8).

Symbolic violence is a term introduced by Bourdieu (1977) in his study on a Kabyle region in Algeria to refer to a form of indirect dominance, exploitation, and control, which is disguised under the veil of bonding and maintaining social relations, and which sustains its implicit status by concealing overt exploitation such as, physical force.

An example of this is exercising power over someone through gifts and debts for the purpose of establishing dependence. Because my study concerns the perceptions of a group of university lectures from 'different nationalities' in their everyday personal lives, which includes others' perceptions of them, it appears that it does not fit Bourdieu's conceptualisation of 'symbolic violence'. Nevertheless, I use the same concept from another perspective as explained below.

Instead of using Bourdieu directly, I use the perspective of Dolińska (2020) on 'symbolic violence' who redefines it in terms of social exclusion manifested in, for example, accusation of being less competent that a group of, what she refers to as, 'highly

skilled female migrants' from Belarus and Ukraine encounters in Poland, because of stereotypes about where these 'migrants' come from. The way in which this concept operates in Bourdieu's work is by assuming that it is invisible for the people being covertly dominated and that they lack agency. This contrasts with how the co-participants in my study respond to being implicitly discriminated against in that they are aware of its implications and oppose it either in a similar way (implicitly) and/or explicitly.

7.4.4.1. Illustration of symbolic violence

The following incidents, which I interpret in terms of 'symbolic violence' can also be described as 'unwitting racism'. This term was used in the MacPherson report (1999) to refer to 'unconscious' or 'unintentional' racism, which is manifested in the discourse of white police officers involved in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. This discourse includes words in reference to 'black' people such as, 'coloured' and 'negro', as well as accusations of robbery, which some of these police officers did not think communicate racist views nor portray them as 'racist' (Chapter 6, sections 6.3; 6.4; 6.17).

An illustration of 'symbolic violence' or, what might be understood as, 'unwitting racism' is what seems to be a mundane question 'where are you from'? As shown in section 3.2., this question was repeatedly asked to Kyle by 'some white British' people because, based on the data, it appears that these people do not 'approve' of her identifying as 'British'. Such a question, as well as how it is asked by repeatedly directing 'where are you from?' to Kyle, who resists it by sticking to her claim of being 'British' and interrogating their question by saying: 'what do you mean?', communicates hidden 'racism'. This is in the sense that, based on the data, what she looks like and how she sounds, do not seem to 'match' their expectations of 'British people'. This also communicates that each side is implicitly signalling their opinion about each other's responses and resisting the other's question by questioning each other back. The way Kyle responds to this exchange in the interview meeting is by explicitly pointing to these people's intention which is disguised in a seemingly 'genuine' and 'naïve' question, and showing awareness of them wanting her to 'admit' or refer to the country she comes from, instead of presenting herself as 'British'. Another example of 'symbolic violence' is the gaze of 'the other', which Jordan received

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because of his 'accent'. Even though the person did not verbally address Jordan, her look made him uncomfortable and feel excluded. Flam and Beauzamy (2008) emphasise the power of the gaze as a central category in the relationship between, what they refer to as, 'natives' and 'foreigners', where the former enacts their power and rejection of the latter by glaring and staring at them (p.222; p.224).

7.4.5. Agency

This extends from the discussion about 'symbolic violence', as well as the rest of the processes discussed earlier in this chapter. As shown throughout, in these processes of 'identity' construction, the co-participants are influenced by how they believe they are framed, and they challenge others' perceptions of them by asserting their own self-perception. So, in this context, by 'agency' I mean the ability to respond to and counter such a discriminatory practice. In this regard, Giddens (1984); Grossberg (1996); Schiffrin (1996); and Bamberg (2010), for example, talk about agency in terms of relations of participation and access, as well as in terms of the capability to do things and 'who-is-in - control', which involves the binary relationship between 'I' as a subject and 'me' and 'undergoer' (pp. 9-10; pp. 99-102; p. 167; p.7). This definition of agency as a site of power relations (Grossberg, 1996) also extends to the attitudes of 'some white British' people that the co-participants talk about, in that, it appears that they discriminate against the co-participants because of their understanding of 'Britishness', which they might think is threatened by people like the co-participants.

This struggle of 'who-is-in-control' (Bamberg, 2010, p.7) and who is who and on what basis, can be said to represent the conflicting orientations of methodological nationalism and the critical cosmopolitan view of 'national identity'. The former conception of 'national identity', which appears to be 'adopted' by 'some white British' people, does not recognise any mélange, and rather operates in terms of 'the 'either/or' logic of nationality' (Beck and Sznaider, 2006, p.9), as well as promotes it as static and rigid. Whereas, the co-participants' interrogation of such a conception of 'British national identity', which resists it and claims it in their own ways, in my understanding, seems to advocate the 'both/and' logic of the cosmopolitan vision (ibid.), in that, 'national identities should not be perceived as static,

but rather as dynamic, vulnerable and rather ambivalent entities' (Wodak *et al*. 1999, p.187).

To summarise this section, I have focused on processes of 'identity' construction, which involve 'self' and 'other' relations. Based on the discussion above, which is also based on the data in chapter three, I argue that 'the other', interpreted as 'some white British' people is omnipresent in how the co-participants make sense of themselves. This is in the sense that, 'some white British' people seem to ascribe an 'identity' to the co-participants based on their perceptions of 'race' and 'accent'. In other words, 'race' and 'accent' appear to be the lens through the co-participants are perceived, where the conception of 'British national identity' seems to be defined in terms of these categories, which the co-participants resist. This conflicted interactional relationship, which is interpreted in the processes discussed above, I argue, shows the social nature of 'identity' in that, the ways in which the co-participants enact and articulate their 'identities', is in relation to 'the other'.

7.5. What does 'immersion' mean?

'Immersion' has been talked about in various disciplines such as, education, nursing, and counselling. It is discussed in terms of learners' enrolment into a course or courses by visiting the target 'culture', where they learn skills related to the language and/ or 'the culture' of the new place, experience encounters with people 'belonging' to the new social environment, engage in activities and participate in events which make them 'immersed' into the new 'culture' (Jackson 2004; De Ricco and Sciarra, 2005; Kearney, 2010; Larson, Ott and Miles, 2010; Tomlinson-Clarke and Clarke, 2010; and Shih, 2015). So, 'immersion' in this literature is, in my understanding, associated with travelling abroad and learning from courses (curricula), which are tailored for learners' needs to be able to gain understating of how the target 'culture' operates, and communicate effectively with members 'belonging' to that 'culture'.

Based on my understanding of this literature about 'immersion', it can be said that it is limited to a specific period of time and how learners 'immerse' themselves into the 'new culture' is by learning from curricula, then applying it outside the learning institution.

However, in terms of the data of my study, the way the notion of 'immersion' is talked about can be said to move away from this understanding which might be understood as a common or a traditional conception of 'immersion'. This is in the sense that, in my study, 'immersion' is situated within the struggle of multiple 'realities' of who the co-participants are and on what basis as part of their everyday personal life experiences, because of perceptions of them on the basis of 'race' and 'accent' by 'some white British' people.

'Immersion' in my study, as explained in chapter one, section 1.8.1., is generated from my own lived experience, discussed in the same section, of being looked at differently, because of perceptions of where I come from, which limited my interaction with 'British culture'. Similarly, the co-participants' 'immersion' in 'British society' is challenged in that it is constructed in relation to the previously discussed categories of 'race' and 'accent'. However, perceptions of the co-participants by 'the other', do not seem to always have a negative effect on the co-participants. This is in the sense that in the case of Ashley, he states that he feels accepted because of his understanding of, what he refers to as, the 'culture', which I interpret as 'British culture', but he will always be a 'foreigner' because of his physical traits, 'accent' and dress, which he suggests are not 'British features' as a matter of 'fact'.

Having said this, I argue that 'immersion' is constructed in a similar way to 'identity' in the sense that perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' are salient categories in how it is constructed. 'Culture' is also another category that has been drawn on by some of the co-participants in how they talk about themselves. My interpretation of 'culture' in light of the literature will be discussed in the following chapter, in sections 8.2., and 8.3.

In summary, as far as this study is concerned, the notion of 'immersion' can be said to have another understanding which centres the co-participants' constant interaction with 'British society', as well as the omnipresence of 'some white British' people in evaluating how far they are immersed and why, where perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' are central. Therefore, I argue that the notion of 'immersion' is hugely associated with perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' in such a way that the co-participants are framed within these categories by their social environment, as evidenced throughout.

7.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed 'identity' construction in relation to the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance, and agency involved in 'self' and 'other' relations. I argue that 'identity' is socially constructed in that 'the other' who is interpreted as 'some white British' people' is omnipresent in the ways in which the coparticipants talk about themselves. This is in the sense that the latter appears to have a say whether the co-participants identify with Britain and are 'British' or not based on perceptions of 'race' and 'accent'. This relationship between the co-participants and 'some white British' people is characterised by the processes discussed in this chapter where power relations and resistance are salient. This is in such a way that the co-participants are framed by 'some white British' people as 'outsiders' and 'foreigners' because they are not 'white British' and do not have 'British accent', while the co-participants reject this perception of them and decentre these categories through, for example, labelling themselves as 'chain person, 'British', 'hybrid' 'transnational'. In other words, 'race' and 'accent', appear to be markers of 'British national identity'.

I also argue that the way 'immersion' is talked about in my study appears to disturb the way it is established in the literature. As discussed earlier, in the literature, 'immersion' is limited to a specific period of time; and is associated with learning from curricula, followed by applying this outside of the learning environment. However, in my study 'immersion' is situated within the conflict of who the co-participants are, and on what basis, which they encounter in their everyday personal lives because of exclusionary perceptions of them by 'some white British' people's. These perceptions are based on 'race' and 'accent' as evidenced in this chapter and chapter three.

From reading about 'immersion' and analysing it. I wonder why we do not talk about 'immersion' in the environment we come from? Why this notion tends to be salient only in contexts of travelling or living somewhere different? Is it assumed that we are already 'immersed' in the places we come from?

In the following chapter, I will discuss the notion of 'belonging' and the significance of non-human categories in the co-participants' sense of 'identity'.

Chapter Eight: 'Belonging' and the significance of human to non-human relations in 'identity' construction

8.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have discussed the processes involved in 'identity' construction. It is, as argued in the previous chapter, discussed in terms of how the co-participants perceive themselves and how they believe they are perceived by their social environment. In this chapter, I discuss the notion of 'belonging' in terms of how the co-participants construct their sense of place in the places they feel connected to. I also discuss the role of non-human entities in how the co-participants make sense of their 'identity'.

In section 8.2., under the heading 'the definition of 'culture'' I provide various meanings of 'culture' and how it has been used. In section 8.3., under the heading 'the manifestation of 'culture in my study'', I discuss the notion of 'culture' in relation to my study and how I interpret it. In section 8.4.; ''integration'', I discuss the concept of 'integration' in terms of the meanings attached to it by the co-participants and how it is practiced, as well as situate its meaning in the literature. In section 8.5., under the heading 'interpretations of 'belonging' in the literature', I consider how it is discussed in various contributions and their relevance to my study. In section 8.6., 'hybridity', I briefly discuss this notion and its relevance to the notion of 'belonging' in my study. In section 8.7., 'non-human categories', I discuss the significance of these categories in my study, where the second interpretation of 'identity', briefly explained in the previous chapter, is discussed in more detail.

I argue that the notions of 'integration' and 'culture' are emergent and are in constant construction. How they are articulated suggests the need to continue to interrogate them, rather than treat them as fixed categories. I also argue that the tension of who the co-participants are and on what basis, which is salient mainly in the previous chapter and in chapter three, wherein 'race' and 'accent' are central tends to 'fade' the more the co-participants move away from talking about how they believe they are perceived by their social environment. This is evidenced in the co-participants' negotiation of their sense of 'belonging', in the sense that 'belonging' is constructed in relation to the notion of 'home' which is used to refer to many places. This interpretation, which represents one dimension

of 'belonging'; 'place belongingness', (Antonsich, 2010), alludes to the second dimension; 'politics of belonging' (ibid.), by implicitly rejecting and resisting categorisation by others in terms of 'either/or', a categorisation which I have discussed in the previous chapter and chapter three. This resistance is also evidenced in the non-human categories, that the co-participants draw upon when constructing their sense of 'identity'.

Therefore, I argue that 'identity' is not exclusively social, that is, constructed in relation to 'self' and 'other' only, but it is also constructed in relation to non-human entities.

8.2. Definition of 'culture'

As stated in the conclusion of chapter three, and the summary of section 5.5., and 7.5., the notion of 'culture' is going to be discussed in this and the following section in light of the literature. This contested term has been drawn upon by few co-participants in the abovementioned locations. What the term 'culture' means and the contexts in which it is used has shifted throughout time. The following is a brief historical account of the way 'culture' has been used. The earliest meaning of this term can be attributed to the fifteenth century where it was used to refer to the cultivation of crops, looking after animals, and people's relationship with nature as a means of their survival (Williams,1983, p.87; Bocock, 1995; p.151; and Cope and Kalantzis, 1997). In the sixteenth century, this meaning of 'culture' in terms of cultivation of animals and plants extended to include the human mind, where the idea that only certain groups of people and only some nations, mainly Europeans had cultivated minds and manners, and exhibited a high standard of culture or civilisation emerged (Williams, 1981; and Bocock, 1995). By the eighteenth century, this meaning of 'culture' was closely associated with 'the arts' and 'a cultivated elite' (Bocock, p.151), and as such it was in opposition with 'popular culture', which, in turn, was associated with working class and the lower middle-class (ibid., p.152).

Another definition of 'culture' goes back to the enlightenment in the eighteenth century, which refers to Europe as the source of human development and as the most civilised nation due to the secular changes it had witnessed. This enlightenment view of 'culture' maintained that all societies will pass through historical development of humanity, in which Europe was a leading factor (ibid., p.152). This meant a 'Eurocentric' structure of the world

and a universal history of humankind (Friese, 2001). A fourth definition of 'culture' concerns the necessity to talk about it in the plural; 'cultures', which refers to different ways of being, and shared values and meanings among various 'nations, groups, classes, [and] subcultures' (ibid., p.154). Although there is an emphasis on the plurality of 'culture', this view of 'culture', is essentialist as it promotes difference and fixed boundaries between various 'cultures', and sameness among 'cultures' by arguing that the changes that happen as the result of mutual interaction between members of various groups should 'fit harmoniously into the overall cultural configuration and do not alter the focus of a given culture' (Friese, 2001, p.68). Last, but not least, while the former definition of 'culture' focuses on shared meanings among people and maintains that 'culture' is something we have, a fifth definition of this term promotes it as something we do, that is, a practice by which meaning is produced (ibid., p.154).

The third, fourth and fifth definitions of 'culture' have some relevance to my study in the sense that the way 'culture' is talked about by the co-participants suggests essentialist, as well as non-essentialist views. I subscribe to the fifth definition of 'culture' in that I view it as something we do, rather than something we have. However, I do not attempt to define 'culture', I rather focus on how it is manifested as emergent and dynamic in the everyday personal lives of the co-participants.

In this section, I have discussed some of the ways in which the concept of 'culture' has been used throughout time, and the shift of meaning this notion has undergone. This historical account has some sort of relevance to my study as some of the usages of 'culture' explained above are manifested in my study.

8.3. The manifestation of 'culture' in my study

In the previous section, I have provided some 'definitions' of 'culture', which shows the shift in its meaning and how it has been approached throughout time. In this section, I discuss how it is manifested in my study and how I approach it. 'Culture' in my study is manifested in terms of an interaction between the co-participants' 'cultural' backgrounds and 'British culture'. They bring them together and negotiate them in the process of making sense of themselves. Even though most of the co-participants did not self-identify as

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'British', they appear to claim ownership of 'British culture' in the sense that they engage with it in their own ways. By implication, this non-essentialist representation of 'culture', which emphasises interrelationship between 'cultures' regardless of where people come from alludes to an essentialist understanding of it. This is in such a way that bringing various 'cultures' into interaction with each other appears to disturb an understanding of 'culture' in terms of clear-cut boundaries between 'cultures', and a view of 'culture' as fixed among groups of people, such as those who share the same country and language (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992, p.17; Holliday, 2010; Holliday, Hyde and Kullman, 2010; and Holliday 2012).

I subscribe to a non-essentialist view of 'culture', which is manifested in critical cosmopolitanism, which rejects locating 'culture' within the boundaries of nations and rather suggests that we, as individuals, engage with 'culture' wherever we find it, regardless of where we come from (Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Delanty, 2006; Grande 2006; and Holliday, 2016b). Other scholars whose conception of 'culture' in my understanding converges with the critical cosmopolitan understanding of it in the sense that they argue against clear-cut definitions of 'culture' and maintain that it is emergent and is something we do, rather than fixed and something we have, are Geertz (1973, p.5, p.9, p.29); Hannerz (1991, pp.116-117); King (1991, p.150); Turim (1991, pp.145-148); Wallerstein (1991, p.94, p.95); Wolf (1991, p.161); Baumann (1996, p.11); Stratton and Ang (1996, p.376); Markus (2002, pp.404-405); Hall, Neitz and Battani (2003, p.7); and Woodin, (2007, p.232).

The concepts of 'blocks and threads' (Amadasi and Holliday, 2017; and Holliday, 2016c) are relevant to this discussion in the sense that 'they represent essentialist and non-essentialist discourses of "culture"' (Amadasi and Holliday, 2017, p.259). The former concept refers to ways of talking about 'culture' in terms of unnegotiated difference between 'cultures', and that each 'culture' has its own characteristics which define individuals who 'belong' to various 'cultures'. The latter concept represents 'culture' as a web of relations, which fits into a cosmopolitan understanding of 'culture' in that, it promotes the idea of engaging with 'culture' in our own ways wherever we find it, as well as the idea that our 'cultural' background and previous experiences in similar or different 'cultural' contexts are used to navigate our ways into the new 'culture' (ibid., p.260). This

means that there is no single way of engaging with 'culture', and that we are all entitled to engage with it in our own ways regardless of our difference and where we come from.

To summarise this section, I have presented the ways in which 'culture' is manifested in my study, which involves essentialist and non-essentialist views of 'culture'. The essentialist understanding is implicitly referred to in the ways in which the co-participants engage with 'culture', which is in my understanding non-essentialist. This is to say that the co-participants engage with 'culture' by bringing their 'cultural' backgrounds into interaction with 'British culture', and navigating their ways into them without categorising and situating themselves with these 'cultures' using the binary logic of 'either/or', a view which is essentialist in nature.

8.4. 'Integration'

The notion of 'integration' is discussed in chapter four, section 4.2., and this is a further discussion of this contested concept. While who needs to 'integrate' is a contested area, it can be interpreted in two different ways. It is understood as a 'two-way' process where both 'members of the host society and of the minority group display mutual accommodation' (Castles *et al*. 2002). Examples of other scholars who subscribe to this view are Ager and Strang (2008); Strang and Ager (2010); and Anjum, McVittie and McKinlay (2018). The second understanding of 'integration' presents it as a 'one-way' (Anjum, McVittie and McKinlay, 2018) task that needs to be accomplished by minority groups (Castles *et al*. 2002). Castles *et al*. (2002); Ager and Strang (2008); Strang and Agar (2010); and Lawson (2017) maintain that 'integration' means different things to different people at different times, and it operates at different levels of society, such as having access to education and welfare, being accepted within the 'culture' of the new place and being able to participate in the politics of the new place, and so forth.

In my study, I talk about 'integration' as a 'one-way' relationship due to the way it is constructed by the co-participants. Their interaction with the British context in terms of practices they perform to feel or become 'integrated' appears to suggest that it has one direction in that, it is the co-participants only who appear to make efforts and work out how to 'integrate' into the British context. However, the meaning they attribute to 'integration'

is highly subjective, an understanding which is advocated by scholars such as Ager and Strang (2008); and Castles *et al*. (2002) as explained above, and which I subscribe to. The co-participants draw on various categories, such as language, understanding 'the culture' of the new place, daily life practices, their relationship with the countries they come from, their profession, as well as 'race' and 'accent'.

The way 'integration' is constructed indicates that it has different meanings, emergent and multiple. This is in the sense that it means different things to the co-participants, and they position themselves in the UK by constantly negotiating their sense of place in this place, as well as in the places they come from. They talk about 'integration' in the British context, by drawing on their relationship with where they come from, which suggests that these places are in constant interaction with each other through which the co-participants situate their sense of place in these places. Therefore, how I discuss 'integration' is by showing its contested nature, as well as by disturbing a rigid understanding of it which centres on the idea that individuals should move away from their own 'cultural' background and adhere to 'the culture' of the new place. I also show the contested nature of 'integration' by moving away from making generations and offering a definition of this term, which 'continues to be controversial and hotly debated' (Castles *et al*. 2002, p.12; and Strath, 2008).

This interpretation of 'integration' converges with the meaning Lawson (2017) attributes to this term, which is empirically based on her study about positioning and 'integration' of what she refers to as, 'British migrants' in Ariège, France. In my study, as argued above and in chapter four, section 4.2., 'integration' is disturbed in that, it is made sense of differently by the co-participants, and that how they situate themselves in the places they come from is omnipresent in how they interpret 'integration' in Britain in such a way that there is constant interaction between these places. In the latter study, 'British migrants' (Lawson, 2017), construe their 'integration' in Ariège by manipulating the various resources available to them to present themselves positively in French society. For example, some of them opt for options connected with the French context, rather than with the British context, such as changing their British car registration to a French registration and paying French taxes, while in other situations they dissociate themselves from categories which link them to the French context, such as speaking French, because they

do not master the language. Based on this study, Lawson (2017) interprets 'integration' 'as a dynamic construct that varies according to how migrants themselves negotiate its meaning' (p.72). An understanding which I, as stated above, adopt in explaining how 'integration' is manifested in my study, which decentres the orientation of conceptualising 'integration' in terms of 'the effacement of specific cultural manifestations and the unquestioning acceptance of the mores of the metropolis' (Strath, 2008, p. 28).

The way 'culture' and 'integration' are interpreted in my study relate to each other in that not only 'culture' is a salient category when we talk about 'integration', but also because they are both negotiated and renegotiated by making decisions as to how to engage with them, which shows their emergent and dynamic nature, as well as demonstrating that there is no single way of interacting with these entities.

I have discussed the notion of 'integration' by bringing together how it is constructed by the co-participants and the ways in which it is discussed in the literature. 'Integration' in my study is manifested in terms of a 'one-way' process in that the co-participants talk about how they engage with the British context, rather than how they and other members of 'British society' engage with each other in such a way that their different ways of being are reciprocally accepted. The way in which they 'integrate' themselves into the British context is highly subjective, in that they draw on various categories through which they make sense of their 'integration'. Also, the places they come from are omnipresent in the way they position themselves in Britain. This approach to 'integration' disturbs the understating of it which is based on the idea that people should move away from their 'cultural' background and adopt 'the culture' of the new place.

In a similar vein, in the following section, I discuss the notion of 'belonging' manifested in the notion of 'home' in a way which is 'hybrid', which is another way through which the coparticipants position themselves in Britain.

8.5. Interpretations of 'belonging' in the literature

This section and the following section reflect the shift in categories which I have explained in sections 1.2., 4.1., and 5.1. This is in the sense that, as will be shown below, these sections move away from the categories of 'race' and 'accent', which have been imposed on the

coparticipants by their social environment and move towards highlighting the 'new' categories which the co-participants choose, for the purposes of projecting their sense of place, as well as their sense of 'identity'. I interpret this transient manifestation of 'race' and 'accent' as showing freedom in that, there is movement from categories which have been imposed on the coparticipants by their social environment to categories which have been chosen by the coparticipants.

As explained briefly in chapter one, the way 'belonging' is discussed in some literature lacks theoretical 'definition'; in addition, its understanding in relation to other contested concepts, such as 'identity' and 'citizenship' is not made clear. In the same vein, Anthias (2006, p.19); and Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007, p.261), argue that 'belonging' is not clearly defined and is 'under-theorised'.

The following is a discussion of some contributions which use the term 'belonging' in relation to other contested terms without necessarily clarifying how it differs from them.

8.5.1. 'Belonging' in association with 'identity' and 'citizenship'

Some contributions which adopt an understanding of 'belonging' using the term 'identity', 'national', and 'ethnic' are Fortier (1997); Bond (2006); Scheibelhofer (2007); and Colombo, Leonini and Rebughini (2009). The first study which uses 'belonging' and 'identity' at face value is on émigré Italian culture in Britain by Fortier (1997). This study, which explores the relationship between 'the construction of identity of places and the construction of terrains of belonging' (pp.41-42), and the use of the terms 'home', 'origins' and 'tradition', refers to 'belonging' as both 'possessions' and 'appartenance' (p.42). The researcher further explains this description of 'belonging' as 'practices of group identity are about manufacturing cultural and historical belongings which mark out terrain of commonality that delineate the political and social dynamics of fitting in' (p.42).

The findings show that Italians articulate themselves as 'invisible immigrants', a term which they use to show their equality with the 'British'. The findings also show that 'ethnicity' is salient in that, it is used by Italians to differentiate themselves from the 'British', in a way which suggests 'a hegemonic Italianess' (p.58).

Even though there is a description of 'belonging' as 'possessions' and 'appartenance'

(ibid., p.42), it is not further elaborated on nor situated in terms of its meaning and its association with 'identity'.

The second study is by Bond (2006), and he uses the terms 'national' and 'ethnic' 'identity' interchangeably with 'belonging to investigate the extent to which two groups; a group of people born in England, and another of those who belong to 'visible' minority ethnic groups are excluded from a 'Scottish national identity' (pp.613-614). He argues that 'national belonging' can be recognised by the majority group if people who claim this 'identity' have the three key markers of 'national identity', which are residence, birth and ancestry (p.611). Participants who were members of the public, were asked about their own opinions, as well as what they think about the way the wider public would perceive: a person who was born in England, but lives permanently in Scotland and identifies as Scottish, and a non-white person who lives in Scotland, has a Scottish accent and self-identifies as a Scottish. Bond (2006) argues that 'national belonging' of people who do have the key markers of 'national identity' (residence, birth and ancestry) are likely to be excluded by the majority group 'who are likely to have a more straightforward sense of this identity' (p.623). The meaning of 'belonging and its relationship with the term 'identity' is not unpacked. Therefore, it is hard to figure out what 'belonging' means in this context.

The third study in which the use of 'belonging' is ambiguous is Scheibelhofer (2007). This study researches the narratives of 'belonging' of young men of migrant Turkish background living in Vienna and moves away from focusing on the sons of Muslim migrants as 'antipode' of 'Western man' (p.317). It argues that the young men's narratives are projected discursively in such a way that they serve to claim their own space. Their identification is transient and have different meanings in different contexts. Therefore, Scheibelhofer (2007) argues that the young men's identifications are relational and need to be contextualised in relation to what circumstances or factors shaped the young men's views of themselves and their positionalities. In this study again, what is meant by 'belonging' and the way it is interpreted in relation to 'national identity' is left unexplained.

The fourth study which uses the term 'identity' and 'belonging' interchangeably is by Colombo, Leonini and Rebughini, (2009). They examine the processes involved in constructing 'self-identification' and 'belonging' by second generation teenage children of immigrants in Italy to reach an understanding of how they talk about themselves, their

future plans, how they engage with their communities and ethnic groups, as well as to understand how they 'integrate' into Italian society (p.43). The study reveals six self-identifications, which the researchers describe as ethnic enclave, mimicry, crisis, transnational, hyphenated, and cosmopolitan. The first three processes, which the researchers refer to as 'modern forms of belonging' are, according to them, static and conceptualised by the second-generation migrants through the lens of 'either/or' choice, while the second three 'forms of belonging' are more dynamic in that, they are constructed using the logic of 'both/and' choice (p.44). The researchers argue that these processes are partly conceived as objective entities which define '"identities" and "belonging" as "natural" and hereditary' (p.44). Similar to the previous study, in this study what 'belonging' means and its association with 'identity' is not explained and is rather used at face value.

Having said this, 'belonging' in these studies lacks theoretical understanding, as well as a clear conceptualisation. Also, its understanding in relation to the terms that is used interchangeably or in association with is not defined.

Another example of academic literature in which the use of 'belonging' is ambiguous is by Wong (2007); and Clark (2009). The researchers use the notion of 'citizenship' to refer to 'belonging' in a synonymous way or by association without defining how the latter term differs from the former.

Wong (2007) looks at the ways in which 'transnationalism' and 'active citizenship' are conceptualised in Canada (p.80). The research argues 'the practice of transnationalism produces "citizens" who de facto belong to more than one nation… hence the traditional conception of citizenship as a singular sense of belonging, allegiance, and loyalty is challenged as multiple forms of belonging become institutionalized into transnational citizenship' (p.87). A survey and telephone interviews were used to collect data from 42,476 people who were 15 years old or over and who lived in the ten provinces of Canada (p.92). The study reveals that, 'there is no relationship whatsoever between transnationalism and a sense of belonging to Canada', and that there are other factors which predict people's "citizenship" and their sense of "belonging", such as gender, schooling in Canada, marital status, children, level of education… and so on' (p.96). The study also

reveals that the participants' 'citizenship' and their sense of 'belonging' is not hindered by their 'transnational identities' (p.97).

The second study which is by Clark (2009) examines how likely Asian Australian migrants are to feel a sense of 'belonging' to the nation-state and compares this to the rest of the Australian population. The results show that Asian Australian migrants attribute more importance to family bond and occupation than to the nation, and that they share relatively the same views as the rest of the population about maintaining the border and not allowing legal immigrants who are not citizens to have the same rights as Australian citizens (p.37). The study also shows that the Asian Australians are more willing to engage with 'global citizenship' and not only 'Australian citizenship' compared to the rest of the population (p.37). The relationship between the highly contested terms of 'belonging' and 'citizenship' is left undefined, which makes it difficult to make sense of these concepts.

As argued above, in both studies, the use of 'belonging' and 'citizenship' is not discussed in such a way that their meaning is clarified.

A third example of studies, which I also find ambiguous in terms of the analysis of 'belonging' is by Anderson and Taylor (2005); and Nordberg (2006). They use both 'identity', and 'citizenship' in association with 'belonging without clarifying their relationship.

In a study by Anderson and Taylor (2005) on the relevance of 'ethnicity' and 'race' to the struggles over 'national belonging' in Australia, they look at the relationship between 'white settler', 'migrant', and 'indigenous population' (p.460). When explicitly discussing the way 'citizenship', 'national identity', and 'national belonging' appear to operate, the authors argue that 'citizenship' is the main formal mark of 'national belonging' (p.474), and that 'whiteness' was privileged over other 'ethnicities' and was regarded as an indicator of the Australian 'national identity' through previous successive governments (p.466). The study shows that the relationship between the previously mentioned groups ('white settler', 'migrant', and 'indigenous population') is characterised by power relations, and that like other groups, 'white settlers' also struggle to define and redefine their positioning and to establish their spatial territories (pp.478-497).

Last, but not least Nordberg (2006) investigates the ways in which 'citizenship', 'identity' and 'belonging' are articulated among Roma in Finland (p.523). She defines

'citizenship' as a combination of various forms of 'belonging', such as 'sexual, cultural or diasporic citizenship' (p.526). The participants' narratives project feelings of 'belonging', exclusion and claims to Finnish citizenship (p.527). They express their sense of 'belonging' to the Finnish citizenship through language, religion and participation in war. However, they project their sense of exclusion on the basis of their everyday lives' encounters, which include disrespect, discrimination by people and institutions (p.537). The participants also call for a space where they can be empowered through, for example, education so that they can engage with the Finish society in a better way (p.537).

In this section, I have presented some studies on 'belonging'. As argued earlier, the use of this notion in the studies above is ambiguous in the sense that it is not theoretically nor conceptually 'defined', which makes it difficult to unpack. This is not to say that the way 'belonging' is used is wrong, because it is 'multidimensional' (Yuval-Davis *et al.* 2005, p.526), in that, categories such as 'identity', 'citizenship', and 'nation' can be closely related to it. However, its use in relation to these highly contested concepts in the studies presented above is left ambiguous. Therefore, it can be said that 'belonging' in these studies is used at face value.

In the following section, I discuss some other literature on 'belonging' and how far it is relevant to my study.

8.5.2. 'Belonging': Anthias (2006); Yuval Davis (2006); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008)

In this section I discuss the works of Anthias (2006); Yuval Davis (2006); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008). I begin the discussion with Anthias (2006); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008) due to their similar theorisation of the concept of 'belonging'. Following this, I discuss 'belonging' using Yuval Davis's analysis (2006), which offers more or less a different understanding.

Anthias (2006), defines 'belonging' in relation to experiences of inclusion and exclusion, which involve practices that consolidate people's bond and acceptance of each other or perpetuate divisions among them. These practices involve shared values, norms, feelings of acceptance, safety, membership, obligations, and social positions, such as

gender, age, and class (p.21). 'Belonging' according to Anthias (2006) is associated with social bonds and ties (ibid.), which inform people's feeling of 'belonging' or not 'belonging'. However, she criticises an imagined conception of 'belonging' which constructs social groups as fixed and naturally occurring. This understanding of 'belonging' which is manifested in essentialist discourses of 'integration' and 'social cohesion' serves to exclude others (p.20).

Anthias (2006) suggests four dimensions of 'belonging', which she suggests are interconnected. These dimensions revolve around our location in relation to the wider world, a person's sense of place as a result of his/her relationship with the social group, and 'belonging', and 'social inclusion' (p.21), 'belonging' and 'citizenship' in relation to having rights, and obligations; and 'belonging' as gendered processes where 'women carried the burden of the reproduction of national discourse, with men taking a different role' (p.22). The first three dimensions are, according to Anthias (2006), experiential and operate differently. This in the sense that the first dimension, being how we position ourselves in the wider social world come into realisation through experiences of 'social exclusion' rather than 'social inclusion' (ibid.); this yields the second dimension which is the perceptions we construct about our sense of place due to our interaction with social groups. Contrary to the first dimension, the third dimension: 'belonging' and social inclusion' emerges through experiences of 'social inclusion' which creates and consolidates claims of acceptance in society. (ibid.). These dimensions and how they inform the notion of 'belonging' are not unpacked in more detail in the work of Anthias (2006).

Therefore, even though this theorisation of 'belonging' rejects solid understanding of how people articulate their sense of 'belonging', it does not quite inform how 'belonging' is manifested in my study. This is because, in my understanding, it does not provide a thorough understanding of 'belonging' in terms of the dimensions discussed above or elaborate on this relationship. It is rather presented briefly, which makes it difficult to unpack the relevance of these dimensions and acquire a 'clearer' picture of 'belonging'. This is also because this theorisation of 'belonging' appears to frame it within social relations only, in that people's feelings in a place is dependent on how they are received in their social environment. This analysis of 'belonging' is different from how I interpret 'belonging' in my study as will be explained in the following section.

The second work I draw on is Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007). They define 'belonging' as processes which are crucial to how human relationships are practised (p.261). It is discussed in terms of the interrelated relationship between 'affirmation of belonging vs. retraction of the right to belong' (p.262). This is in the sense that this interactive relationship is mostly enacted through power relations, where 'belonging' is situated in the discourse of 'nationalism' and 'authenticity' (ibid.). This creates inclusivity of some people, and exclusion of others.

This contribution tackles the notion of 'belonging' in relation to the term 'migrant generations' to highlight relations of inclusion and exclusions between 'second-generation migrants' and the host country. The authors argue that this type of 'migrant' is an interesting case for the following reasons: they serve as a bridge between the migrant generation and the host country, they are a fertile terrain for research on the impact of long-term migration on both these individuals and the host society, and they are regarded as vulnerable in the eyes of the host country. (p. ibid.) They draw on other works which researched the experiences of 'second-generation migrants' in places such as the UK, Australia, and the US to consolidate their argument of the importance of researching the notion of 'migrant generations' in relation to 'belonging' (ibid., p.268). Therefore, this contribution by Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007), situates the notion of 'belonging' within relations of inclusion and exclusion between people. Similar to the previous contribution, this contribution does not inform how I discuss 'belonging', because it also situates this contested 'notion' in relation to humans' relations, whereby inclusion and exclusion relations are enacted, and it overlooks the notion of 'place' in how 'belonging' is constructed.

The third study is conducted by Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008), who define 'belonging' as a process where an individual feels an association with a group and that this process represents one way of explaining the relationship between the personal and the collective (p. 44). In other words, they 'define' 'belonging' in terms of a person's positioning of him/herself in relation to a group (p.46). They developed a theory of 'belonging' where this conception of it is manifested. In this theory they argue that 'identities' are 'internally and externally' constructed via our self-projection, and our positioning with others, and that we as individuals identify with groups of people differently

by taking different routes and understand our relationship with others in different ways (pp.45-46). They suggest that in this process of identifying with a group, the distinction between a person and an 'other' is not necessarily clearly demarcated and that difference between individuals does not necessarily lead to dissociation from each other. They rather suggest that 'individuals often express a sense of 'belonging' with another, while remaining outside the bounds of the group' (p.46). This means that the dynamics by which 'belonging' operates in terms of 'internal' and 'external' relations are multiple, ambivalent, and take different forms. This also means that the way difference functions between 'internal' and 'external' relations is not straightforward in the sense that, because there is difference between 'self' and 'other', it does not always mean that they do not feel a sense of 'belonging' towards each other.

Jones's and Krzyzanowski's (2008) understanding of 'belonging' resists an essentialist conception of this term, which promotes the idea that 'ethnicities' and 'external sameness' lead people to have a sense of 'belonging' towards each other. They call for an understanding of 'belonging' which acknowledges both people's choices in positioning themselves in relation to others, and external relationships, which involve others' perceptions of an individual and how far they accept and/or reject him/her into and/or from the group (p.46).

As far as my study is concerned, Jones and Krzyzanowski's (2008) understanding of 'belonging' does not capture the way it is manifested. Even though, they acknowledge both the individual's personal sense of place, and the role of other people in the individual's sense of 'belonging', they appear to conceptualise it in relation to the social element, only. This is in the sense that both 'internal' and 'external' relations, which involve an individual's own self-presentation, and how he/she situates him/herself into a group revolve around people. In other words, this conceptualisation of 'belonging' is socially oriented and does not, in my understanding, capture the relevance of other entities in projecting 'belonging', such as places, which is the way in which 'belonging' is articulated in my study.

Moving to Yuval-Davis's analysis (2006), she defines 'belonging' in terms of two facets: 'belonging' and 'politics of belonging' (p.197). She argues that 'belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling "at home"' (p.199), while 'politics of belonging' is

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about 'boundary maintenance' which involves perceiving people in terms of whether they are 'us' or 'them', that is, whether they 'belong' or not (p.204). The former understanding of 'belonging' sheds light on the personal side of people's attachments and identification by highlighting the role of emotions in the ways in which people articulate their 'belonging'. Yuval-Davis (2006) argues that people's emotions are defined and redefined throughout the course of their lives, and that these emotions become more prominent if their feelings towards how they identify are threatened, a tendency which for some people justifies sacrificing their lives and the lives of others so that their sense of who they are, and attachments continue to live (p.202). This worldview of 'belonging', which is mediated by people's emotions and attachments, brings the individual and the collective together in such a way that their connection with each other reinforces, constructs and reconstructs their narratives of their attachments and their feelings of 'belonging' (p.203).

This, therefore, brings to the centre how people's attachments are received by others where perceptions of inclusion and exclusion manifested in the categories of 'us' and 'them' become central. This represents the latter understanding of 'belonging' being the 'politics of belonging'.

Yuval-Davis (2006) argues that even though this binary relationship is characterised by difference among and between each group, that is, these groups are not homogeneous among themselves, the idea of 'us' and 'them', which imply some sort of 'sameness' is the basis upon which this relationship is formed (p.205). Power dynamics between the 'in-group' and the 'outgroup' become central in maintaining and reproducing the boundaries of 'belonging' within and outside the community, a relationship which is salient in the 'politics of belonging' (p.205). Also, according to Yuval-Davis (2006), 'politics of belonging' involve another type of struggle which involves defining and establishing 'what is involved in belonging, in being a member of a community, and of what specific social locations [such as gender, class, religion] and specific narratives of identity play in this' (p.205).

Having said this, even though this conceptualisation of 'belonging' tackles people's personal attachments to places, which is a central dimension in the way in which 'belonging' is discussed in my study, it is not discussed elaborately in Yuval-Davis's contribution (Antonsich, 2010). Rather, she discusses in more detail the 'politics of

belongings', which is a dimension of 'belonging' that is not quite relevant to the way in which 'belonging' is manifested in my study. In this regard, Antonsich (2010) argues that although Yuval-Davis (2006) intended to discuss both 'belonging' as a personal attachment, and the 'politics of belonging', she failed to address the former dimension, and rather focused on the latter (p.647). He also argues that in her discussion, the notion of place is overlooked (ibid., p.647).

To summarise this section, I have discussed the notion of 'belonging' based on the works of Anthias (2006); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007); Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008); and Yuval-Davis (2006). As argued above, the first three contributions do not capture the way in which 'belonging' is manifested in my study because their conceptualisation of 'belonging' is situated within humans' relations, in that it does not accommodate other entities, such as places, which is the angle from which 'belonging' is manifested in my study. These places refer to the countries the co-participants come from, Britain, and other places they feel connection with. In the fourth contribution, the analysis of the relationship between 'feeling home', and 'belonging' is not discussed in detail. The author rather focuses on the 'politics of belonging', which is not quite relevant to my study. Therefore, unlike the studies cited above, I argue that 'belonging' in my study is discussed from a different dimension which is the relevance of 'places' to which the co-participants construct as 'home'.

In the following section, I discuss 'belonging' in relation to this dimension using Antonsich's (2010) analysis, as it has close relevance to my study.

8.5.3. The notion of 'home' and its relationship with 'belonging': Antonsich (2010) analysis

In section 1.3., 1.6., 1.11., as well as in the summary of section 4.3., I have argued that the way the concept of 'home' is used in my study refers more or less to two dimensions of 'belonging' which are discussed by Antonsich (2010). These dimensions are represented in people's personal attachment and emotions towards places to which they refer as 'home' ('place belongingness'), and in the discursive ways in which they respond to social and spatial inclusion and exclusion, such as by claiming and/or rejecting inclusion and exclusion ('politics of belonging') (Antonsich, 2010).

This analysis of 'belonging' is not completely different from the previous works because it builds on them, but it suggests a more detailed analysis of the personal dimension of 'belonging' compared to, for example, Yuval-Davis's (2006) analysis (Antonsich, 2010, pp. 645-646).

8.5.3.1. 'Belonging as feeling "at home" (place-belongingness)'

In this dimension, which is of most relevance to my study, Antonsich (2010) argues 'the notion of belonging as an emotional feeling of being at home in a place is not frequently analysed by scholars' (p.647). He explains the notion of 'home' as a symbolic space of familiarity, comfort, security and emotional attachment (p.646). He also argues that feeling 'home' has different meanings to different people. It can be used to refer to one's own house, neighbourhood, community, and national homeland (p.646). This view on the multiplicity of 'belonging' is also supported by Anthias (2006, p.20); Yuval-Davis (2006, p.199); Skrbiš, Baldassar and Poynting (2007, p.263); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008, pp.45-46).

Antonsich (2010) identifies five factors which, according to him, can contribute to people's feelings of 'place-belongingness', which are: auto-biography, relational, cultural, economic, and legal (p. 647). Auto-biography refers to a person's place of birth, memories of him/herself and their ancestors, as well as the continuous presence of family members in that place (ibid., p. 647). He explains relational as the personal and social relations that sustain a person socially in a social environment. He argues that these relations are relative

in that, there are dense ties between, for example, family members and friends, and there are occasional interactions with, for instance, foreigners. This variation makes a person more or less attached emotionally to a place (ibid., p.647). Cultural factors are explained in terms of shared language and meaning making, such as gestures and signs, as well as shared habits, traditions, such as food and religion (ibid., p.648). Sharing these socio-cultural elements reinforces a sense of 'belonging' to a place where these elements are shared. Economic factors are, according to Antonsich (2010) crucial in people's sense of financial stability, as well as in their claim of 'belonging' to a place (p.648). The last factor proposed is legal factors and is explained in terms of 'citizenship and residence' (p.648). Antonsich (2010) construes these terms as central elements in making an individual feel security and subscribe to the idea that having a 'legal status' contributes of one's feelings of 'belonging' (p.648).

Antonsich (2010) argues that if a person lacks a feeling of 'place-belongingness', it does not necessarily mean that he or she is excluded. It can be explained as loneliness and isolation. However, this does not completely exclude that 'place-belongingness' can be mediated by power relations, which create inclusionary and exclusionary relations (p.649).

8.5.3.2. 'Politics of belonging'

Antonsich (2010) defines the 'politics of belonging' as 'a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion' (p.646). He argues that feeling 'home' is not merely personal but is also social. This is in the sense that an individual's feeling of acceptance or rejection by his/her social environment facilitates or jeopardises this individual's feeling of 'place-belongingness'. Antonsich (2010), suggests that these two dimensions of 'belonging' being people's personal attachments, and the way they are received by their social environment should find a way to co-exist (p.649). Therefore, the 'politics of belonging' constitutes two opposing sides: one side which claims and asserts 'belonging', and another side which has the power to judge, evaluate and grant 'belonging' (p.650). Antonsich's (2010) understanding of 'belonging' where the personal and the social overlap converges to an extent with Yuval-Davis (2006); and Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008) discussed above. Although these

scholars' conceptualisation of 'belonging' differ to an extent from each other, as explained above, there is convergence between their views which lies in the idea that people's self-presentation, their personal attachments, and how they are received by their social environment interrelate. In other words, the personal and the social are not independent of each other, and they both inform individuals' feeling of 'belonging'.

In sections 7.2., 1.3., and 1.11., I have explained the relevance of Antonsich (2010) theory of 'belonging' to my study in general. I further discuss this relevance in more detail here. The relevance of Antonsich's (2010) analysis of 'belonging' to my study lies mostly in the first dimension, which is people's personal and emotional attachment to places manifested in the notion of 'home' ('place-belongingness'). This is because as argued in chapter one, chapter four, and in this chapter, the co-participants' sense of 'belonging' is projected in terms of places, to which they refer as 'home'. While the five factors of 'belonging' (auto-biography, relational, cultural, economic and legal) identified by Antonsich (2010), can be relevant to my study, these factors are not the focus of how I interpret 'belonging'. I rather examine this notion in terms of how the co-participants construe it, not in terms of why they 'belong' the way they do, and what factors contribute to their sense of 'belonging'. In other words, factors and circumstances are omnipresent in the ways in which the co-participants construct their sense of 'belonging', however, I look at the way it is talked about, rather than what specifically causes their sense of 'belonging'.

Nevertheless, in section 4.4., I have discussed the co-participants' sense of 'belonging' in relation to their profession where the latter plays a central role in the way they position themselves in both Britain and where they come from. I approach this highly important relationship from the perspective that the co-participants' 'belonging' is multiple and constantly negotiated. The content of section 4.4., as well as section 4.5., where I have discussed the interaction between the co-participants' areas of specialism, and their personal experiences in articulating who they are are beyond the scope of the study. This is because as argued previously they involve the co-participants' experiences in their professional setting which is not what the study is about.

Therefore, in my study the relationship between the two dimensions of 'belonging' presented by Antonsich (2010) differs to an extent from the way in which he discusses it. While in his work the personal and the social are explicitly connected, in that an individual's

personal sense of 'place-belongingness' is also mediated by the perceptions of the social environment ('politics of belonging'), in my study the second dimension of 'belonging'; 'politics of belonging', represented in resisting discrimination is not explicitly referred to. It is rather alluded to in the way in which the co-participants use 'home'. This is in the sense that they situate themselves in various places to which they refer as 'home', which by implication resists perceptions in terms of 'either/or' and questioning of whether they 'belong' or not, which were more salient in the previous chapter, as well as in chapter three. This conception of 'belonging' manifests the critical cosmopolitan view on the question of 'to belong or not to belong?' (Beck, 2003, p.45), which acknowledges people's multiple allegiances and positionings in the wider world and their claims to 'belong' to various places in various ways, regardless of where they come from.

In this section, I have discussed the notion of 'belonging' based on the contribution of Antonsich (2010), which has close relevance to my work. As argued above, 'belonging' in my study is manifested in terms of the notion of 'home', a term which is used by the co-participants to refer to Britain, the places they come from, and other places they feel connection with. I interpret this use of 'home' as 'hybrid' in that, the co-participants merge their feeling of 'home' towards various places. This interpretation of 'belonging', which indicates that it is multiple and emergent, represents more or less one dimension of 'belonging', which is 'place-belongingness'. The way this dimension is manifested alludes to the second dimension of 'belonging', which is 'politics of belonging' in such a way that the co-participants' implicitly respond to perceptions by 'some white British' people in terms of whether they 'belong' or not, and their categorisation within the binary categories of 'either/or', which is salient in the previous chapter, and chapter three.

8.6. 'Hybridity'

In chapter four, I have argued that the co-participants' sense of 'belonging' is 'hybrid' in the sense that they use the concept of 'home' to refer to different places, which are Britain, where they come from, and other places they feel connection with. The way in which they situate themselves in these places is by merging their feelings of 'home' towards these 'separate' places, which indicates that their sense of 'belonging' is multiple and emergent.

Therefore, the term 'hybridity', which is a central aspect of cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2006, p.33), refers to this mélange which is negotiated without necessarily drawing boundaries between these places.

In a similar vein, 'hybridity' is explained by scholars as a process which involves different positionings whereby different elements are combined at the same time in such a way that people 'belong' to several 'homes' at the same time (Bhabha, 1994, p.5, p.26; Hall, 1995, p.529; Bhabha, 1996, pp.54-55; Qureshi and Moores, 1999, p.312, p.327; Karla, Kaur, and Hutnyk, 2005, p. 17, p. 73, p.88; Delanty, 2006, p.33; Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.5; and Wetherell, 2010, p. 18).

In this section, I have explained the relevance of the notion of 'hybridity' which I interpret in association with the co-participants' use of the concept of 'home', which they use to refer to various places as evidenced throughout. In the following section I discuss the relevance of nonhuman entities, such as naming, and death, in the ways in which the co-participants' articulate their sense of who they are.

8.7. Non-human categories

In sections 7.2., 1.11., 1.6., I have briefly explained the relevance of critical posthuman theory (Braidotti, 2013, 2019), to my study. In this section I further explain this relevance in more detail. This section is a continuous discussion of the way the co-participants construct their understanding of who they are beyond 'self' and 'other' relations. The section revolves around the significance of non-human categories, such as names, death, and food, which I have discussed in chapter five. I use a critical posthuman perspective (Braidotti, 2013, 2019) to further make sense of the relationship between the co-participants' sense of who they are and these non-human entities. The co-participants interact with the non-human entities which they drew upon in chapter five in a way which suggests freedom in such a way that the conflicted relationship between them, and 'some white British' people concerning who they are and on what basis, which is salient in the previous chapter and chapter three, tends to 'fade'. In other words, the omnipresence of 'the other' alongside the categories of 'race' and 'accent' in the way they have talked about themselves do not seem to be part of how the co-participants make sense of themselves,

except Alex. Yet, overall, compared to the previous chapter and chapter three, the occurrence of the 'other', 'race' and 'accent' is almost non-existent in this chapter, as well as in chapters four and five.

8.7.1. The second interpretation of 'identity': human to non-human relations

In sections 1.3., 1.11., and 7.4., I have argued that 'identity' is interpreted in two different but related ways. The first interpretation, which I have already discussed in the previous chapter deals with the processes of 'identity' construction where the perceptions of 'some white British' people, whom I also refer to as 'the other', are omnipresent in the ways in which the coparticipants construe their 'identities'. In other words, the discussion of 'identity' in the previous chapter focused on 'self' and 'other' relationship. The second interpretation of 'identity' which is the focus of this section moves away from this social relationship and rather moves towards shedding light on the significance of non-human entities in the everyday lives of the co-participants. This manifestation of 'identity' in relation to non-human categories is represented in figure 7.1. in the square on the right side (non-human entities).

As explained throughout I use critical posthuman theory (Braidotti, 2013; 2019) to further make sense of the relevance of non-human elements in my study. In my understanding, this theory completes the use of critical cosmopolitan theory in the sense that it focuses on nonhuman entities and brings to the centre their relevance in our lives, instead of focusing on 'self' and 'other' relations only. In this regard, Auger and Dervin (2021) argue for the need to think about our intercultural encounters beyond human subjects, and to accommodate interactions between living objects and non-living objects.

'Posthumanist thought is a fairly broad, and… chaotic field' (Pennycook, 2018, p.445). As already explained in the previous chapter, in section 7.2., it is explained as posthuman, which is a critique of a 'Eurocentric' structure of the world, which can be said to originate from the enlightenment century, which is 'Western- centred' in the sense that 'the West' defines the world (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 67-68; and Braidotti, 2019, pp.31-32). Critical posthuman theory is also explained as post-anthropocentrism, which is a critique of species hierarchy (ibid., 2013; ibid., 2019). This view of the world which interrogates the separation

between 'humans, and other animals, humans and artefacts, humans and nature' (Pennycook, 2018, p.445), is manifested in my study in terms of the significance of non-human entities in the way the coparticipants make sense of their 'identities'. This is to say that the entities of names, news, death, and food are central resources through which the co-participants project their sense of who they are and maintain ties with both the places they come from and Britain.

The emphasis on human to non-human relations in the ways in which we interact with the world and make sense of ourselves is salient in the works of non-essentialist researchers, such as Kell (2015); Pennycook (2018); Badwan and Hall (2020); Ferri (2020); and Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist (2020). While they focus on material entities, such as objects, I mostly use their contributions to discuss non-material elements, such as naming and death. This is because their arguments of the relevance of material entities in our lives and that these entities are a central part in our make-up, in my interpretation, can be extended to the categories which are highly salient in chapter five (naming, news, death, and food). This allows for more engaging research by adding another dimension to the discussion of non-human categories.

8.7.2. 'Identity' is not all about 'self' and human 'other' relationship

Ferri (2020) attempts to subvert, what appears to be an established understanding of intercultural encounters in terms of to the binary relationship between 'self' and 'other' by suggesting another understanding of the concept of 'the other', whereby difference is conceived as a source of 'becoming' (p.408), rather than a resource for conflict and enacting power relations. She argues that, often, difference in intercultural communication is employed to 'demarcate [and reinforce] cultural difference of the other [on the basis of] nationality and language' (p.409). This conception of 'the other' which is situated within power dynamics between 'a powerful self and an essentialised cultural other' (ibid.), is, according to Ferri (2020), a 'Western' construe, which aims at defining the world from a 'Eurocentric' viewpoint, (ibid.).

In offering a new understanding of 'the other', she uses a critical posthuman theory and post-structural feminism, which emphasises subjectivity in the ways in which we

connect to the world. This new understanding of 'the other', which goes beyond the binary relationship between 'self' and 'other', involves viewing difference as a productive factor based on the experiences of 'minoritarian' or 'rhizomatic subjectivities' embedded in feminism and antiracism, rather than a factor of enacting power relations (Ferri 2020, p.410). It advocates an equal relation to human and non-human others by destabilising hierarchies, binary relationships, and acknowledging 'minoritarian' or 'outsider' views, which is also referred to as 'rhizomatic subjectivities' (ibid., pp.412-413). Subjectivity, which is a central aspect of this conceptualization of 'the other' emerges in the active engagement with the world, as such new meanings, purposes and connections come into manifestation. Based on this rhizomatic understanding of 'the other', Ferri (2020) argues for expanding our resources of how we relate to the world to include artefacts, video, artwork and auto-ethnographic narratives (p.415).

Therefore, 'the other' in this new understanding of the intercultural is not peculiar to human relations nor is framed within power relations in such a way that difference is conceived as a means of reiterating the powerful 'self' and the framed 'other'. 'The other' is rather used to refer to both humans and non-humans, and they both enjoy equal consideration in such a way the intercultural is enacted 'from the perspective of new subjectivities, outsider identities, and from sites of minoritarian expression' (ibid., p.416). This view of the world poses some methodological challenges, like moving away from a linear narrative to acknowledging multiplicity of subjects, power imbalance, and inequality, in such a way that interrogating the long-established idea of accepted dichotomies means rethinking our collaboration in reiterating power practices (ibid., p.413).

In a similar vein to Ferri (2020) in terms of acknowledging a multiplicity of subjects and the relevance of entities, other than humans in our make-up, Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist (2020) argue for an understanding of 'identity' which is dissociated from an anthropocentric view of the world, whereby the human subject is the centre element of existence who gives meaning to life (p.397). This understanding of 'identity' interrogates its human-made nature, as well as refuses to frame it within binary relations where boundaries and power relations between human relations, and human to non-human relations define the way these relations operate. Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist (2020),

rather view 'identity' as 'vibrant', unpredictable, and they promote its interconnectedness with 'organic and non-organic life' (ibid.) by shacking hierarchy of species. In doing so, Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist (2020), organise the discussion of vibrant 'identity' around five axes: becomings, relationality, language, agencements, and affect (p.398).

The concept of becomings is explained in terms of a constant change of life as a result of continuous interrelationships between 'organisms' (ibid., pp.399-400). The authors reject the understanding of 'identity', which is anthropocentric in nature, as fixed, predictable, humanmade, and located within binary relations. They argue for a conceptualisation of 'identity' which liberates it from this essentialised framing, by promoting a multiplicity of subjectivities through embracing minority views and interconnections with multiple others; humans, animals, objects, and so forth. This view of 'identity' as vibrant seeks to develop 'rhizomatically' and interact with different environments (ibid., p.399). Relationality refers to interrogating our subjectivity and our complicity in reinforcing the idea of humans being the centre of existence. Relationality in the posthuman perspective emphasises our interconnectedness 'within the universe as a whole: relations to ourselves, to others, to animals, to machines, and to the planet' (ibid., p.401). Hence, it acknowledges the equality of species and moves away from situating them within power dynamics; this is by viewing them as a 'productive factor' (Ferri, 2020) and premises for new avenues for movement and change (Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist, 2020, p. 401).

Language through posthuman lenses is not exclusively related to humans. This is to say that language is understood as an entity which also pertains to, for example, artefacts. As such, agency is not pertinent to humans, only, but extends also to the material world. This understanding of language destabilises the assumption that meaning-making is exclusively human-made, and instead suggests news ways of engaging with communication by decentring the idea that it is exclusive to humans. Also, this view of language invites us to rethink our relationship with objects, in the sense that it is a two-way relationship whereby we give meaning to objects, and they make us happen (Kell, 2015) by 'contribut[ing] to our intercultural living and our identity becomings' (Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist, 2020, p.402).

Agencement, which is a key element in the understanding of vibrant 'identity' (ibid.

p.403) rejects the separation between matter and organism, and instead acknowledges the agency of these entities in the sense that they are a constituent of our relationship with the world (ibid.). Affect, which is the last axis around which vibrant 'identity' is organised focuses on feelings and emotions in how 'identity' operates. This is to say that entities such as objects can be attributed 'anthropocentric qualities' by becoming 'emotional companions' that we feel connection with and project our 'identities' through (ibid., p.404).

8.7.3. Drawing connections with my study

The contributions in the section above converge more or less with my study. The new conceptualisation of 'the other' by Ferri (2020), which suggests rethinking human relations to different others, such as animals, objects, things, women, slaves, and so on, (Pennycook, 2018, p.449), converges to a greater or lesser extent with my argument throughout, that the ways in which the co-participants construe their 'identity' is not exclusively in relation to 'the other', who is a human entity, but also extends to non-human categories, such as names and food.

While Ferri (2020) uses the term 'the other' to refer to relations between humans, as well as to relations between humans and non-humans, in my study, I use the term 'the other' to refer to the co-participants' social environment; 'some white British' people, and I use the terms nonhuman categories, non-human entities, and non-human elements to refer to other entities, such as names, death, and food. Also, the work of Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist (2020) on vibrant 'identity' is of great relevance to my study in the sense that, like (Ferri, 2020), they reject locating the notion of 'identity' within binary relations and limiting its understanding to human relations only. They rather liberate this emergent and dynamic term from an essentialised anthropocentric perspective by advocating a multiplicity of subjects.

Overall, the axes suggested by Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet, and Quist (2020) in their discussion of vibrant 'identity', can be used to emphasise my argument that 'identity' in my study is not exclusively limited to the co-participants' perception of themselves and the ways in which they believe they are perceived by their social environment, which is characterised by conflicted perceptions of who the co-participants are, where the categories

of 'race' and 'accent' are salient. 'Identity', based on the data in chapter five, is also interpreted in relation to non-human entities in such a way that its understanding moves away from limiting it within 'self' and other' relations and moves towards acknowledging the relevance of non-human categories, such as names, news, death, and food.

This understanding of non-human entities which is significant in the co-participants' lives as these categories operate as a means through which the co-participants project their sense of who they are and maintain ties with the places they come from and Britain, in my interpretation, brings to centre the idea of 'things make people happen' (Kell, 2020, p.442), which I relate to emotions in 'sticky' places (Ahmed, 2014). The idea of 'things make people happen' (Kell, 2015, p.442), sheds light on how people interact and intra-act with entities such as places, and artefacts, which can be in similar or different ways.

Like the previous contributions, this conceptualisation of 'things' and their interconnectedness with individuals' make-up, offers new insights into emergent relations between individuals and 'things', by destabilising the orientation that communication resides solely in language, as well as the only agents are humans. This is in the sense that the idea of 'things make people happen' (ibid.) can be said to be manifested in the ways in which we, as individuals engage with objects by, for example, turning them into something else, creatively making other objects as a result of our interaction with previous objects, and using objects creatively. This interaction and intra-action with these entities make individuals happen by, for instance, having a sense of accomplishment, self-esteem and status among their peers, which may also make other people happen, such as us, researchers, by enabling us to observe and discuss these relations and contextualise them.

Some examples of this human to non-human relations and how 'things make people happen' are from Kell's (2015) field work in Tanzania, where a boy created a sugarcane from a large stick of sugar cane, which had some sort of status among his friends, and a group of children being 'nudged' by the photo of the sugarcane, which Kell showed them, to create their own objects. Another example of how 'things make people happen' is taken from Badwan's and Hall's (2020) work on the use of places, emotions and materiality to understand how 'things me people happen' (ibid.). The researchers argue that the presence of one of them with the participant Samia in the Curry Mile in Manchester, a place which Samia constructs as 'home' due to a perceived similarity with the country she comes from

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and inter/intra-acting with it, allowed the researcher to understand what Samia could not express in words. This situation of sharing a significant location for Samia and inter/intra-acting with it, made the researcher happen by reflecting on her own childhood memories and her social class positioning in the world.

Overall, this idea of 'things make people happen' ties in with the contributions above, as well as with my argument. This is in a sense that there is emphasis on the interconnectedness between human to non-human relations in our make-up, as well as an interrogation of an anthropocentric view of these relations, which situates humans above all other entities; this is by moving away from framing humans and non-human categories within binary relations, and instead moving towards emphasising multiple and agentive subjectivities.

Therefore, regardless of the different dimensions used in the contributions above to discuss human to non-human relations; that is, focusing on the role of objects and/or places in individuals' lives without necessarily including other entities which are salient in my study, such as names and death, the studies discussed above are relevant to each other, as well as to my study. This is because of their message which destabilises a hierarchy of species and suggests new ways of findings meaning and relating to the world, by advocating for the centrality of non-human entities in our make-up.

This focus on non-human entities in the ways in which individuals engage with the world, and how they situate themselves in it, in my understanding, can be said to connect with the work of Ahmed (2014), in which she focuses on the way interaction between individuals, objects and spaces invokes emotions which are attached to objects and spaces to make them 'sticky and saturated with affect' (p.11). Ahmed (2014) focuses on what emotions do, rather than what emotions are, wherein she argues that emotions are not static, and they emerge as a result of interaction with objects, and that they do not exist 'simply in the subject or the object' (p.6). For Ahmed (2014) objects do not necessarily refer to entities with material existence, in that they can be imagined or a memory, for example. She also suggests that emotions are about something, which makes them intentional. This 'aboutness' of emotions, Ahmed (2014) argues, communicates a position towards the world and the way we understand it (p.7). I use this understanding of emotions which result from individuals' relationships with objects to briefly highlight the manifestation of emotions in

my study. This in the sense that these emotions make objects 'sticky' and serve as an engine which influences why people do things the way that they do them.

As argued in chapter two, section 2.11., emotions were omnipresent in the ways in which the co-participants have talked about themselves. It was a common category among all of them. I investigate this term in relation to the non-human entities which the co-participants have talked about which serve as ties through which they maintain connection with the places they come from and Britain. These entities represented in names, news, death, and food, in my interpretation, invoke emotions and value which can be sensed from their significance in the co-participants' lives. This in a way that these non-human categories symbolise the places the co-participants connect with. Illustrations of this from the data, are the co-participants' choice to give names which 'belong' to the countries they come from, instead of English names, and their endeavour to maintain this kind of names which serves as a tie through their children. Another illustration is the co-participants' virtual presence in the places they come from through prioritising news about these places and participating in voting. A third illustration is the coparticipants' choice of various places in which they want to be buried or their ashes to be scattered, which reflects their sense of who they are and sense of place in the world. The fourth entity through the co-participants' 'identities' and how they situate themselves in the wider world is expressed is food in that, they use it to project interrelationship between the places they come from and Britain.

Therefore, there is interaction and intra-action with these categories in such a way that they are a constituent of the co-participants' 'identities', and they acquire value and prominence in such a way that the way they are manifested converges with a posthuman perspective on human to non-human relations, this is by acknowledging their interconnectedness and moving away from humans' superiority over other entities.

In this section, I have discussed the relevance of human to non-human relations in my study in light of some relevant literature. The role of this section is to emphasise the relevance of nonhuman entities in my study and to reiterate my argument that 'identity' is not exclusively social, in the sense that the ways in which the co-participants construct their 'identities' is not only in relation to their social environment, but also in relation to other entities, such as the non-human entities I have discussed. Also, the role of this section is to suggest that there is a sense of freedom in the ways in which the co-participants interact

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with non-human entities in the sense that the tension of who the co-participants are and on what basis because their perception by 'some white British' people through the lens of 'race' and 'accent', discussed in chapter three and seven, tends to 'fade' the more they move away from talking about others' perceptions of them. Therefore, I argue that the categories of 'race' and 'accent' appear to be central only when the co-participants talk about the ways in which 'some white British' people perceive them, and these categories become decentred when the co-participants move away from 'self' and 'other' relations, and 'new' categories emerge.

8.8. Criticism of constructivist approach in the light of posthuman perspective

According to Braidotti (2011; 2013), social constructivism is a dualistic approach, which conceives the world in terms of oppositional relations and assumes a dualistic relationship between 'nature' and 'culture'. This is a view which she resists by arguing for nature-culture continuum. I appreciate Braidotti's criticism, however, I attempt to respond to this by arguing that my use of constructivism is not as restrictive as Braidotti claims. In my study, as has been shown throughout, there is a focus on the ways in which the co-participants construct their 'identities' and the ways they are constructed by others wherein there is conflict and power relations, not because the constructivist approach I use assumes so, but because of the nature of this relationship between the co-participants and their social environment. Also, this study goes beyond these 'self' and 'other' relations to examining the ways in which the co-participants interact with non-human entities, such as places, naming and food, in such a way that the conflict between the co-participants and their social environment becomes almost non-existent. In this human to non-human relations, there is emphasis on the relevance of non-human entities in individuals' make-up by moving away from hierarchy of species, and instead moving towards acknowledging equal consideration between individuals, living, and non-living entities.

Therefore, constructivism in my study acknowledges people's subjectivities and multiplicity of views about their relations towards each other, and towards the wider world, which by implication includes entities, such as non-human relations, and does not necessarily claim a dualistic view of the world unless it is manifested empirically.

As far as a nature-culture continuum is concerned, the constructivist approach I use in my study responds specifically to the relationship between 'culture' and 'nature' proposed by positivist and post-positivist research. This is by rejecting the claim that there is one 'reality' and one 'truth', and that 'the truth' is 'out there' independent of the researcher. This separation between the researcher and the social context he/she studies found in positivist and postpositivist research apprehends the world quantitatively and engenders clear-cut definitions of the world and the ways in which people interact with it. In other words, the constructivist approach I use rejects framing people's relations and their environment under the terms of hegemony, sameness, and prediction, and rather destabilises this positivist and post-positivist worldview by promoting subjectivity and multiplicity.

Having said this, because constructivism rejects positivist and post-positivist view of culture-nature continuum, it does not mean that the former worldview declines the relationship between 'culture' and nature overall.

To summarise this section, I have responded to the criticism of social constructivism by the critical posthumanist scholar (Braidotti, 2011; 2013). This is by clarifying that constructivism rejects the particular understanding of 'nature' and 'culture' which is proposed by the positivist and post-positivist approach wherein there is a separation between the researcher and the social context they study, because of the belief that the 'truth' is 'out there'. This essentialist manner of researching people which the constructivist approach I use rejects, is rooted in a 'Western' view of the world, which creates boundaries between people and other species. Therefore, I suggest that constructivism should not be framed as a dualistic mode of thinking in absolute terms in the sense that, because it rejects nature-culture continuum proposed by positivist and post-positivist research, it does means that it refutes the relationship between 'nature' and 'culture' overall. This objection is manifested in my study in that, throughout I have argued for an understanding of the co-participants' 'identities' and 'belonging' in terms of 'and', 'and', and rejected an understanding of these open questions in terms of 'either, or' (Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet and Quist, 2020, p.399).

8.9. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the notions of 'culture', 'integration', 'belonging', and the relevance of non-human categories in 'identity' construction in light of the literature. Based on the discussion above, I argue that 'culture' and 'integration' are dynamic terms in such a way that their meaning is highly subjective, constantly reinterpreted, and not fixed. I also argue again that, unlike the previous chapter, and chapter three, in this chapter the omnipresence of 'some white British' people, as well as the centrality of 'race' and 'accent' in the ways in which the co-participants talk about themselves tends to 'fade'. This is in a sense that they project their sense of 'belonging' in relation to the notion of 'home' which they use to refer to many places; the places they come from, Britain and other places they feel connection with. This use of 'home', which I interpret as 'hybrid', represents one dimension of 'belonging' ('place belongingness'), Antonsich (2010), and it alludes to the second dimension, which is 'politics of belonging', (ibid.), in a way that by claiming multiple places as 'home', there is resistance to categorisation in terms of 'either, or', which was central in the previous chapter and chapter three. Furthermore, I argue that non-human categories, such as names, death and, food are significant categories in the construction of 'identity' as such, this highly contested term is not limited to 'self' and other' relations, but also is constructed in connection with human to nonhuman relations which are central in my study.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions and implications

9.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have introduced the research, presented the methodology, discussed the data based on my own interpretation, then discussed the data in light of the literature. In this chapter, I conclude my thesis by reiterating what I suggest to be key aspects of this study. In doing this, I will start by restating the focus of the study. Then, I will answer the research questions by summarizing the key findings and my interpretations of these findings, which have been developed in chapter three, four and five, and further discussed in light of the literature in chapter six, seven and eight. Next, I will present what I believe to be the main contributions to knowledge which have emerged from the findings of the study. After this, I will provide a reflective account of what I have learnt from conducting the research. some reflections about what triggered this research by discussing how the study emerged and how it ended, as well as by briefly restating my positionality. Following this, I will highlight limitations of the study and future avenues based on the discussion in the previous sections in this chapter. Finally, I wrap up the chapter by providing final reflections.

It is important to remind the reader that this study has focused on the personal everyday lives of a group of high-status professionals, who happen to be academics. They are well-established male and female university lecturers who come from 'different national background'. I have examined the ways in which these people, whom I have throughout referred to as co-participants, construct their sense of 'identity' and 'belonging' in their personal everyday lives, *outside* of the context of academia. In other words, this study is *not* about the experiences of this group of professionals in their work environment, i.e., in the university context, it is rather about their sense of 'identity' and 'belonging' in their personal everyday lives when their professional status as academics is not highlighted.

The study is situated within the broad and interdisciplinary field of intercultural communication. Therefore, I have drawn on the contributions of non-essentialist scholars such as Dervin, Holliday, Ros i Solé, and Woodin. I have also referred to the contributions of other non-essentialist researchers from other fields such as Delanty, Hall, and Wodak.

As explained in chapter one, section 1.3., and chapter seven, section 7.1., the reason this study is situated in the field of intercultural communication is because, regardless of the co-participants' 'cultural background', it examines the way they interact with the world around them and how they enact and articulate their 'identities' and belonging' as a result of this interaction.

9.2. Major findings: answering the research questions

This section brings together the main findings of the study, which are based on the discussion with the co-participants about the ways in which they construct their 'identities' and 'belonging'. These findings answer the following research questions which I have presented in chapter one, section 1.2.:

1. In what way(s) do the co-participants construct their sense of 'identities' and 'belonging'?'.
2. What is the role of non-human categories in the ways in which the co-participants make sense of their 'identities'?

9.2.1. Interrogating my views of the research co-participants

In answering the first research question, 'in what way(s) do the co-participants construct their 'identities' and 'belonging'?', I devote this section and the following one to answer how 'identity' is constructed. Section 9.2.3., answers the ways in which 'belonging' is constructed.

In chapter six, I have clarified my position in relation to situating my research within a body of academic literature which refers to groups of high-status professionals, including academics in the UK who have come from 'different national backgrounds' using terms such as 'expatriates', '(im)migrants', 'international university lecturers', which I find problematic. I have rejected positioning my study within this existing body of literature which uses these terms without interrogating them, and rather adopts them by attributing these labels, which are politically loaded, to the research participants.

My stance towards these studies emerged from the data of my study in such a way that, as explained in section 2.2.1, before meeting the co-participants and analysing the data, I

used to apply 'outsider categories' (Woodin, 2016, p.108). This is the sense that I used to refer to my research participants as 'long-term residents', and '(im)migrants'.

This is mainly because I did not want to foreground the term academics so that the audiences do not assume that my study is about academics and in the university context.

Therefore, I opted for easy definitions or labels of my research participants. However, after analysing the data, the labels I attributed to the coparticipants, as well as other labels found in the literature became visibly irrelevant as the coparticipants did not refer to themselves using these labels or other labels, which can be used to refer to them.

As argued in the summary of section 3.4., which draws on the interviews with Jordan, Kyle, and Eli, as well as in the conclusion of chapter three (3.5.), section 6.1., and the conclusion of chapter six (6.3.) which draw on the data in chapter three, the labels used by the co-participants, such as 'foreigner' and 'not British', do not appear to be the co-participants' own construction of themselves. They rather appear to be a construction of the way they believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people. Therefore, I have not used the above labels, as well as I have moved away from imposing my own categorisation of the co-participants by not labelling them, and I have instead adopted the term 'co-participants' which refers to their role in my study. This is in the sense that, as argued in chapter one, section 1.1., and chapter two, section, 2.2.1., the knowledge of this thesis is co-constructed by them, as co-participants, and me as a researcher. Having said this, I argue that we, as researchers, need to rethink our perceptions of the research participants and the way we present them by letting their self-perceptions in terms of what labels they attribute to themselves, if they do, and how come into the centre.

9.2.2. The processes involved in 'identity' construction in relation to 'self' and 'other' relations: the centrality of 'race' and 'accent'

The co-participants construct their sense of 'identity' in two different, but related ways as shown in the data chapters, three and five, and the literature chapters, seven and eight. The first construction of this 'contested term' (Robertson, 1991, p.71), which I have discussed in chapter three and seven based on the interview with, for example, Alex, Kyle, and Sam, concerns the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves, as well as the ways in

which they believe they are perceived by people who I interpret as 'some white British' people, and also refer as 'the other'. This interpretation of 'identity' connects with the interpretation by Storry and Childs (2013), who argue that 'identity' might have two sides in that, it concerns 'who people take for themselves to be and who others take them to be' (pp.4-5). I interpret this 'self' and 'other' relations in relation to processes whereby each party manifests resistance to each other's construction of the co-participants.

In other words, 'the other' is omnipresent in the ways in which 'identity' is constructed in relation to 'self' and 'other' relations. This is in the sense that the former appears to have a say about who the co-participants are, and whether they 'belong' to the UK or not, where the categories of 'race' and 'accent' are central in how the co-participants are perceived. This conflicted relationship is manifested in terms of the processes of relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance, and agency. These processes which are based on my interpretation of the data in chapter three, manifest the ways in which the co-participants, and 'some white British' people respond to each other and the positions they take to reinforce and assert their opinion of each other, as well as of themselves.

In this 'self' and 'other' relations, which emphasise the social nature of 'identity' the notion of 'race' and 'accent' are salient to the co-participants. This is to say that, according to the data, they are perceived by 'some white British' people through the lens of their physical traits, such as skin colour, alongside their 'accent'. As such, they are discriminated against and dissociated from claiming to be 'British' and 'belonging' to Britain, because they are not 'British'. Thus, based on this data, 'British national identity' in my study is highly associated with 'race' and 'accent', concepts which are recurrent when 'the other' is referred to by the co-participants when they talk about the ways in which their 'identities' are constructed by their social environment.

However, the categories of 'race' and 'accent' 'fade' when the co-participants move away from talking about perceptions of them by 'some white British' people, and 'new' categories, such as the notion of 'home', naming and food, emerge when the co-participants move towards projecting the ways in which they situate themselves in the wider world. This is to say that 'race' and 'accent' appear to be relevant to the co-participants when they project the ways in which they believe they are perceived by 'the other'; however, these categories become invisible to them, and 'new' categories emerge when they no longer

refer to 'the other'. I have interpreted this shift in categories as demonstrating freedom in that there is movement from categories which have been imposed on the co-participants by their social environment to categories which have been chosen by the co-participants through which they articulate their own views of themselves and their relationship with the wider world. This shift in categories is manifested in the two sections below; in how the notion of 'belonging' is constructed by the co-participants, as well as in the significant role of non-human categories in their perceptions of their 'identity'.

9.2.3. 'Belonging' in relation to 'home'

As clarified above, this section addresses 'in what way(s) do the co-participants construct their sense of 'belonging'?'. The way the notion of 'belonging' is constructed, which is discussed in chapter four and eight based on the interviews with, for example, Charlie, Ryan, and Jordan, manifests my argument in the previous section that when the co-participants move away from talking about 'the other', the categories of 'race' and 'accent' become less salient to them, and 'new' categories emerge. 'Belonging' in my study is projected by the co-participants in relation to the notion of 'home', a term which they use to refer to the places they come from, Britain and other places they feel connection with. This multiplicity in the use of 'home' indicates that the co-participants' sense of 'belonging' is plural, dynamic, and 'hybrid'.

The use of the term 'home' represents one dimension of 'belonging, called 'place belongingness' (Antonsich, 2010). This term is associated with individuals' emotions and feelings towards places, which they construct as 'home'. This dimension of 'belonging' is the most salient in my study in the sense that, based on the data, 'belonging' revolves around the co-participants' sense of 'home' where their emotions and connection towards various places is highlighted through this term; 'home'. This usage of 'home' through which the coparticipants situate themselves invokes the second dimension of 'belonging, which is referred to as 'politics of belonging' (Yuval-Davis, 2006; and Antonsich, 2010). This dimension of 'belonging', concerns relations of inclusion and exclusion between people, in such a way that the individual's sense of 'belonging' is not personal, like in the first dimension, but connects with the person's social environment where rejection, negotiation,

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and acceptance are the dynamics through which this dimension operates. This influences people's personal attachment to places, which is the first dimension of 'belonging'.

As I have argued here, and in section 8.5.3, which focuses on the notion of 'belonging' based on the interviews in section 4.3., with Charlie, Jordan, Ryan, and Kyle, the second dimension of 'belonging' is, in my interpretation, invoked via the first dimension in such a way that the co-participants' multiple and 'hybrid' sense of 'home' implicitly challenges perceptions of them in terms of 'either, or' on the basis of 'race' and 'accent', which are salient in chapter three and seven. In other words, 'belonging' in my study is associated with the notion of 'home', a term which is used to refer to multiple places. This multiplicity implies resistance to the categorisation of the co-participants and the framing of them on the basis of their physical traits and 'accent' as individuals who do not have a claim to be 'British' or 'belong' to Britain, which I have discussed in the section above.

The following section is a continuous manifestation of my argument that the more the coparticipants move away from 'the other', the less 'race' and 'accent' are relevant in how they talk about themselves, and 'new' categories emerge instead.

9.2.4. 'Identity' is not all about the human 'other'

This section is devoted to answering the second research question, which is 'what is the role of non-human entities in the ways in which the co-participants make sense of their 'identities?'. In section 9.2.1., sections 1.3., and 1.11., as well as section 7.4., I have argued that, in my study, the notion of 'identity' is interpreted in two different, but related ways.

In section 9.2.1. I have reiterated the first interpretation of 'identity' which concerns the processes involved in 'self' and 'other' relations, where 'the other' is omnipresent in the ways in which the co-participants construct their sense of 'identity'. I have also restated that 'race' and 'accent' are salient categories and are the lens through which the co-participants are perceived by 'the other' ('some white British' people'). This section focuses on the second interpretation of 'identity', which I have discussed in chapter five and chapter eight, section, 8.7., which revolves around the relevance of non-human entities in the ways in which the coparticipants project their sense of 'identity'.

The entities of names, news, voting, death, and food which the co-participants have drawn upon serve as ties through which they maintain connection with the places they come from and Britain. They also serve as a means through which the co-participants project their sense of 'identity'. This is in the sense that these elements are part of the co-participants make-up through constant interaction and intra-action. This relationship between the co-participants and these non-human entities indicates that the latter are significant in the ways in which individuals interact with the world and situate themselves in it. In this regard, Ros i Solé, Fenoulhet and Quist (2020) argue that 'identities' are situated in the entanglement of multiple configurations of life and that they develop in chaos rather than order. They also argue that interrogating clear-cut definitions of 'identities' allows for embracing new subjectivities and viewing the concept of 'identity' in terms of 'and', 'and', rather than 'either', 'or' (p.399).

This interpretation of the relationship between humans and non-human entities decentres a 'Western-centred' perception of the world, wherein 'the West' structures and defines the world (Braidotti, 2013). It also rejects the view that humans are the centre of existence by promoting interrelationship between living and non-living entities, as well as by decentering hierarchy between various entities, including human exceptionalism (Braidotti, 2019). This view of the relationship between various species, and non-human entities is also supported by Pennycook (2018), who argues for rethinking human relationship with each other, as well as with other entities by re-evaluating the role of objects and space in relation to humans' makeup. Having said this, 'identity' in my study is not only limited to the ways in which the coparticipants construct themselves and the ways in which they believe they are constructed by others. This is to say that 'identity' in my study is not restricted to 'self' and other' relations, but also extends to the relationship between the co-participants and non-human entities.

I would like to emphasise an important detail about the findings, which I have already explained in chapter seven, section 7.4.2.1.1. This concerns my decision not to make the study revolve around the categories of 'race' and 'accent' only, which characterise the coparticipants' relationship with 'some white British' people. This is because by focusing on these categories which only become salient in the context where the co-participants discuss their perceptions by others, I would have not done 'justice' to the data. This is in

the sense that I would have overlooked the other ways through which the co-participants project their 'identities', and sense of 'belonging', which do not make reference to 'race' and 'accent'. In other words, I did not want to frame the co-participants' sense of 'identities' and 'belonging' in relation to 'race' and 'accent' because these categories are only central to the co-participants when they refer to others' construction of them. I rather wanted to go beyond these categories to try to capture a bigger picture of what is going on in the data. Moving beyond 'race' and 'accent' allowed other categories such as the notion of 'home', and non-human entities to acquire the centre as demonstrated throughout.

This way of presenting the findings, that is, discussing the notion of 'identity' in relation to 'self' and 'other' relations, then discussing the notion of 'belonging', and after that discussing the notion of 'identity' again but in relation to human to non-human relations relates to my interpretation of the data and the thread that connects the data together. This is to say that when the co-participants talk about their self-perceptions, they also talk about how they believe they are perceived by 'some white British' people where perceptions of 'race' and 'accent' are central. However, the centrality of these categories and the conflicted relationship between the co-participants and 'some white British' people becomes less invisible to the co-participants when they do not refer to their social environment, and rather 'new' categories, such as 'home', naming, and food, emerge and acquire the centre.

Having discussed the findings of this study, in the following section I discuss the contribution of these findings.

9.3. Contribution to knowledge

This study contributes to the politics of labelling by rejecting the impetus to situate my study within an existing body of academic literature which uses contested terms, such as '(im)migrants' and 'expatriates' without interrogating them. This is manifested in chapter six where I critique a body of literature which uses terms such as '(im)migrants', 'expatriates', 'non-native speakers', and so forth to describe academics, and other high-status professionals who live in places different from where they come from. This contribution to the politics of labelling is also manifested in section 2.2.1., where I discuss how I shifted from imposing 'outsider categories' (Woodin, 2016, p.108) reflected in the

labels '(im)migrants' and 'long- term residents' to letting the co-participants self-projection acquire the centre. By adopting this stance towards the ways in which labels are used to refer to the research participants, I add my voice to calls by other non-essentialist researchers, such as Dervin, and Woodin to reconsider the categories we apply to research participants, by emphasising the necessity to rethink our assumptions and prejudice which we, as researchers, bring with us into research. This is by letting such and/or other categories emerge from the research process and carefully examine them, instead of applying them without considering the contexts in which they emerge, how, and why they emerge.

This study also contributes to the study of 'identity' by exploring it in terms of the processes involved in its construction in relation to 'self' and 'other' relations. It goes beyond the suggestion that 'identity' is complex, to focusing on the way this complexity is manifested in terms of the processes involved in the way in which 'identity' is enacted. These processes are relationality, labelling/categorisation, positioning, resistance, and agency; and are discussed in light of the literature in chapter seven, which is based on the data in chapter three. This interpretation of 'identity' emphasises its social nature, in the sense that it is situated within 'self' and 'other' relations where 'the other' is omnipresent in the ways in which the coparticipants talk about themselves. This relationship is characterised by power dynamics and tensions between the ways in which the co-participants perceive themselves and the ways in which they believe they are perceived by 'the other' who is 'some white British' people.

Another contribution to the study of 'identity' revolves around moving away from restricting it to the binary relationship between 'self' and 'other' and moving towards emphasising the relevance of non-human entities in the ways in which 'identity' is constructed. This is represented in chapter five and section 8.7., which show a shift from discussing 'identity' in relation to 'self' and human 'other' relations, to highlighting the significance of non-human categories, such as naming, death, food, and so forth, in the co-participants' sense of 'identity'. This acknowledges the centrality of various entities in humans' make-up, and destabilises the understanding of 'identity' as exclusively relational in terms of 'self' and 'other' relations. Therefore, this interpretation of 'identity' supports the idea of creating new meaning and constructing individuals' 'identities' through entities

which are not necessarily human in nature. As such there is broadening of the understanding of 'identity'.

Further to this, this study contributes to the study of 'belonging' by emphasising its multiple nature and the centrality of the first dimension of 'belonging' ('place belongingness') over the second dimension ('politics of belonging'). This claim is manifested through the term 'home' in such a way that this contested concept is used to refer to multiple places. This use of 'home', which indicates individuals' emotional attachment to places, suggests 'hybrid' positioning in the various places the co-participants have constructed as 'home'. This understanding of 'belonging' is reflected in chapter four, more specifically in section 4.4., and section 8.5.

In addition to the contributions above, despite the fact that this study focuses on the coparticipants' 'identities', and 'belonging' in their personal everyday lives, that is, when their professional status as university lecturers is not highlighted, their professional status becomes of huge importance. This is in the sense that despite the co-participants' high professional status in society, they are discriminated against in a way that can be said to be more or less similar to members from, what can be described as a 'lower' professional background. This representation of the co-participants despite their high professional status is significant for our understanding of how deep and omnipresent prejudice and discrimination within society are. This contribution is manifested throughout the thesis.

9.4. Reflection on what I have learnt from conducting the research

Conducting this research has reinforced my approach of investigating highly subjective and debatable concepts such as 'identities' and 'belonging'. This is in the sense that I have produced nuanced research, which demonstrates complexity in how 'identity' and 'belonging' are constructed. This is, as shown in section 2.11.2., by interrogating and reflecting on my own views, the interview questions, as well as on the co-participants' 'realities' instead of taking them for granted. Even though I had assumptions and predefined categories like 'immersion' and 'bilingualism', and as I have shown in different parts of the thesis such as in section 2.11.2. [refers to correction 3], I have 'confronted' these assumptions. This is by asking the co-participants about their relevance in their

projection of self-understanding, as well as by reflecting on how they are manifested, including instances when they are not manifested (interview question 3, the relationship between bilingualism and self-perception). Based on the co-participants' answers, these categories acquired centrality in the thesis. Closely, related to the previous point, and as I have demonstrated in section 2.11.2., I have also learned to embrace the nuanced articulation of the co-participants' opinions on themselves, instead of opting for clear cut and stereotypical representations of them by letting their self-understanding acquire the centre. Furthermore, I have learned that it is inevitable to untangle my own 'realities' from the co-participants' 'realities' in meaning-making, and that the way that I have engaged with the co-participants during the interviews, as shown in 2.11.2., has certainly shaped the knowledge of the thesis.

9.4.1. Brief reflections on my positionality

My positionality has been briefly discussed in chapter one, section 1.9., and further discussed more elaborately in chapter two, section 2.2.1. In this section, I provide a brief overview of my positionality.

In some respects, I have been an insider and an outsider. In some other respects, I have shifted from being an insider to being an outsider and *vice versa*. I have been an outsider since I do not enjoy the same high professional status that the co-participants do, and I have not been living in the UK for a considerable number of years. I have also been an outsider because I do not belong to the co-participants' age groups, I do not come from the countries they come from, and I am not the focus of this study.

Regardless of this difference, I have been an insider. This is because, like the coparticipants, I come from a country different to Britain, and I have also experienced prejudice by people around me as shown in section 1.8.1. Through this experience I resonate with the coparticipants in broader terms in such a way that, like them, I was othered because of perceptions of where I come from by people around me. Our difference has not been a barrier in understanding the co-participants' lived experiences. This is in the sense that, broadly speaking, I have related to the co-participants' experiences of being prejudiced. However, I have not used this resonance with the co-participants to claim that

I have absolute knowledge of their experiences. My insider position can also be manifested in the theoretical framework of this thesis which emerged from the data and captures a bigger picture of the data, because it speaks to the co-participants' experiences.

In this process of selecting the theoretical framework that informs the data, my insider stance has shifted towards an outsider position. This is because my choice of the theoretical framework is very subjective and reflects my own interpretation of the whole data. This means that the co-participants might have different insights as to which theories inform the data, as evidenced in chapter two, section 2.2.1.

Conversely during the research, I have shifted from being an outsider to being an insider. This has been explained in relation to the way in which I used to perceive the co-participants which was manifested in the problematic labels (('im) migrants' and 'long-term 'residents'), which I used without interrogating them. This naïve way of representing the co-participants has been challenged in such a way that the co-participants did not refer to themselves using these labels or other labels of this nature. Therefore, I have rejected labelling the co-participants and situating my study within an existing body of literature which uses such labels. I have also devoted chapter six to highlight this point.

Having reiterated core parts of the thesis, I move to concluding it up by providing final reflections.

9.5. Critical reflections

This section is devoted to critical reflections in terms of what I could have done differently and future possible research directions.

9.5.1. Limitations and future avenues

As I have explained in the previous chapters, I have made choices in crafting this research. These choices have inevitably yielded limitations. As explained in chapter seven, this study has focused on 'insider perspective' (Wodak, 2008, p.55), which refers to the co-participants' opinions on their own lived experiences. The study could have benefited from 'an investigation from outside' (ibid.), that is, from the perspectives of 'white British' people, as their omnipresence in the ways in which the co-participants have talked about

themselves was central. This is in the sense that diverse data in terms of 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives could have been generated, hence a greater understanding of the relationship between the coparticipants and 'white British' people could have been obtained.

Despite the conflicted relationship between the co-participants and 'some white British' people, and the common reference to 'race' and 'accent' by the co-participants, I have not treated the former as one similar group and the latter as another similar group, nor have I claimed that these two groups are the same within themselves. I have rather approached them as individuals, rather than as groups. This is manifested in the way I have constructed the data by juxtaposing the relevant data, as well as by using the expression 'some white British' people', instead of ''white British' people' which implies generalisation and sameness. This opposing relationship could probably be approached differently in future research using social identity theory. Besides asking the co-participants about their own views on their personal experiences, they could be also asked about their own views on the personal experiences of other university lectuers in the UK who have come from 'different national background', as well as on their own views on the way 'white British' people perceive them. Also, 'white British' people could be asked about their own perceptions of the personal lives of this category of professionals, as well as on their own views on the way other 'white British' people might perceive these professionals on the personal level, beyond their profession. This would allow examining whether groups exist inherently, and to what extent these groups are similar and different within and between themselves.

Depending on the researcher's perspective, this can be approached qualitatively by looking at the nuances of how these people identify with each other. Based on the findings an 'in group' and an 'out group' might emerge which gives premise to the use social identity theory.

In chapter two, section 2.11., I have suggested that emotions were omnipresent in the ways in which I have looked at the data. This is in the sense that the co-participants' demeanour was part of my data analysis. I have discussed the notion of emotions in chapter eight in relation to non-human entities which the co-participants have drawn upon to make

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sense of who they are, as well as highlighted the co-participants' emotions by highlighting their tone, and gestures in the data analysis. Despite this, my study could benefit more from the study of emotions, this can be done by taking equal consideration to emotions in the ways in which the co-participants talk about things, including themselves and other people, instead of focusing mostly on what the co-participants say.

Another area which could be explored in future research is the relationship between the coparticipants and their family members, especially their children in terms of the ways in which the former perceives the latter, and the ways in which the latter responds to the former's perceptions.

Based on the data in chapter four, section 4.4., another potential area for future research might revolve around the ways in which the co-participants are or will be perceived in the places they come from as opposed to the ways in which they are perceived in the UK, and how far these perceptions are similar and/or different from the ways in which they are perceived in the UK.

Also, based on the data in sections 4.4., and 4.5., which I have stated throughout is beyond the scope of my study, future research might focus on the interrelationship between both the personal lived experiences and the professional experiences of the co-participants, and how far these experiences influence the way positioning in society is articulated.

9.6. Final reflections: so what?

Since the co-participants are academics, it could easily be assumed that they enjoy elevated social status, and not face experiences of 'othering' such as the ones demonstrated throughout. However, as evidenced in my study, what the co-participants reported about the ways in which they are received in Britain destabilises the assumption that individuals with high professional status, including those outside of academia, are safe from prejudice in places which are different from where they come from, even in their own workplace. Therefore, based on my study, I suggest that it is important to direct attention to the personal everyday life experiences of high-status professionals where their professional status is not salient as this will enable us to get to the bottom of their personal experiences, and grasp how deeply prejudice is embedded in society.

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Appendix One: Email invitation

Dear [name of the addressee]

My name is Amina Kebabi. I am doing a PhD in the School of Language Studies and Applied Linguistics. I am conducting an ethnographic study of the identity construction of people engaged in university work who have come from outside the UK. As a professional with another different cultural background, I believe that you may be a suitable candidate for my research study. I would greatly appreciate if you might consider taking time to participate in the research study.

If you are willing to participate, please reply to this e-mail to confirm. We can then arrange a time to meet.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,
Amina Kebabi
PhD Student
School of Language Studies and Applied Linguistics
Canterbury Christ Church University
Canterbury CT1 1QU, UK

Appendix Two: Ethical and consent form documents

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

An ethnographic study of the identity construction of people engaged in university work who have come from outside the UK: A consideration of the role of language in cultural identity

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Amina Kebabi is conducting this research study at Canterbury Christ Church University.

The research study looks at the cultural identity of people engaged in university work who have come from outside the UK. This exploratory study looks at the way(s) language and cultural heritage are located within your life, and how you construct and negotiate your cultural identity. **What will you be required to do?**

You will be asked to share with the researcher your feelings, experiences and opinions about your own perceptions of your identity, and if possible, to allow the researcher access the artefacts and photographs that you agree to provide such as interior home decoration style, dress and food.

To participate in this research you must:

My research criteria lie on the following aspects:

1. The research co-participants need to be from outside the UK.
2. The research co-participants need to be engaged in university work.
3. The research co-participants should be living in Britain. **Procedures**

You will be asked to participate in interviews (between 30 and 60 minutes in duration). These will be carried out in public locations that you and the researcher will agree to, most likely on university campus. After the initial interview you may be invited to a further follow-up interview. During, or as a result of the interview, where appropriate and with your permission, you may be asked to write briefly about your ideas, to share photographic material or other artefacts that appear relevant.

Feedback

You will be invited to see the data that has been collected about you which will appear in the final study and comment on it.

Confidentiality

Your identity will be protected. We will also discuss the issue of anonymity, and you will have the absolute freedom to choose an alias. I would like to add that my supervisors, Prof. Adrian Holliday and Dr. Alexandra Polyzou might want to have access to my raw data. The data will be kept for up a period of ten years and may be used in other publications written by the researcher.

Dissemination of results

The material will be reported or transcribed in such a way that the research co-participants involved in this study will not be identifiable as members in academia within Canterbury Christ Church University or related to any educational body, unless particular co-participants choose to be identified.

Deciding whether to participate

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation do not hesitate to contact me. Should you decide to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason.

Any questions?

Please contact Amina Kebabi on **a.kebabi417@canterbury.ac.uk**. School of Language Studies and Applied Linguistics. www.canterbury.ac.uk, or my research supervisor at Adrian.holliday@canterbury.ac.uk

Canterbury Christ Church University

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: An ethnographic study of the identity construction of people engaged in university work who have come from outside the UK: A consideration of the role of language in cultural identity Name of Researcher: Amina Kebabi **Contact details:**

Address:

North Holmes Road

CT1 1QU

Canterbury, Kent

Tel:

01227 767700

Email:

a.kebabi417@canterbury.ac.uk

Please initial box

1.   I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2.   I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3.   I understand that any personal information that I provide to the researchers will be kept strictly confidential

4.   I agree to take part in the above study.

5.   I agree to be recorded during the Interview

6.   I agree to allow the researcher to analyse artefacts that I agree to provide her with.

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of Person taking consent   Date   Signature

(if different from researcher)

_____   _____   _____

Researcher   Date   Signature

Copies: 1 for participant

                    1 for researcher

Appendix Three: Ethical and consent form documents

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

16 April 2018   Ref: 17/A&H/17C

Amina Kebabi
c/o School of Language Studies & Applied Linguistics
Faculty of Arts & Humanities

Dear Amina,

Confirmation of ethics compliance for your study - *An ethnographic study of the identity construction of people engaged in university work who have come from outside the UK: A consideration of the role of language in cultural identity*

I have received your Ethics Review Checklist and appropriate supporting documentation for proportionate review of the above project. Your application complies fully with the requirements for proportionate ethical review, as set out in this University's Research Ethics and Governance Procedures.

In confirming compliance for your study, I must remind you that it is your responsibility to follow, as appropriate, the policies and procedures set out in the *Research Governance Framework* (http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/research-and-consultancy/governance-and-ethics/governance-and-ethics.aspx) and any relevant academic or professional guidelines. This includes providing, if appropriate, information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.

Any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over its course should be notified via email to red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk and may require a new application for ethics approval.

It is a condition of compliance that you must inform me once your research has completed.

Wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Tracy

Tracy Crine
Contracts & Compliance Manager
Email: red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk

CC   Professor Adrian Holliday
       Dr Alexandra Polyzou

Appendix Four: Table of thematic Analysis

Participants	Sub-theme: Sub-theme: 'dialectic 'identity' perception: centring and decentring physical traits	Interview extracts
	Main theme: Multiplicity in 'identity' perception Data Chapter 1	
Alex		What was more important was that the kind of stuff I was doing with [X] or [Y] groups. <mark>So, for me, more than my race or religion</mark>… What was important, was ideas and that sort of I was at the university to interact with. <mark>So, I will have thought of myself as being fairly internationalist.</mark> So, there is a consciousness in my mind with sort of I'm conscious of the fact that I am [reference to a 'race'] looking and <mark>I have a [religious] name.</mark> Whereas, it never used to be. <mark>It was never important to me.</mark> (Alex, interview)
	'Race' is salient here. He talks about himself from two different perspectives where he seems to address other people, implicitly. Labelling.	
Kyle	Being 'British' appears to be associated with physical traits. Labelling.	<mark>I sometime go about culture and Britain and how the idea of my own identity. I say [reference to a skin colour] person is ascribed in my skin, that once people see me, the first thought is not associate me being British or English or whatever. They associate me with somebody who does come from outside. Now, for a white person it doesn't matter if your parents have been and whatever or wherever you are or where they come from, whereas, for us even that association is not there. So, for me the identity is ascribed before I even speak you will already put me somewhere and the same with the whole thing about being British. You tell people you are British, they say oh! No, but where are you from? I'm like; I'm British. Where are you from? I'm what do you mean where I am from? I'm from [a place in Britain] I live in [a place in Britain]. They want you to say that I'm from [the country Kyle comes from], yeah. So, you get this kind of people who are just ignorant people.</mark> (Kyle, interview)
	Challenging perceptions based on 'race'.	I am British. I have the passport (making a physical gesture of shrugging shoulders and

		facial expression, while laughing). (Kyle, interview)
Sam	Colonial/ postcolonial influence.	So, as long as you have a British passport, you are British? Well, (deep breath). Yes, no, I mean identity is a very fluid thing, isn't it? It changes as well…Well, I always felt, I mean, see, don't get me wrong, I mean, legally this passport is the legal thing that's, OK, you're British. When the British came to colonise most of the colonised world, I mean, really, [the country Kyle comes from] particularly, we were told that we are British subjects. (Kyle, interview) We were subjects of the crown. We were not [a nationality] per se. We were told that we are British subjects. So, when he did that change, did he ask for permission to change that? Did he ask if we want to be British subjects? It was by force. (Kyle, interview)
	The influence of social environment on self-perceptions.	We are human beings. We, in a way, become acclimatising to different thing. We have certain perceptions, you know, what I mean. So, that's what I sometimes feel. I might not be true or correct, you know, but what I feel is, you know, when I go into students who have never seen me or have never interacted with me. They all look at me, oh! This is alien, you know, who's this guy? It's just, you know, because I look different. It's just like that. The same reason whenever I travel to the USA, I am always randomly selected. I don't mind, I used to feel upset, you know, but that's very interesting. (Sam, interview)
	'Race' is central here. Refusing being categorised as 'either/ or', and instead as 'and', 'and' which shows interaction of both backgrounds.	I'm neither a British nor a [nationality of the country Sam comes from], you know, because I'm a chain person…I think, now I am neither [the country Sam comes from] nor British. I have tried to take the good things from both cultures. (Sam, interview)
Jordan	Challenging perceptions based on 'nation'.	I have a massive problem with the idea of nation. I cannot understand why I cannot pick.

	Labelling. The notion of 'home'.	I love the concept of transnationality. When this concept started operating, I just, it felt some hope. It felt so much of home. Of course, ==I love my city where I was born. It's always like anything, you love your bedroom when you were a child, you know. It has all that sentiments and things like that…== I think of ==myself as transnational==… (Jordan, interview)
	Sub-theme: Who the coparticipants are in their families' eyes.	
Alex	Sourdough as a means to 'become' 'white British middle-class' person.	==My kids== are the latest thing…. ==These days, they've started making fun of me because I have started baking sourdough bread.== There is this bread called sourdough, which is a very sort of ==middle-class white British== thing to do, and I make it very regularly and… you have to keep feeding it (laughing). ==I think this is a very postcolonial thing. We want to be accepted as ok… So, the sourdough bread, because it's such a symbol of middle-class white culture, my kids told me that it's a new thing that I am doing to feel accepted (laughing).== (Alex, interview)
	Emphasise of the influence of colonial relations on self-perceptions.	What do you say to them? …they are right, but I don't know. I enjoy eating bread, but they are right. ==This is a standard postcolonial thing. We try really hard to be accepted. You know, my wife is English, she learned enough [language spoken where Alex comes from], but very basic. As far as I'm concerned, if I was living here and if I had come to this country and live to sixteen years and my English was as basic as her [language spoken where he comes from] was, then people would say you are not assimilating.== That's the postcolonial baggage we carry for us. ==It's different if we come here and we quickly don't speak the language. Well, then we are just for it and you're told that you are either not assimilating or you're not refined==

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		enough, or British enough. People would say, you know, you are not trying hard to assimilate to the British culture and value. So, it's ok for white people to do that and my family will be really over the moon that she could even speak three sentences. That's absolutely right. But that's the postcolonial baggage we carry for us. We try really hard to be accepted. (Alex, interview)
Jo	Negotiation of perceptions	I don't' know what [Jo's partner] would think. That's an interesting question. I think [Jo's partner] would say I am very [national background] when I support [a national] football team, that's the moment when your '…ness' (reference to the country Jo comes from) comes out of me. So, but, I don't know what [Jo's partner] would say. [Jo's partner] would probably say something around the fact that I'm very well integrated, and that I am, you know, very much behaving, let's say, like a native. But there are also moments where she notices that I am, you know, not, and it's a stupid thing. Usually, it's like talking about children TV series like a cartoon series. They are different in the UK to the ones I saw, right, or singing children songs, or like we sometimes go to the pub, right. Sometimes we spend time there and, then, they ask some stupid questions about East Enders and I'm like what the hell, who knows that and [Jo's partner] is like, I know the answer, you know, this is (laughing). (Jo, interview) I like to think otherwise. She would say I'm reasonably well integrated in my local community and the community I live in. I'm not necessarily part of the culture, I'm deepening into the culture, but I am reasonably well integrated. I speak the language, I, you know, pay my taxes, I engage with my neighbours and my friends, I volunteer for an

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	Sub-theme: the co-participants' 'realities' of 'immersion'	<mark>organisation, right. So, I do what native British people do. I don't go to the pub very often and drink my pint there, I don't do that. But other than that, I do a lot of things that I would say I'm, you know, reasonably well integrated.</mark> (Jo, interview)
Ashley	Perceptions of being 'British' appears to be associated with physical traits and 'accent'. Labelling.	What could you say about your 'immersion' in Britain? I asked the participants separately about their perspective on 'immersion' in Britain. I discuss their responses below: I think, we spoke about this, the fact that I do believe and I know for a fact that, you know, sort of <mark>our physical traits, accent, everything, you know, says that I'm not British. You will always be in that sense an outsider. I personally think that's the case that sort of thing, but it doesn't bother me because I've never felt necessarily as a barrier, and also because I think is natural.</mark> There are certain things that you can't change or can't fight. <mark>I only in a way never be, you know, British in that sense because I'm not, but I think I've got a good understanding of the culture, I feel accepted.</mark> (Ashley, interview)
Eli	The same here. Perceptions of being 'British' appears to be associated with physical traits and 'accent'. Labelling.	<mark>I think it has something to do with how you're received in the UK, like you are not one of us, you come from somewhere else. I am very aware that I am a foreigner here. I'm actually very aware of that. I wasn't born here; obviously the moment that I start talking people know that I am not from here. I mean it's obvious that I am not English, you know. They just have to look at you and they just have to hear you talk. I am aware of my accent, I am aware of the way I look, I am aware of it. It doesn't bother me, it doesn't bother me at all, but I am aware of it. I don't think I look like an English person I think, you know, we (gesture with hands) look Mediterranean.</mark> (Eli, interview)

Jordan	Labelling of how he believes he might be perceived. Instances which show 'discrimination' on the basis of his 'accent'.	As a foreigner, I think, the worst moment was, of course, around Brexit referendum …. I was coming from a conference and I was in the train…I was on the phone talking. There was only one young woman on the train. When she heard my accent on the phone, she looked at me with so much hatred, but she didn't say anything. There was just so much hatred (change of tone-emphasis). So, that was the moment when, you know, I felt really bad. The other moment when I didn't know how to handle the situation was at my GP. what happened was when I was walking out of the GP, a young person, pretty young, passed me and said under their nose: fucking foreigner. (Jordan, interview)
	'Accent' as an issue	The weirdest thing that even happened was that I was living in [the country before [a number of years] and I have some influence of [an accent] in my own accent… When I came here, and there's one of my colleagues very senior, like age wise. He could not understand me, he kept correcting me. That, you know, was frustrating and annoying, but also a lot of what he was correcting was the [pronunciation of words in a regional accent] influences. So, I would say [a name of a place, [with /u/]], and he say [the same name, [with /ʌ/] (change of tone, stronger tone]. (Jordan, interview)
	The relationship between his personal experience of being discriminated against and his professional specialism.	This person said: well, in Britain you should adapt a little bit. So, things like that. I think, it really destroyed my confidence and, you know, you feel constantly, you somehow, need to give more in terms of, you know. I don't really know how to make up your own accent. That made the struggle worth, but, then, I began to have a therapy. On the other hand, it made me engaged very much of [a political activity in an institution] and think how I can change that. It made me more interested in [a field of studies which looks at accent]. It was not very bad, but it made me

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Kyle	Constructing the notion of 'immersion' in relation to bringing elements from the 'culture' she comes from, such as 'accent' and putting it into interaction with 'British culture'. There is resistance to speaking like 'the British' do.	feel pretty shitty honestly (laughing) for a long time. (Jordan, interview) For me, I think immersion in society is about, it's a deliberate thing. I mean let me give you an example. I will hold to [the country she comes from], I talk about people from [the country she comes from] because I know them better. I was an adult when I came here and some of them were adults when they came here. Well, I still speak with my (X) accent. They speak with a British accent. To them, that's immersion because you listen to them you think they were born here. I made a deliberate choice that I am not going to try and learn the accent. I'm just going to try my best to speak as clear as I can, but I'm not going to try and copy the accent. (Kyle, interview)
	Emphasising interconnectedness	So, I think immersion, for me, is more about you choose how you want to relate with the society you live in. But, knowingly that immersion doesn't mean you know, obliterating and cleaning your own culture (gesture with hands, scrubbing one hand with the other). It's really seen how your culture can intermingle, overlap and all that with the community you are living in (gesture with hands showing intersection). (Kyle, interview)

<div align="center">

Main theme: Negotiating 'belonging'
Data Chapter 2

</div>

Participants	Sub-theme: Disturbed 'integration'	Interview extracts
Charlie	Constructing integration by drawing on language, 'culture' and history. Situating himself in relation to both places. Notion of 'home'.	In the meeting we had previously, you said that language is significant in 'integration'. Can you tell me more? Language is essential in integration, but is not everything, you know. I think, apart from the fluency of language and even the cultural depth, I claim to suggest that the good understanding of the history of the social context… In the context of [a city in Britain], I see these places as my, you know, space of origin. I'm very comfortable with them. So, in

		a way, I feel integrated, but, on the other hand, you know, there is always that element of where you put your own barrier with a certain integration. For instance, in my case that has got to do with the fact that after all my identity is not British and I don't want to be British, and it's never going to be, you know. I have that sense that Britishness has become an element because of my long encounter with the situation. All my entire adult life, you know, has been based here pretty much (laughing). But on the other hand, I also have got this sense that leaving my home country is what made me [association with a country he comes from] because of the sense that it made me point out some of the traditions, some of the specificities and reinvent them from a new perspective. It made me more critical and more reflective from this new position and I embraced my [qualities associated with the place he comes from] …ness in a different way. So, in a way, I feel both integrated and not integrated, both in the [a country he comes from] and in the British context. I feel like I'm some sort of borderline with both of them. (Charlie, interview)
Jo	Elements of language, skin colour and religion. Hierarchy based on skin colour and religion. Labelling.	Language is an important element, but it's not the only element. I mean, even here in the UK, I know, I'm a foreigner, but it would be even more extreme let's say in India, because there would be things like skin colour, religion. That would make very clear I'm a foreign. (Jo, interview)
	Distinguishing between being part of a 'culture' and taking part in 'culture' where 'accent' is salient.	There is a difference between being a member of a culture and being able to participate in a culture. Because as I said, I speak the language, I can go to a pub, I can eat fish and chips, I can, you know, celebrate, I don't know, Saint George's day, I can, you know, enjoy typical British traditions. I can be part of this culture, but I'm not really a member of this culture, right because I am not British. One thing is most British people will hear that I'm foreign, the moment I speak because I

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		have an accent. So, they will say, ok, you're not British. (Jo, interview)
Ryan	Hierarchy based on physical traits.	Researcher: Do you think that the way you look helps you integrate? I suppose yes, I mean I think people with, you know, (hesitation) black would have more difficulties than me in terms of integrating. Now, how people look in [a country she comes from) tend to be more brown than I am and with brown eyes. So, I mean [where she comes from] is very mixed nation. But here most people when they don't know where I come from and that happens often, they think I'm from [a place which is different from where she comes from]. I think because I'm [describing how she looks]; I never met anyone who guessed I'm [where she comes from]. I mean British people think I'm from [a place which British people associate her with, because of her physical characteristics, which is different from where she comes from]. People just go for you know, stereotypes. I'm [describing what she looks like], and I've got accent must be [from a place British people think she comes from which is different from where she actually comes from]. (Ryan, interview)
	Another, different construction of 'integration' based on everyday life practices.	What does 'integration' mean to you? Well, integration is I suppose in that sense is how I felt integrated in sort of the everyday life in terms of where you shop, where do you go out, who you socialise with, what do you do as a sort of a social activities, you know what do you do in spare time and things like that which wasn't a huge difference where I came from, in [a country she comes from]. It was different and it wasn't different, ye, in terms of integration that's what I meant. (Ryan, interview)
Eli	Talking about 'integration' in terms of	I suppose, people talk about two forms of integration. One is at a more sort of general

	how others seem to perceive it.	level; do you feel that you are ok in the country, do you understand the culture, and do you know a little bit about the culture, have you accepted (laughing) the culture, you know, are you part of that. And, then, there is a more kind of personal level like who are your friends, who you socialise with, who you talk to, do you have kind of some kind of social circle. So, maybe, you could talk about integration in those two different ways. (Eli, interview)
	Conflicted feelings towards Britain and 'home'.	Researcher: Where do you stand in that? So, for me, I think I've become quite accustomed to being in the UK. I think, over the years, I mean, I have a love-hate relationship with this country. Over the years, sometimes I loved it, sometime what I am doing here? I wish I go back home. Or sometimes I feel no, I don't want to go back home. I prefer to stay here. So, it just kind of various things depending on whatever is happening at the time… (Eli, interview)
	Assertion of her position in British society by drawing on her profession.	…Because it's a little bit like my own country, it's not my home country, but it's where I live. It's where I work; it's where I've spent most of my adult life and where I will probably spend most of my life or also going forward. So, of course, I care about it and I am part of that society and, you know, of course, you have to care, at the end of the day you are contributing to that. (Eli, interview)
Charlie	Sub-theme: Hybrid sense of 'home' Perceptions of 'home' and the role of professional orientation.	I feel very happy back home. Well, of course, I was considering going back totally and every now and again I do it, you know. I think of it, and I think if I had pursued a different strand of my career, I may have done that. But I think in the context of the type of academic research that I am into, I don't think that I could do that in [a place he comes from]. I'm pretty certainly will be not only difficult but also potentially quite limiting. (Charlie,

		interview)
	Drawing boundaries of what is 'home'. In-betweenness.	[A city in Britain] is my home, as well as [a country he comes from]. You know, because they were just as integral in my evolution as a person (smiling), but I wouldn't make kind of assumption, you know, that the UK as a whole could be my home. I think, If I have a space that I consider as a space of origin it's, it's (a city in Britain), you know, in the UK context. (Charlie, interview)
Ryan	Negotiating perceptions of 'home'. The role of profession.	I've got dual citizenship: [a citizenship of Ryan's national background] and Britain. All my kids have got dual citizenship. I don't feel either of countries are important. I don't feel I'm more at home in one place than in the other. I suppose, in a way, because I work here and I lived here so long of my adult life, Britain is more home in that sense. If I wanted to go home tomorrow, I think I would struggle to find a job in a similar sort of role to what I am here, because things work differently there. I am not sure if that makes sense. (Ryan, interview)
Kyle	Drawing on colonial history in claiming to have a place in the UK.	Well, I grew up kind of with whole notion that, you know as from colonies, the wealth of the colonies, the wealth of our people was used to build this country. So, I always thought I had a place here…. I mean, if you think of it, the whole colonial interference was about, you know, taking row material from [a continent] and elsewhere and bringing it here to build all the great things you see today. So, for me, it was always like, well, a part of home that didn't quite know about and I have never experienced before. So, it was the first time, but I always knew I kind of belong there (laughing). I always felt I had a stake, you know, to have a stake (gesture with hands that shows something that is rooted). So, I have something, I could have a claim to be here. (Kyle, interview)
	Perception of 'home'	I'm at home in [a country Kyle comes from]

	based on the feelings towards the UK.	and I'm at home here, em, maybe is my personality. Wherever I feel comfortable in a place its home, but I'm talking about home in terms of not just where I'm good there, where I feel comfortable. But is that kind of home in the sense of feeling strange, which I felt about coming here. I felt like it was my home. I had a stake to it, but I didn't know how anything was, everything was confusing and stuff like that. (Kyle, interview)
	Drawing on her 'cultural background' in situating herself in Britain. A perception of 'British establishment'.	Well, there is always a [reference to where Kyle comes from] thing. I think, when people come from any culture, there is always something about that culture that stays with them. So, there is always a [reference to where she comes from] thing, but I don't resent anybody because, for me, I think, is pointless. I mean the people that did the terrible things of slavery and colony are long dead. It's not about the people; it's really about the establishment. (Kyle, interview)
Jordan	Resisting of identifying on the basis of nation. Perception of 'home'.	I have a massive problem with the idea of nation. I cannot understand why I cannot pick. I love the concept of trans-nationality. When this concept started operating, I just, it felt some hope. It felt so much of home. Of course, I love my city where I was born. It's always like anything, you love your bedroom when you were a child, you know. It has all that sentiments and things like that… I think of myself as transnational… (Jordan, interview)
	Sub-theme: 'The familiar- stranger'	
Charlie	Attachment to his 'home' country, but not fitting in 'professionally' there.	I definitely love [a country Charlie comes from]. I miss my parents, they are getting old, you know. So, there is also the personal element that's quite strong there. But, on the other hand, I think that professionally, in terms of colleagues, in terms of research opportunities when you do something as niche as [a type of research] and you've got this place to do it somewhere and that is definitely

		what you want to do, then, you know, it's also propitious especially when you devoted such a lengthy time investing in, you know, specialising in that field. It's not an easy thing to say, you know, that I'm just gonna have a career, change it and do something else, no. (Charlie, interview)
Eli	Fitting in in the British university system, and not in the university system where she comes from, yet having an emotional bond with where she comes from.	If I have a permanent job in [a country Eli comes from], I will go back. I haven't even tried to get a permanent job in [where she comes from], because I just read the news and see that people have no jobs… I suppose also because I've worked quite a few years now in the British university system and I know people in the (university where she comes from). So, I know how things work over there and it's just different as well, you know…. But, I'm just not sure that I will be comfortable working in a [university where she comes from] based on the things that I know about how things work over there… (Eli, interview)
	How she might be perceived in her country when she goes back. A sense of belonging manifested in the term 'roots'.	I asked Eli about her intention to go back: Researcher: So, there is this idea of going back home one day?
		Oh! ye, as soon as I can afford it. I will retire and go back home (laughing). I will be one of those British people, (laughing) going back going to [a country Eli comes from] just to retire. I will retire as a foreigner in my own country, (laughing). I was thinking about that and I will not only be back home, but actually back to my mum's village, specifically where my roots actually are. (Eli, interview)
Jo	Alienation from the community he comes from because he does not 'conform' to their lifestyle and their image of who they are.	I live abroad, but I think the other thing is also that that's a small village. In [a regional area in the country Jo comes from], most people are working class, right. So, this idea that I've been to universities, that idea that, you know, the job I am working is not a traditional physical labour job. There are lots of people who wouldn't understand why would you wonna live abroad? Why would you speak a

		different language? Why would you have a job that doesn't involve a physical labour? What do you actually do? So, that's affect why people would look at me and would find me very alien, right. I mean, they would look at me partly alien, if I weren't to do the same job I do here in [a capital of a country Jo comes from], right, because they wouldn't understand the job, but at least they would understand why this (laughing). The fact I'm doing this job abroad, I think contributes to the alienation and to the strangeness of me, of my perception for them. (Jo, interview)
	Sub-theme: A personal interest in the subject matter	
Jordan	The connection between his lived experience of being 'discriminated' against because of perceptions of 'accent' and his professional specialty.	Researcher: You talked before about language and you said that accent is very important.

Yes, well that's my research and that came like that's how my experiences in a sense inspired my research. It's about performance of identity through language; it's about the accent right. So, in terms of my personal experience that inspires it. Like, in [a show] when I was [a performance] in [a country] and somebody saying; Oh! I don't understand what he's saying, and I'm thinking, really! At the beginning I was getting upset about it, but then I started thinking, in [a country] when you have two people from [a region], for example, no one can understand and, yet you put them on [a show] and it's a great [an accent spoken in this region]. So, it's the idea that native speakers have the right to not be understood. I'm thinking how you perform foreignness and how, also, you know, the lack of representation of accents in [an area of research] and public space. Because, in general, in English language the foreign accents are spoken for, right, not spoken for themselves. They don't have that agency of representing themselves. (Jordan, interview) |

Kyle	Projecting where she comes from through teaching and outside profession-cooking.	The curriculum within my [a particular] programme, one of the things I have done is to introduce [a show about a continent]. Within that, some students would never know that [a continent] is somewhere. They think it is a city and stuff like that. Suddenly, they come across this module, you know, and they all study about the culture. They [an activity which relate to] that culture, you know, and have discussions around how things work within that culture and how it is different or similar to your own culture. For me, that's a massive influence on people because my students, some of them come from, even these students [from an ethnic group]. By [an ethnic group], I mean people whose parents are here maybe [some nationalities] and all that. Some of them come to our course and they learn things they've never learned before, you know. That's for me a massive way of influencing. I have friends as well who maybe, you know, they see something when they come to my house. I make, I don't make English food when they come to my house, I make [food where Kyle comes from]. (Kyle, interview)
Alex	Prejudice based on 'race'.	My name is [Alex], and I don't have a bomb with me (raising his hands in the air and laughing). (notes from first meeting)
	His worldview is projected in the way he teaches his students.	One short cut that people use in this country now is that when they look at you and your name, they immediately think, ok, you are a [reference to a religious group] and they start wondering what your views are and where your sympathies lie. So, it is really important to make students see the world through international lenses. I think, we need a lot more anthropology and lot more ideas of how different ideas and societies view the world and that's ok. You might not like it, but that's ok. Ideas are powerful and it's important that students, children, young people are exposed to all kinds of identities so that they can make up their minds in what they believe in and why and also for the sake of co-existence and

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		tolerance (Alex, interview)
Ashley	Perceptions of Britain and 'British people'.	You know, every nation has things that they are proud of and they need to because what I know, again from my sort of discipline and my background that people cannot cope with a negative identity, right. People can't think of themselves as not being good because everybody has got something that is good and you need to enhance that, fine. But, I, also, understand that, you know, is all relative and if you take a wider perspective there are certain things that and so, for me, the British actually are quite up there in terms of where as human race, we ought to be developing towards. And, I think, my only other experience, not even experience, but, you know, belief of nation that there is anything better is, probably, the Dutch, you know, if there is another place where I would like to live it would, probably, be the Netherlands because I got the sense they even got, you know, a little bit further ahead, you know. Denmark, probably, as well and this Scandinavian although they got other issues. (Ashley, interview)
	Ashley's perceptions of 'Britain' and 'British people' appears to oppose Kyle's perceptions of 'British establishment'.	Researcher: In the previous meeting you talked about 'British superiority' and you said that it is legitimate. Can you tell me more about this? Yes, that's something I really, really feel strongly about. You see, I think, part of the reason why the British society is or at least my experience of it, at least, you know, sort of a tolerant. I'm not saying that there is no prejudice. I'm saying that, you know, and that happens everywhere, but that's also mixed up with you know social economic status, financial situation as we were saying. Now, what I'm saying is that when you have all the ideal situations, I find it a really tolerant country and, I think, that is the case because they are genuinely superior in terms of their, you know, their civilisation, in terms of their understanding, their appreciation in terms of their values. And I think, the British feel comfortable and feel that this superiority is

		legitimate in the sense that other people recognise it and accept it as such. So, the values of this country are the ones that are actually always universal, are the ones that, I think, everybody across the world would take as fundamental. (Ashley, interview)
	Main theme: Ties Data Chapter 3	
Participants	Sub-theme: The significance of names	Interview extracts
Kyle	Keeping bond with the place she comes from through names. Her self-perception seems to be reflected in the names she gave her children.	Because they are not English. Well, ok not them, they are English because they were born here. I'm not English. Maybe, what reinforced for me was right from [the country Kyle comes from]. When I met my husband, I already said to him when we have kids, we are not going to have any doubts back in [where Kyle comes from]. So, I really had this thinking, but living here also reinforces it, for me, that, actually, they were born in this society in England. One thing I wanted them to, if nothing else, is always remember where those names come from. For me, that's really important that's why I always say to them: well, I was the one who do so and I make sure they do it as well. (Kyle, interview)
	She appears to criticise those who have changed their children's names into English names.	I know people who have come here and, actually, they've changed their names to English names, you know. Some people are here and mentally, they are here and their kids, o, we don't want people having difficulty calling their names and they give them English names. They even change their own names. I know people who have done. (Kyle, interview)
	Bringing her cultural background and putting it into interaction with 'British culture'.	Researcher: The following is a response to my question to Kyle about whether she is mentally in the place she comes from, but physically in Britain: No, no, I want to be here mentally. I'm here mentally and physically, but what I'm saying is that my mental identity is not stuck in [the country Kyle comes from]. It's here. I'm here,

		but I recognise that I'm not going to whiten my identity to become British. I want to use my identity to become British. I want my identity to merge with to interact with it. (Kyle, interview)
	The significance of pronouncing people's names in the 'right' way.	You know, I watch TV a lot and there are some really difficult names aren't there? And they call them right all the time at least, I think, why is because they think they are important people. So, the fact that you don't get my name right and you call me something else; tell me that you don't think I'm important. (Kyle, interview)
Ryan	The intention of making sure her children's names cannot be converted into English. The intention of making sure her children's names cannot be converted into English.	Researcher: In the next interview extract, I asked Ryan about the relevance of her name in how she perceives herself. She responded by explaining the Latin origins of her names and that she does not feel comfortable with the idea of changing her name after marriage. Then, she moved to talking about the choice of names she gave her children, which I find interesting to discuss.
		I gave [reference to the country Ryan comes from] first name to my children on purpose. So, they are proper [reference to the country Ryan comes from] names. We didn't want one which then they will be Anglicised or, you know, I didn't want Robert, for instance, as a [reference to the country Ryan comes from] version and English version, because he will be just Robert or something. So, they have got very typical [referring to the country Ryan comes from] names. They can't deny, they can't hide, laughing. (Ryan, interview)
Eli	Her surname carries history and reflects her self-perception as well as her bond with her family.	There was a time when I started using my first surname just to make my life easier because you only have one surname then, you know, it's easier than having to say; Okay; so, my surname has two words [saying each part] (in a funny way). Then, at one point I thought why would I do that? My name is my full name, why should I have to (silence) kind of I don't

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		know. Why should I do something to my name just to make it fit? If you don't like it, just deal with it. Why should I take my grand-fathers' surname out of, you know, it's part of who I am. Why should I have to delete it for your sake? No, I said; okay, it's a little bit more uncomfortable in practical terms, but, it doesn't matter, it has to be full. (Eli, interview)
	She perceives her name as a significant element in her sense of 'identity', which she wants to maintain by giving her future children names that come from where she comes from.	The only one that I actually feel proud of is my last surname because it's the one from my mum's part of the family (showing emotions). It's the one that I actually feel a proper connection to. So, really, I messed up my relationship with my name (laughing). It's linked to their identity, and I actually think about that even though I don't have any children, but if or when I have them they will have (names which relate to where Eli comes from). (Eli, interview)
Sam	Sub-theme: Virtual presence in the places the co-participants' come from	
		Researcher asking the participants individually: Do you keep up with the [news about where you come from]?
	Being emotionally there and caring for people's life over there.	These days I am following very religiously (deep breath, showing emotions). I really pray because, you know, [people from Sam's county] at the intellectual level, you know, are very, I would say, talented but also a bit misguided and corrupted as well (laughing). The election is coming in [a specific month] and, em, if he wins then the country will take a positive and a different direction. (Sam, interview)
Jordan	Being there.	I wake up in the morning to [where Jordan comes from] radio and [new where he comes from] news, but then in the evenings we watch channel 4 news. So, we mix. (Jordan, interview)
Charlie	Having a say in the socio-political life where he comes from.	I do read news about [where Charlie comes from], and, of course, if I told you, I vote. If I

		am someone who votes, I need to know what the hell is going on in that place. I vote from here, but if I'm in [where Charlie comes from] I vote from there. So, if I'm honoured to have the right to, you know, vote as a [Charlie's national citizenship], then, I think it's my obligation to be informed. (Charlie, interview)
Ryan	Like Charlie, Ryan participates in the social and political life in the country she comes from. Reacting to the outcomes of the election. Disproval-caring.	I try to follow the [news where Ryan comes from] as well. Although there was an election in [a specific month]and the party I don't like won. I had to go to London to vote. Since then, I read less news (laughing). (Ryan, interview)
Jo	Prioritising reading new about where he comes from.	Not only [news about where he comes from], it's also world news. So, I will first read the news [about where Jo comes from] and only if something that I think is related to the UK, then, I might check the BBC or the guardian as well. But news wise, I still keep up with news [where Jo comes from]. (Jo, interview)
Alex	Being emotionally there.	The poem is about being away from home, and it applies to all people who are like me, who are thousands of miles away from home. I have made a new 'home' in this country, and we struggle, we struggle with looking back and thinking the door is still open. At the end of the poem he [the poet] says my heart tells me perhaps you should go back before that door shuts and you will no longer be able to go back. (Notes from research diary)
	Sub-theme: Does dying or resting somewhere specific matter?	I had an impression that there might be a link between their longing for returning 'home' and my assumption that it is in these places that they want to be forever, which I have associated with death. I interrogated this assumption by asking the co-participants individually if there is a specific place where they desire to die.

Charlie	Negotiating different Locations	That's great (silence), preferably, I haven't thought about this quite frankly. Firstly, I'm not sure that I will wanna grave. I haven't necessarily thought about it, but I'd rather not. Because after few maybe a generation or so, it becomes bit of a burden, unless I'm famous. Now, if I'm famous, I can totally have grave. Most of it would be my mum's home town, you know, probably, because some of the landscape, the mountains are beautiful. My mum's family I linked to a lot of my nice child memories. The side of the family that I know better, probably, as well. (Charlie, interview) But I wouldn't necessarily like to be buried there like a specific location. If, maybe, some ashes could be scattered there like, some quite pretty, ah shit like may be like, a bit in [a place in Britain]. I do bits the same as (not finishing the sentence). I'm describing myself now as somebody who, you know negotiates different locations. I probably have to pay someone, you know, to just go and deal with. You know, spreading a bit here, spreading a bit there. Where I'd like to die like, preferably (hesitation) I don't know whether it's a new place or a place I know very well, you know, as long as it's got a pretty view. (Charlie, interview)
Ryan	She seems to relate 'death' with the place she intends to retire in. Pointing to 'difference' between Britain and where she comes from in terms of how people relate to the dead, where she seems to position herself somehow.	Oh God, I haven't thought about that (laughing). I suppose because I'm planning to retire probably in (where Ryan comes from), I would imagine. It's interesting. My mum died when I was pregnant with my second child and that it was quite hard. In (where Ryan comes from), there is more culturally and expectations, but also other people go and visit relatives in a cemetery regularly. I don't find it here. So, I think if I die here no one will visit me anyways (laughing). (Ryan, interview)
	Rethinking her previous response.	Where do I die? Yeah, I don't know, I suppose it depends where I am at the time (laughing). Yeah, God, yeah! I didn't talk to my husband about it actually, because we keep saying,

		yeah. I don't know, we haven't decided yet. Hopefully, I've got a while to go (laughing). That's a very good question though. (Ryan, interview)
Eli	Going back to 'the roots' through death	I will probably live somewhere else, but I think as I get older, I think, I wanna be buried in my mum's village. I wanna be in that cemetery. In that cemetery, I wanna be there. It's not where I was born, but it's where my mum's family comes from and again it's where I see the connection, where I feel. So, that's where I want to be eventually. You know, the roots actually call you. They call you back. (Eli, interview)
	Sub-theme: Food	
Kyle	Food as a symbol of tolerance and acceptance of the other	Researcher: you said that when you have friends in your house you do not cook English food, you cook [food where she comes from] Can you tell me more what this means? But I realised that if I were to be friend with some of people I was meeting, who were British, I have to accept their food. They invite me to their house, I think, it needs bit salt. When people invite you to their house, you know, you just cover their food with salt and pepper. Gradually, I kind of said well, I've got and I actually began to enjoy food that way, because I find too much salt and pepper, are not good anyway. (Kyle, interview)
	Food as a medium to 'immersion'.	I don't find British food bland. When I first came, I used to put lots of pepper and salt. Now, I can eat it without and I make it in my own house and things like that. So, I think immersion is about allowing some of what's in the culture to influence you, but also allow yourself to be an influence within the cultures, and people can learn and take this from you as well. (Kyle, interview)
Alex	Food as a statement of	My kids are the latest thing.... These days,

	self-perception.	they've started making fun of me because I have started baking sourdough bread. There is this bread called sourdough which is a very sort of middle-class white British thing to do, and I make it very regularly and… you have to keep feeding it (laughing). I think this is a very postcolonial thing. We want to be accepted as OK… So, the sourdough bread because it's such a symbol of middle-class white culture, my kids told me that it's a new thing that I am doing to feel accepted (laughing). (Alex, interview)
	The significance of practices, such as coffee beans and Artisan gin in how he perceives and projects himself.	I was thinking of our discussions the other day and laughing because my latest attempt to become a white middle-class person is that my wife has bought a coffee grinder. So, we have started buying coffee beans and grinding them fresh each time for a cup of aromatic coffee! First, the sourdough and now coffee beans… I wonder what will be next. Artisan gin, I guess. Then, one day, I will look at the mirror and realise that despite all my attempts at being white on the inside, I am at best a coconut and still brown on the outside and the disillusionment will send me to despair!. (Alex, email) [Use notes from my research diary with Alex about the book of Black Skin, White Masks.]
	His perception of a place he lives in in Britain: 'all the same, one colour, flavour'.	My children got their own flavour of international food and international languages and people and cultures. Ironically, when we came here, it was in (a place in England). It was all white. Everyone was the same, everyone, you know, was one colour and one flavour. I'm very comfortable in (where Alex comes from). I think, I'm one of those fortunate people, I guess, it's because I think very international, I like to think that you put me anywhere and I'll be comfortable. (Alex, interview)

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Appendix Five: Organisation of the data chapters