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“I can express *myself*, but not *my self*” – Investigating the English Language Identity of Polish migrants in Scotland

Jaroslaw Kriukow

PhD in Education

The University of Edinburgh

2017
Abstract

Poles comprise the largest group of migrants in Scotland. The Scottish Government’s plan has been to attract and retain them to counter the issues of Scotland’s aging population and insufficient labour force, as well as to promote cultural diversity and tolerance (Scottish Government, 2013). However, research on Polish migrants’ experiences suggests that there is a discrepancy between the rhetoric of retaining migrants in a tolerant and inclusive society and the reality, in which Poles tend not to integrate with the local communities and to work below their skill-set and education level (Kobialka, 2016). This is clearly detrimental to the aforementioned government goal of ensuring their emotional and financial well-being and sense of belonging.

The existing, and predominantly sociolinguistic, research attributes these issues almost exclusively to the migrants’ “little knowledge of English” (Weishaar, 2008: 1252), whilst overlooking findings from social psychology that suggest that there is more to a person’s ‘relationship’ with the language than just proficiency. These findings suggest that one’s self-concept, or the sum of beliefs about him/herself, is strongly connected to language and may influence his/her everyday decisions and behaviour (Rubio, 2014). Thus, this current study investigated the experiences of Polish migrants in Scotland from this under-researched perspective, focusing on the relationship between the migrants’ self-concept and the English language, referred to as English Language Identity (ELI), as a concept potentially playing a central part in the migrants’ experiences. Gaining an understanding of the migrants’ ELI was believed to be crucial, in order to determine ways of preparing future learners of English to face their potential migration experience with confidence and high self-esteem.

In this longitudinal mixed methods study, 20 Polish migrants were interviewed twice and they each submitted electronic journals, in which they reflected on their language-related experiences. Additionally, the findings were validated through a structured questionnaire completed by 378 respondents in the final stage of the study.

The data analysis revealed that the participants’ ELI was a dynamic relationship manifested during social encounters in which they made evaluations of how successfully they managed to express their ‘desired self’, or self-concept, and based these evaluations on their perceptions of the ‘ascribed selves’. The perceived communication failure or success, resulting respectively from discrepancy or match between these selves, influenced the
participants’ self-esteem, which, in turn, had an impact on their future behaviour and a range of decisions, including the decision of whether or not to remain in Scotland. This dynamic interplay between the desired and ascribed selves that essentially defined the participants’ ELI was influenced by their self-assessed English competence, beliefs about other people’s perceptions of migrants and their general beliefs about the language and its speakers. The latter, based on the assumption that Native English Speakers (NESs) are linguistic experts and ‘owners’ of the language, influenced the participants’ understanding of communication success/failure and of linguistic ‘correctness’, as well as their self-assessed English competence.

These findings, coupled with findings from the fields of social psychology, sociolinguistics and English Language Teaching (ELT), were used to make suggestions for English language classrooms and for general pedagogy in Poland and Scotland to reconsider its content, in order to foster the learners’ self-growth, build their self-esteem and prepare them to recognise and address various forms of prejudice and stereotyping.
Declaration of authorship

I, Jaroslaw Kriukow, declare that the thesis entitled

“"I CAN EXPRESS MYSELF, BUT NOT MY SELF“-INVESTIGATING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IDENTITY OF POLISH MIGRANTS IN SCOTLAND”

is my own work and has been composed as the result of my own original research. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisors, Dr Nicola Galloway and Dr Joan Cutting, for their support in my PhD study and in my professional and personal development. Thanks to their immense knowledge and professional expertise, their patience and motivation and, above all, their enthusiasm and continuous encouragement, I developed not only into a skilled researcher, but also a self-confident individual who recognises his value. I cannot imagine having better mentors and PhD supervisors.

My sincere thanks also go to all other staff members at the university, including Lorraine Denholm and Moira Ross, who both patiently and quickly replied to dozens of emails I sent them. They, and other employees with whom I had the pleasure to interact, were always helpful and their support enabled me to maximise the value of my education at the university.

Finally, I would like to thank my family: my parents and my wife for supporting me mentally throughout this journey, and my wife and children for putting up with me throughout it.
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Introduction

This thesis outlines a study that addressed the experiences of Polish migrants in Scotland from a previously under-researched psycho-social perspective that focused on the relationship between the migrants’ self-perceptions and the English language.

The post-accession migration, or the movement of migrants from Central and Eastern to Western Europe, that started after the European Union (EU) enlargement in May 2004, is unique in its remarkable size and intensity (Fihel et al., 2008; Salt and Millar, 2006). The UK alone, which, at that time, opened its labour market to eight new members of the EU (referred to as the A8), is estimated to have received approximately 1.5 million A8 workers between 2004 and 2009 (Sumption and Somerville, 2009). Polish migrants comprised about two-thirds of the A8 immigration (ibid.) and soon established themselves as the largest migrant group in the UK (Census Analysis, 2011).

Unsurprisingly, this large group of migrants, who form such a substantial part of the UK society and whose mother tongue quickly became the second most widely spoken language in the UK after English (Census Analysis, 2011), have attracted the attention of scholars, who have investigated the Polish migrants’ experiences from various perspectives. Common themes emerging from these studies are the Poles’ ‘poor’ integration and socialisation with the local communities and their tendency to work in low-skilled jobs that do not match their relatively high level of qualification and education (cf. Bielewska, 2010; Blanchflower and Lawton, 2008; Drinkwater et al., 2006; Garapich, 2008; Kobialka, 2016; Skrzypek et al., 2014; Sumption and Somerville, 2009). Furthermore, Scotland, unlike England, where efforts have been made to restrict the arrival of more migrants and to reduce the present migrants’ rights (Saggar and Somerville, 2012), continues to aim to both attract and retain a large number of migrants to address its population decline and resulting insufficient labour force, as well as to promote and encourage cultural diversity (Hepburn and Rosie, 2014; Moskal, 2013; Scottish Government, 2013). In considering these aims, the aforementioned patterns emerging from the research on Polish migrants are alarming. The combination of financial and emotional well-being resulting from forging social ties outside one’s own group and from ‘status consistency’, or the match between one’s perceived professional and social status and the performed job (Kobialka, 2015), is arguably one of the major factors influencing the migrants’ decision of whether or not to remain in Scotland. It is, thus, crucial
to investigate the Polish migrants’ experiences, in order to gain an understanding of the above situation, not only to contribute to the Government’s goal, but to generally ensure the migrants’ emotional and financial well-being and to foster their sense of belonging (Moskal, 2013).

Studies attempting to explain the issues of Poles’ socialisation patterns and professional situation have focused largely on the migrants’ English competence and seem to be based on the assumption that the English language has a strictly ‘instrumental’ role in the migrants’ lives, as a means of getting across factual information (cf. Sumption and Somerville, 2009; Trevena, 2013; Weishaar, 2008). On the whole, these studies imply that the correlation between English skill and the aforementioned socialisation patterns and professional situation is straightforward and self-evident, appearing to assume that those who speak English well will be successful both socially and professionally, whilst those who are less proficient in English will not.

However, researchers do agree that language is an indispensable element of a person’s overall sense of self, or ‘identity’, as it is through language that we first internally conceptualise, and then express and negotiate, that sense of self during interactions (cf. Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Park, 2007; Williams and Burden, 1997). When discussing the implications of the relationship between language and identity for Second Language (L2) learning, some scholars have argued that the link between the two is so strong that “to learn a second language is to take on a new identity” (Guiora et al., 1972: 422). Most importantly, this identity, being a complex relationship between people’s broadly defined self-beliefs and various social contexts, is believed to strongly influence their everyday decisions and behaviour (cf. Ryan and Irie, 2015). Therefore, rather than being merely a tool for ‘getting the meaning across’, or conveying basic factual information, the language is also a means for constructing, expressing and negotiating one’s sense of self and a factor ultimately influencing a number of aspects of any given person’s experiences.

In considering these links between language and identity, it was believed in this current study that being required to express and negotiate their ‘self’ with a language other than their mother tongue, and one that had not ‘traditionally’ been part of their self, could influence the migrants’ self-perceptions and self-esteem, which, in turn, could, consequently, influence a number of decisions and behaviours defining their experiences. Hence, this current study aimed to investigate the relationship between the English language and the migrants’ self-concept, understood as their sum of beliefs about themselves, “consisting of different dimensions or selves, namely physical, social, familiar, personal, academic and many other
situational ones” (Rubio, 2015: 42). The main objective was to gain an in-depth understanding of this relationship, referred to as English Language Identity (ELI), the factors influencing it and its influence on the migrants’ lives, in order to determine if a positive development of ELI could be fostered in future ELT classrooms.

Unlike the somewhat simplified notion of ‘identity’ commonly used in sociolinguistic research as a substitute for beliefs and attitudes, or the sense of membership of certain communities defined by nationality, culture or spoken language (cf. Jenks, 2013; Rezaei et al., 2014), the concept of ‘identity’ in this study is viewed as being much more complex, as a result of drawing from the findings of several fields of study. One of the strengths of this current study stemmed from utilising findings from the fields of sociolinguistics and social psychology, in aiming to develop a perception of identity as being a complex and largely subjective notion based on individual self-perceptions and possibly influenced by the current global spread of the English language. Over the years, sociolinguists investigating the links between Non-native English Speakers’ (NNESs’) identity and the English language in a variety of contexts have increasingly recognised identity as a notion constructed largely through individual ‘agency’, or a person’s self-perceptions and subjective constructions and interpretations of the surrounding reality (cf. Pavlenko, 2002; Omoniyi and White, 2006) (see sections 2.4 and 2.5). From this perspective, a person’s ‘positioning’ (Davies and Harre, 1990), or perceptions of his/her and other people’s role and status in the wider social context, including beliefs about membership of certain ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1991), is crucial in the process of identity construction.

These findings are in line with claims made in social psychology literature, a field of study that has arguably contributed most to investigation of the relationship between the broadly defined ‘sense of self’ and English language learning. Research within this field has showcased the role of interpretations of the explicit and implicit feedback during interaction and of the speakers’ comparisons “with those perceived as being better than themselves” (Mercer 2011: 88), or ‘experts’ within a particular domain, in forming the image of oneself and, consequently, in a range of decisions and behaviours defining a person’s ‘self’. However, despite its contributions to the notion of NNESs’ identification in relation to English, social psychology has largely overlooked the role of the globalisation of English, the changing demographics of NESs/NNESs and a variety of contexts and ways in which English is used for NNESs’ positioning and the perceptions of ‘power relations’ and ‘imagined communities’ that are central to it (see Chapter Three for a detailed discussion of the influence of the global spread of English on the notion of NNESs’ identification).
This current thesis addressed this gap and considered the role of this “changing landscape of English” (Jenks, 2013: 166) by drawing from research into English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (see Section 3.1), which fits into both fields of sociolinguistics and ELT research, in order to gain additional insight into the notion of NNES language identity. With regard to NNES identity, findings from ELF research have showcased how the global spread of English, and the increasing number of its speakers from a variety of socio-cultural backgrounds who use the language as a common means of communication, has created a range of new “identity categories” (Jenks, 2013: 168) for NNESs. In essence, ELF scholars argue that, with the globalisation of English and its use as a global lingua franca, the English language is no longer exclusively owned by Native English Speakers (NESs), but now ‘belongs’ to everyone who speaks it. These ELF scholars further argue that NESs do not represent a realistic, or relevant, benchmark for English learners and, hence, NNESs should perceive themselves as being legitimate and competent users of a ‘global’ language (Cervatiuc, 2009) and being identified with a global community of English L2 speakers, instead of having the desire to integrate into NES communities (cf. Lamb, 2003; Ryan, 2006). At the same time, research suggests that NNESs are rarely aware of these empowering concepts, tending to see themselves as “deficient native speaker[s]” (Cook, 1999: 195) and holding beliefs of NESs’ ‘superiority’ (cf. Galloway 2011, 2013). Bearing in mind the aforementioned importance of social comparisons for identification, the increasing number of NNESs and the increased use of ELF showcased by ELF research were considered in relation to the notion of NESs’ status as linguistic ‘experts’. In considering the strong link between language and identity, the perceptions of the migrants in relation to both themselves and others as users of English were believed to potentially influence their general perceptions of themselves and their skills outside the language, which could, eventually, influence their self-confidence and self-esteem, affect their socialisation and result in them selecting jobs below their skill set. This “relationship between self-concept and the English language”, or English Language Identity (ELI), could, thus, ultimately influence their migrant experience. In order to fully explore this potential relationship between the sum of migrants’ self-perceptions and the quality of their migration experience, the following research questions, and sub-questions, were constructed:

1. What is the Polish migrants’ ELI?
2. What factors influence Polish migrants’ ELI?
3. How does Polish migrants’ ELI affect their lives?
   - Does ELI affect their self-esteem?
   - If so, what are the effects of this on their lives?
It was crucial in this current study to address research questions 1 and 3, respectively, to gain insight into the migrants’ ELI and to explore whether it could affect a number of the aforementioned aspects of their lives, including their socialisation and professional situation. The aim of research question 2 was to provide an understanding of how pedagogy may foster a desirable development of ELI to benefit learners’, or future migrants’, well-being and to contribute to the Scottish Government’s goal of retaining migrants in Scotland. Additionally, two sub-questions were added to Research Question 3 at a later stage. The topic of self-esteem regularly emerged in the analysed data and it was decided that, in compliance with the constructivist grounded theory approach (described in detail in Section 4.4.1), this aspect of the participants’ self-perceptions was worthy of a detailed empirical investigation and, hence, a research question of its own (for a more detailed explanation see Chapter Seven).

The first three chapters of this thesis provide a theoretical background to the study by discussing relevant literature. The argument put forward throughout this introductory section is developed further, beginning with an overview of statistical data and empirical studies of Polish migrants in the UK in Chapter One. This is followed by a critical review of literature devoted to language and identity in Chapter Two and an outline of relevant research devoted to the global spread of English and its consequences for NNESs’ identification in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four focuses on the research design, specifying the research rationale, aims and research questions, describes the setting and participants and discusses the philosophical and methodological foundations underpinning the study. Then, it provides a detailed outline of the research process, describing the recruitment criteria and the application of data collection and analysis tools and techniques in the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. It concludes with a description of ways to secure validity and reliability of research and its findings and a discussion of ethical procedures, as well as risks and limitations that were considered.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven discuss the results of the data analysis in relation to research questions 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

The final chapter provides the conclusion to the thesis. It briefly summarises the whole thesis and draws the implications of the findings for both ELT and general pedagogy. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the contributions to world knowledge and suggestions for further research.
Chapter One – Background to the study of Polish migrants’ language identity

1.1. The number of Polish migrants in the UK.

Migrants form a large proportion of the UK population. According to the Migration Observatory from the University of Oxford (Rienzo and Vargas-Silva, 2015), migrants constitute approximately 13% of the UK population, with approximately 10% being Polish migrants. A large proportion of these newcomers from Poland arrived in the UK after 2004 as part of, not only a large, but also an exceptionally intense flow of migrants (Fihel et al., 2008; Salt and Millar, 2006). While the UK census in 2001 showed that 58,000 people born in Poland were residing in the UK, this number increased to 520,000 in 2008 (Upward, 2008). This resulted in, from being the thirteenth largest foreign national group residing in the UK in 2004, the Poland-born residents becoming the largest migrant group by 2008 (Pollard et al., 2008). This increase was a consequence of the enlargement of the EU by 10 countries in 2004 and the UK opening up its labour market to eight of these countries, referred to as the A8 countries, that had an income level below the Western Europe average, one of which was Poland. It was estimated that around 1.5 million workers from the A8 countries came to the UK between 2004 and 2009 (Sumption and Somerville, 2009), with Polish migrants making up about two-thirds of this A8 immigration (ibid.). Furthermore, in the 2011 census of languages spoken in England and Wales, 546,000 people reported Polish to be their main language, resulting in Polish being the second most widely spoken language in the UK, after English (Census Analysis, 2011).

Although it is difficult to provide the exact numbers, the significant difference between the number of migrants from Poland and from other countries is evident in the amount of registrations for a National Insurance Number (NIN) in 2013 (see Table 1.1), as cited by the Office for National Statistics (2014, p.27).
Table 1.1

National Insurance Number Registrations For Adult Overseas Nationals Entering The UK - Top 20 registrations 2013 (top five countries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>% Change to previous year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>518.95</td>
<td>617.24</td>
<td>98.29</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>342.57</td>
<td>440.02</td>
<td>97.45</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non European Union</td>
<td>175.98</td>
<td>176.72</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>80.47</td>
<td>111.45</td>
<td>30.98</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>38.08</td>
<td>51.73</td>
<td>13.65</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>26.61</td>
<td>44.11</td>
<td>17.50</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>31.62</td>
<td>30.62</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>20.44</td>
<td>30.12</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Office for National Statistics (2014: 27)

Table 1.1 illustrates that, in 2014, Polish people were the largest group of recipients of a NIN. Although this table and the above discussion are useful in illustrating the scale of the recent migration, they are not definitive, due to some differences in the estimates provided by different sources. Moreover, the number of NIN recipients provided by the Office for National Statistics (2014) does not, understandably, include those who did not apply for a NIN, although they were required to do so, or those who were not required to apply (Orchard et al., 2007), which is the major limitation of this source of data. Another way of gathering data specific to A8 migrants is via the registration numbers on the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS), which is a requirement for those who wish to work in the UK for at least one month. However, there is evidence that 40% of the Polish nationals who, after 2004, worked in the UK and then returned to Poland were not registered (Pollard et al., 2008) and, furthermore, approximately 14% of migrants are not required to register (including those who are self-employed) (Trevena, 2009). Despite the discrepancies in the numbers provided by various sources, the available data does, unquestionably, “illustrate the unprecedented scale of Polish migration to Britain following the accession” (Trevena, 2009: 8).
In Scotland, within the group of non-Scottish nationals residing in the country, which comprises 7% (369,000) of the total population (5,295,000), approximately 15% (55,231) are Polish (Krausova and Vargas-Silva, 2013). Although Scotland does have a smaller percentage of non-UK born nationals than England or Wales, the non-UK population increased at a higher rate in Scotland (93%) than in the other two countries (62%) between 2001 and 2011, which may partially stem from the differences in the countries’ policies regarding newcomers (see further below). The number for the Polish group alone increased by 2,105% during this period, from Poland being the 18th top country of birth for non-UK residents in 2001 (with 2,505 Poles residing in Scotland at that time) to it becoming the top ranked country (with 55,231 Polish nationals in Scotland), with the highest number of foreign-born residents in Scotland being reported in the Edinburgh council area (75,678) (Krausova and Vargas-Silva, 2013: 2).

Whilst such a high number of EU migrants in the UK may seem to reflect the UK government’s reputation within the European context as respecting multiculturalism and fostering tolerance for diversity (Modood, 2013; Pilkington, 2008), scholars have repeatedly pointed out that there exists divergence in the sub-state UK governments’ policies with regard to the reception and treatment of migrants (cf. Hepburn, 2014). Thus, while the UK government has reportedly attempted to reduce migrants’ rights, possibly to discourage the current migrants from remaining in, and potential future migrants from coming to, the UK (Saggar and Somerville, 2012; Spencer, 2011), and also to restrict the arrival of migrants from outside the EU, the Scottish government’s plan has been to attract and retain a large number of migrants to address the population decline and resulting insufficient labour force, as well as to promote and encourage cultural diversity (Hepburn and Rosie, 2014; Moskal, 2013; Scottish Government, 2013). The Scottish Government’s approach that both highlights and values migrants’ contribution to the Scottish economy, and to the society as a whole, is evident in a number of schemes and policies, such as the ‘Fresh Talent’ programme, which is aimed at encouraging migrants to study, work and live in Scotland (Moskal, 2013), or the provision of free-of-charge English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for migrants.

The contrasting attitudes towards migrants held by the Scottish and English public and officials became particularly noticeable both during and after the ‘Brexit’ campaign, which took place in the final months of writing this thesis. In a referendum held in June 2016, the majority of UK citizens expressed the opinion that the UK should withdraw from the EU. According to the Lord Ashcroft Polls (2016), an online source, the second main reason for
voting ‘leave’, after “the principle that decisions about the UK should be taken in the UK” (49%), was linked to the notion of national identity and the belief that withdrawing from the EU would help the UK to regain control over immigration (33%). There were, however, notable differences in the distribution of votes across the UK, with Scotland having the highest proportion of voters in favour of remaining in the EU (62%) (BBC News, 2016). Further differences could be observed in the aftermath of Brexit, as according to Osler (2016), within a week, the number of hate crimes launched at migrants rose by 400% in England, whilst Scottish officials have been emphasising their solidarity with, and welcoming attitudes towards, migrants. One example is the Scottish Government’s plan to introduce Polish as an optional foreign language in Scottish schools, as a way, according to the Scottish Herald, “to make EU nationals feel more welcome” (Denholm, 2016).

Despite these efforts by the Government to both attract and retain migrants in Scotland, it is unfortunate that, according to a number of studies focusing on Polish migrants in the UK, migrants’ experiences do not always match these aspirations. The following section discusses the findings of these studies and argues for the need to investigate Polish migrants’ experiences from a previously under-researched perspective.

1.2. Rationale for investigating the Polish migrants’ identity.

It is unsurprising that such a large movement of migrants and the resulting large group of people that became a substantial part of the society in a relatively short period of time has attracted scholars’ attention in diverse fields, including sociology, psychology, sociolinguistics and ELT. Reasons for this attention arguably include the feeling that it is important to foster migrants’ “sense of belonging in the majority culture” (Moskal, 2014: 279), stemming from a genuine concern about people’s broadly defined well-being and belief of migrants’ potential contribution to the host country’s economy (Pietka et al., 2015). Consequently, various aspects of Polish migrants’ experiences have been researched and documented, with investigations of Polish migrants in the UK including studies of their integration patterns (cf. Garapich, 2008), the ways they establish and maintain social networks (cf. Ryan et al., 2008), the relationship between the post-war and post-accession migrants (cf. Bielewska, 2011; Galasinska, 2010), Poles’ intended length of stay in the UK (cf. Drinkwater and Garapich, 2015) and their experiences within specific professional sectors (cf. Janta et al., 2011) or the experiences of Polish migrant children in schools (cf.
Overall, these investigations have focused on how well Polish migrants have established themselves within the UK society.

The results of these studies, and the available statistical data, indicate that Poles tend to work in low-skilled jobs that do not match their skills and education and rarely forge social ties outside their own group (cf. Bielewska, 2010; Blanchflower and Lawton, 2008; Drinkwater et al., 2006; Garapich, 2008; Kobialka, 2016; Skrzypek et al., 2014; Sumption and Somerville, 2009). The situation in the Scottish context is particularly alarming, as there seems to be “a considerable gap between the rhetoric of attracting new migrants to settle in a fair and social democratic society and the low-skilled and poorly paid jobs in which the majority of Poles are working” (Moskal, 2013: 158), despite there being a relationship between professional situation, well-being and socialisation and its outcomes. Were the migrants to socialise with the local community, for example, not only would this contribute to their mental health and emotional well-being (Weishaar, 2010), but this increased exposure to the language would also benefit their acquisition of English (Kobialka, 2015; Skrzypek et al., 2014), possibly resulting in them overcoming the economic disadvantage by gaining access to specialised, well-paid jobs (cf. Ryan et al., 2008; Trevena, 2013).

Furthermore, this could arguably contribute to the government’s goal of retaining the migrants in Scotland, as their improved financial situation would likely influence their decision about remaining in the country. However, Kobialka (2015), based on the findings from her study of 37 Polish migrants in Dublin, argued that perceived loss of professional status, associated with working below one’s qualifications and or/skill level, affects both socialisation practices and English acquisition.

It seems crucial, therefore, to explore the factors related to Polish migrants’ poor socialisation practices and them working below their education level, in order to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and to aid the government’s goal of retaining them in Scotland. The importance of these factors has been evidenced in a number of studies attempting to explore and explain them. However, it does appear that the conclusions and explanations provided by these studies do not fully account for the complexity of each individual’s life experiences. By focusing almost exclusively on English competence as a factor influencing these experiences, researchers do not place importance on a person’s subjective interpretations of the surrounding reality for his/her overall well-being. The authors of the aforementioned studies attribute both socialisation practices and professional situation of the migrants mainly to their limited English competence, which is discussed critically later in this paper. Suggested reasons for the migrants’ working in low-skilled jobs
also include their low English language skills, employers’ discrimination or migrants’ willingness to apply for unskilled jobs because of a short intended stay in the UK (Sumption and Somerville, 2009). The issue of the educated Polish migrants’ working below their qualification level has been addressed in detail by Trevena (2013) in a qualitative study with “elements of grounded theory” (p. 170), in which the author claims to have investigated “the impact of working below one’s qualifications on the identity, well-being and values of educated migrants” (ibid.: 170-171). Based on the data collected from interviewing 28 Polish migrants in London, the author classified the factors contributing to the migrants working below their skill and education level into several groups. Trevena’s (ibid.) detailed typology, consisting of macro-, meso- and micro-level factors provides an in-depth insight into a number of contributing factors, ranging from the differing economic and institutional conditions in both countries to the role of the migrants’ social networks, aims of migration or “national traits” (ibid.: 170). However, despite the aforementioned claim that the study would draw a link between the migrants’ professional situation and their ‘identity’, this dimension of their migration experience is not articulated in the study.

Prior to examining the literature in this area, although I believed that English competence was, without doubt, an influential factor shaping migrants’ experiences in this English-speaking country, on a personal and subjective level I believed that there were other likely contributing factors linked to the language. Whilst acknowledging its importance, I was interested in other ways the language could influence the migrants’ lives. I believed that, in their migrant experience, in which they had been rapidly immersed in a new linguistic environment, the way they perceived themselves as users of English was likely to affect their sense of self. My impression was that their general understanding of English as an exclusive property of Native English Speakers (NESs) was a factor contributing to their lack of confidence in speaking the language, which seemed to cause low self-esteem in general and affect their understanding of what their skills were outside the language, ultimately resulting in them selecting jobs below their skill set, and possibly also affect a number of other decisions or behaviours. These assumptions were influenced by literature within both the English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) research paradigm (see Section 3.1) that has showcased how ‘traditional’ approaches to ELT tend to promote the notion of ‘NES superiority’ and social psychology, which has demonstrated that a person’s ‘sense of self’ exists in the relationship with language and influences that person’s behaviour and decisions (see Section 2.6). It was deemed to be of great importance, hence, to gain an insight into these self-perceptions, in order to make suggestions for ELT and to develop proposals for pedagogy.
that would not only be effective in teaching the language itself, but would also promote a desirable development of ‘self’ characterised by high self-esteem and confidence when using the language.

However, studies of Polish migrants have not, to date, investigated migrants’ self-perceptions in relation to their status as users of English. Moreover, despite some studies reporting that participants have stated their feelings and beliefs, which could provide valuable knowledge about their self-perceptions and subsequent influence on migrants’ experiences, the impression is that these statements were not explored in detail. One example is Kobiałka’s (2015) study of the effects of ‘status inconsistency’, or the discrepancy between perceived professional status in Poland and in the UK, on the identity construction of Polish migrants in Ireland. Despite the author frequently referring to the participants’ emotions and subjective interpretations of reality, and quoting them making statements that arguably constitute one of the most intriguing insights into the relationship between language and the broadly defined ‘identity’ to be found in literature on Polish migrants, no attempt is made to explore this topic in detail. When analysing the content of the 37 interviews, Kobialka (ibid.) described the migrants’ feelings of stress, frustration and dissatisfaction stemming from the discrepancy between their perceived status in Poland and in the Irish context resulting from them working below their skill set and education level. She further mentioned their “fear of being perceived as unintelligent, due to their current occupational position” (ibid: 203), arguing that the aforementioned discrepancy affected their self-esteem. Despite the impression being that the described emotions of the migrants and their evaluation of other people’s perceptions do play a significant role in the migrants’ experiences, other than the aforementioned brief references to these subjective interpretations of reality, again there is no attempt made to further explore these factors. This lack of deeper investigation is evident when the author interprets the following extract from one of the interviews as a manifestation of the role of language as a central element of a person’s identity:

“I never actually realized of how much there is in language – like how much of your personality, of who you are, where you are from, is actually in a language you speak. I wasn’t aware of how much of me was in Polish, how much of me I enjoy was actually me speaking Polish”

(Kobialka, 2015: 205; emphasis in the original).

In the above statement the participant seems to express a belief about a strong relationship between language and sense of self and, although he speaks about Polish, it is safe to assume
that, as he realises “how much of who you are” is in the language spoken, him being required to speak English in the context of migration may have put this sense of self on the line. This is, arguably, one of the most thought-provoking statements to be found, not only in this study, but also in other studies of Polish migrants’ experiences. Bearing in mind both the previously mentioned references to stress and frustration and the above migrant’s statement, a question could be raised regarding, for example, the extent to which these emotions were the result of status inconsistency or whether they could be the cause of it, resulting from the affected sense of self from having to communicate in English. Although the accounts cited in Kobiałka’s (2015) study provide an insight into a possible relationship between English and the migrants’ sense of self and indicate that this relationship could influence a number of aspects of migrants’ lives, including their professional situation, the author does not further explore these statements.

In contrast, whilst Kobiałka’s (2015) study appears to overlook the ‘language dimension’ of the migrants’ experiences, the majority of studies of Polish migrants ignore dimensions other than language. For example, in the study by Trevena (2013) mentioned previously, although the author claims that English competence is a factor influencing migrants’ professional standing, she focuses exclusively on the instrumental role of English as the means to “advance their position” (p. 182) in the labour market. Moreover, although she briefly discusses the importance of the migrants’ perceptions and beliefs in the context of the ‘micro-level’ factors, she focuses on their “perceptions of the impermanence of their stay, along with their motives for moving to the host country and for continuing their stay” (p. 186). There lacks consideration of their general sense of who they are and the role of English in shaping these perceptions. Similarly, in a study of the stress experienced by Polish migrants in Scotland conducted by Weishaar (2008), the author appears to assume that English played an exclusively ‘instrumental’ role in the migrants’ lives, although the participants’ statements extracted from eight interviews and two focus groups (n=4 and 5, respectively) suggested otherwise. One of the sources of stress identified in this study was the participants’ difficulty with communication, stemming from them having “little knowledge of English” (p. 1252). The participants mentioned problems with being understood, forging relationships with local people or being able to, generally, ‘be themselves’, as indicated in the following extract:

Sometimes I sit at a bus stop and some elderly lady wants to talk to me and I can’t understand her, sadly, because I would like to talk to her, as it’s an interesting way to
get to know the culture and place. Also, I can’t help when, for example, I am asked for directions. I have always liked helping people and I hate being passive.

Weishaar (2008: 1253)

It appears that, in this statement, the participant is expressing her belief that language is a tool used, not only for instrumental purposes, such as sharing or obtaining information, but also to ‘act out’ her real personality. In discussing the findings of this study, however, the author focused only on the ‘transactional’ (Brown and Yule, 1983) role of the language as a tool for ‘getting the meaning across’, thus implying that the stress experienced by the migrants was related to them not being able to ‘function’ effectively within various domains of their everyday life. No consideration was given, however, to the possibility that their low English competence could also pose problems in expressing their ‘real selves’, which could be the main contributory factor of their stress and anxiety.

To sum up, although Polish migrants’ experiences have been investigated in various fields, and by a variety of methods, it is surprising that little attention has been paid to the role of the English language in these experiences, with even less attention being placed on its potential function as a tool for constructing one’s sense of self and expressing one’s personality or identity. Some of the findings do suggest, however, that, with the migrants having to communicate in a different language, they are also required to use this language to construct, and express, their sense of self, and being unable to do this may result in them feeling stressed and frustrated, which may, ultimately, influence their overall experiences. This is in line with the extensive literature conducted within the fields of sociolinguistics and social psychology on the broadly defined concept of ‘identity’, in which it is suggested that migrants being immersed in a context where they are forced to express their identity through a language that is not normally a part of that identity may have a significant influence on their overall well-being (cf. Block, 2007). This literature also demonstrates that language is a tool that plays a central role in the complex process of identity construction, which consists of a number of subjective interpretations of one’s self, of other people’s perceptions and of the wider social context. The following Chapter Two outlines research related to various forms of ‘self’ and explains its relevance to the context discussed in this current thesis.
Chapter Two – Language Identity

This current study utilises the strengths of several fields that jointly contribute to understanding the relationship between second, or additional, language and identity. This chapter provides a detailed insight into the topic of language identity by drawing on findings within the fields of sociolinguistics and social psychology. Language identity is firstly defined with its various components, as determined by both sociolinguistic and social psychology research, and studies related to NNES language identity are also discussed. The chapter concludes by arguing that, in order to fully cater for the various factors that may influence NNES identification, it is necessary to consider research within the field of ELF that showcased the relevance of the global spread of English when discussing how NNESs perceive themselves and others.

2.1. Defining Language Identity.

The relationship between a person’s second, or additional, language and his/her general sense of who he/she is was called ‘Second Language Identity’ by Block (2007) and defined as “the assumed and/or attributed relationship between one’s sense of self and a means of communication” (p:40). Although Block did not provide a definition of the “sense of self” and it may, in fact, appear to have a common sense meaning, such as “the picture of oneself” (Hamlyn, 1983: 241), there exists a broad body of research devoted to the notion of self-concept (cf. Bong and Skaalvik; 2003; Marsh et al., 1988; Pajares, 1996; Pajares and Miller, 1994), which seems to be what Block was referring to as the sense of self. In this current thesis, self-concept is understood as “the beliefs (…) about oneself” (Hamlyn, 1983: 241), “consisting of different dimensions or selves, namely physical, social, familiar, personal, academic and many other situational ones” (Rubio, 2015: 42). These beliefs, as Rubio (ibid.) argued, determine a person’s behaviour and “individuality” (p.42). According to Mercer (2011), the difference between self-concept and identity is that the former refers to a person’s inner, subjective sense of self and the latter relates the interaction between beliefs about oneself and various social contexts. Mercer’s (ibid.) classification was adopted in this study, due to its clear differentiation between self-concept and identity, and also because it closely corresponds to my own understanding of these terms. Additionally, this view of self-
concept as being a general set of beliefs about oneself, consisting of the aforementioned variety of “dimensions” (Rubio, 2015: 42) of one’s ‘self’, was found to be useful, as it encompasses a number of different ‘types of self’ discussed by scholars who sought to distinguish between different biological and psychological aspects of a person’s self-concept (cf. Neisser, 1988; Neisser and Jopling, 1997; Schumann, 1997). In her influential book, The multilingual subject: what foreign language learners say about their experience and why it matters, Kramsch (2009) discussed these different aspects in detail, providing examples of how they manifest themselves in language learners’ various experiences. Among the various types of ‘self’ that Kramsch (ibid.) considered are such constructs as ‘interpersonal self’, which “comes into existence when the body responds to the response of another body engaged in personal interaction” (ibid.: 70), ‘extended self’, which is based on a person’s memory and associations of him/herself in a certain language that may, thus, be difficult to ‘achieve’ in a foreign language, and ‘reflective self’, which is based on a person’s self-awareness and awareness of the other ‘selves’ described above. According to Kramsch (ibid.), a person’s “conscious or unconscious sense of self” (p.18) is the result of the interplay of these various selves. Overall, this point of view corresponds to what Rubio (2015) described as “situational” selves (p. 42) and their relationship to self-concept, as defined in this current thesis. With regard to identity, the term is so widely used that some have suggested abandoning it, arguing that “it means too much (…) too little (…) or nothing at all” (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 1). Similar to Mercer (2011), Kramsch (2009) made a clear distinction between the subjective and personal sense of self and identity that results from both the interplay between the various selves and their interaction with external social contexts. A person’s identity is, therefore, constructed as a result of both individual agency and the external structures that may determine it, as well as being ‘ascribed’ to an individual, rather than merely being ‘assumed’ by him or her. This, as argued further in Section 2.4, is in line with the assumptions about the nature of identity adopted in this current study. Hence, if Block’s (2007) ‘sense of self’ relates to ‘self-concept’, or a person’s beliefs about him/herself, as defined above, then second language identity refers to any existing relationship between that self-concept and a second, or additional, language. In the context of this current study, thus, migrants’ second language identity would be the relationship between the English language and their self-concept.

According to Block (2007), second language identity includes the concepts of language expertise, language affiliation and language inheritance (Leung et al., 1997; Rampton, 1990), where affiliation refers to “attachment or identification” and inheritance to being “born into a language” (Leung et al., 1997: 555). Block (ibid.) believes these factors to be at constant
interplay, forming second language identity. He argued that the interplay between these factors allows a person’s language identity to shift during his/her lifetime, as “one can be born into a language community – a question of inheritance and possibly expertise – but then, later in life, develop a strong affiliation to, and expertise in, another language community” (Block, ibid.: 40). Block’s definition was found to be particularly relevant to this current study, as it directly addresses the assumption discussed in the previous section, being that, in the migration context, where migrants are rapidly immersed in a new linguistic reality, their sense of self expressed through a language that is not their mother tongue may have an influence on their behaviour and a variety of choices they make. It also presents a view of identity as being something that may vary across contexts, which is a perspective adopted in this study. However, as this current study focused on investigating the language identities enacted when Polish migrants communicated specifically in English, the term coined for the purpose of this research was English Language Identity (ELI). It was believed that, in the era of the globalisation of English, the possible relationship between a NNES’s sense of self and English was unlike other second language speakers’ ‘Second language identities’ (see Chapter Three for a detailed discussion of the implications of the global spread of English for NNES language identity). By analogy to Block’s (2007) definition of language identity, this study defines ELI as “the assumed and/or attributed relationship between one’s self-concept and the English language”. Another divergence from Block’s definition is the use of the term ‘self-concept’, instead of the rather vague term ‘sense of self’, for the purposes explained at the beginning of this section.

Before discussing the conceptual problems with the notion of identity (see Section 2.3), the various approaches to studying it (see sections 2.4 and 2.5) and the research investigating language identity (see Section 2.6), three assumptions about the relationship between language and identity that explain the attention the topic has received from scholars in sociolinguistics, social psychology and ELT are discussed in the following section.

2.2. The importance of investigating NNES language identity.

The importance of establishing a theoretical relevance of the concept of NNES identity to English learning has been increasingly articulated by scholars from various fields (cf. Gass, 1998; Block, 2007; Mercer, 2011), who seem to recognise the relevance of identity for language learning, particularly because “language (…) belongs to a person’s whole social
being; it is a part of one’s identity and is used to convey this identity to other people” (Williams and Burden, 1997: 115). There appears to be three main assumptions about the relationship between language and identity that may explain scholars’ interest in the topic, with the first relating to language learners’ identity, in that “how a learner approaches or engages with learning activities depends, to a large extent, on what the individual thinks and feels about both themselves and the learning activity per se” (Mercer, 2011: 1). From this perspective, establishing an understanding of the language learner identity that the learner ‘brings into’ the classroom, as well as the process of constructing this identity, is essential for understanding and, ultimately, improving the process of English learning and acquisition. The second assumption is that, when a person has to use English in any given communicative context in real life, where he/she is required to express and negotiate his/her identity through a language that is “not [his/her] own” (Polzl and Seidlhofer, 2006: 152), or not a part of that identity, that identity is “put on the line” (Block, 2007: 5). Whilst the first perspective assumes that a learner’s identity influences his/her English learning, the second assumption suggests that the use of English influences the speaker’s identity. Traditionally, this assumption was investigated in the migrant contexts where NNESs found themselves in a new linguistic and cultural environment, being assumed to use English mainly to communicate to the target group of NESs (cf. Block, 2006; Norton; 2000). However, scholars’ efforts to investigate the concept of NNES identity have multiplied with the growing research within the field of ELF (see Section 3.1), which adds a new perspective to the topic. ELF is understood as being a common means of communication between users of different first languages (cf. Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011). Therefore, the assumption is that, since ELF is the most common usage of the language and the majority of ELF communication takes place between NNESs, who have now outnumbered NESs (Crystal, 2012) and whose purpose of learning English is not necessarily to “integrate into [the NESs’] culture” (Jenkins, 2007: 198), this provides a whole range of new “identity categories” (Jenks, 2013: 168) available to NNESs. Findings from ELF research (see Section 3.1) shed new light on a number of concepts, including the idea of linguistic errors/correctness, the notion of a benchmark of linguistic achievement and the question of who ‘owns’ the language (see Section 3.2). These issues are central to debates within the ELF field relating to the status of NNESs and NESs, which, in turn, are relevant to the research within social psychology that showcased the importance of the feedback received from those who are perceived as ‘experts’ of a given person’s self-perceptions (see Section 2.6).
2.3. Conceptual and definitional problems with the notion of identity.

Despite the increased interest in researching the topic of identity and language learning and use in different fields, developing an understanding of this topic has been hindered by its complexity, limited definitions, varying conceptualisations and overlapping terminology and theoretical approaches (Mercer, 2011). This lack of clarity accompanying the discussions of identity caused such scholars as Brubaker and Cooper (2000) to argue against using the term, on the grounds that “it means too much (when understood in a strong sense), too little (when understood in a weak sense) or nothing at all (because of its sheer ambiguity)” (p.1). To some extent, this view may stem from the fact that, as Block (2007) noted, research into Second Language Learning (SLL) and identity developed gradually as a result of “systematic and extensive borrowing from contiguous social science fields of enquiry” (p.2). Hence, terms such as ‘self-concept’, ‘self-esteem’ and ‘identity’ have been used, often interchangeably, in the absence of clear definitions and accompanied by unclear conceptualisations of a chosen theoretical approach. As noted in Section 2.1, in this study ‘self-concept’ is defined as a set of beliefs about oneself, “consisting of different dimensions or selves, namely physical, social, familiar, personal, academic and many other situational ones” (Rubio, 2015: 42), and ‘self-esteem’ as one’s evaluation of that self-concept (ibid.). Whilst both of these concepts are understood, in this study, to relate to the ‘internal’ processes of self-perceptions and self-evaluations, ‘identity’ is viewed as an inclusive term that refers to interaction between these beliefs about oneself and various social contexts (Mercer, 2011).

With regard to the theoretical approach to the relationship between language and identity, the most commonly adopted perspective of identity has been the poststructuralist approach (cf. Coomber, 2013; Jenks, 2013; Omoniyi and White, 2006; Pavlenko, 2002; Ryan, 2006; Samar and Mahdavy, 2009; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009), which is described in detail in Section 2.5. However, in many cases, the characteristics of the nature of identity, as seen from this perspective, such as its broadly defined flexibility, dynamic nature and variability (cf. Coomber, 2013; Morita, 2004; Samar and Mahdavy, 2009; Wong, 2009), seem to be used as a substitute for a definition of the concept. This way of ‘defining’ identity is problematic, as it makes it notoriously difficult for the reader to interpret the findings of the study, or assess its validity and choice of methods. One example is Jenks’ (2013) detailed study of ‘ELF identity’, which involved an analysis of 30 hours of NNESs’ “chat room data” (ibid: 171) and 110 hours of audio-recorded conversation from the Vienna-Oxford
International Corpus of English (VOICE, 2009), a large and publicly available corpus of NNES speech. This study of the manifestation of ‘ELF identities’ in proficiency undoubtedly provides one of the most detailed insights into the topic of NNES identity in light of the global spread of English and the author also provides a clear and detailed discussion of other studies of NNES identity in light of this spread. However, Jenks (ibid.) did not define the term ‘identity’, itself, in his paper, although he did discuss the aforementioned characteristics of identity in detail. Additionally, he argued that observation may be a more appropriate tool for investigating identity, as opposed to interviews, which he believed to be ‘problematic’. He supported this preference by claiming that interviews require the participants “to report on what they believe are the most relevant issues” (Jenks, 2013: 168). Jenks (ibid.) sees this as a limitation that can be overcome by using observational methods. Although it is acceptable to use observational methods for investigating identity, or the concepts related to the ‘self’, and the choice of methods fully depends on the researcher and the adopted theoretical approach, it is unfortunate that, despite the deep level of Jenks’ (ibid.) analysis, his claims, coupled with the lack of definition of identity, leave the reader unsure of what the author understands identity to be. Due to the broad range of notions covered by the umbrella term ‘identity’ and the derivative constructs, such as national identity, learner identity, global identity and ELF identity, not specifying what identity is and what kind of identity is being discussed is problematic, and makes it difficult for the reader to assess the findings, as well as the author’s choice of methods.

Moreover, the contributions of early approaches to identity (see Section 2.4) to the current knowledge of the concept are largely ignored in studies of identity, with the approaches, themselves, being dismissed as merely promoting a view of identity as something fixed, stable and quantifiable. However, not only are “seeds of poststructuralism” (Block, 2007: 46) found in these early descriptions and studies of identity, but, contrary to claims made in the literature, the poststructuralist approach, itself, does not fully dismiss the idea of stability and the importance of external, or social, structures on identity formation (see Section 2.5). The view adopted in this current study was that, although my understanding of identity has been influenced by descriptions of the term from the poststructuralist perspective, this approach would not have developed without the influence of the earlier approaches. Thus, prior to discussing the poststructuralist perspective in length in Section 2.5, the following section provides a brief outline of two other ‘early’ approaches.
2.4. Early approaches to studying identity.

According to Block’s (2007) classification, the early approaches to studying identity were biological determinism and a social structuralist approach. While biological determinism viewed a person’s identity as being determined by biological factors (cf. Baron-Cohen, 2003), social structuralism attributed the formation of an individual’s identity to being dependent on social variables, where “[identity] is seen as the product of the social conditions under which it has developed” (Block, 2007: 11). These social conditions relate to such variables as ethnicity, age, social class, education, etc. that are believed to define a person’s belonging to a given social category. Although this approach was criticised for over-relying on these external categories at the expense of individuals’ self-perceptions and conscious decisions (cf. Pavlenko, 2002), the importance of social factors in a person’s identity is still widely acknowledged among social scientists today (cf. Block, 2006; Norton, 2015). Both of the approaches described above are based on the idea that a person’s identity is determined, and defined, by factors, or structures, which are either impossible, or very difficult, to influence (Block, 2007). These approaches are covered by the term essentialism, defined as “the position that the attributes and behaviour of socially defined groups can be determined and explained by reference to cultural and/or biological characteristics believed to be inherent to the group” (Bucholtz, 2003: 4000). Attributing importance to external factors, or ‘structures’, both of these approaches are also called structuralism. Despite the limitations of these frameworks, and the early research into language and identity that was largely based on them, these studies contributed to the more recent poststructuralist approaches that view identity as a matter of individual agency and social interaction (cf. Jenkins, 2007; Pavlenko, 2002, 2003; Omoniyi and White, 2006). In Block’s (2007) account of early studies concerned with language and identity, for example, a number of concepts are to be found, which have typically come to be associated with the poststructuralist approach. These include, for example, the idea of negotiation of identity and the importance of distribution of power between the speakers (cf. Lambert, 1972), the notion of “positioning” (Whyte, 1943: 262) (see Section 2.6 for the discussion of positioning) and the importance of individual perceptions, or human agency, for identity construction (cf. Brown, 1980). These concepts are central to the conceptualisation of identity in this current study, which acknowledges both these ‘early’ essentialist discussions of identity and the more ‘recent’ poststructuralist approach and perceives the relationship between migrants’ self-concept and English as being potentially influenced by their beliefs about the language, its speakers and their own position in the host society. Section 2.6 discusses these concepts in relation to the
poststructuralist approach to identity, which contributed to the current understanding of the terms.

2.5. Poststructuralist approach to language and identity.

Since the last decade of the 20th century, the research on language and identity has been largely informed by poststructuralist theories of language learning and use (c.f. Block, 2006; Broeder et al., 1996; Cervatiuc, 2009; Han, 2012; Norton, 1997, 2000; Norton and Kamal, 2003). Poststructuralism refers to moving ‘beyond’ structuralism, or the search for “universal and invariant laws of humanity that are operative at all levels of human life” (Ekeh, 1982: 128). The most significant difference between poststructuralism and the earlier approaches is its belief in the importance of ‘human agency’, or an individual’s views, beliefs and interpretations, for his, or her, identity construction. This view is in contrast with the previously discussed biological determinism and social structuralism, which attributed the construction of identity to ‘external structures’, or social and/or biological factors independent of a given person. In the discussions of identity from the poststructuralist perspective, identity is often emphasised as an actively produced and reproduced product of a process, rather than being a fixed state attributed to an individual as a result of external, and independent of this individual, factors (Baker, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Dolby, 2000; Hall, 1996; Schneider, 2003). The subjective nature of identity also implies that it is constructed and negotiated socially in any given interaction (cf. Jenks 2013; Ryan 2006; Virkkula and Nikula 2010; Wong 2009), when it is “confirmed, shaped and reshaped” (Brown, 1980: 53-4). Norton (2000) defined identity as a concept relating to “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p.5). A shift from perceiving identity as being defined by social or biological variables to viewing it as a construct dependent on self-perceptions and self-awareness is evident in this definition. Norton later explained that “every time we speak, we are negotiating and renegotiating our sense of self [the term she uses interchangeably with ‘identity’] in relation to the larger social world” (Norton, 2010: 350). What seems important during these interactions are the speakers’ comparisons “with those perceived as being better than themselves” (Mercer, 2011: 88) and interpretations of the explicit and implicit feedback being sent back to them by their interlocutors (ibid.). The term “those perceived as being better” refers to anyone believed to be an ‘expert’ in a domain relevant to a given communicative situation (ibid.).
This claim seems relevant to the context of Polish migrants, as it raises the question of how they perceive themselves vis-à-vis NESs, whether these perceptions are related to the English language and whether they have any influence on the migrants’ sense of self and everyday decisions. Additionally, some researchers within the field of ELF have claimed that, in NES-NNES interactions, the status of an (linguistic) expert, and the ‘owner’ of the language, tends to be wielded by NESs (cf. Jenkins, 2007), which sheds new light on the concept of NNES positioning (see Section 2.6 for a discussion of positioning and Chapter Three for a discussion of the influence of the global spread of English on this notion).

Based on the findings from studies on English and NNESs’ identity conducted from the poststructuralist point of view (cf. Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009), it is possible to outline the central arguments put forward by researchers investigating the topic. The main assumptions emerging from these studies are that:

1. A person’s identity comprises of his/her view of him/herself and his/her position, or status, in the larger social world.
2. Identity is expressed and negotiated in interactions and is, therefore, dependent on the relationship between the interlocutors. This relationship is influenced by the distribution of ‘power’ between the speakers and their beliefs about this distribution of power.
3. More than one identity may be enacted by a given individual. A person may, for example, assume an identity as a teacher in one situation and as a mother, or wife, in another.
4. Identity may change over time.

This view regarding the ‘dynamic’ nature of identity is evident in a number of studies that describe various aspects of migrants’ experiences. Although these studies do not always focus on ‘language identity’ as such, and often refer to other constructs, such as national identity (e.g. Oliveira, 2016) or ethnic identity (e.g. Ryan, 2010), various manifestations of the relationship between the English language and migrants’ self-concept, and of this relationship being a dynamic one, are evident in them. The very choice of words used by the authors to refer to various identity-related experiences, such as “developing” and “experiencing” (Hoare, 2016: 130), “redefining” (Kobialka, 2016: 195), “re-negotiating” and “re-building” (Ryan, 2010: 359) or “safeguarding” (Oliveira, 2016: 339) both identity and a sense of self, seems to reflect the dynamic nature of the described processes.
Although not many of these studies discuss ‘language identity’ as such, and many, in fact, rarely explicitly focus on the use of language at all, the link between the participants’ various actions aimed at managing the way other people perceive them and, as a result, the way they feel about, and perceive, themselves, with their level of English competence, is often self-evident. These studies not only demonstrate the dynamic nature of identity described above, including its capacity to change across time and different contexts, or the multiplicity of identities that can be assumed by, or ascribed to, a person under different conditions, but also seem to imply that a crucial role in managing one’s identity is, in fact, occupied by language. In absence of this important ‘resource’ for constructing, communicating and negotiating one’s self-concept and identity, it seems that one needs to resort to other methods that may help him/her achieve this goal.

In Ryan’s (2010) study of Polish migrants’ experiences in London, for example, to manage the ethnic identity ascribed to them by others, the participants reported having adopted a strategy of concealing their “Polish-ness” (p. 359), which, as the author argued, helped them to ultimately “re-build [their] sense of self” (ibid.). The participants believed that the local people perceived Poles in a negative light, due to the latter’s alleged anti-social behaviour in public, which they, themselves, had frequently witnessed. Thus, being aware of their limited self-assessed English competence, which would ‘give away’ their nationality, and being unable to communicate their desired image of themselves to others, they chose to remain silent or withdraw from a certain situation in which they would be required to speak English. This way, by avoiding being perceived as the negatively stereotyped, in their view, Polish migrants, they not only, to a certain extent, ‘managed’ the perceptions of these other people but, ultimately, also managed the way they felt about themselves. As argued in Section 2.6 below, beliefs about the way others perceive us are known to play a crucial role in the formation of our self-concept. It has also been argued that ‘desire’ (Kristeva and Roudiez, 1980) to identify “with the other, be it another person, such as a native speaker, or another image of oneself” (Kramsch, 2009: 14), is the basis of a person’s “drive toward self-fulfilment” (ibid.). In the case discussed above, this self-fulfilment appears to only be possible to achieve by avoiding being perceived as a stereotypical Polish migrant. This case also demonstrates the dynamic nature of identity as seen from the poststructuralist perspective, as it is clear that, for the participants in Ryan’s (2010) study, both their self-concept and their overall ‘identity’ were far from being a stable set of characteristics. In contrast to this study, in which the strategy for managing identity was to avoid being perceived in a certain way, in Datta and Brickell’s (2009) study of Polish construction
workers in London, the participants, who also lacked communicative ability in English, tried to express their positive image through their actions. They ‘advertised’ their Polish-ness, which, in the context of their profession, they believed to be a marker of precision, commitment to work and attention to detail, through work performance. Although they performed jobs they believed to be lower in the workplace hierarchy than those performed by their NES colleagues, they attempted to enhance their self-esteem by generating a kind of counter discourse, central to which was the notion that English builders are careless and less professional and have a poor work ethic, described by one participant as reflecting “cowboy culture” (ibid.: 456). They focused on performing the work they had been allocated to the highest possible standard, in order to create an image of themselves as being accurate, reliable and professional. This, arguably, enabled them to achieve the aforementioned ‘self-fulfilment’, by separating themselves from the local workers and ‘communicating’, through their own performance, their desired image of themselves.

These studies, and other studies in which the participants adopted certain ‘non-linguistic’ strategies to express themselves and, thus, negotiate their identity, such as Rodriguez’s (2010) study of “Polish migrant mothers” (p. 339), in which the participants were argued to have managed other people’s perceptions and their own sense of belonging to a certain social class through investing in their children’s education, have demonstrated the complex and dynamic nature of identity. They have shown that a person may both assume and be ascribed a variety of identity positions, that these positions may change and that the processes of both self-ascription and ascription by others depend on both individual perceptions and beliefs and on wider ‘external’ factors (Sections 2.4 and 2.5 discussed the role of individual agency and external structures in relation to various theoretical approaches to identity). Furthermore, although the studies discussed above did not include much about language use, their findings, arguably, support the claim that language is, in fact, an important means of expressing and negotiating identity, “is a part of one’s identity and is used to convey this identity to other people” (Williams and Burden, 1997: 115). The participants’ low English competence was perceived in these studies as being a factor that hindered their ability to express and negotiate their image to other people, hence their use of other available ‘resources’ and strategies to achieve this aim.

Other studies demonstrating this dynamic nature of identity as seen from the poststructuralist perspective are various studies that directly emphasise the role of language in negotiating the
migrants’ identity to “gain new memberships in new contexts” (Miller, 2000: 86). Miller (ibid.) described immigrant students’ struggles to form and express their sense of self, as well as to have that self recognised by others, in the context of an Australian high-school. In her concluding section, she noted:

Often unable to represent themselves through the use of English, their Chinese identities and language seemed an obvious resource for them, necessary to maintain social memberships and to represent their identities.

Miller (2000: 97)

She further observed that, by resorting to their mother tongue and ‘limiting’ their membership of the migrant student communities in their high-school, they accepted the identity of “foreigner” (ibid: 97) that had been ascribed to them by the local students despite having actively tried to resist this. The author perceived this as them failing to get their desired ‘self’ recognised, using this observation to argue about not only the dynamic nature of identity discussed in this section, but also the crucial role of other people’s perceptions in forming one’s self-representation. A similar study was conducted by Palmer (2007), who investigated “Korean-born Korean American high school students’ negotiations of ascribed and achieved identities” (p. 277), where the former referred to the way they were perceived by others and the latter to the way they wanted to be perceived. Palmer described a number of the students’ experiences of attempting to express their achieved identities, which, however, “went unrecognized by the majority of their peers” (p.292). Although they were “attempting to gain recognition of an achieved identity that resembled the American mainstream Discourse” (p.286), they were marginalized and perceived as simply “‘foreign’ or ‘Asian’ students” (p.287). This clash between these achieved and ascribed identities, being detrimental to the participants’ overall well-being and self-esteem, resulted in them deciding to seek membership of the migrant student groups, where they could use their mother tongue and be recognised in the way they wanted to be recognised. Whilst, among the local students, they were being labelled as “the Koreans” (p.286), not only due to their limited freedom in expressing themselves, but also because of their appearance and them “acting too Korean” (ibid.), in the migrant groups “they re-educated and re-affirmed their identities” (p.293). They were not only perceived differently by their peers in these groups, but also redefined their own self-perceptions and began to think of themselves as being
a person who has achieved the ability to cross cultural boundaries. In that, the participants viewed their identity as being in-between the two cultures, possessing aspects of both cultures (...). Yet, they continued to resist surrendering a Korean identity and completely accept an American identity.

Palmer (2007: 291)

Language, in this study, was among other ‘instruments’ through which the participants attempted to claim, or express, their belonging to certain groups. The role of language, and accent, in negotiating this kind of belonging and, thus, a certain ‘identity’ is often central to studies conducted in migration contexts. In Hoare’s (2016) study of migrant children born in Ireland the following extracts exemplify this point

Every time I go to Pakistan, no one understands my Urdu, and then when I am in Ireland, people don’t understand my Pakistani accent. Sometimes I think I don’t belong anywhere. (11-year-old female, parents from Pakistan)

Sometimes I wish that I spoke English like my friends from Ireland do. I know that I have an accent even though I was born here, and I try to hide it (...) Sometimes I would like people to think I’m Irish, so that I fit in better. This never happens because of my Polish accent. (10-year-old boy, parents from Poland)

Hoare (2016: 148)

The accounts from the studies described above demonstrate that the participants’ identity, or the aforementioned dynamic interaction between their self-concept, constituting various ‘selves’, and the various social contexts, is a complex and fluid concept that can be, as argued above, “developed” and “experienced” (Hoare, 2016: 130), “redefined” (Kobialka, 2016: 195), “re-negotiated” and “re-built” (Ryan, 2010: 359), or, later, “safeguarded” (Oliveira, 2016: 339). These studies also demonstrate that the claim “to learn a second language is to take on a new identity” (Guiora et al., 1972: 422), or to develop some kind of a distinct ‘self’ in that language, is a rather simplistic view and it cannot always be taken for granted. It seems that, for the participants of these studies, their problems resulted from not being able to express their first language self-concept, the self-concept that had been formed long before they were faced with their migration experience, through English, rather than from trying to form, or express, some kind of ‘English self’. To adopt the aforementioned Kramsch’s (2009) terminology, they seem to be lacking their ‘extended self’ in English, as
their perceptions of themselves they had formed through speaking their mother tongue cannot be easily translated, or extended, into the new language, which they have not yet had the opportunity to apply to a range of actions, scripts and representations related to their self-concept. Furthermore, some of the findings, particularly evident in the extract from Palmer (2007) on Page 27, suggest that identity may be even more complex a notion that should not be perceived in terms of resulting exclusively from one cultural or linguistic background, but, rather, perceived as being something ‘in-between’ (ibid.: 291). This “between-ness” (Davis, 2010: 662) of individuals constructing their general ‘positioning’ (see Section 2.6 for a more detailed discussion of this concept) in multilingual and multicultural contexts has, in fact, been discussed by an entire tradition of scholars concerned with the topic of the hybridity of cultures, languages and identity (cf. Connell and Gibson, 2003; Davis, 2010; Focault, 1986; Heller, 2007; Otsuji and Pennycook, 2010; Pennycook, 2010). Focusing on various concepts, such as ‘heterotopias’ (cf. Davis, 2010; Focault, 1986), ‘third space’ (cf. Babha, 1994; Soja, 1996) or ‘metrolinguialism’ (cf. Otsuji and Pennycook, 2010), these scholars have questioned the ‘traditional’ perception of there being a “one-to-one association among language, ethnicity, nation and territory” (ibid.: 241) and have argued that, in a clash between a variety of cultural and linguistic background, among others, the result, on an individual level, is “not just a subject reconstituted (from multiple cultural origins), but a cultural newness” (Davis, 2010: 661). Although the scope of many of these discussions is much wider than merely the topic of migrants’ language identity, they have been acknowledged in this current thesis, as their implications for the topic of the relationship between language and self-concept are that the English Language Identity could, potentially, be more than a binary ‘variable’ analysed in terms of migrants’ first, or additional, language. They also support the idea that, rather than being an unchanging ‘label’ given to a person on the basis of certain externally defined characteristics, identity is a much more dynamic construct, as argued throughout this section.

This section has summarised the main claims about language and identity made by poststructuralists and provided some example studies whose findings seemed to support these claims. What also emerged from the above discussion is aforementioned shift from perceiving identity as a relatively stable characteristic that can be attributed to an individual to viewing it as being defined, to a great extent, by a person’s own assessment and judgement and, thus, constructed in social interactions. The following section discusses this dynamic nature of identity in relation to specific theoretical constructs integral to studies of NNES language identities.
2.6. Main theoretical constructs in studies of NNES language identity.

In their discussion of identity, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) stated that “language choice and attitudes are inseparable from political arrangements, relations of power, language ideologies and interlocutors’ views of their own and others’ identities” (p.1). Their statement encompasses the most frequently emerging characteristics of language identity that are, in turn, included in a broader process of positioning. Although Norton (2015) listed the “poststructuralist theories of positioning” (p.65) among the key theories “inform[ing] recent work on identity and language learning” (p.62), positioning is, arguably, the key construct, central for understanding how NNESs form and negotiate their identities in interactions.

Positioning refers to an individual’s understanding of his, or her, status position in the context of a given interaction, or in a wider social context, as well as how that individual’s status is perceived by others. Davies and Harre (1990), who directly linked positioning with identity formation, argued that “discursive practices constitute the speakers and hearers in certain ways and yet, at the same time, are a resource through which speakers and hearers can negotiate new positions” (p.7). The ‘discursive practices’ refer to a person’s everyday interactions and engagement with other individuals. Therefore, in relation to language identity, positioning is a theme underlying the notion of a dynamic nature of identity as seen from the poststructuralist perspective, precisely because other characteristics of identity and other theoretical concepts used to describe it all seem to relate to the process of positioning.

One of these concepts is the frequently cited notion of power relations, or distribution of power, between the speakers (cf. Jenkins, 2007; Morita, 2004; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010). This ‘power’ refers to a kind of status beliefs, or “the power to define others and to force them to behave in ways consonant with that construction” (Leki, 2001: 61) and, in NNES-NES interactions, it is believed by some scholars to often belong to the latter (cf. Leki, 2001; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010). Norton (1995), for example, suggested that all social encounters “are structured by relations of power” (p.15) and argued for the importance of these relations, particularly in research on migrant identity. From the perspective of social psychology and the literature on self-concept, the beliefs about power relations inform the practice of social comparisons, where speakers compare themselves “with those perceived as being better than themselves” (Mercer, 2011: 88). These comparisons with, and the feedback received from, these ‘knowledgeable’ others have the most potential for influencing a person’s self-concept (ibid.). In considering these ‘power relations’, and the importance of
social comparisons for the formation of one’s concept of him/herself, questions arise in relation to the context of migrants in Scotland as to whether these comparisons are made by the newcomers and whether they include comparisons related to English competence.

Importantly, positioning may involve a person’s past and present experiences, as well as his, or her, perceptions of the future. Regarding the past and present, it has, not surprisingly, been argued that perceived experiences of communicative success or failure have a significant influence on a person’s overall sense of self (Mercer, 2015). Additionally, as argued by Ryan and Irie (2015), “past events (…) help us form theories of the current self” (p.111). A person’s positioning and, generally, current self-evaluation, depend, to a great extent, on his, or her, interpretations of past events and, precisely, of other people’s evaluations, or judgements, during past encounters (Skaalvik, 1997). These interpretations are highly subjective and people may struggle to differentiate between the actual past events and their own mental simulations of them (cf. Johnson, 1988; Johnson & Raye, 2000). With regard to the future, or “how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2000: 5), it has been argued that “generating mental images of future success can sometimes increase achievement motivation, effort and performance” (Vasquez and Buehler, 2007: 1392). This may also involve English learners imagining which communities they want to be part of as users of the language (Norton and Toohey, 2011). The concept of ‘imagined communities’ developed by Anderson (1991) has been adopted by several researchers of language and identity (cf. Kinginger, 2004; Norton, 2000; Norton and Kamal, 2003). Norton (2000), who was the first to apply Anderson’s (ibid.) concept to the context of English learners, and migrants in particular, argued that the community of NESs in a given country is an imagined community of gatekeepers to which migrants seek entrance, and Pavlenko (2003) proposed that NNESs would benefit from perceiving themselves as members of a wider, global community of multilingual English users, rather than seeking membership to these ‘NES communities’.

The relevance of these various concepts for migrant contexts has been evident in a number of studies conducted within the field of sociolinguistics, which have effectively demonstrated that English has more than a mere ‘transactional’ function of conveying factual information to an interlocutor (Brown and Yule, 1983). In contrast to the previously discussed studies of Polish migrants that, as noted in Section 1.2, gave this impression, these studies suggested that the language constitutes an element of a complex and highly subjective relationship influenced by a person’s beliefs about, and interpretations of, the surrounding reality, and influencing a range of his, or her, decisions and behaviours.
To address this complex and highly subjective nature of identity, the majority of researchers have dismissed methods that rely on the stable and measurable variables typically attributed to quantitative research, choosing, instead, to adopt methods that pay closer attention to individuals’ perceptions and beliefs. Consequently, in research on language identity, the methodological focus has been on personal narratives collected by means of a combination of interviews and participants’ self-reports and diaries, often complemented by participant observation (cf. Botha, 2009; Morita, 2004; Norton, 2000; Park, 2012; Stroud and Wee, 2007).

In a study conducted by Cervatiuc (2009) among 20 adult migrants in Canada, interviews were utilised to investigate the role of the aforementioned individual ‘agency’ in constructing the migrants’ self-defined identity as “professionally successful and highly proficient in the target language” (p. 254). In line with Norton (2000), Cervatiuc believed that the ‘power’ between the migrants and the target community of NESs was distributed unevenly in the context of migration, resulting in the migrants likely facing difficulties in gaining access to NESs’ social networks. She was, therefore, particularly interested in the strategies used by the participants to negotiate their positioning in the host country and to achieve this perceived status of being successful professionals and language users. One strategy that emerged was based on them imagining they belonged to a community of successful bilingual, or multilingual, individuals, “in spite of still being considered by the majority group as outsiders” (Cervatiuc, 2009: 266). It was argued that this strategy ‘empowered’ them and provided them with confidence to generate ‘counter discourse’, or to verbally resist the incompetent foreigner identity being ascribed to them by members of the target community, thus enabling them to gain access to the NESs’ social networks. Cervatiuc’s (ibid.) study demonstrated that, albeit competence in English is important for migrants’ professional success, it is an element, rather than a guarantor, of this success and of their emotional well-being, and that the role of the language is not limited to its transactional function. The participants used English as a ‘tool’ to negotiate their ‘ascribed’, or ‘imposed’, identity, and their perceptions of their own status as users of English and of their membership in a community of English users played a significant role in this process.

Another study that, although based on the classroom context, effectively demonstrated the role of NNESs’ subjective ‘positioning’, in addition to English competence, in contexts requiring them to communicate in English, was a study of 10 NNESs’ socialisation practices in a Canadian university conducted by Morita (2004). The data was collected through interviews, classroom observations and the students’ self-reports, with the aim being to
investigate how the participants negotiated membership of classroom communities. In line with research within social psychology that highlighted the impact of social comparisons and the implicit and explicit feedback from those perceived as ‘experts’ of one’s self-perceptions (cf. Mercer, 2011), the findings revealed that the participants constructed their self-concept in relation to how they believed other people perceived them. More than ‘simply’ being dissatisfied with not being able to express desired meanings, the participants were concerned about the impression their perceived limited English competence would generate. They expressed concern, for example, about being perceived as “not very intelligent” (Morita, 2004:583), or sounding “stupid or not very logical” (ibid.), when speaking English. They found the limitations of their English competence to be “face-threatening” (ibid.:585) and it was argued that they found themselves in a particularly problematic situation, in that, on one hand, they did not participate because of their concerns and, on the other hand, they feared that this lack of participation would result in an even more negative identity being ascribed to them. Ultimately, in attempting to save ‘face’, or to retain “a claimed sense of favourable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him” (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998: 187), they mostly decided to remain silent and avoid language contact. Morita (2004) argued that this decision was a way of resisting identities they felt were being “imposed” (ibid: 591) on them and discussed these identities in terms of the ‘power’ held by those who imposed them. Teachers were believed to hold the most power, as they were perceived as “experts” (ibid: 598) and a credible source of feedback, due to their status of both teacher and NES. It was argued, for example, that one of the participants had developed “an identity as a competent and valued member [of the classroom community]” (ibid: 584) as a result of positive feedback received from the teacher. Consequently, and in line with the literature on self-concept, this feedback eventually influenced the participant’s self-perceptions. Overall, this particular study provided a valuable insight into the complicated process of NNESs’ identification, where the participants’ combined beliefs about their English competence and about their colleagues’ and teachers’, as well as their own, status and/or authority related to the language influenced their beliefs about themselves and, ultimately, determined their behaviour.

These findings are in line with literature in the field of social psychology that describes NNESs’ confidence, or lack thereof, in their English language skills, in terms of ‘Second Language Confidence’ (L2C) (Clement, 1980), and the resulting decision of whether or not to engage in interaction in English, in terms of ‘Willingness to Communicate’ (WTC) (MacIntyre et al., 1998). L2C is a term relating to “a lack of anxiety when communicating in [L2] coupled with positive ratings of self-proficiency” (Sampasivam and Clement, 2015: 23).
and WTC relates to the “psychological readiness to use the L2 when the opportunity arises” (ibid: 25). Hence, it does seem that the participants in Morita’s (2004) study had low L2C, which, in turn, affected their WTC.

Additionally, it seems that, in the complex process of NNESSs’ identification and in the relationship between their self-concept and English, their general beliefs about the language play a central role. In her study, Morita (2004) explained that the participants’ L2C was affected by their belief that their English competence should be higher and by their general beliefs about the status and authority of NESs, as users of the language, being higher than NNESSs’. Therefore, these beliefs held by the participants had an influence on the relationship between the language and their self-concept, which was ultimately affected by these beliefs and influenced their behaviour. These general “beliefs about languages and their speakers, or a cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships”, that “influence all choices made by language users, even when implicit”, and “influence our understanding of what is usual [when speaking the language]” (Irvine, 1989: 255) are called, in short, ‘language ideologies’. Language ideologies have been shown to affect NNESSs’ understanding of their English competence and, as a result, their L2C and WTC. In a study of the language ideologies of Polish and Chinese migrants in Ireland, for example, Diskin (2015) interviewed 48 participants and found that the migrants’ integration with the local community was affected by ‘standard language ideology’. This belief that there exists “an inherently powerful standard version of the language” (Pennycook, 2001: 48), coupled with the migrants’ lack of awareness of varieties of English other than the ‘British English’ they are familiar with, resulted in them having doubts about their own English competence on encountering the Irish variety of English. This, in turn, led to a feeling of ‘disconnection’ from the local community and affected their socialisation with its members (Diskin, 2015).

To summarise, various studies conducted within the field of sociolinguistics, supported by findings from social psychology research, have demonstrated that, rather than performing a solely transactional, or ‘instrumental’, function in contexts where NNESSs are required to communicate with NESs in English, the language is more of a ‘tool’ for expressing and negotiating what they believe to be their ‘real selves’. This interaction between their self-concept and English, or their language identity, seems to be a highly subjective relationship influenced by a range of beliefs about, and interpretations of, their, and their interlocutors’, positioning, membership of certain (imagined) communities or relationships of ‘power’. These findings both demonstrate and highlight the aforementioned limitations of the existing studies of Polish migrants’ experiences, which seemed to assume a relatively straightforward
correlation between the migrants’ English competence and professional achievement and socialisation practices, and to underestimate this psychological dimension of their ‘relationship’ with English (see Section 1.2).

As previously noted, the studies of NNES ‘language identity’ conducted within the general field of sociolinguistics, which includes ELF research, and research into NNES ‘self-concept’ carried out by social psychologists jointly contribute to the discussions about the relationship between English and NNESs’ self-perceptions and the outcomes of this relationship. However, the impression is that these areas of research exist independently and, despite their unquestionable contributions to each other, they appear not to consider each other’s findings. However, it seems that, if language ideologies, and comparisons with those perceived as being linguistic ‘experts’, play such a significant role in the process of NNES identity formation, then the wider context of the current globalisation of English must not be overlooked, due to it precisely shedding new light on these particular concepts. In this current study, findings from ELF research, which has provided a new, and valuable, perspective on the notion of NNES identification and, amongst other concepts, the idea of positioning, imagined communities and distribution of power, have been considered and are discussed in Chapter Three.
Chapter Three – Language identity and the global spread of English

English has become a “global language” (Crystal, 2012: 3) and has a “special internal status (as an official, co-official, national or dominant language)” (Schneider, 2012: 59) in more than a hundred countries. The estimated combined number of NESs, for whom English is their first language (L1), and NNESs, or those who have an “L1, or L1s, other than English” (Seidlhofer, 2011: 6), is around two billion (cf. Crystal, 2012, 2012b). The majority of users of English worldwide, however, are NNESs (Brumfit, 2001; Graddol, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2000) and the largest part of communication in English takes place between those for whom English is not their mother tongue (Young and Walsh, 2010). English is a dominant language in the world’s advertising, tourism, education, law, banking and scientific publications (Jenkins, 2015).

It was noted in Section 2.1 that, although Block’s (2007) concept of Second Language Identity was adopted as a starting point in defining identity in this study, the focus was deliberately narrowed down to the English language, with the resulting term coined for the purpose of the study being English Language Identity (ELI). If identity is to be seen as largely dependent on individual agency (see Section 2.5), thus encompassing such elements as a person’s self-positioning, self-comparisons with interlocutors, language ideologies or beliefs about distribution of power between the speakers (see Section 2.6), one ‘second language identity’ cannot be the same as another. After all, languages differ, not only with regard to their ‘structural’ aspects, but also their distribution, their status and the status of their speakers. Therefore, in considering the globalisation of English and its increasingly recognised role as a global lingua franca (see Section 3.1 for details on ELF research), it appears that the factors, or beliefs, involved in its speakers’ ‘language identities’, or the relationship between their self-concept and the language, would, arguably, be considerably different from those in other ‘second language identities’. Section 2.2 outlined three assumptions justifying the importance of investigating NNES language identity, with the first two of them being, briefly speaking, that a language learner’s identity influences his/her learning process and that using English in a variety of socially diverse contexts influences the speakers’ identity, respectively. The third assumption underlying the need to investigate
the relationship between language and identity was that, due to the global spread of English, NNESs’ “identity categories” (Jenks, 2013: 168) have expanded. In other words, the spread of English worldwide, the changing demographics of NESs/NNESs and a variety of contexts and ways in which English is used nowadays have implications for NNESs’ self-positioning. Hence, self-beliefs, perceptions of ‘power relations’ and ‘imagined communities’ that are central to this positioning (see Section 2.6) require reconsideration in light of this “changing landscape of English” (Jenks, 2013: 166). Specifically, in bearing in mind the importance of social comparisons for self-concept and self-esteem (see Section 2.6), this increasing number of NNESs, and the ways in which they use English, calls into question the relevance of NESs’ status as linguistic ‘experts’ and the ‘power’ attributed to them in NES-NNES interactions.

It is important to note that considering the implications of the global spread of English for NNESs’ identification does not necessarily mean questioning NESs’ English competence, promoting a simplified ‘variety’ of the language or encouraging learners to speak ‘incorrect’ English, which are arguments frequently used to criticise ELF as a field of study (see Section 3.3), but, rather, these implications are based on promoting a change in language learners’, or users’, mind-set that may benefit their self-concept and self-esteem (ditto). This chapter discusses these implications in detail. Section 3.1 describes the nature of English use in NNES-NNES communication, as demonstrated by ELF research. Section 3.2 discusses the implications of this research for the idea that NNESs ‘own’ English, in the sense that they flexibly adopt the language for their specific communicative needs, thus constituting a global-wide community of English users in their own right, who, at least at the theoretical level, may use this membership of a community as an empowering concept for their identification. Section 3.3 argues that ‘native-speakerism’ (Holliday 2005, 2006), or the belief of the ‘superiority’ of NESs, has been a dominating ideology in the ELT industry and the main obstacle to encouraging the aforementioned change to NNESs’ beliefs. Next, the possible changes to ELT that have been proposed by scholars and may benefit NNESs’ identification and self-esteem are discussed. The chapter concludes by discussing the relevance of the topic of the global spread of English for NNES identity and for the context described in this thesis.
3.1. Research into English as a lingua franca.

The idea of English as a language that would be used all over the world was first presented and discussed as far back as 1767 by David Hume and later taken up by several philologists and linguists of the 19th century (Crystal, 2012). However, the term ELF in its current meaning was first identified and described in the 1980s by two German scholars, Knapp and Hülle (1985 and 1982, respectively, both cited in Jenkins, 2014) and ELF as a research paradigm was developed towards the beginning of the 21st century.

Research into ELF has provided a number of insights into the nature of NNES-NNES interactions that have implications for how NNESs’ ‘identity’ is perceived. The early ELF research, which gained momentum with the publication of Jenkins’ (2000) study of ELF phonology, was mainly concerned with determining the structural aspects of the English used by NNESs that differ from the traditional English use and determining which of these affect mutual intelligibility during communication. The focus of these early studies was mainly on phonology and lexicogrammar. The findings from research on ELF phonology revealed pronunciation characteristics typical to NNES speech, such as replacing dental fricatives with consonants (cf. /d/ instead of /ð/ or /θ/) (cf. Jenkins, 2000, 2002). The common features of NNES speech determined by research on lexicogrammar, in turn, included omitting the ‘third person –s’ in the present tense, inconsistent use of the pronouns ‘who’ and ‘which’ and unconventional use of question tags and definite and indefinite articles (cf. Cogo and Dewey, 2006). Research on the structure of ELF also investigated how NNESs use idioms in creative and innovative ways (cf. Pitzl, 2009). Overall, the main focus of the early ELF research was on which structural patterns were most commonly found in ELF interactions and the main argument based on that research was that, due to the frequent occurrences of certain structures, they should not automatically be dismissed as errors, especially in considering that many of them do not affect mutual intelligibility and occur in post-colonial English varieties (cf. Ranta, 2009).

ELF research has also revealed what ELF scholars call the ‘fluid’ nature of ELF, evident in an “ad hoc situated negotiation of meaning” (Seidlhofer 2009: 242), where ELF users have to adopt, and use, language and strategies depending on the context of interaction. Based on these findings, the focus of ELF research gradually shifted to the function of certain features and, hence, to determining “the underlying significance of the forms”, “what work they do [and] what functions they are symptomatic of” (Seidlhofer, 2009: 241). A number of features
characteristic of ELF encounters were found to constitute strategies aiming to ensure mutual intelligibility and to resolve communication problems (cf. Cogo, 2009; Lichtkoppler, 2007; Mauranen, 2006). These strategies included accommodation, or adapting the language to the interlocutor’s language, code-switching, repetition, rephrasing, turn-taking and self-repair, to name a few (cf. Baker, 2012; Cogo and Dewey, 2012; Klimpfinger, 2009).

These, and misleadingly named, ‘pragmatic strategies’ (cf. Kwan and Dunworth, 2016; O’Neal, 2015) mostly constitute what was already known as ‘communication strategies’, or “systematic technique[s] employed by a speaker to express his [or her] meaning when faced with some difficulty” (Corder, 1981: 103). Although various typologies of communication strategies have been put forward over the years, they “differ primarily in terminology and overall categorizing principle rather than in the substance of the specific strategies” (Bialystok, 1990: 61) and beyond these categorisations a core group of commonly recognised strategies can be identified (Dörnyei, 1995). They can be categorised into avoidance and reduction strategies, which involve abandoning the intended communicative goal, and achievement, or compensatory, strategies, which are adopted to compensate for linguistic limitations and to achieve the goal of communication with alternative means (Maleki, 2010). Across the various taxonomies, the most commonly found achievement, or compensatory, strategies are paraphrasing, circumlocution, word coinage, repetition, appealing for assistance and code-switching (cf. Björkman, 2014; Dörnyei, 1995; Maleki, 2010; Sukirlan, 2014). Additional strategies that fit in with these achievement, or compensatory, strategies are the accommodation and self-repair strategies discussed by Global Englishes (GE) scholars (cf. Björkman, 2014). Whether communication strategies can, and should, be taught continues to be questioned on the grounds that the use of these strategies stems largely from cognitive processes specific to each individual, which, thus, cannot be taught (cf. Konishi and Tarone, 2004). However, there exists a great amount of empirical evidence suggesting that explicit instruction in communication strategies is effective and results in students’ improved performance, increased use of these strategies and increased WTC (cf. Rossiter, 2003; Scullen and Jourdian, 2000). Similarly, the aforementioned studies of ELF ‘pragmatics’ showcased that successful communication in ELF involves the use of a variety of strategies, which, although in no way unique to ELF encounters or, in fact, to encounters in L2 in general (Dörnyei, 1995), do seem to appear more often in ELF communication (Björkman, 2014).

The findings from ELF research offer a great contribution to understanding the nature and consequences of the globalisation of English and its links with NNES identity, despite the
heavy criticism the field has received (cf. Groom, 2012; Mortensen, 2013; Phillipson, 2008; Prodromou, 2007; Swan, 2012). Galloway and Rose (2015: 164) categorised this criticism into the following headings:

1. language hierarchisation and denial of diversity;
2. the invisibility myth;
3. imposition of a single variety of English, or English ‘rules’;
4. promotion of a reduced, simplified version of English – an ‘anything goes’ policy;
5. it is unrepresentative of ELF usage;
6. ELF is linked with pedagogy and promotes a teachable model.

To address each of the above points separately lies beyond the scope of this work, as, rather than engaging with the established lines of study, or supporting, or disagreeing with, the points of view of either of the sides, it sets a new direction for ELF research and uses its findings to argue that both the empirical findings and the resulting pedagogical proposals in the field are highly relevant to discussions of the ‘self’ in social psychology. However, worth noting is a ‘trend’ evident in the existing, detailed responses to the above criticism, in that their authors tend to refer to it as ‘misconceptions’ and ‘misunderstandings’ of ELF (cf. Jenkins, 2007, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2006). This is, arguably, a rather dismissive attitude, as it seems to ignore the fact that these ‘misunderstandings’ clearly stem from a lack of clarity and contradictions found in some discussions of ELF. Jenkins (2007, 2009, 2011), for example, while continuously emphasising, on one hand, that ELF is not to be perceived as a separate ‘variety’ of English, referred to ELF, on the other hand, as “an emerging English that exists in its own right and which is being described in its own terms rather than by comparison with ENL” (Jenkins, 2007:2), thus giving the impression that ELF is, in fact, a separate ‘variety’ of English, although it is clear that this is not what the author believes. She further argues that learners of English should be able to decide whether they want to be taught ‘native English’ or ELF, a point also made by Cogo (2012). Additionally, in one of her definitions of ELF, Jenkins (2011) described it as “an additionally acquired language system” (p.928) and, in the discussion that followed, argued that NESs also “need to acquire it in order to communicate successfully in ELF” (ibid.). As Sewell (2013) rightly points out, this kind of distinguishing between ELF and ‘non-ELF’ (p.3) does seem to suggest that ELF is a separate language, rather than a ‘function’ of English, i.e. the use of English as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages, which is the understanding of ELF adopted in this thesis.
Notwithstanding this criticism, empirical findings from structure-oriented ELF research have brought attention to the fact that the ways English is used are often at odds with those promoted by ELT practice, which sees NES speech as a benchmark of achievement (Dewey, 2012). ELF users adapt the language and employ various strategies to communicate. They adapt to their surroundings and their interlocutors and make use of their multilingual repertoires. In other words, they can successfully communicate and use the language, despite certain divergences from the ‘NES norms’ that traditional ELT views as linguistic limitations (see Section 3.3). ELF researchers perceive many of these differences as proof of an adaptive nature of NNES’ use of linguistic resources during interaction and often as a tool for expressing identity and culture (Baker, 2012, 2014; Seidlhofer and Berns, 2009). They argue that NESs do not represent a realistic, or relevant, benchmark for English learners and, therefore, NNESs should see themselves as legitimate and competent language users (Cervatiuc, 2009; Cook, 1999) identified with a global community of English L2 speakers, rather than having the desire to integrate into NES communities (cf. Lamb, 2003; Ryan, 2006). In discussions of the ‘empowered’ NNES, they frequently make use of the notions of ‘multi-competence’ and ‘ownership of English’ to support their claims. Section 3.2 discusses these concepts and explains their relevance to discussing NNES language identity.

3.2. ‘Multi-competence’ and ‘Ownership of English’.

Within the field of ELF, it is often argued that NNESs should be perceived, and should perceive themselves, as legitimate, competent bi- or multilingual users of the language, rather than ‘failed’ NESs (Jenkins 2011: 284). Due to the spread of English worldwide and the fact that NESs have been outnumbered by NNESs, it has been argued that “the power to adapt and change” (Brumfit 2001: 116) the language no longer rests with the former, but with everyone who uses it (cf. Jenkins 2006). The notion of multi-competence, or the “knowledge of more than one language, free from evaluation against an outside standard” (Cook 1999: 190), has been put forward as a concept beneficial for NNES identity construction in light of ELF (cf. Pavlenko 2003). Rather than seeing NESs as the benchmark for measuring their language proficiency, it has been argued that language learners should recognise their own potential of being multi-competent language users (Cervatiuc, 2009; Cook, 1999). Cook (ibid.) argued that, by continuously comparing their pronunciation with native models, NESs are likely to perceive themselves “deficient native speaker[s]”, or an “imitation of native speaker[s]” (ibid: 195), instead of thinking of themselves as successful,
multilingual speakers. According to her, achieving a multi-competent state of mind involves discarding the view of native English speakers as being a benchmark of achievement and realising one’s own strength as a bi- or multilingual language speaker.

This sense of multi-competence has implications for developing NNES language identity. In her study of 44 MA TESOL students, Pavlenko (2003) explored its possible implications for offering students alternative identity options. Her study involved an analysis of students’ linguistic autobiographies before and after they were exposed to readings and lectures devoted to the concepts of multi-competence, identity and native/non-native dichotomy. The findings suggested that awareness of these issues helped students re-position themselves as legitimate language users by offering them alternative identity options. This awareness was also described as having a “therapeutic” (p. 263) effect on students, helping them to improve their self-esteem. A further finding was the considerable role of imagination in developing non-native English speakers’ identities. The participants of Pavlenko’s (ibid.) study were said to have developed imagined communities of multi-competent speakers to which they had access, rather than positioning themselves as incompetent NNESs struggling to gain entry to an inaccessible community of native English speakers.

A strong feeling of multi-competence was expressed by several of the participants in Cervatiuc’s (2009) aforementioned study of migrants in Canada. In the following extracts, two of these participants described the transformation that occurred in their mind-set as a result of the instruction they received:

Iulia: Learning a second language is hard work. I simply refused to have my level of competence in English criticised by people who could speak only one language. In my experience, many NSs who are intolerant to a foreign accent cannot speak a second language and cannot understand what it takes to learn it. I am very proud that I am multilingual and admire people who make the effort to learn another language.

Veronica: I am a unique individual with a unique combination of skills and talents. I value the fact that I can speak 3 languages, even if I might never get true native-like ability in all of them.

Cervatiuc (2009, p.260)

Both of the speakers in the above extracts seem to have changed their own positioning from being someone not competent in English to being a multi-competent speaker, who, in a way,
is a linguistic ‘expert’. Additionally, the first participant clearly reformulated her view of NESs as experts who hold the power to criticise her foreign accent, or her English competence, and chose to position herself as a member of the imagined community of multi-competent NNESs. On one hand, the above statements may, understandably, raise concerns about the extent to which such a refusal to be criticised and ‘discriminated’ by NESs is a manifestation of ‘discrimination’ of NESs themselves. On the other hand, however, in considering the discussion of NNES ‘positioning’ in Section 2.6, it seems that these attitudes have, in a way, ‘empowered’ the participants, influenced their self-concept of being multilingual language ‘experts’ and, arguably, positively influenced their L2C and WTC.

The idea of English belonging to everyone who speaks it and of NNESs’ desirable self-perceptions of being multi-competent language users undoubtedly provides a valuable contribution to the discussions of NNES language identity and to the understanding of ELI. The nature of ELF communication and use that ELF research showcases, and the changing proportions of NESs and NNESs resulting from the global spread of English, provide evidence that the identity regarding the relationship between self-concept and English is likely to be unlike other ‘second language identities’. If the majority of English speakers use the language in a way that is at odds with the way promoted by the ELT industry, which sees NES speech as a benchmark of achievement (see Section 3.3), this will raise the question of whether perceiving NESs as “being better than themselves” (Mercer, 2011: 88), which has been shown to have a negative effect on NNESs’ self-concept (see Section 2.5), is relevant or necessary.

Importantly, to support this idea of NNESs’ ownership of English, it is not necessary to have to agree with the rather controversial claim made by some GE scholars that “the kind of English [the learners] need and use in their lives outside the classroom [is] primarily as a lingua franca to communicate with NNESs” (Jenkins, 2015: 156) and, therefore, ‘NES norms’ are irrelevant for teaching English to NNESs. In fact, claims of this kind, occasionally appearing in ELF literature (cf. Cogo and Dewey, 2012; Dewey, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011), are, arguably, the reason why the field is regarded with scepticism by many scholars and has attracted heavy criticism over the years (see Section 3.3). Instead, a ‘soft’ version of ownership of English, described by Kohn (2015) as the “my English” condition (p.119-120), may be adopted and, rather than discarding the linguistic norm characteristic to Native English (NE), this soft version assumes a personal transformation that learners of English need to undertake, in order to free themselves of the belief about
NES superiority and achieve a mind-set characterised by high self-confidence and self-esteem. When talking about establishing this condition and achieving the frame of mind of being an owner of English, Kohn states as follows:

There is only one way of acquiring a language, and that is by creatively constructing your own version of it in your mind, in your heart, and in your behaviour. Your ownership of a language is established through such process of individual construction, influenced and shaped by what you are exposed to, where you come from, and where you want to go; and all this in social collaboration with the people you (want to) communicate and interact with. It is in this social constructivist sense that the English I acquire and develop is my own; inevitably different from any target language model no matter how strong the orientation.

Kohn (2015: 119/120)

The transformation described by the author requires a number of personal realisations about one’s status as an English speaker and an understanding that the English they are learning should not be perceived as a target to be precisely copied, or “cloned” (ibid., p.123), but something to progress towards, notwithstanding treating English as a language that could be used to one’s advantage as a tool to express one’s self. What seems essential for the purpose of achieving such a transformation is understanding and accepting the reality of English as a lingua franca, as “a resource […] to bring people and cultures together” (Weber, 2015: 348) and a common means of communication between people across the world, and to see its other users, including NESs, as fellow English users, rather than gatekeepers or owners of it.

However, despite scholars’ aforementioned claims about these possible “identity categories” (Jenks 2013: 166) available to NNESs as a result of the global spread of English, it is safe to assume that the average NNES does not express such a desirable attitude. Research findings suggest that this somewhat idealised view of NNESs, who “associate their use of English with a sense of a ‘global identity’ and develop a desire to become ‘global citizens’” (Sung, 2014: 32), does not reflect the reality. The belief about NESs’ superiority still “persists among both native and non-native speakers - teachers, teacher educators and linguists alike” (Jenkins, 2006: 191) and the majority of English learners still seem to prefer NE accents (Li, 2009; Llurda, 2009; Timmis, 2002) and hold some kind of beliefs about NES superiority (cf. Galloway 2011, 2013).

ELF scholars attribute these beliefs, to a great extent, to ELT practices that promote the myth of NES superiority. The following section describes some common trends in ELT provision, both worldwide and in Poland, and argues that they may have a negative influence on NNES language identity.
3.3. The global spread of English and English language teaching.

The ‘traditional’ English instruction has been criticised for promoting an irrelevant and realistic goal of achieving ‘native-like’ English competence and reinforcing the promotion of “standard language ideology” (Jenkins, 2007: 31) and the assumption that there exists one inherently ‘correct’ variety of English (cf. Galloway and Rose, 2015). In their arguments, scholars have pointed to the dominance of the NES model in English teaching textbooks and English language examinations and to teacher hiring practices that discriminate Non-native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTs), and to policies that largely influence both of these issues by dictating the goals of learning English and the methods of teaching the language and assessing the learners’ competence (ibid.).

Although it is difficult to generalise about the methods and materials used in Polish ELT classrooms, as they vary across schools, the English teaching in Poland is, on the whole, based on the requirements of the outdated Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2007). This framework has been criticised by a number of ELF scholars for promoting the idea of ‘NES superiority’ (cf. Azuaga and Cavalheiro, 2015; Dewey, 2015; Mauranen, 2012; Weber, 2015). The criticism does not relate to the grammatical norm itself, but to the irrelevant, vague and unrealistic specifications of the objectives of learning English that the document lists for various levels, such as the expectation that learners at ‘B2’ level should be able to “sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker” (Council of Europe, 2007: 122). A number of aims specified in the CEFR seem to promote the idea of a NES as being an unquestionable linguistic expert and authority (Seidlhofer, 2011), a notion that has been shown to pose various problems for NNES identity in light of the global spread of English. It has also been argued that the CEFR focuses too much on the unrealistic ‘ends’, whilst overlooking the importance of the ‘means’, or the process of learning, and the role of individual differences between the learners (Widdowson, 2009).

Scholars who argue that ELT needs to reflect the reality of English use worldwide propose that learners should not only be exposed to real-life ‘ELF communication’, but also to World Englishes (WE), or the officially established and codified post-colonial varieties of English, to “foster learners’ linguistic and cultural tolerance – both for others and for
themselves” (Kohn, 2015: 128). With regard to this issue, however, in the existing studies concerned with ELT in Poland, it can be observed that, although not officially prescribed, Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) tend to be the only varieties of English students are exposed to, and are aware of (cf. Henderson et al., 2012; Waniek-Klimczak and Klimczak, 2005). Although students are not officially expected to ‘sound native’ in the lower levels, university students majoring in English are usually required to choose between British and American English at the start of their course and are encouraged to try to imitate the chosen accent (Janicka et al., 2005). This focus on a very limited number of English varieties and the lack of exposure to other ‘Englishes’ spoken worldwide, is, arguably, one of the reasons why Polish students eventually find it “extremely important” (Janicka et al., 2005: 257) to sound ‘native’, as indicated by the results of Janicka et al.’s (ibid.) survey of 240 students.

It has been argued that learners taught in a manner that does not reflect the current reality of English use worldwide often choose to pursue the unattainable goal of achieving a ‘perfect’, ‘native-like’ accent, being unaware that their efforts are likely to result in failure. This “feeling that whatever you do you will never achieve ‘proper’ command [of English]” (Davies 2004: 440) may lead to self-perceptions of being less competent users of the language that belongs to the ‘superior’ NESs and may result in lower Second Language Confidence (L2C) (MacIntyre et al. 1998), and L2C has, in turn, been linked to self-perceived and, ultimately, actual language competence (Sampasivam and Clement 2014). This was demonstrated in Baran-Lucarz’s (2014) study of the relationship between WTC and ‘pronunciation anxiety’, which was conducted among 151 university students in Poland. The author defined pronunciation anxiety as “a multidimensional construct referring to the feeling of apprehension experienced by non-native speakers in oral-communicative situations, due to negative/low pronunciation self-perception and to beliefs and fears related to pronunciation” (ibid.: 453). The participants in this study were found to be experiencing a high level of pronunciation anxiety, coupled with the feeling that “they are being constantly evaluated”, and were concerned about “losing face” (ibid: 465). The students also assessed their pronunciation as being low, feeling that they were expected to do better in this respect, due to the unrealistic ‘native-like’ model of pronunciation they were expected to follow. In a concluding section, the author rightly pointed out that

[the students’] beliefs need to be changed, particularly those concerning their perceived difficulty in learning pronunciation and the amount of time and effort needed before any progress is made. Furthermore, it is important that learners be
aided in setting realistic goals for themselves and understanding that perfect native-like [target language] pronunciation is neither necessary nor attainable in most cases. Introducing the concepts of Euro English, English as a Lingua Franca and International English, and explaining the difference between accentedness and intelligibility might help language students become less critical of themselves, raise their pronunciation self-image and aid in their accepting their new [foreign language] identity.

Baran-Łucarz (2014: 467-468)

Bearing in mind the above considerations and the studies of NNES identity, which showcased the influence of language ideologies on self-perceptions and, consequently, on behaviour (see Section 2.6), in the context of migration such irrelevant English language instruction may, ultimately, lead to migrants’ poor socialisation and isolation, and may generally affect their emotional and financial well-being. These language ideologies, in turn, which have a significant influence on NNESs’ positioning, are, to a great extent, influenced by ELT practices.

The point made by Baran-Łucarz (2014) about raising students’ awareness of the more ‘relevant’ English models, and of some of the characteristics of real-life communication in English, is in line with ELF scholars’ proposals for introducing a research-informed pedagogy based on the global spread of English. These scholars argue that the numerous consequences of the global spread of English showcased by research have direct implications for how English should be taught. Consequently, recent years have witnessed an increase in proposals for change in ELT practice (cf. Dewey, 2012; Galloway, 2013; Jenkins, 2006, 2012; Matsumoto, 2011; Sifakis, 2007, 2014), Scholars have highlighted various facts related to the current reality of English use in proposing these changes, as summarised below:

- Non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers;
- Native speakers of English can no longer claim exclusive ownership of the language;
- Native varieties of English, British and American English (or any other ‘native’ variety) do not represent relevant models for learners of English around the world, be they in the Outer or Expanding Circle;
- Native speakers of English should no longer be regarded as the sole repository of truth about the language, nor the default choice as language teachers;
- The distinction between native and non-native speakers should be downplayed as irrelevant and unhelpful; and
as English becomes abstracted from Anglo-Saxon culture, the cultural component of ELT and learning should look to other (local as well as global) cultures as reference points

Saraceni (2009: 176)

The main idea underlying the above arguments is the need to rethink ELT practices, which are largely based on NE and, therefore, on the “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992), or the belief that NESTs constitute the ideal pedagogical model. Bearing in mind the discussions of NNES identity (see Section 2.6) that emphasised the importance of positioning and social comparisons “with those perceived as being better than [oneself]” (Mercer, 2011: 88) for the development of self-concept and for the resulting evaluation of it, it seems that the points listed by Saraceni (2009) effectively summarise the implications of the global spread of English for NNES identity. ELF scholars’ proposals for change have great potential for NNESs’ personal growth and self-esteem building, even though the scholars do not articulate this strength explicitly, preferring, instead, to focus on the potential to equip NNESs with the skills necessary to be able “to use English globally” (Galloway, 2013: 787). Upon closer scrutiny, however, it is evident that the changes suggested by these scholars may not only benefit the ways the learners use English, but also the way they perceive themselves. Galloway and Rose (2015) summarise the main themes emerging from the existing pedagogical proposals as follows:

1. Increasing World Englishes and ELF exposure in language curriculums;
2. Emphasising respect for multilingualism in ELT;
3. Raising awareness of Global Englishes in ELT;
4. Raising awareness of ELF strategies in language curriculums;
5. Emphasising respect for diverse cultures and identities in ELT;
6. Changing English teacher hiring practices in the ELT industry.

Galloway and Rose (2015: 203)

Regarding the methodology of themes 1-5, the proposals suggest a number of approaches, including explicit teaching about the global spread of English (cf. Bayyurt and Altinmakas, 2012; Galloway, 2013; Murata and Sugimoto, 2009), exposing students to different WE varieties (cf. Hino and Oda, 2015; Galloway and Rose, 2013), content-based teaching (cf. Baker, 2012b; Galloway and Rose, ibid.) and providing the learners with the opportunity to participate in ‘authentic’ communication with other ELF users, for example through Skype (cf. Hino and Oda, 2015).
Although not articulated by the ELF scholars, their pedagogical suggestions have clear potential for social psychologists’ discussions on the need to build English learners’ self-esteem, which ultimately results in increased WTC and L2C. Over the years, the relevance of self-esteem enhancement in English language classrooms has been evident in a number of pedagogical developments aimed at providing learners with a sense of security and competence, particularly in humanistic methods aiming to “promote a stress-free environment” (Rubio, 2015: 51) in the language classroom. Methods such as Total Physical Response (Ashler, 1969), relying on the students’ physical response to the teacher’s oral instructions, Suggestopedia (Lozanov, 1978), based strongly on the use of art and music in the classroom, and Community Language Learning (Curran, 1972), encouraging a sense of community, were all, in one way or another, aimed at increasing students’ self-esteem, by helping to reduce their stress, making them feel comfortable and relaxed and fostering individual students’ sense of purpose (Rubio, 2015). Moreover, multiple theories that placed emphasis on individual differences, learning styles and strategies, such as Gardner’s (1982) Theory of Multiple Intelligences, highlighted individual learners’ strengths and provided opportunities for the aforementioned enhancement of self-esteem. An influential model explicitly aimed at influencing learners’ self-esteem that has been adopted by several researchers over the years (cf. Andres and Arnold, 2009; Arnold, 2007; El-Daw and Hammoud, 2014) is Reasoner’s (1982) programme for building self-esteem. This programme is based on a model consisting of five elements, which, according to Reasoner (ibid.), need to be considered to benefit learners’ self-esteem: sense of security, identity, belonging, purpose and competence. The sense of security is promoted when the learners do not feel anxious about participating in the lesson, because their individual strengths are recognised and acknowledged, the ‘errors’ they make are regarded as a natural element of learning and they are provided with plenty of positive feedback. The ‘identity’ element of the model is concerned with the learners’ positive and realistic self-perceptions that include them recognising their own strengths and weaknesses with the assistance of the teacher, who recognises, and helps the learners to recognise, their individual values and uniqueness. Similarly, the sense of belonging relates to feeling valued and accepted as a member of the class and when peer support is encouraged by the teacher. The sense of purpose is about having clear and realistic objectives regarding the learning process, as well as having realistic and attainable goals and self-expectations. Finally, the sense of competence develops when a person has a clear view of his, or her, abilities and individual strengths evident in a clear record of his, or her, progress (Reasoner, 1982).
ELF scholars’ suggestions, as summarised above, have clear potential for supporting learners’ self-growth, as they generally promote the idea of adopting a more ‘tolerant’ approach to learners’ errors, of setting more realistic goals and self-expectations regarding the purpose of learning English and of helping learners recognise their own value and strengths as multi-competent English users. ELF research clearly contributes greatly to the field of social psychology, even though this point is not articulated by either the ELF or social psychology scholars. This failure to consider, or recognise, this contribution to the discussions of NNES self-beliefs, self-esteem and other related concepts that, together, form what may be described as NNES language identity is, in turn, a considerable limitation of the field of social psychology. Hence, not only does ELF research contribute to the theoretical discussions of language learners’ self-concept, but it also contributes to the literature within social psychology devoted to pedagogical proposals, in which relatively little has been proposed with regard to specific methodologies of self-concept and self-esteem building in a classroom (although notable exceptions include Mercer, 2011, 2015; Reasoner, 1982; Rubio, 2015). The actions outlined in ELF researchers’ pedagogical proposals and aimed at equipping NNESs with the skills necessary to be able “to use English globally” (Galloway, 2013: 787) would help educators, and learners, to counter the myth of NES superiority and highlight NNESs’ status as ‘owners’ of, and ‘experts’ in, the language. This status, which, as previously noted, is a result of the ‘NES ideology’ underlying the ELT industry, tends to be attributed to NESs, has been shown to be empowering for NNESs, who otherwise may suffer from the feeling of being “deficient native speaker[s]”, which affects their self-beliefs and, as a result, their L2C and WTC (see Section 2.6).

In considering this complex relationship that exists, at least on the theoretical level, between NNESs’ self-concept and language identity, their everyday behaviour and decisions and their broadly defined ‘language ideologies’, which, as argued throughout this chapter, tend to be irrelevant to the reality of English use worldwide and are promoted by ELT, the need to investigate Polish migrants’ experiences from a perspective that takes this relationship into account becomes evident. Addressing this relationship requires methodology that enables the researcher to carefully consider the complexity of individuals’ beliefs and interpretations of their experiences, rather than to merely ‘observe’, or ‘measure’ and ‘quantify’, these experiences. Chapter Four describes the design of this current study and argues for its relevance and suitability for the purpose of addressing this need.
Chapter Four – Research Design

The first three chapters of this thesis provided the background and rationale for investigating Polish migrants’ English Language Identity (ELI) and the defined concepts central to this study, as well as a review of relevant literature devoted to Polish migrants in the UK, self-concept and identity and the global spread of English. Furthermore, the limitations of the existing studies were highlighted, which downgraded the role of psycho-social factors in shaping the migrants’ experiences, and a detailed view of identity as a complex relationship that requires in-depth methods of investigation was presented.

Chapter Four outlines the design of this current study that aims to address this empirical and conceptual gap and offers justification for the selection of a mixed methods approach and particular methods of data collection and analysis. It also provides a detailed outline of the pilot studies and main study. Moreover, the researcher’s positionality as an insider in the Polish community and the participants’ acquaintance are discussed in detail. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how the issues of validity and reliability were addressed, as well as pointing out the methodological and conceptual limitations of the study.

4.1. Aims of the study and the research questions.

It was noted in Section 1.2 in Chapter One that, while the Scottish government continues to make efforts to attract, and retain, Polish migrants, as a way of addressing the issues of Scotland’s aging population and the insufficient labour force, as well as to promote and encourage cultural diversity (cf. Moskal, 2013; Scottish Government, 2013), retaining them may be particularly challenging given the findings from the existing literature on Polish migrants in the UK. It seems that to achieve the outlined Government goals the migrants’ “sense of belonging in the majority culture” (Moskal, 2014: 279) and their broadly defined well-being would need to be fostered in the long-run. Furthermore, research also suggests that they tend not to integrate well with the local communities (cf. Bielewska, 2010; Rodriguez, 2010; Ryan et al., 2008) and work predominantly in low-skilled and low-paid occupations, despite more than 50% of them being well-educated and highly qualified (Blanchflower and Lawton, 2008; Sumption and Somerville, 2009). The existing research
aimed at addressing the above issues has focused either on a range of ‘external’ socio-economic factors that may contribute to this situation (cf. Trevena, 2013) or on the migrants’ presumably limited English competence as being the only obstacle to improving their emotional and financial well-being (cf. Weishaar, 2008). It has, however, largely ignored other possible explanations, potentially stemming from a subjective psychological dimension of the migrants’ ‘relationship’ with English. This relationship is potentially based on them having been immersed in a new cultural and linguistic environment, in which they are required to express and negotiate their self-concept with a language that is not their mother tongue. In line with research within sociolinguistics and social psychology, the relationship between English and their self-concept is likely to have influenced their overall beliefs about themselves, their self-esteem and their L2C and WTC, resulting in them choosing jobs below their skill set and poor integration with the local communities.

Thus, gaining an in-depth insight into Polish migrants’ ELI, defined in this thesis as “the assumed and/or attributed relationship between one’s self-concept and the English language”, is crucial for understanding their experiences and addressing them in the future. Hence, the following research questions, and sub-questions, were formulated:

1. What is the Polish migrants’ ELI?
2. What factors influence Polish migrants’ ELI?
3. How does Polish migrants’ ELI affect their lives?
   - Does ELI affect their self-esteem?
   - If so, what are the effects of this on their lives?

It was believed that answering these research questions would make it possible to draw implications for pedagogy and to suggest ways to foster both the current and the future migrants’ desirable ELI development, in order to prepare them for their migration experience and to contribute to their emotional and consequent financial well-being and, ultimately, to contribute to the Government’s goal of retaining Polish migrants in Scotland.

4.2. Setting and participants.

Scotland, and, in particular, the city of Edinburgh, was chosen as the context for the research purpose of this thesis. Not only was this a matter of convenience, as I, the researcher, was based in Edinburgh at the time of conducting this study, but this context was chosen for two
main reasons. Firstly, as demonstrated in Section 1.1 in Chapter One, Scotland is distinctive in its interest, and effort made, in both attracting migrants and encouraging them to settle in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2013). This is reflected in Scotland’s immigrant population growing faster than any other UK country’s (Vargas-Silva, 2014). Within Scotland, Edinburgh has the highest density of immigrants, with the number of Polish migrants exceeding the number of the second largest group of migrants, being those born in India, by more than 50% (ibid.). However, there remains a lack of research into the Polish migrants in Scotland that would convincingly demonstrate the possible reasons for them seeming to experience the aforementioned problems and that could suggest feasible solutions for solving the problems, thus contributing to the government’s goals of attracting and retaining migrants. Secondly, I, as the researcher, believed that, in a study investigating people’s personal experiences and beliefs, it was important to recruit participants within my established social networks (see Section 4.5.1.2), in order to ensure that I was perceived by the participants as being someone who could be trusted to confide in. I hoped that our shared status and experience as fellow Polish migrants, and acquaintances, would both decrease the bias stemming from my status as the researcher and enable me to obtain an in-depth insight into the investigated topic (see Section 4.5.1.2), despite the potential ethical issues (see Section 4.7) and methodological limitations of this approach (see Section 4.8).

The participants of this current study were all Poles who had lived in Edinburgh in Scotland. They had all arrived after 2004 and were, therefore, post-accession migrants. The sampling procedures and sample size, which varied across the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study, are described separately in Sections 4.5.1.1 and 4.5.2.1, respectively. Section 2.3 describes the philosophical assumptions that underpinned this study and influenced the choice of methodology.

4.3. Philosophical foundations.

Section 1.2 in Chapter One argued that a weakness of the existing studies of Polish migrants’ experiences was that limited attention had been paid to exploring the migrants’ perceptions of themselves, or their self-concepts, and their beliefs about their own, and other people’s, status in the wider social world. This assumption was, however, a reflection of the sum of my beliefs about the social world and the ways it should be researched, and of my
understanding of what constitutes ‘knowledge’ and how it could be accessed, as well as from my ontological and epistemological position (Thomas, 2009). Had this philosophical stance been rooted in positivism, for example, which assumes that “knowledge about the social world can be obtained objectively: what we see and hear is straightforward and recordable without too many problems” (ibid: 74), the way the discussed studies approached the migrants’ experiences would not necessarily have been viewed as a limitation. According to the principles of positivism, universal facts can, and should, be separated from subjective perceptions and beliefs and should be assessed using rigorous scientific methods that seek to ‘systematise’ knowledge, treat themes and concepts as ‘variables’ and use them to develop universal explanations and predictions of the researched issues (Charmaz, 2014). Therefore, using quantitative questionnaires, designing identity scales and applying inferential statistics (cf. Khatib and Rezaei, 2013), or using observational methods (cf. Jenks, 2013), to carefully document and ‘measure’ one’s identity would be seen as a methodological strength, according to the positivistic worldview. Furthermore, the participants’ subjective views would not contribute to, and would, in fact, obstruct, the understanding of their experiences.

The assumptions of positivism, despite having influenced some aspects of the adopted approach to the data analysis (see Section 4.5.1.8.1), were generally at odds with the philosophical stance central to this current study. This worldview (Creswell, 2013; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2013), or paradigm (Bazeley, 2013; Mertens, 1998), is typically referred to as constructivism or social constructivism and is rooted in interpretive theories, which assume the existence of multiple emergent realities and aim to gain an understanding of the ways people construct meanings and actions within these realities (Thomas, 2009). In research, constructivists are predominantly interested in the participants’ perspectives and beliefs, and investigate how and why these specific beliefs are formed (Bryant, 2002, Creswell, 2013). In this current study, the definition of ELI as a notion based on the participants’ self-concept, or their beliefs about themselves (see Section 2.1), reflected the constructivist worldview and required predominantly qualitative methods of data collection.

Additionally, although recognising the subjective nature of reality promoted by constructivists, an even more ‘flexible’ approach, compatible with the ideology of philosophical ‘pragmatism’ (Mead, 1932), was adopted in this study. Pragmatism is a very “practice-oriented” worldview that utilises elements of various philosophical traditions and is mainly concerned with applying a “what works” (Creswell, 2013: 22) approach to solving the problems of methodology and systems of philosophy and reality. Therefore, although
pragmatism perceives the reality as being constructed by individuals, it states that these interpretations are “reconstruction[s] of something that exists” (Bazeley, 2013: 22), gives importance to empirical observations, but relies on the researcher’s interpretation of them, and acknowledges the existence of certain established social structures, but recognises people’s role in constructing them (Charmaz, 2014). Thus, pragmatism is a balanced philosophical stance that recognises some assumptions typically attributed to the aforementioned positivism and links these to the more ‘flexible’ constructivist theories. This view was endorsed in this current study, which, although placing prominence on the participants’ subjectivities and emphasising the role of individual agency by using interviews and reflective journals, also utilised a quantitative questionnaire and, hence, recognised the role of external ‘structures’ and the reality existing independently of the individuals’ interpretations. The research methodology recognised as being the closest to the assumptions of this study, and adopted in the study, was the constructivist grounded theory described in the following section.

4.4. Methodological foundations.

4.4.1. Constructivist grounded theory.

In order to effectively argue that constructivist grounded theory suited the purpose of, and that the philosophical assumptions that underlie this approach closely match those adopted in, the current study (see Section 4.3), this section discusses the main characteristics of this methodology and contrasts it with other versions of grounded theory research. Constructivist grounded theory is Charmaz’s (2014) take on a methodology developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and characterised particularly by its inductive approach to research (with an ongoing process of simultaneous data collection and analysis), aimed at developing a theory, or explanation, ‘grounded in’, and emerging from, the data, rather than pre-existing categories and theoretical frameworks. Charmaz (2014) summarised the logic of grounded theory as follows:

Stated simply, grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible, guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves (…) Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods and keeps you interacting and involved with your data and emerging analysis.

Charmaz (2014:1)
Grounded theory was developed as a response to the research methodologies of the early 20th century. These predominantly deductive methodologies were mainly oriented towards testing pre-formulated hypotheses. The research would normally start with a ‘general’ concept or theory and progress towards studying specific instances, or cases, in order to investigate its validity. In contrast to these approaches, and despite certain differences between various versions of the methodology stemming from differing epistemological views, grounded theory, in general, is an inductive approach aimed at developing a theory, or an explanation, through a thorough investigation of a range of individual cases through a process known as constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

However, despite some understandable similarities between the various versions of grounded theory, they are distinguished by contrasting epistemological views, which results in significant differences in how the studied reality is perceived and approached (Oliver, 2012). Thus, as the early 20th century grounded theory was deeply rooted in positivism, it subscribed to the idea of objective reality, which may be assessed by a neutral observer who would approach it without pre-existing knowledge of the topic and through rigorous and systematic application of a set of procedures. This, in turn, resulted in grounded theory being a strict and narrow set of specific scientific guidelines for conducting rigorous research. This strictly inductive approach was aimed at developing a theory based on a systematic enquiry into various individuals. More recently, however, constructivist grounded theory is being based on the assumption that “knowledge rests on social constructions” (Charmaz, 2009: 130) and, thus, the studied reality is not an objective, but a social construct, and the very notion of a neutral observer is inherently invalid. As Charmaz (2014) argued:

"Unlike [Glaser and Strauss’] position, I assume that neither data nor theories are discovered either as given in the data or the analysis. Rather, we are part of the world we study, the data we collect and the analyses we produce."

Charmaz (2014: 17)

The implications of this epistemological position for research practice are that, no matter how rigorous the procedures are, the studied reality cannot be assessed objectively, as the researchers and the research participants alike “construct research processes and products” (Charmaz, 2009, p. 130). This significant shift in the perception of the studied reality
required a different approach to studying it. Constructivist grounded theory is much less ‘prescribed’ in its design and places more importance on “diverse local worlds [and] multiple realities” (Creswell, 2013: 65), by putting the emphasis on the participants’ views, assumptions and beliefs and by emphasising the subjectivity of the researchers’ interpretations. At the same time, however, the existence of social structures independent of interpretation is not denied. The strictly inductive approaches to research promoted by the earlier versions of grounded theory do not provide an opportunity to effectively investigate this complex reality. Hence, constructivist grounded theorists advocate investigating the research topic either through “reverberating induction fostering deduction” (Glaser, 1998: 43) or through abduction, or

A type of reasoning that begins with the researcher examining inductive data and observing a surprising or puzzling finding that cannot be explained with conventional theoretical accounts. After scrutinizing these data, the researcher entertains all possible theoretical explanations for the observed data, and then forms hypotheses and tests them to confirm or disconfirm each explanation until he or she arrives at the most plausible theoretical interpretation of the observed data.

Charmaz (2014: 341)

Research based on abductive reasoning begins with induction, but does not end with it. Rather, the inductive stage leads to formulating hypotheses that may be based on both the researcher’s pre-existing theoretical knowledge and the emerging research findings and testing them through empirical investigation. Abduction also involves pursuing personal hunches, making highly theoretical interpretations and making assumptions about any unspoken knowledge (Oliver, 2012).

The constructivist grounded theorists’ views of research are in line with the philosophical assumptions of this current study (see Section 4.3) and the importance attributed to the role of the researcher’s position in it (see Section 4.5.1.2). However, as previously mentioned, constructivist grounded theory was not chosen prior to the study and was, rather, recognised as being the methodology reflecting the set of beliefs and choices made when designing it. For example, the most recognised characteristic of constructivist grounded theory, being that the emerging interpretation of the research findings needs to be grounded in the data, was the first assumption made when planning the study. It was believed that, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the complex notion of a person’s identity, particularly if this was
defined by that person’s self-concept, it was crucial to develop this understanding from the collected data and to avoid using pre-existing frameworks that could limit the researcher’s sensitivity to the emerging themes, thus affecting the interpretations of the data (Robson, 2002). In considering the limited amount of research into the topic of Polish migrants’ identity, it was believed that constructivist grounded theory had the greatest potential as an approach to gain an in-depth understanding of this under-researched topic. Although findings from research on language and identity had been considered, they were perceived as being sensitising concepts (Blumer, 1969), or ideas, used to initiate the enquiry, with a possibility of their dismissal, or revising, being taken into consideration (van den Hoonard, 1997). Furthermore, abductive reasoning, discussed above as one of the characteristics of constructivist grounded theory, was followed throughout this current study. Detailed investigations of the negative cases, or the responses and opinions of participants that did not match the rest of the data (Bazeley, 2013) for example, were a common feature of the process of the data analysis (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.3) and were believed to be crucial in order to gain a deep understanding of the studied context. Also, the decision to add two additional sub-questions to Research Question 3 reflected ‘sensitivity’ to the data, being a characteristic of the abductive approach, as these sub-questions were formed to explore any additional emerging assumptions about the studied phenomena, in order to provide a plausible theoretical explanation of them.

The pragmatic approach to research methodology adopted in this current study was evident in certain differences between the study and what would typically be considered a constructivist grounded theory research. For example, the use of mixed methods, although increasingly recognised as a valuable approach in constructivist grounded theory studies (Charmaz, 2014), has not ‘traditionally’ been linked with grounded theory approach.

4.4.2. Mixed methods research.

In planning this study strictly quantitative designs, which place emphasis on describing general tendencies, rely on quantitative measures of a single pattern or behaviour and are not able to capture the complexity of an individual person’s behaviour (King, 1994; Robson, 2002), were rejected as being at odds with the complex view of identity described in Chapter Two and with the epistemological beliefs underlying this study. These beliefs fitted within the principles of constructivism, which assumes that the social world is co-constructed by individuals within particular situations, with both the researcher and the participants shaping
and constructing the research reality during their interactions (Clarke, 2012; Flick, 2009). To address such a view of reality, an exploratory mixed methods research design was chosen as an approach that synthesises the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research (Johnson Burke and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Collecting both qualitative and quantitative data helped to gain an in-depth understanding of the investigated phenomenon and enabled me, as the researcher, to replicate the findings to a broader population, thus increasing its validity (see Section 4.6) (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

The mixed methods approach in this study was what is called an ‘emergent’, ‘sequential’ and ‘exploratory’ mixed methods design (cf. Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003) with a “qualitative priority” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011: 65). It was ‘emergent’, as the decision to introduce the quantitative component ‘emerged’ in the course of the study, as opposed to fixed designs, where “the use of qualitative and quantitative methods is predetermined and planned at the start of the study” (ibid.: 54). The timing of the application of the qualitative and quantitative methods indicated that it was a ‘sequential’ design, as the quantitative strand followed the qualitative one, as opposed to ‘concurrent’ designs, in which both phases occur at the same time. Finally, the mixed methods design adopted in this current study was ‘exploratory’, meaning that the results from the first, and qualitative (i.e. exploratory), phase were used to design the quantitative component aiming to assess the generalisability of the findings (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

4.5. Outline of the research process.

This section provides details of how the qualitative and quantitative phases of this current study were designed and conducted, in sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2, respectively. A number of subsections explain the recruitment process, provide details of the pilot and main studies, describe the techniques for the data collection and analysis and discuss the issues of validity and reliability. The concluding Section 4.5.3 discusses an additional method that was considered for this study.

The research was conducted between January 2015 and January 2016 (see Table 4.1). During the period of the qualitative data collection (February-August 2015), the participants were asked to submit reflective diaries, in which they described incidents and experiences they found to be note-worthy and related to the English language (see Section 4.5.1.7). The main tool for the data collection was, however, an audio-recorded interview conducted twice with
each participant, prior to and following the collection of the reflective journals. The language used in the interviews was Polish, as I, the researcher, shared this language with the participants, and to speak English with them would, arguably, have felt unnatural. The first round of interviews took place in February and March 2015, with the second round taking place in July and August. Interview 1 was a gently-guided conversation containing open-ended questions and was aimed at gaining an insight into the participants’ beliefs and gaining a perspective of their experiences within the research topic (Charmaz, 2014). Interview 2 was more structured and was focused around the themes emerging from both the analysis of the participants’ e-diary entries and Interview 1. This organisation of interviews helped to develop an in-depth understanding of the studied phenomenon (Gall et al., 1996; Patton, 1990) and reflected the interwoven procedure of data collection and analysis that is characteristic to constructivist grounded theory methodology (Flick, 2009; Strauss, 1987).

The exploratory work carried out during the qualitative phase resulted in the development of a thematic framework that was used to design the structured questionnaire, which was the method of the quantitative data collection in the second phase of the study (December 2015-February 2016) (Johnson Burke and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Table 4.1 presents a detailed timeline of the research process, along with the methods of the data collection and analysis and the additional activities undertaken at each stage.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Analysed data</th>
<th>Additional activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>Pilot study1 (n=3)</td>
<td>Pilot interviews, reflective journals</td>
<td>Pilot interviews, reflective journals</td>
<td>Piloting all aspects of the qualitative phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>Qualitative phase (n=20)</td>
<td>Interview 1 reflexive journals</td>
<td>Interview 1 Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Collecting interview 1 data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview 1 Reflexive journals</td>
<td>Interview 1/Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Distributing journal guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflective journals</td>
<td>Interview 1/Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Transcribing interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflective journals</td>
<td>Interview 1/Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Collecting journal entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflective journals</td>
<td>Interview 1/Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Designing interview 2 guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pilot interview 2 Interview 2</td>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>-Piloting interview 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>-Collecting interview 2 data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Interview 1/2, Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Transcribing interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview 1/2, Reflexive journals</td>
<td>Interview 1/2, Reflexive journals</td>
<td>-Gaining access to the quantitative phase participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview 1/2, Reflexive journals</td>
<td></td>
<td>(see section 2.5.2.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1
Outline of the research process
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Study Type</th>
<th>Action 1</th>
<th>Action 2</th>
<th>Action 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>Pilot study 2 (n=30)</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>-Piloting the questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>Quantitative phase (n=378)</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>-Distributing the questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>-Analysing the questionnaire data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

quantitative phase participants (see section 2.5.2.1)
The following sections describe the qualitative (Section 4.5.1) and quantitative (Section 4.5.2) stages separately and provide details of the development, and implementation, of the research instruments, as well as the sampling procedures and methods of data analysis.

4.5.1. The qualitative phase.

4.5.1.1. Participants.

The qualitative phase of this current study involved 20 Polish migrants living in Edinburgh, who came to Scotland after 2004 and were, thus, classified as post-accession migrants (see Table 4.2). They had lived in Scotland for at least one year (therefore, they potentially had some experiences and opinions to share) and were aged between 18 and 35 years old, thus representing ‘typical’ Polish migrants, as approximately 80% of the post-accession Polish migrants in the UK were within this age range (Home Office, 2009).

Table 4.2
The participants’ profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Time spent in Scotland (years)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aga</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicja</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ania</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artur</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bart</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartek</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogusia</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagnara</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorota</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Izabela</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although these basic criteria were introduced to ensure a relatively homogenous sample, and for the purpose of later cross-case comparisons (Smith et al., 2009), recruiting participants according to other pre-established criteria, such as gender, social status or education, was never my intention. Having a representative sample was not an aim of the study and, as noted in Section 4.2, the participants were selected through purposive sampling, with priority being placed on their status as my friends/acquaintances. Thus, the choice of participants reflected my personal judgement as to whether these participants were likely to be the relevant and reliable source of information that I sought (Morse, 2007).

The size of the sample was estimated on the assumption that it would enable me to reach ‘theoretical saturation’, or “the point at which gathering more data about a theoretical category reveals no new properties nor yields any further theoretical insights about the emerging grounded theory” (Charmaz, 2014: 345). Although there is no single answer to the question of what sample size is sufficient to reach theoretical saturation, such factors as heterogeneity of the studied population, the scope of the study and the adopted methods and their application (cf. the length of the interviews) are believed to have a central role in achieving this (cf. Baker and Edwards, 2012; Guest et al., 2005; Mason, 2010). Mason’s (2010) analysis of 560 PhD studies that adopted a qualitative interview as their main method revealed that the most common sample size in qualitative research is between 15 and 50 participants, with 20 being the average sample size in grounded theory studies. Guest et al. (2005) used data from their own study to conclude that 88% of the codes they developed when analysing the data from 60 qualitative interviews were created by the time 12 interviews had been conducted. These findings, thus, helped in establishing the sample size for this current study and it was, subsequently, decided that, initially, 20 participants would be recruited. Given the detailed design of the study, which included triangulation of the data and methods by means of two in-depth interviews and reflective journals, I, the researcher, believed that this number would enable me to make valid judgements about the general trends emerging in the data and to identify and explore the ‘negative cases’, or the responses...
and opinions that did not match the rest of the data (Bazeley, 2013). Additionally, the possibility of recruiting more participants was considered, should the theoretical saturation not occur.

The participants were mainly approached through email, phone text messages and Facebook, as I did not want to put them under pressure by asking them to make a decision in a face-to-face conversation. As previously noted, the participants were my friends and acquaintances. Whilst the ethics and possible challenges related to having “friend-respondents” (Brewis, 2014: 80) are discussed in detail in Section 4.7, the following section provides the rationale for choosing this approach and outlines its main advantages.

4.5.1.2. Researching friends.

Conducting research among friends, which is a different issue to establishing friendships with the participants (Brewis, 2014), has been addressed extensively in theoretical literature in the field of education (cf. Ellis, 2007; Humphrey, 2007; Taylor, 2011; Tillmann-Healy, 2003), mainly with regard to the ethical issues arising and the ways to manage them. It has also been adopted as a strategy in empirical, mainly ethnographic, studies in various fields, including education (cf. Malbon, 1999; Park, 2012). On one hand, among the most problematic issues linked with using “friendship as a method” (Tillmann-Healy, 2003: 729) are the feeling of confusion, due to the unconventional relationship between the researcher and the participants, the feeling of ‘betrayal’ when sharing the personal stories of people the researcher knows, the issue of the previous knowledge shared by the researcher and the participants and the “possibility of reducing friends to little more than paper stereotypes, objectifying them in our writing so that their individuality is stripped away” (Brewis, 2014: 850; Browne, 2003; Taylor, 2011). On the other hand, the advantages are believed to include establishing rapport and a high level of trust more easily and effectively, a “deeper level of understanding” (Taylor, 2011: 6) between the researcher and the participants, due to the shared knowledge, and the participants’ willingness to share their honest personal experiences and reflections with a person they know (cf. Brewis, 2014; Hodkinson, 2005).

This approach was adopted as it was believed that, despite the aforementioned risks involved in researching friends (addressed in detail in Section 4.7), it was a particularly valuable strategy for the purpose of this current study, which relied on, and emphasised the
importance of, detailed personal accounts of the participants. In line with the methodological literature devoted to this approach, it enabled me, the researcher, to establish a good rapport and high level of trust quickly during the initial interviews and to retain this throughout the study. The participants admitted on several occasions that they enjoyed participating in the study and sharing their experiences. They readily shared their detailed personal stories, as well as occasional controversial opinions that could potentially show them in a bad light. They did not appear stressed and used informal, and sometimes vulgar, language and the general impression was that they appreciated the opportunity to share their insights. Although there is no way of knowing for certain, I do believe that, had it not been for this status as the participants’ friend, I would not have gained access to these “hard stories” (Brewis, 2014: 855).

4.5.1.3. The aims of the pilot studies.

Two pilot studies were conducted in the qualitative phase of this study. While Pilot Study 2, conducted in July 2015 (see Section 4.5.1.5.1), was mainly aimed at testing whether the Interview 2 questions were clear to the participants, the purpose of Pilot Study 1 (January 2015) was to assess the overall feasibility of the research design by addressing the following list of objectives:

- To ensure the informed consent form was clear and easy to understand.
- To choose the most suitable approach to transcription and to test the software for transcription.
- To test the software for arranging interview dates with the participants.
- To pilot the interview and assess whether the questions were clear to the participants and would result in relevant data.
- To test the recording set-up (how close people needed to sit, whether it was audible, etc.)
- To ensure the e-journal guide was clear and easy to understand.
- To test different ways of collecting the e-journals.
- To find effective ways of managing and storing the interview and e-journal data.
- To find software for keeping a researcher diary.
- To decide on the approach to coding.
- To find a way to incorporate line-by-line coding into NVivo 10.
To conduct the data analysis in NVivo 10.

The above objectives, and how they were addressed, are discussed throughout the following sections.

4.5.1.4. Interview1.

4.5.1.4.1. Piloting interview 1.

The participants were recruited using the same criteria as for the main sample. Each participant was provided with the informed consent form (see Appendix 1) and asked to provide feedback on its content and form. Based on both the received feedback and personal communication with the participants, several changes were made (the changes are emphasised in Appendix 2). Firstly, it was clarified that, to participate, no previous knowledge of the subject was required. All of the three participants raised concerns about their ability to contribute to the study, with one of them explicitly stating that he “[had] to read something about this identity before we meet” [Marek, personal communication]. He, therefore, assumed that he would need to have some knowledge about the topic of ‘identity’ to share during the interview. Thus, the second version of the consent form not only explained that previous knowledge was not required, as I was interested in their personal experiences, but also clarified, in simple terms, what I understood by ELI.

Secondly, the idea of keeping a reflective journal caused confusion upon reading the consent form, due to some differences between the Polish and English language. A journal, or diary, may be translated into Polish in several ways. The most precise translations are ‘dziennik’ and ‘pamiętnik’. The word ‘dziennik’, which is a closer equivalent of ‘journal’, derives from the word ‘dzień’, or ‘day’, and, by definition, is a detailed log filled in daily. Therefore, it was initially decided that the word ‘pamiętnik’ (‘diary’) would be used, despite this word sounding less formal, or even ‘childish’, and, arguably, carries connotations of something that teenagers would fill with their daily reflections and concerns. This was partly confirmed by the participants’ feedback, in which they expressed concerns that they would neither have enough topics to fill their diary daily, nor the time to do so. In response to this feedback, the final version of the consent form used the term ‘dziennik elektroniczny’ (‘electronic journal’), followed by a description advising that it would only need to be filled in whenever they felt they had something note-worthy to share, and that the entries did not have to be
lengthy, or detailed. Other questions raised by the participants related to the language and location of the interviews. Consequently, the final consent form explained that the interviews would be conducted in Polish and at a time and place convenient for the participants.

The pilot interviews were conducted on the 18\textsuperscript{th}, 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} of January 2015 (see Table 4.1). The dates were arranged through an online scheduling tool Doodle (http://doodle.com/en_GB/), which provided an easy and effective way of scheduling the interviews. The tool enabled me to pick suggested dates and times and forward this ‘calendar’ to the participants. Each participant could choose a time and date that suited her/him and had not been selected by other participants (the participants could see what dates had already been selected by others). Additionally, in the ‘comments’ section, the participants could also specify a preferred location for the interview. As a result, the interviews were conducted in three different locations chosen by the participants – in the researcher’s flat, in a pub and at one interviewee’s workplace. This variety of contexts was believed to be particularly useful for the purpose of testing the audio-recording equipment and the intelligibility of the audio-recordings in the further process of transcribing the interviews (see Section 4.5.1.6). It also provided an opportunity to decide whether any differences existed in the data collected in these different situations. Based on this, it appeared that, as long as the participants could choose a preferred location, they felt comfortable during the interview process and no negative influence was noted in relation to the environment in which the interviews were conducted.

The initial interview guide is provided in Appendix 3. When asked about the experience of being interviewed, in the final stage of the interview (see Section 4.5.1.4.2), the participants reported having enjoyed the process and liked the fact that they had to reflect on issues they had not previously thought about, as expressed in extract A from one of the pilot interviews.

\textit{Extract A, Pilot interview 1 (Marek, 26, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a joiner)}

Marek: I have to tell you, I like this interview thing, I’ve never thought about these things and now …

\hspace{1cm} it’s a good thing to think about these topics because now I start to understand myself better.

Other feedback, as well as my own judgement of the interview process, however, revealed that several questions I asked were vague and difficult to understand, or answer. One of these
was a question about factors influencing “the way [the participants] felt about the language”. In a pilot interview with Basia, this question followed her account of differences she experienced when communicating in Polish and English and resulted in a long pause and Basia’s increasing confusion, which seemed to have deepened as a result of cues I provided (extract B).

Extract B, Pilot interview 1 (Basia, 29, came to Scotland in 2010, worked as a chef)

Jarek: What do you think; what factors influence the way you feel as a user of the language? You have mentioned English competence, are there any other factors?
Basia: [long pause, confusion]
Jarek: Is there anything else that may influence the way you feel about the language, apart from competence…
Basia: [more confusion]
Jarek: Do you think anything may influence how you feel as a user of English, how you feel as a person.
Basia: [long pause]
I think that the way I had been taught, the focus on grammar… Is that what you mean?
Jarek: Possibly, this could be some factors from the past.
[ interruption by a phone call]
Basia: What was the question again?
Jarek: What factors do you think could influence the way you feel about the language?
Basia: [long pause]
Jarek: Did you say it could be some previous experiences you had?
Basia: [long pause]

Other participants had similar difficulties in answering this and other questions about their “relationship with English”. This kind of questions clearly interrupted the otherwise ‘smooth’ interview and caused a great deal of confusion. It seemed that these questions were broad and conceptual in nature and, as I reflected in the researcher’s diary (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.4) afterwards, resulted from my assumptions of some similarity between our experiences and, thus, from what I expected to hear from the participants (Figure 4.1).
Figure 4.1
The first reflection on my assumptions as a researcher (extract from the researcher’s diary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Menu</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the process of interviewing/transcribing I constantly keep asking...</td>
<td>25 Nov 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>I will need to read about it but I decided that I may include students I...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-journals</td>
<td>I may need to change the guidelines for journals. The ones I have are ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot interview 2</td>
<td>I received a very positive feedback from the second interviewee and a lo...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nivo</td>
<td>The analysis is under way!!! Learning with th...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My assumptions !</td>
<td>I read and knew about researcher’s assumptions but did not realise how ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>I need to read some more on approaches to transcription but I real...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researching friends</td>
<td>In her article The ethics of researching friends ... Bews (2014)January/...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing the interv...</td>
<td>I decided that I will not ask them about the ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My assumptions !
I read and knew about researcher’s assumptions but did not realise how deeply rooted they are in the research process. My first serious realisation of these happened during and after pilot interview 1. I realised that a number of questions was designed according to my assumptions and what I expected to hear! But during the interview it occurred to me that the respondent’s way of thinking was strikingly different than mine. The second draft of the interview guide is therefore much different.
Despite efforts to both recognise and control this kind of assumptions during and after the interview, it became evident after the pilot interviews that the interview structure in itself was a product of some of these assumptions. The participants did not have enough freedom to express their opinions and, as shown above, some of the questions were leading the participants towards the reflections I had ‘hoped’ to hear, posing a threat to the validity of the findings. At the same time, an observation made during the interviews was that, when the participants recollected particular stories and events from the past (as opposed to expressing their opinions on the general theoretical ideas I asked them about), their accounts were much longer, more detailed, felt more ‘natural’ and, as the later analysis revealed, generated data that was not only more detailed, but also more relevant to the research topic. These observations and the feedback regarding the pilot interview resulted in the final version of Interview 1 being significantly different to the pilot interview.

4.5.1.4.2. Interview 1 final.

The interviews were conducted during February and March 2015 and each interview lasted for approximately one hour. The interview began with a ‘briefing’ (Kvale, 1996) that was divided into a “content” and “form” briefing (see Appendix 4). Firstly, the participants were reminded of the aims of the study and the general topic of the interview, and the content of the interview was briefly outlined. With regard to the form, the participants were reminded of the fact that it was an interview, as opposed to a casual conversation we could have under any other circumstances, and, hence, my input would be minimal. I also clarified that there were no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers and my goal was, not to evaluate or judge what the participants said, but to collect data and to get to know about their opinions.

As opposed to the pilot interview, which started with, and later included, direct and specific questions (cf. “where, how often and with whom do you communicate in English?”, “Do you have any observations or thoughts about the English language?”, “Tell me about your relationship with English”), the main interview relied more on the participants’ retrospective accounts and resembled a ‘narrative interview’ (cf. Kvale, 2007; Mishler, 1991; Thomas et al., 2014). Narrative interviewing is a technique “through which individuals express their understandings of events and experiences” (Mishler, 1991). Narrative interviews are less structured than ‘traditional’ qualitative interviews and allow the interviewees more freedom to elaborate on the topics they find important and relevant (Thomas et al., 2014). The
interviewer introduces general themes and encourages the interviewees to produce detailed accounts, or ‘narratives’, that resemble “stories rather than reports” (Chase, 2003: 275). The interview started with a general question initiating the conversation and encouraging retrospection – “Please tell me about the time you first arrived in Scotland” (see Appendix 4). As the participants described their experiences, additional questions were asked to encourage reflection, e.g. “How did you feel about it?”, “Do you think that this experience influenced you in any way? How? Why?” The resulting narrative accounts enabled the interviewees to better organise, and express, the experiences they were describing (Mishler, 1991). This organisation of the interview also resembled Charmaz’s (2014) ‘grounded theory interview’, in which the initial open-ended questions ask about a given experience and are followed by “intermediate questions” (p. 67), which encourage reflections regarding this experience. This approach to the interviewing encouraged conversations that felt more ‘natural’ and informal and generated more relevant data than the initial attempts.

The questions that followed the initial question about their arrival in Scotland asked about particular situations involving communication in English that the participants perceived as being either particularly successful or a failure, and asked the participants about their feelings at a given moment and the influence of these situations on any aspects of their experience. The participants were also asked about the contexts and speakers they preferred (cf. NNES/NES) and about the differences between communication in English and in Polish. Subsequently, they were asked about possible reasons for these beliefs and attitudes, as well as about the influence they believed their described experiences, as well as their beliefs and attitudes, had on their lives. There was also a set of questions about their experiences, or lack thereof, with ELT in Poland, which, at most times, emerged ‘naturally’ in the course of the interview.

The interview ended with a ‘debriefing’ (Kvale, 1996), during which the participants were asked if there was anything else they would like to add. They were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on the experience of being interviewed.

Overall, the main difference between the pilot and the final version of Interview 1 was that the latter appeared less structured and more ‘natural’, did not result in long periods of silence and/or confusion and the topics anticipated in the interview guide were covered by the participants with minimal input and interference from the researcher. The interviews being conducted in this way resulted in rich data that contributed significantly to the further analysis and resulted in a number of themes that were not imposed by a pre-determined theoretical framework, but emerged from the interview data. This was kept in mind when
designing Interview 2, which, on one hand, needed to be more structured, due to the goal of developing the particular themes that had emerged from the analysis of Interview 1 and the journal data, and, on the other hand, was designed in a similar way that encouraged the participants to freely discuss their experiences.

4.5.1.5. Interview 2.

The second round of interviews, conducted during July and August 2015, followed the collection and analysis of the data from Interview 1 and the reflective journal (see Section 4.5.1.7) and was developed to expand on, and develop a deeper understanding of, the emerging themes, as well as to validate the analysis conducted to that point (Buchbinder, 2011).

4.5.1.5.1. Piloting interview 2.

The Pilot Interviews were carried out on the 2nd, 4th and 7th of July 2-15 with the same three participants who had been interviewed during the Pilot Interview 1. In this way, it mirrored the design of the main study. Overall, the aim of Interview 2, which was a ‘validation interview’ (Buchbinder, 2011), was to provide the participants with a brief summary of the main findings and to structure the interview around a discussion of these findings. This not only helped to develop a deeper understanding of the emergent themes, but also helped to increase the validity of my interpretations and analysis, in order to guard against my bias as a researcher, and to ‘empower’ the participants, by giving them a more active role in the interviewing process (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Padgett, 1998).

In the initial version of the Pilot Interview 2 the participants had been provided with a summary of the findings to reflect on prior to the interview (see Appendix 5) and, when discussing each theme during the interview, they were asked for their reflections on this summary of findings (see Appendix 6). The feedback received from the first two interviewees, however, suggested that this form confused them and generated an impression that I was not interested in what they had to say apart from confirming my assumptions. Overall, they felt that this way of conducting the interview limited their ‘freedom’ to say what they wanted to say.
As this was at odds with the main assumptions underlying this current study, which emphasised the central role of the participants’ subjectivity in the investigated reality and was, therefore, meant to encourage the participants to share their experiences and opinions freely, a decision was made not to send the summary of findings prior to the future interviews, in order to avoid this kind of impression. Instead, brief summaries of the discussed themes were incorporated into the interview guide wherever appropriate (see Appendix 7). In this way the aim of validating the findings was still achieved, but, overall, the interview felt more natural. As a result, the third pilot interview was not confusing for the participant and was received in a more positive way. The developed interview guide was used in the final version of the guide for Interview 2 and is described below.

4.5.1.5.2. Interview 2 final.

The consent form for Interview 1 also covered Interview 2. Similar to Interview 1, the interview began with a briefing. I thanked the participants for their participation and involvement in the study. I explained that, during the interview, we would discuss some of the findings from my analysis and explained that the findings were not only based on their Interview 1, but on all of the 20 interviews I had conducted. I explained that I would like to hear their opinions on these topics in general and would like them to relate their own beliefs and experiences to these findings. I also explained that they would not be limited in any way to discuss what they found to be worth sharing and that there were no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ responses. I also reminded them of my role as the interviewer and how this would influence our interaction.

For the purpose of triggering detailed responses, and to allow the participants to fully ‘re-live’ the recollected experiences with as much detail as possible, elements of a ‘cognitive interview’ (cf. Beatty and Willis, 2007; Fisher et al., 1989) were adopted. Cognitive interviewing is a method that draws on the developments in fields of study that investigated how memory retrieval works (Memon and Higham, 1999). The primary purpose of cognitive interviewing is for the interviewer to help the interviewee reconstruct the context of a given situation with as much detail as possible, by asking questions about a range of details, such as environmental conditions, feelings and emotions, smells and sounds, etc. (ibid.).

Thus, whenever possible, the interviewees were asked to visualise their experiences in as much detail as possible. When asked the first set of questions, regarding their first encounter
with the ‘Scottish accent’ (which was one of the themes emerging from the analysis), for example, they were asked, and given time to recollect as much detail as possible (including the weather that day, their feelings, the exact place of the event, etc.), about that particular experience. This approach, although initially welcomed with reserve and humour, was found to be effective, by both me and the participants. The main themes around which the interview was centred were ‘first encounter with the Scottish accent’, ‘expectations’, ‘saving face’ and ‘expressing one’s real self’, being themes that emerged during Interview 1.

Additionally, a section on ‘language ideologies’ was added, with the possibility of using this in the future in mind, although, at that time, it was not a theme that had emerged from the initial analysis.

4.5.1.6. Transcribing the interviews.

One of the objectives of the Pilot Study 1 was to test various ways of transcribing the interviews. Initially, an attempt was made to use Windows Media Player to play the audio recordings, while transcribing them in Microsoft Word. This method, however, proved problematic and ineffective, due to the need to stop and rewind the recording very often and to switch between the two different ‘windows’ in which the recording and the transcription were open. This was also a very time-consuming and laborious process of transcription, where one minute of audio recording took approximately 10 minutes to transcribe. To overcome this obstacle, Express Scribe Transcription Software Pro was tested and chosen for the main study. Among the most useful options provided by this software are the possibility to stop, pause, rewind, etc. using the specified shortcut keys (thus, it is easier and quicker than using a ‘mouse’ or a touchpad) and the option to modify the speed of an audio-recording (Figure 4.2).
Figure 4.2

A screenshot from the control panel of Express Scribe Transcription Software Pro
As a result, after the recording speed was slowed down by about 50%, it was possible to transcribe one minute of a recording in approximately two minutes and a 25-minute-long interview in around one hour, as there was hardly ever the need to stop the recording whilst transcribing.

Regarding the transcribing conventions, neither detailed punctuation conventions nor the practice of numbering each line, as in Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis, were used. The transcriptions included basic indications of the tone of the conversation, such as ‘@’ to indicate laughter, and the non-verbal aspects of the conversation, such as bracketed comments indicating “long pause” or “confusion”, in order to communicate the tone of the interview (Kvale, 2007). This served the purpose of a trustworthy analysis afterwards and helped me to remember the overall tone of the interview. Although there are many transcription conventions, the general agreement is that the level of transcription depends on the purpose of the research (Crang, 2005). In this current study, which was mainly concerned with the content of the participants’ accounts and their expressed beliefs, the basic conventions and punctuation marks utilised were believed to be sufficient (Bazeley, 2013). Additionally, in considering the aforementioned philosophical stance, I, the researcher, was not interested in making interpretations of the way the participants expressed certain things, or how they behaved when expressing them, as I was more interested, rather, in the content of what the participants said and in what the discussed phenomena meant to them.

4.5.1.7. Reflective journal.

An additional method used to complement the data collected from the interviews was the use of reflective journals that the participants were required to complete, starting after Interview 1 until the end of June 2015. They were asked to send me their entries as soon as possible after they had been made, which enabled me to regularly incorporate new data in the analysis (see Section 4.5.1.8) and contributed to the development of the Interview 2 guide. The effectiveness of this ‘diary-interview method’ (Cucu-Oancea, 2013; Kenten, 2010) is evident in several studies of NNES identity (cf. Gu, 2010; Morita, 2004, Norton, 2000; Park, 2012). The methodological usefulness of the reflective journals was that they gave me access to situations where direct observation would be difficult to carry out (Robson, 2002). Journals also allowed the participants more time to generate ideas, hence generating more reliable data from a ‘natural’ context (Alaszewski, 2006). Additionally, the use of journals contributed to the goal of achieving triangulation of the methods and triangulation of the data.
(ibid.), which, in turn, increased the validity of the study (see Section 4.6). From an epistemological point of view, the importance of this method was that the journal entries were hoped to provide direct access to the participants’ thoughts and beliefs (Cucu-Oancea, 2013), which were crucial for understanding the participants’ ELI from the constructivist point of view.

The objectives of the Pilot Study 1 included ensuring the journal guidelines were clear to the participants and testing different ways of collecting the journals (see the bullet list in Section 4.5.1.3). The initial version of the journal guidelines (see Appendix 8) were based on Park’s (2012) guidelines adopted in her study of five NNESTs’ experiences. Given that methodological literature on designing reflective journal guidelines is relatively scarce (although some notable exceptions include Bryman, 1989; Pack, 2014; Robson, 2002) and Park’s (2012) guidelines were clearly expressed and corresponded to my idea of the purpose of a reflective journal, they were initially adopted in this current study.

The feedback received from the participants of the pilot study revealed that they found the guidelines problematic and difficult to follow. They found the concept of ELI confusing and difficult to talk about, in terms of their everyday experiences, as they did not understand what incidents I wanted them to report. Additionally, both the detailed list of the interview topics and the provided format for constructing diary entries were found to be confusing and limited their freedom to express their thoughts. Thus, I decided that, in order for this method to be more effective, I needed to follow a similar approach to the one adopted during the interviews, to allow the participants to share any experiences they believed to be worth sharing. In the final version of the guidelines, although some explanation of the previously covered topics was included, the participants were encouraged to describe “any experiences with English (from both the present and in the past) which [they thought] may influence, or have influenced, [them] in any way or encourage [their] reflections” (see Appendix 9).

This version was found to be clearer and more encouraging for the participants, as well as being more effective in helping them to remember what topics had been covered in the interview. Instead of the detailed list of previously discussed topics, this version referred to the interview content more directly and less formally (cf. “During the interview we talked about the ways you perceived yourself as a user of English…”). Thus, the second version of the journal guidelines was used in the main study.
During the pilot study various methods for keeping the journals were considered. The goal was to find an easy and quick way for the participants to access the journal and create entries, in order that they could write them as soon as possible after they had an experience or thought to share. In the pilot study an online platform Kidblog (http://kidblog.org/home/) was used for this purpose. Kidblog is a platform for teachers and it enables them to create a ‘class’ online, with each student having a separate account, to which only he/she and the teacher have access (Figure 4.3).
Figure 4.3

A screen shot of the control panel in Kidblog
The privacy settings provide an option where the ‘students’, or participants, cannot see each other’s activities. This setting was used in the pilot study and each participant was given a login and password. The pilot study revealed, however, that one of the participants had difficulties with accessing the website from his phone, which posed a problem, as the main purpose of considering the use of this platform was for the participants to be able to create entries quickly and without having to use devices other than their phones. The assumption was that it would be quick and convenient, and also because people are increasingly using portable devices to access the internet, as opposed to using a personal computer (PC) at home (Pack, 2014). In fact, of the three participants in the pilot study, two were found not to have a PC at home. Another problem was that logging into the account required time and remembering the portal’s URL address, login and password. The participants suggested that it would be easier, and more convenient, for them to use Facebook Messenger to send their reflections. This method was, thus, adopted in the main study. The participants sent me private messages through Facebook Messenger, which I copied and pasted into an MS Word text file created for each participant in a password-protected folder on my PC. Following this, the online messages were deleted for security reasons.

4.5.1.8. Qualitative data analysis.

4.5.1.8.1. The overall purpose of the qualitative data analysis.

Although, due to the nature of the posed research questions, it could be argued that the goal of this current study could have been achieved by means of “descriptive reporting” (Bazeley, 2013: 374), this method constituted a stage of analysis rather than its outcome. The role of a detailed description as an outcome of research has been discussed by a number of authors (cf. Patton, 2002; Sandelowski, 2000; Stake, 1995; Thorne, 2008), who took different positions on the extent to which it is to be accepted as such. It seems, however, that, in most cases, it is desirable to “go beyond that” (Bazeley, 2013: 373) and follow up various relationships, patterns, regularities or divergences, in order to provide a certain degree of explanation:

When you emphasise description, you want your reader to see what you saw. When you emphasize analysis, you want your reader to know what you know. When you
emphasize interpretation, you want your reader to understand what you yourself have understood. **In different rations, for different purposes, we try to accomplish all three.**

Wolcott (1994: 412, emphasis added)

Wolcott’s reasoning was endorsed in this current study, as there seems to be much research focused on reproducing the results of a study and listing general themes that emerged, without any attempt to interpret and analyse these results (Atkinson, 2005), thus leaving the reader unsure of the real relevance, or contributions, of the study. Thus, the aim of the analysis was, not only to demonstrate what the participants said about their ELI and the related issues, but also to interpret their responses, to theorise about the reasons why certain themes and factors seemed to be important to the participants and to investigate what these themes and factors meant to them. In this respect, the previously discussed philosophical pragmatism (see Section 4.3) manifested itself in the approach to the data analysis, as to rely faithfully on the assumptions of constructivism and discarding all claims typically attributed to positivism would mean that these higher-level interpretations made by the researcher were irrelevant and unnecessary.

**4.5.1.8.2. Piloting data analysis techniques.**

For the purpose of the data analysis NVivo 10 was used (see further below). The main decision made about the analysis prior to the study was to follow a constructivist grounded theory approach, characterised by avoiding imposing pre-existing frameworks, or sets of theoretical concepts, on the data and ‘grounding’ the findings strictly in the collected data (Charmaz, 2014). Although some grounded theorists have argued for the need to discard any pre-existing ideas and knowledge when conducting the analysis (cf. Glaser, 1992), others rightly questioned whether it is possible not to have any assumptions stemming from prior knowledge (cf. Charmaz, 2014), suggesting that, instead, these ideas should be seen as ‘sensitising concepts’ (Blumer, 1969), or ideas used to initiate the enquiry, with a possibility of their dismissal, or revising, at later stages of the analysis (Van Den Hoonard, 1997). Hence, constructivist grounded theory approach was found to be suitable for this under-researched topic and the idea of not using pre-existing frameworks was believed to be crucial in not limiting the opportunities for new concepts, or theories, to emerge, especially in
considering that the aim was to gain an in-depth insight into the participants’ beliefs and the ways they perceived ELI. Imposing a set of pre-defined categories, or themes, on the data would have limited the opportunity to understand the participants’ relationship with English in detail, as the attention would have shifted from ‘discovering’ new themes from the data to ‘looking for’, or ‘confirming’, themes outlined by a given theoretical framework.

Although the results of the final analysis are presented in detail in the chapters devoted to the discussion of the results, the following paragraph describes some of them, in order to argue for the effectiveness of the chosen approach to the data analysis. One of the aims of the Pilot Study 1 was to carry out different levels of analysis of the data and to decide whether a detailed, line-by-line coding, or coding the data into broader and more general theoretical categories, would be more suitable for the purpose of this current study. Thus, the pilot study data was analysed twice using two different approaches. First, a more general approach was adopted, with the date being coded with broad codes, or categories, ascribed to larger chunks of data (Bernard and Ryan, 2010), as in the following extract from one of the pilot interviews, where it is coded as “being different in Polish and English” (extract C).

Extract C, pilot interview 1 (Joanna, 22, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a waitress)

Jarek: Is there any difference in the way you feel about yourself as a person when you communicate in Polish and in English?

Joanna: There is, when I speak Polish I am more humorous, I make jokes easily, I can talk about different topics. In English, what I express does not fully convey what I want to express and I think that some people, Scottish people, have a different perception of me. I know that Polish people like me because I’m always lively, I always laugh, and with them I do joke but not on the same level as with Poles.

My impression, however, was that labelling large chunks of the participants’ accounts with such general themes as “being different in Polish and English” limited my insight into what the participants were describing and would result in a very basic analysis at the later stages of the research. I believed that using a more detailed approach to coding would enable me to extract more information from the accounts, which could prove relevant once I started to analyse a larger amount of data and the similarities and differences across it. In the second attempt of the data analysis, therefore, I used detailed line-by-line coding, which is
commonly associated with constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). Figure 4.4 shows the result of applying detailed line-by-line coding to the same account provided by Joanna. It is evident that, in the same extract, a number of themes that had been overlooked in the initial attempt at coding the data emerged.

**Figure 4.4**

*Example of applying line-by-line coding to the pilot study 1 data*

| Joanna: There is, when I speak Polish I am more humorous, I make jokes easily, I can talk on different topics, and in English what I express does not fully convey what I want to express and, I don’t know, I think that some people, Scottish people, have a different perception of me, I know that Polish people like me because I’m always lively, I always laugh, and with them I do joke but not on the same level as with Poles. | Being different when communicating in Polish and English, Being able to express oneself better in Polish, Beliefs about other people’s perceptions, Differences in being perceived by Polish people and Scottish people |

The above example was used, as, in fact, the concepts of ‘being able to express one’s real self’, or ‘beliefs about other people’s perceptions’, emerged later in the main study (although the coding framework from the pilot study was not applied to the main study) and were central to the emerging thematic framework for the Polish migrants’ ELI (see Section 5.4 in Chapter Five). Another concept resulting from the line-by-line coding of the pilot interview, and that emerged later in the main study, was ‘fear of not being understood’, which had initially been overlooked when following the broader approach to the data analysis (Figure 4.5).
Jarek: You mentioned low self-esteem. Is it the result of English competence?
Marek: I think it depends on a person, not on English competence, because I know people who don’t speak English at all, I mean “hi” and maybe some basic words, and they can communicate, like this [name of a friend], he can’t speak English but he somehow communicates and he doesn’t care that his English is shit, he just tries to communicate. And I, on the other hand, I know that I can speak it in like… 45% but when I speak I’m afraid that they will not understand me.

Although at the time of analysing the pilot data there was, understandably, no way of knowing which concepts, or codes, would be useful at the later stages, the analysis revealed that line-by-line coding was not only more detailed and provided more opportunities for an in-depth analysis, but also provided a way to control my own assumptions about the data (Charmaz, 2014). Line-by-line coding involves labelling each line, or each sentence, of the data and the more conceptual codes are not created until the later selective stage, when some of the initial codes are synthesised into more inclusive and broader themes. Therefore, the risk of imposing one’s assumptions on the data is minimised, as the initial detailed codes are, essentially, a summary of what was said in a given line of text.

As previously noted, NVivo 10 was utilised to analyse the data. NVivo is the most recognised and, arguably, the most professional Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDAS). Other software that could have been used, including Microsoft Excel, was not considered, as it seemed that NVivo is better equipped in a range of easily accessed and detailed tools specifically designed for qualitative data analysis, while, at the same time, being really straightforward and easy to use. It provides numerous options and tools for managing and sorting the data, running queries and tests and visualising and reporting the data, making the task of conducting the data analysis time-efficient and effective. However, one obstacle I did encounter when learning to use NVivo was the lack of options to conduct line-by-line coding in a straightforward way. Although coding each line can be easily done with the software
and despite providing a variety of options for accessing, sorting and visualising the created codes, it does not have an option for showing the codes directly next to the coded text. This posed a problem, given the large number of codes resulting from the line-by-line approach. In the initial stages of the data analysis it was crucial to be able to visually examine the text along with the created codes, in order to proceed with the analysis involving merging these codes, looking for similarities and differences, common themes, etc. (see Section 4.5.1.8.3). Thus, one of the objectives of the Pilot Study 1 was to find a way to conduct line-by-line coding by means of *Microsoft Word* and to then incorporate the data into *NVivo 10*.

The first attempt involved use of the ‘comments’ option in *Microsoft Word* to create the codes as comments. This method, however, proved ineffective, as the comments did not always appear next to each line. The second method, and the one eventually adopted in the study, was to create a two-column table, with one column consisting of the transcribed data and the other consisting of the line-by-line codes (Figure 4.6).
Figure 4.6

Conducting line-by-line coding in Microsoft Word
The text file created for each participant was then imported to NVivo, where it constituted a single ‘case’ representing the participant. The ‘codes’ created in Microsoft Word, however, were not recognised as such in NVivo, where they constituted a part of the text attributed to the participant. Therefore, the text covering a given code had to be selected and a code name had to be created in NVivo. The line-by-line codes in the right column of the table, in turn, served only as a reminder of which codes were used in a given line, due to, as noted above, NVivo not showing these codes next to the text (Figure 4.7).
Figure 4.7
Importing the data from MS Word and coding it in NVivo 10

BASIA: Often when I speak to a native English speaker, I am talking and saying a word and he’s just, I have to repeat that word 10 times because I pronouncing one letter, even a stupid example from a taxi – Sinclair Place, and they don’t know where it is because of the wrong emphasis, I once got on a bus and asked if it was going to Dundee Street and he asks what street I am talking about – because you pronounce it Dundee, it seems the same to me.

JAREK: Did it, and do such situations, influence you in any way?

BASIA: Generally, it makes me feel like a lesser being.

The actual ‘codes’ created in NVivo (see box 2)

Feeling like a lesser being
Feeling of frustration
Feeling like a lesser being initial difficulties
Difficulties with understanding other people
Feeling alienated

Feeling “like a child”, Feeling like lesser being
Although extremely laborious, this process only had to be adopted for three sources of the pilot study and a few of the first sources of the main study, as line-by-line coding is only usually applied at the beginning of a data analysis (Bazeley, 2013). Later, when certain patterns began to emerge and the codes were merged into more general categories (see Section 4.5.1.8.3), there was no need to apply line-by-line coding and the decreasing number of codes meant that it was no longer a problem to organise the data in NVivo. Furthermore, the use of the software saved time in the long run, and allowed for a more detailed and efficient analysis at the later stages.

4.5.1.8.3. Main study data analysis.

The analysis of the qualitative data involved exploring the separate data sets (i.e. Interview 1, Interview 2 and reflective journal data) and individual cases (i.e. all data collected from a given participant), as well as comparing the cases within a data set and then comparing the whole data sets. In this process a number of themes emerged, and their detailed analysis resulted in developing, and then testing, various working hypotheses aimed at deepening the understanding of the investigated accounts and the phenomena and events they described.

The process of coding the data (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.1) was repeated and conducted separately for each data set. Thus, although at the time of analysing the content of the reflective journals a number of themes had already been developed from the Interview 1 data, these themes were not used in the journal data analysis. All of the steps of coding were repeated from the beginning, in order to minimise the influence of the interview data analysis on the analysis of the journal data. Similarly, the collection of the Interview 2 data was followed by the same detailed process of line-by-line coding that had been applied to the other two data sets.

The resulting lists of themes were similar for Interview 1 and the reflective journals (see Appendix 10), although there were fewer themes in the journal data, due to the smaller size of the data set. The codes for Interview 2 were slightly different, as this interview was more structured than Interview 1 and focused principally on the themes emerging from Interview 1 and the journal data analysis. These three data sets were compared and analysed in detail and, as a result, the thematic framework discussed in Chapter Five was developed.
4.5.1.8.3.1. The development of codes and themes.

For each qualitative data set, the process of coding started with line-by-line coding of the first few sources until the point when there was no need to create new codes, as the newly inputted data could be fully covered with the existing codes. This point occurred in Interviews 1 and 2 after the analysis of the first five interviews and in the journal data after analysing 15 journal entries. There were a large number of line-by-line codes each time when this point of ‘saturation’ occurred. The analysis of the first five interviews, for example, resulted in 190 detailed codes (see Figure 4.8 for some examples). Before coding the data from the subsequent interviews, these codes were scrutinised, in order to reduce this number. All the coded interviews were reviewed and re-read several times and the codes were visually analysed. The purpose of this step was to ensure that the created codes accurately described the coded data. Subsequently, these descriptive codes were organised into a ‘parent-child’ relationship, which is a term used in NVivo to refer to the hierarchical organisation of codes (Figure 4.8).
Figure 4.8

An example of organising the initial codes into a parent-child relationship (screenshot from NVivo 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SELF-Confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being more comfortable speaking English in informal situations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being more comfortable speaking English with familiar people</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that speaking a second language will always affect one's confidence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fear of not being understood</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of not being understood being the main cause of stress and failure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of not being understood being the main concern</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of being distant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>importance of being praised for self-confidence (Nodes)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>importance of encouragement for self-confidence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NES evaluating NNES speech</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open-mindedness increasing self-confidence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-confidence being an unstable construct</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence being more important than fluency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of English use being crucial for self-confidence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being shy as a constraining factor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in getting meaning across</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in meeting new people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling &quot;like a child&quot; because of limited understanding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling alienated because of limited understanding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling worse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality influencing self-esteem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for low-self-esteem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classifying the codes into this type of relationships was used for the purpose of sorting, and gaining a deep insight into, the data. Although these codes were attributed to the general ‘parent codes’ (cf. “self-confidence” or “self-esteem” in Figure 4.8), as a result of further analysis some of them later became separate thematic categories on their own. For example, the data coded as “the amount of English use being crucial for self-confidence”, which is shown in Figure 4.8 as a child code of “self-confidence”, was eventually created as a separate theme on its own, labelled “the amount of language use and contact”. This frequently mentioned theme was eventually found to be crucial for understanding the factors influencing the participants’ ELI. Similarly, the first two child codes from the above list (“being more comfortable speaking English in informal situations” and “being more comfortable speaking English with familiar people”) became, at a later stage, the more general and inclusive theme of “familiarity with the speaker and context” (see Appendix 10). As argued in Section 4.5.1.8.2, this detailed and thorough process helped to gain a deep insight into the participants’ accounts. If, for example, all the data covered by the child-codes of “self-confidence” (see Figure 4.8), which seemingly described the same theme, was coded as “self-confidence” at the very beginning (as opposed to being divided into a number of descriptive codes), a number of themes that emerged from a closer analysis of these descriptive codes would have been missed.

Other child-codes, in turn, were eventually merged into the parent-code to become a more inclusive theme based on the relationship between these child-codes and the parent-code. For example, descriptive codes that were initially labelled self-confidence being more important than fluency and open-mindedness increasing self-confidence and belonged to the more general theme of self-confidence were eventually merged into this theme once the decision was made that their limited scope did not offer any additional insight.

As a result of this stage of the analysis the number of thematic categories was becoming smaller and at the point when the subsequent interview data was added to the analysis it was at around 50. This number, however, was not stable and regularly changed as a result of merging and restructuring the themes, or, occasionally, adding a new theme that emerged from the subsequent analysed data. As Section 4.5.1.8.3.2 demonstrates, the themes also changed at the later stages of the data analysis. Once all three data sets were collected and analysed, the Interview 1 data was analysed in relation to the themes that emerged from the Interview 2 data analysis, in order to strengthen the validity of the final findings. The final thematic framework for Interview 1 comprised of 29 themes, with 28 and 22 themes in the Interview 2 and journal data, respectively (see Appendix 10).
Another strategy used for analysing the data was creating models of relationships between the codes, and later themes, in *NVivo*. This was used as another way of visualising the data and exploring the relationships between the existing codes, or themes (Figure 4.9).
Figure 4.9
Visualising relationships between codes
The option of creating models of relationships in *NVivo* was quite basic and resulted in simple models that were unlike the diagrams created in software specifically designed for this purpose. The options available for creating diagrams in *NVivo* are very limited. It was useful, however, as a tool for the initial analysis of the relationships based on what the participants had said. Moreover, these models in *NVivo* were updated ‘live’, meaning that, if a given theme was erased, or merged into another theme, the changes were immediately seen in the previously created model. This option was, therefore, particularly useful at the beginning, when the number of codes and themes was still very large.

4.5.1.8.3.2. *Within-case analysis.*

As the qualitative data set was growing, first with the journal and then with the Interview 2 data being gradually added, a crucial element of the process of analysis was a within-case analysis, which involved analysing each ‘case’, or the data attributed to each participant, separately (Bazeley, 2013). This step involved a number of techniques, including:

- Summarising each ‘case’, i.e. setting up a separate memo in *NVivo*, in which I briefly summarised the sum of the data for each participant, focusing on the points directly relevant to the focus of the study. I also included any other comments, or insights, I had regarding a given participant, general impressions that I gained from analysing his or her accounts, points which I felt needed to be followed up and expanded and my interpretations that I wanted the participant to validate (Figure 4.10)
A case summary for Kaska (imported from NVivo), Interview 1

RQ3

Kaska is satisfied with progress that she has made. When discussing her relationship and experiences with the language she talks about problems with the Scottish accent and how her friendship with a Spanish girl helped her increase her self-confidence (another concept often mentioned - therefore I put it in RQ1 as the way she feels about herself as a speaker of English is mainly defined by her increasing self-confidence). She prefers speaking with people who "also came here" to NES. When speaking with NES she feels more anxious as she doesn't understand what they are saying and is more nervous about the way she speaks.

In general, she is happy with her progress and she wants to make more progress to be even more confident, she wants to be understood too.

RQ1
Creating visual ‘interactive’ models for each case. An overall model of all coding and separate models of relationships between particular themes were created for each participant. These models were based on the individual participants’ accounts and, by demonstrating connections between various concepts, provided insight into the meanings that each participant attributed to a given phenomenon or concept, as these meanings differed across the participants. The models were ‘interactive’, meaning that, when using the option of creating these models, they were automatically created by NVivo based on the previously specified ‘relationships’ between codes. Thus, if any of the codes were changed, added or deleted, or their ‘relationship’ with other codes was manually changed, the model was automatically updated. Figure 4.11 shows a simple model created to visualise one of the participants’ understanding of the role of ‘experiences of failure or success’ in her migrant experience.
Figure 4.11

An example model of relationships between themes (imported from NVivo), Interview 1

The diagram presented in Figure 4.11 is presented as it appears in NVivo and could not be altered in any way to avoid ‘chopping’ the words up, changing the size, etc. It is presented here solely for the purpose of demonstrating what the product of modelling individual cases looked like in the software.
• Creating coding charts for each participant. These charts showed all, or selected, codes used for each participant and the percentage of the data that these codes covered. They were useful in that they demonstrated which topics/issues were mentioned most often by a given participant, thus, to some extent, indicating how important these issues were to him/her. They were also used later, when the data collected from different participants was compared (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.3) (Figure 4.12). The diagram presented in Figure 4.12 is presented as it appears in NVivo and could not be altered in any way. It is presented here solely for the purpose of demonstrating what the product of creating charts for individual cases looked like in the software.
Figure 4.12
An example chart of the 10 most frequently occurring codes in Kaska’s accounts, Interview 1
The techniques outlined above were first applied to each separate data set (Interview 1, Interview 2 and reflective journal) for each participant. Then, these data sets were merged and the same kind of visualisations, summaries and charts for the whole qualitative data coming from an individual participant were created. Using these techniques of within-case analysis contributed to a more detailed and valid interpretation of the individual participants’ responses prior to comparing the different participants’ accounts. As the underlying assumption of this current study was that the surrounding ‘reality’ is, to a great extent, a product of one’s interpretations and beliefs about this reality, rather than an independently existing, and unchangeable, ‘entity’, care had to be taken to account for each participant’s individual interpretations and to avoid generalising from the sum of participants, as their understandings of the discussed concepts were not always the same.

These techniques also highlighted any uncertainties, or patterns, specific to the individual participants that emerged from the data. These uncertainties were later followed up through ‘member checking’, a term coined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to refer to the process of ‘checking’, or testing and consulting, the emerging findings with the research participants, in order to increase the validity of the findings (see Section 4.6). This, as well as having Interview 2, which was, itself, a strategy of member checking and sending the participants’ full interview transcripts in the final stage of the study (ditto), was done through online correspondence with the participants. Whenever the meaning of a given account provided by a participant was unclear, the participant was sent a request for clarification. This happened mainly during the analysis of the journal data. It also happened when I encountered interview accounts that I had not followed up during the interview, or when I was developing interpretations of what the participants meant and wanted them to confirm if these interpretations were correct.

The thorough process of within-case analysis laid the foundation for the later stages of the analysis, which involved comparing the data sets from different participants, or cross-case analysis (Bazeley, 2013).
As an extension to the comparative analysis conducted within each case, the next step involved comparing relationships and patterns across the whole set of cases, or data from all of the participants. This made it possible to see the general trends and patterns more clearly. Similar to the previous within-case comparisons, this analysis was first conducted within each qualitative data set (Interview 1, Interview 2 and reflective journals) separately and then across the whole set of qualitative data. Although general similarities, in terms of occurring themes, had already been established, as the process of coding and the development of themes in itself involved a kind of cross-case comparison, the aim of this stage of the analysis was to establish if the patterns and relationships found in individual cases were common across all cases. Thus, the cross-case analysis consisted of four main elements:

- Identifying common themes and concepts across all cases – this, as already noted, was a process taking place throughout the qualitative data analysis.
- Identifying and comparing patterns and relationships between concepts across different cases. This aimed to determine whether the previously mentioned interpretations and understandings of events, experiences and concepts were specific to individual cases or common to all, or the majority of, cases.
- Identifying, and trying to understand and explain, similarities and differences between cases.
- Identifying and exploring ‘negative cases’, or the cases that did not match the developing ‘theory’ or explanation. The importance of negative, or deviant, cases was highlighted by a number of authors (cf. Bazeley, 2013; Green, 1998; Van Maanen, 1979) and argued to be “the key to developing rigorous and valid theory” (Green, 1998: 1065). In line with the literature, the negative cases found in this current study ultimately enriched and validated the emerging explanations and helped to test the assumptions I was developing throughout the process of analysis. The most distinctive example of how the negative cases contributed to the evolving theory is described in Section 5.4 in Chapter Five, devoted to the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves, which was found to be the central element of the participants’ ELI.
At this stage the aforementioned descriptive reporting was more and more counterbalanced by the interpretation and the themes were becoming increasingly ‘theoretical’ (Charmaz, 2014), meaning that they were raised to a conceptual level to form an emerging theory of what the participants’ ELI was. At this stage, for example, what the participants had said about factors influencing their ELI was interpreted and compared across all cases, as well as scrutinised against the rest of these participants’ accounts, in order to develop an explanation of what ‘higher level’ factors seemed to have influenced it. Therefore, the previously discussed pragmatic approach, not only to methodology, but also to the philosophical assumptions guiding the study, manifested itself. This was evident in the assumption that, apart from what the participants consciously perceived as factors influencing their ELI, which reflected the role of individual ‘agency’ in shaping their world, other factors representing the importance of ‘structure’ were also at play.

4.5.1.8.3.4. Keeping an audit trail.

Throughout the analysis of the qualitative data all decisions regarding the structure, names and organisation of codes (e.g. changing a code’s name, merging, organising into a parent-child relationship, introducing a new code), as well as any other actions taken in NVivo, were documented in a memo specifically designed for this purpose in NVivo (Figure 4.13).
21/02/2015 12:26 I created a lot of new parent nodes to incorporate other nodes - at the moment it looks like a good strategy, it becomes more organised and I even begin to see some new relationships. I need to be careful though not to lose some nodes in the complicated trees of nodes (it actually did happen a couple of times already).

I am trying to constantly develop a model in the Model section - I draw connections between nodes and I think it helps

I am still not sure whether I should develop a new Parent node that has to do with emotions, feelings etc. At the moment these are included in factors influencing ELI, under Self-esteem. However, I can only include those that had been stated by the participants to influence self esteem, therefore I am left with some that I do not want to put in there - to do so would be to impose my preconceptions and I do not want this.

22/02/2015 14:09

I started to limit and merge nodes. I created 3 parent nodes directly reflecting my research questions and I will try to put other nodes under them. For example, I put Being different in Polish and English under WHAT IS PL MIGRANTS ELI. Then I will merge nodes, so, for example, OPEN-MINDNESS INCREASING SELF-CONFIDENCE, SELF-CONFIDENCE BEING MORE IMPORTANT THAN FLUENCY, THE AMOUNT OF ENGLISH USE BEING CRUCIAL FOR SELF-CONFIDENCE, etc. will probably be just merged into SELF-CONFIDENCE, which is under FACTORS INFLUENCING ELI FORMATION. So, particularly the nodes that appear once and are the direct result of line-by-line coding, will be merged into broader categories, because after all I am interested in those broad categories. Then, as I report on my findings/nodes, I will anyway describe specific things, such as that "the amount of English use was reported as crucial for self-confidence by a participant".

* **Important decision:** I initially moved BELIEFS ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE’S PERCEPTIONS and BELIEFS ABOUT STEREOTYPES AND BEING STEREOTYPED to FACTORS INFLUENCING ELI FORMATION. **However,** my research is interested in MIGRANTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF factors influencing their ELI formation, etc. and they did not mention that. They believe that what others think about them shapes the way they feel. Therefore, my decision is that whatever they feel influences their ELI formation I will put in that group, but things like the above I put in PL MIGRANTS ELI, as this kind of beliefs seems to be who they are seems to be their ELI. It is difficult, am I doing what they think or what I think after all? Maybe have another research question??? ("What constructs do PL migrants use to talk about their ELI?")
Rather than constituting a data set on its own, this documentation served the purpose of increasing the validity of the study by ensuring a higher transparency of the process and triggered more analytic thinking, which often resulted in further progress of the analysis (Robson, 2002). It also enabled me to develop the overall logic guiding my analysis and to track all changes made to the structure of the analytic framework, which was very important considering the size of this framework and the initially large number of created codes. NVivo also provided an option of linking these memo entries to the data. Any given word, sentence or paragraph could be highlighted and linked to an extract, or a number of extracts, from the relevant interview or journal account, a model, a diagram or to another memo entry. The same option was used to create the participants’ case summaries (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.2), where a given observation, or a thought regarding the participant, could be directly linked to his or her account that triggered it.

Another form of audit trail kept for the purpose of the study was the researcher’s diary, which, in its focus, was different from the coding documentation described above. While the ‘code book’ was strictly about the activities undertaken in NVivo (i.e. about the ‘structural’ aspects of analysis), the researcher’s diary regarded the ‘interpretative’ side of the analysis, thus documenting any thoughts, observations, interpretations, emergent theories and hypotheses, etc. It also served as a time-keeping and scheduling tool, as any further steps I planned to undertake were noted there. Thus, if, for example, in the researcher’s diary, I made an entry reminding me to analyse and compare the participants’ views on English education in Poland, the further decision to create two ‘child codes’ to separate the negative and positive attitudes (see Appendix 10) was described in the code book. Additionally, apart from the focus on the analysis, the researcher’s diary included any other thoughts and decisions about the overall process of the study, including the sampling techniques, designing the interview guides and different transcription conventions, and also my assumptions, impressions, etc. A sample entry from my researcher’s diary was provided in Figure 4.1 and regarded my reflections on the assumptions I had brought into the pilot study interview.

The software used for the researcher’s diary was Day One, which is a cross-platform application, meaning that it can be accessed through a PC, iPhone, iPad mini, etc. This was very helpful, as it made it possible to have constant access to the diary and to make entries, or record emerging reflections, at any moment a thought arose. It was also synchronised across all of the researcher’s devices, meaning that, if an entry was made on the iPhone on
the way home, it could be opened on other devices, such as the researcher’s laptop or iPad mini. Another useful option in *Day One* was the use of ‘tags’ to categorise each entry. For example, a tag called ‘sampling’ could be ascribed to each entry regarding sampling decisions, which could be easily accessed later and distinguished from all other entries.

4.5.2. The quantitative phase.

4.5.2.1. Gaining access to the participants.

The quantitative questionnaire was an additional method used to validate the findings from the qualitative phase, by checking their representativeness across a broader population of post-accession Polish migrants in Scotland (Creswell, 2013). The participants represented a non-probability purposeful sample. Rather than reflecting the proportion of the population of Polish migrants in Scotland, they were recruited based on pre-specified criteria (Dörnyei, 2007). Thus, similar to the participants of the qualitative phase, they were Polish migrants who came to Scotland between 2004 and 2014. However, to be able to extend the findings to a broader population, the sampling criteria did not include the previously included age or location restrictions. The participants were 378 Polish migrants living in Scotland - 88 males and 286 females, with ages ranging from 17 to 66 years old (*mean* = 31, *SD* = 7.9). The sample was not random and was not representative of the Polish population in the UK, which, in 2009, was perfectly ‘balanced’ at a male-female ratio of 50:50, and approximately 80% of them were aged between 18 and 35 years old (Home Office, 2009).

The sample was recruited through Facebook. In order to gain access to a large group of respondents, three months prior to distributing the questionnaire I joined the largest Facebook groups associated with Polish people in Scotland. They were: “Polacy w Edinburgh” (Poles in Edinburgh), “Polonia w Edinburgh” (‘Polonia’, or Polish diaspora, in Edinburgh), “Polacy w Szkocji” (Poles in Scotland), “Polonia w Szkocji” (‘Polonia’ in Scotland), “Polacy w Edinburgh i Glasgow” (Poles in Edinburgh and Glasgow), “Polacy w Glasgow” (Poles in Glasgow) and “Polacy w Aberdeen Szkocja” (Poles in Aberdeen, Scotland). These groups provided space where Polish migrants could actively socialise, advertise their business, ask for advice, etc.
4.5.2.2. The development of the questionnaire.

Essentially, the questionnaire aimed to answer the same three research questions that were posed in the qualitative stage:

1. What is the Polish migrants’ ELI?
2. What factors influence Polish migrants’ ELI?
3. How does Polish migrants’ ELI affect their lives?

However, as the questionnaire was designed according to the thematic framework developed as a result of the qualitative analysis, it served the purpose of answering the research questions by confirming the qualitative findings. Thus, the qualitative stage of the study not only served the purpose of developing an understanding of the topic of ELI and creating the thematic framework, but also of identifying indicators (i.e. beliefs) that could provide evidence of the presence, or absence, of certain attitudes and stances defining the participants’ ELI (Wilson and McLean (1994). Therefore, whilst the qualitative phase, and the in-depth interviews in particular, was the main study, the questionnaire was added to validate the findings by checking their representativeness.

The questionnaire was designed and piloted in December 2015 on 30 participants recruited among the aforementioned Facebook groups. The aim of the pilot was a basic ‘item analysis’, which aimed to determine if the questionnaire items were clear to the participants (Rattray and Jones, 2007). As a result of the received feedback, only a few minor changes were made to the wording of the introductory section of the questionnaire. In the pilot version it was stated that ELI was “any relationship between the English language and one’s sense of self, one’s personality or the ‘I’” (see Appendix 11). Some participants found this definition unclear and, therefore, it was changed to “how we feel as a result of contact with English; how the language influences our self-perceptions and self-worth” (see Appendix 12). Although this was recognised as being biased to some extent, as it assumed that the language influenced self-perceptions, a decision was made to keep it, as it was clear to the participants, and, in the questionnaire, the participants were later asked whether this was the case for them. It was, however, eventually recognised as a limitation, as it is possible that the wording of this initial definition could influence the participants’ choice when responding to the question asking if this kind of relationship existed.
The questionnaire opened with a paragraph explaining the focus of the study and briefly describing the previous qualitative phase and the purpose of having the quantitative phase. I also explained that there were no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers and that the participants’ responses would be anonymous.

Page two of the questionnaire consisted of nine items, being a mixture of multiple choice and 5-point Likert scale items, based on the main findings from the qualitative phase. Multiple choice questions were included to ensure the participants had a variety of options to choose from, and the pilot questionnaire ensured that these items were “comprehensive, exhaustive and representative” (Cohen et al., 2007: 324). Regarding the Likert scale items, this method of scaling is a visually attractive, and effective, way of measuring attitudes and beliefs (Neuman, 2011; Robson, 2002; Thomas, 2009). Example Likert scale items are “I prefer speaking English with people I know and who know me” and “it is important to me to be able to use English to express my real self (my overall personality and who I feel I am)”. Example multiple choice items are “tick the boxes that correspond to factors that, in your opinion, may, in any way, influence the ability to express one’s self in English” and “tick the boxes that correspond to aspects of life on which you believe your self-esteem may have any influence”. The participants were also given the option to provide comments under each questionnaire item.

A decision was made to include a neutral point (cf. ‘I don’t know’), in order to not force the respondents to express certain attitudes in cases where they did not have an opinion (Brown, 2000) and, thus, to minimise the risk of response bias, or favouring one type of response (Fernandez and Randall, 1991). There is a large body of research devoted to the issue of an optimal number of responses on a rating scale, which produced different, and contradictory, results (cf. Cox 1980; Garland, 1991; Lai et al., 2010; Matell and Jacoby, 1971; Preston, 2000). While “there is no single number of response alternatives for a scale which is appropriate under all circumstances” (Cox, 1980: 418), the decision on the number of provided response options seems to depend strongly on the purposes of the study and on the researcher’s preferences (Garland, 1991; Matell and Jacoby, 1971). Therefore, in considering the complexity of this research topic, a decision was made to provide the respondents with an option that would not force them to express their opinions if they did not have definite beliefs about a certain issue.
Page 3 included the personal details section, which was put at the end, rather than on page 1, in order to not ‘bore’ the participants with questions about their demographic characteristics and discourage them from further participation (Rattray and Jones, 2007).

Page 4 provided instructions on how to take part in the prize draw. Those willing to participate were asked to send an email with the title “prize draw” to my email address. Subsequently, one person was randomly chosen from these people.

4.5.2.3. Analysis of questionnaire data.

The design of the questionnaire fitted the purpose of the descriptive, rather than interpretive, analysis (Cohen et al., 2007). The structured, close-ended questions made it easy to code, analyse and compare the responses (Bailey, 1994). Through piloting the questionnaire it was ensured that the questionnaire items meant relatively the same to the range of participants and the aim of the analysis was to investigate whether the qualitative results could be extended to a larger sample of Polish migrants in Scotland (Creswell, 2013).

The aim of the questionnaire data analysis was to provide statistical description of the distribution of the participants’ responses, rather than to discover new knowledge or gain new insights into the migrants’ ELI (Robson, 2002), for two reasons. Firstly, the main tool in the study was the qualitative interview and the questionnaire aimed solely to check the representativeness of these findings, in order to validate them. Secondly, this study was based on constructivist assumptions about the nature of reality and knowledge obtained in the process of investigating this reality (see Section 4.3). These assumptions were reflected in this study in the belief that the understanding of the participants’ subjective views, beliefs and individual experiences was a crucial prerequisite to being able to explore and understand their ELI. One of the aims of this study was to obtain an in-depth insight into these particular individuals’ ELI and their views of it. This required a method that ensured a close face-to-face interaction with the participants and which would give them the opportunity to express their opinions in great detail. Additionally, it was important for the researcher to be able to respond to these opinions and to clarify meanings and offer explanations when necessary. These actions contributed to the previously discussed process of negotiating and co-constructing the knowledge.
4.5.2.4. Securing a high response rate.

In order to establish, and highlight, my position as an insider in the Polish community, in the months preceding the study I actively participated in the discussions, provided advice and responded to questions within the aforementioned Facebook groups. I also kept the same characteristic profile picture, in order for the group members to remember me. I believed this would help me to secure a high number of responses from these groups once I invited them to take part in the study. I based this assumption on my observation of the relationships within these groups, which seemed to be largely defined by the amount of participation. For example, a survey distributed by a new group member, who apparently joined the “Poles in Edinburgh” and “Poles in Scotland” groups only for the purpose of collecting data, did not attract many respondents. Its author repeatedly posted invitations for a period of two weeks and, as a result, collected 65 responses. In contrast, I collected 378 responses within a period of one week in January 2016, and I believe that this response rate stemmed, to a great extent, from my aforementioned membership and active participation in this group.

Prior to distributing the questionnaire I had also noted which days of the week were characterised by the highest activity in the group and picked two consecutive Sundays (17th and 24th) to distribute the invitations. As a result, 310 out of 378 responses (82%) were collected during these two days. This high response rate may also have resulted from the generous prize I offered in the prize draw the respondents could participate in (Cohen et al.; 2007) and may partly have been a reflection of the importance and relevance of the studied topic to the participants.

Additionally, the questionnaire was designed to secure a high response rate, with clear wording, simple design, short length, multiple choice and Likert scale responses and the order of items all contributing to this goal (Robson, 2002; Oppenheim, 1992).

4.5.3. Considering focus groups.

At the time of collecting the qualitative data, use of additional methods at the later phase of the study was considered. As noted in Section 4.4.2, the quantitative component had not been planned from the beginning, but emerged in the course of the study as a way to validate
the findings and extend them to the broader population. Prior to making the decision to include the questionnaire, however, focus groups were considered as an additional method of data collection, although the final decision was not to include this method of data collection.

Focus groups are essentially a “series of discussions to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest” (Krueger and Casey, 2009: 2). Typically, these seemingly informal discussions occur in a group of no more than 12 individuals (Asbury, 1995; Smithson, 2008), who share some common characteristics (Franz, 2011) and “have a direct experience of the topic” (Acocella, 2012: 1127), and, thus, are treated as ‘experts’ (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). These discussions are facilitated by a moderator. The analysis of focus groups’ data involves both the verbal content of the debate and the non-verbal communication (Acocella, 2012).

Focus groups are valued for their potential to provide large amounts of data in a relatively short time and to explore “little known phenomena” (ibid: 1126).

In this current study, the use of focus groups was considered, either with the same group of participants to gain an additional insight into the topic of ELI or with a newly recruited group, who would contribute to the triangulation of data and increase the validity of the findings. However, a possible use of focus groups in this study was found to be problematic for several reasons, which reflected a discrepancy between the methodological, epistemological and ethical assumptions of focus group research and this current study.

Firstly, the idea of conducting a focus group discussion involving the existing participants, some of whom knew each other, was dismissed. It is generally not advisable to include participants who are familiar with each other, due to the issues of disclosure and the influence of familiarity on the dynamics of group interaction, due to “an established way of relating to each other” (Franz, 2011: 1381). Therefore, I found the idea of conducting a focus group debate based on the analysis of data from participants who knew each other to be problematic with regard to the issues of confidentiality and anonymity.

Further doubts included the possible contributions of this method to this current study, even if the participants were not familiar with each other, due to some of the main assumptions underlying focus group research. Firstly, the concerns about the suitability of focus groups resulted from the complexity of the research topic and the previous experience of conducting the interviews, which required me to actively manage the interview process and to be able to immediately respond to the interview situation. Furthermore, literature devoted to focus group research emphasises that the moderator’s input should be minimised at the expense of the participants’ ‘free’ interaction, on the assumption that they will generate a large amount of relevant data (Frey and Fontana, 1993). Secondly, to have focus groups would also
involve the issue of the meanings that the participants ascribed to certain terms, or “meaning attribution” (Acocella, 2012: 1131), which could create a discrepancy in understanding and could affect both the discussion and the validity of my interpretations. Although it has been suggested that this problem can be solved by clarifying certain terms prior to the discussion (cf. Vaughn et al., 1996), doing this would have posed the risk of imposing my views on the participants and limiting their potential to express their own views and understandings that I wanted to investigate (Bertrand et al., 1992).

Another discrepancy between the assumptions of focus group research and those of the current study was that, in focus groups, individual beliefs, attitudes and experiences should not be the central focus of the debate, as they could cause the participants “to reflect upon the topic as individuals, reporting on their private experience and scarifying precious time for collective debate” (Acocella, 2012: 1129). This assumption was at odds with the purpose of this research, which aimed specifically to explore individual, rather than collective, experiences, beliefs and attitudes.

Additionally, the potential negative effects that focus groups could have on the quality and trustworthiness of the participants’ accounts influenced the decision not to use focus groups. The very idea of a group discussion ‘moderated’ by the researcher did not seem appealing, especially when confronted with a number of insights into group dynamics, including the theory of social impact, which generally holds that any kind of individual effort decreases among members of a group subjected to external social forces (cf. Latané et al., 1973). This concern also stemmed from the emerging findings from the qualitative phase of the study, which highlighted the importance of social comparisons, as well as the participants’ concerns about ‘saving face’ and about various judgements and expectations (see Chapters Five and Six). If, during the focus group discussions, the participants were concerned about being judged by other members of the group and about the group’s expectations, they may choose to provide responses they believed to be socially acceptable and desirable, rather than honest (Bickman, 1974). Thus, in a study concerned with individual experiences, often marked by stressful or, in a way, shameful experiences and involving a number of personal, and frequently controversial, opinions, a focus group interview did not seem like a reasonable choice.

Overall, due to the discrepancy between the assumptions of focus group research and the assumptions guiding this study, as well as the questionable contributions of this method to the study, in terms of valid data relevant to the research questions, the idea of using focus groups was dismissed.
4.6. Validity and reliability.

The issues of validity and reliability were addressed separately for the qualitative and quantitative phases (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). As the purpose of the questionnaire analysis was mostly description, rather than inferential analysis and exploration, common tests for ensuring the validity and reliability, such as factor analysis and Cronbach’s alpha, were not applied, as they tend to measure the reliability and validity of a questionnaire as a tool, or a scale, for measuring a given construct (Bryman and Cramer, 1997; Priest et al., 1995; Robson, 2002). Thus, these tests were not relevant tools for assessing the validity and reliability of this descriptive questionnaire. Instead, both issues were addressed through careful designing and piloting of the questionnaire. The care taken when designing the questionnaire items, which included revising their content and wording during the pilot study, ensuring that they reflected the research questions and reviewing them with the relevant literature on the subject, contributed to the content validity of the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1992; Rattray, 2007). The reliability was addressed mainly by taking measures to avoid biased responses, by using a number of both positively and negatively worded items that “require respondents to engage in a more controlled, as opposed to automatic, cognitive processing” (Podsakoff et al., 2003: 884) and, thus, reduce the risk of response bias (Croasmun and Ostrom, 2011).

Reliability in qualitative studies is mostly a matter of “being thorough, careful and honest in carrying out the research” (Robson, 2002: 176). In the case of interviews, this issue has mainly been discussed in relation to a number of practical aspects of the process of interviewing, including the wording of interview questions, establishing rapport with the interviewees and the ‘power relationship’ between the interviewer and the participant (cf. Breakwell, 2000; Cohen et al., 2007; Oppenheim, 1992; Silverman, 1993). What seems more relevant when discussing qualitative studies is their validity, which, in the qualitative component of this study, was addressed with regard to three common threats to validity in qualitative studies, namely researcher bias, reactivity and respondent bias (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Researcher bias refers to any kind of negative influence of the researcher’s knowledge, or assumptions, of the study, including the influence of his or her assumptions of the design, analysis or, even, sampling strategy. Reactivity, in turn, refers to a possible influence of the researcher himself/herself on the studied situation and people. Respondent
bias refers to a situation where respondents do not provide honest responses for any reason, which may include them perceiving a given topic as a threat, or them being willing to ‘please’ the researcher with responses they believe are desirable. Robson (2002) suggested a number of strategies aimed at addressing these threats to validity, being ‘prolonged involvement’, ‘triangulation’, ‘peer debriefing’, ‘member checking’, ‘negative case analysis’ and keeping an ‘audit trail’ (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Strategies to deal with the threats to validity (adopted from Robson, 2002: 174)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reactivity</th>
<th>Researcher bias</th>
<th>Respondent bias</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prolonged involvement</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>Increases threat</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer debriefing</td>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>No effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member checking</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative case analysis</td>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>No effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit trail</td>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>Reduces threat</td>
<td>No effect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prolonged involvement refers to the length of time of the researcher’s involvement in the study, including involvement with the environment and the studied participants. In this current study, prolonged involvement was granted by the duration of the study and by my general belonging to the studied community. This positionality was mainly seen as an advantage and a factor that both increased the level of trust between me, as the researcher, and the participants and reduced the possible threats of reactivity and respondent bias, as I was a member of the Polish community and a friend to my participants. It did, however, pose a threat in the form of researcher bias, which is discussed as a limitation in Section 4.8.

Triangulation in this study referred to triangulation of the data through utilising different instruments of data collection, methodological triangulation through employing the mixed methods approach and theory triangulation through comparing different theories and perspectives with the developing theory and drawing from a number of different fields of study (Denzin, 1988).
Peer debriefing and support was an element of my student experience at the university throughout the process of the PhD study. Various opportunities to present and discuss my research at its different stages, both at internally organised events at my university and at external conferences, seminars and workshops, provided me with valuable feedback, criticism and suggestions for improvement. These events were invaluable in helping me to assess the studied issues and, generally, the study itself from a more objective, and critical, perspective and to address its limitations. This input, thus, from other people, and my resulting reflections, helped to reduce the researcher bias.

Member checking, or testing the emerging findings with the research participants, in order to increase the validity of the findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), took various forms in this study. Firstly, it involved regular contact with the participants throughout the period of the data collection and analysis and verifying a number of interpretations and themes resulting from the analysis of the interview and journal data. (Curtin and Fossey, 2007). As a way of controlling the influence of my knowledge and assumptions on the emerging interpretations, if I was not clear about something a participant had said, or written, I sent him/her a request to verify either what he/she had meant or the interpretation I had made based on that. Secondly, as noted in Section 4.5.1.5, Interview 2 was, in itself, a tool for validating my findings and verifying whether they could be applied to individual participants (Buchbinder, 2011), in order to determine outlying, or negative, cases and to re-evaluate my understanding of a given concept (see further below). Finally, member checking, in its most commonly adopted form, was carried out by sending the Interview 1 and 2 transcripts to the participants after Interview 2 had been conducted and asking them to read them and provide any necessary comments or corrections (Carlson, 2010).

Negative case analysis, or the process of analysing ‘cases’, or sets of data collected from a single participant, that did not match the patterns emerging from the rest of the data, was a strategy regularly applied throughout the data analysis. It constituted a central element of cross-case comparisons and, whenever an emerging explanation of a given phenomenon was found not to be applicable to one, or a small number, of the participants, this triggered a new line of analysis aimed at understanding the source of this discrepancy (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.3). The strategy of negative case analysis, frequently combined with member checking, was a valuable way of reducing researcher bias.

The notion of keeping an audit trail referred to monitoring and keeping a record of all the research-related activities and data, including the raw interview and journal data, the audio-recordings and online exchanges with the participants, the researcher’s diary and the coding
book (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.4). Additionally, the NVivo files saved after each major change to the structure of the themes and codes were kept, thus providing access to all the separate stages of the data analysis.

4.7. Ethics.

This current study was conducted in conformance with the guidelines established by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011) and those provided by the Moray House School of Education. As this research involved neither children nor vulnerable groups, no major ethical issues arose or were identified. Additionally, all standard procedures, such as securing the participants’ voluntary informed consent and anonymous treatment of the participants’ data, were followed.

The only ethics-related issue that deserved consideration was the ethics of researching friends, which was, however, carefully addressed in the study. The literature on researching familiar people has suggested several risks connected with adopting this approach (see Section 4.5.1.2) and addressing each of them was planned prior to commencing the study and implemented throughout it.

The issue of ‘betraying’ the friend-participants by sharing their personal stories (Brewis, 2014) (see Section 4.5.1.2), for example, was addressed by means of a detailed informed consent form, as well as by a detailed briefing prior to the interview and a general ‘openness’ towards the participants when discussing the purposes of the study and answering any questions about it. Most importantly, the new temporary dimension of our relationship, with the shift from my status as friend to researcher, was discussed prior to conducting the study. The participants, therefore, were aware that, when we met for the interview, our interactions would become ‘data’ that would be analysed, interpreted and shared. Additionally, the process of respondent validation, when the participants were sent full transcripts of both interviews and asked to make any comments or corrections they found necessary, minimised the risk of misrepresenting their statements or, essentially, their individuality.

Another aspect of the research that could raise questions regarding the ethics was my strategy of gaining access to the questionnaire participants. I deliberately joined the Facebook groups with the aim of gaining the participants’ trust, in order to ‘use’ them for my study afterwards. Although the ethics of this approach could raise questions regarding the
‘personal’ aspect of it, relating to the aforementioned distress and feeling of betraying the participants, on the formal level this procedure followed all the necessary ethical guidelines, including instructing the participants in detail of the nature of the study, gaining their informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, granting them the authority to withdraw from the study at any time, sending them full transcripts of both interviews and providing them with the opportunity to read the finished thesis and remove any parts about themselves that they did not like.

4.8. Limitations.

4.8.1. Researcher Bias.

Although my position as an insider in the studied community was mainly perceived as an advantage (see Section 4.5.1.2), certain limitations of this insider status were also recognised. Researcher bias could have stemmed from my, and the participants’, possible assumptions of similarity and presuppositions about some shared experiences (Corbin Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). This threat was, however, controlled through member checking, negative case analysis, peer debriefing, triangulation and keeping an audit trail (see Table 4.1). The assumptions of similarity emerged, particularly, in the pilot study, when I, the researcher, realised that the Interview 1 guide I had initially designed had been greatly influenced by my own previous experiences (see Section 4.5.1.4.1). These assumptions were also occasionally manifested in the participants’ statements, in which they clearly assumed that what they were stating needed no explanation. This issue, and the issue of ‘ex-ante’ data, or the knowledge I shared with the participants prior to the study, was addressed by acknowledging this shared knowledge with the interviewees, careful framing of the interview questions and asking the participants to frame their responses accordingly (McConnell-Henry et al., 2009-2010).

These assumptions could affect the quality of the collected data and the subsequent analysis and, despite me putting considerable effort into controlling and minimising these threats, I cannot be certain about what else in this study may ultimately be the result of my personal position as an insider. However, due to precautions being made to control the aforementioned assumptions, through keeping a researcher’s diary and through the detailed process of the data analysis, and due to the advantages stemming from my position as an
insider, this ‘friendship approach’ was not perceived as being a major limitation, although it was recognised as constituting a risk and a threat to the validity.

4.8.2. Limitations of the questionnaire.

As noted in Section 4.4.2, the approach adopted in this current study reflects what may be called an ‘emergent’ design (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). Thus, the decision to include an additional, in this case quantitative, component emerged during the course of the study, after the data from the qualitative phase had been analysed. It was believed that adding a quantitative questionnaire would provide insight into the transferability of the findings, thus validating the achieved results and strengthening the claims made. Although it was recognised from the findings that ELI was a dynamic and highly subjective construct, it was felt that ‘breaking it down’ into a set of beliefs, experiences and attitudes that had emerged in the qualitative data analysis and were perceived as elements of ELI would, nevertheless, provide an overall insight into the respondents’ ELI that could strengthen the claims that were made on the basis of the qualitative analysis. However, during the final phase of the study, when writing the results of the questionnaire and analysing the overall insights provided by the study, it became evident that a consequence of including a questionnaire in the study was a number of conceptual and methodological limitations. It seemed that the very nature of a quantitative questionnaire, the type of data it gathers and the philosophical assumptions underlying the use of this method are all at odds with the dynamic and subjective nature of identity that has both been described in the literature (see Sections 2.5 and 2.6) and emerged from the data analysis in this current study (see Chapters Five through to Seven for the results).

Firstly, it was concluded that, being a construct highly dependent on the notion of subjectivity, identity cannot simply be forced into a number of quantifiable categories, variables and characteristics. Moreover, it was ultimately found that even breaking it down into a number of beliefs, attitudes and experiences that had been found to constitute ELI, which, at the time of designing the questionnaire, was believed to be a possible way of inferring information about it, posed a number of problems that would raise concerns about the validity of this approach. These concerns stemmed from the fact that, when collecting
data related to the respondents’ individual experiences, beliefs and attitudes by means of a questionnaire, the various subjective conceptualisations and understandings of these beliefs and experiences could not be addressed. Consequently, when asking the respondents about such inherently problematic and complex notions as ‘identity’, ‘real self’, ‘motivation’, ‘personality’ and, even, ‘English competence’, to name a few, which appeared in the questionnaire, there is a risk that the participants’ understanding of these concepts may differ greatly to the researcher’s. Additionally, this understanding is likely to vary between the individual participants, as evidenced by the findings from the qualitative phase. One example of this relates to one of the terms that appeared in the questionnaire, namely ‘experiences of [communicative] failure or success’ (Item 5 – “Tick the boxes that correspond to factors that, in your opinion, may in any way influence the ability to express one’s self in English” – see Appendix 12), as this was found to be a highly subjective notion and the participants’ individual understanding of what constitutes communicative success was found to stem from their broader language ideologies (see Section 6.2.3 in Chapter 6).

Secondly, as previously noted, in this current study the elements of ‘narrative’ (cf. Thomas et al., 2014) and ‘cognitive’ (cf. Beatty and Willis, 2007) interviews were combined (see Sections 4.5.1.4.2 and 4.5.1.5.2, respectively, for a description of these techniques). It was believed that the main strength of this approach was that it enabled the participants to ‘relive’ their experiences, to reconstruct a given moment with as much detail as possible and, in a way, to better understand themselves, thus encouraging them to provide an honest and detailed account. This approach was found to be highly effective and, through this cognitive engagement, the participants unfolded a number of detailed memories of a given event or gradually increased their cognitive engagement and described their feelings, beliefs and attitudes with an increasing amount of detail. This, in fact, sometimes caused them to change their original opinions, especially with regard to stereotypes of Polish migrants, which had been either neutral or positive, as, on recollecting their experiences, they began to mainly reflect opinions about a negative stereotype (see Section 6.2.2 for a detailed discussion of this finding). As Section 6.2.2 demonstrates, these opinions were found to be in contrast with the participants’ responses to the questionnaire item asking them about the stereotype of Polish migrants. It was concluded that a possible reason for this discrepancy may have been the lack of opportunity to engage cognitively with the question when completing the questionnaire. This demonstrates that, given the focus of this current study and, hence, what was hoped to be achieved by the inclusion of the questionnaire, there may be concerns regarding the validity of the responses obtained by this method.
Finally, the analysis of the interview and journal data revealed a number of seemingly contradictory statements (see Table 5.2 in Section 5.4), which were later concluded to have reflected the dynamic nature of ELI construction and negotiation (see Section 5.5.4). Thus, each person’s ELI could unfold differently, depending on various factors, such as familiarity with the speaker, beliefs about his/her expectations or the topic of the conversation. Hence, another limitation of the questionnaire, linked to the one previously discussed, is that it failed to provide an opportunity for the participants to engage with their experiences and to consider them from more than one perspective, or for a longer period of time. The validity of the qualitative findings was enhanced by employing two in-depth interviews and the reflective journals, as this allowed the participants to frequently express their opinions, thus making the analysis of their responses more valid, as the researcher could spot any similarities and differences, and analyse the latter in-depth. The respondents of the questionnaire, in contrast, were required to provide a single response, being forced, to some extent, to quantify a potentially complex feeling, belief or conceptualisation into a single, and simple, variable.

Overall, although in theory the use of the questionnaire could provide some additional knowledge about the experiences and beliefs of a larger group of respondents, thus increasing the validity of the qualitative findings, in practice it was found that, considering these very findings, the questionnaire findings had to be treated with caution, to say the least.
The analysis indicated that, contrary to what the literature on Polish migrants suggests (cf. Trevena, 2013; Weishaar, 2008), for the migrants in this current study, English did not have the mere ‘transactional’ (Brown and Yule, 1983) function of communicating basic factual information, but was a crucial element of their migrant experience that was interwoven with their self-concept. English was a ‘tool’ for expressing their desired selves, or the selves they wanted their interlocutors to recognise, and managing (e.g. responding to, resisting, negotiating) their ascribed selves, or how they believed their interlocutors perceived them (Gee, 2001). The participants’ judgement of the extent to which these desired and ascribed selves matched, in turn, triggered their evaluation of how their perceived ‘real self’, defined by their “core” (Mercer, 2011: 74), and relatively stable, beliefs about themselves, had been expressed and, thus, of whether their interlocutors perceived them ‘as they really were’. This judgement, in turn, could influence their “peripheral” beliefs (Mercer, 2011: 74) about themselves, or the less established beliefs based on immediate, or task-specific, self-evaluations, which were also a part of their self-concept. Thus, the migrants’ ELI, or the relationship between the English language and their self-concept, was a relationship based, essentially, on the notion of English as a tool for expressing, and retaining, their (perceived) ‘real self’, or their self-concept. Figure 5.1 presents the thematic framework developed from the analysis of the qualitative data and is used throughout the chapter to discuss the findings. Each time this diagram appears in the chapter, the red-dotted box is around the part of the figure that is discussed in a given section. Thus, the highlighted part of Figure 5.1 demonstrates the aforementioned constituents of the migrants’ ELI, or the relationship between their self-concept and the English language.
Figure 5.1

The relationship between English and the participants' self-concept (highlighted in red)
The above diagram highlights the relationship between English and the migrants’ self-concept, which is the focus of the following sub-sections. To answer research question 1 (“what is Polish migrants’ ELI?”), sections 5.1 to 5.5 discuss separate elements of this relationship. Section 5.1 outlines the findings regarding the migrants’ self-concept, which included their core and peripheral beliefs about themselves, and argues that it was a self-concept through, rather than in, English. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 discuss the notions of the migrants’ desired and ascribed selves, respectively. Section 5.4 describes the interplay between these desired and ascribed selves and argues that this interplay constituted the core of the migrants’ ELI. Finally, Section 5.5 describes a finding that emerged during the analysis, being the strategies the participants adopted in order to manage the aforementioned interplay and, thus, reduce the threat to their ‘selves’ and retain their ‘real self’.

5.1. Self-concept through English.

Contrary to much of the language and identity literature (cf. Guiora et al., 1972; Sung, 2014b), the results of this study indicated that, rather than developing a distinct ‘English self-concept’ or ‘feeling like a different person in English’, the participants were strongly attached to their ‘Polish self-concept’, which they tried to express through English. The assumption that NNESs develop a separate ‘self’, or a combination of beliefs about themselves (cf. Hamlyn, 1983; Lau et al., 1999; Mercer, 2011; Mruk, 2006; Rogers, 1961; Rubio, 2015), in English was initially addressed during Interview 1 by the question “do you feel like a different person when you speak English?” The participants’ responses (coded as being different in Polish and English – see appendix 10) indicated that, if differences existed (n=17), they did not stem from having a separate self in these two languages, but from the extent to which they were able to use English to express the self they were used to expressing in their mother-tongue. Although the findings of this study did support some of the essentialists’ claims about the strong links between a person’s self-concept and the mother-tongue (see Section 2.3 in Chapter Two), it did not seem that the migrants had to “take on a new identity” (Guiora et al., 1972: 422) in English. Contrary to the claims made in the literature, it seemed that, rather than standing for a separate self existing in English and independent of their Polish self, the participants’ self-concept was mostly that Polish self expressed through English (see Extracts 1-4 for evidence of this trend).
Extract 1 Interview 1 (Kate, 34, came to Scotland in 2005, worked as an accountant)

Kate: At first I had a big problem because (. . .) I like to tell jokes, I like to laugh, and at first I had a big problem because the natives did not see me as I really am, because I could not express it…

Extract 2 Interview 1(Izabela, 35, came to Scotland in 2010, worked as a secretary)

Izabela: I feel a difference, if I was in a Polish speaking company I’d come across as the so-called life and soul of the party, of course it depends with whom exactly but, to generalise, I would certainly have a lot to say on different topics, I would laugh a lot, smile a lot, etc. And in an English speaking company, I would indeed smile but I would be much more reserved, avoiding certain things…

Extract 3 Interview 2(Bogusia, 29, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a sous chef)

Bogusia: It’s a very big difference, because when I speak Polish I joke a lot, I just feel more relaxed, I have no problems with communicating with another person… And in the case of English, I don’t know, I don’t joke that much, it’s just different, they just… I think they perceive me more like a serious person than the one that jokes a lot, it’s just… it’s that I’m not that competent in English.

Extract 4 Interview 2(Kuba, 27, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a chef)

Kuba: I think that when I speak English people don’t perceive me the same way as in Polish, because what I say is not as effective (sic) as in Polish, in Polish I feel more confident and I can express my feelings and what I think, and in English I can’t fully express myself the same way as in Polish. I can’t fully express my self, I can express myself but in a simple way and using other words that I’d like to use.

It is evident in Extracts 1-4 that, rather than being different people when speaking in English, the participants felt they were being perceived as different people and linked this experience to their ability to communicate their ‘real’ selves through English. All of the 20 participants, including those who felt that they “come across as exactly the same person in English and Polish” (Karolina, Interview 1) (n=3), seemed to link their understanding of their self
communicated through English to the self they had mediated in the past by means of Polish. It seemed that these “core beliefs” (Mercer, 2011: 74) that formed the foundation of the migrants’ understanding of themselves were relatively stable. In Extract 1, for example, Kate talked about problems with communicating ‘what she really was’ in English, although, from what she described, it could be argued that she ‘was not’, in fact, that person any more. Her understanding of herself, or her self-concept, however, seemed to be based on her core beliefs about herself and was unaffected by her current inability to express that self-concept. Similarly, in Extracts 2 and 3 the participants spoke about being perceived as different people, rather than being different people, which, however, would be expected if the participants had taken on “a new identity” (Guiora et al., 1972: 422) in speaking in English. In Extract 4, in turn, Kuba specifically talked about being able to express “himself”, but not being able to express “his self”, suggesting that “his self” was a kind of stable self-concept he could not express by means of English.

This situation was similar with other participants of this study and this partial stability of the migrants’ self-concept contradicted some previous claims made in NNES identity literature, where the dynamic and ever-changing nature of identity was cited almost unanimously and uncritically (cf. Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009), without any consideration being given to the possibility that some of its elements may, in fact, be less prone to change. In this current study, however, these main, or core, beliefs were the foundation of what the participants believed to be their ‘real selves’ that they wanted to communicate to their interlocutors. This is not to imply, however, that none of their beliefs about themselves could change as a result of their experiences of speaking English. There were also less established and more task-specific beliefs (see Section 5.4) that could change as a result of their evaluation of how successfully their ‘real self’ had come across in a given interaction. This evaluation consisted of their perceptions of whether their desired selves, or the selves that they wanted to express, matched their ascribed selves, or how they believed their interlocutors perceived them. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 below discuss the notions of desired and ascribed selves, respectively.

5.2. Desired selves.

The previous section has argued that, based on the participants’ qualitative accounts across two interviews and their reflective journals, the participants’ self-concept appeared to be, to
some extent, stable and based on their core beliefs about themselves. When the participants spoke about differences between communicating in English and in Polish, they described problems related to expressing their ‘real self’ in English. At this point, it is important to establish some understanding of just what these selves that the participants wished to be recognised by their interlocutors, or their desired selves, were.

It was not possible to determine the extent to which the participants’ desired selves coincided with their actual beliefs about themselves, as opposed to their idealised views of themselves that they wanted to project to the public. This problem is not new, and it has been argued in literature that “identity comprises not only of “who you think you are” (…) but also “who you act as being”” (Vignoles et al., 2011: 2). Several authors (cf. Harter, 1999; Schwartz et al., 2011) defined identity as a combination of the self that one ‘advertises’ in public and the private beliefs that he or she holds about him- or herself, referring to the difference between these two domains of identity as “the difference between the private and the public self” (cf. Taylor, 2015: 94). These two aspects appear to be so closely related that, in some cases, the latter may eventually alter the former in a process called ‘internalisation’ (cf. Leary, 1995; Noels, 2009; Schlenker, 2003). Due to this inability to establish the difference between the ‘actual’ and the ‘public’ self, the self that the participants of this study described was assumed to be the self they wanted to display to the public, being, hence, their desired self.

The importance the participants attributed to expressing their desired selves emerged consistently throughout both the interviews and the participants’ diaries and was later confirmed by the quantitative strand of this study. In Interview 2, the participants were asked how important it was to them to be able to express their ‘real’ self in English. Not surprisingly, all of the 20 participants stated that it was important to them, calling it “the foundation of relationships with people” (David, interview 2), “one of the most important things” (Kuba, interview 2) or “one of the most fundamental human needs” (Bart, interview 2). Accordingly, being unable to express their self to others was linked to feelings of “discomfort” (Aga, Interview 2), “isolation” and “frustration” (Dorota, Interview 2), “unhappiness” (Karolina, Interview 2) and, ultimately, to “feeling like a lesser being” (Kaska, Interview 2). The results of the questionnaire confirmed that being able to express one’s ‘real’ self in English was important to the participants, as 334 respondents (88%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the questionnaire item, stating “it is important to me to be able to use English to express my real self (my overall personality and who I feel I am)” (Figure 5.2).
Figure 5.2

Questionnaire item 3 – “it is important to me to be able to use English to express my real self (my overall personality and who I feel I am)”
- tick the box that mostly corresponds to your feelings

- Strongly agree 235 (62%)
- Tend to agree 99 (26%)
- I don't know 24 (6%)
- Tend to disagree 12 (3%)
- Strongly disagree 8 (2%)
Whilst the notion of the participants’ desired self emerged gradually through the in-depth analysis of the qualitative data, the results of the questionnaire were not surprising and the predicted outcome of the quantitative analysis helped to strengthen the validity of the qualitative analysis.

Although the exact nature of the relationship between English and the participants’ self-concept is described in detail in Section 5.4, at this point some evidence of the role of English in this relationship has already emerged. It has been shown, for example, that the participants wished to express their desired self, which is based on their beliefs about themselves, or their self-concept. In considering the context of this current study, and the provided extracts, it is already evident that English was the ‘tool’ for expressing their desired self during interaction with other people. The role of the language, however, was not limited to merely ‘expressing’ what they wanted to say. The participants assessed their success in achieving their desired self, not only in terms of how well they were able to communicate this self, but also by making judgments about how other people perceived them. These ascribed selves that the participants frequently had to respond to, and their role in the relationship between English and the participants’ self-concept, are described in the following section.

5.3. Ascribed selves.

The participants’ beliefs about the ascribed selves were central to their ELI, as they influenced their evaluation of how successfully their desired selves were being expressed through English. Within the qualitative data set, the participants provided 143 statements, in which they expressed their concerns, or hypothesised about, other people’s perceptions of them, as in the following diary extract (Extract 5).

*Extract 5* Diary entry 20.02.2015 *(Barbara, 28, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a supervisor in a hotel)*

Barbara: Sometimes I have an impression that, for example in this medical centre here [where she lived], when I want to ask something and I can’t find a word, then I have an impression that he gets nervous and thinks ‘God, if you can’t say it why did you even come here?’
In Extract 5 Barbara expressed more than just an opinion of what her interlocutor may have thought at the given moment. The hypothetical voice she employed described her belief about the overall sum of characteristics being ascribed to her. It seemed to be an ascribed self of someone who “came here”, hence an outsider and possibly someone not welcome in this country. Moreover, the strength of this hypothetical response suggested irritation potentially stemming from her confirming a somewhat negative stereotype of a migrant who cannot speak English well (the participants’ beliefs about other people’s perceptions of Polish migrants are discussed in detail in Section 6.2.2 in Chapter Six).

Throughout the analysis of the qualitative data it became evident that “everyone cares about being perceived the way he or she wants to be perceived” (Hanna, interview 2) and it appeared that this was why the participants’ statements about their ascribed selves formed such a substantial part of their accounts. To confirm this claim, in the quantitative stage the questionnaire asked about the importance of being perceived the way the participants wanted to be perceived. Their responses indicated that they, indeed, attributed great importance to such perceptions (Figure 5.3).
Figure 5.3

Questionnaire item 4 – “It is important to me that the way people perceive me matches who I really am as a person” – tick the box that mostly corresponds to your feelings

- Strongly agree 284 (75%)
- Tend to agree 78 (21%)
- I don’t know 9 (2%)
- Tend to disagree 2 (0.5%)
- Strongly disagree 5 (1%)
In total, 362 (92%) respondents tended to agree or strongly agreed with the statement “It is important to me that the way people perceive me matches who I really am as a person”, confirming the importance of the ascribed selves that emerged from the qualitative analysis. Again, although this result of the questionnaire item was not surprising, it further strengthened the qualitative data analysis and confirmed that what had been found in the qualitative stage had, in fact, ‘emerged from the data’, rather than being my detached interpretation of it.

Within the qualitative data set, not only were a variety of references to ascribed selves found in the participants’ direct statements about other people’s perceptions, such as in Extract 5 in Section 5.3, but references also emerged as a result of the analysis of a number of previously created themes. One of these themes, for example, was fear of not being understood (see Appendix 10), which referred to various statements (48 statements by 15 participants) expressing the participants’ concerns about not being understood by their interlocutors found in both the interviews and the diary data. Although, at first, it was not clear why the participants were concerned about not being understood, as opposed to them not understanding others, for example, the analysis revealed that this concern stemmed from what the participants believed the consequences of making mistakes would be in relation to the way other people perceived them, as in Extract 6 below.

Extract 6 Interview 1(Bartek, 28, came to Scotland in 2006, worked as a graphic designer)

Bartek: (...) you know I think there was this barrier to speak up at first, this fear that you will say something stupid or that they won’t understand you (...) this was the worst (...)  
Jarek: Could you explain more?  
Bartek: Well, for example that I will use a wrong word (...) I was also afraid of accent, that he wouldn’t understand me, or that you won’t say something correctly, nicely (...)  
Jarek: You were afraid that you will not say something correctly and...  
Bartek: And they either won’t understand or it will sound funny.
As opposed to, for example, not being understood and ‘simply’ having to rephrase, or repeat, what he was trying to say, it is clear that Bartek’s idea of the consequences of not saying something ‘correctly’ was the possibility of ‘sounding funny’ and being ridiculed. In the same interview he recollected his negative experience of having been laughed at because of his accent and because he had not been able to correctly express what he wanted to say in English. Similar to Barbara (see Extract 5 in Section 5.2), he employed a hypothetical voice to represent what his interlocutor may have thought about him when the failure occurred – “they’ll be like ‘who the hell are you, a Polish guy came here, delivers pizza, and doesn’t even understand what I’m saying…”’. Therefore, the consequence of not being understood, or of saying something ‘incorrectly’, would be, in his opinion, him being ascribed a certain self that did not correspond to the way he wanted to be perceived.

The ascribed selves mentioned by the participants were, in all cases, negative. Due to the large number of these accounts in the qualitative data set, it was believed that these perceptions of the ascribed selves, coupled with the previously discussed desired selves (see Section 5.2), had a significant influence on the participants’ self-concept. Additionally, what the accounts of both of these selves had in common was that, most of the time, they appeared together in the context of communicating in English, suggesting some kind of relationship between them. The further analysis confirmed this assumption. Section 5.4 outlines the results of this analysis and explains the interaction between the desired and ascribed selves and how this interaction constituted the central element of the participants’ ELI.

5.4. Interplay between the desired and ascribed selves as a relationship between English and the self-concept.

What was gradually emerging during the process of the data analysis, and throughout the above discussion, is the central finding of this study with regard to the construction of the participants’ self-concept, namely that, in line with previous research (cf. Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Park, 2007; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009), the self-concept surfaced during various interactions. Although the self-concept in this current study was found to be based, to a great extent, on core beliefs (see Section 5.1) and it cannot be said, thus, that it was ‘constructed’ during these interactions, it was expressed and negotiated during these interactions. As the language of these interactions was English, English was the tool for establishing and negotiating the self-concept. The important role of interactions for the
participants’ self-concept was evident in the number of accounts of various interactions they provided in both the interviews and their electronic diaries. Table 5.1 shows how many times each participant described an act of communication in English (“references”) and what percentage of all the data collected from this participant was covered by such descriptions (“coverage”).

Table 5.1

The coverage (%) of the participants’ accounts of interactions throughout the two interviews and their electronic diaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aga</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicja</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ania</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>49 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artur</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bart</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>53 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartek</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogusia</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagmara</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorota</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Izabela</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karolina</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaska</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konrad</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuba</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natasha</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebastian</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows that the accounts of various interactions covered a significant part of the data collected from each participant. It could be argued that the presence of some of these accounts may be explained as resulting from questions specifically asking for this kind of information (c.f. “Can you remember a situation involving communication in English when something went particularly wrong?”). However, due to the fact that the interviews were semi-structured and that the participants’ were encouraged to discuss ‘anything they found worth sharing’ in their diaries, in most cases it was the participants’ choice to talk about their interactions.

As the general topic underlying the interviews and the participants’ diary accounts was the relationship between English and the participants’ sense of self, the percentage of this coverage indicated that these encounters in English had more than just a ‘transactional’ function of communicating specific messages to, or exchanging basic information with, interlocutors (Brown and Yule, 1983). The analysis of these accounts revealed that these encounters were ‘interactional’, thus the participants were “sending out messages and having them ‘bounced back’” (Brown, 1980: 53). In other words, they were trying to communicate their desired selves, while interpreting what they believed to be their ascribed selves and the feedback they received from their interlocutors (Wood, 2009). In Extracts 1, 2 and 4 in Section 5.1, for example, it is evident that, rather than merely describing the action of expressing themselves, the participants chose to describe certain evaluations of how successfully their selves (“I like to tell jokes, I like to laugh…”, “I joke a lot, I just feel more relaxed…”, “I feel more confident and I can express my feelings…”) had been communicated (“the natives did not see me as I really am…”, “they perceive me more like a serious person than the one that jokes a lot…”, “people don’t perceive me the same way as in Polish…”).

The participants’ accounts suggested that their sense of self was “confirmed, shaped, and reshaped” (Brown, 1980: 53) during various social encounters, in which they were “establishing and advertising” their identity (Lippi-Green, 1997: 5). This interplay between the desired and ascribed selves, therefore, seemed to have an influence on the participants’ self-concept. Although the participants’ relatively stable core beliefs (see Section 5.1) constituted the central element of their self-concept, this did not mean that none of their self-beliefs could be influenced by interaction. Overall, the relationship between English and their self-concept appeared to be dynamic. This was evident in a number of accounts of self-esteem, which is a person’s evaluation of his or her self-concept (Rubio, 2015: 43), being influenced by interactions (48 references across all data). The participants reported making
positive self-evaluations (cf. “it [an experience of successful communication] put me in a
good mood, it meant I am not stupid after all…” – Aga, interview 1), as a result of some
experiences of communication, and negative self-evaluations (e.g. “I took a step backwards,
I thought I must be a moron…” – Bartek, diary entry 9.02.2015), as a result of others.
Therefore, the interactions the migrants participated in could influence some of their beliefs
about themselves, although these were their “peripheral” beliefs (Mercer, 2011: 74), or the
less established beliefs based on immediate, or task-specific, self-evaluations. As a result,
through influencing these self-beliefs that constitute a part of the participants’ self-concept,
these interactions or, more specifically, the evaluations resulting from these interactions, had
an influence on the participants’ self-concept. This finding supports some of the findings
from previous studies of self-concept, which claimed that other people’s perceived
evaluations have an influence on a person’s self-concept (cf. Bouchey and Harter, 2005;
Miller, 2000; Rogers, 1961).

During the early stages of the data analysis it became evident that talking about the
participants’ self-concept, in terms of a consistently ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ relationship with
English, or trying to assign it to one of these categories, was not desirable, as this would not
do justice to the complexity of this relationship that was emerging from their accounts. It
seemed that, not only was this relationship unique for different participants, but it could also
vary for each individual, depending on the changing circumstances and events. This was
evident in a number of seemingly contradicting statements and accounts found in the data
collected from each participant. Table 5.2 shows extracts from one participant’s interviews
and diaries, in which he expressed his opinion about the influence of English on his sense of
self. It appears that, in each extract, his opinion varied.
Table 5.2

The comparison of Bart’s differing accounts of the influence of English on his sense of self

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extract A</strong></td>
<td><em>Interview 1</em> ‘I’ve been working in a pub for two and a half years (...) it never happens at work (...) I don’t care what someone may think …’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extract B</strong></td>
<td><em>Diary extract 16.03.2015</em> ‘When I talk to someone and I have to ask that person to repeat several times, I feel stupid, I mean, I imagine that the person I’m talking to thinks I’m uneducated. These situations happen most frequently at work, in the pub, my self-esteem doesn’t lower when my interlocutor is a regular who knows me, but it does when I don’t know this person.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extract C</strong></td>
<td><em>Diary extract 24.04.2015</em> ‘At the university, when I have no idea what that person is talking about because I don’t even know some words and I have to ask for clarification, my self-worth lowers. However, it only happens in the case of my area – sports and exercises and the scientific aspect of it, but when I talk about a topic I’m not familiar with, and my interlocutor is an expert, I’m not worried about what he will think about me I don’t feel bad when I ask for clarification.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extract D</strong></td>
<td><em>Interview 2</em> ‘I generally don’t think that I need to prove anything to anyone, because I know who I am, I know what my life is like and, regardless of whether I’m satisfied with it or not, an opinion of someone I don’t know or someone I’m getting to know … well, sorry, but it’s not important to me.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 presents a typical example of contradictions found in the data, where the same participant made a number of seemingly contradicting statements on different occasions. What was found, however, both in the above statements and in other participants’ accounts, is that such statements reflected the complexity of the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves and suggested that the relationship between English and the participants’ self-concept could change according to a given conversational context. Similar claims were also made in Rubio’s (2015) discussion of a ‘neurogenerative’ approach to self-concept and self-esteem, where the author suggested that both concepts are continuously reconstructed in each situation that requires self-evaluation and, therefore, “the process of evaluating oneself [is] a recurring lifetime event” (ibid.: 47).
The analysis of the participants’ accounts of various situations involving communication in English revealed that what was important during any given act of communication was not only the participants’ desired and ascribed selves, but also the extent to which the participants believed these selves matched, as well as the extent to which the participants were able to express the self they wanted to express. This finding was made when two ‘negative cases’ (see Section 4.5.1.8.3.3 in Chapter Four) were analysed in detail after Interview 2, which addressed an emerging theory of how ELI manifested itself. In the early stage of the data analysis it appeared that ELI was defined solely by the interplay between the desired/ascribed selves and one’s English competence. Thus, if a person believed that his/her ascribed self did not match the desired self in a given interaction, the influence of this interplay on his/her self-concept depended exclusively on his/her English competence, as high English competence would enable him/her to respond to, and possibly minimise, this discrepancy by expressing his/her desired self, while low English competence would mean the discrepancy could not be addressed and would result in some kind of negative outcome for this person’s ELI. Alternatively, the only ‘scenario’ in which a person with a low English competence would avoid such a negative outcome was when he/she did not believe there was a discrepancy between his/her desired and ascribed selves. As this theory was emerging, however, two negative cases, or two participants who did not match this theory and whose accounts, in fact, undermined it, were identified. One of them was Sebastian, who, although he believed his English competence to be low and frequently expressed beliefs about various negative selves being ascribed to him during interactions, did not seem to be affected by the discrepancy between his desired and ascribed selves. On the other hand, Izabela, whose both self-assessed and actual English competence appeared to be high (she worked as a secretary), seemed to be strongly affected by not being able to express her ‘real’ self to her interlocutors, who she believed perceived her in a way that did not match who she really was. What was found in the subsequent process of the in-depth analysis was that the aforementioned interplay between the desired and ascribed selves was influenced by the extent to which the self he/she wanted to express matched the self he/she was able to express, which did not always have to be defined by his/her English competence. For example, if, despite beliefs about other people’s negative perceptions of him/her (and, thus, the discrepancy between the desired and ascribed selves) and his/her low self-assessed English competence, he/she did not feel that he/she needed to “prove anything to anyone” (Bart, Interview 2) or he/she did not “give a shit what others think” (Sebastian, Interview 2) and there was no discrepancy between what he/she really wanted to express and was able to express. Alternatively, in the case when his/her self-assessed English competence was high,
but not high enough to express what he/she wanted to express, due to his/her higher expectation of himself/herself, there could be a discrepancy between what he/she wanted to express and was able to express, even despite the high English competence, as in the case of Izabela. The interplay between the match/discrepancy between the desired/ascribed selves and between the self he/she wanted to/ was able to express could result in several possible outcomes. These outcomes could be placed in a matrix and categorised in terms of a presence, or absence, of a threat to self-esteem, or the evaluation of self-concept (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3

The interplay between being able to express one’s desired self and the beliefs about the ascribed selves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discrepancy between the self that one wants to and is able to express</th>
<th>A sense of a discrepancy between the desired and ascribed selves</th>
<th>No sense of a discrepancy between the desired and ascribed selves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome A</td>
<td>e.g. “I want to show that I’m intelligent and I can’t express it, and people don’t see me as intelligent” (threat to self-esteem)</td>
<td>Outcome B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome C</td>
<td>e.g. “Although people probably think I’m a stupid Pole, I’m not worried and I don’t feel like I need to express what I’m really like” / “People might think I’m a stupid Pole, but thanks to my English competence I can express what I’m really like” (no threat to self-esteem)</td>
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</table>

Table 5.3 outlines several outcomes of the relationship between being able to express one’s desired self and one’s perceptions of the ascribed selves. Importantly, the participants did not consistently have only an A, B or C outcome. Although it did seem that, for some
participants, whose self-assessed English competence was high, for example, the patterns of interactions and their outcomes, in terms of the above table, were likely to be, to some extent, repeatable and easier to predict, the findings suggested that the above combinations and their outcomes varied; different interactions, with different linguistic requirements and different relationships between the speakers, could generate different outcomes of the above interplay.

This finding supported the claims made in the literature on language and identity that suggested that a person may enact different identities, depending on a range of characteristics of the conversational context in which he/she finds himself/herself (cf. Norton, 2015). Although what appears to be commonly understood as identity, the ‘who I am’ aspect of one’s self concept defined in this study as one’s core beliefs, did not seem to change from one situation to another, the relationship between the self-concept and English that stands for English language identity did seem to take different forms in different situations. Applying the model from Table 5.3 to Bart’s diary extracts from Table 5.2, for example, resulted in the following observations. In Extract B Bart referred to a situation where his self-esteem was lowered (“I feel stupid”) as a result of the perceived discrepancy between his desired and ascribed selves (“the person I’m talking to thinks I’m uneducated”). Additionally, as, due to the fact that he had to ask for repetition (“I have to ask that person to repeat several times”), he was not able to express the desired self he wished to express, based on Bart’s account it could be argued that the outcome of that interaction fitted outcome A in Table 5.3 – his evaluation of his self-concept, or his self-esteem, was threatened. In Extract C, in turn, Bart described a similar situation, although this time he pointed out several factors that could influence the outcome of the interaction. The first factor seemed to be whether the topic of a conversation related to Bart’s area of study (“it only happens in the case of my area – sports and exercises and the scientific aspect of it”). It could be argued that, in such situations, by Bart asking for clarification, his desired identity as someone who has expertise in the topic was threatened, resulting in outcome A. As he later stated, however, if his interlocutor was an expert within an area that was not Bart’s area of study (“when I talk about a topic I’m not familiar with, and my interlocutor is an expert…”), his self-esteem was not affected. He did not feel obliged to demonstrate expertise in the discussed topic and did not believe he would be negatively perceived because of this lack of expertise. Thus, there was no discrepancy between his desired and ascribed selves, and possibly no discrepancy between the self he wanted to express and was able to express, and the outcome of this encounter was a B.
It seemed that the way the participants interacted, and the outcomes of these interactions, differed according to the depth of the relationship with the interlocutor, and the majority of the qualitative phase participants (18 out of 20) preferred to communicate with familiar people. It seemed that, under such circumstances, the task of both expressing one’s desired self and responding to the ascribed selves was less linguistically demanding, due to the familiarity between the speakers. In Extract 7, for example, it is evident that, when Aga communicated with familiar people, the discrepancy between her desired and ascribed selves was smaller and the influence of English on her self-concept was less negative, resulting in what Table 5.3 categorised as outcome B.

Extract 7 Interview 2 (Aga, 25, came to Scotland in 2014, worked as a waitress)

Aga: Yes, it [familiarity with the speaker] makes a difference because if I speak English with someone who knows me, you know, even if I say something incorrectly they will not care about it because they know what I’m like and also they know what I want to say, and if I speak with someone for the first time I often see on their face something like “what the hell is she talking about, what does she mean?”, you know, such surprise. I feel like they immediately categorise me as someone who’s not very smart or something, it’s much more comfortable to speak with someone you know.

In the above example Aga suggested that, in communication with someone familiar, she was not concerned about saying something “incorrectly”, or making an error, because that person knew “what she was like”. This means that, although there was a discrepancy between the self she wanted to express and was able to express, there was no discrepancy between her desired and ascribed selves and, therefore, there was no threat to her ‘self’. At the same time, however, she felt that, under similar circumstances, but in communication with people she did not know, she was ascribed a self that did not match her desired self (“someone who’s not very smart”). While the former situation appears to match outcome B from Table 5.3, the latter depicts outcome A.

This case was similar to that of other participants, who linked familiarity with their interlocutors with lower anxiety about making linguistic errors and, as a result, being wrongly evaluated. Overall, 18 out of the 20 participants expressed a preference to communicate with familiar people. In considering the above discussion on the importance of the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves, as well as of beliefs about other
people’s evaluations, for the participants’ self-concept, it could be argued that this was the main reason for that preference. Additionally, the majority of the participants of the quantitative phase of the study, who were given an opportunity to express their attitudes towards communicating with familiar people, also expressed a preference to communicate with familiar people, which strengthens the above claim (Figure 5.4).
Figure 5.4

Questionnaire item 2 – “I prefer speaking English with people I know and who know me” - tick the box that mostly corresponds to your feelings.

- Strongly agree 84 (22%)
- Tend to agree 130 (34%)
- I don't know 32 (8%)
- Tend to disagree 79 (21%)
- Strongly disagree 53 (14%)
As can be seen in the above figure, unsurprisingly, and similar to the participants of the qualitative study, the majority of the respondents preferred to communicate with familiar people.

Although the questionnaire did not provide as good an opportunity to discuss these preferences as the interview, some comments made in the provided space under this questionnaire item helped to understand some of the respondents’ reasons for selecting their answers. Out of the 26 comments made under this questionnaire item, one was about the “I don’t know” response, 17 explained the “tend to disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses and eight were about the “tend to agree” and “strongly agree” responses. The person justifying the “I don’t know” answer stated that she simply preferred to “talk with a person that is interesting to talk to”. 14 of the participants who disagreed with the above statement commented that “it doesn’t make any difference” to them, two stated that “it is nice to meet new people” and one explained that, although he did prefer to communicate with familiar people, it had nothing to do with English in particular and he felt the same about communicating in Polish. Out of the eight respondents who agreed with this statement, four linked communicating with familiar people with less difficulty in understanding them (cf. “different accent and pronunciation, I used to have a feeling that I had to learn the language every time I met a new person”, “I’m worried that I will not understand them”) and four with the feeling of being understood better (cf. “people who know me know my level of English so it’s easier and more relaxed”, “depends on the level of English, if I speak with unfamiliar people I am more concerned with not being understood, with familiar people there is more comfort”). Although it is not possible to generalise about the overall motivation of the sum of the respondents based on this limited number of comments, the available comments justifying the “strongly agree” and “tend to agree” responses suggest that, for those who commented, communicating with familiar people was less stressful, due to a closer match between the desired and ascribed selves and, consequently, a smaller ‘threat to self-esteem’ (see Table 5.3). Those respondents who talked about ‘being understood’, for example, explained that familiar people knew their level of English and knew what to expect from them. This supports the claims made earlier, in that, with familiar interlocutors, the risk of making errors, or not being understood, was not necessarily linked with negative ascribed selves. It is possible that those concerned with not understanding their interlocutors, in turn, could worry that not understanding them (and perhaps having to ask for repetition or clarification) would trigger such negative ascribed selves.
To sum up, the interplay between the participants’ desired and ascribed selves was found to be the central element of their ELI and an element on which the English language had a direct influence. As the outcome of this interplay, to some extent, influenced some of the participants’ self-beliefs that were a part of their self-concept, a strong relationship between English and the participants’ self-concept existed and was based on this interplay. An additional finding that emerged in the process of the qualitative data analysis related to the certain efforts that the participants seemed to make, in order to manage the relationship between the desired and ascribed selves, and, therefore, manage their self-concept. These strategies are described in Section 5.5.

5.5. Strategies for managing the self-concept.

As noted in Section 2.6 in Chapter Two, ‘positioning’ (cf. Davies and Harré, 1990; Foucault, 1980) and the closely related concept of the distribution of ‘power’ between the speakers (cf. Norton, 1997) are central to the poststructuralist approach to investigating the relationships between L2 and identity. Based on the findings from her study of adult migrants in Canada (see Chapter One), Norton (2000) argued that identity is, to a great extent, influenced by the shifting, and usually unequal, socially constructed relations between the speakers. She argued that identity construction, therefore, resembles a struggle, as NNESs often need to resist the imposition of certain identities upon them and generate ‘counter-discourse’ (ibid.:127) to manage their position within the interaction with the target language speakers.

A similar ‘struggle’ was evident in the accounts provided by the participants of this study. During interactions, in which the participants’ ELI was manifested, they had to negotiate their subject position by expressing their desired selves and actively managing their ascribed selves. The selves that they felt were being attributed to them were sometimes at odds with their desired selves, or how they wished to be perceived by others (see Table 5.3). This discrepancy could affect their sense of self, by posing a threat to their face, or “a claimed sense of favourable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him” (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998: 187). In order to minimise this threat, the participants attempted to influence their ascribed selves. During the analysis these efforts were categorised into several strategies for managing the self-concept. These strategies were:
• resisting the stereotype of Polish people \((n=5, 25\% \text{ of total})\),
• pretending to understand \((n=6, 30\% \text{ of total})\), justifying one’s low English competence to interlocutors \((n=6, 30\% \text{ of total})\) and
• avoiding language use or contact \((n=8, 40\% \text{ of total})\) (see Appendix 10).

In the majority of the participants’ accounts \((n=17)\) at least one of these strategies was mentioned, although they did not refer to these as strategies. Additionally, the questionnaire addressed this issue by asking the respondents of the quantitative phase whether certain situations happened to them (see Appendix 12). The results of this questionnaire item are presented in Figure 5.5.
Figure 5.5

Strategies for managing the self-concept (questionnaire results, multiple choice)

- Pretending to understand: 287 (76%)
- Avoiding language use or contact: 222 (59%)
- Justifying one's low English competence: 162 (43%)
- Resisting the stereotype of Polish people: 100 (26%)
The results of the questionnaire confirmed that these strategies were frequently adopted by the participants. The high proportion of the quantitative phase participants who had adopted these strategies most likely stemmed from the fact that the qualitative phase participants were not directly asked about each specific strategy. At the time of conducting Interview 2 the focus of one part of the interview was on ‘face-saving’ strategies in general, and the aforementioned four strategies emerged as a result of all the qualitative data analysis. While Section 8.3.1.2 in Chapter Eight argues that the implication of this finding is to introduce training on communication strategies to ELT classrooms, the following subsections describe these strategies separately.

5.5.1. Resisting the stereotype of Polish people.

*Resisting the stereotype of Polish people* was a strategy that enabled the participants to manage their ascribed selves by influencing their interlocutors’ beliefs about Polish migrants, and Polish people in general.

In Extract 8, Bartek expressed his belief that people sometimes assumed that he was not competent in English, and he provided several examples of how he reacted in such situations. Importantly, Bartek generally appeared to be very self-confident and, when asked about his relationship with English, he responded “I feel confident… I don’t even think about it anymore, it’s like I… I even sometimes realise I’m thinking in English” (Interview 2). However, it is clear from his account that he was not indifferent to the described situation and, in his diary, he explained that such situations made him take “a step backwards” and think he was “a moron” (9.02.2015), which supports the argument about some beliefs about one’s self being prone to change as a result of other people’s influence. In Extract 8 from Interview 2, following a statement about the local people’s beliefs about Poles’ not being able to speak English, Bartek described his attempts to resist this stereotype. The fact that he chose to describe the following situation when asked about “trying to prove such stereotype of a foreigner wrong” indicated that he perceived the responses and behaviour he described as a way of resisting a stereotype of a Polish migrant with a limited English competence.
Extract 8 Interview 2 (Bartek, 28, came to Scotland in 2006, worked as a graphic designer)

Bartek: (...) it’s a big barrier when someone assumes that you don’t understand something, because it puts you in a situation when you want to punch somebody @

Jarek: Could you develop this thought?

Bartek: It’s frustrating to me because, I think even if I spoke in Polish with someone and, say, you know you’re doing something right and someone comes and talks to you as if you’re a child or an idiot, you’re pissed off too. It’s the same here, you know you can speak English and some guy won’t even CONSIDER that you can, and will ASSUME that he will be correcting your every sentence, or if you use slang he’s like “oh, this is not how we say it”, although others would say it the same way and it would be correct, but of course YOU don’t know what you’re saying!

Jarek: And when you communicate with people, do you think about trying to prove such stereotype of a foreigner wrong?

Bartek: It depends on a day because sometimes I just don’t feel like it, but generally if I feel that that’s what’s happening I prefer to make people aware, to say “listen, it’s not like I don’t know something”, or I would just say “you guys say that too”. I would say “I’ve lived here for 10 years…” Recently I talked to some guys @ in a toilet, one of them was standing here [points to the left] and the other here [points to the right], and this guy says “how is it going?” and I just stand there taking a piss, and he repeats “how is it going?” and I say “oh, I thought you’re talking to that guy” @ And then we’re talking and he asks where I’m from and I ask where he’s from and he says he’s from here and I say I’m from Poland, and he goes “Are you? You sound a bit Scottish” and I say “you too” @

This extract shows how Bartek managed his perceived ascribed self (considering his belief in a stereotype of a Polish migrant who cannot speak English) either by openly countering this self (cf. “listen, it’s not like I don’t know something”, “you guys say that too”) or by engaging in ‘small talk’ (the situation in a toilet). Thus, he arguably attempted to minimise the discrepancy between his desired and ascribed selves. It was clearly important for him to achieve his desired self, as he had previously described having the identity of someone not competent in English ascribed to him as “frustrating”. Therefore, although he might have had certain ‘core’ beliefs about himself, it seems that his sense of self was also “task-specific” (Mercer, 2011: 75) and could be affected by a particular social encounter.
Instances of resisting the stereotype of Polish people had been reported by four other participants. This strategy referred both to attempts to reject a perceived negative stereotype by representing a ‘positive’ image of a Polish person with one’s actions and behaviour ($n=3$, see extract 8 above, and extract 9) and to openly ‘defending’ Polish migrants by explaining to the interlocutor what Polish people are ‘really’ like ($n=2$, see extract 10).

*Extract 9* Diary entry 7.03.2015 (Kuba, 27, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a chef)

Kuba: Obviously, I won’t change that I’m Polish. I have always been and always will be Polish. However, I always try to make it look good, to make them perceive Polish people as good people, through contact with me.

*Extract 10* Interview 2 (Kate, 34, came to Scotland in 2005, worked as an accountant)

Kate: Did I tell you that I got in a fight once? I mean, I didn’t physically fight but it was close, I just got so irritated. I was in Sunday Market, a typical situation, someone heard me speak Polish with a friend […] and I heard them say these things about us, and about Polish people […] I couldn’t take it and I said ‘is it nice to speak this way about Poles?’ […] and I said ‘what school have you finished, because I think that you haven’t, and you know what school I finished?’ @ He just upset me so much, this situation, that they said that Polish people are idiots, unemployed, uneducated, without anything, and it made me so angry that we almost started to fight @ […] I had to tell him that because he made it sound like we are some idiots and failure …

Both of these extracts indicate different ways of trying to influence other people’s perceptions of Polish people. Both Kuba’s behaving in such a way that would make his interlocutors “perceive Polish people as good people” (extract 9) and Kate’s openly confronting a person who had made negative comments about her were, arguably, aimed at managing their ascribed (negative) selves of Polish people. By resisting these stereotypes the participants attempted to ‘get rid of’ the negative, or disadvantageous, selves they felt were being ascribed to them and affected their desired selves, thus posing a threat to their desired selves.
5.5.2. Justifying one’s low English competence to interlocutors.

Other strategies employed by the participants were also believed to be aimed at influencing their ascribed selves. This, as argued in Section 5.4., enabled the participants to achieve their desired selves that they wanted to project through English and, as a result, to manage the influence the language had on their sense of self. In total, six participants reported having felt obliged to explain to their interlocutors why their linguistic skills were limited, or justifying their low English competence to interlocutors. Extract 11 provides one of these accounts, in which Natasha described how she frequently explained to her interlocutors why her English competence was not high.

Extract 11 Interview 2 (Natasha, 25, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a shop assistant)

Natasha: I don’t feel ashamed of this [low self-assessed English competence], I always tell them [her interlocutors] that if I’d come here by myself and without my family, I would focus only on work, just work, work, I would certainly be more competent in this language than I am, but I was raising my daughter, I had to take care of the household, etc., and I didn’t have time to learn English [...] and I still think that the best way to learn is through practice...

Although Natasha provided several accounts describing practices similar to the above, at the time of conducting this interview the focus was not on the discussed strategies and, therefore, these accounts were not followed up with questions that could have helped to clarify the exact purpose of Natasha justifying her English competence. Another participant’s account, however, may help to gain a more in-depth view of possible reasons for adopting this strategy, and link them to the process of the participants’ ELI construction. In Extract 12, David described how the time he had spent in Scotland had gradually increased his concerns about his, in his view, low English competence, which resulted in him adopting the strategy of justifying his English competence to his interlocutors.
Extract 12 Interview 2 (David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

David: I have to say, for the first year or two […] I didn’t really care what people think about me, but with time I am more and more concerned with saving face […] and 4 or 3 years back I wasn’t, I didn’t even think about it, if somebody didn’t understand me I would turn around and leave, finish the conversation, and now I try to explain everything, say “you know what it’s like with Polish people at work, so many years in the kitchen, it’s hard to learn English” and stuff like that.

Jarek: OK, so are you saying that the length of your stay has a negative influence in this respect?

David: Yes, I mean that sometimes it is difficult to admit, I don’t want them to think that I’m stupid or something […] when I hear “How long have you lived in Scotland for?” and when I hear this question now, meaning today, tomorrow or the day after, I feel ashamed, ashamed to say 6 years, I’ve said a couple of times that it’s been 6 years and, you know, a surprised look and “6 years?” and then I try to save face and say “you know what it’s like in a kitchen, just Polish people, you won’t find a kitchen without Poles, 90% of chefs are Polish” ….

David clearly believed that he needed to “defend self” (Oetzel et al., 2003: 72), in order to avoid being perceived as a “stupid” person. Additionally, he expressed a belief that this need to justify his level of English competence had been increasing with the time spent in Scotland, due to the fact that he believed it should be higher. The negative influence of time that he described resembles a similar ‘shift’ of identity described in Park’s (2012) study of a non-native English speaking teacher (NNEST) identity. The participant of that study reported that, once her role changed from being a learner of English to being a teacher, her self-confidence suffered, as, despite having a higher English competence than in the past, she felt that certain expectations others had of her changed. In the case of David a similar process seemed to have taken place. Although as a migrant who had recently arrived in Scotland David may not have felt any ‘pressure’ to express sophisticated English skills (“if somebody didn’t understand me I would turn around and leave, finish the conversation…”), with time he felt that other people’s, and arguably his own, expectations of his language ability were higher. Therefore, in order to avoid giving a negative impression that could influence other people’s perceptions of him (“I don’t want them to think that I’m stupid or something”), he chose to explain why his English competence was low. At first sight, this strategy may resemble what, in pragmatics, is referred to as a positive politeness strategy of attending to the interlocutors needs and wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987). If this had been the case, David would have chosen to endear himself to the hearer by admitting that his
English competence was limited and ‘helping’ him/her to understand him better. It seems, however, that, despite this resemblance, the strategy of justifying one’s low English competence to interlocutors was different to the aforementioned politeness strategy. Rather than “making other people feel good” (Cutting, 2015: 39), which is the aim of the latter, the former aimed to enhance one’s own self-perceptions through triggering positive evaluations by the interlocutor. As beliefs about other people’s evaluations influence a person’s self-concept (cf. Branden, 1994; Rogers, 1961; Rubio, 2015), it seemed that justifying one’s low English competence to interlocutors was a way of getting the potential threat to the self (i.e. the perception of someone with potentially low cognitive ability) ‘out of the way’, in order to trigger positive evaluations and, hence, positively influence one’s self-concept.

5.5.3. Pretending to understand and avoiding language use or contact.

These two strategies are described together, as neither of them ultimately involved English use. It appeared, however, that they were also used to influence the ascribed selves. In both cases, the participants’ choice to adopt a given strategy seemed to stem from their fear of confirming a negative stereotype, which is referred to in the literature as a ‘stereotype threat’ (Steele, 1997). In Extracts 13 and 14, which are the examples of the participants’ accounts of pretending to understand and avoiding language use or contact, respectively, the interviewees described their concerns about being ascribed an identity of a “stupid Pole” (extract 13) or a “moron” (extract 14) who did not speak English well.

*Extract 13 Interview 2 (Dagmara, 31, came to Scotland in 2008, worked as a shop assistant)*

Dagmara: (…) sometimes I just pretend to understand and that’s it @ or I nod my head or just say we don’t have it [in a shop] but in reality I’m just embarrassed to ask what they mean […]

Jarek: But why are you embarrassed to ask them to repeat?

Dagmara: I think it’s about… you know, we are from a different country, if I ask five times, I don’t want someone to think “what a stupid Pole, she’s been here for so many years and she can’t even understand what I’m saying, and she should” or “they came to our country, they are taking our jobs away, and they don’t even speak English”, that’s what I mean.
Extract 14 Interview 2 (Barbara, 28, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a supervisor in a hotel)

[talking about being asked for directions]

Barbara: (...) If a Scottish person asks me, I say I don’t know, that I don’t really know because… I know I can’t explain […] I don’t know, I don’t know how to explain it, I’m just more likely to explain to a foreigner […] it’s like I want to be more correct in English but I know I will… it’s not my choice but I will become stressed, or it will be obvious that I’m … it’s obvious that I’m not from here, but maybe they will think “God, she’s some moron” or something, and the foreigner will think I’m a tourist or something, I don’t know.

Jarek: From what you have just said, I am wondering… is it important for you whether you’re perceived as a tourist or an immigrant?

Barbara: That’s exactly the point, and even worse if they know I’m a POLISH immigrant.

Both extracts, consistent with other participants’ accounts of employing the discussed strategies for managing self-concept, show how important the ascribed selves were. In Extract 13, for example, Dagmara explained that she would rather pretend to understand than ask for repetition. It seemed that a ‘stereotype threat’, or a fear of confirming a perceived negative stereotype (Steele, 1997), was the reason she chose to pretend to understand. She expressed her belief about this stereotype by hypothesising what her interlocutor would have thought of her (“a stupid Pole”), and of Polish migrants in general (“they came to our country, they are taking our jobs away, and they don’t even speak English”), had she admitted that she could not understand him or her. It seems that she also expressed her own complex, namely that her English competence should be higher after the time she had spent in Scotland (“she’s been here so many years and she can’t even understand what I’m saying”), and, in a way, she ascribed the identity of a “stupid Pole” to herself (the role of the participants’ own beliefs about Polish migrants in their evaluation of the ascribed selves is described in more detail in Section 6.2.2.1 in Chapter Six). In order to avoid having this negative self ascribed to her, therefore, she chose to pretend to understand her interlocutor. As argued in Section 5.4, the discrepancy between the desired and ascribed selves, and the perceived negative evaluations from other people, could pose a threat to the participants’ self-concept. Pretending to understand, therefore, was a way to minimise this discrepancy and ‘protect’ that self-concept.
In Extract 14 a similar process was described by Barbara, who appeared to avoid communication in English for the same reason as Dagmara. She was concerned that, if she decided to speak, she would be immediately recognised as a foreigner, a “moron” whose English competence is low or, “even worse”, as a “Polish immigrant”. Her avoiding, or minimising, language use was, thus, a way of distancing herself from, in her view, the negatively perceived Polish community, being a face-saving practice (Goffman, 1972) evident in Ryan’s (2010) study of Polish migrants’ experiences in London. Ryan (ibid.), who conducted a qualitative study with 30 Polish migrants, found that they frequently attempted to conceal their nationality because of their beliefs about the perceptions of Polish migrants among the local community. These findings are also in line with Morita’s (2004) study of NNESSs’ classroom socialisation, where the participants’ avoiding language use was interpreted as a face-saving strategy that stemmed from their concerns about the “imposed” selves (ibid.: 591) of “not very intelligent” (ibid.: 583) foreigners (see Section 2.6 in Chapter Two).

Literature suggests that a non-native accent is the most salient indication of foreignness that potentially leads to stigmatisation (cf. Derwing and Munro, 2009) and that may only be concealed if a person chooses not to speak (2010 Gluszek and Dividio). As the participants’ NNESS accent and self-assessed English competence were the indications of their “hearable” identities (Duff, 2002: 310), or their apparent identities as foreigners who are not competent in English, rather than having these disadvantageous identities ascribed to them, they preferred to pretend to understand their interlocutor, justify their low English competence or completely avoid the communicative situation.

Additionally, the participants’ strategy of avoiding language use, or contact, resembles findings from Neeley’s (2013) study of an organisation that introduced English as a mandatory language for its employees. The results of that study indicated that, because of their fear of negative evaluation from their NES colleagues, the NNESSs chose to minimise, or avoid, communicative situations. The participants in this current also expressed concerns about being evaluated and, interestingly, they were only concerned about feedback from NESs, as opposed to other foreigners. Section 6.2.3 in Chapter Six discusses the participants’ concerns about being evaluated by NESs in more detail, and links these concerns with the concept of ’positioning’ (cf. Davies and Harré, 1990; Foucault, 1980), or the way they constructed their self-image in relation to their beliefs about the context in which they were situated and about English being the ‘property’ of NESs.
All of the interviewees who reported having used any of these strategies \((n=17)\) made references to their English competence, suggesting that this was the major factor obstructing their ability to “advertise” (Lippi-Green, 1997: 5) their desired selves and, therefore, to establish their sense of self. This supported Pellegrino Aveni’s (2005) claim that “language learners can be severely hindered in their ability to create or approximate their ideal image of the self they wish to project in the second language” (p.35), due to their limited L2 competence. Moreover, as well as the mere limitations in their ability to express themselves, what seemed to hinder their ability to achieve their desired self was the participants’ apparent belief that people may equate their English competence to their cognitive level, or that “their cognitive sophistication goes unnoticed by others” (Taylor, 2015: 99). This assumption is in line with research on non-native accent stigma, which suggests that, in fact, people with non-native accents tend to be perceived as less intelligent (cf. Lindemann, 2003), and was evident in a number of accounts where the participants used words such as “stupid” \((n=14)\), “idiot” \((n=12)\) and “moron” \((n=10)\) to link their limited self-assessed English competence to their interlocutors’ perceived perceptions of them.

The strategies discussed in this section also resemble the concepts appearing in several other studies from other areas of research, such as the studies of the face-negotiation theory concerned with the concept of self-face and seeing the face as a central issue in constructing one’s “social-self” (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998: 188). Several face-saving strategies, such as avoiding the use of language, for example (cf. Oetzel et al., 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1988), closely resemble the strategies adopted by the participants in this study. Other accounts of strategies ultimately aimed at protecting, or ‘managing’, one’s self-concept were provided in Trevena’s (2013) study of Polish migrants in London, where the participants were reported to have employed certain “ego-defence” mechanisms, or in Terui’s (2012) study of NNES’s “coping strategies” in communication with NESs (which included ‘pretending to understand’), argued by the author to be a way of “protecting self-esteem” (p.177). In spite of the different terminology, what these strategies and the strategies outlined in the above sections have in common is that they all described people’s attempts to influence the way other people perceived them and, consequently, the way they felt about themselves.

Importantly, as a number of beliefs that the participants openly expressed, not only in the above extracts but throughout the study, were about the ‘Other’ (i.e. Scottish) people’s perceptions of ‘Us’ (i.e. Poles), this, arguably, demonstrates the advantage of my insider
status as a fellow Pole and a friend, to whom honest opinions and “hard stories” (Brewis, 2014: 855) can be told (see Section 4.5.1.2 for advantages of having friend respondents).

5.6. Chapter summary.

The results of this current study indicated that the ‘instrumental’ view of English presented in the existing studies of Polish migrants and discussed in Section 1.2 in Chapter One did not reflect the role of English in the migrants’ daily experiences and, in particular, the impact that the language had on their beliefs about themselves. It has been argued throughout this chapter that the participants needed English to express and ‘advertise’ their ‘real self’, which was their self-concept largely based on their core beliefs about themselves. Although these beliefs appeared relatively stable and well-established, the migrants’ self-concept also consisted of task-specific beliefs about themselves that could change as a result of their evaluation of how effectively they managed to express the selves they wanted to be recognised by their interlocutors, or their desired selves based on their core beliefs about themselves. Thus, their ELI was a dynamic relationship managed during interactions, in which the participants made evaluations of the aforementioned failure, or success, in expressing their desired selves and interpretations of how their interlocutors perceived them, or their ascribed selves. This view of ELI as something negotiated during interactions confirmed the claims about the social nature of identity frequently cited by authors investigating the concept (cf. Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Park, 2007; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009).

The results also supported claims made in the literature that enhancement of self-esteem, or the “evaluation of self-concept” (Rubio, 2015: 43) strongly influenced by beliefs about other people’s perceptions and acceptance (Rogers, 1961), is among the most important human needs (cf. Ausabel, 1968; Branden, 1994). The participants of this current study referred to being able to express their ‘real’ selves to others as “the foundation of relationships with people”, “one of the most important things” or “one of the most fundamental human needs”, and their accounts suggested that having their desired selves recognised by their interlocutors enhanced their self-esteem. The relationship between the Polish migrants’ self-concept and the English language, therefore, was based on the notion of English being the ‘tool’ used to manage their desired and ascribed selves and, as a result, to ‘protect’ their self-concept.
Finally, it was found that the construction, or negotiation, of the participants’ self-concept was not a process that would ‘take care of itself’, with the participants passively waiting for an outcome ‘to happen’. Instead, they had to adopt certain strategies (resisting the stereotype of Polish people, justifying one’s low English competence, pretending to understand and avoiding language use or contact), in order to manage the selves they believed were being ascribed to them.
Chapter Six - Factors influencing the relationship between the migrants’ self-concept and the English language

As the relationship between the migrants’ sense of self and the English language, or ELI, manifested itself in the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves, which was *managed through English*, the factors that influenced the participants’ ELI were the factors that directly influenced this interplay.

It was argued in Section 4.5.1.8 in Chapter Four that the analysis was not a linear process. An example of the dynamic nature of the data analysis in this current study is the way research questions 1 and 2 were approached. The first step towards developing an understanding of ELI and the factors influencing it were the participants’ Interview 1 responses to questions about their general relationship with English. This was a particularly demanding task, however, in considering that this relationship had not been, at that stage, conceptualised. Their responses, along with the rest of the Interview 1 data and the increasing amount of data collected from the participants’ diaries, significantly contributed to gaining an understanding of the relationship between the English language and the migrants’ self-concept, as described in Chapter Five. Once that relationship had been investigated in detail it was possible to refer back to the participants’ responses related to the factors influencing that relationship and to proceed with a deeper level of analysis. Understanding the discussed relationship made it possible to interpret why the factors the participants’ previously mentioned were, in fact, important. As a result of this stage of the analysis another, and smaller, group of factors was determined and the validity of these findings was confirmed by Interview 2, based on the initial findings and aimed to explore and confirm them. All these factors, both those directly mentioned by the participants and those being a result of interpretation, were also addressed in the questionnaire, in order to investigate the validity of the interpretations and findings. Section 6.1 describes and discusses the factors the participants believed influenced their relationship with English, and Section 6.2 discusses factors that emerged from the detailed qualitative analysis and were believed to explain the participants’ choice of the factors described in Section 6.1.
6.1. Factors mentioned by the participants.

When the participants of the qualitative phase of the study reflected on the relationship between English and their sense of self, they appeared to focus mainly on the extent to which English enabled them to express ‘who they (felt they) were’ (e.g. “if you want to show more about yourself you do need to speak the language well” – Dagmara, Interview 2) and to generate desirable perceptions (e.g. “when I speak English, people don’t perceive me the same way as when I speak Polish” – Kuba, Interview 1). Therefore, when directly asked about the factors influencing their relationship with English during Interview 1, they mainly talked about the factors influencing this ability manifesting itself in the previously described interplay between the desired and ascribed selves. Additionally, the findings of the exploratory qualitative phase were later validated through the quantitative questionnaire, which required the participants to tick all the boxes corresponding to factors they believed could, in any way, influence their ability to express “their self”. The factors mentioned by the participants during Interview 1 are presented in the highlighted part of Figure 6.1. Additionally, Table 6.1 below the figure compares the number of participants who mentioned a given factor in Interview 1 and the number of respondents who selected it in the questionnaire.
Factors mentioned by the participants as factors influencing the relationship between their self-concept and the English language (Interview 1)

Figure 6.1

The relationship between English and self-concept (EU) manifested during interaction in English (the current experience of failure or success)

Self-concept
- Core beliefs
- Peripheral beliefs

The English language
- Desired selves
- Achieved selves

The participants’ beliefs about factors influencing EU
- Personality
- Previous experiences of failure or success
- Amount of language use or contact
- English competence
- Time spent in Scotland
- Investment and motivation to learn English
- Omnipresence of the English language and people
- Cultural differences
- The intended time of stay

Evaluation of self-concept based on the perceived match/disscrepancy between the desired and ascribed selves

General happiness/liking
- Amount of socialisation
- Sense of independence
- Professional situation
- Future experiences of failure or success
- Motivation to learn English
- Decision to stay or return to Poland

Belief about the importance of English competence

Beliefs about English and its speakers

Beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants
Table 6.1

Factors influencing the relationship between self-concept and the English language
– Interview 1/questionnaire results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Interview 1</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
<td>230 (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences of failure or success</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
<td>203 (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of language use or contact</td>
<td>17 (85%)</td>
<td>249 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English competence</td>
<td>17 (85%)</td>
<td>238 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in Scotland</td>
<td>11 (55%)</td>
<td>240 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment and motivation to learn English</td>
<td>11 (55%)</td>
<td>246 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnipresence of the Polish language and people</td>
<td>11 (55%)</td>
<td>113 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>73 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intended time of stay</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>45 (12%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis, which included writing extensive memos, diagramming, comparing the factors from Table 6.1 with the rest of the participants’ accounts and a cross-case comparison of different participants, revealed additional factors that influenced the relationship between the migrants’ self-concept and English. These factors were believed to be ‘higher’ in hierarchy than the factors listed by the participants and to influence the participants’ choice of the factors they mentioned. Additionally, the factors mentioned by the participants seemed to be interrelated and some of them influenced one another. The factors from Table 6.1 are briefly described in the bullet points below and each description is illustrated with an example extract from the qualitative data.

- **Personality** referred to one’s core beliefs about him or herself. As argued in Sections 5.1 and 5.4 in Chapter Five, these beliefs were central to the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves. Additionally, what the participants referred to as *personality* seemed to have a relationship a number of other factors they mentioned,
including the amount of language use or contact, or experiences of failure or success.

(David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

“I think it depends on personality (. ) not on the level of English because (. ) I know people who don’t speak English at all, I mean ‘Hi’ and some basic words and they can speak like, I don’t know, for example that [name of a friend], he can’t speak English but he’s communicating somehow and he doesn’t give a shit that his English sucks, he’s just trying to speak …”

Experiences of failure or success were the experiences involving communication in English, which, depending on the participants’ judgment, were perceived as being particularly successful or as a failed communication. These experiences could affect their task-specific beliefs about themselves and their self-esteem and, consequently, influence their future decisions (see Chapter Seven). Experiences of failure or success had a relationship with the amount of language use or contact, personality, and English competence.

(Bartek, 28, came to Scotland in 2006, worked as a graphic designer)

“I worked in Leith at [name of a pizza restaurant] at the beginning, and those ‘neds’ there sometimes can either make you feel like an idiot if you don’t understand something, or somebody is laughing at you […] As far as I remember after this you take a step back […] you feel stupid […] if you got your ass kicked in a dark alley you would avoid dark alleys too @”

Amount of language use or contact. The experiences of failure, or success, could have an influence on the decisions about language use in the future. However, the amount of language use also seemed to have an influence on such experiences, as the participants linked it with their self-assessed English competence.

(Bart, 29, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a bartender)

“Because I use the language every day and I think that because I use it every day it becomes a routine…”
• **Time spent in Scotland.** The participants mainly linked the time spent in Scotland with increased self-confidence and increased *English competence*, and attributed these changes to the *amount of language use or contact*.

(Artur, 34, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a chef)

“At first I was worried, but now I’m not. I’m becoming more self-confident, I don’t know, I just don’t worry any more, and at first I did.”

(Izabela, 35, came to Scotland in 2010, worked as a secretary)

“After some time I became acquainted with this language, with this accent, and I understood it better. You need time for this.”

• **Investment and motivation to learn English** referred to motivation to improve English, as well as to investment into learning, i.e. steps taken to develop *English competence*.

(David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

“If somebody wants to – he will learn, simple as that, if somebody doesn’t want to learn – he won’t, he will come here and he will look for his friends to help him out here.”

• **Omnipresence of the Polish language and people.** The participants found the availability of services in Polish, as well as the tendency of Polish people to stick to their community, problematic and they believed this affected the *amount of language use or contact, investment and motivation to learn English* and, as a result, *English competence*.

(Dagmara, 31, came to Scotland in 2008, shop assistant)

“(…) and they [Polish people] stay here for a couple of years and they realise that why would they need English if there are Polish people everywhere, there are Polish offices that will do things for you, there are Polish managers in factories, plenty of Polish employees, etc. (.) but
I wouldn’t feel good if I couldn’t take care of things myself. We are not in Poland, some people only hang out with the Poles, so no wonder they don’t learn English”

- **Cultural differences.** Those who talked about cultural differences spoke about different sense of humour and different knowledge about celebrities, events from the past, etc. constituting the overall experience of a person in a given cultural context.

(Bartek, 28, came to Scotland in 2006, worked as a graphic designer)

“It’s a difficult topic, because it depends what your target group’s culture is, because I may think I’m funny, for example, and in a Polish company everybody laughs at my jokes, and I will go to Scots and they will laugh because it’s ‘stupid-funny’, and here it was ‘funny-funny’, so my perception of ‘I’m such a funny guy’ as opposed to their thinking ‘what the hell’ @ you know what I mean? What I find funny is not necessarily what they find funny”

- **The intended time of stay.** The participants who mentioned this factor also talked about its influence on the investment and motivation to learn English, cultural differences, socialisation practices and English competence.

(Kuba, 27, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a chef)

“Kuba: If you want to spend the rest of your life here, you will try to have a certain standard, as if this place was your home (…) And if you have a limited time in your mind, you focus on your goals which you previously set up and you want to achieve.

Jarek: So how would it be different for you if you were planning to stay here?

Kuba: I would have made some steps… in educating myself, in terms of the language and culture, I would set myself some goals that I currently don’t set.”

Although there was, seemingly, a large number of factors that the participants believed influenced their experiences with the English language, most of these factors seemed to be interrelated. Upon closer scrutiny, and in light of the gradually emerging picture of ELI as an interplay between the desired and ascribed selves (see Section 5.4 in Chapter Five), the factors that the participants mentioned strengthened this emerging theory and it became
evident that these factors, in one way or another, influenced the aforementioned interplay. The analysis resulted in a new model, in which it seemed that the above factors could be grouped into those that influence English competence and those that influence the participants’ beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants. Both of these newly emerged themes, in turn, had a direct influence on the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves.

It seemed that all the factors mentioned by the participants could be linked to one of these newly emerged factors. An example of these relationships is provided in Extract 15, which illustrates how the omnipresence of the Polish language and people and amount of language use or contact were found to be directly influencing the participants’ self-assessed English competence.

Extract 15 Interview 1 (David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

David: [if] you avoid contact with English then it will obviously be what it is now, it won’t get better. You will just be going backwards, you know. It’s the same with all these Poles here, because you work with them, you’re surrounded by them, you don’t pick up that language [English]. That’s why Poles don’t speak English here, and if they do, they stutter […] because why would they need English if you can get everything sorted in Polish. You go to the Council, you explain that you want to speak Polish and they send an interpreter, you go to the Job Centre and you have all the forms in Polish, you go to work like mine and you take some exams and they are in Polish, this is why Poles don’t give a shit about English, why would they learn it when they have a second Poland here, all institutions print in Polish too.

This extract illustrates how the omnipresence of the Polish language and people discussed by David (cf. “they have a second Poland here”) appears to influence the amount of language use or contact (“why would they need English if you can get everything sorted in Polish”) and hinder the development of English competence (“it will obviously be what it is now, it won’t get better”). All of the 11 participants who mentioned omnipresence of the Polish language and people in their accounts linked it to limited English use and exposure and, as a result, lower English competence. Similarly, all the other factors from Table 4.1 were ultimately linked to English competence and beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants. These assumptions were later confirmed by Interview 2.
and the questionnaire data. One of the aims of Interview 2 was to confirm these assumptions and to develop a better understanding of these relationships.

What emerged during the analysis of Interview 2 data and later, when all of the collected data was analysed at the final stage, was another factor that seemed to influence both of these factors and, therefore, could be placed higher in the hierarchy of factors influencing the relationship between English and self-concept. These were the participants’ general beliefs about English and its speakers (Figure 6.2).
Figure 6.2

The relationship between the factors the participants believed influenced their ELI and the factors that emerged during the analysis.

Diagram showing the relationship between English self-concept (ELI) and factors influencing ELI, including personality, previous experiences, amount of language use, time spent in Scotland, and more. The diagram also illustrates how these factors influence self-esteem and general well-being.
On the whole, once the whole qualitative data set (Interview 1, Interview 2 and the reflective journals) was analysed with regard to the factors the participants listed as influencing their ELI, it was concluded that the participants’ choice mirrored their belief about the importance of English competence and their beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants, which, in turn, were ultimately influenced by their general ‘language ideologies’, or beliefs about English and its speakers (see Figure 6.2). These were the factors that were eventually the main, or ‘core’, factors influencing ELI and are discussed in Section 6.2 and its three sub-sections.

6.2. Factors influencing the relationship between the migrants’ self-concept and the English language (the results of a deeper analysis).

6.2.1. English competence.

English competence was not only mentioned by all of the 20 participants as a response to the question about factors influencing the relationship between their self-concept and English and chosen by 230 respondents in the questionnaire (see Table 6.1), but was also a theme underlying and constantly emerging throughout both the interviews and the participants’ diaries. The importance of English competence was particularly evident in the discussion of the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves (see Section 5.4 in Chapter Five), where it was argued that, to be able to express one’s desired self, one needed a certain level of English competence. Additionally, Table 5.3 and the provided discussion showed that whether or not there was a discrepancy between the self one wanted to express and was able to express influenced the outcome of a given encounter in English. Thus, while the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves described in Section 5.4 and illustrated in Table 5.3 was the manifestation of the migrants’ ELI, English competence was one of the factors influencing this interplay and, thus, influencing the ELI.

As previously noted, one of the aims of this study was to explore whether in the context where the Polish migrants have been immersed in a new linguistic environment and their main ‘tool’ for expressing and negotiating their identity (Polish) has been replaced with a
language that is not normally part of their sense of self (i.e. English), this sense of self could have been put at risk (Block, 2007; Giddens, 1991), particularly if their linguistic repertoire in English was limited. The analysis of all the data sets confirmed this claim and revealed that, for the participants, the importance of English competence not only meant being able to merely get the meaning across, but, rather, to communicate their desired selves. This was confirmed by the importance the participants attributed to being able to express one’s real self (see Figure 5.1 in Chapter Five). The results of the questionnaire confirmed that being able to express one’s ‘real self’, as opposed to using English only instrumentally to ‘sort things out’, was valued among the respondents. Example comments provided under this item in the questionnaire were “yes! To master English to such an extent that I can express my personality as well as in Polish”, “sometimes I don’t know the right words to express my emotions” and “I don’t give a shit, people will judge me anyway, regardless of what I will say”. Common among most of the comments were references to English competence, indicating that the participants attributed importance to their level of English competence with regard to being able to express who they were. This was supported by responses to the previously discussed questionnaire item, where 230 participants (63%) stated that English competence was a factor influencing their ability to express their real self. Additionally, all the 20 participants of the qualitative study believed that the higher the English competence, the more effectively a person may accomplish this task. In Extract 16, for example, Kate described how, with increasing English competence, she gradually became able to express her real self.

Extract 16 Interview 1 (Kate, 34, came to Scotland in 2005, worked as an accountant)

Kate: At first I had a big problem because (.) I like to tell jokes, I like to laugh, and at first I had a big problem because the natives did not see me as I really am, because I could not express it, I don’t have this problem now, I will tell you a situation @ I was once in a relationship with a Scot, after a year his mom told me that now she can see why he fell in love with me, she didn’t know before because they didn’t know me as ME (.) I am louder and more confident in Polish than I am in English @

The above extract confirms that to be able to express one’s self one needed a level of English competence that matched the extent to which he/she felt that he/she needed to express that self. Although, according to Kate, she had a good command of English when she came to
Scotland, in her opinion it was not good enough for her to fully express who she really was. Referring to the table of the different outcomes of the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves (see Table 5.3 in Chapter Five), it seems that there was a discrepancy between the self that Kate wanted to express and was able to express. Her statement about her liking to make jokes and laugh, as well as being “louder” and “more confident” in Polish, gave an impression of a generally outgoing person. This part of her self-concept seemed to constitute her core beliefs about herself that she was not able to communicate. As a result, she perceived a discrepancy between her desired and ascribed selves. “The natives” did not see what she felt she was “really” like. She stated that “they didn’t know me as ME”, believed this to be “a big problem” and attributed it to the level of her English competence.

Kate also talked about telling jokes, a topic mentioned by seven other participants throughout the two interviews and the diaries. At first these accounts referring to very specific functions of the language were interpreted as a misunderstanding of the question about ‘being different in Polish and English’. To my initial surprise, rather than talking about some kind of ‘new’, or ‘English’ self, the participants chose to speak about their English competence. When the Interview 1 data was analysed, however, it became evident that these different aspects of the language provided a certain freedom to express his or her desired self and, hence, manage his or her self-concept. These findings are in line with Kobiałka’s (2015) study of the identity of Polish migrants’ in Ireland, in which the author described the ‘power’ that stemmed from having a certain level of English competence in the following words:

What is more, many migrants are aware that they cannot have everything in a new language. They associate their own language with enormous freedom; being able to express themselves in a very specific way; chatting about nothing; being able to express a specific sense of humour; the ability to improvise, make no sense, make up words, be mad, weird and unpredictable (…) On the other hand, when they speak English they are more logical and predictable (…) Even those with high proficiency (…) are selective about topics and they choose the topics they are able to handle in terms of vocabulary.

Kobiałka (2015: 205)

The different functions of the language listed by the author (e.g. chatting about nothing, being able to express a specific sense of humour…) contribute to the task of expressing one’s desired self and, as a result, establishing one’s self-concept, although the author did not describe it as such. Telling certain types of jokes, improvising, creating new expressions, etc. are all aimed at communicating a certain message about the person who is sending that message. It is evident, therefore, that this is the reason why a certain level of competence is required to express one’s self. Although one participant linked not being able to tell jokes to the cultural differences between Poland and Scotland, the other seven who discussed this
topic attributed this problem to their English competence that did not enable them to correctly translate the jokes from Polish into English (Extract 17).

Extract 17 Interview 2(Anna, 28, came to Scotland in 2007, worked as an accountant)

Anna: I can say a lot of things but there are also many things which don’t sound the same way as if I said them in Polish, I think I sometimes speak with some simplified version of English and this person cannot get a proper impression of what I’m really like, because I don’t really say what I want to say. Like I said to you before [in interview 1], telling jokes, for example, I cannot really translate them from Polish, or generally saying something funny is difficult to me.

What Anna described in the above extract reflected the “freedom” that Kobiałka (2015: 205) discussed in the quotation provided above. Not only did she mention not being able to translate the jokes from Polish to English, but she also believed that she spoke with a “simplified version of English”, which did not enable her to fully communicate “what she’s really like”, or her desired self. This supports the claim that, similar to other participants of the study, she needed a certain command of English to express more than just basic factual information.

The importance of English competence for expressing the desired selves and, hence, for the participants’ self-concept was also evident in their responses to the question about their linguistic goals (Extracts 18 and 19).

Extract 18 Interview 2 (Dagmara, 31, came to Scotland in 2008, worked as a shop assistant)

Dagmara: (...) it depends on how well you know the language, if you can only say that you’re nice, or that you’re funny or, I don’t know, that you’re pedantic, well it’s not really enough, if you want to show more about yourself you do need to speak the language well.

Extract 19 Interview 2 (Kaska, 28, came to Scotland in 2013, unemployed)

Kaska: Well, I think that my aim is a level which, I don’t know, which will allow me to express myself, to say everything the way I want to say, and for them to understand me exactly the way I want them to understand me. I think that ultimately in learning a language the goal is to express your personality…
Bearing in mind the discussion of the process taking place during interaction provided in Section 5.4, the above examples support the argument that the ability to express the desired selves required a certain level of English competence (“to say everything the way I want to say”, “if you want to show more about yourself you do need to speak the language well”). The participants’ English competence influenced the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves (“for them to understand me exactly the way I want them to understand me”), by allowing the participants to express the former in order to respond to, and influence, the latter.

This leads to another factor that influenced the participants’ self-concepts through playing a major role in the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves. What has emerged several times throughout the discussion so far is that the participants’ perceptions of their ascribed selves seemed to be based on their view of a stereotype of a Polish migrant among the local community. This was also evident in the discussion of the strategies for managing the self-concept (see Section 5.5) and particularly in Extracts 13 and 14, where the participants hypothesised about their interlocutors’ perceptions of them. These perceptions were argued to reflect the participants’ beliefs about negative stereotypes of foreigners in general, as well as specifically the stereotypes of Polish migrants. The following section describes the participants’ beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants as a factor influencing the relationship between the participants’ self-concept and the English language.

6.2.2. Beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants.

It was argued in Section 5.4 in Chapter Five that the relationship between the migrants’ self-concept and English was based on the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves, in which English was the tool for managing this interplay through enabling the participants to express the desired selves and respond to, and negotiate, the ascribed selves. Not surprisingly, as well as self-assessed English competence (see Section 6.2.1) and general beliefs about English and its speakers (See section 6.2.3), another factor that influenced this interplay, and, thus, the migrants’ ELI, were their beliefs about, and attitudes towards, other people’s perceptions of migrants. These broad beliefs included general beliefs about the perceptions of foreigners and migrants, as well as beliefs about Polish migrants in particular,
and formed the basis for the participants’ interpretations of the selves ascribed to them during interactions. Evidence of the participants’ beliefs about the local people’s perceptions of migrants can be found in a number of their statements about their ascribed selves, such as Dagmara’s justification of pretending to understand in Extract 13, where she hypothesised about her interlocutor’s thinking “they came to our country, they are talking our jobs away and they don’t even speak English”.

To investigate the role of the participants’ beliefs about the local people’s perceptions of Polish migrants, in Interview 2 they were asked for their opinion on whether there was any stereotype of Polish people among the local community. Although most of the participants (n=18) believed that there was both a positive and a negative stereotype, the majority of this group (n=11) emphasised the negative stereotype as being more dominant. Additionally, one person believed there was only a negative stereotype of Polish people and another stated that there was no stereotype at all (Figure 6.3).
Figure 6.3
The interview participants' beliefs about the stereotype of a Polish migrant

- No stereotype at all 1 (5%)
- Only a negative stereotype 1 (5%)
- Both a positive and a negative stereotype but the negative one is more common 11 (55%)
- Both a positive and a negative stereotype but the positive one is more common 7 (35%)
In the participants’ view, the positive stereotype of a Polish migrant was a hard-working person and the negative stereotype was a view that Polish migrants often claim social benefits and are ‘taking’ the local people’s jobs (Extract 20).

Extract 20 Interview 2 (Aga, 25, came to Scotland in 2014, worked as a waitress)

Jarek: Do you think there is any particular view of Polish migrants in Scotland?

Aga: Well, the Poles are thieves @ This is the view, at least from what I’ve heard, usually either that Poles are thieves or that they are hard-working, these are the two stereotypes.

Interestingly, even those participants who initially claimed there was no stereotype of Polish people or that a positive stereotype existed, throughout the interviews they gave an opposite impression (Extract 21).

Extract 21 Interview 2 (Bart, 29, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a bartender)

Bart: They don’t want us here, but if I was to describe the percentage I would say it is 65 to 35, so 2 to 1, one doesn’t want us here because he has his set opinion about Polish people, even though he doesn’t know any, but the majority of them are happy that we are here, at least those of us who do something for the society, who don’t steal, or cause trouble, or start fights… those who came here to work, we look for work and we find it, we pay taxes, we set up families and live here, it’s not like we steal something from them (…) We show that this stereotype is wrong, the cheap workforce, who work God knows how many hours, don’t have time for anything else, we stay in a flat with 10 other Poles and save all the money only to go to Poland and spend it…

The above extract shows how deeply rooted the Polish migrants’ beliefs about negative stereotypes of Poles seemed to be in their minds. Although Bart generally claimed that the positive stereotype was dominant, he had a very clear image of a negative stereotype of a Polish migrant (see the text in italics). This situation was the same for other participants who, despite claiming that the stereotype was rather positive, eventually changed their minds as they engaged in a reflection on their experiences. In the quantitative stage of the study, one
of the questionnaire items asked the participants for their opinion on the stereotype of Polish migrants among Scottish people, in order to investigate whether beliefs about a negative stereotype were, in fact, predominant among Polish migrants. The results of the questionnaire, however, did not support the qualitative results, indicating that the majority of the participants believed the opposite to be true (Figure 6.4).
Figure 6.4

Questionnaire item 9 – “I think the stereotype of Polish migrants in Scotland is mostly…” - tick the box that mostly corresponds to your feelings

- Mostly positive 206 (55%)
- Mostly negative 58 (15%)
- I don't know 71 (19%)
- I don't think there is any stereotype 43 (11%)
This result of the questionnaire was in line with findings from the study of Polish-Scottish integration conducted by the Polish Cultural Festival Association (2013). Based on responses collected from 206 participants, that study argued that the majority (70%) of Poles believed that the Scottish people’s attitudes towards Polish migrants were positive, as opposed to 22% of the respondents who believed that their attitudes were neutral and 8% who claimed they were negative.

Although the result of the questionnaire in this current research supported the aforementioned results from another study, it was found to be surprising, given that it contradicted the result of the qualitative stage of the study. This result was interpreted in several ways. Firstly, in considering the fact that the interview participants who had initially expressed belief in a positive stereotype changed their mind when given the opportunity to reflect on their experiences, it was considered that the questionnaire, which deprived the respondents of this opportunity to cognitively engage with their experiences, may have produced results that corresponded strictly to their beliefs. Secondly, it was also considered that these responses themselves may have been a manifestation of a face-saving strategy aimed to reduce the risk of the development of an ‘ascribed self’ as someone who had possibly experienced negative stereotyping or prejudice and to ‘advertise’ the desired self of a ‘successful’ and stress-free migrant. This assumption was partly supported by the result of the questionnaire item asking the participants about the strategies for managing self-concept (see Figure 5.5), where 100 respondents (26%) admitted to having been involved in the strategy of resisting the stereotype of Polish migrants. Involvement in this strategy, however, did not necessarily imply having general beliefs about a negative stereotype and may only have been a ‘one-off’ event. Finally, a more plausible explanation of the discrepancy between the qualitative and quantitative results emerged from the analysis of the 32 comments made under this questionnaire item. Six of these comments reflected the belief about a positive stereotype and seven about a negative stereotype. Additionally, one of the respondents who chose the “mostly positive” response provided a comment that seemed to indicate a rather ambiguous attitude (“It’s positive, although most Scottish people think that we steal their jobs”). The majority of the comments (18), however, reflected the belief that it depends on a person, on social class and on other circumstances and the question is, thus, difficult to answer. The overall theme of these comments was that both positive and negative stereotypes did exist and it was difficult to state which one was dominant. Among these 18 participants who expressed this belief, however, five chose the “I don’t know”, five chose
the “mostly negative” and eight chose the “mostly positive” response, indicating that a major limitation of this questionnaire item, and one that was not determined in the pilot study, was possibly the wording and the number of the provided responses. It seemed likely that those participants who believed that both positive and negative stereotypes existed and that it was difficult to classify them into “mostly positive” or “mostly negative” were ‘forced’ to choose responses that did not fully reflect their opinion and the “I don’t know” answer did not match the way they felt about the issue of stereotypes. A suggested improvement in future studies would be either to provide a wider range of responses or to have only an open-ended response to this item, which would require the participants to state their true opinion.

6.2.2.1. Possible sources of beliefs about negative stereotypes.

Negative discourse on migrants in the UK

Although the majority of the participants of the qualitative study had not had any experience of being openly discriminated against, they believed that the overall public attitude towards migrants in the UK was mostly negative. When discussing the issue of threats to social identity, which is closely related to both stereotype treat and stigma consciousness, Kaiser et al. (2006) argued that such threats do not “occur when environmental cues signal that other people value and respect one’s social group” (p.332). There is evidence, in fact, that some public attitudes towards Poles may be hostile. For example, a review of attitudes towards migrants in 27 countries revealed that the UK had the second highest proportion of the population who believed that immigration to their country should be reduced (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010). Although several studies (cf. Lewis, 2006; McCollum et al., 2014; Pillai, 2007; Park et al., 2012) suggested that attitudes in Scotland were much more favourable in relation to immigrants, it still seems that a relatively large proportion of the population express hostile attitudes. For example, according to different sources, between 58 per cent (Blinder, 2015) and 69 per cent (NatCen, 2015) of the surveyed population in Scotland were in favour of a reduction in the immigration to Britain, compared to 75 per cent and 78 per cent of the surveyed population in England, as cited by the same sources. Some reasons for such attitudes were indicated in the results of a 2015 Survey of British Social Attitudes conducted by NatCen (ibid.). The findings of that survey suggested that, in 2014, 24 per cent of the surveyed population believed that the main reason
migrants came to Britain was to claim benefits, and 40 per cent thought that the immigrants significantly increased the crime rates. Furthermore, only 27 per cent believed that immigrants should have the same legal rights as British citizens.

There is also evidence of certain hostile attitudes towards migrants in the media, which could influence both Polish migrants’ beliefs about the attitudes towards them and the actual attitudes of the British population. In fact, in 2008, the *Daily Mail* was accused by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain of having repeatedly defamed Polish migrants in their articles, using anti-Polish language and encouraging negative emotions towards Polish migrants. Although the *Daily Mail* rejected these accusations, it does, indeed, seem that articles describing Polish migrants published by the *Daily Mail* tend to focus on their negative side. The *Daily Mail* articles about Polish migrants tend to be couched in the following language:

*Figure 6.5*

A sample of *Daily Mail* articles online, accessed on 24.10.2015

| “Polish immigrants take £1bn out of the UK economy” |
| “Gangs of Eastern European workers who sit drinking in town square all day face being ‘educated’ about acceptable behaviour” |
| “Polish gang jailed for stripping, beating and smothering a self-made millionaire to death in his home for his £20,000 Rolex” |
| “Secret report warns of migration meltdown in Britain” |
| “Polish couple deported back to Britain after wife strips naked to parade around Turkish swimming pool and husband is tear gassed by police after he attacks hotel staff who complained” |

These observations are in line with the results of Spigelman’s (2013) discursive analysis of British newspapers, which revealed similarly negative attitudes and use of metaphors of natural disasters to refer to the arrival of Polish migrants to the UK. These negative representations of migrants in general, and of Polish migrants, may have also influenced the
general public’s attitudes towards these ‘outsiders’. In a study of general attitudes towards Pakistani diaspora in the UK conducted by YouGov (2013), the results indicated that the respondents who regularly read tabloids (cf. Express, Daily Mail) expressed more hostile attitudes towards Pakistani people than the respondents who read such newspapers as the Independent, Daily Telegraph or Guardian.

Additionally, anti-Polish attitudes were also evident in users’ comments posted under these, and other, online articles about Polish migrants (Figure 6.6).

**Figure 6.6**

* A sample of users’ comments under articles on Polish migrants, accessed on 24.10.2015 (quoted verbatim)

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“People don't need to "look" for a reason to pick on Polish people! It's right in front of every one's eyes! You flood here, lower the wages for everyone else, increase house prices and house waiting times, form Polish ghettos, increase waiting times massively for the NHS, and worst of all a lot of Poles claim benefits!”

“It's disgusting that these people are allowed to "get on their bike" and find work. Tories like us would never never never approve of behaviour like that”

[referring to the intake of Polish migrants] “When I had Dreams, I never would have dreamt this Nightmare for our beloved country.”

“The Poles seem to be mentioned a lot in the article perhaps that's how they make their money after working for a pittance during the day.”
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As identities are believed to be “given by social structures or ascribed by others” (Norton, 2015: 65), it is likely that this predominantly negative discourse on Polish migration may have influenced the participants’ beliefs about the local people’s perceptions of them.
The participants’ beliefs about the negative identities ascribed to them, and to other Poles, to some extent, seemed to be the reflection of their own opinions about fellow Polish migrants. When discussing the topic of the stereotype of Polish migrants, the majority of the participants (n=14) of the qualitative phase expressed the belief that Polish people had earned their negative perceptions through their anti-social behaviour in public, including swearing and drinking, and their limited English competence (Extracts 22 and 23).

Extract 22, Interview 2 (Karolina, 31, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as cleaner)

Karolina: I try to look at it [the issue of stereotypes] from a different perspective. For example, I can’t imagine a situation in Poland when you go to work and you work only with Spanish people, of whom three quarters do not speak Polish, I just can’t imagine a Pole in this situation, we’re so racist! (...)It was long time ago, a Scottish guy got on the bus, there are 10 Poles, he asks something, nobody replies, because there are only Polish people on the bus. Tell me, wouldn’t it be weird and irritating to you in Poland? Because it would irritate me. Can you imagine 20 Chinese people working under you and nobody speaks Polish? Because I speak English, you speak English, somebody else speaks English, but the majority of Poles don’t, they can’t (...) I’m not saying that you need to discuss politics straight away, but the girl has been working in the kitchen for five years and she comes to me and asks how to say “a fork” in English?! In the kitchen?! She doesn’t know how to say „a fork”?!

Extract 23 Interview 2 (David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

David: Cheeky Poles don’t want to work for a minimum wage, same as Scots, nowadays both value themselves, but I think they [Scottish people] also mind the alcohol [the fact that Polish people drink a lot] and that three quarters, or at least 60% of Poles don’t speak English.

Similar beliefs were also expressed in the previously discussed comments in the questionnaire item asking about the stereotype of Polish migrants (see Figure 6.3). These comments revealed the perception of Polish migrants as being people who ‘deserved’ to be thought of as, amongst others, cunning, “cheeky” and rude people who do not speak English and drink a lot of alcohol (Figure 6.7).
“Cheeky Poles work for their own opinion”

“I have a feeling that Scottish people don’t like us (although there are exceptions) because many of our compatriots are simply parasites and chancers, and they don’t speak English”

“The majority like us. They know that we can drink a lot and that most of us know how to fight. But what makes me particularly proud is that they value us for our prowess and hard-work”

“We drink a lot, we don’t speak English, or ‘Scottish’, we’re cunning and cheeky”

The participants’ beliefs about negative perceptions of Polish migrants could, therefore, stem from their own opinions of fellow migrants, which could, to some extent, influence their interpretations of the selves ascribed to them during interactions. In the previously mentioned qualitative study of Polish migrants’ experiences in London (Ryan, 2011), when the participants spoke about the negative perceptions of Poles among the local community, they expressed their own opinions about Polish migrants based on the anti-social behaviour displayed by their fellow compatriots that they had encountered. This also seemed to be the case with some of the participants in this current study, as the same phenomenon was evident in the frequently employed (n=8) hypothetical voice, in which the participants reflected on their interlocutors’ possible thoughts with a surprising amount of detail (see Extracts 5 and 6).

The central role of the beliefs about the stereotypes of Polish people discussed in this section in influencing their ELI was seen in terms of the notion of ‘stigma consciousness’ (cf. Pinel, 1999, 2002, 2004; Pinel et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2012) or “the extent to which one expects to be stereotyped” (Pinel, 1999: 114). People who have high stigma consciousness are believed to perceive higher discrimination against themselves (Pinel, 1999), to be more sensitive to prejudice cues (Kaiser et al., 2006) and to suffer from lower self-esteem (Pinel et al., 2005) and great amount of anxiety and depression (Stroebe et al., 2011). Unlike the
concept of a stereotype threat (Steele, 1997), which refers to the fear of confirming a negative stereotype and was also found in this study (see Section 5.5.3 in Chapter Five), stigma consciousness refers to expecting to be stereotyped, regardless of one’s behaviour. Therefore, having these beliefs about a negative stereotype of Polish people clearly influenced the participants’ stigma consciousness, which was later manifested in the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves central to their ELI (see Section 5.4), or in the strategies to manage self-concept that they adopted (see Section 5.5).

Lack of contact between the migrants and the locals

Another possible reason for some of the actual negative attitudes towards migrants was put forward in the aforementioned study of Britons’ attitudes towards Pakistani people (YouGov, 2013), in which it was suggested that the respondents who had had personal contact with the minorities (either through work or social and family networks) expressed significantly more tolerant attitudes than those who had not had such an opportunity. This finding is particularly relevant in light of the concerns raised by the participants regarding the Poles’ isolation and preference for remaining within the Polish communities. It is likely, therefore, that, as well as limiting the migrants’ opportunities to interact and socialise with members of the host society, this isolation of Poles, fostered by the government’s efforts to cater for their limited English competence, may also contribute to the locals’ expressing more negative attitudes towards Polish migrants. Thus, in considering the results of this current study, it seems that the initiatives promoted by the government to enhance the quality of the migrants’ experiences and aimed at retaining the migrant population in Scotland may, in fact, affect the migrants’ ELI. The availability of various services in Polish may both hinder the improvement of the migrants’ English competence and their motivation to learn English, which they need, in order to be able to express their desired selves in English and negatively influence the local people’s beliefs about migrants, thus affecting the migrants’ ascribed selves.

As noted in the conclusion to Section 6.1, as well as the participants’ English competence and their beliefs about, and attitudes towards, other people’s perceptions of migrants, another major factor that influenced the participants’ ELI manifested in the interplay between their desired and ascribed selves was their language ideologies, or general beliefs about English and its speakers. Whilst the former two factors were found to explain the
participants’ responses to questions about factors influencing their ELI (see Section 6.2), their language ideologies were found to be the factor ultimately both influencing their self-assessment of, and their beliefs about, their *English competence*, and being at the core of their beliefs about, and attitudes towards, other people’s perceptions of migrants. Thus, their *beliefs about English and its speakers* was the major factor ultimately influencing their ELI.

6.2.3. Beliefs about English and its speakers.

*Beliefs about English and its speakers* was a theme that, unlike the previously discussed *beliefs about English competence* and *beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants*, which both emerged after the reflective journal and the Interview 1 data analysis to be validated by Interview 2, emerged after the analysis of the whole qualitative data set in the final stage of the data analysis. Although this factor influencing ELI had not emerged as a theme prior to Interview 2, a number of questions regarding the participants’ beliefs about the status of English and its speakers were asked during Interview 2, as it was believed, at that point, that these beliefs should not be overlooked. What emerged from the final stage of the analysis, however, was a factor that appeared to influence both the participants’ *beliefs about English competence* and *beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants* and, consequently, the whole range of beliefs that they expressed when they talked about factors influencing their ELI during Interview 1 (see Table 6.1).

As previously noted, the participants’ sense of self was strongly influenced by their interpretations of other people’s perceptions of them, of migrants and ‘outsiders’ in general, or specifically of Polish migrants. However, it also seemed that their ‘positioning’ (cf. Davies and Harré, 1990; Foucault, 1980) also reflected their broader ‘language ideologies’, including their understanding of NESs as the ‘owners’ of the language and themselves as foreigners who are “in their country and have to accept their rules” (Dagmara, diary entry 13.03.2015). In order to investigate the participants’ general views of themselves and other NNES vis-à-vis NES in relation to English and to compare them with findings from the existing GE studies of NNES’ beliefs and attitudes, during Interview 2 the participants were asked about their linguistic goals, perceptions of ‘correctness’ and opinions on who should teach English, as well as about their ‘ideal’ model of English (see Appendix 7). Their responses indicated beliefs about what GE literature refers to as ‘NES superiority’ and their
‘ownership of English’ (cf. Cogo, 2012; Davies, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; McKay, 2003). Although only five participants expressed a desire to *speak* with a ‘native-like’ (which they meant British or American) accent, all of the participants stated that the ‘correct’ models of English are the British and American varieties, and 19 participants believed that English should only be taught by a native English speaking teacher (NEST). One participant stated that a non-native English speaking teacher (NNEST) may be a good teacher of English, providing he or she speaks with an indistinguishable native-like accent.

These beliefs suggested that the participants treated NESs as ‘experts’ in the language. This explains why their accounts of various interactions in English to be found across all the data focused on communication with NESs, rather than NNEs. It has been argued that a person’s sense of self develops through comparisons “with those perceived as being better than [him or herself]” (Mercer, 2011: 88) and through the interpretation of direct, or indirect, feedback they send during interactions. Additionally, in order for this feedback to have any impact on the person’s sense of self, the interlocutor needs to be perceived as “being a credible and respected source of feedback for a particular domain” (ibid: 86). In considering this claim and the participants’ beliefs about the ‘native’ varieties of English being the only ‘correct’ ones, it becomes evident that the participants’ choice to talk about their sense of self in terms of their interactions with NESs reflected their beliefs about NESs being the legitimate ‘owners’ of English and, thus, the only source of feedback that could influence that sense of self.

A similar conclusion was made by Kasztalska (2014) in her analysis of users’ comments on 15 Polish online articles regarding the briefly defined topic of ‘English’. As the author explained, “the topics covered in these articles ranged from the recent *Matura* exams, to the cost of learning foreign languages, to the Euro 2012 soccer championships, and included reports on ordinary, as well as famous, Poles’ English language abilities”, and the aim was to “identify recurring thematic trends in the commenters’ discourses and to note specific statements [to] gain insight into Poles’ relationship with English” (ibid.: 256). The author argued that a common theme occurring in the comments was ‘shame’ stemming from the belief about Pole’s limited English competence and from the resulting “international community’s opinion of Poland and Poles” (ibid: 257). Based on the analysis of the comments, the author concluded that they reflected “a persistent belief that the English language was the sole property of ‘native speakers’ – and, above all, those from Great Britain or the United States” (ibid.). This belief, in turn, was argued to influence, amongst
others, the commenters’ assessment of what ‘correct’ English was and their belief that not complying to NES linguistic rules, which many ELF scholars see as ‘linguistic innovations’ and a sign of multi-competence, creativity and adaptive nature of NNESs’ use of English (cf. Björkman, 2010; Rimmer, 2011), was “an example of Poles’ arrogance (who know English better than ‘native speakers’) and stupidity” (Kasztalska, 2014: 257).

Interestingly, although the participants in this current study chose to talk mainly about their interactions with Scottish people, the majority of them (n=17) expressed preference to talk to other NNESs (see appendix 10 – NES vs NNES) and one of the reasons they gave was the lack of feeling of being evaluated (Extracts 24-26).

*Extract 24 Interview 1 (Anna, 28, came to Scotland in 2007, worked as an accountant)*

Anna: I generally feel alright [about speaking English]. Although I know my English is not perfect, I know I have a Polish accent, it doesn’t bother me. But I find it easier to communicate with certain people than with others, for example it is easier to talk with people from other countries than with the locals.

Jarek: Why?

Anna: I don’t know, it’s hard to tell, maybe because I’m not worried because I know they are in a similar position, that they won’t judge me or hear my mistakes like the local people do.

*Extract 25 Interview 1 (Bogusia, 29, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a sous chef)*

Bogusia: When I talk with Spanish people, or we have a Portuguese guy [at work], there is absolutely no problem, and I even speak better, it’s easier for me to speak to them than to the locals. I don’t know, maybe it’s somewhere in my head that they [local people] evaluate the way I speak… that they expect me to say it in a certain way, I don’t know, I just think they judge me all the time.

*Extract 26 Interview 1 (Sebastian, 28, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a labourer)*

Sebastian: I prefer to speak with another nation than the Scottish one, for example with Spanish people. We have this neighbour, I think it’s easier to speak with her, because she’s also not that fluent in English, and I know that she won’t pay attention to whether I speak correctly or
incorrectly, and this is how I feel too, I sometimes spot some mistakes she makes and I don’t pay attention, because I know she doesn’t pay attention to mine.

The participants did not seem concerned about being evaluated by other NNESs, as they believed NNESs either did not make these evaluations at all or did not care about the spotted mistakes. Therefore, bearing in mind that a person’s sense of self is influenced by comparisons with those perceived as ‘experts’ in a given domain, it seemed that the participants viewed NESs as the experts in, or ‘owners’ of, English, because it was their feedback and evaluations that they were concerned with. This finding is in line with previous studies that investigated the links between English and NNES sense of self (cf. Neeley, 2013), in which the NNES participants shared similar concerns about their native counterparts judging their linguistic skill during communication (see Section 2.6 in Chapter Two). Moreover, some studies of NNES identity in light of the spread of English have drawn attention to the fact that this ‘solidarity’ between NNESs stems from their shared linguistic resources and shared status as NNESs, who had to learn English as an additional language in order to be able to speak it (cf. House, 2009; Gu et al., 2014). The participants of this study also justified their preference to communicate with other NNESs with the fact that they, also, are, or were, learners of English (Extracts 27-30).

Extract 27 Diary entry 5.05.2015 (Bartek, 28, came to Scotland in 2006, worked as a graphic designer)

Bartek: My boss is from Denmark and he speaks English. It is such a multicultural environment at work that I don’t worry at all. But when I’m by myself with for example Scottish or English people, there is this thing, I feel this thing, that when they speak I can feel this barrier. Even after such a long time there is still that barrier.

Extract 28 Interview 1 (Barbara, 28, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a supervisor in a hotel)

Barbara: If I know I’m not speaking with a local person, I feel better, because I know that this person also came here from abroad, that he/she is not fluent in English, I’m more likely to understand that person than a local person, so I feel more confident when I speak with somebody from the outside than when he/she is from here.
Bogusia: I often hear them [other NNES] use some of their own words, often when they don’t know some word they can somehow explain it with other words so that I understand, they will say it in another way, and a native will say a word which I don’t understand, and he will repeat the same word over and over again, instead of saying it in another way, he will repeat it in the exact same way, you know, I don’t know this word so I won’t understand him anyway, but he will keep repeating the same word as if he couldn’t explain it in some other way.

Izabela: Of course, I find it much easier to speak with a person from abroad, much easier (…) if I was to ask a local person to repeat something for the second or third time, I would probably say ‘OK, stop, I didn’t understand and I won’t understand him anyway’, and here [with other NNES] the conversation is much easier, and I would say more relaxed, you’re not afraid of making mistakes…

The participants preferred to speak to other NNESs because of the general shared ‘non-nativeness’ (Extracts 27 and 28), less difficulty in understanding them (Extract 28), better skills at clarification (Extract 29) or, interestingly, the lack of concern about making mistakes (Extract 30), which was discussed in the first part of this section.

The participants’ beliefs about the NES ownership of English, and their sense of solidarity with other NNESs, seemed to have “heightened and legitimized the status distinctions between them and native English speakers” (Neeley, 2013: 485; Ridgeway and Correll 2006). Their beliefs about the divide between them and the community of Scottish people seemed evident in the migrants’ frequent use of third-person plural forms of personal pronouns, such as they, them and their, when referring to Scottish people, without any previous indication of who the sentence is about. In order to explore this possibility, several word search queries were run to determine the frequency of use of the mentioned pronoun. Initially 232 occurrences of different forms of the pronoun them were found. The text was then analysed to discard the occurrences where the pronoun did not refer to Scottish people, as in “(…) with other foreigners – their English is clearer…” Subsequently, any instances of pronouns with endophoric reference, as in “(…) we have a few Scottish people at work (…)
and they know they have to speak slowly…”), were discarded. As a result, 120 instances of pronouns with exophoric reference, as in “I think it’s annoying that they lump us all together, those who don’t speak English and those who speak it well…”, were left. This frequent use of these pronouns may be argued to indicate their assumptions about their position as outsiders in the ‘host country’. As previously noted, this assumption seemed to influence the participants’ perceptions of their ascribed identities and, as a result, their sense of self.

In order to determine whether the aforementioned language ideologies, or beliefs about the English language, could result from the English language instruction the participants had received in Poland, an additional line of enquiry was launched at a later stage of the data analysis. As noted in Sections 4.5.1.4.2 and 4.5.1.5.2 in Chapter Four, questions about English language instruction in Poland and about the participants’ language ideologies were asked in Interviews 1 and 2, respectively, although, at the time, I did not know whether this data would contribute to the findings. However, as these language ideologies began to emerge as the main factor influencing the participants’ ELI and, ultimately, their overall migration experience, the influence of ELT in Poland on their beliefs was investigated. These findings are presented below.

6.2.3.1. The influence of ELT in Poland on the beliefs about English and its speakers.

Based on the participants’ comments, it appeared that their language ideologies, or the sum of the aforementioned beliefs about English and its speakers, were, at least to some extent, the result of the English education they had received in Poland. The participants talked about the ELT in Poland in Interview 1 when they were asked whether they had been taught English at school and what their opinion about it was (see Appendix 4) and in Interview 2 when discussing their language ideologies and their expectations about the English language upon their arrival in Scotland. Out of the 18 participants who had been taught English in school, 16 expressed negative opinions about the ELT in Poland. They did not believe it prepared learners for real-life communication and they talked about a lack of exposure to, and raising awareness of, different accents, teachers’ over-reliance on grammatical accuracy, lack of training in communication strategies and a lack of opportunities to practice speaking. The participants generally felt that the way English was ‘really’ spoken was at odds with what they had been taught and criticised the methodology of the ELT in Poland (Extracts 31-34).
Extract 31 Interview 1 (Dorota, 27, came to Scotland in 2007, worked in a student advice office)

Dorota: I think that in Poland there’s too much focus on theory, you know how to make correct sentences, etc. But in reality, to communicate you don’t have to know every grammatical rule, you have to know vocabulary and understand the accent.

Extract 32 Interview 1 (Izabela, 35, came to Scotland in 2005, worked as a secretary)

Izabela: I was taught in a system called “oh my God, don’t say anything because you’ll sound like an idiot, because you won’t say it grammatically”, so it’s better to keep quiet.

Extract 33 Interview 1 (Artur, 34, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a chef)

Artur: When you learn English at school in Poland, you know, the only accent you keep hearing is that correct British accent, so whether you like it or not you believe that it’s the best accent.

Extract 34 Interview 1 (Bogusia, 29, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a sous chef)

Bogusia: In Poland the focus was mainly on grammar, I don’t think that they taught us well and prepared to come here, to an English-speaking country (...) They didn’t teach us to speak freely, they focused on grammar, when I was saying something they would interrupt me half way through to correct me, and I would lose my focus (...) And they never prepared me for the Scottish accent @ (...) I think that in Poland they teach us that how THEY [NESs] sound is how you have to sound (...) that everything that’s English is better, I don’t know…. As if we were worse than them and we have to adjust, that if you go there you have to sound like that, they never showed us our value, never said that communication may be more important than grammar, they lowered your self-esteem.

Common themes re-occurring throughout the above statements are the participants’ beliefs that the ELT in Poland placed too much emphasis on grammatical accuracy at the expense of communicative competence, that it did not teach about the range of English accents spoken worldwide and that, ultimately, the way English was taught in Poland affected self-esteem and self-confidence. These findings are in line with Baran-Lucarz’s (2014) study of the relationship between WTC and pronunciation anxiety (see Section 3.3), which found that the exposure to ‘native English’ models, coupled with the lack of exposure to other varieties of English and of instruction on the current sociolinguistic reality of English use worldwide,
ultimately resulted in increased pronunciation anxiety and affected WTC. In addition, the participants became overly concerned about “losing face” (ibid: 465) and about being constantly evaluated, which led to their affected self-perceptions and was believed to have affected their “FL [Foreign Language] identity” (ibid: 468). Similarly, it seemed that, in this current study, the way the participants had been taught English in Poland ultimately affected their self-confidence and self-esteem, due to the lack of exposure to the variety of Englishes worldwide and general lack of awareness of the ‘new’ linguistic reality that is unlike the ‘traditional’ view of the static and homogenous ‘standard’ English dominant worldwide. This argument is developed further in Section 8.3.1 in Chapter Eight, where the implications of these findings for ELT are discussed.

The participants also talked about the discrepancy between their expectations about the English language and the reality they faced upon arrival in Scotland. This data, covered by the codes difficulties with Scottish accent and first encounter with Scottish accent were eventually incorporated into the general theme of beliefs about English and its speakers discussed in this section. The participants believed that, because of the education they had received, they were not prepared well for the reality of English use in Scotland, which resulted in difficulties (Extracts 35-39).

*Extract 35 Interview 2 (Karolina, 31, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as cleaner)*

Karolina: My first impression was that it was a completely different English from what I’d been taught.

*Extract 36 Interview 2 (Aga, 25, came to Scotland in 2014, worked as a waitress)*

Agnieszka: There was a big difference between my expectations and the reality here. I don’t believe it [education] prepares for this reality. We just learn this language when we come here, we have some basics but we really just learn here, by listening to it, in which situation you use particular expressions, etc.
Extract 37 Interview 2 (Kuba, 27, came to Scotland in 2012, worked as a chef)

Kuba: My first encounter with the language was weird because I’d learned English in Poland for 8 years and when I arrived it turned out that this English is completely different from what they teach in Poland.

Extract 38 Interview 1 (Bogusia, 29, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a sous chef)

Bogusia: The first two weeks were a shock, I mean the way they spoke, I just couldn’t understand the accent, I don’t know, I felt lost I just didn’t know what they were saying. (...) I thought I could understand more but when I came here I realised I couldn’t @.

Extract 39 Interview 2 (David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

David: I thought it would all be so easy when I arrived, simple words, a piece of cake, I thought when I came here in 2009 that by 2010 I would be fluent in English, but it turned out differently (...) Always, all the time I keep thinking, when I go to the shop I plan in my head what to say and I worry that I will fuck it up.

The participants’ statements revealed that, because of the way they had been taught, they experienced initial shock upon arrival. As previously noted (see Section 6.2.3), their first encounter with the unfamiliar ‘Scottish’ accent emphasised the perceived difference between the migrants and ‘them’, or the Scottish people. Similar claims were made in Diskin’s (2015) study on the influence of ‘language ideologies’ on the identity construction of Polish migrants’ in Ireland, where the author argued that the migrants’ not being prepared to encounter Irish English resulted in their doubts about their own English competence and in feelings of “disconnection and disjuncture” (p.288), which ultimately affected their integration with the local community.

To sum up, the participants found the focus on grammatical accuracy and lack of instruction on different accents, in characterising Polish ELT, problematic. The way they had been taught affected their self-assessed competence and their understanding of ‘correctness’, and triggered a belief that it was better to say nothing than to say something incorrectly. These beliefs, coupled with the perception of NESs as owners of English, and the previously discussed beliefs about stereotypes of Polish people, and foreigners in general, resulted in
their fear that their ‘imperfect’ English would confirm the negative stereotype. Thus, the participants’ language ideologies that they seemed to have formed on the basis of English education they had received influenced both their beliefs about other people’s perceptions, which were central to their perceived ascribed selves, and their self-assessed English competence that enabled them to resist these ascribed selves and express their desired selves.

6.3. Chapter summary.

The analysis of the range of factors that the participants of the qualitative phase believed had influenced their overall migrant experiences and their relationship with the English language revealed that these beliefs mostly constituted a reflection of their beliefs about the importance of English competence and of their beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants. These beliefs directly influenced the interplay between their desired and ascribed selves that was argued in Section 5.4 to be the core of the participants’ ELI, as they influenced their interpretations of the selves being ascribed to them and their evaluation of how successfully they managed to convey their desired selves in interactions in English. Additionally, both of these sets of beliefs seemed to be influenced by another group of beliefs that seemed to be higher in ‘hierarchy’, namely the participants’ beliefs about the positioning of English and its speakers. These were the general beliefs about the language, its status and the legitimacy of different varieties and accents of English, as well as the status of NESs and NNESs. These beliefs, which seemed to have been formed as a result of the English education the participants had received, formed the basis of what the participants thought to be ‘correct English’ and how the participants perceived the roles and status of English speakers. Having been taught in a manner that implicitly conveyed a message that NE was the only ‘correct’ English, that grammatical accuracy was the main prerequisite for successful communication in English and that the only ‘English’ they would encounter abroad would be either British or American English, they formed a set of beliefs about English and communication in English that were both unrealistic and irrelevant in the context they found themselves in. Their evaluation of their own English competence, therefore, and their beliefs about the perceptions and status of NNESs in general, were central to the aforementioned English competence and beliefs about, and attitudes towards, people’s perceptions of migrants. These beliefs, in turn, influenced the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves that constituted their ELI. These findings suggest that the content
and methodology of English language instruction has an indirect influence on learners’ self-concept, which, in the context of migration, is mediated through English and is influenced by the beliefs about the language. This is particularly relevant for the purpose of this current study, which aimed to determine the existence of ELI and whether it could be influenced by ELT practices. In considering the aforementioned findings, suggestions can be made as to how the ELT in Poland and Scotland could address the issue of the learners’ ELI in a way that would foster their future well-being and contribute to them remaining in Scotland, thus contributing to the Scottish Government’s goal of retaining migrants in the country. These suggestions are described in detail in Section 8.3.1 in Chapter Eight.

Having described the data that provided answers to the first two research questions (“what is Polish migrants’ ELI?” and “what factors influence it?”), it is already evident that the migrants’ ELI played a crucial role in their experiences and that the existing literature on Polish migrants, which played down the importance of their self-concept and focused on a range of external factors to gain an understanding of their situation, did not make it possible to understand and explain the full scope of their experiences. In order to draw a link between these experiences and the migrants’ ELI, however, and to address the issues of migrants’ socialisation patterns and professional situation outlined in Section 1.2 in Chapter One, Chapter Seven discusses the influence the participants’ ELI, and their resulting self-esteem, was found to have on their lives.
Chapter Seven - The influence of the migrants’ ELI, and their self-esteem, on their lives

As previously mentioned (see Section 5.4), the various communicative encounters in English the participants took part in could be grouped according to their perceived outcome, in terms of presence/absence of threat to self-esteem (see Table 5.3), being both the process and product of the migrants’ “evaluation of [their] self-concept” (Rubio, 2015: 43). The participants referred to having the ability to express their ‘real’ selves to others as “the foundation of relationships with people”, “one of the most important things” or “one of the most fundamental human needs”, and their accounts suggested that having their desired selves recognised by their interlocutors enhanced their self-esteem. In contrast, being unable to express their self-concept, or not having their self-concept recognised by their interlocutors, was found to pose a threat to their self-esteem. It was at that stage that the two sub-questions were added to Research Question 3, which asked about the effects of ELI on the migrants’ lives. These sub-questions were, respectively, “Does ELI affect their self-esteem?” and “If so, what are the effects of this self-esteem on their lives?” It did appear, in fact, that, when the participants discussed the influence of ELI on their lives, they spoke of that influence through the lens of their self-esteem, which was found to be the most direct outcome of ELI. Therefore, the effects of their self-esteem on their lives were, indirectly, the effects of ELI on their lives.

The migrants’ ELI was based on the interplay between their desired and ascribed selves, which they ‘managed’ through English during interactions. Their desired selves were largely based on their core, and relatively stable, beliefs about themselves that they wanted to express and wanted other people to recognise. However, similar to claims made in the literature on the concept of ‘self’, which emphasised the central role of interlocutors’ evaluations in establishing one’s self-concept characterised by a “sense of competence and [a] sense of worthiness” (cf. Branden, 1994; Rubio, 2015: 42), their evaluation of how successfully they negotiated their position, and whether their perceived ascribed selves matched their desired selves (see Table 5.3), did have an influence on their less stable, peripheral and task-specific beliefs about themselves. In these interactions, which, depending
on the participants’ judgement, were perceived as *experiences of failure or success* (see Appendix 10), the participants evaluated their self-concept and, as a result, their self-esteem could increase, lower or remain intact.

All of the 20 participants of the qualitative phase linked these *experiences of failure or success* with, respectively, lower or higher self-esteem. This, in turn, affected their behaviour and decisions in a number of ways. The participants believed that self-esteem had an influence on the general quality of their life by influencing their amount of socialisation through English (*n*=14), their sense of independence (*n*=10), their professional situation (*n*=8) and, ultimately, the decision about whether to stay in Scotland or return to Poland (*n*=2). Additionally, it was found that, for some participants, (*n*=7) experiences of communicative failure, interpreted as constituting a threat to their self-esteem (see ‘outcome A’ in Table 5.3), resulted in increased motivation to improve their English competence (see the highlighted part of the diagram in Figure 7.1).
Figure 7.1

The effects of ELI on the migrants’ lives
Upon examination of the effects of ELI highlighted in Figure 7.1 it is evident that separating the effects of ELI from the factors that influenced it is not straightforward. Personality, for example, which includes one’s self esteem, was one of the factors believed to influence ELI, although self-esteem appears in the above figure as the direct effect of ELI through which various aspects of the migrants’ experience were influenced. This is because self-esteem did, in fact, seem to be both the cause and effect of ELI. For example, higher self-esteem could bring about the more desirable outcome of ELI outlined in Table 5.3, by influencing the extent to which a person was concerned about other people’s perceptions. However, as noted above, self-esteem was also the main effect of the migrants’ ELI, influenced by the interplay between their desired and ascribed selves manifested during interaction. Several other concepts could also be argued to be in similar cause-effect relationship with ELI, such as experiences of failure or success that were listed as being a factor influencing ELI, but could also be one of its effects, in considering that ELI influenced self-esteem and self-esteem influenced the outcomes of future interactions that were the experiences of failure or success. Finally, the interactions in English during which the migrants’ ELI, or the relationship between their self-concept and English, was manifested and negotiated were, in themselves, an experience of failure or success, depending on the outcome seen in terms of the three different scenarios presented in Table 5.3.

This interrelatedness between one’s past, current and future experiences, decisions, behaviour and understanding of his/her ‘self’ is in line with identity research within social psychology, which argues that “past events (…) help us form theories of the current self” (Ryan and Irie, 2015: 111) and, as a result, determine our future behaviour. As Rubio (2015) explains,

> After a situation or thought is experienced, a person evaluates his/her self (…) then, s/he compares his/her actual self to his/her ideal or ought to [i.e. ‘desired’] self, resulting in a self-esteem measure, which generates positive or negative feelings that determine behaviour.

Rubio (2015: 47)

The above description is strikingly similar to the process of ELI formation, and its effects, described in this chapter. The participants’ previous experiences of failure or success influenced their current experiences, in which their ELI was negotiated, and, as a result of these, their self-esteem increased or lowered, thus having an influence on their future choices, behaviour and communicative experiences in which their ELI was again negotiated.
This interrelatedness also mirrors the Reciprocal Effects Model (REM) put forward by Marsch (1990) to explain the relationship between academic achievement and the English learners’ sense of self, referred to as self-concept. As an alternative to previous models that proposed two possible one-way causal relationships between the concepts (achievement influencing self-concept/self-concept influencing achievement) (Calsyn and Kenny, 1977), REM suggested that the influence of previous achievements on a person’s self-concept was equal to the influence of his/her self-concept on his/her achievements. Although the cited studies were based within an academic domain, the similarities between their findings and the results of this current study may be used to argue that the processes of NNES’s self-identification share similar elements across different contexts and developmental stages. This, in turn, strengthens the arguments for addressing the English learners’ self-concept through adopting educational approaches that recognise, value and respond to individual learner differences (see Section 8.3 in Chapter Eight).

An example of the interrelatedness between the factors influencing ELI and its effects can be found in the case of Bogusia, which also demonstrates another dimension of the complexity of ELI, namely that the effects of ELI were, at times, difficult to separate from, or, in fact, influenced, each other. In Extract 40 Bogusia talked about her past and present experiences and explained how they affected her self-confidence and self-esteem and resulted in her temporary isolation. It is also evident in her account that her self-esteem, lowered as a result of the discrepancy between her desired and ascribed self, influenced several aspects of her future experiences, including her willingness to communicate, her general sense of happiness and her sense of independence.

Extract 40 Interview 1(Bogusia, 29, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a sous chef)

Bogusia: I felt like a lesser being, I don’t know… I didn’t have a sense of self-worth, in Poland I used to be self-confident and here for some time I lost this confidence, for a long time I was afraid to go out or to ask someone something (…) In Poland I had no problem sorting things out, doing something, and here I was afraid to go out because I didn’t know what they will ask me. They often even, when [she/he] hears that I’m Polish, and asks for example if I need ‘two’ of something, [she/he] often shows it with [her/his] fingers, so automatically I feel a bit offended, like I didn’t understand, like [she/he] needed to gesticulate.

Jarek: And how does that make you feel?

Bogusia: I don’t know … a bit like a lesser being, I don’t know … I always feel like, I don’t know… that they treat me like a lesser being, that they have to show me everything as if I was a child, they also often think that I can’t do something in general, but I just don’t understand this
word, and they think I’m not good enough because I don’t know how to do it, I don’t know if you know what I mean.

It seemed that, for Bogusia, there was a sense of discrepancy between her desired identity as someone confident and independent and her ascribed identity as someone with limited English competence and skill set. It was evident that, although on one hand, Bogusia’s core beliefs about herself were based on her ‘Polish self’ that she referred to twice in the above extract, on the other hand the aforementioned discrepancy affected her self-esteem and made her feel “like a lesser being”. Thus, although her main point of reference to what her ‘real self’ was constituted her core beliefs, her temporary, task-specific beliefs about herself were affected and, thus, her evaluation of her self-concept resulted in lower self-esteem. Not surprisingly, as self-esteem is believed to determine behaviour (cf. Higgins, 1987) and low self-esteem is linked to decreased WTC (McCroskey and Richmond, 1990; Rubio, 2015), this resulted in her decision to avoid going out, due to fear of encountering similar situations. Her lowered self-esteem also affected her sense of independence (“In Poland I had no problem sorting things out, doing something, and here I was afraid to go out”) and, arguably, her overall sense of happiness and well-being. Additionally, Bogusia later explained in her reflective journal how the negative experiences she had described in Interview 1 (see extracts 25, 29, 38 and 40) affected her self-esteem and, ultimately, had an influence on her professional situation.

Extract 41 Diary entry 27.02.2015 (Bogusia, 29, came to Scotland in 2011, worked as a sous chef)

(…) I could work with the kids [as a nursery teacher], but something stops me. On the one hand my friend asks me why I won’t do it and, to be honest, I don’t know. I’m just afraid that I won’t manage or something. On the other hand, I know that I could start doing something towards it, even now, but instead I’m working in the kitchen because I’m afraid that I wouldn’t manage, even though I’d like to do something else, I could always go and see whether I will manage or not. It’s the same with getting promoted here [in the restaurant], I’ve been offered a promotion but I don’t know if I’ll manage, I’d be afraid that they will be evaluating me and stuff. I didn’t use to be like that…

It seemed that Bogusia’s affected self-esteem, and her feeling “like a lesser being” (see Extract 40), had a significant influence on her future decisions regarding job opportunities. Although, in her diary, she could not clearly articulate what her problem was and her self-assessed English competence could, arguably, be an influential factor she did not mention, it
did seem that she generally suffered from affected self-confidence and sense of security (cf. “I’m afraid that I wouldn’t manage”, “I’d be afraid that they will be evaluating me”).

Similar to Bogusia, seven other participants of the qualitative phase believed that their self-esteem, affected by interactions in English, had an influence on their, or others’, professional situation and 311 (82%) questionnaire respondents ticked professional situation as an aspect their self-esteem had an influence on. One of the interviewees, Izabela, in Interview 1 described extensively how the migration experience affected her self-esteem and her sense of independence. She described in detail her first day in Scotland when a boiler in her flat broke and she did not know where to seek help. She eventually asked her neighbour for help, but, due to his “Scottish” accent, she was unable to communicate successfully with him. This, in line with the previously described findings on the process of ELI formation (see Section 5.4), affected her self-esteem, as her perceived ascribed self was at odds with her desired self as the self-confident and independent business woman she used to be in Poland. During the interview she described this and other initial experiences of failure as “traumatic” and discussed them in terms of the “shock” and “anxiety” she experienced. This affected her self-esteem and, as a result, both her aforementioned sense of independence and her professional situation (Extract 42).

**Extract 42 Interview 1 (Izabela, 35, came to Scotland in 2005, worked as a secretary)**

Izabela: It’s not that I wouldn’t be able to find a better job, I know that I would, but I’m just so damn scared of going to the job interview. I don’t want to do what I do for living now, but I am somehow afraid of leaving this comfort zone, of believing in myself, that I can manage this interview and move on. I am very experienced; I have a higher degree after all. (…) Because I can’t show them who I really am, I place myself lower in this hierarchy, this community of professionals, if you like.

Similar to the previously discussed Bogusia’s case, Izabela’s experiences of communicative failure, when she failed to express her desired self, affected her self-esteem, which, in turn, had an influence on several aspects of her life, including her decisions regarding a professional career. In Interview 2 Izabela also discussed how this affected self-esteem also resulted in her isolation and decision to avoid socialising with her colleagues from work (Extract 43).
Izabela: (...) I once told you that but I will say it again so that you can record it – my colleagues invited me out once, and what did I do? I deliberately came up with an excuse that I’d gone out with a friend and was hung over. I had gone out indeed, but I wasn’t hung over and I could easily get up on Sunday and go to the brunch, but instead I panicked – “my God, they will be asking me things, will I be able to respond? I will again be saying things slowly, trying to rehearse everything in my mind; they will think I’m weird”.

Although the aforementioned series of events that had led to her affected self-esteem, or the role that this self-esteem played in the situation described in Extract 43, might not be immediately evident in the extract, when the broader context of Izabela’s pre-migration and current experiences that she described in both of the interviews and her journals was analysed it was evident that the decision she described was the effect of an affected self-esteem. She was very up-front about the change that occurred in her after her initial negative experiences, and she provided very detailed accounts of this transformation from a self-confident business woman to someone constantly anxious about the way she was perceived by other people. In line with the previously discussed (see Section 1.2) study of the effects of Polish migrants’ ‘status inconsistency’ (Kobialka, 2015), in Izabela’s case the discrepancy between her perceived professional status in Poland and in the UK resulted in a great amount of anxiety.

Although, as noted in Section 5.4, not being able to express the self that the participants wanted to express, and the resulting discrepancy between their desired and ascribed selves, resulted in a threat to their self-esteem (see Table 5.3), further consequences of this seemingly ‘negative’ outcome of ELI were not always ‘negative’. This was the case, for example, with increased motivation to learn English, which, according to some participants (n=7), resulted from experiences of failed communication (extracts 44-46).

Kate: They [experiences of failure] influence me in such a way that I want to read even more in English, write down some words, so it’s a rather positive influence.
Extract 45 Diary entry 24.05.2015 (David, 26, came to Scotland in 2009, worked as a head chef)

David: If I know that something didn’t work out, I failed to communicate but I understood some words, I check them and try to learn these words, so next time I can construct some sentences.

Extract 46 Interview 1 (Konrad, 18, came to Scotland in 2014, worked as a chef)

Konrad: It influenced me so that I knew I had to take a dictionary, check the pronunciation, I use an online Oxford Dictionary, after each word, sometimes you can even listen to it, but you can always check the pronunciation, and I started to do it for all words, so for example when I wanted to buy lentils, so I wanted to buy ‘lentils’ [uses English]. I first checked how it translates, then how you pronounce it, I went to Tesco again and said that I wanted to buy ‘lentils’ (…) and he understood and showed me where it was …

In the above extracts the participants expressed how experiences of failure encouraged them to make an effort to improve their English. As English competence has been argued to be one of the factors influencing ELI, it could be argued that even seemingly ‘negative’ experiences, in which the sense of self is threatened, may, in the long run, result in experiences where it is regained as a result of a successful interaction. The above extract from the interview with Konrad supports this claim. In his account preceding the above story, Konrad described how he once went to Tesco and failed to buy salt, due to his wrong pronunciation. This, as he explained above, motivated him to focus more on pronunciation, which later resulted in a more successful communication.

Similarly, the experiences of ‘success’, where there was no threat to self-esteem, due to the match between the participants’ desired and ascribed selves, increased the participants’ self-esteem and had a positive influence on the aforementioned (see Figure 7.1) aspects of their life (n=18). In Extract 47 Aga described how, after several initial difficulties she encountered after coming to Scotland, she managed to “overcome [her] barriers” and communicate successfully, resulting in her increased self-confidence and self-esteem.
Aga: It does [influence me], it’s like overcoming your barriers (…) this experience surely enriched me and let me spread my wings, so I thought ‘Oh, so someone does see that I’m bright’, so it improved my mood (…), ‘someone can see that I will manage’ … I wasn’t afraid any more, I moved past that stage, ‘I’m not afraid anymore, so it’s not so bad’.

Aga described how the match between her ascribed and desired selves (“so someone does see that I’m bright”) resulted in her increased self-confidence (“I wasn’t afraid anymore”) and self-esteem (“I’m not afraid anymore, so it’s not so bad”). In other words, her perception of the other person’s evaluation of her influenced her self-evaluation, or her self-esteem. Additionally, as “self-perceptions of competence [‘it’s not so bad’] (…) have a strong influence on individuals’ WTC” (McCroskey and Richmond, 1990: 27), Aga ‘moved past’ the stage where she was afraid to communicate. Her experience of ‘successful’ communication, in which she managed to ‘retain her real self’, therefore, increased her self-esteem and, arguably, resulted in increased willingness to communicate in the future (“I wasn’t afraid any more, I moved past that stage”).

The results discussed above support claims made in the literature that enhancement of self-esteem, or the “evaluation of self-concept” (Rubio, 2015: 43) strongly influenced by beliefs about other people’s perceptions and acceptance (Rogers, 1961), is one of the most important human needs (cf. Ausabel, 1968; Branden, 1994). It not only seems that self-esteem is an important aspect of the general sense of “self-fulfilment” that Kramsch (2009: 14, discussed in more detail in Section 2.5) associated with achieving the desired self-image, but most importantly, and in line with the previous literature, it appears to have a crucial role in future decision-making and behaviour (cf. Higgins, 1987). Hence, in response to Research Question 3 of this current study, ELI, and the resulting evaluation of the match between the desired and ascribed selves, directly influenced the participants’ self-esteem, which, in turn, seemed to affect most aspects of their migration experience. These findings provide further evidence that the overall relationship between self-concept and the English language, as opposed to merely English competence, is a crucial factor for understanding the migrants’ experiences in the UK. The participants’ ELI negotiated during various communicative encounters influenced their self-esteem, which, in turn, had a strong influence on various aspects of their everyday experiences, including the migrants’ professional career, their socialisation practices and, ultimately, even the decision of whether they wanted to stay in the UK or
return to Poland (which is particularly note-worthy given the Scottish government’s goal and efforts to attract and retain the migrants). As noted in Section 6.2, self-assessed English competence was only one factor influencing their ELI and one element in this complex relationship defined by the interplay between the ascribed and desired selves. This highlights the weaknesses of some of the existing studies of Polish migrants in the UK, which seemed to uncritically assume a straightforward correlation between English competence and migrants’ experiences, without having considered the more personal and emotional ‘dimension’ of both of these experiences and the Poles’ relationship with the English language. For some of the participants in this current study limited English competence did not affect their attempts to socialise. This stemmed from the fact that they did not perceive their ascribed selves as being at odds with their desired selves, or the selves they wanted to communicate and were able to communicate matched, simply because they were not interested in expressing their selves in detail at a given moment (see Section 5.4). For others, in turn, who had higher expectations of themselves, or who had more clearly articulated beliefs about their ascribed selves, their communicative experiences resulted in perceived failure, despite their high self-assessed English competence. Therefore, it was these experiences of failure or success, which were highly dependent on the participants’ ELI defined by the complex interplay between the desired and ascribed selves, that had a direct influence on the participants’ self-esteem and, consequently, on their daily behaviour and decisions.
Chapter Eight – Conclusion

This chapter begins with restating the rationale and aims of this current study. Then, the summary of the main findings is provided. Subsequently, the pedagogical implications of these findings are discussed and suggestions are made for ELT practice in Poland and Scotland, as well as for general pedagogy in both of these countries. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the contributions of this current study and suggestions for future research.

8.1. Rationale, research objectives and research questions.

In Scotland, Poles constitute the largest and fastest growing migrant community, having at least 75,000 members in 2013 (Krausova and Vargas-Silva, 2013). Although the Scottish Government aims to attract and retain migrants to counter the issues of Scotland’s aging population and insufficient labour force, as well as to promote and encourage cultural diversity (Scottish Government, 2013), the literature suggests that Polish migrants’ experiences do not match these aspirations. Their sense of belonging, and consequent general well-being and the chance of them remaining in Scotland, seems to be at risk, as research suggests that they tend not to integrate well with the local communities and work mostly below their qualification and education level (cf. Bielewska, 2010). In spite of a growing body of research investigating this issue, it is safe to say that the exact reasons remain not clearly specified. Research into Polish migrants addressing the above issues has focused predominantly on a range of ‘external’ socio-economic factors that could contribute to their current situation (cf. Trevena, 2013). Suggested reasons include some migrants’ low English language skills, their willingness to apply for unskilled jobs because of a short intended stay in the UK and employers’ discrimination (Sumption and Somerville, 2009).

However, the existing research has largely overlooked the role of the migrants’ subjective interpretations of their current situation, and of themselves, in shaping their experiences. An extensive body of research into self-concept, or “the beliefs (…) about oneself” (Hamlyn, 1983: 241), self-esteem, or the self-evaluation of that self-concept (Rubio, 2015), and
broadly defined identity, understood in this study as a kind of interaction between these self-beliefs and various social contexts (Mercer, 2011), showcases how a person’s subjective views of him/herself and the surrounding reality may influence this reality in many ways. Most importantly, a person’s overall ‘sense of self’, largely influenced by a number of self-beliefs arising as a result of social encounters, is believed to determine his/her behaviour (cf. Ryan and Irie, 2015). An indispensable element of that sense of self, or identity, is language, as it is through the language that people first internally conceptualise, and then express, that sense of self to others (Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Park, 2007; Williams and Burden, 1997).

Thus, one of the assumptions this current study aimed to explore was that, in the context of migration, this sense of self may be at risk, as it is expressed and negotiated with a language that has not traditionally been a part of it. This could, in the long run, influence the overall quality of the migrants’ experiences, including their socialisation and integration, or their professional situation. In order to investigate the nature of this “assumed and/or attributed relationship between [the migrants’] self-concept and the English language”, or English Language Identity (ELI), the factors that influence it and its possible influence on the migrants’ lives, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the Polish migrants’ ELI?
2. What factors influence Polish migrants’ ELI?
3. How does Polish migrants’ ELI affect their lives?
   - Does ELI affect their self-esteem?
   - If so, what are the effects of this on their lives?

The ultimate purpose of carrying out this in-depth investigation of ELI and exploring both its effect on the migrants’ experiences and the factors that influence their ELI was to gain an understanding of how ELI could be addressed by pedagogy, focusing mainly on ELT. Whilst recognising that the migrants’ ELI, and self-esteem, could, potentially, be influenced by a range of factors outside the reach of educational settings, it was, however, also believed that it was precisely in these settings that ELI development could possibly be monitored and, to some extent, controlled. Additionally, as language and identity were believed to be closely related, for a number of reasons discussed in Chapter Two, the environment that, arguably, has the most to offer with regard to ELI development would be English language classrooms. Gaining an in-depth insight into their ELI and investigating its relevance to ELT pedagogy would help to make pedagogical proposals for the way English should be taught to Polish
migrants, in order to ensure that their English language classes prepare them for their migration experience in such a way that enables them to thrive in this environment. In the Scottish context this has potential to benefit the overall well-being of future migrants and, consequently, to contribute to the Scottish Government’s goal of retaining them and encouraging them to integrate into the local society.

8.2. Main results and contributions.

The findings revealed a strong relationship between English and the migrants’ self-concept, which influenced their everyday experiences, behaviour and decisions. Although the migrants’ self-concept consisted of both less stable and changeable ‘peripheral’ beliefs and relatively stable ‘core’ beliefs about themselves, the relationship between that self-concept and English was, overall, a dynamic relationship constantly negotiated in any given encounter in English. During these encounters the migrants made evaluations of how successfully they managed to express their self-concept, based on their perceptions of the selves being ascribed to them by their interlocutors, or their ‘ascribed selves’. The perceived success, or failure, of expressing these ‘desired selves’, based on their core beliefs about themselves, influenced the migrants’ evaluation of their self-concept, or their self-esteem. This, in turn, influenced a whole range of everyday behaviours and decisions, including their socialisation practices and their choice of jobs, both of which the existing literature on Polish migrants attributes exclusively to English competence (see Section 1.2).

The aforementioned process of self-evaluation, the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves and the overall relationship between self-concept and English, to which both of these were central, were found to be influenced by the migrants’ self-assessed English competence, beliefs about the local people’s perceptions of migrants/foreigners and by their general beliefs about the English language, its speakers and the status of both. Whilst the following sections describe the implications of these findings for pedagogy, the remainder of this section discusses the contributions of this current study to world knowledge and to the Scottish Government’s goals regarding migrants.

This current research contributes to the several fields of study it drew from, by combining their findings and utilising their strengths to provide a detailed analysis, and gain a deep understanding, of NNES language identity. Research within social psychology has long investigated the broadly defined ‘self’ and, by providing clear definitions strongly grounded
in empirical findings, has greatly contributed to gaining an understanding of the concepts, such as self-esteem, self-concept, self-confidence and identity, in relation to non-native English learners. Social psychology, however, has not considered the broader context of learning English in light of the global spread of the language and the implications of this spread for the concepts this field describes. At the same time, researchers within the field of sociolinguistics, who have been concerned with the globalisation of the English language, have demonstrated numerous implications of this spread for NNESs’ identification, although they do not always articulate this link strongly enough, and, when they do, it seems that their understanding of ‘identity’ seems less straightforward than the social psychologists’.

Overall, these fields appear to exist in isolation, despite their clear contributions to each other. This current study has linked these fields and utilised their strengths to achieve a detailed insight into the migrants’ ELI that is timely and relevant to the current context of English use worldwide. This insight may, arguably, contribute to other contexts in which NNESs learn and/or use the language, to the discussions of ‘self’, or ‘identity’, within both of these fields and to future research aiming to investigate these concepts.

Firstly, the findings from this study shed light on the theoretical discussions of the relationship between second language and identity that tend to promote the poststructuralist view of identity and discard other approaches as ‘old’ or ‘irrelevant’ (see Section 2.3). Although this constructivist grounded theory study did not adopt any existing frameworks to investigate the topic of NNES identity and, therefore, all of the ‘knowledge’ of ELI emerged directly from the research data, some of its findings are, to a great extent, consistent with the findings of previous studies investigating links between language and identity from the poststructuralist perspective. This consistency strengthens both the findings of this current study and the validity of the poststructuralist approach, which, with some exceptions of detailed in-depth studies (cf. Block, 2007; Norton, 2000), too often has been adopted uncritically and without the support of empirical data. The findings of this current study supported claims about the nature of NNES identity frequently cited by authors investigating the concept, in that it is expressed through language and is constructed in social interactions, thus depending on relationships between the speakers (cf. Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Park, 2007; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009). The construction of ELI took place during interactions, in which the participants needed linguistic resources to “establish and advertise” (Lippi-Green, 1997: 5) their desired selves. However, contrary to some previous claims that “to learn a second language is to take on a new identity” (Guiora et al., 1972: 422), or to develop some kind of a distinct ‘self’ in that language, the results of this current study
indicated that the participants did not seem to have an identity connected with them being English users that was separate from their ‘Polish identity’. It was argued that the participants’ ELI was an identity through English, rather than in English, meaning that their ‘self’ expressed through English was largely based on their ‘core beliefs’ about themselves that they ‘brought’ with them from Poland. These findings seemed to support some of the essentialist claims about identity that emphasised the strong link between a person and his/her ‘self’ that develops in early childhood and is relatively stable (cf. Brown, 1980). As argued in Sections 2.3 and 2.4, these essentialist claims about identity are often automatically discredited as outdated and irrelevant by authors who uncritically claim allegiance to poststructuralist approaches. This study, however, demonstrated that identity may be both ‘stable’ and ‘dynamic’, and, although, in line with poststructuralists’ claims about identity (cf. Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009), it may change according to time and context, it does not always do so.

Secondly, by considering findings from research that suggested an increased number of desirable “identity categories” (Jenks, 2013: 168) available to NNESs as a result of the global spread of English, but have not been particularly specific about these categories, and from the fields ‘specialising’ in the concept of the ‘self’, but overlooking the implications of the aforementioned spread of English on that self, this study links sociolinguistic research into the global spread of English and ELF use to research conducted by social psychologists. It also bridged the gap between sociolinguistic studies of migrant identities and ELF research, which has predominantly focused on contexts where NNESs interact with other NNESs, overlooking NES-NNES interactions. The results of this current study supported the argument made throughout Chapter Three, in that both fields would benefit from recognising and acknowledging each other’s strengths and that any valid discussion of the relationship between sense of self and English needs to take into account the changing role of English and its speakers, due to the globalisation of the language. The results of the study demonstrated that a crucial factor influencing the participants’ ELI was their ‘language ideologies’, understood as “beliefs about languages and their speakers, or a cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships” (Irvine, 1989: 255). The beliefs expressed by the participants of the study, and found to have affected their overall ELI, were largely at odds with the potentially beneficial influence that the global spread of English may have on NNESs’ positionality and beliefs about power relations between the speakers and about desired imagined communities that the broad body of ELF research showcased. Thus, it was argued that the proposals for pedagogy put forward by ELF scholars are relevant to the migrant contexts and that, although the implicit aim of much of the ELF research seems to be
to ‘empower’ NNESs by demonstrating the irrelevance of NES norms and contexts for them, this field should not overlook these contexts, or ‘forget’ that a number of NNESs may use English ‘as a lingua franca’ to communicate to NESs in countries where English is a first language.

Thirdly, by bridging the gap between ELF research and research into NNES identity, and drawing implications for ELT, this current study contributes to the topic of language learners’ self-esteem and self-concept. Although the topic of self-esteem, on the whole, has been a well-developed and frequently investigated topic within social psychology, literature focusing specifically on building language learners’ self-esteem remains very scarce. Furthermore, the available notable exceptions, such as collections by Mercer and Williams (2014) and Rubio (2007), focus mostly on particular activities meant to build learners’ self-esteem in language classrooms. The results of this current study, however, indicated that, in addition to the ways English is taught (i.e. particular methods and classroom activities), the content of ELT is equally important to consider in relation to fostering the development of language learners’ self-concept and self-esteem. Most importantly, the discussion of ELT and the global spread of English, provided in Section 3.3, demonstrated that much has already been done with regard to this content by ELF scholars, who have long discussed the approaches to teaching based on the global spread of English. Further steps towards developing pedagogical proposals for fostering the development of language learners’ self-esteem, therefore, need to consider the findings from both social psychology and GE research.

Finally, the findings from this study contribute to the Scottish Government’s goal of attracting and retaining migrants to counter the issues of Scotland’s aging population and insufficient labour force, as well as to promote and encourage cultural diversity (Scottish Government, 2013) (see Section 1.1.). These findings suggest that the migrants’ poor socio-economic mobility, evident in their lack of socialisation or working below their skill set and education level, which has been extensively discussed in the literature (see Section 1.2) and is clearly detrimental to the aforementioned Scottish Government goal, can be attributed to their low self-esteem, which was found to be the major and direct outcome of their ELI (see Chapter Seven). Factors that influence ELI, in turn, such as self-assessed English competence, beliefs about other people’s perceptions of migrants and general beliefs about the language and its speakers (see Chapter Six), are all factors that can, arguably, be addressed either in ELT or general pedagogy. Thus, it seems that developing approaches to teaching that would account for these factors may, in the long-run, contribute to the
migrants’ overall well-being and, consequently, to the aforementioned government goal. The following sections describe the implications of the findings for pedagogy, focusing mostly on ELT in Poland and Scotland.

**8.3. Pedagogical implications of findings.**

In essence, the findings from this study revealed that the direct outcome of the participants’ ELI was increased or lowered self-esteem, which, in turn, influenced a range of aspects of their daily lives. These included their behaviour, decisions and the overall quality of their daily experiences, which could, ultimately, influence their decision about whether to remain in Scotland. The findings of this current study may be summarised as follows:

1. ELI is a dynamic relationship negotiated in interactions in English.
2. The direct outcome of the migrants’ ELI is their self-esteem, which, in turn, influences a number of their daily decisions and behaviour.
3. ELI is influenced by the migrants’ *self-assessed English competence, beliefs about, and attitudes towards, other people’s perceptions of migrants, and beliefs about English and its speakers*, which include beliefs about the correctness of various varieties of English, about communication goals and about the status of NESs and NNESs.
4. Based on the above factors, the migrants ‘manage’ their positioning, evident in the interplay between their desired and ascribed selves, by using a number of strategies, which include *resisting the stereotype of Polish people, pretending to understand, justifying one’s low English competence to interlocutors* and *avoiding language use or contact*.

The findings of this current study confirmed that the participants’ ELI was very much a subjective construct determined, to a great extent, by their beliefs about a number of issues related to the English language and its speakers, and the nature of communication in English. It was recognised that some of these beliefs, such as those about people’s perceptions of migrants, and Poles in particular, could have developed as a result of exposure to a certain type of rhetoric surrounding migrants in the UK (see Section 6.2.2.1) and, possibly, other factors and experiences. Other beliefs, in turn, such as the participants’ language ideologies, or the sum of the aforementioned beliefs about English and it speakers, seemed, at least to
some extent, to result from the English education they had received in Poland (see Section 6.2.3.1). Although it is recognised in this current study that not all of the beliefs forming the migrants’ ELI could be addressed by pedagogy, as argued through this thesis, it is believed that the educational setting provides the greatest opportunity to influence, and develop, individuals’ beliefs and worldviews. Hence, the focus of this chapter is mainly on pedagogical implications. Moreover, most space is devoted to implications for ELT, as the findings of this current study confirmed some previous claims that language learners’ language ideologies are dependent on the type of instruction received in the language classroom (cf. Diskin, 2015), as well as the assumption underlying this current study, being that ELI could, and should, be addressed most effectively in ELT settings.

Sections 8.3.1 and 8.3.2 discuss the implications for pedagogy and are separated into suggestions for ELT both in Poland and in Scotland (Section 8.3.1) and for general pedagogy in both of these countries (Section 8.3.2). As self-esteem was the direct outcome of ELI, and the suggested pedagogical proposals are based on the factors influencing ELI and on strategies for managing it, it is argued throughout these sections that the suggested changes aim to build the learners’ self-esteem, which is the central prerequisite for their emotional and financial well-being in the context of migration.

Section 8.3.1 describes the implications for ELT. The first suggested component, which directly addresses the migrants’ beliefs about English and its speakers being the major factor influencing their ELI, is raising their awareness of the global spread of English and its consequences, discussed in Section 8.3.1.1. Subsequently, based on the findings that revealed that the participants adopted a number of strategies aimed at managing their self-concept, but failed to adopt common strategies, which would, arguably, have helped them to achieve their communication aims, Section 8.3.1.2 suggests that these ‘communication strategies’ should be taught in ELT classrooms. Section 8.3.1.3, the concluding section on the implications for ELT, discusses other factors that need to be considered in order to implement the changes, as well as potential barriers to change.

Sections 8.3.2.1 and 8.3.2.2 discuss the implications for general pedagogy in Scotland and in Poland. Based on the research findings that suggested that ELI is a dynamic relationship jointly negotiated during interactions, 8.3.2.1 argues that the awareness of the global spread of English, and its consequences for its speakers’ positioning and identification, needs to be raised, not only among NNESs, but also locally, among Scottish people. Finally, Section 8.3.2.2 argues that teaching about the nature of prejudice and stereotyping is also necessary,
8.3.1. Implications for English language teaching.

8.3.1.1. Raising awareness of the global spread of English and its consequences.

Chapter Three argued that, as the result of the global spread of English, scholars’ understanding of the status, form and function of the language, as well as of the status (understood in terms of the distribution of power) of its speakers, has changed. This, in turn, caused them to reconsider the notions of NNESs’ imagined communities and positioning as users of English. As shown in Section 2.6, these notions are central to the current understanding of the topic of NNES Second/English Language Identity, understood as the relationship between the language and its speakers’ self-concept, or “sense of self” (Block, 2007: 40). The “changing landscape of English” (Jenks, 2013: 166) described in Section 3.1 was argued to have increased the number of “identity categories” (ibid.) available to NNESs, meaning that they may identify with the global community of multi-competent English users who own the language, rather than seeing themselves as “deficient native speaker[s]”, or an “imitation of native speaker[s]” (Cook, 1999: 195). Literature on NNESs’ self-concept suggested that NNESs develop their self-concept by comparing themselves with those who they believe to have expertise in a domain relevant to a given communicative situation (cf. Mercer, 2011). Research conducted within the ELF paradigm, in turn, suggests that, at least with regard to English competence, NNESs tend to see NESs as such ‘experts’ and tend to measure their own achievement in terms of proximity to their unrealistic and irrelevant goal of achieving native-like pronunciation. This is likely to result in the “feeling that whatever you do you will never achieve ‘proper’ command [of English]” (Davies, 2004: 440), which has been argued to enhance NNESs’ beliefs about NES superiority and hinder the development of a multi-competent state of mind (Cook, 1999). The studies outlined in Section 2.6 (cf. Morita, 2004) indicated that, in fact, the participants perceived NESs as experts and, while positive feedback from NESs could benefit NNESs’ self-perceptions, this belief otherwise proved problematic and affected their WTC and L2C. Other studies indicated that exposure to ELF communication positively influenced the participants’ self-
concept (cf. Virkkula and Nikula, 2010). Furthermore, it was noted that, in practice, NNESs are often not aware of the consequences of the global spread of English discussed on a theoretical level and, therefore, do not have the ‘resources’ that could benefit the relationship between English and their self-concept.

In this current study the participants’ beliefs about the language and its speakers were found to be a major factor influencing their ELI (see Section 6.2.3). Their understanding of what constitutes ‘correct’ English and, consequently, their self-perception as someone with limited language skills, as opposed to the superior ‘expert’ NESs, led to low self-worth and feelings of frustration and anxiety, and influenced both their self-evaluation of their ability to express their desired selves and their interpretation of the ascribed selves. Their unrealistic and irrelevant language ideologies manifested themselves on their very arrival to Scotland, when the majority of the participants experienced ‘shock’ on encountering ‘English’ that did not sound like the English they had been taught, and expected to hear (see Section 6.2.3). This caused them to question their own English ability, as they had difficulties in understanding the ‘local people’, as well as emphasising the perceived division between themselves as outsiders and incompetent ‘foreigners’ and the NESs as fluent ‘owners’ of the language. This triggered the feeling of having their linguistic skill evaluated during interactions with NESs and legitimised the perceived role of their interlocutors as linguistic ‘experts’. Thus, the direct, or indirect, feedback received from these “significant others” (Mercer, 2011: 85) during interactions had a stronger influence on the participants’ self-esteem than that ‘sent’ by other NNESs.

Overall, their general beliefs about English and English speakers ultimately led to lowered self-esteem and affected their everyday decisions and behaviour, resulting, for example, in them avoiding communicative encounters and opting for less linguistically demanding jobs, or even influencing their decision about whether to remain in Scotland or return to Poland. The argument that these beliefs about the language stemmed from the way the participants were taught English in Poland was supported by the participants’ critical statements about the English instruction they had received (see Section 6.2.3.1). Moreover, research investigating ELT in Poland not only demonstrated that the only varieties students were exposed to were British and American English, which are promoted as the only ‘legitimate’ and ‘correct’ varieties of English (Henderson et al., 2012; Janicka et al., 2005; Waniek-Klimczak and Klimczak, 2005), but also provided evidence that this kind of instruction negatively influenced the learners’ evaluation of their linguistic skill and, as a result, brought
about the feeling of being negatively evaluated, thus affecting the learners’ WTC (Baran-Łucarz, 2014).

Based on the relevance of ELF scholars’ pedagogical proposals for building the learners’ self-esteem, as proposed by Reasoner (1982) (see Section 3.3), the findings from this current study further support the notion that raising learners’ awareness of the global spread of English and its consequences could be beneficial for their self-esteem, which, in the migration context, was found to influence their overall experiences. Based on these results, it seems that raising Polish students’ awareness of the global spread of English and its consequences, including the status of the emerging varieties of English, the changing proportions of NESs and NNESs and their status and distribution of power between them, could benefit their ELI and, as a result, their WTC, their L2 confidence and their self-esteem. Chapter Three combined findings from NNES identity research with relevant ELF research to argue that the awareness of ELF-related topics could greatly benefit English learners’ self-concept and self-esteem and could be achieved through implementing the changes to ELT suggested by ELF scholars in their pedagogical proposals. The results of this current study strengthen this argument, by demonstrating the strong influence of the participants’ beliefs about the English language and its speakers, which were largely at odds with the reality of the English spread and use showcased by ELF research (see Section 3.1), on their ELI.

Instruction that raises students’ awareness of GE-related topics may potentially transform the learners’ perceptions of English, from seeing it as an exclusive property of NESs, or ‘a language spoken by NESs’, into English as a language that belongs to everyone who speaks it (cf. Cogo, 2011; McKay, 2003) (see Section 3.2).

This feeling of ‘ownership’ of English (cf. Jenkins, 2006) could lead to a number of important realisations that could help learners overcome the problems faced by the participants of this study. In understanding that the ways English is spoken across the globe differ, and acknowledging the legitimacy of these different varieties, may help them accept their own ‘version of English’, free them from pursuing the unattainable and irrelevant goal of achieving a ‘native-like accent’ and ease their ‘transition’ into an environment where a variety of accents are spoken. Firstly, the awareness of the global spread of English may help learners to overcome the belief held by the participants of this study, in that they speak ‘incorrect’ English and are, hence, constantly evaluated, and judged, on this basis by their expert NES counterparts. These assumptions formed the foundation of, and influenced the participants’ beliefs about, their ascribed selves, their assessment of their English competence and ability to express their desired selves and, ultimately, their self-concept (see
Section 6.2.3). This, in turn, influenced their behaviour and a number of future decisions constituting the general quality of their life in Scotland. Secondly, being aware of, and expecting to encounter, a ‘marked’ version of English could also contribute to the quality of their migrant experience in various ways. The participants reported initial shock upon encountering the Scottish accent, which widened the perceived distinction between the migrants and the local community.

Raising awareness of the issues related to the global spread of English could be achieved through a variety of approaches, including teaching about the global spread of English (cf. Bayyurt and Altinmakas, 2012; Galloway, 2013; Murata and Sugimoto, 2009) and exposing students to different WE varieties (cf. Hino and Oda, 2015; Galloway and Rose, 2013) and ‘authentic’ ELF encounters (cf. Galloway and Rose, 2013; Hino and Oda, 2015). Teaching about the spread of English could be incorporated into reading and listening exercises, as well as the subject of oral debates and written assignments. Exposing learners to ELF and WE, in turn, could involve listening materials that include encounters between speakers from a variety of backgrounds. Such instruction would not only prepare them to encounter a variety of ‘Englishes’, but would also contribute to the learners’ understanding of how ambiguous the notion of ‘correctness’ is and to their assessment of their own, and of NESs’, status as users of the language. In considering the findings from this current study, this awareness, and possibly the sense of ‘owning’ the language resulting from it, would benefit the speakers during their encounters with NESs. Their interlocutors’ perceived status as fellow users of the language, as opposed to ‘owners’ and ‘experts’, and the status of English as a common means of communication, rather than the ‘NESs’ language’ that requires native-like fluency, could, in the future, benefit the dynamic interplay between the desired and ascribed selves and benefit the migrants’ assessment of how effectively their desired self was expressed. This, in turn, would positively influence their self-esteem and, consequently, a variety of the described aspects of their experience.

This exposure to ELF communication would also be the first step in teaching the learners communication strategies used by successful speakers of English, which, as the following section argues, is another element of fostering the learners’ self-esteem that emerged from the findings of this current study.
8.3.1.2. Teaching communication strategies.

Exposure to successful ELF encounters would not only contribute to the goal of fostering the sense of ownership and multi-competence by setting a positive and realistic example of ELF use, but would also contribute to the sense of ‘security’ and ‘competence’ (Reasoner, 1982), as an inductive way of teaching communication strategies (Murray, 2012). Teaching these strategies, in turn, is another way to foster the development of learners’ self-esteem and self-concept.

In this current study, the participants’ experiences of communication were affected by their concerns about not understanding, and not being understood by, their interlocutors and about having to ask for clarification. These concerns were mostly attributed to the phenomenon of stereotype threat, or the fear of confirming a negative stereotype (Steele, 1997), and influenced the outcome of the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves that was central to their ELI. The participants had concerns that both not understanding their interlocutor and having to ask for clarification and not being understood by their interlocutor would result in them confirming a stereotype of a migrant whose English skill is low, and would hinder their goal of communicating ‘who they really are’, or their desired self. These concerns resulted in them adopting face-saving strategies, such as avoiding language use, or pretending to understand (see Section 5.5.3), and, to some extent, preferring to communicate with familiar people, in order to manage the discrepancy between the ascribed and desired selves (see Section 5.4).

Whilst the topic of addressing the issues of stereotyping and prejudice in education is discussed in detail in Section 8.3.2.2, the aforementioned concerns suggested, not only the participants’ beliefs about English and its speakers and their understanding of ‘correctness’, but also their lack of awareness of communication strategies that would enable them to compensate for these linguistic limitations that they perceived as a sign of low English ability. In fact, a number of participants seemed to be aware of this ‘weakness’ and openly criticised Polish education for having failed to equip them with these strategies, and for having over-relied on grammatical accuracy (see Section 6.2.3.1).

Based on the results of this current study it can be argued that instruction on communication strategies would benefit Polish migrants in several ways. Firstly, the very awareness of communication strategies and exposure to successful communication that involves their use would potentially influence migrants’ understanding of what constitutes a ‘success’, or
‘failure’, in communication. If they did not automatically regard even the smallest linguistic (cf. lexical or grammatical) limitation as proof of low competence, or of ‘failure’ of communication, they would most likely engage in communication more willingly, without the fear of ‘failing’ to express their selves and confirming the perceived negative stereotype of an incompetent NNES. Additionally, the use of communication strategies would both help them during the interaction and positively influence their self-evaluation afterwards, thus influencing their self-esteem. It would also reduce the stress connected with not understanding ‘Scottish’ people and with communicating with unfamiliar people, as they would be aware of ways of dealing with communicative obstacles. Not only would they not have to pretend to understand or avoid communication, but they would evaluate this communication in a more positive light, even despite difficulties they may encounter. This would lead to higher L2C and WTC and result in more communication in the future, contributing to their socialisation and integration, and to their general sense of well-being. In terms of Reasoner’s (1982) model, instruction on communication strategies would benefit their sense of security, belonging, purpose and competence, as well as their ‘identity’, or self-perceptions as successful communicators and legitimate language users.

Teaching communication strategies could involve explicit instruction about them (cf. Murray, 2002; Rossiter, 2003), combined with deductive techniques for identifying these strategies in, for example, the aforementioned authentic ELF encounters. This exposure would not only serve the purpose of teaching about strategies, but would also provide a model of a successful NNES to follow, which would be more relevant and realistic than the perfectly structured conversations in English to which learners are ‘traditionally’ exposed to in language classrooms. Teaching about strategies could also involve reflecting on, and discussing, the nature of communication problems both in L1 and L2 and the possible ways of overcoming them (cf. Murray, 2002). Students could also practise the use of communication strategies through various speaking exercises, which would depend on individual teachers’ approaches, methodological choices, resources and imagination. An activity for practising paraphrasing or circumlocution, for example, could involve one student holding up a card with a word, or expression, on a card in front of the class, and the class taking turns to describe the content of the card without using the word on it.
8.3.1.3. Other issues to consider.

The underlying theme of Sections 8.3.1.1 and 8.3.1.2 was that the learners need to be equipped with tools and knowledge that would enable them to acknowledge their status as multi-competent users of English who ‘own’ the language and are able to use it resourcefully and confidently to achieve their goals. These suggestions stem from the findings of this current study, which demonstrated that the participants’ ELI, influenced by their beliefs about themselves and about other people’s perceptions, was essentially depending on their beliefs about the positionality of English and its speakers in a wider social world. These beliefs included beliefs about the status of English, its varieties, accents and speakers, as well as beliefs about what constitutes ‘correct’ English and what defines a ‘successful’, or ‘failed’, communicative encounter. Thus, Sections 8.3.1.1 and 8.3.1.2, respectively, argued for the need to raise students’ awareness of the global spread of English and its consequences, in order to foster the frame of mind as a multi-competent ‘owner’ of the language, and to equip them with strategies that would help them manifest this status.

However, merely teaching the students about the global spread of English and of their resulting status as multi-competent ‘experts’, or ‘owners’ of the language, or teaching them communication strategies would be unlikely to produce the desirable outcome if the students’ sense of security and sense of competence (Reasoner, 1982) were constantly undermined by the teacher’s strict treatment of ‘errors’ and over-relying on grammatical accuracy when assessing the students’ performance. 16 out of the 18 participants of the qualitative phase who had been taught English at school shared the opinion that grammatical accuracy was the main criterion they were assessed on in a classroom (see Section 6.2.3.1). They complained that, even during activities orientated towards oral fluency, such as presentations or group discussions, they were constantly interrupted by a teacher who would point out grammar errors. They found this approach, described by one of the participants, Izabela, as “don’t say anything because you’ll sound like an idiot, because you won’t say it grammatically”, discouraging and failing to prepare them for the ‘real’ communication that they encountered in Scotland. This kind of approach to assessing their performance arguably contributed to the participants’ lower self-assessed English competence and their understanding of communicative ‘success’, and, in the long-run, to lowering of their self-esteem as a result of perceived ‘failure’ during encounters with local people. Thus, teaching communication strategies and raising awareness of the spread of English would,
understandably, need to be accompanied by an approach to marking and assessment that would acknowledge the value of communicative competence in certain classroom activities.

However, as the ELT practices in Poland are largely dictated by the general European framework for teaching English (see Section 3.3), which does not seem to be appropriate for fostering the desirable self-growth and the development of self-esteem that this chapter has been arguing for, addressing the need to promote this self-growth in English language classrooms seems much more than a methodological issue. This kind of change would require, above all, insight into the relevance of the governmental policies for teaching English in Poland in light of the global spread of English, being an argument increasingly made by GE scholars in relation to other European contexts (cf. Azuaga and Cavalheiro, 2015; Weber, 2015). Although this is only a hypothetical claim based on the currently made argument, rather than on the research data, other required steps would involve a much broader “cultural shift” (Dewey, 2015: 250) in understanding the goals of learning English in light of its global spread and, as a result, changes in ELT theory, pedagogy and practice, changes in assessment techniques and the development of teaching materials that match the learners’ needs (Newbold, 2015; Gimenez et al., 2015). Moreover, in addition to implications for ELT, the results of this current study have implications for general pedagogy regarding both Poles and Scottish people. These implications are described in Section 8.3.2.

8.3.2. Other implications for pedagogy.

Although the main focus of the study was on language and one of the aims was to develop suggestions for ELT, other aspects of the migrants’ experiences emerging from the data were also recognised and implications reaching beyond the ELT classroom were acknowledged. Despite the predominantly constructivist worldview underlying the study (see Section 4.3), it was also assumed that any given person’s life experiences were shaped by a combination of external factors and individual agency, rather than being a series of intended outcomes of fully conscious actions (Marsh, 1982). Thus, it would be naïve to assume that individuals’ perceptions and intentions fully account for every aspect of their experience, although to adopt a ‘hard’ version of constructivism would suggest so. In this current study, it cannot be claimed that the ways the participants had been taught English, or their resulting views of the
English language and its speakers, can explain all aspects of their migration experiences, primarily because

1. Not every aspect of their experience was a result of their own conscious actions or interpretations,
2. Not every aspect of their experience is linked with the language.

With regard to the first point, even if the learners, or future migrants, were aware of the issues surrounding the theoretical and academic debates about the global spread of English, a question would remain as to how the NESs they communicated with would perceive their status and the status of ‘their’ English. Bearing in mind that ELI was, at least to some extent, dependent on the interlocutors’ perceptions, it seems equally important to educate Scots about the global spread of English and its consequences.

Secondly, although the focus of this study was specifically on language, it needs to be acknowledged that not every aspect of the migrants’ experiences, or even of their English language identity, could be linked with, and explained by, language. There are, undoubtedly, numerous factors that may influence each individual migrant’s experiences, beliefs and perceptions. While these possible factors are, indeed, numerous and investigating their influence lay beyond the scope of this study that focused predominantly on language, one factor which, on one hand, is seemingly not language-related, but, on the other hand, was central to the participants’ ELI, was their beliefs about stereotypes. By playing a significant part in the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves that was a process underlying the participants’ ELI (see Section 5.4), these beliefs were argued to be among the main factors influencing ELI (see Section 6.2.2).

The following sections discuss the above two assumptions and the implications for pedagogy that may be drawn from them.

8.3.2.1. Raising Scots’ awareness of the global spread of English and its consequences.

Although the idea of ‘empowering’ future migrants by fostering the frame of mind as multi-competent ‘owners’ of English is the central pedagogical implication of the findings, the question remains as to the extent to which the NES community’s perceptions of the status of English and its speakers play a role in the migrants’ experiences. The findings, in line with
the existing literature on NNES identity (cf. Duff, 2002; Leki, 2001; Park, 2007; Virkkula and Nikula, 2010; Wong, 2009), suggested that negotiating one’s self-concept was a joint process that depended on a person’s desired self and on the self being ascribed to him or her by the interlocutor. Although the focus of the study was on the migrants’ subjective positionality and, thus, on their interpretations of their interlocutors’ perceptions, the potential importance of the actual perceptions cannot be overlooked, in considering the importance of these (perceived) perceptions for the migrants’ self-evaluations that influenced their experiences. Thus, as empowering as the sense of multi-competence and awareness that ownership of English may be for NNESs, it is easy to imagine that, unless the encountered NESs share this awareness, it would only guarantee partial success. In Extract 8 in Section 5.5.1, for example, Bartek expressed his frustration at NESs’ correcting the instances of what is seen by ELF scholars as linguistic innovation, creativity or ‘playfulness’ (cf. Björkman, 2010). While ELF scholars argue that NNESs adapt the language to their needs and create these linguistic innovations to manifest their ‘ownership’ of English (cf. Rimmer, 2011), Bartek explained that his linguistic ‘creativity’ was automatically regarded by NESs as an error and evidence of his limited competence, stemming from his status as a foreigner. Thus, although he expressed what the literature would describe as a sense of being a multi-competent English speaker with high L2C, the selves ascribed to him by his interlocutors were still at odds with his desired self, due to his interlocutors interpreting his linguistic innovation as a linguistic limitation. This is not surprising, and it is easy to imagine many other encounters where NNESs’ manifestations of multi-competence, or ownership of English, would not necessarily come across as such to their NES interlocutors, if the latter were not aware of the theoretical debates surrounding the spread of English worldwide. It is unfortunate, therefore, that these debates remain exclusive to academic contexts and the existing proposals for ELF pedagogy are only concerned with educating NNESs. It seems that, in order to improve the quality of the migrants’ experiences in the described context, educating Scots about the global spread of English and its consequences is equally important. In this way NESs would perceive NNESs, their accents and varieties of English in a different light, which could positively influence the NNESs’ ascribed selves during communication and, consequently, their self-esteem and a number of aspects of their life that it was found to influence. Raising Scots’ awareness of these issues could take various forms and could either be done ‘implicitly’ through features in newspapers or on television, or through explicit instruction in schools, which would not be too different from the suggested awareness raising courses for NNESs. In the case of the latter, it could be combined with some kind of general courses concerned with intergroup biases taught in schools.
8.3.2.2. Teaching about intergroup biases.

Although addressing various types of intergroup bias in Scottish schools has been an increasingly discussed topic among scholars (cf. Arshad and Riddell, 2011; Florian and Rouse, 2009), the focus has mainly been on “educating the teachers of tomorrow” (Hick et al., 2011: 1) on how to address problems and conflicts resulting from diversity among pupils, rather than on explicit instruction for pupils about intergroup bias. Although, on one hand, the idea of teaching, particularly children, about the nature of stereotyping and prejudice has been questioned by some scholars, who argued that it could induce stereotype threat, or trigger negative behaviour, that they were not previously aware of (McKown and Weinstein, 2003; Smith, 2010), the evidence to support these claims is weak (Bigler, 2014). On the other hand, there is substantial evidence that teaching about intergroup biases may be beneficial for both “stigmatised and non-stigmatised [groups]” (ibid: 21), due to its potential to teach how to “recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination” (ibid.). It has also been directly linked with increasing the stigmatised group’s self-esteem, as they learn to attribute the negative behaviour they encounter to intergroup bias (Brown et al., 2010), and valued for its potential to enable the non-stigmatised group members to recognise, and ‘work on’, their own prejudice and stereotypical beliefs (cf. Wurtele and Maruyama, 2013). Given the findings from this current study, where the (perceived) beliefs about foreigners/NNESs/migrants, or Polish migrants, in particular, played a crucial role in the dynamic interplay between the desired and scribed selves that was central to the participants’ ELI, educating both Poles and Scots about various manifestations of intergroup bias could greatly benefit both groups. Both groups would learn to recognise actual prejudice and stereotyping, as well as understand how stereotype threat works and how it may influence the stigmatised group members’ behaviour.

Regarding the methodology of teaching about this issue, a variety of approaches have been investigated. Innovative and non-threatening ways, such as encouraging reflection through exposing students to films and animated movies (cf. Junn et al., 2001; Melchiori and Mallett, 2015), discussing stereotypes in popular culture (cf. Childs, 2014), engaging students in role-play activities (cf. Junn et al., 2001; Plous, 2000) and encouraging them to reflect on instances of stereotyping in their own everyday speech (cf. Kite and Whitley, 2012), have been suggested, particularly for undergraduate students. Others have proposed direct
teaching, or lecturing, about the nature of stereotypes, or about the habits and everyday lives of the stereotyped group (cf. Wurtele and Maruyama, 2013).

8.4. Suggestions for future research.

In order to implement the changes discussed in Section 8.1 and to contribute to the Scottish Government’s goal of improving the migrants’ financial and emotional well-being to retain them in Scotland, more research is needed. As well as continuing the research into the notion of ELI and extending it to a larger population of Polish migrants, or migrants in general, it is necessary to research the ways the migrants are currently taught English in Scotland and to investigate whether these classes provide opportunity for their self-growth and self-esteem. In addition, it is necessary to develop materials, methods and curricula aimed at addressing the issues discussed in Section 8.1, investigate the feasibility of, and possible obstacles to, introducing these teaching materials to language classrooms in Scotland, investigate learners’ and teachers’ attitudes towards this new research-informed approach and investigate the effectiveness of this approach on migrants’ self-esteem building.

Firstly, in considering that the above claims were made on the basis of one study, more research is needed. In order to further validate the findings from this current study, it is also necessary to extend these findings to a broader population of Polish migrants in Scotland and to pertain to a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics to investigate a possible influence of these factors on the migrants’ ELI. Future studies of migrants’ ELI may also be extended to other populations of migrants in Scotland or, ultimately, to migrant populations in other countries.

Secondly, systematic research into the ways migrants are taught English in Scotland is needed. Whilst it is believed that language curricula need to be based on up-to-date research, in order to integrate theory and practice, it has been observed that many do not make this connection (Pullin, 2015). Since the dominance of ‘traditional’ approaches to teaching English in the migrant English language instruction may hinder the development of self-esteem, which is detrimental to the aforementioned government goal, it is crucial to obtain systematised knowledge of the current pedagogical practice in Scottish institutions providing English language instruction.

Next, cutting-edge research-informed materials for teaching English need to be developed, as, despite the increased attention being paid to the pedagogical implications of the global
spread of English for ELT (see Section 3.4), the majority of teachers do not have enough knowledge to provide such instruction. Therefore, they have to rely on available teaching materials, which, however, rarely address the changing linguistic landscape of English worldwide.

Finally, the feasibility of, and possible obstacles to, introducing these teaching materials to language classrooms in Scotland would need to be investigated alongside the learners’ and teachers’ attitudes towards this new research-informed approach and the effectiveness of this approach on migrant self-esteem building.

Overall, in order to achieve these ambitious goals, co-operation across various sectors and various public and private organisations that deal with education in Scotland and with migrants in Scotland is required. In the long run this could contribute to the goal of promoting Scotland’s outstanding educational practice and could lead to the development of a definitive and relevant plan for educating migrants in Scotland that could be used as an example by other European countries increasingly faced with the issue of immigration.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Informed consent form, pilot version (translation from Polish)

This informed consent form is for members of the Polish community in Edinburgh whom I am inviting to participate in research entitled “A study of Polish migrants’ English language identity in a Scottish context”. If you decide to participate please return this form with your (electronic) signature to [my email address].

Introduction

I am a student at the University of Edinburgh and I am currently working on my PhD research.

The aim of my study is to investigate Polish people’s English language identity which I define as the relationship between one’s sense of self and the English language. This study is very important for, as you know, there are many Polish migrants who currently live in Scotland. By understanding their identity I would like to draw implications for the English language education in Poland and Scotland so it addresses our needs effectively and prepare us for effective communication in future.

Research process

The research duration is 7 months (January-July 2015). If you decide to participate you will be asked to keep an electronic diary which you will be completing once a month and sending me via email. The diary will ask you about your experiences with the English
language which you may find thought-provoking in terms of your perceptions of your English language identity.

You will also be asked to participate in 2 interviews. Each interview will take about 30 minutes and will be conducted at a place and time of your convenience unless you indicate otherwise. The interviews will be audio-recorded only with your agreement. The first interview will be conducted in January and the second one in July 2015.

Your opinion is highly important and will contribute to development of a theory of English language identity.

I would like to add that during this study you will be guaranteed full anonymity and your personal details will not be shared with anybody under any circumstances. You have also full right to withdraw from the study at any moment without giving me any reason. Additionally, the data I will gather (your personal accounts and the interview recordings) will be destroyed 2 years after the publication of my findings.

Please consider taking part in this project, as it may have important implications for future education. Therefore, by offering help you are contributing to the field of English language teaching. If you have any questions please don’t hesitate to contact me on jarek.kriukow@wp.pl

Jaroslaw Kriukow

University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education

I have read the included information and I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Participant’s signature _____________________

Date____________________
Appendix 2: Informed consent form, final version (translation from Polish)

This informed consent form is for members of the Polish community in Edinburgh whom I am inviting to participate in research entitled “A study of Polish migrants’ English language identity in a Scottish context”.

Introduction

I am a student at the University of Edinburgh and I am currently working on my PhD research.

The aim of my study is to investigate Polish people’s perceptions of English language identity which I define as the relationship between one’s sense of self and the English language. In practice, it refers to any differences (if there are any) that a person may experience when he/she is communicates in English as opposed to Polish. You do not need any previous knowledge on this topic to participate. I am only interested in Your opinion.

Research process

The research duration is 7 months. If you decide to participate you will be asked to keep an electronic journal in Polish in which you will share your experiences with the English language which you feel may be related to the topic of identity. You do not have to complete your journal every day but rather when you believe you should share a given
thought/experience. The entries don’t have to be very long – sometimes a few sentences may be enough.

You will also be asked to participate in two interviews with me (conducted in Polish) which will last approximately one hour and will take place at the previously agreed time and place. During these interviews I will mainly ask for your opinion on the relationship between one’s sense of self and English, as well as discuss your journal entries. I will repeat that your opinion on this topic is extremely important to me!

I would like to add that during this study you will be guaranteed full anonymity and your personal details will not be shared with anybody under any circumstances. You have also full right to withdraw from the study at any moment without giving me any reason. Please consider taking part in this study which has numerous implications, particularly within the field of language education. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Jarek Kriukow

University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education

I have read the included information and I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Participant’s signature ______________________

Date____________________
Appendix 3: Interview 1 guide, pilot version (translation from Polish)

Intro: Thank you for your participation. As I previously said, the interview will be audio-recorded and will last between 30 and 60 minutes. If you want to stop the interview at any point, remember that your participation is voluntary.

Briefing:

[content] The purpose of my study is what I call English language identity. I define it as a relationship between a sense of self (your sense of who you are) and the English language. I defined it only so I can refer to it later during the conversation. I will not, however, ask you direct and detailed questions about your English language identity as such during the interview, as I do realise it is a new and quite abstract concept. During the interview we will mainly discuss your perception of yourself as a speaker of English. This not only refers to your level of English but also to how you feel when you communicate in English, what you think about different accents and different users of English, etc. I will also ask about your particular experiences of using English and whether they influence your current thinking. I will finish by asking you about possible influence that your current thinking may have on your life.

[form] There is one more important thing about the nature of this interview. Only the data I collect from my participants (you) will be analysed in my study. My opinions I express here do not count as data. Therefore, my input will be minimal and I will mainly ask questions. It may feel a bit artificial at first, as it is not a „conversation” in a traditional sense. Remember, however, that there are no right and wrong answers and I am not trying to evaluate your knowledge on some particular topic. Everything you say is very interesting and important to me.

Do you have any questions before we start?

1. Where, how often and with whom do you now communicate in English?

2. Do you have any observations or thoughts about the English language?
Prompts: What do you think about different accents? Are there any accents which are more/less correct than others? Are there any benefits stemming from having a given accent? Why? Do you think it is important to sound native? Is it important to you to sound native?

1. Now, please tell me more about your relationship with English.

Prompts:

- How do you feel when you communicate in English? Do you feel confident? Do you have any concerns? Why / Why not?

- Is there any difference with whom you are communicating? Are there any differences between how you feel when you communicate in Polish and English? What differences?

- Does the fact that English is not your mother tongue influence the way you feel about yourself in any ways?

- Did you have any experiences which made you reflect on the topics we are discussing? What experiences? What happened?

2. What circumstances/factors influence the way you feel about the language?

Prompts:

- What do you think influenced the way you feel about it most?

- What circumstances would have to change in order for you to change the way you feel now? Why do you think some other people could feel different than you?

- What else may influence the way you feel? Experiences from the past? Professional/social circumstances?

3. What do you think about English education in Poland, in relation with the topic we are discussing?
Prompts:

- To what extent does it influence you feel and think about the language?
- Would you describe this influence as negative, positive or neutral?
- How well does it prepare for real communication in English?

3. **Does the way one perceives one’s self as a user of language (accent, self-confidence, other topics we discussed) can influence life in any ways?**

Prompts:

- Socialisation practices, work situation, anything else?
- Does it influence personality in any way?

Debriefing:

Thank you one more time for your help. Is there anything else you would like to add before we stop recording?

How did you like being interviewed?
Appendix 4: Interview 1 guide, final version (translation from Polish)

Intro: Thank you for your participation. As I previously said, the interview will be audio-recorded and will last between 30 and 60 minutes. If you want to stop the interview at any point remember that your participation is voluntary.

Briefing:

[content] The purpose of my study is what I call English language identity. I define it as a relationship between a sense of self (your sense of who you are) and the English language. I defined it only so I can refer to it later during the conversation. I will not, however, ask you direct and detailed questions about your English language identity as such during the interview, as I do realise it is a new and quite abstract concept. During the interview we will mainly discuss your perception of yourself as a speaker of English. This not only refers to your level of English but also to how you feel when you communicate in English, what you think about different accents and different users of English, etc. I will also ask about your particular experiences of using English and whether they influence your current thinking. I will finish by asking you about possible influence that your current thinking may have on your life.

[form] There is one more important thing about the nature of this interview. Only the data I collect from my participants (you) will be analysed in my study. My opinions I express here do not count as data. Therefore, my input will be minimal and I will mainly ask questions. It may feel a bit artificial at first, as it is not a „conversation” in a traditional sense. Remember, however, that there are no right and wrong answers and I am not trying to evaluate your knowledge on some particular topic. Everything you say is very interesting and important to me.

Do you have any questions before we start?

1. **Please tell me about the time you first arrived to Scotland.**

   **Prompts:**
   
   -When? Did you have any memorable experiences? Is there anything you remember as a first impression from that period?
2. Can you think of a (difficult) situation when you had to communicate in English and:

- You did particularly well?

- Something went wrong? There was a problem or misunderstanding?

Prompts:

- How did you feel about it (at the time when it happened/afterwards)?

- Do you think that such situations influence you in any way? How? Why?

3. Where, how often and with whom do you now communicate in English?

Prompts:

- How do you feel when you communicate in English? Do you feel confident? Do you have any concerns? Why / Why not? What influences this?

- Are there any situations particularly problematic for you? Why? What influences this?

- Are there any situations when you feel more comfortable communicating in English? Why? What influences this?

- Is there any difference in who you communicate with – other NNES or NES? Why?

- Is there any difference between how you feel when you speak Polish and when you speak English? What difference? What influences this difference?

4. How would you describe your overall relationship with the language? Can you think of any factors, experiences which may influence the way you feel about it?

- What do you think influenced the way you feel about it most?
- What circumstances would have to change in order for you to change the way you feel now? Why do you think some other people could feel different than you?

1. **Do the discussed ways you feel about the language and being a speaker of it have any influence on your life?**

   **Prompts:**

   - Do they influence your everyday life, your employment situation, your socialisation practices, or anything else?

6. **What do you think about English education in Poland?** [this question often comes earlier in the interview, as the participants tend to start talking about education when describing their arrival in Scotland]

   **Prompts:**

   - What is your overall attitude towards English education in Poland?

   - Did it influence your thinking in any ways?

   - To what extent did education in Poland prepare you for successful communication in English?

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**Debriefing:**

Thank you one more time for your help. Is there anything else you would like to add before we stop recording?

How did you like being interviewed?
Appendix 5: Summary of research findings sent to the participants before pilot interview 2 (translation from Polish)

In the upcoming interview we will discuss some of the findings resulting from my analysis of the data I collected by means of the previous interview and the reflective journals you have kept.

Below is a brief summary of these findings that I would like you to read before we meet for the interview. You are also welcome to note down any thoughts that you have when you read these findings. It is important to me to know your opinion on my interpretations – it will strengthen and validate these interpretations and the overall study.

Also, I would like to emphasise that these findings regard the sum of the researched group and although I analysed each participant separately and each “case” (i.e. participant) was an important separate element of the study, there were also trends that I found across all or most of the studied participants. These trends will form the basis of our discussion. You don’t have to agree with these conclusions and you may in fact believe that the case is different with you – if so, I would like to hear it from you and discuss why you don’t agree with it.

Below is the list of the general topics and conclusions that I would like to discuss:

- The “relationship between English and the sense of self” depends on the extent to which a person can express his or her “real self”, or who he/she “really is” through English. It seemed to me that if a person is able to communicate his/her “real” self, personality, etc. this has a positive influence on that person. Alternatively, not being able to express that real self though English seems to affect that person’s relationship with English and may, for example, affect his/her overall self-esteem.

- This leads to another theme I analysed, namely the notion of „saving face”. In other words, it is important to people to be perceived in a positive, rather than negative, light. This concern with saving face seems to influence a number of a person’s everyday decisions and the outcome of different situations he/she encounters and may, for example, result in this person’s avoiding the situations in which he/she believes that saving face is difficult (and, for example, other people will perceive him/her in a negative light).

- “Expectations” were another theme occurring throughout my analysis, and links to the above theme. It means that the aforementioned saving face seems easier if a person knows what to expect from a given communicative situation. Hence, the majority of people preferred familiar situations, contexts and interlocutors – under these circumstances a person knows what to expect in terms of the English language in a given situation and from a given interlocutor and, what is important, knows that
his/her interlocutor knows what to expect from him/her. This seems to make “saving face” an easier task.

As I noted above, I would like you to read and carefully consider these conclusions, and share your opinion on them with me. See you soon!
Appendix 6: Interview 2 guide, pilot version (translation from Polish)

First of all, thank you for seeing me again and for your involvement in this study in general. As I previously informed you, today we will discuss several things. First I will ask you about your thoughts on the summary of my findings that I sent you. I want you to remember that these were not just themes relating to my interview with you though, but rather my general conclusions which I drew from the total of 20 interviews I conducted. It is completely normal, therefore, if you do not agree with anything I wrote or you think that it is not the case with you. I would like to hear your opinion on it then. During the interview I will also ask about other things that I find important for various reasons. Some of the questions I ask may sound similar to what we discussed in our first interview but even if they do I would like to hear your opinion on these issues again. I also encourage you to express any other thoughts or opinions that arise or have risen in your mind. Remember – there are no right and wrong answers and your opinions and beliefs are my data and are of extreme value to me.

First I would like to discuss my findings that I summarized for you. Is there anything that you found interesting, anything that you agree or disagree with? Would you like to discuss any of your thoughts about these findings?

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH SCOTTISH ACCENT

- investigate the impact of first encounter with Scottish accent (cognitive interviewing technique)
  - with as much detail as possible (even things you think may be irrelevant), describe your initial encounter with Scottish accent (or one of the first)
  - Try to start at before the encounter, describe your expectations, etc. and then progress through the encounter towards whether it influenced any aspects of your life afterwards
  - Try to remember everything, the whole context (even starting with the weather, etc.)
  - Try to remember any feelings, thoughts, emotions, that you had at the time.
  - I will not interrupt you and will not ask you questions until after your account when we will have a more traditional interview. Therefore, I encourage you to speak freely, provide as much detail as possible, and be as honest (especially about your feelings and emotions) as possible
- Write down any questions during the narration, follow these up after the interview
  - Possible prompts: - what do you think caused you to feel the way you felt? – What would have had to be different for you to feel different (wording depends on what he/she felt like) – Do you think if the encounter had been different (the
outcome) any aspects of your experience in Scotland afterwards would’ve been different?

- Investigate whether the first encounter influenced any aspects of the participant’s life afterwards
- Investigate the encounter in relation with Expectations → what was the role of expectations for the encounter? What were the expectations of different participants and the outcome of their “encounters”? Did the encounter influence expectations?

EXPECTATIONS

Remember, one of the themes I analysed in my study were expectations. What are you general thoughts on the role of expectations in migrant experience in general? How would you describe the role of expectations in your particular case?

Prompts

- Does it matter if you know what to expect from other people in communication (e.g. in terms of accent) or not? Why/why not?
- Does it matter if other people know what to expect from you (for example, if you are talking to somebody who has already heard the way you speak before or someone who has never met you)? Why/why not?
- Do you think that expectations about what English sounds like may influence the first encounter with Scottish accent, or any other local accent, when people come from abroad? How was it in your case? Why?
- Prior to coming to Scotland, where did your knowledge about English come from (your idea of what English sounds like, etc.)? Where did your expectations about English come from (English classes? Films? Reports from other Polish people who went abroad, etc.)?
- What do you think influence the expectations that we may have about language? What influenced your expectations?
- What would have had to be different for your expectations to have been different?
- Do you generally prefer to be prepared for communication (in terms of vocabulary that you may need, grammar, etc.)? Why/why not?

CONCERN WITH SAVING FACE (including beliefs about/role of other people’s perceptions)

Prompts

- Is “saving face” important to you?
- Do you think other people may influence your sense of self/self-confidence/self-esteem? Explain.
- Do you think local people have any preconceptions of what Polish people are like, think like, speak like, feel like, etc.?
- Have you ever suspected you are treated differently because of your nationality, gender, etc.?
- Do you think migrants/Polish migrants are being stereotyped in any way by Scottish people? If yes, how? Is it important for you to prove them wrong?
- Do you think you are being stereotyped? Can you give any examples?
- Do other people’s perceptions matter to you/influence you or your actions in any way? Why?
- Are you ever afraid that somebody will not understand you? Why?
- Are you worried when you can’t understand somebody? Why?
- Are you ever worried about the way your English sounds? Why?
- Do you ever experience any anxiety when you have to speak to somebody? If yes, when and why?
- Do you think it is better to speak up and encounter problems with communication or not speak at all? Why?

EXPRESSING ONE’S REAL SELF

What do you think about my idea that what matters for a migrant is being able to retain or express and communicate their real self? Does it relate to you in any way? Do you have any other thoughts about this assumption of mine?

Prompts

- Do you think that speaking a language other than our mother tongue may influence our ability to express who we are? How? Is it a matter of proficiency or anything else?
- Do you think that when you speak English you can express yourself (and your personality, who you are, etc.) the same way as when you speak Polish? Explain.
- If NOT, what aspects of the language do you think make the task difficult for you?
- What aspects of a language in general do you think are most important for being able to express yourself? Is it proficiency, vocabulary, cultural knowledge, something else?
- Do you think it is important to be able to express your real self?
- What do you think may be the consequences of not being able to express your real self?
- Do you think that people with whom you speak English interpret you (in general, as a person) in the same way as people with whom you speak Polish?
- Do you think your identity may change over time?
UNDERSTANDING OF PROFICIENCY, LINGUISTIC GOALS, BELIEFS ABOUT ENGLISH AND ITS SPEAKERS/VARIETIES (Also, the role of education)

- What is your understanding of being proficient/ fluent in English? What is (or was) your ultimate goal in terms of English competence? How much is enough for you? Why?
- Is it important for you to be fluent in English?
- Do you have a model of English that you can give as an example of “good” or “correct” English?
- Who do you think should teach English – NES or NNES? Both? Why?
- What do you consider a serious linguistic error during communication? Can you give me any examples?
- Do you think it is better to say things incorrectly or not to say anything?
- Are you generally happy with your level of English/your pronunciation/your accent?
- Does it make any difference to you whether you make an “error” when you speak to a NES or when you speak to another NNES?
- Are you more worried when you don’t understand a NES or a NNES?

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

- Thank you for your participation 😊
Appendix 7: Interview 2 guide, final version (translation from Polish)

First of all, thank you for seeing me again and for your involvement in this study. Before we start, I would like to remind you several things about the interview itself.

If you want to stop the interview at any point remember that your participation is voluntary.

Similar to the last time I interviewed you, what counts to me as data is what you say during the interview. Therefore, my input will be minimal and I will mainly ask questions. In this respect, this may not feel like a conversation that we could have under other circumstances. Remember, that there are no right and wrong answers and I am not trying to evaluate your knowledge on some particular topic. Everything you say is very interesting and important to me.

The aim of this second interview is for me to develop a deeper understanding of certain themes that emerged when I analysed interview 1 and reflective journal data. Therefore, although some questions that I ask may sound very similar to what I previously asked you, I would like you to answer them in as much detail as possible, even if you feel that you have already said or written this before. I also encourage you to express any other thoughts or opinions that arise or have risen in your mind. Additionally, during the interview I will brief you on several conclusions that I came to in my analysis. I would like to hear you opinion on these conclusions and try to relate your own experiences to them.

Do you have any questions before we start?

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH SCOTTISH ACCENT

- investigate the impact of first encounter with Scottish accent (cognitive interviewing technique)
  - with as much detail as possible (even things you think may be irrelevant), describe your initial encounter with Scottish accent (or one of the first)
  - Try to start at before the encounter, describe your expectations, etc. and then progress through the encounter towards whether it influenced any aspects of your life afterwards
  - Try to remember everything, the whole context (even starting with the weather, etc.)
  - Try to remember any feelings, thoughts, emotions, that you had at the time.
  - I will not interrupt you and will not ask you questions until after your account when we will have a more traditional interview. Therefore, I encourage you to speak freely, provide as much detail as possible, and be as honest (especially about your feelings and emotions) as possible
- Write down any questions during the narration, follow these up after the interview
  - Possible prompts: - what do you think caused you to feel the way you felt? – What would have had to be different for you to feel different (wording depends
on what he/she felt like) – Do you think if the encounter had been different (the outcome) any aspects of your experience in Scotland afterwards would’ve been different?

- Investigate whether the first encounter influenced any aspects of the participant’s life afterwards
- Investigate the encounter in relation with Expectations → what was the role of expectations for the encounter? What were the expectations of different participants and the outcome of their “encounters”? Did the encounter influence expectations?

**EXPECTATIONS**

[brief information about expectations]

**Prompts**

- Does it matter if you know what to expect from other people in communication (e.g. in terms of accent) or not? Why/why not?
- Does it matter if other people know what to expect from you (for example, if you are talking to somebody who has already heard the way you speak before or someone who has never met you)? Why/why not?
- Do you think that expectations about what English sounds like may influence the first encounter with Scottish accent, or any other local accent, when people come from abroad? How was it in your case? Why?
- Prior to coming to Scotland, where did your knowledge about English come from (your idea of what English sounds like, etc.)? Where did your expectations about English come from (English classes? Films? Reports from other Polish people who went abroad, etc.)?
- What do you think influence the expectations that we may have about language? What influenced your expectations?
- What would have had to be different for your expectations to have been different?
- Do you generally prefer to be prepared for communication (in terms of vocabulary that you may need, grammar, etc.)? Why/why not?

**CONCERN WITH SAVING FACE (including beliefs about/role of other people’s perceptions)**

[brief information about saving face]

**Prompts**

- Is “saving face” important to you?
- Do you think other people may influence your sense of self/self-confidence/self-esteem? Explain.
- Do you think local people have any preconceptions of what Polish people are like, think like, speak like, feel like, etc.?
- Have you ever suspected you are treated differently because of your nationality, gender, etc.?
- Do you think migrants/Polish migrants are being stereotyped in any way by Scottish people? If yes, how? Is it important for you to prove them wrong?
- Do you think you are being stereotyped? Can you give any examples?
- Do other people's perceptions matter to you/influence you or your actions in any way? Why?
- Are you ever afraid that somebody will not understand you? Why?
- Are you worried when you can't understand somebody? Why?
- Are you ever worried about the way your English sounds? Why?
- Do you ever experience any anxiety when you have to speak to somebody? If yes, when and why?
- Do you think it is better to speak up and encounter problems with communication or not speak at all? Why?

EXPRESSING ONE’S REAL SELF

[brief information about expressing real self]

Prompts

- Do you think that speaking a language other than our mother tongue may influence our ability to express who we are? How? Is it a matter of proficiency or anything else?
- Do you think that when you speak English you can express yourself (and your personality, who you are, etc.) the same way as when you speak Polish? Explain.
- If NOT, what aspects of the language do you think make the task difficult for you?
- What aspects of a language in general do you think are most important for being able to express yourself? Is it proficiency, vocabulary, cultural knowledge, something else?
- Do you think it is important to be able to express your real self?
- What do you think may be the consequences of not being able to express your real self?
- Do you think that people with whom you speak English interpret you (in general, as a person) in the same way as people with whom you speak Polish?
- Do you think your identity may change over time?
UNDERSTANDING OF PROFICIENCY, LINGUISTIC GOALS, BELIEFS ABOUT ENGLISH AND ITS SPEAKERS/VARIETIES (Also, the role of education)

- What is your understanding of being proficient/ fluent in English? What is (or was) your ultimate goal in terms of English competence? How much is enough for you? Why?
- Is it important for you to be fluent in English?
- Do you have a model of English that you can give as an example of “good” or “correct” English?
- Who do you think should teach English – NES or NNES? Both? Why?
- What do you consider a serious linguistic error during communication? Can you give me any examples?
- Do you think it is better to say things incorrectly or not to say anything?
- Are you generally happy with your level of English/your pronunciation/your accent?
- Does it make any difference to you whether you make an “error” when you speak to a NES or when you speak to another NNES?
- Are you more worried when you don’t understand a NES or a NNES?

-Is there anything else you would like to add?

-Thank you for your participation 😊
Appendix 8: Directions for reflective journals, pilot version
(translation from Polish)

I would like to remind you that my study is about English language identity which I define as the assumed relationship between one’s sense of self and the English language. As I explained before I am interested to hear specifically your opinion on this topic. Please keep this journal of events which occur in your everyday life and which you find to be thought-provoking in terms of the described relationship. **Remember that these entries are confidential and I am the only person who has access to them.**

I would like you to document those experiences which in any way trigger your reflections on the topics we discussed during the interview. Just to remind you, the main topics we covered were:

1. Your thoughts about English language identity
2. Why different people may assume different ELI
3. What factors may influence the development of ELI
4. How ELI may influence one’s life
5. How you feel about your ELI

Apart from particular experiences you may also just have some general thoughts on the topics listed above or any other you think may be relevant to my investigation. Please feel free to share them too.

Please complete your journal as often as possible. Below is a format which may assist you with constructing your journal entries:

6. Date of the incident/experience
7. Description of the incident/experience
8. Other people involved
9. Any thoughts/feelings that the incident/experience evoked
10. Your reflections on the described incident/experience

**Thank you!**
Appendix 9: Directions for reflective journals, the final version
(translation from Polish)

I would like to remind you that my study is about English language identity which I define as the assumed relationship between one’s sense of self and the English language. During the interview we talked about the ways you perceive yourself as a user of English. I was asking you about your positive and negative experiences involving English, and whether and how these experiences influence your broadly defined relationship with the language.

Subsequently, we talked about whether your relationship with the language (the overall ways you feel about it and about yourself as user of English, your attitudes and beliefs, etc.) influence your life in any way.

I realise that there is a lot of information which is difficult to recall during the interview and which one may remember only afterwards. There are also things that may happen between the first and the second (July 2015) interview.

This is why I asked you to keep this journal with your thoughts on any experiences with English (both taking place at present and those from the past) which you think may influence, or have influenced, you in any way or encourage your reflections.

Apart from concrete experiences you may just have some general thoughts about the topics we covered during the interview. You may feel free to share those with me in your journal.

The journal does not have to be filled in every day but rather in situations when you believe it is worthwhile to share some experience/thought with me. Of course, as I hope to collect certain amount of data I do hope it would be at least several times a month. Your entries do not have to be very long – sometimes a short paragraph is enough. Also, remember that the information is confidential and I am the only person who will have access to it.

Thank you!
## Appendix 10: Lists of themes

**Interview 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the code</th>
<th>Number of references</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of language use or contact</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mainly the beliefs about the amount of language use or contact as a factor influencing the self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of socialisation through English</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Accounts of socialisation with the locals, beliefs about the effects of self-concept on socialisation, beliefs about socialisation influencing the self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding language use or contact</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Accounts of avoiding language use, later found to be a strategy for managing the self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to express one’s self</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Beliefs about the importance of being able to express one’s real self, as opposed to basic meanings, in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being different in Polish and English</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Beliefs about differences between communication in English and Polish, mainly accounts of not being able to make jokes, swear, talk about certain topics, etc. An important code for finding out what the migrants’ self-concept was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about, and attitudes towards, other people’s perceptions</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mainly hypothetical talk about what other people (usually during communication) thought of them and how the participants felt about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beliefs about Status of English, its speakers and its varieties</strong></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Various beliefs about English in general, about its speakers, legitimacy of accents, etc. that emerged in interview 1 and was followed up in interview 2 (coded as ELF awareness and Beliefs about Status of English, its speakers and its varieties). Included two sub-codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties with Scottish accent</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Descriptions of difficulties with understanding Scottish accent. Followed up in interview 2 and coded both as <em>Difficulties with Scottish accent</em> and <em>First encounter with Scottish accent</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with NES and NNES</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Beliefs about NES and NNES, preferences for communicating with NES/NNES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Statements about cultural differences between Poland and Scotland, beliefs about these differences influencing the self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision to stay or return to Poland (effects)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Beliefs about the decision to stay or return to Poland resulting from the relationship between self-concept and English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminishing the status of Scottish English</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Various accounts in which the participants diminished the importance, legitimacy, correctness, etc. of Scottish accent, very often by humorous comparisons. At first it was interpreted as a strategy for managing the self-concept/saving face, but when it was followed up in interview 2 it did not appear as such. The analysis revealed that these beliefs were genuine and seemed to stem from lack of awareness of this variety of English. It was also hypothesised that, in line with the literature, some of these statements were the reflected the migrants’ perceived differences between US and THEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English education in Poland</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Various statements about English education in Poland and its quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitudes towards English education in Poland</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitudes towards English education in Poland</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mainly statements about preference for being familiar with the interlocutor and with the whole communication context. This code was important for understanding the dynamics of the interplay between the desired and ascribed selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with the speaker and the context</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of not being understood</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Statements about the participants’ concerns with not being understood. Later it was found that these concerns were connected with beliefs about other people’s perceptions and with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of competence for being able to retain one’s sense of self</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Beliefs about English competence being important for expressing one’s real self and, as a result, retaining the sense of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment and motivation to learn English</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Accounts of strategies adopted by the participants (e.g. coming home and checking an unfamiliar word) in order to improve their English. Also, direct statements about the importance of motivation and investment in learning for the relationship with English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justifying one’s low English competence</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Accounts of justifying one’s English competence during interaction. Later it was found to be a strategy of managing the ascribed selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnipresence of the Polish language and people</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mainly beliefs about the omnipresence of Polish as a factor influencing the overall relationship with English, including English competence, the relationships with the local people, and one’s self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretending to understand</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Accounts of pretending to understand someone during interaction, later found to be a strategy for managing the ascribed selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional situation (effects)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Beliefs about the effects of the relationship between English and the self-concept on one’s professional situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving face</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Various accounts of behaviour which was interpreted as attempts to save face. The code mainly consisted of, but was not limited to, the strategies for managing the self-concept. It started as a more general code (saving face) and then the accounts were analysed again and resulted in other codes describing these strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Criticism</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Accounts in which the participants talked about their self-criticism, or expressed self-criticism</td>
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<td>Self-confidence and self-esteem</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Various accounts of self-confidence and self-esteem in relation to different contexts, both as a factor influencing and the effect of the relationship between English and self-concept, but</td>
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</table>
Also in other contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of independence</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>Accounts of the affected sense of independence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The intended time of stay</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Beliefs about the intended time of stay as a factor influencing the relationship between English and the self-concept</td>
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<td>Time spent in Scotland</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Beliefs about the time spent in Scotland as a factor influencing the relationship between English and the self-concept. Also, other accounts in which they were talking about the importance of time, for example for integrating or developing higher English competence</td>
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</tbody>
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**Interview 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the code</th>
<th>Number of references</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of language use or contact</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of socialisation through English</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding language use or contact</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<td>Being able to express one’s self</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Value 1</td>
<td>Value 2</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being different in Polish and English</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about and attitudes towards other people’s perceptions</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beliefs about Status of English, its speakers and its varieties</strong></td>
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<td>-Difficulties with Scottish accent</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Relationship with NES and NNES</td>
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<td>As above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
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<td>Diminishing the status of Scottish English</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<td><strong>ELF awareness (sub codes below)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-desire to be native</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>-beliefs about English</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<td>-linguistic goals and correctness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear of not being understood</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First encounter with Scottish accent</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Importance of competence for being able to retain one’s sense of self</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of the code</td>
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<td>Number of participants</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being able to express one’s self</td>
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<td>Being different in Polish and English</td>
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<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about and attitudes towards other people’s perceptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about correctness, linguistic goals</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about Status of English, its speakers and its varieties</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties with Scottish accent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with NES and NNES</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with the speaker and the context</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of not being understood</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of competence for being able to retain one’s sense of self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment and motivation to learn English</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Value 1</td>
<td>Value 2</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnipresence of the Polish language and people</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretending to understand</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving face</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Criticism</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence and self-esteem</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of independence</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in Scotland</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 11: Page 1 of the questionnaire, pilot version (translation from Polish, the sentences characteristic only to the pilot version are emphasised)

Thank you for your participation – completing this questionnaire will take no longer than 7 minutes and it will greatly benefit my study.

This is the second phase of a study of Polish migrants’ in Scotland English Language Identity. By English Language Identity I mean any relationship between the English language and one’s sense of self, one’s personality, or the “I”. In the first part of the study I conducted interviews with a selected group of Polish migrants and I collected their “reflective journals” in which they shared their experiences and opinions. The second phase is about investigating whether this data reflect the opinions of a broader group of Poles.

When completing the questionnaire, remember that there are no right or wrong answers – your honest opinion is what I am interested in. Therefore, please provide responses that are honest and reflect your real beliefs.

Your identity will always remain strictly confident. Your name or any identifiable information will not be required.

*This is the pilot version of the questionnaire. Therefore, I am also interested in your opinion about the questionnaire itself – whether it’s clear and easy to understand, whether to each question you found an answer that corresponded to your opinion, etc. If you have any comments about the above issues, you may put them in the comment boxes under each questionnaire item.
Appendix 12: The full questionnaire (translation from Polish)

Page 1

Thank you for your participation – completing this questionnaire will take no longer than 7 minutes and it will greatly benefit my study.

This is the second phase of a study of Polish migrants’ in Scotland English Language Identity. By English Language Identity I mean how we feel as a result of contact with English, how the language influences our self-perceptions and self-worth. In the first part of the study I conducted interviews with a selected group of Polish migrants and I collected their “reflective journals” in which they shared their experiences and opinions. The second phase is about investigating whether this data reflect the opinions of a broader group of Poles.

When completing the questionnaire, remember that there are no right or wrong answers – your honest opinion is what I am interested in. Therefore, please provide responses that are honest and reflect your real beliefs.

Your identity will always remain strictly confidential. Your name or any identifiable information will not be required.

Page 2

1 'When I communicate in English, I am more comfortable when I speak to other people for whom English is not their first language than when I speak to Scottish people’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings.

(4 point Likert scale)

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
I don’t know
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree

2 'I prefer speaking English with people I know and who know me' - tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings.
(4 point Likert scale)

3 'It is important to me to be able to use English to express my real self (my overall personality and who I feel I am)’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

(4 point Likert scale)

4 'It is important to me that the way people perceive me matches who I really am as a person’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

(4 point Likert scale)

5 Tick the boxes that correspond to factors that in your opinion may in any way influence the ability to express one’s self in English.

(Multiple-choice and multiple answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences of failure or success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of language use or contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment and motivation to learn English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnipresence of the Polish language and people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intended time of stay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 ‘Whether I successfully express my real self in a given interaction may influence my self-esteem’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings
7 Tick the boxes that correspond to aspects of life on which you believe your self-esteem may have any influence

(Multiple-choice and multiple answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional situation (including type of employment or job, being promoted, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision to stay or return to Poland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Have any of the following situations ever happened to you while communicating in English? Tick all the boxes that apply to you.

(Multiple-choice and multiple answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having a problem with understanding someone but not worrying because you thought that Scottish accent is not ‘real’ English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding a given interaction because you were worried that you may not cope with it because of your English skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretending to understand someone (e.g. nodding your head) despite not understanding him or her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining/justifying to someone the level of your English competence (e.g. explaining that you have not lived in Scotland for too long, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Trying to ‘reject’ the stereotype of a Polish person, for example through your actions or explaining to someone what Polish people ‘are really like’, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. ‘I think the stereotype of Polish migrants in Scotland is mostly…’ - tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

(Multiple-choice and single answer)

Mostly positive
Mostly negative
I don’t know
I don’t think there is any stereotype

Page 3

Nearly there!

Now I will only need a few more details from you – this will help me to analyse the data, thank you!

10 Your age (enter only the number)

11 Gender

    Male
    Female

12 When did you come to Scotland (if you don’t remember the exact date, choose the one that is the closest to when you believe you arrived)

Page 4

Thank you!

Your responses have already been saved, now you can close this window. Thank you very much for your time and help. If you would like to know more about this study or to know the results of the questionnaire, please send me an email to [personal email address] and I will share the results as soon as the study is completed (Autumn 2016).

To participate in the prize draw, send me an email with a title “prize draw” 😊
Appendix 13: Questionnaire responses

1 'When I communicate in English, I am more comfortable when I speak to other people for whom English is not their first language than when I speak to Scottish people’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 'I prefer speaking English with people I know and who know me' - tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings.

- Strongly agree 84 (22%)
- Tend to agree 130 (34%)
- I don't know 32 (8%)
- Tend to disagree 79 (21%)
- Strongly disagree 53 (14%)

3 'It is important to me to be able to use English to express my real self (my overall personality and who I feel I am)’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

- Strongly agree 235 (62%)
- Tend to agree 99 (26%)
- I don't know 24 (6%)
- Tend to disagree 12 (3%)
- Strongly disagree 8 (2%)
4 'It is important to me that the way people perceive me matches who I really am as a person' – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

5 Tick the boxes that correspond to factors that in your opinion may in any way influence the ability to express one’s self in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Responses (% of 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>230 (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences of failure or success</td>
<td>203 (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of language use or contact</td>
<td>249 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English competence</td>
<td>238 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in Scotland</td>
<td>240 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment and motivation to learn English</td>
<td>246 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnipresence of the Polish language and people</td>
<td>113 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>73 (19%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 ‘Whether I successfully express my real self in a given interaction may influence my self-esteem’ – tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree 147 (39%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tend to agree 142 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know 39 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tend to disagree 39 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree 11 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Tick the boxes that correspond to aspects of life on which you believe your self-esteem may have any influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Responses (% of 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General happiness</td>
<td>319 (84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialisation</td>
<td>233 (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of independence</td>
<td>283 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional situation (including type of employment or job, being promoted, etc.)</td>
<td>311 (82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision to stay or return to Poland</td>
<td>62 (16%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 Have any of the following situations ever happened to you while communicating in English? Tick all the boxes that apply to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situations</th>
<th>Responses (% of 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having a problem with understanding someone but not worrying</td>
<td>120 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because you thought that Scottish accent is not ‘real’ English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding a given interaction because you were worried that you</td>
<td>222 (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may not cope with it because of your English skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretending to understand someone (e.g. nodding your head)</td>
<td>287 (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>despite not understanding him or her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining/justifying to someone the level of your English</td>
<td>162 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competence (e.g. explaining that you have not lived in Scotland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for too long, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to ‘reject’ the stereotype of a Polish person, for example</td>
<td>100 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through your actions or explaining to someone what Polish people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘are really like’, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. ‘I think the stereotype of Polish migrants in Scotland is mostly…’ - tick the box that most corresponds to your feelings

- Mostly positive 206 (55%)
- Mostly negative 58 (15%)
- I don’t know 71 (19%)
- I don’t think there is any stereotype 43 (11%)