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Positioning the Self

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Repertoires and Language Ideologies in South Tyrol

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*In order to understand others,
we have to understand what they remember from the past,
what they imagine and project onto the future,
and how they position themselves in the present.
And we have to understand the same things of ourselves.*

(Kramsch, 2006a:251)

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Since originality is only required from the rest of this document, I can now join the myriad of PhD students who have probably introduced their thesis acknowledgements by drawing on a conventional metaphor: a PhD is a journey. The road can be long and winding. You might have to take some detours. You might also get lost a couple of times along the way. But if you're lucky – and with a little help of your friends – you'll reach your destination eventually. I am about to reach this destination, and so the time has come to thank my helping friends.

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1 Introduction

Formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the northernmost Italian province of South Tyrol is now looking back on about a century as part of Italy, since its annexation in 1920. In many ways, social and political life in the province today is organised around affiliation with either the German, Italian or Ladin *language group*, and thus around ethnolinguistic categories. Research in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology has shown how such categories ideologically tie language to ethnicity and to the idea of a nation (Heller, 2006, 2011; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006; Pujolar, 2001). More recently, however, research from within the same fields has observed the emergence of a different set of ideologies that treats language primarily as a measurable skill and an economic resource, and has shown how these two sets of ideologies coexist and interact in complex and even contradictory ways with one another (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Heller, 2011). Moreover, they also interact with other language ideologies, including those that accrue different values to different kinds of language practices (Horner & Weber, 2018).

In this thesis, I contribute to this body of research by adopting a perspective that places the speaking subject at the centre of attention and examines how such ideologies figure in subjects' linguistic repertoires and their lived experience of language (Busch, 2015a). For this purpose, I draw on concepts of positioning (Bamberg, 1997; Davies & Harré, 1990; Spitzmüller, 2013) to analyse language-biographical interviews conducted around language portraits (Busch, 2018b) with adolescents in South Tyrol; a place where issues around language are highly salient (Alber, 2012).

Traditionally, sociolinguistics as a discipline “has been based on ideas about language and society that take as a baseline a stable connection between speakers, places, times and social position” (Heller, 2011:3). Much of variationist sociolinguistics has drawn on this assumption to explore how language variation works as an expression of these stable links. However, particularly with the advent of a globalised economy and new means of communication, many of these connections are no longer as stable as they were once thought to be. Many people are increasingly mobile and can participate in a wide range of communities and networks (Blommaert, 2010; Busch, 2012), which gives rise to new kinds of language practices and requires sociolinguists to ask new kinds of questions.

Moreover, sociolinguistics has increasingly adopted critical approaches that aim to investigate how language is involved in the reproduction of social difference and inequality (Heller, 2007;

Heller, Pietikäinen, & Pujolar, 2018). Critical sociolinguistics shares this aim with linguistic anthropological research, which has investigated similar issues under the label of language ideologies. In this line of research, beliefs about language and about the links between linguistic variation and social boundary making are the central object of inquiry. The notion of language ideologies has been productively mobilised to study, among others, how language was involved in territorial claims to Macedonia based on ethnonational criteria (Irvine & Gal, 2000), how language activists on Corsica fought to have Corsican recognised as a language distinct from both French and Italian (Jaffe, 2007), or how Catalan went from being a language that was seen as only spoken by authentic Catalans to becoming recognised as a more anonymous means of communication in Catalonia (Woolard, 2016).

In all of these contexts, ideologies that link language, ethnicity and nationhood emerged as salient. These links can be traced back to the 19th century (Heller, 2011; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007), and have their roots in the French Revolution and German Romanticism (Heller, 2006; Hobsbawm & Kertzer, 1992). Since then, and in particular in 20th century Europe, ethnicity has been mobilised to lay claims to independent nation states, and language thereby often worked as an authenticating symbol of ethnicity (McElhinny, 2010), thereby forming ideologies of ‘one nation, one language’ (Horner & Weber, 2018). The concept of linguistic minority sits within this very framework of ethnolinguistic nationalism, as “[l]inguistic minorities are created by nationalisms which exclude them” (Heller, 2006:7).

More recently, scholars in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology have uncovered a different set of ideologies that no longer link language to a supposedly authentic core of a person and a nation, but treat it as a measurable skill and an economic resource instead (Duchêne & Heller, 2012). These ideologies are at work, for instance, when French-English bilingual workers are sought for employment in the call center industry in Canada (Heller, 2003), when unemployment services support specific job seekers’ investments in language skills (Flubacher, Duchêne, & Coray, 2018), or when parents in South Korea send their children abroad to acquire native-like English skills to make them competitive in a neoliberal economy (Park, 2016). At the same time, these ideologies interact with, and are sometimes even dependent on, ideologies that construct language as a marker of authenticity, for instance when language is mobilised to market touristic experiences and cultural products (Heller, 2003, 2011; Pietikäinen, 2010). Moreover, both these sets of ideologies intertwine in complex ways with other ideologies that accrue particular value to what is constructed as standard as opposed to non-standard language, and to ‘pure’ language as opposed to hybrid language practices (Heller, 2006; Horner & Weber, 2018).

An important question that scholars have only recently begun to answer is how such ideologies of language enter and leave traces on speakers' linguistic repertoires. Busch (2015a, 2017a, 2020) has argued that such insights can be gained by taking a subject-centred approach to the linguistic repertoire. For such an approach, Busch combines interactional, poststructuralist and phenomenological approaches to the speaking subject to conceptualise the linguistic repertoire and lived experience of language. The latter brings the bodily and emotional dimension of experiencing language in interaction to the fore, and serves as the mediating link between speakers' linguistic repertoires and language ideologies.

South Tyrol is an interesting place in which to study how speakers, conceived as speaking subjects in poststructuralist terms (Butler, 1997), experience ideologies of language in bodily and emotional manner and construct their linguistic repertoires. The Italian province is located at the borders to Switzerland and Austria (see Figure 1). It carries three official names: in Italian, it is referred to as *Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano - Alto Adige*, in German as *Autonome Provinz Bozen - Südtirol* and in Ladin as *Provinzia Autonoma de Bulsan - Südtirol*. These denominations reflect the three languages officially recognised in South Tyrol: Italian, German and Ladin; the latter being a Rhaeto-romance language related to Romansh spoken in Switzerland and to Friulian spoken in other parts of Italy's northeast.



Figure 1: South Tyrol in Europe

Three aspects of the province's name require clarification: Firstly, the province is considered an *autonomous* province, as it has been granted a special status within the state of Italy (Das

neue Autonomiestatut, 1972; Il nuovo Statuto di Autonomia, 1972)¹. Secondly, it is called the province of *Bolzano*, *Bozen* or *Bulsan*, since most Italian provinces are designated by their capital city (Domenico, 2002). Thirdly, the province also bears the additional denomination of *Alto Adige* in Italian and of *Südtirol* in German and Ladin.

This last aspect is of particular interest to the present research project, as these denominations hint at the province's complex history: the historian Georg Grote (2012:3) observed that *Südtirol* invokes a link to the Austrian Bundesland Tirol, with which the territory once constituted a political unit in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Italian *Alto Adige*, on the other hand, implicitly conjures up the Italian territory south of the province by referring to the river Adige, which flows through the province and through parts of Northern Italy to finally flow into the Adriatic Sea just south of Venice². Grote (2012:3) concludes that *Südtirol* and *Alto Adige* "are not merely German and Italian versions of each other, they are, in fact, linguistic attempts to appropriate the area based on competing political and cultural understandings of the region."

The redrawing of boundaries after World War I gave rise to dispute and has marked the province and its inhabitants. Just over a hundred years after the end of the war, South Tyrol now enjoys considerable legislative and executive powers as well as a financial autonomy linked to its status of an autonomous province. It is officially trilingual in that Italian, German and Ladin share official status to differing degrees (Autonomy Statute, 1972) and it is an oft-cited example for societal multilingualism in Europe (Abel, Stuflesser, & Voltmer, 2007), as well as for the resolution of conflict in a divided society (Wölk, Marko, & Palermo, 2008).

The division that is thereby referred to is one between what are officially termed *Sprachgruppen*, *gruppi linguistici* or *grups linguistics*, which I have above called language groups. The use of this terminology suggests that language is considered the distinctive element between the Italian, the German and the Ladin language groups respectively. However, in South Tyrol like in other places (Heller, 2011; Piller, 2016), language is ideologically bundled up with ethnicity. In fact, several authors also speak of "ethno-linguistic groups" (Alber, 2012:415), of an "ethnic division" (Wisthaler, 2013:370), or of South Tyrol as an example for "ethnically fragmented societies" (Pallaver, 2008:303).

¹ I will henceforth quote both versions as (Autonomy Statute, 1972).

² The Italian toponym Alto Adige actually originates in the French term Haut Adige that designates a slightly different geographical area under Napoleonic rule at the beginning of the 19th century (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010).

The German and Ladin language group are recognised as linguistic minorities within the Italian state, which by the Italian Constitution grants them the right to be protected (Alber, 2012). Members of these groups have successfully mobilised this status, and thus the ideological association between language, ethnicity and nation, to achieve a far-reaching territorial autonomy. In the light of these autonomy arrangements, the minority/majority distinction has become somewhat blurred. Within the province, the German language group encompasses about 70% of the entire population and thus represents the numerical majority according to the latest census (ASTAT, 2012). Several authors (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012b; Egger, 2001; Meluzzi, 2017) have pointed out that a dichotomising distinction between majority and minority cannot hold for South Tyrol. Moreover, the picture becomes even more complex considering that in 2011, close to 9% of the province's population already consisted of foreign citizens who had made it their home (Wisthaler, 2013).

The Autonomy Statute (1972) also institutionalised a particular organisation of education in South Tyrol. The province's education system consists of three separate tracks of schooling: one with German as language of instruction, one with Italian as language of instruction, and a paritetical model in the Ladin valleys with both German and Italian as languages of instruction and Ladin as a subject and auxiliary language. The Statute thereby also laid the foundation for extensive efforts in fostering German-Italian bilingualism among South Tyrol's population, regulating that the respective second language(s) be taught from an early age.

Alber (2012:413) has argued that in recent years, this specific kind of bilingualism, as well as a specific kind of multilingualism that includes English alongside Italian and German, has increasingly been endorsed in education, and she has linked these developments to the recognition of multilingualism as "a factor for economic development in and for South Tyrol". Alber's argument is supported by a cursory glance across policy documents and public discourse: for instance, South Tyrol's regional development strategies for the period 2014-2020 (2013:11, my translation) refer to German-Italian bilingualism as an "enormous potential competitive advantage", and a 2018 campaign launched by local trade associations with the slogan "More languages, more advantages", aimed to encourage adolescents and young adults to learn (specific) languages (Camera di Commercio di Bolzano, 2018, my translation). Albeit not clearly stated, this campaign seemed to target specific languages, as the campaign videos only included English, German and Italian. These observations indicate that also in South Tyrol, language has been recognised as an economic resource and a measurable, marketable skill (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Urciuoli, 2008).

In the present thesis, I will examine how twenty-four adolescents attending different ‘German’, ‘Italian’ and ‘Ladin’ secondary schools in South Tyrol position themselves in relation to language. I will investigate how my interview partners construct their linguistic repertoire, how they position themselves as speakers, and how language ideologies affect their linguistic repertoires and their lived experience of language. In order to do so, I will draw on language-biographical interviews that I conducted with these adolescents around language portraits as creative visualisations of their linguistic repertoires (Busch, 2018b). I will make use of an analytical toolkit from different approaches to interactional analyses, including more recent approaches to embodied social action (e.g. Mondada, 2016) and analyse interviews as co-constructed interactions (Talmy, 2011).

I grew up in South Tyrol myself, and some of the discourses I previously mentioned were and are part of my own lived experience. I spent my childhood and teenage years in an area in the west of the province that is perceived as quite homogeneously ‘German’ in ethnolinguistic terms. My family and most of my childhood friends identify as ethnolinguistically ‘German’, or rather ‘German South Tyrolean’, and so did I while growing up. I went to ‘German’ schools, where (Standard) German was the language of instruction, and I learned Italian, and later English and French there. At the time, I was passionate about English, interested in French, and somewhat ambivalent about Italian. I felt, like many others, as if the language had been forced on me, and the mantra that my parents and teachers repeated about Italian being important did little to make me enjoy learning it. Italian was important, they said, because we live in Italy, and because I will need to know Italian to get a job in South Tyrol – discourse that is saturated with ideological notions that link language to the nation, but also language skills to employment. Throughout this thesis, I will reflexively engage with the way in which my own positionings as interviewer, researcher, young woman and ‘South Tyrolean’ impacted on this research process.

The present thesis is structured as follows: In Chapter 2, I will elaborate on the theoretical framework that guided this research. I will thus situate my research within the broader field of sociolinguistics and explain the particular subject-centred approach that I took. I will illustrate the theoretical notions of the linguistic repertoire, of the lived experience of language and of language ideologies that have been crucial to this approach, and I will delineate positioning and stance-taking in discourse as the theoretical and analytical approaches that have enabled me to link adolescents’ positionings to broader language ideologies.

Chapter 3 will then provide a critical reading of South Tyrol as the spatiotemporal context in which this research is situated. It will give an overview of the province’s history, of the

language policies in place there, and of the provincial education system. I will also review relevant sociolinguistic research that has been conducted in and on South Tyrol to date, and engage with my own positioning as a person and researcher in the province.

In Chapter 4, I will present my research design as well as the ways in which the research process unfolded. I will elaborate on my epistemological position and on the methodological principles that I followed and delineate the aims of this research project. In doing so, I will engage with methodological insights from language biographical inquiries as well as from research that employed language portraits, and illustrate the methods and processes of data generation as well as the principles and processes of data analysis.

Chapter 5 will represent an interlude that sits between method and empirical analyses. It will show how language portraits served to co-construct my interview partners' linguistic repertoires in our interview interactions. I will examine the language portraits created for this project from a perspective of social semiotics and provide an analysis of the semiotic processes that were at play as my interview partners represented the languages and dialects in their lives as a language portrait. This chapter will thus constitute an empirical investigation into the creation of language portraits that also has important methodological implications.

In Chapter 6, I will begin to address which kinds of linguistic repertoires were co-constructed during my interview interactions with adolescents in South Tyrol. I will illustrate how my interview partners described their past, present and imagined future language practices in various social spaces of family, school, leisure and work. I will also critically examine the social constructs of named languages and named dialects around which these practices seemed to pattern.

Chapter 7 will illustrate the ways in which my interview partners positioned themselves in terms of their competence as speakers, as well as the ideologies that inform these positionings. I will distinguish between positionings by performance and positionings by claiming (in)competence for oneself as two major ways of accomplishing positionings as (in)competent speakers. I will also investigate a special case of claiming competence that consists in positioning as a (near-)native speaker. Finally, I will elaborate on overarching ideological constructions of competence underlying my interview partners' positionings, involving notions of normativity and purity as well as of effortlessness and of successful communication.

In Chapter 8, I will review my participants' affective positionings and examine how and with what effect affective positionings clustered around specific kinds of speakers and specific kinds of linguistic resources. I will examine affective positionings in which my interview partners took affective stances of attachment, desire, enjoyment, indifference, dislike and hate to named

languages or dialects as stance objects. I will also analyse their affective positionings as they were narrating instances of lived experience of language, involving shame and anxiety, pride, regrets, pain, anger and frustration. Finally, I will show how these positionings were entangled with one another, with language ideologies and with my own affective positionings.

Finally, Chapter 9 will present the conclusions that I have drawn based on the findings of my research. It will show how they contribute to theory and methodology in sociolinguistic research, and will include suggestions for further research and for different stakeholders in South Tyrol.

2 Theoretical Framework

The questions I am addressing with this research are fundamentally sociolinguistic ones. They are less about language itself, and more about the ways in which language matters to the adolescents I talked to. In this chapter, I will situate my research within the broader field of sociolinguistics, and illustrate some of the key theoretical concepts I have worked with. I will first explain the particular subject-centred approach to sociolinguistics that I take in this research (2.1), before I will focus more closely on the notions of the linguistic repertoire and of lived experience of language (2.2) and of language ideologies (2.3) that are crucial to this approach. Finally, I will elucidate how the two related research traditions of positioning theory and stance-taking provide both theoretical and analytical tools that can establish links between linguistic repertoires, lived experience of language and language ideologies in a sociolinguistics of the speaking subject (2.4).

2.1 Doing sociolinguistics from a subject perspective

In this research, I am adopting a sociolinguistic perspective that puts the *speaking subject* at the centre of attention. This designation is inspired by uses of the term by poststructural theorists such as Lacan (1977), Kristeva (1980, 1984/2002) or Butler (1997), and refers not necessarily to a subject that is speaking in a literal sense, but to the subject as more generally constituted in language. However, the notion of the speaking subject that I have applied in this research is not only inspired by poststructuralist thinking, but also by interactional and phenomenological approaches to subjectivity. Research in sociolinguistics has productively been drawing on poststructural and interactional notions of subjectivity for the last decades, while it has started to engage with phenomenological notions only more recently. In adopting a perspective that combines these notions, I follow in particular Brigitta Busch (2015a, 2017a, 2020), who has argued that a phenomenological perspective can enrich interactional and poststructural approaches to the speaking subject. In this section, I will review the ways in which these three differing approaches have been applied to issues of language both separately and conjointly, to finally justify why I deemed their combination most suitable for my investigation into the linguistic repertoires and self-positionings of adolescents in South Tyrol. Poststructuralist approaches to the subject have productively been applied to sociolinguistics within the fields of second language acquisition, multilingualism and in recent reconceptualisations of the linguistic repertoire. Such approaches have drawn on scholars like Michel Foucault (1969), Julia Kristeva (1980) or Judith Butler (1997) to theorise the subject

as constituted in language. The speaking subject is thereby not conceived of as a sovereign individual, but as a subject constrained by the subject positions available for it in discourse (Foucault, 1969). At the same time, however, it is not entirely determined by those subject positions, as it disposes of agency within discourse – an aspect that was underlined especially by the feminist scholars Butler (1997) and Kristeva (1980, 1984/2002).

Poststructuralist theories of the subject have urged scholars in sociolinguistics to make issues of power a central concern. As early as 1995, Bonny Norton Peirce drew on notions of subjectivity in her study of the acquisition of English by immigrant women in Canada. She demonstrated how power imbalances influenced learning processes, but also how her participants claimed the right to speak. Claire Kramsch (2009), in turn, drew on poststructuralist theories of subjectivity in order to theorise the multilingual subject. She referred to subjectivity as “a dynamic, spatio-temporal, symbolic concept” (Kramsch, 2009:94) and illustrated how being multilingual engenders possibilities and necessities to occupy new subject positions within different symbolic systems. Recent reformulations of the linguistic repertoire, which I will discuss in more detail in section 2.2, also put the subject, intended as formed by discourse and consequently by power, at the centre of their considerations (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012).

The central preoccupations of poststructuralist approaches to the subject are thus investigations of the conditions of possibility for subject positions, and of the subject’s agency in discourse. This becomes especially evident in Kramsch’s (2012) comparative elaborations of modernist and postmodernist/poststructuralist stances in applied linguistics: while the former were concerned more with empowering speakers and helping them take up subject positions from which they could speak, the latter ask where the discourses come from that assign certain speakers powerless subject positions, and how established binary categories can be resignified. Categories are recognised as historically contingent, and consequently speakers’ feelings of illegitimacy or imposture are no longer framed as individual problems, but are linked to larger social processes and discourses and to the contradictions and paradoxes within them.

Interactional approaches to subjectivity, in turn, are mostly situated within interactional sociolinguistics or conversation analysis, or draw heavily on analytical tools developed within and across these two disciplines. Within such approaches, the subject is seen as continuously co-constructed in interaction, and attention is thus placed on how subject positions are negotiated in the minutiae of interaction. Such an orientation is displayed by analyses of identity construction in conversational interaction (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998), in narrative

(e.g. De Fina, 2013; Deppermann, 2013b; König, 2011; Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2004) and in small stories (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2003).

Research undertaken within this paradigm shares a core interest in interaction as the site where subject positions or identities are co-constructed, but different strands within it display differing ontological orientations that make them more or less compatible with poststructural approaches. Research that primarily orients to local displays of identity interaction, and thus attempts to understand subject positions only within interaction (e.g. Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998), is not concerned with wider discourses and issues of power. Other approaches, however, do aim to link what they observe in interaction to wider social processes, and thus share aims of poststructuralist approaches (e.g. De Fina, 2013; Deppermann, 2013b).

Phenomenological thinking has taken a different approach to subjectivity, taking a first-person perspective and thus focusing on the subject's lived experience. The work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty was especially influential in this context. Merleau-Ponty (1945:467) emphasised the role of the body and of the body's being in the world:

Si, réfléchissant sur l'essence de la subjectivité, je la trouve liée à celle du corps et à celle du monde, c'est que mon existence comme subjectivité ne fait qu'un avec mon existence comme corps et avec l'existence du monde et que finalement le sujet que je suis, concrètement pris, est inséparable de ce corps-ci et de ce monde-ci.³

Merleau-Ponty saw subjectivity as grounded in the body and its being in the world, and thus considered the subject as inseparable from the body as well as from the world in which the body finds itself. The body is always with the subject, it is the foundation of perception and experience. The subject thus becomes a perceiving, experiencing and feeling subject.

As pointed out by Busch (2017a:52), language, from a phenomenological perspective, is not primarily a system of signifiers, but “an intersubjective bodily emotional gesture which relates the experiencing/speaking subject to the other and to the world.” In her conceptualisation of the lived experience of language, Busch (2015a, 2017a) expanded on this idea and underlined the merits of a phenomenological stance in investigating how language is experienced, especially in the context of language biographical research (see section 2.2).

In fact, Busch (2015a, 2017a, 2020) argued that poststructuralist, interactional and phenomenological approaches to the subject can be complementary. Each perspective can contribute to a better understanding of the speaking subject, inasmuch as questions about the

³ “If I find, reflecting upon the essence of the body, that it is tied to the essence of the world, this is because my existence as subjectivity is identical with my existence as a body and with the existence of the world, and because, ultimately, the subject that I am, understood concretely, is inseparable from this particular body and from this particular world.” – translation by Donald A. Landes, 2012, Routledge

ways in which language can (re)produce belonging or social difference, as well as about how speakers experience themselves as belonging or as excluded, can consequently be more adequately addressed. Busch (2020) argued that the poststructuralist interest in the subject's agency in discourse and in the ways in which subject positions can be negotiated and challenged can benefit substantially from a phenomenological stance that is centred on how the subject experiences discourse and on the subject positions it takes up within it.

Busch (2015a, 2020) also conceded that there are two necessary premises if these differing approaches are to be rendered compatible with one another. First, it needs to be acknowledged that the first-person perspective on experience and perception can only ever be accessed by being reconstituted. Such reconstitution, together with the verbalisation speakers make of it for instance through narration, will always be influenced by the specific interactional contexts in which it takes place. For this reason, the analytical toolkit of interactional approaches needs to be mobilised to take the interactional nature of the reconstruction of experience into account. Second, the subject cannot be regarded as unitary and given, as the continuity of the body in phenomenological terms suggests, but experience needs to be considered as influenced by discourses and ideologies that pre-structure available subject positions in poststructuralist terms (Butler, 1997). If these two premises are respected, then interactional, poststructuralist and phenomenological perspectives on the subject can fruitfully be combined to investigate how subjects experience ideologies and categorisations, how they negotiate or subvert them in interaction, and how finally such ideologies are finally reproduced or altered over time.

Such combined approaches have been adopted by several scholars in recent years. For instance, Thüne (2011) interactionally analysed language biographical interviews with two Italian women who had lived in Germany for over three decades, and investigated how these women experienced inclusions and exclusions on the basis of their accent. Osterkorn and Vetter (2015) investigated language practices and positionings of adolescents within the monolingual institutional framework of a Breton immersion school in Brittany, France. Purkarthofer (2017) took a speaker-centred approach to examining how future parents imagined the development of their family language policy, and showed how what the participants envisioned was linked to their own biographies, to the social spaces in which they moved and to language ideologies. Codó (2018), in turn, drew on interactional analyses of two interviews with lifestyle migrants to Barcelona to investigate the subjective and emotional meanings that they give to Catalan, as well as how these are embedded in larger discourses about the language and the nation. Codó (2018:19) thereby argued the following:

[C]ertain dimensions of sociolinguistic sensemaking (to do with very intimate and emotional experiences) are frequently left out of understandings of language and identity in favour of broader political, economic and ideological considerations, which despite their relevance, fail short of providing the whole picture.

Drawing on previous research that combines interactional, poststructural and phenomenological approaches, I will adopt a subject perspective in this dissertation and aim to attend both to the intimate and emotional experiences of my interview partners, as well as to broader political and ideological considerations in order to provide the whole picture of South Tyrolean adolescents' linguistic repertoires and their self-positionings in relation to these repertoires. The linguistic repertoire and the lived experience of language, which I will now turn to, thus become central notions of such a sociolinguistics of the subject.

2.2 The linguistic repertoire and the lived experience of language

Since its inception in the work of sociolinguist and linguistic anthropologist John J. Gumperz (1964), the concept of the linguistic repertoire has remained one of the key notions in sociolinguistics (e.g. Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Dal Negro & Iannàccaro, 2003; Pennycook, 2016). Gumperz developed his ideas on what he then called the *verbal repertoire* on the basis of research conducted on two distinct communities, an agricultural village in the North of India and a small settlement in Northern Norway. He defined this verbal repertoire as “the totality of linguistic forms regularly employed in the course of socially significant interaction” (Gumperz, 1964:137). At the heart of this notion thus stood an interest in the way in which linguistic forms are made use of in social interaction, and in how they express contextual variation and social difference. Gumperz illustrated this with the two verbs *dine* and *eat*, which despite their semantic similarities express differences not only in the kind of meals prepared for consumption, but also in the social relationships and social positions of the people doing the dining or eating.

Gumperz (1964:140) stressed that this notion of the verbal repertoire can stretch several languages or dialects, if they regularly appear in the use of a speech community, and that they consequently “form a behavioural whole, regardless of grammatical distinctness, and must be considered constituent varieties of the same verbal repertoire”. He further noted that speech varieties within a given repertoire may be meaningful in that they are allocated to different contexts or social relationships, and he convincingly demonstrated this idea with reference to different social contexts in the two communities he studied. The notion of the verbal repertoire thus consisted in a shift from investigating linguistic forms for their own sake, to investigating

them as social action and thus discovering their social meanings for the groups of people employing them.

For Gumperz (1964:137), the starting point for analysis was the speech community, which he defined as “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction over a significant span of time and set off from other such aggregates by differences in the frequency of interaction”. He thus refrained from describing the speech community in essentialist terms, and it follows from his definition that the boundaries of the speech community are as much an outcome of analysis as are descriptions of the community’s verbal repertoire, since regularity and frequency of interaction cannot be established *a priori*.

While the notion of the verbal repertoire, renamed *linguistic* repertoire by Gumperz (1965) himself, has been highly productive since Gumperz’ seminal publications, several authors (e.g. Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Pennycook, 2016) noted a lack in sustained theoretical engagement with the concept up until recently. Moreover, the notion has increasingly experienced a shift in focus from the speech community to individual speakers, which however has rarely been accompanied by reflections on what a move of this sort entails from a theoretical perspective.

Recent exceptions in this regard are Pennycook and Otsuji’s (2014) notion of the spatial repertoire, Blommaert and Backus’ (2013) reflections on superdiverse repertoires and Busch’s (2012, 2015a) reconceptualisation of the linguistic repertoire. While the authors’ approaches to the linguistic repertoire differ in certain ways, they agree on the necessity of calling into question two central notions: that of the speech community, as well as that of bounded, separable languages.

The authors argued that, in the present day, speakers engage with various groups and networks of people, especially as modern communication technology enables them to do so also in a deterritorialised fashion. Thus, the stability of the speech community is questionable and cannot serve as a defining feature of the linguistic repertoire as it did for Gumperz (1964). While Gumperz’ speech community was defined in non-essentialist terms, he still worked from the assumption that one community can be delimited from another, which the above-cited authors claimed might no longer be possible, or at least obscures the ways in which mobile subjects participate in multiple networks.

Moreover, the mentioned reconceptualisations of the linguistic repertoire share an understanding of the ways in which languages as bounded entities are socially constructed and do not match real-life language practices. This idea also lies at the heart of the more recently developed notions of *translanguaging* (e.g. Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2015;

Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015; Wei, 2011) or *polylinguaging* (Jørgensen, Karrebæk, Madsen, & Møller, 2011), and has also been more widely discussed in sociolinguistics generally (Heller, 2007; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). In order to differentiate between language as language practices, and *a* language as a bounded entity, research in this line of thinking tends to refer to the latter as a *named* language, as it consists in different linguistic resources carrying a socially constructed label like ‘Spanish’, ‘Urdu’ or ‘Swahili’. Such research has either investigated precisely the social construction of bounded languages (e.g. Makoni & Pennycook, 2007), or has turned to focus almost exclusively on language practices, as is the case for translanguaging, polylinguaging and the spatial repertoire (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014). A small number of scholars, in contrast, have paid attention to both language practices and the social constructs of bounded linguistic systems (e.g. Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a; Heller, 2007).

Current notions of the linguistic repertoire differ most strikingly in that some research has taken a speaker-centred approach to the linguistic repertoire (Blommaert, 2009; Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a), while other scholars have proposed a focus on spatial repertoires as “the linguistic resources available in a particular place” (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014:161). The latter thus argued against a view of the individual as the locus of the linguistic repertoire, and cautioned that such a view risks losing sight of the social nature of the repertoire that was so central for Gumperz (1964).

While this word of caution is certainly due, it needs to be taken into account that a speaker-centred perspective on the linguistic repertoire does not entail considering this speaker as a bounded, independent individual. On the contrary: the starting point is the speaking subject that is entangled in relations of power and is constituted in interaction (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a). Consequently, the linguistic repertoire, in Busch’s (2015a:7) terms, is understood “not as something the individual possesses but as formed and deployed in intersubjective processes located on the border between self and the other”.

In such a view, the repertoire is constituted in interaction just like the subject itself. It develops as the speaking subject moves through different social spaces, and takes up different subject positions within those spaces (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a). In fact, Blommaert (2009:423-4) claims the following about the linguistic repertoire:

It is tied to an individual’s life, and it follows the peculiar biographical trajectory of the speaker. When the speaker moves from one social space into another, his or her repertoire is affected, and the end result is something that mirrors, almost like an autobiography, the erratic lives of people.

Speaker-centred perspectives on the repertoire thus recognise that it is linked to both time and space, as it reflects an entire life led in different, socially configured, spaces. As Busch (2015a) rightly observed, Pennycook and Otsuji (2014) might place a focus on the spatial perspective, while Blommaert (2009) and Blommaert and Backus (2013) underline a biographical one, but the one perspective is always implicated in the other.

While Blommaert and Backus (2013) and Busch (2012, 2015a) share a focus on the repertoire in interaction, as well as a poststructuralist conception of the speaking subject, Busch additionally merged these insights with a phenomenological perspective on the subject by introducing the concept of the lived experience of language. This notion brings to the fore the bodily and emotional dimension of experiencing language in intersubjective interaction. The speaking subject thus becomes an experiencing subject that perceives itself and others as speakers.

As is common for phenomenological approaches, this experience needs to be addressed from a first-person perspective. Busch illustrated this idea by in-depth analyses of the lived experience of two particular subjects, accessed via language-biographical methods. One example is that of Pascal, whose biography has been characterised by a constant negotiation of tensions between discourses of German and French (Busch, 2010a, 2012), and the other is that of an unnamed student who found that her repertoire no longer belonged as she moved schools (Busch, 2015a). Pascal, whose life involved several border crossings between German Saarland and French Lorraine, and whose parents were a French soldier and a woman from Saarland, has experienced French and German to be associated to two national identities that mutually exclude each other. In highly emotional terms, he speaks of his desire for double nationality, the rejection of which he describes as a frustration. The unnamed student, on the other hand, perceived the linguistic variation within one language, German, as expressing a social difference between herself and her new classmates. Having moved from a rural elementary school to a secondary school in the city, she found her German to index a rural identity and perceived herself, through the eyes of others, as a deficient speaker – experiencing shame and ultimately assimilating into the new linguistic environment.

Busch (2015a) noted that the feelings of desire, frustration and shame mentioned in these examples, but also feelings of joy, pride, fear or anger were all mentioned in different accounts of the lived experience of language. These feelings are experienced in a bodily manner, and Busch argued that such bodily and emotional aspects of experiencing language in situated interactions have remained under-researched. Similar arguments of a neglect of emotion and

affect have also been put forth by Kramsch (2009) in the field of Second Language Acquisition, and by McNamara (2010) in the field of Applied Linguistics more generally.

In this context, Busch (2012, 2015a) thus recognised the linguistic repertoire as not only determined by the linguistic resources we deploy, but also by the ones we are not (yet) able to use. These may be experienced in bodily-emotional terms as a threat in a given interaction, particularly in encounters with high stakes. On the other hand, linguistic resources can also be part of a linguistic repertoire as objects of desire, which may or may not result in efforts to appropriate and deploy them. Consequently, the linguistic repertoire does not only point backwards, but also forwards to possible futures that speakers are projecting and to the social spaces in which they imagine themselves participating.

These aspects also distinguish Busch's (2012, 2015a) intertwined notions of the linguistic repertoire and the lived experience of language from Blommaert and Backus' (2013) notion of the repertoire. While the latter authors ultimately list the linguistic resources that the speaking subject has learned to use in the course of his or her lifetime, Busch stresses the importance of conceiving the repertoire as multidimensional. She argued that this engenders "a move away from the idea that the repertoire is a set of competences, a kind of toolbox, from which we select the 'right' language, the 'right code' for each context or situation" (Busch, 2015a:17).

Moreover, while Blommaert (2009) and Blommaert and Backus (2013) also recognised the importance that discourses and ideologies about language have for the linguistic repertoire, Busch (2015a, 2017a) convincingly theorised these ideologies as entering the linguistic repertoire through the lived experience of the subject. The example of the young student's shame at speaking a specific kind of German illustrates how the lived experience of language mediates between language ideologies and the linguistic repertoire. Through the eyes of her classmates, the girl came to perceive and finally internalise ideas about what it means to speak like someone from the country, and about the subject positions associated with this speech – and consequently restructured her linguistic repertoire.

In such a view, the linguistic repertoire can be mobilised as a theoretical notion to address how people experience themselves as legitimate or illegitimate, authentic or artificial speakers, how they experience inclusions, exclusions or even persecution on the basis of language. Moreover, it helps address how people agentively respond to such categorisations, including, as in Pascal's case, strategies such as irony or silence (Busch, 2012). Ultimately, such a perspective also allows further insights into how linguistic variation serves to construct and reproduce, but also subvert such categorisations (Busch, 2015a, 2020). In this research, in line with Busch (2015a:13), I will thus consider the repertoire as the following:

a structure bearing the traces of past experience of situated interactions, and of the everyday linguistic practices derived from this experience, a structure that is constantly present in our current linguistic perceptions, interpretations, and actions, and is simultaneously directed forward, anticipating future situations and events we are preparing to face.

2.3 Language ideologies

The previous section has already pointed to language ideologies as a central concept for the subject perspective on the linguistic repertoire that I have applied in this study. The notions of the linguistic repertoire and the lived experience of language would not be complete without attention to language ideologies as “sets of socially shared beliefs about language” (Horner & Weber, 2018:26) that structure the subject’s lived experience of language. In this section, I will provide an overview of some of the central notions in language ideological research undertaken in the fields of linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics, also touching upon intersections with critical discourse analysis.

In a seminal article that can be seen as having laid the foundation for language ideological research, Michael Silverstein (1979:193) defined language ideologies as “any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use”. By these beliefs, he intended the ways in which speakers perceive and explain linguistic forms and practices and associated social meanings. This notion of ideologies is thus set apart from both everyday uses of the term ideology, as well as from notions of ideologies as ‘false’ beliefs about language. Silverstein further argued that social actors’ beliefs *about* language structure and language use actually impact *on* language use and structure, and thus these beliefs can become central for explaining language change.

In her review of language ideologies as an emerging field of study, Kathryn Woolard (1992) noted that these ideologies have been researched under different labels: studies on metalinguistics, language norms, language attitudes and on values attributed to languages and varieties can be summed up under the umbrella term of language ideologies. The label ideology, she stated, thereby “calls attention to the socially-situated and/or experientially-derived dimension of cognition or consciousness” (Woolard, 1992:237). Ideologies, which she located in the conceptual or cognitive realm, are thus conceived of as derived from experience and as grounded in social interaction.

In fact, language ideologies rarely concern beliefs about language only, but are about associations between linguistic forms, and people and their activities (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Silverstein, 2003). Irvine and Gal (2000) noted that linguistic forms, or signs in semiotic terms, can point to the social positions of speakers. Such forms are referred to as *indexes* or *indexical signs*, and linguistic ideologies are produced when these indexes come to be seen as reflecting

systematic contrasts between social groups. With his concept of *indexical order*, Michael Silverstein (2003) theorised this process: an index of the first order points to membership in a social group, and when a social evaluation of this group becomes associated with that index, we speak of a second-order index. This link between linguistic form and social meaning is stable insofar as it is produced and reproduced in interaction. However, this also means that indexical meanings can change as different indexical links can be forged in interaction.

In such a view, it becomes clear how language ideologies construct social difference and make boundaries between different kinds of people (Irvine & Gal, 2000). Monica Heller's (2006) ethnography of a francophone school in Toronto provides a telling example: especially for the male students in the school, speaking Quebec French means being a tough, authentic francophone, being French-English bilingual means being immersed in North American popular culture, and speaking a European French alongside Somali means being streetwise and cool, anti-racist and anti-colonialist. In this context, language does not only index these meanings, but is central to constructing them in the first place. Therefore, linguistic differentiation cannot be considered as merely reflecting independent social differences, but the two are inextricably intertwined.

Another central aspect already noted by Woolard (1992) is that there tends to be multiplicity among language ideologies. One of the reasons for this is the fact that ideologies are socially stratified, meaning that they index particular perspectives and interests of socially positioned actors. As Irvine and Gal (2000) stated, "[t]here is no 'view from nowhere', no gaze that is not positioned". Once more, this can be illustrated with reference to Heller's (2006) school ethnography: from different social positions, the authentic francophone might become perceived as uncultured, the bilingual becomes a sell-out to anglophone Canadians, and the student from Somalia becomes both a victim and a threat.

Moreover, ideologies are often far from coherent, and can be contradictory even from similar social positions. Examples of such contradictions are manifold. Horner and Weber (2018), for instance, observed that in European media, being multilingual is often presented as a personal enrichment that might even lead to enrichments of the economic kind – but media representations of multilingual speakers who might not speak the 'right' languages often look radically different, and depict this kind of multilingualism as problematic. Joseph Sung-Yul Park (2010), in turn, uncovered contradictions in the way in which English skills in South Korea are associated with privileged social classes on the one hand, and on the other they have come to be constructed as results of personal efforts and moral worth instead of as an outcome of privilege. Ultimately, as is noted by Heller, Pietikäinen and Pujolar (2018), competing and

contradiction ideologies of language are also found within the field of linguistics itself, concerning nothing less than the definition of the object under study, where understandings of languages as coherent structural systems and understandings of language as social action coexist or even compete.

Competition and contradiction between ideologies can often also be symptomatic of language ideological change, which can most easily be observed in hindsight. Striking examples are the socio-ideological construction of specific bounded languages, as Makoni and Pennycook (2007) have convincingly shown with special attention to colonial and nationalistic projects. In the same volume, Busch and Schick (2007) presented the most recent European example of the construction of languages by following the development of languages on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The authors delineated how Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian came to be constructed as separate languages as Yugoslavia began to disintegrate, among others through the creation of dictionaries and grammars that emphasised linguistic differences, and how this ultimately served nation-building projects.

From this example, it also becomes clear how language ideologies are linked to power and social inequality. They can serve to legitimise nation states, and they can construct inclusions and exclusions on the ground. This is also the case when a high school student in Austria needs to adapt her speech to that of her classmates in order to belong (Busch, 2015a), when the call center industry in Ontario prefers hiring speakers of European French to hiring francophone Ontarians (Heller, 2011), or when assessments of language skills decide over questions of citizenship (McNamara, 2012) – and the list of examples could go on.

When it comes to linking language ideologies to power, research on language ideologies has frequently drawn on the notions of *linguistic capital* and of the *linguistic market* developed by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1986, 1991). Bourdieu mobilised these two notions to explain how certain linguistic resources acquire value as legitimate language. He argued that it is essentially social relations that underlie the definition of what gets defined as valuable linguistic capital on a particular linguistic market. The latter can be constituted in different ways: for instance, anything from a single school to a national education system could be considered as a linguistic market, and under the current conditions of globalisation, one can also speak of globalised linguistic marketplaces (Park & Wee, 2013). While this notion of the linguistic market is mainly to be understood in metaphorical terms, Bourdieu (1986) also stressed that linguistic capital, like other kinds of cultural capital, is intricately linked to economic capital, both because it can be converted into economic capital under specific

conditions, and because acquiring linguistic capital requires investing time, which is only possible if one possesses economic capital.

It is also important to note that the questions asked by research on language ideologies in linguistic anthropology or sociolinguistics are akin to the ones asked by different approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis (e.g. Fairclough, 1989; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Both CDA and language ideological research are interested in the ways in which language and power are intertwined, and in which they conjointly construct social difference and inequality. This was pointed out by Milani and Johnson (2008:379) when they stated that the two approaches have a “common commitment to unpacking relationships between ideology, power, and history, on the one hand, and language/discourse, on the other”. The authors argued that language ideological research could benefit from the methods of text analysis developed in CDA, whereas the latter could benefit from the heightened reflexivity characteristic for the former. They argued that CDA needs to recognise the knowledge it produces as situated and positioned, and let go of the epistemologically problematic assumption that it is somehow less ideological – which, however, does not lessen its emancipatory force.

Silverstein (1979) and Irvine and Gal (2000) already recognised the ideological dimensions of doing linguistic research. The latter demonstrate this convincingly from a historical distance in an analysis of the work of linguists in drawing linguistic boundaries both in Senegal and Macedonia, and state that “the scholarly enterprise of describing linguistic differentiation is itself ideologically and socially engaged” (Irvine & Gal, 2000:74). The same argument was put forth by Spitzmüller in his more recent analyses of two language ideological debates in the German context, one on the influence of English on German (2007), and the other on the phenomenon of *netspeak*, i.e. a linguistic register supposedly specific to communication on the internet (Spitzmüller, 2013).

While language ideologies are always of a socially situated nature, and need to be looked at from within the context of their circulation, some recurring language ideological themes can be identified. In this context, Horner and Weber (2018) have listed the belief of some hierarchical relationship between different (socially constructed) languages, a standard language ideology valuing the standard over non-standard varieties of a language, ideas of ‘pure’, homogeneous language, a mother tongue ideology stipulating that people would tend to have only one mother tongue, as well as an ideology tying one nation to one language. Most of the examples of language ideologies I have mentioned so far fit one or several of these general ideas: at the Austrian secondary school, a German closer to the standard was valued more positively than a rural variety (Busch, 2015a); in the debates that Spitzmüller (2007)

analysed, people argued for a ‘pure’ German free from anglicisms; and in former Yugoslavia, Croatian and Serbian were constructed as separate languages in order to tie them to the newly formed nation states (Busch & Schick, 2007). An additional ideological complex that has begun to emerge more recently with the advent of the neoliberal economy is the idea of language as a commodity to be marketed and sold. This is the case when bilingual workers are sought for employment in the call center industry in Canada, or when language is mobilised as a marker for authenticity to market touristic experiences and cultural products (Heller, 2003, 2011).

Besides such patterns of recurring language ideologies across contexts, scholars have also endeavoured to uncover patterns in the processes involved in making language ideologies. Irvine and Gal (2000) identified three semiotic processes that “concern the way people conceive of links between linguistic forms and social phenomena”, thus constructing language ideologies: iconization, fractal recursivity and erasure. The authors speak of *iconization* when linguistic forms are not regarded as mere indexes of a social group, but become iconic representations of some qualities of that group. This was for instance the case when the language of a people in Senegal was described as ‘simple’ during the colonial project, much in the same way as the people were perceived as ‘simple’. *Fractal recursivity*, in turn, concerns the projection of a linguistic difference that is salient on one level to another level. For instance, if a linguistic register symbolises distance between members of different communities, it can become mobilised to express deference within members of the same community. *Erasure* is a process of simplifying actual linguistic differentiation to fit an ideological scheme. For instance, this is the case when the speech of social groups is imagined as homogeneous and linguistic variation within the group is either not noticed or explained away. In its most radical forms, this process can potentially even lead to action that attempts to eradicate aspects of linguistic differentiation.

Irvine and Gal (2000) illustrated these three ideological processes with reference to three different contexts, explaining how clicks came to be introduced to the Nguni languages in southern Africa, how the French colonial project constructed languages and territories in Senegal and how language practices changed in Macedonia under the influence of Western European language ideologies. Especially with regard to the latter two examples, they showed how all three ideological processes worked together to ultimately change the linguistic landscape. For instance, language maps created by French linguists in Senegal *iconically* linked a language to a people and a territory, simultaneously *erasing* multilingualism and variation. At the same time, multilingualism was explained away as having been introduced through a

history of conquest and subordination, thus *recursively* projecting ideological relationships between Europeans and Africans onto the relationships between peoples on Senegalese territory.

While Irvine and Gal (2000) mostly drew on historical data and contexts for their analyses, other authors have identified the workings of the same ideological processes in the present day. For instance, Busch (2015b) has shown how individual multilingualism is *erased* both in reports on school statistics and national censuses in Austria. Park (2010), in turn, has illustrated how success stories of English language learning published in the South Korean press create a naturalised, iconic link between the learners' moral worth, their English learning success and their social success by *erasing* the potential role that social privilege could have played in the learners' journey, and by *highlighting* learners who are socially successful and *erasing* others who are not.

From this discussion, it becomes clear that when people discuss and debate language, they are really talking about other, social issues most of the time. As Piller (2016:55) stated, "judgments about language are ultimately judgments about speakers". Language ideologies make boundaries and can include and exclude speakers with real social consequences. However, if we as researchers can point to some of these ideologies and to the interests that they serve, we may provide alternative narratives in language ideological debates and might contribute to bringing about ideological and social change.

2.4 Bridging to analysis: positioning and stance-taking

While I have now introduced most of the key ideas informing my study on the ways in which secondary school students in South Tyrol position themselves to language, the central concept of positioning still needs to be clarified. In several instances throughout this chapter, I have referred to subject positions negotiated in discourse. In this section, I will first delineate positioning (2.4.1) and stance-taking in discourse (2.4.2) as two related approaches to how this occurs and finally illustrate how a combination of these two approaches has guided my study both theoretically and analytically, serving as the link between interview interactions, the students' linguistic repertoires and their lived experience of language, as well as the language ideologies at play in the latter.

2.4.1 Positioning theory

The beginnings of a designated positioning theory can be traced back to a seminal paper by Davies and Harré (1990), in which they laid the groundwork for *positioning* as a useful concept

for approaching “the discursive production of a diversity of selves” (Davies & Harré, 1990:47). The two scholars located their endeavour within social psychology and proposed it as a perspective on selfhood that stands in stark opposition to the more stable concept of *role* that was popular in their field at the time. While the latter concept constituted a rather static and deterministic view of how people display a version of their self in social encounters, positioning, on the other hand, enabled a focus on dynamic aspects of social interaction.

Davies and Harré (1990) described positioning as a conversational phenomenon, thus grounding it firmly in social interaction, and they highlighted that it is achieved by the joint action of participants. Positions are thus considered as co-constructed and negotiated in interaction. A central role in this process is played by the discursive practices that make subject positions available for interactants to take up. However, individuals engaging in discursive practices are not entirely determined by these subject positions, but exercise a certain degree of choice with respect to the kinds of positions to take up.

These principles of a positioning theory already make apparent the striking parallels between positioning and poststructuralist theory, which Davies and Harré (1990) themselves only slightly touched upon. Positioning is essentially based on the Foucauldian conceptualisation of both discourse and the subject, and one could thus argue that it is a *subject*, and not a sovereign individual, that “emerges through the process of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate” (Davies & Harré, 1990:46). For this reason, positioning is particularly suitable as an analytic lens with which to approach social interactions and the way in which participants actively co-construct and negotiate social positions and thus become subjects.

In another seminal paper, Harré and van Langenhove (1991) established a taxonomy of different kinds of positioning: they distinguished between first, second and third order positioning, between moral and personal positioning, self- and other positioning and tacit and intentional positioning. These categories are not mutually exclusive, but the two authors argued that teasing them apart may still prove useful for analytical purposes. For the present study, the distinction between self- and other positioning is most relevant. However, even though utterances may place a focus on positioning the self or on positioning others, the two always take place simultaneously, as positions are relational: by positioning myself, I position others, and by positioning others, I position myself.

Since these first papers developing the outlines of a positioning theory, the concept has travelled far. It has been imported to and re-framed for methodological operationalisation in

conversation analysis (Deppermann, 2013b), and it has been influential in narratology or narrative analysis (e.g. Bamberg, 1997; De Fina, 2006, 2013; Georgakopoulou, 2003), where it has also received a sociolinguistic orientation. These different approaches to positioning have each re-shaped the concept to suit their epistemological basis and their methodological purposes.

For narrative analysis, Bamberg's (1997) notion of three levels of positioning has been especially influential. The first level of positioning addresses the ways in which the narrator positions characters to one another in the story world, the second level entails the narrator's positionings towards his or her audience, and the third level is about narrators positioning themselves to themselves. As pointed out by Deppermann (2013b, 2013a), this view of positioning is especially useful as it "refers specifically to the double temporal indexicality of narratives, which includes both representation and action, and its biographical, individual dimension" (Deppermann, 2013a:9). Deppermann thus underlined that positioning can capture how narrators position themselves on two timescales: on the timescale of the story being told, and in the specific interaction in which they tell the story. If narrators tell stories about themselves, as they do in language-biographical interviews, they may take up various positions towards their narrated self, e.g. in displaying self-irony or in telling a tale of maturation, or more generally in telling stories of biographical continuity or of change.

One of the more recent innovations within narrative approaches to positioning is the introduction of *affective positioning* as an analytical framework within which to attend to affect performance in narrative. Giaxoglou and Georgakopoulou (in press:13) have argued that affect has remained under-researched in positioning studies, and proposed to treat affect "as an integral part of storytelling interaction and as an embodied practice". They applied this framework to analyses of talk about death and mourning on social media, and examined affect performed with linguistic or paralinguistic means and in embodied ways, on the three levels of positioning established by Bamberg (1997). Such an extension of positioning analysis is thus particularly useful for an analysis of the lived experience of language.

A central merit of positioning is that it can be usefully employed to link singular social interactions to larger discourses, as has been argued by several scholars (e.g. De Fina, 2013; Deppermann, 2013b; Spitzmüller, Flubacher, & Bendl, 2017). This can be achieved by combining an investigation of possibilities for the negotiation of subject positions in interaction with a focus on the ways in which subject positions are enabled and constrained by discourse. De Fina (2013), for instance, proposed Bamberg's (1997) third level of positioning as suitable to connect local positionings in narratives to wider social processes. She highlighted that in

positioning themselves to themselves, narrators display their stances to larger societal discourses, and may also point to positioning practices common within a community. Thus, she sustained that ideologies can be uncovered and linked to local positioning moves by closely examining narratives and by uncovering patterns in narratives told by people belonging to the same community. Her analysis of Latin American women's narratives of learning English in the US is a case in point: De Fina (2013) identified a pattern of linking stories of language learning to ethnic or racial group conflicts. She argued that this pattern points to the ideology of clearly separable ethnic or racial groups and to the relevance of language for belonging to one of these groups.

At this point, however, it is important to note that De Fina (2006, 2013) and other authors (e.g. Dailey-O'Cain & Liebscher, 2011; Deppermann, 2013b; König, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2011) have not mobilised positioning for its own sake, but in order to investigate how *identities* are constructed in interaction. In fact, the concepts of positioning and identity have much in common: especially in newer formulations of identity (e.g. Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Wodak, 2012), identities have been considered as fundamentally social, as constructed in interaction and as both multiple and dynamic. Moreover, the importance of discourse and of power for identity construction has been recognised just as it has been for positioning.

The mentioned reconceptualisations of identity represent a break with a different notion of identity that regards it as an internal, psychological phenomenon, as somewhat of a 'core' of one's being in essentialist terms. Moreover, especially Bucholtz and Hall (2005) argued for a concept of identity that is inclusive of both macro social categories, such as national or gender identities, and local interactional roles. From such formulations, it becomes clear, however, that concepts of identity need to work at resisting a continuous pull of notions of stability, fixedness and even essentialism. Horner and Weber (2018) observed that in order to acknowledge identity as a process, many scholars have turned to labelling it *identification* instead. Positioning theory offers the great advantage of not having the same essentialist baggage that recent theories of identity have attempted to cut loose.

The concept of positioning, especially in its more recent version stemming from a sociolinguistically-oriented narrative analysis, thus seems a useful theoretical framework and analytical tool with which to approach the language biographical interviews I have conducted within this research. However, despite the merits that positioning has to offer, one aspect that is central for my purposes has remained under-theorised in these elaborations so far. Positioning as a concept is inherently relational, but it thereby focuses on relations between

social actors, and neglects to some degree how positions are taken up in relation to objects being evaluated – these objects, in the case of language-biographical interviews, being language(s) and associated speakers. If this link is weak, however, any link established between interview interactions and language ideologies will consequently be fragile as well. Therefore, I will now turn to a discussion of *stance-taking in discourse* for a clarification of this aspect.

2.4.2 Stance-taking in discourse

The act of taking a stance has been conceptualised graphically as a triangle by John W. Du Bois (2007), including the three simultaneous acts of evaluation, positioning and alignment (see Figure 2). Starting from cumulative definitions figuring different types of stances, such as affective or epistemic stances, Du Bois (2007:163) argued for conceiving of stance as unitary and composed of the mentioned three aspects:

“Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field.”

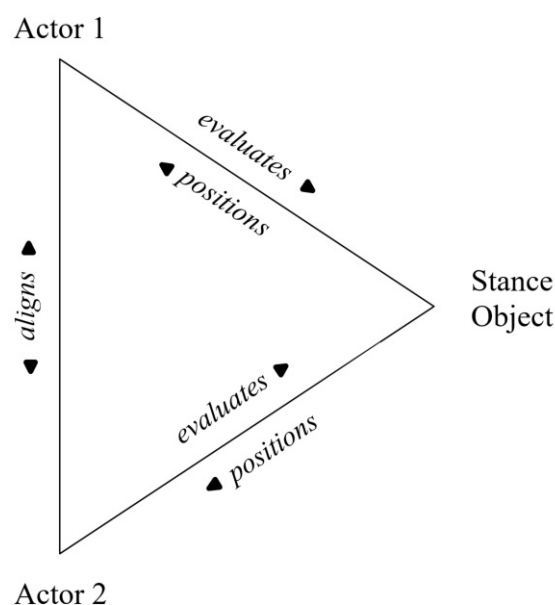


Figure 2: The Stance Triangle, adapted from Du Bois 2007:163

Thus, positioning can be considered part of the larger act of taking a stance. The focus that positioning theory places on interaction and co-construction hereby remains intact, but by its consideration of both evaluation and alignment alongside positioning, stance-taking creates added theoretical and analytical value. As subjects position themselves by evaluating a stance object, stance acts always implicitly or explicitly mobilise sociocultural value, i.e. ideologies, and thus also contribute to their reproduction. Alignment, in turn, is understood as “the act of

calibrating the relationship between two stances and by implication between two stancetakers” (Du Bois, 2007:44), whereby subjects do not align with each other in an all-or-nothing fashion, but by degrees, sometimes even strategically keeping their degree of alignment ambiguous. While du Bois (2007) came at stance from the angle of discourse and sociocultural linguistics, significant contributions to stance-taking have also been made from a sociolinguistic perspective, notably in an edited volume by Alexandra Jaffe (2009a). In her introduction to this volume, Jaffe (2009c:24) identified two broad concerns of a sociolinguistics of stance: “the social processes and consequences of all forms of stancetaking and how sociolinguistic indexicalities are both resources for and targets of stance”. Thus, from a sociolinguistic perspective, a focus is placed on the socially situated and on the socially consequential nature of stance-acts on the one hand, and on the ways in which regular associations of linguistic resources and social identities figure in these acts as stance-objects and/or as the means by which a stance is taken, on the other hand. These associations, in turn, are conceptualised as indexicalities (Silverstein, 2003).

Stance as an analytical framework essentialises neither the mentioned links between language and social categories, nor the latter themselves, but it considers how subject positions are taken up by deploying (socio)-linguistic means and how these positions are stereotypically connected to linguistic systems such as accents or dialects. In this conceptualisation, stance can be used productively to study processes of indexicalisation, i.e. the processes by which indexical links are forged. As these processes take place in the fields of the political, the social and the cultural, stance-taking can thus also be considered as an indirect index of these fields, whereby issues of power and ideology are always involved. In her own paper on bilingual Corsican schools, Jaffe (2009b) showed how stance-taking always needs to be interpreted in relation to the particularities of the sociolinguistic context in which it is embedded, including its political economy and relevant language ideologies. Jaffe (2009c:17) also coined the term of *metasociolinguistic stance*, whereby “people can take up stances toward the assumed connections between language and identity, from the individual to the collective level.” We thus speak of such stances whenever indexicalities or language ideologies themselves serve as stance-objects.

This idea is closely linked to what Spitzmüller (2013) has termed *metapragmatisches Stance-taking* or *metapragmatische Positionierung*. He based his model of metapragmatic positioning on Du Bois’ (2007) stance triangle, reducing stance objects however to language or language use and combining it with a second, mirrored triangle representing indexicality (see Figure 3). The dotted lines in the schema express how indexical links between language use, person types

and types of behaviour are not fixed, but rather dynamic and potential associations. Spitzmüller thus illustrated how evaluations of language use are often simultaneously acts of positioning towards person types or types of behaviour associated with this sort of language use. Moreover, he claimed that language use is rarely evaluated in an explicit manner, but more often than not this happens implicitly by performing a specific language use.

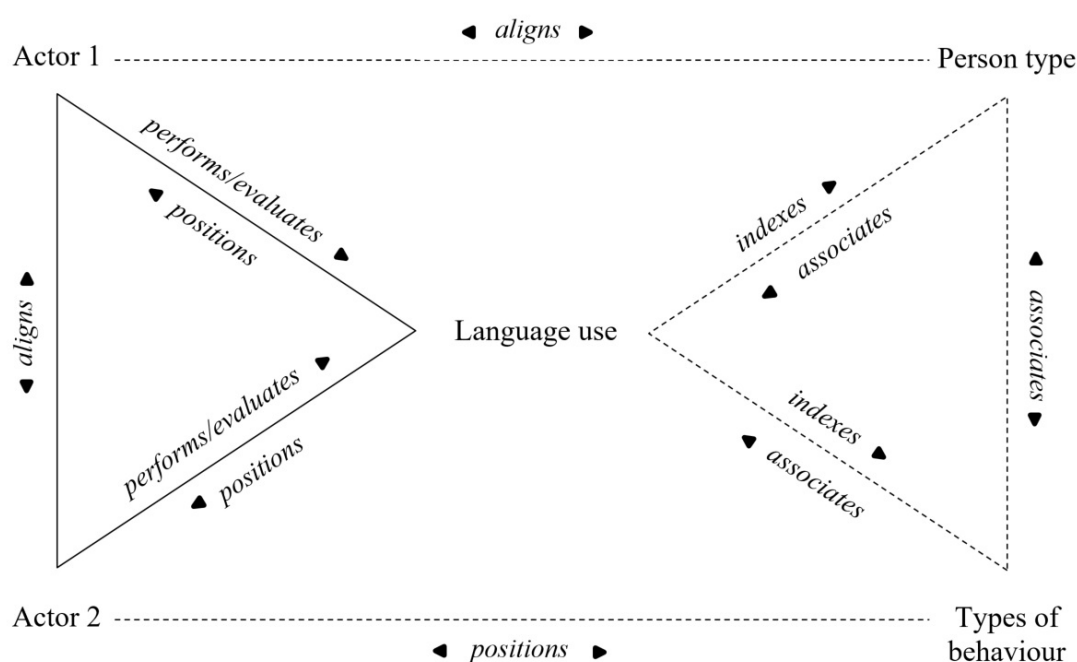


Figure 3: Schematic Representation of Metapragmatic Positioning, adapted from Spitzmüller 2013:273

Spitzmüller's (2013) model shows in a comprehensive manner how positionings towards language use are rarely mere positionings towards and evaluations of language, but also ways of (dis-)aligning with the types of people and behaviour that this kind of language use indexes. As such, metapragmatic positioning is a way of constructing one's belonging to or distance from certain social groups and generally of negotiating what is considered of social value, or, in Spitzmüller's (2013:282) own terms:

Es zeigt sich also, dass es hier um weit mehr als um ›Sprache‹ geht. Sprachideologische Diskurse und metapragmatische Positionierungen sind ein Mittel der Strukturierung und Ordnung von Gesellschaft, der Konstitution sozialer Gruppen, zu denen sich die Diskursakteure zurechnen oder von denen sie sich abgrenzen können, und der Kommunikation und Aushandlung grundlegender sozialer Werte.⁴

The types of people and behaviour that figure as stance objects in such metapragmatic positionings have elsewhere been theorised as *figures of personhood* (Agha, 2005, 2007). Such

⁴ "It is clear, then, that this is about much more than 'language'. Linguistic ideological discourses and metapragmatic positionings are a means of structuring and ordering society, of constituting social groups, with which the discourse actors can affiliate themselves or from which they can distance themselves, and of communicating and negotiating basic social values." – my translation

figures are considered as “indexical images of speaker-actor” (Agha, 2005:39), and as such are ideological constructs. This notion has been employed productively in several studies in different contexts, including Reyes’ (2017) investigation into the construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ elite figures in the Philippines, Park’s (2017) identification of a figure of the incompetent Korean speaker of English that serves as a point of reference for transnational Korean managers’ positionings, or Hassemer and Garrido’s (2020) analysis of the indexical values connected to speaking ‘Arabic’ in an NGO operating in Austria and a European-based NGO operating in the Middle East, and of the ways in which Arabic-speaking professionals navigate these.

Another merit of stance-taking is that it has a long tradition of being mobilised to investigate the display of affect in interaction (Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012; Goodwin, Cekaite, & Goodwin, 2012; Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989). This line of research has shown how a broad range of semiotic resources come together to display affect, ranging from nonverbal resources such as facial expressions, gestures and body posture, to linguistic resources as disparate as affective speech acts (e.g. apologising) and intonation. The insight that affect displays need to be analysed as the co-occurrence of various semiotic resources has also been taken up within conversation analysis (e.g. Couper-Kuhlen, 2009; Selting, 2010, 2012), where sequential micro-analyses have shed light on how affectivity is managed in interaction. More recent analyses of affective positioning in narrative (Giaxoglou & Georgakopoulou, in press) could benefit substantially from this body of research.

Wetherell (2013) and Busch (2020) have pointed out that despite their near-exclusive focus on affect display, which puts them somewhat at odds with phenomenological approaches, such analyses can productively be mobilised to investigate affective-discursive practices also from an experiential perspective. Moreover, the authors perceived an important nexus between the two perspectives in the fact that both are very much interested in affect as embodied practice. Thus, positioning and stance-taking, as embodied, affective practices, are well suited to accommodate an analysis of the bodily-emotional aspects of experiencing language.

These elaborations thus sharpen the analytical tools with which I want to approach South Tyrolean students’ positionings towards language. By locating positioning within the framework of stance-taking, more specifically of metasociolinguistic and metapragmatic stance-taking, linkages to language ideologies can be established more convincingly, and positionings towards language become interpretable as potential (dis-)alignments with the kinds of people and behaviour associated with this kind of language use – alignments that might, moreover, be highly affective.

3 Frameworks of Time and Place: A 100-year-old South Tyrol

The theoretical framework has already shown some of the many ways in which language is intricately linked to the social configuration of places at certain moments in time. In the context of the present study, it thus seems necessary to revisit the spatiotemporal framework in which I conducted my research. In the Introduction, I have already given a glimpse into the historical, social and linguistic complexities of the northernmost Italian province of South Tyrol. The following sections aim at providing deeper insights into this context by giving an overview of South Tyrol's history (3.1), of the language policies in place in the province (3.2) and of its education system (3.3). These considerations will be followed by a review of relevant sociolinguistic research that has been conducted in and on South Tyrol to date (3.4), before I will conclude with reflections on my own positionality within this context (3.5).

3.1 Perspectives on a province's troubled history

At the beginning of this thesis stood a quote by Claire Kramsch (2006a:251), in which she reminds us that if we want to understand others, then “we have to understand what they remember from the past, what they imagine and project onto the future, and how they position themselves in the present”, and we need to understand those very same things about ourselves. Busch (2012:521), too, reminds us that from a poststructuralist perspective, language practices need to be considered as “subjected to the time-space dimensions of history and biography”, which also applies to speakers' positionings towards their language practices. Therefore, a consideration of South Tyrol's history stands to reason for the present research. The following historical overview aims to serve as a backdrop in order to better understand the province's present and thus situate the research project, its participants, and myself as a researcher in time and space. Very much in line with poststructuralism, however, I acknowledge that there is never only one history but multiple histories of any given place. Therefore, I will aim not to tell *the* history of the province, but to provide multiple *perspectives* on its past.

A first matter of perspective in this context is at which point in time to start the telling of South Tyrol's history. One could begin with the formation of Tyrol in the Middle Ages, or with Tyrol's incorporation into Habsburg Austria towards the end of the Middle Ages, underlining the historical link to those territories. One could also start the history of South Tyrol with a history of the unification of Italy and of how Italy came to occupy its present territory. Alternatively, one could go even further back and detail the settlement history of the area (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010). However, for most purposes in the present day, the key event in

telling South Tyrol's history is its annexation by Italy 100 years ago – something that I, too, have insinuated with the title of this chapter.

Specifically, the signing of the Treaty of Saint Germain in 1919, or its coming into effect in 1920, are most commonly mentioned as the starting points for the history of South Tyrol. This treaty constituted the creation of a new political unit within the kingdom of Italy from a territory that had formerly been part of the larger Tyrol in the pre-war Austro-Hungarian Empire (Grote, 2012). From an Austrian perspective, said treaty shrank their empire to the smaller territory of the newly formed Republic of Austria, ceding territory not only to Italy but also to the so-called successor states Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. From an Italian perspective, the then-kingdom had finally succeeded in incorporating most of the *terre irredente*, i.e. the territories that were claimed to belong to the Italian nation but had not yet been secured during the process of unification in the 19th century (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010), spanning the entire Northeast of Italy, including parts of the current region of Friuli Venezia Giulia and parts of Istria and Dalmatia⁵. From the perspective of a proportion of inhabitants of Trentino, which had been the southernmost part of Tyrol before the war, the new border represented a political goal that they had long fought for (Marcantoni & Postal, 2013), while from the perspective of a large proportion of what had become South Tyrol, the new border represented a grave injustice (Grote, 2012).

The newly drawn border between Italy and Austria (see Figure 4) had been vividly contested at the time (and sometimes still is). It was argued that this border did not correspond to the principle of self-determination outlined by then U.S. President Wilson as one of the guidelines for the re-drawing of boundaries after World War I (Steininger, 2003). If this logic had been applied, Italy's claims to Trentino would have been valid, as it was populated by people who identified as Italian. South Tyrol's population, on the other hand, had always consisted in a majority of German speakers, who identified as Tyroleans, and in a minority of people who identified as Ladins, living in different valleys in the Dolomites (Marcantoni & Postal, 2013). The concepts of *nationhood* and *ethnicity* that were central for the drawing of a number of boundaries in Europe at the time (Hobsbawm & Kertzer, 1992) were thus not applied to this border – they were, however, mobilised for contesting it.

⁵ The latter, however, were ceded to Yugoslavia after World War II, representing other examples of territories with a conflictual past (Jansen, 2007).



Figure 4: Today's border between Italy and Austria (in bold), drawn between former Tyrol after WWI ⁶

Italy, on the other hand, argued for this border as a 'natural' one at the time, as all rivers south of the border flow south into the Adriatic Sea, and the territory had been promised to Italy for entering the war in 1915. Moreover, Italy is claimed to have insisted on this border because the territory was of strategic value, especially in economic terms, as it was suited for building hydroelectric plants and as the Brenner Pass between North and South Tyrol was crucial for traffic in the Alps on a North-South route (Grote, 2012).

The perception of the Brenner Pass border as an injustice also needs to be considered in the light of the events of the period following the territory's annexation to Italy: under the Fascist rule in Italy, which began in 1922 with Mussolini seizing power, the German- and Ladin-speaking population suffered under a politics of *Italianisation* (Grote, 2012). In different phases of this process, place names were translated into Italian and the use of the original ones forbidden, former government and administration officials were substituted by Italian speakers, and Italian became the language of instruction in all schools. Later, in-migration of Italian speakers was heavily promoted, considerably changing the ethnolinguistic make-up of the territory.

In 1939, this process of Italianisation culminated in what was termed *die Option – le opzioni*: an agreement between Hitler and Mussolini that ethnic 'Germans' in South Tyrol would be accepted as citizens of the Third Reich if they relocated. The population therefore had to choose between remaining in South Tyrol and remaining ethnationally Italian, or relocating to the

⁶ adapted from Gesamttirol by BlueMars (CC BY-SA)

Third Reich and becoming ethnonationally German. The vast majority of the population registered for the latter option, even though only a small proportion of the ones who chose to relocate actually did so, as that was rendered impossible by the events during the war (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010). Overall, the measures of Italianisation can be seen as the State's attempts to make its population ethnolinguistically homogeneous in order to fit the ethnonational ideology of a nation overlapping with one ethnicity and one language that had been dominant in Europe since the 19th century (Hobsbawm & Kertzer, 1992).

The Fascist rule ended in 1943 in South Tyrol, when German troops occupied the territory along with other parts of Northern Italy. The ethnolinguistically 'German' population welcomed this development, but soon realised that the Nazi regime was no less violent than the Fascist one, albeit not targeting their ethnicity and language (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010). The ethnolinguistic 'Italians' in the territory, whose numbers had increased drastically since the annexation, are said to have experienced the Nazi regime as somewhat of a shock: the German occupation separated them from the rest of Italy and important political and administrative positions were taken from them, which in turn harmed relations with the 'German' ethnolinguistic group (Lechner, Mezzalana, Palla, Spada, & Verdorfer, 2013).

At the end of World War II, South Tyrol's being part of Italy was again seriously contested, and there were hopes among some of the population that the territory could be re-assigned to Austria. Both Italy and Austria argued their parts (see Steininger, 2003 for details), but in 1946, it was decided that the border between Austria and Italy would stay as it had been drawn after World War I. However, the Allied Forces recognised that this would not resolve the conflict, and pushed for negotiations on an autonomy for the territory. These took place between the Foreign Ministers of Austria and Italy, Karl Gruber and Alcide De Gasperi, and resulted in an agreement that is referred to as the *Treaty of Paris*, the *Austro-Italian Agreement*, or the *Gruber-De Gasperi Agreement* (1946). Within this treaty, De Gasperi agreed to concede autonomy in legislation and administration to the provinces of Bolzano and Trento and assured the following:

German-speaking inhabitants of the Bolzano Province and of the neighbouring bilingual townships of the Trento Province will be assured complete equality of rights with the Italian-speaking inhabitants, within the framework of special provisions to safeguard the ethnical character and the cultural and economic development of the German-speaking element.

In this context, the agreement for instance stated that the same 'German-speaking' population would be granted a right to "elementary and secondary teaching in the mother-tongue" (Gruber-De Gasperi Agreement, 1946:1a), that both Italian and German would be established

as official languages for public offices, official documents and toponymy, and that Italy would work towards good neighbourly relations with Austria. Ladin speakers and the Ladin language, in turn, were not mentioned in this document (Lechner et al., 2013).

The first Autonomy Statute that was passed in 1948 on the basis of this agreement did not grant an autonomy to the provinces individually, but to the region of Trentino-South Tyrol as a whole. Even though this statute calmed the conflictual situation to some degree, it was still met with discontent among a large proportion of South Tyrol's population, as the German ethnolinguistic group remained a minority within the region and their autonomy for decision-making remained somewhat stifled (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010). This sentiment kept growing over the following years, especially since a considerable number of Italian speakers continued to immigrate to South Tyrol for economic reasons, which re-ignited fears of being assimilated (Marcantoni & Postal, 2013). This dissatisfaction culminated in an announcement in 1957, where the *Südtiroler Volkspartei*, a political party that had been set up to represent ethnolinguistic Germans and Ladins, demanded a separate autonomy for the province of Bolzano. Their slogan was *Los von Trient*, loosely translatable as 'break away from Trento', the capital city of Trentino. This was a more moderate version of *Los von Rom*, i.e. a 'break away from Rome', and the agenda was thus a more moderate version of separatist tendencies that worked towards a separation from the Italian state altogether (Lechner et al., 2013).

The situation had thus become more conflictual again, and it subsequently received international attention when Austria asked the United Nations to oversee a resolution of the conflict in 1959. This could be argued for all the more convincingly as the second half of the 1950s was also characterised by beginning bombings by an association that had set the 'liberation' of South Tyrol as its goal. The same association was behind a series of bombings all across the province on the night from June 11th to 12th in 1961, referred to as the *Feuernacht* or *notte dei fuochi*, i.e. the night of fire (or fires). The divergent interpretations of these events are another symptom of the conflict that reaches into the present day: for some, the people behind the bombings are freedom fighters, others call them political activists, and yet others call them terrorists (Steininger, 2003). Certainly, all of these terms are warranted from particular perspectives, and the historical literature does not necessarily try to resolve the ambiguity in representing these events (Forcher & Peterlini, 2010; Steininger, 2003).

What has remained uncontested, however, is that the events of the *Feuernacht* led to two major consequences: one being a severe prosecution of the bombers by the Italian state, the other being the state government's increased willingness to negotiate an improved autonomy. A commission was put in place to draw up a document on ways in which the Gruber-De Gasperi

Agreement could be better respected by new legislation. This process finally resulted in an agreement on several new or amended provisions that would grant the province increased autonomy, including extended financial autonomy, and safeguard the German and Ladin ethnolinguistic groups in South Tyrol (Lechner et al., 2013). A second autonomy statute was thus passed in 1972, and the following years were characterised by measures for its implementation until finally, in 1992, Italy and Austria could declare before the United Nations to have resolved the conflict (Steininger, 2003).

This second, ‘new’ Autonomy Statute forms the basis of political life in South Tyrol, as well as the province’s relations to the region Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol and to the Italian state until the present day, which warrants me to end the historical excursus here. The next two sections will provide an overview of the ways in which language and ethnolinguistic groupness figure in political and social life in South Tyrol since this second Autonomy Statute.

However, some final considerations to the historical perspectives are still due. South Tyrol’s history offers examples of the ways in which small territories get caught up in the bigger games of nations, of the ways in which ethnolinguistic groups may be minoritised as a consequence of ethnonationalist ideologies, and of how such groups may employ similar ideologies to legitimise their mobilisation. The discursive links between nation, ethnicity and language that are found in Europe and elsewhere and that can be traced back to the 19th century (Heller, 2011; Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007) thus seem to run like a read thread through South Tyrol’s history over the last one hundred years. This link has been employed to legitimise claims on territory on both sides, and in fact still is by marginal political groups who demand a separation from Italy (Heiss, 2011). Moreover, as I will argue in the following sections, traces of the province’s past linger in its present and the link between ethnicity and language seems to be one of the structuring principles of political and social life in South Tyrol.

3.2 Managing language and language groups in South Tyrol

As mentioned in the previous section, the Second Autonomy Statute (1972) regulates political life in South Tyrol, and includes several measures for which language and ethnolinguistic groupness play a key role. In this section, I will critically engage with some of these measures. In order to do so, I will draw on Spolsky’s (2009) conceptualisation of language policy. Spolsky sees language policy as being made up of three interconnected aspects: language practices, language beliefs, and language management. He defines the latter as “the explicit and observable effort by someone or some group that has or claims authority over the

participants in the domain to modify their practices or beliefs” (Spolsky, 2009:4). While this need not necessarily involve laws, he points out that language management is most clearly observable in laws regulating aspects of official language use. This theoretical lens now enables me to differentiate between those legal measures that aim to manage language practices (3.2.1), and those who are more concerned with managing relations between language groups (3.2.2), before concluding with some outlooks that place the measures discussed in a larger context (3.2.3). Measures relating to language in education will be excluded from this section, as these are central to the context in which I have undertaken the present study, and will consequently be dealt with in a specifically dedicated section (see 3.3).

3.2.1 Language management

The Second Autonomy Statute contains a separate section in which most of the measures pertaining to language use are grouped together. This section carries the title *Gebrauch der deutschen Sprache und des Ladinischen*, or *Uso della lingua tedesca e del ladino* (Autonomy Statute, 1972:Art.99), thus focusing on the use of the two languages recognised as minoritised. The first of these articles regulates the status of the German language relative to Italian: „Nella Regione la lingua tedesca è parificata a quella italiana che è la lingua ufficiale dello Stato“⁷ (Autonomy Statute, 1972:Art.99). Thereby, it puts German and Italian on equal footing in the clearly demarcated territory of the region Trentino-Südtirol, underlining however that Italian is the official language of the state. The following articles of the Statute are concerned with defining what this overall principle entails in specific public domains, including public administration, the judiciary system or sessions of municipal, provincial and regional political organs. In all of these domains, the population is granted the possibility to use both Italian and German.

The Statute is most specific with regard to language use in public administration: it concedes the right to the ‘German-speaking population’ of the province of Bolzano to use ‘their’ language, and to be replied to in this language. It also states that written communication issued by the mentioned offices is to be conducted “in der mutmaßlichen Sprache des Bürgers” or “nella lingua presunta del cittadino” (Autonomy Statute, 1972:Art.100), i.e. in the presumed language of the citizen being addressed. Moreover, there is an obligation to use German place names with ‘German-speaking’ citizens. A general obligation to bilingual place names in

⁷ “In the region, the German language is treated as equal to the Italian language, which is the official language of the state.” – my translation.

“Die deutsche Sprache ist in der Region der italienischen Sprache, die die amtliche Staatssprache ist, gleichgestellt.” – in the German version;

Italian and German throughout the province of Bolzano is anchored in a different section of the Statute (1972).

In these articles, it already becomes apparent that the territorial principle of equating the status of Italian and German in the region is combined with a personal principle that is tied to ethnolinguistic group membership. The right to use German and be replied to in German in public offices in this territory is conceded to members of the German language group, and German is considered as *their* language. Thus, these rights are linked to the collective rights of the group that is considered minoritised (Pallaver, 2008), and this group is conceived of in ethnolinguistic terms in that group membership is intertwined with ownership of the language (Bonfiglio, 2010).

It is interesting to note that the Autonomy Statute does not include specifications regarding the use of the Ladin language, apart from the right to maintain Ladin place names. Only one of the articles in the mentioned section refers to the Ladin population, and it is more concerned with cultural autonomy and the right to maintain traditions. The use of Ladin was however regulated at a later date in one of the decrees implementing the Statute (DPR 574/1988). In this decree, the Ladin population was granted the right to use Ladin in communication with the public administration, but only in the Ladin municipalities. A municipality is considered *Ladin* if more than 80% of its population consider themselves members of this language group. These are currently eight municipalities that are located in two valleys commonly identified as ‘Ladin valleys’: Gherdëina, or *Gröden* in German and *Val Gardena* in Italian, and Val Badia, or *Gadertal* in German (see Figure 5 for the location of the ‘Ladin valleys’ in South Tyrol and in the provinces of Trento and Belluno). Thus, the mentioned measures again combine territorial principles with personal principles based on group membership defined in ethnolinguistic terms (Rautz, 2008).

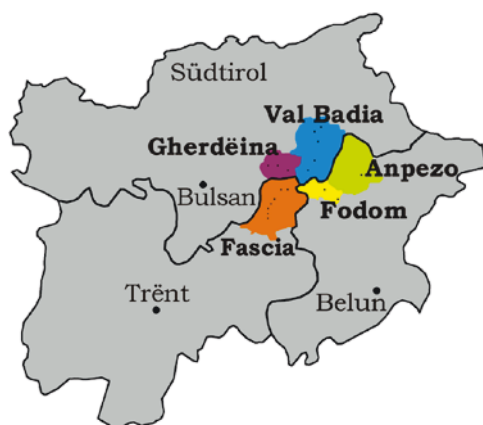


Figure 5: Areas within the provinces of Trento, Belluno and South Tyrol where Ladin is spoken⁸

⁸ adapted from Ladin by Hanno (CC BY-SA)

Ensuring that members of the German and Ladin language group would be able to use German or Ladin respectively in public offices also had, and has, important repercussions for the recruitment of personnel in the public sector. One of the implementing measures of the Autonomy Statute required people to speak both German and Italian, and in the Ladin municipalities additionally Ladin, to gain access to jobs in the public sector (DPR 752/1976). This document also regulates the degrees of proficiency required for different levels of qualifications, as well as the ways in which employees and applicants need to certify their language skills. For this purpose, specific language tests referred to as bilingualism or trilingualism exams were conceived. These tests have changed considerably regarding tasks to perform and grades received. In the most recent modification in 2017, the tests were made to conform with the levels of the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR - Council of Europe, 2001). Levels now range from A2 to C1, excluding the lowest and highest level of the CEFR, and equivalent international certificates of German and Italian proficiency, such as the *Goethe-Zertifikat*, the *ÖSD*, the *Certificato PLIDA*, or the *CELI*, are now also recognised. The same holds for certificates of graduation from a school or university with German or Italian as language of instruction.

Overall, it emerges that language management in South Tyrol cannot be entirely disentangled from the management of language groups. Many of the measures that regulate language practices in different public domains are tied to language group membership. In the following subsection, I will thus turn to the ways in which the three recognised language groups seem to function as a structuring principle of social and political life in South Tyrol (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a).

3.2.2 Language groups and power sharing

Within the field of political science, South Tyrol's autonomy has been referred to as a *consociational system* (Carlà, 2018; Pallaver, 2008), a term going back to Arend Lijphart (1977) and referring to systems of power sharing in plural societies. Such 'plural' societies, in turn, are those that are conceived as made up of different groups, which may be of linguistic, ethnic, religious or other nature. However, scholars in sociology and critical sociolinguistics (e.g. Brubaker, 2002; Heller, 2011; Heller et al., 2018) have argued that we ought not take the existence of such groups for granted, but treat them as socially constructed categories instead. From such a perspective, it is the processes by which ethnicity and language can be mobilised to create groupness that come into focus. Rather than treating ethnolinguistic groups as

substantial entities, I will thus explore what the Second Autonomy Statute (1972), as a major policy document, ‘does’ with ethnolinguistic categories.

The Second Autonomy Statute (1972) regulates how power is to be shared between what it refers to as *gruppi linguistici* or *Sprachgruppen*, i.e. language groups, and thus institutionalises these very groups. The 1948 Autonomy Statute already contained the designation *language groups*, while the previous Gruber-De Gasperi Agreement (1946) on which it was based still spoke of *ethnic* groups. This shift from ethnicity to language as the central boundary-making category is undoubtedly linked to the Constitution of the Italian Republic, which, having come into force in 1948, vouched to protect *linguistic* minorities (Alber, 2012). However, like in other contexts, this surface shift only barely masked the underlying equation of language with ethnicity that continues to prove durable (Heller, 2011).

The institutionalisation of the German, Italian and Ladin ethnolinguistic groups thereby aimed to ensure their participation in society on equal terms, and seems to have been motivated also by a disparity in socioeconomic terms (Peterlini, 2003). The Second Autonomy Statute (1972) thus regulates the representation of all three groups in legislative and executive organs, grants all three groups cultural autonomy, e.g. in education, and follows a principle of proportionality for political representation, for the allocation of provincial funds, e.g. for social housing or study grants, and for employment in the public sector (Pallaver, 2008). Especially the last aspect is said to have caused a feeling of deprivation among the Italian language group, since a gradual redressing of the previous imbalance in public employment meant that such jobs were nearly inaccessible to them for a considerable time. Moreover, the requirement of bilingualism for these same jobs made it harder for members of the Italian language group to access them, as they had not needed to learn German until then (Baur, Mezzalana, & Pichler, 2009).

From the institutionalisation of the language groups, and more specifically from the principle of proportionality, it also follows that the relative strengths of the three groups need to be determined. For this purpose, the province’s population is required to anonymously declare its affiliation (*Zugehörigkeit*, or *appartenenza*) to a language group every ten years, until now in conjunction with the national census. A declaration as ‘German’, ‘Italian’, ‘Ladin’ or ‘other’ is thus required from every Italian citizen residing in the province. If one chooses to declare as ‘other’, one needs to declare one’s *aggregation* to one of the three recognised language groups. The proportion that is so central for many aspects of political and social life in South Tyrol is then established by counting both declarations of affiliation and aggregation for the German, Italian and Ladin group respectively, and it remains valid for ten years. At the last census, conducted in 2011, the resulting proportion was 69.41% of declarations for the German

language group, 26.06% for the Italian language group and 4.53% for the Ladin language group (Volkszählung - Censimento 2011, 2012). As national censuses will no longer be carried out in an all-encompassing manner (ISTAT, 2019), it is probable that a special language census will be conducted in the province in 2021 to adjust the proportion of language groups (ASTAT, 2019b).

While the overall proportion is established in this manner, citizens also need to declare their affiliation or aggregation to a language group non-anonymously, in order to be able to certify their status as an affiliated or aggregated member of one of the three groups. Such a certificate is necessary whenever one wants to make use of certain rights, e.g. being a candidate in an election, applying for social housing or for a job in the public sector. Residents of the province are invited to make these personal declarations when they come of age, i.e. at age 18. The declarations are valid until they are modified or revoked, and they are held in sealed envelopes that can only be opened when the declaring person requests a certificate of affiliation. A number of provisions thereby make it difficult to change one's affiliation to enjoy momentary privileges: for instance, modifications of the declaration are only possible after five years, and only acquire validity after two years, whereas revoking one's declaration entails renouncing on the mentioned rights for at least three years until it is possible to declare anew (DPR 752/1976).

3.2.3 Outlooks

The Second Autonomy Statute and its implementation have certainly contributed to calming the conflict between the minorities in South Tyrol and the Italian state (Peterlini, 2010). In fact, Alber (2012:399) states that the province “is generally considered to be one of the most successful examples of the accommodation of minorities through territorial self-government”. Delegations from different parts of the world continue to visit South Tyrol to learn about its autonomy, and Eurac Research, the research centre where I am currently employed, has recently launched a *Center for Autonomy Experience* (2020) that envisions sharing South Tyrol's experience related to autonomy and minority protection.

However, the celebration of South Tyrol's autonomy oftentimes conceals some of its caveats that have been pointed out by both scholars and public figures over the years. In this context, politician, author and teacher Alexander Langer was particularly influential in criticising and even protesting the proportionality principle and the language group census, most notably before its inception in 1981 (Lechner et al., 2013). Langer (e.g. 1983, 1988) claimed that South Tyrol's autonomy was characterised by a politics of separation that would hinder a true integration of society and sustain and renew tensions between the language groups. Similar

arguments have been brought forth by scholars from various disciplines, including the political sciences (Pallaver, 2008), legal sciences (Carlà, 2018), education (Baur & Larcher, 2011; Baur et al., 2009), and applied linguistics (Leonardi, 2020; Vettori & Abel, 2017; Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a).

Moreover, the focus on pacifying the conflict in South Tyrol by protecting the German and Ladin language group's minority rights has led to neglecting difference that does not conform to the fault lines of language groups. Not everyone may feel affiliated with precisely one language group: some may feel affiliated with two or even all of the recognised language groups, while others may feel affiliated with none. The latter is especially relevant in the light of the presence of foreign residents in South Tyrol, coming from a total of 138 countries and now making up 10% of the province's population (ASTAT, 2017). While foreign residents may of course feel affiliated to one of the language groups, it might not be easy for them to choose a language group to affiliate with or aggregate to – and the same holds true for people from bilingual, trilingual, multilingual and potentially also monolingual families. This flaw of the system has been pointed out repeatedly by linguists (Cennamo, 2017; Risse, 2015; Weber Egli, 1992), political scientists (Larin & Röggl, 2016; Pallaver, 2008), and even by the Advisory Committee to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe (2001). In this context, Larin and Röggl (2016) have even proposed to include the category *other* in the proportionality principle, thus doing away with the requirement to aggregate to one of the recognised groups when declaring as *other*. However, South Tyrol's current head of government, Arno Kompatscher, argued that adding groups to the proportional system risks nullifying the system as a whole (Kompatscher, Boschi, & Peterlini, 2015). Thus, it does not seem likely that a proposal of the sort will be adopted in the near future.

We have now gained an overview of some of the ways in which language groups structure social and political life in the province. The provisions of the Autonomy Statute have certainly done their part in safeguarding the rights of the German and Ladin speakers in South Tyrol and in settling the conflicts revolving around their demands. At the same time, however, they institutionalised a distinction between three language groups that has practical ramifications for the province's residents in terms of access to funding, job prospects and political representation. Moreover, tensions between the language groups persist, dormant, and flare up again occasionally in a more or less pronounced manner (Peterlini, 2003). For the purposes of my study, it will be interesting to observe if and how these ethnolinguistic categories figure in the positionings of my participants.

3.3 Education and language in South Tyrol

Until now, I have only briefly touched upon issues of education and language in South Tyrol – this is because the role that language and language groups play in the provincial education system is of central importance for the present research, and therefore deserves a dedicated section. In this section, I will thus delineate South Tyrol's tripartite education system (3.3.1), and discuss how language teaching and learning are organised within this system and what we know about students' linguistic repertoires (3.3.2).

3.3.1 Three groups, three schools

Overall, education in South Tyrol shares some core aspects of the national Italian education system. Like in other parts of Italy, South Tyrol has comprehensive schooling until the end of lower secondary school, i.e. all children in state education attend the same kinds of schools and take the same subjects. Children can attend up to three years of preschool from age 2/3 to age 5/6, followed by five years of primary school and three years of lower secondary school. After this, students move on to upper secondary schools, where they may choose between different types of schools that place importance on different subjects. Unlike in many other countries, this choice is not linked to structural selection procedures based on school grades. Moreover, school classes have an important role for the social lives of students because the same students will typically be in the same class for all subjects throughout all grades of each of the three different stages of schooling.

Beside these general guidelines, education in South Tyrol is autonomous from the national system and thus very much reflects the needs and preoccupations characteristic of the province (Meraner, 2011; Verra, 2008). In fact, South Tyrol's education system is tripartite, and consists of three different tracks of schooling: one track with German as a language of instruction, one track with Italian as a language of instruction, and one track in the Ladin valleys. These tracks of schooling are separate on all levels, from the individual schools to administration and to education policy within the national framework, to the point that Alber (2012) refers to them as separate schooling systems.

The legal basis of these three different tracks of schooling is to be found in the Second Autonomy Statute (1972), more specifically in its Article 19. This article begins by regulating the languages of instruction:

In der Provinz Bozen wird der Unterricht in den Kindergärten, Grund- und Sekundarschulen in der Muttersprache der Schüler, das heißt in italienischer oder deutscher Sprache, von Lehrkräften erteilt, für welche die betreffende Sprache ebenfalls Muttersprache ist.⁹

By law, the language of instruction thus needs to be the ‘mother tongue’ of the students, which is specified to be Italian or German, and the respective language also needs to be the ‘mother tongue’ of the teachers. The latter moreover need to ‘prove’ this mother tongue status by way of their declaration of affiliation or aggregation to a language group.

The concept of a *mother tongue* thus seems to be central for this passage of the Autonomy Statute. If teased apart, this reveals a series of underlying assumptions: it seems that it is essential that students be taught in their mother tongue, that teachers do a better job if they are mother tongue speakers of the language of instruction, and that declaring one’s affiliation with an ethnolinguistic group automatically makes one such a mother tongue speaker. Weber and Horner (2018) refer to these and other assumptions as mother tongue ideologies, which I will discuss in more detail across the empirical chapters of this thesis.

As far as students are concerned, there is no requirement to ‘prove’ their mother tongue status, or affiliation with a language group. Instead, a principle of free choice of enrolment is followed, whereby parents can choose where they want to enrol their children. However, a decree (DPR 301/1988) also specifies that such an enrolment must not compromise the use of the language of instruction, and schools technically have the possibility of contesting an enrolment if the pupil will not be able to follow the lesson (Alber, 2012). While it is rather rare that this procedure is actually followed through, polemics do sometimes arise about the use of Italian and other languages in German tracks. In this context, especially a supposed decreased use of German in preschools of the German track has continuously caught media attention over the last years (e.g. RAI, 2019; Stol, 2017).

Like for other aspects of social and political life in South Tyrol, Article 19 and the tripartition of the education system that follows from it, need to be looked at in the context of the province’s history. During the Fascist era, schooling in German, which had previously been attended by all children, was abolished and replaced by schooling in Italian – which most children did not speak. Teaching German was forbidden at the time, but continued

⁹ “In the Province of Bolzano/Bozen, teaching in pre-schools, primary and secondary schools is carried out in the pupils’ mother tongue, i.e. in Italian or German, by teachers for whom the respective language is also their mother tongue.” – my translation.

“Nella provincia di Bolzano l’insegnamento nelle scuole materne, elementari e secondarie è impartito nella lingua materna italiana o tedesca degli alunni da docenti per i quali tale lingua sia ugualmente quella materna.” – Italian version

clandestinely in the so-called *Katakombenschulen*. German schools were reintroduced under Nazi occupation in 1943, and their continuation was confirmed by the Gruber-De Gasperi Agreement after the war (Alber, 2012). The insistence on the ‘mother tongue’ as language of instruction thus finds its roots in this experience from the past.

The history of schooling in the Ladin valleys is somewhat more complex (Verra, 2008). Like elsewhere in South Tyrol, the language of instruction there was first German under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, then Italian under Fascism, and then German again under Nazi occupation. A first proposal of *paritetical* schooling, which would involve both German and Italian as language of instruction, was put forward in the summer of 1945. However, this proposal was not respected by the Italian government and schooling in that autumn commenced, like in the time before the Nazi occupation, in Italian. The Ladin population consequently sent a petition to the government, and the latter reacted by offering them a referendum in which they could choose between Italian and German as language of instruction. The majority opted for German, possibly as a reaction to the previous forced continuation of schooling in Italian. A paritetical option had not been foreseen at the referendum, but was newly proposed and then backed by the Italian minister of education in 1948. At the time, a number of parents wanted to keep the German schooling that had been in place for three years, and Verra (2008) argues that it was the local teachers’ commitment to the new model that was most influential for its adoption. Since 1948, with a number of smaller changes over the years, teaching at schools in the Ladin valleys has thus been carried out in German and Italian, while Ladin is taught as a subject and can additionally be used for facilitative purposes (Verra, 2008). The legal basis for the paritetical model was created only later, however, with Article 19 of the Second Autonomy Statute (1972):

La lingua ladina è usata nelle scuole materne ed è insegnata nelle scuole elementari delle località ladine. Tale lingua è altresì usata quale strumento di insegnamento nelle scuole di ogni ordine e grado delle località stesse. In tali scuole l’insegnamento è impartito su base paritetica di ore e di esito finale, in italiano e tedesco.¹⁰

By law, Ladin is thus used in preschool, taught in primary schools and used as a *strumento di insegnamento* (loosely translated as ‘teaching instrument’) in all grades of schooling. There

¹⁰ “The Ladin language is used in the preschools and taught in the primary schools of the Ladin municipalities. This language is also used as a *teaching instrument/language of instruction* in schools of every kind and level in these same municipalities. Lessons in these schools are carried out in Italian and in German on the basis of the same number of hours and the same final results” – my translation and emphasis

“Die ladinische Sprache wird in den Kindergärten verwendet und in den Grundschulen der ladinischen Ortschaften gelehrt. Dort dient diese Sprache auch als Unterrichtssprache in den Schulen jeder Art und jeden Grades. In diesen Schulen wird der Unterricht auf der Grundlage gleicher Stundenzahl und gleichen Enderfolges in Italienisch und in Deutsch erteilt.” – German version

have been debates and insecurities around what this use of Ladin as a ‘teaching instrument’ entails, especially since the German translation speaks of Ladin as an *Unterrichtssprache*, i.e. a language of instruction, instead. However, the interpretation whereby Ladin is more of an auxiliary language than a language of instruction seems to have prevailed (Verra, 2008).

The concept of the ‘mother tongue’, in turn, is surprisingly absent from this passage of the Statute. This also links to the fact that this model was envisioned for all children residing in the Ladin valleys, independently from what they considered their mother tongue. For teachers, however, the ‘mother tongue’ is relevant in similar ways to the German and Italian tracks, as they need to certify, by declaration of affiliation to a language group, that they are mother tongue speakers of either Ladin or of the language of instruction in which they teach (DPR 89/1983).

Overall, it thus emerges that South Tyrol’s education system is quite complex, and could be described as not exactly one, but three education systems that adhere to some common principles. While the paritetical system of schooling in the Ladin valleys is generally well received, criticisms about the separate nature of the German and Italian tracks of schooling have repeatedly been voiced. This separation has been questioned in particular with regard to children who grow up with both German and Italian (Abel, 2009), and children who grow up with different languages altogether (Cennamo, 2017; Wisthaler, 2013). It has also been criticised more generally as upholding separate worlds (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012b; Baur & Larcher, 2011). However, according to Baur and Larcher (2011), introducing bi- or multilingual education beyond the Ladin valleys does not seem to be desired by the dominant political forces.

It is not clear what the future holds for education in South Tyrol. Calls for introducing bilingual tracks of schooling throughout South Tyrol, at least as optional programmes, will probably not abate, and neither will calls to protect the distinctiveness of the German and Ladin language groups. Alber (2012:414f.) has provided an astute account of these differing expectations on the education system, with which I would like to end this subsection:

In short, South Tyrol’s education and school system is in search for a change in continuity aiming at accommodating the claims for a more integrated society without scaring away those for whom such a society is not at all desired.

3.3.2 Language teaching and students’ linguistic repertoires

Language teaching and learning are central aspects of all three tracks of schooling in South Tyrol (Meraner, 2011; Verra, 2008). German, Italian and English are parts of the curriculum of all three tracks, Ladin is taught only at schools in the Ladin valleys, and languages like

French, Spanish, Russian and Latin may additionally be taught in upper secondary schools of all three tracks (Meraner, 2011). Linguistic repertoires of students, however, have been shown to often go beyond the named languages anchored in education policy (Cennamo, 2017; Engel & Hoffmann, 2016; Zanasi, Platzgummer, & Engel, 2020). In this subsection, I will give an overview of the policy side of language teaching as well as of students' actual linguistic repertoires.

Second language teaching and learning plays a crucial role in particular in the schools of the German and Italian track respectively. The term *second language*, or rather *Zweitsprache* or *seconda lingua*, thereby commonly designates either German or Italian in the respective 'other' track of schooling in the South Tyrolean context. This term not only refers to an implied chronology of language learning, as it does elsewhere, but also clearly differentiates the teaching and learning of German and Italian from the teaching of 'other' languages, which are referred to as *foreign* languages, or rather *Fremdsprachen* or *lingue straniere* (Meraner, 2011). The importance of the second language is also clearly stated in Article 19 of the Autonomy Statute (1972):

In den Grundschulen, von der 2. oder 3. Klasse an, [...] und in den Sekundarschulen ist der Unterricht der zweiten Sprache Pflicht; er wird von Lehrkräften erteilt, für die diese Sprache die Muttersprache ist.¹¹

The teaching of the German or Italian as the respective second language is obligatory from grade 2 or 3. It is also to be taught by teachers for whom the respective language is their 'mother tongue', which they again need to certify with their declaration of affiliation or aggregation to the respective language group. In 2003, second language teaching was actually introduced already for grade 1, albeit not without causing polemics around feared negative effects on students' German competence (Meraner, 2011).

Especially schools of the Italian track have invested heavily in German language teaching in recent years. German has increasingly been introduced in preschools in a playful manner and schools have started increasing the teaching time allocated to German (Meraner, 2011; Scochi, 2011). Some schools of the Italian track have also been introducing CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), whereby some subjects are taught in German (Vettori & Abel,

¹¹ "In elementary schools, from the 2nd or 3rd grade onwards, [...] and in secondary schools the teaching of the second language is obligatory; it is carried out by teachers for whom this language is the mother tongue." – my translation

"Nelle scuole elementari con inizio dalla seconda o dalla terza classe [...] e in quelle secondarie è obbligatorio l'insegnamento della seconda lingua che è impartito da docenti per i quali tale lingua è quella materna." – Italian version

2017; Scochi, 2011). This had previously been proposed in a more extensive manner under the label of *immersion* teaching, but had been rejected on a political level. Atz (1999) reported that this decision was based on fears that introducing immersion in German in Italian schools might lead to the introduction of immersion teaching in Italian in German schools, which in turn was feared to weaken the position of the German language group. Reservations against immersion programmes seemingly persist (Alber, 2012). However, CLIL is now increasingly being piloted at secondary schools of the German track (Verdorfer, 2017). In addition to the regular teaching of the respective second language in schools and to CLIL initiatives, adolescents are also offered the possibility to attend a school of one of the other tracks for a year of upper secondary school (Provenzano, 2010).

Besides German and Italian, the English language is also taught in all three tracks of schooling. Like in many other places around Europe (Enever, 2011), the grade of schooling at which children start learning English has been progressively lowered over the last decades. English was initially only taught in some upper secondary schools, and was subsequently made compulsory for all upper secondary schools. In the year 2000, it was also introduced in lower secondary schools, and in later in primary schools starting from grade 4 at schools of the German and Ladin track (Meraner, 2011) and from grade 1 at schools of the Italian track. Languages other than German, Italian, English and Ladin are additionally taught in some upper secondary schools, depending on the orientation of the specific schools. The choices offered thereby are usually restricted to French, Spanish and Russian, the latter two being on the increase. Academically oriented schools commonly also include the teaching of Latin (Meraner, 2011).

More recent pedagogical innovations in South Tyrol have focused on developing more integrated approaches to fostering language development. For instance, schools in the Ladin valleys have increasingly adopted an approach of *multilingual integrated learning* where languages are no longer strictly separated (Verra, 2016), and schools of the German track have moved in a similar direction with the development of a *Mehrsprachencurriculum* aimed at fostering multilingual pedagogy (Schwienbacher, Quartapelle, & Patscheider, 2016). Such approaches also begin to acknowledge that students' linguistic repertoires go beyond the institutionalised tri- or quadrilingualism.

In fact, several researchers, myself included, have continuously pointed to the actual diversity of students' linguistic repertoires (Cennamo, 2017; Engel & Hoffmann, 2016; Zanasi et al., 2020). In part, this diversity is linked to variation within what is commonly constructed as one language. Variation within German, both in terms of the importance of local dialect varieties

and the orientation to differing (sub)national standards of German has been well documented in this context (Abel, 2018; Ciccolone, 2010a; Eichinger, 2002). Research on variation within Italian in South Tyrol has also been conducted more recently (Meluzzi, 2015; Vietti, 2017). My colleagues and I showed that adolescents in lower and upper secondary schools reported being familiar with up to seven named dialects: these included not only those traditionally linked to the standard varieties of German or Italian, but also the ones that are associated with other named languages like Albanian, as well as other varieties that could not be considered as habitually associated to a single standard language. The latter comprised linguistic resources the students themselves referred to as ‘mixed’, but also named dialects like *Bronzolotto* or *Laivesotto* that cannot be attributed to either Italian or German (Zanasi & Platzgummer, 2018; Zanasi et al., 2020), as has been previously shown (Tartarotti, 2010).

Another source of linguistic diversity in South Tyrolean schools is represented by processes of migration and displacement: according to statistical surveys (ASTAT, 2016), the number of students who do not have Italian citizenship has been on the rise over the last two decades, and now amounts to around 10% of South Tyrol’s student population. These students are citizens of Albania, Pakistan, Morocco, Macedonia, Kosovo, Germany and Romania – to name only the more frequent nationalities. While knowing a person’s citizenship does not necessarily allow conclusions on their linguistic repertoire, as has been pointed out by Engel and Hoffmann (2016) for South Tyrol and by Blommaert (2009) or Busch (2015b) in a more general discussion, these statistics do point to a linguistic diversity that goes beyond German, Italian, and Ladin.

In section 3.2, I have already argued that people who speak and are affiliated with such ‘other’ languages represent a challenge for South Tyrol in that they do not neatly fit into its tripartite structures. This also becomes apparent for the education system, where the increasing number of students with diverse linguistic backgrounds reveals that the assumption of a monolingual student population is, in fact, an illusion (Cennamo, 2017). Interestingly, it is precisely the linguistic needs of students who are not yet familiar (enough) with German or Italian that have caused local authorities to create the first structure that overarches the three tracks of schooling. Since 2007, the so-called *Sprachenzentren* or *Centri linguistici* work towards the linguistic and social integration of students who have immigrated to South Tyrol, collaborating with schools of all three tracks (Engel & Niederfriniger, 2016). This may be the first step towards increasing collaboration across the tripartite structure of South Tyrol’s education system.

3.4 Sociolinguistic research in and on South Tyrol

It is not surprising that in a territory where language has such a central role in societal organisation, language would also be researched extensively. Numerous publications from different disciplinary orientations deal with language and language-related aspects in South Tyrol. In this section, I aim to provide an overview of research that has been conducted in and on South Tyrol in the wider field of sociolinguistics, and is of direct relevance to the present research. This overview will span research on linguistic repertoires (3.4.1), language practices and linguistic variation (3.4.2), second language competence (3.4.3), and the links between language, identity and belonging (3.4.4).

3.4.1 Linguistic repertoires

Up until very recently, research on linguistic repertoires in South Tyrol has mainly focused on Gumperz' (1964) notion of the linguistic repertoire as that of a speech *community*. Such research, conducted by Mioni (2000), Cavagnoli (2000), Baur (2000), Meluzzi (2015) or Dal Negro (2017), has mostly attempted to describe the linguistic repertoires of what the respective authors considered different speech communities. The exact borders these authors drew between speech communities varied, but the axes of differentiation usually involved the three ethnolinguistic categories Italian, German and Ladin, as well as a rural/urban divide.

In fact, most of these authors link their observations on community linguistic repertoires to the census of language group affiliation and often report on relative percentages of the different groups in determined places. Figure 6 displays this distribution of declarations of affiliation from the 2011 census over municipalities (ASTAT, 2012).

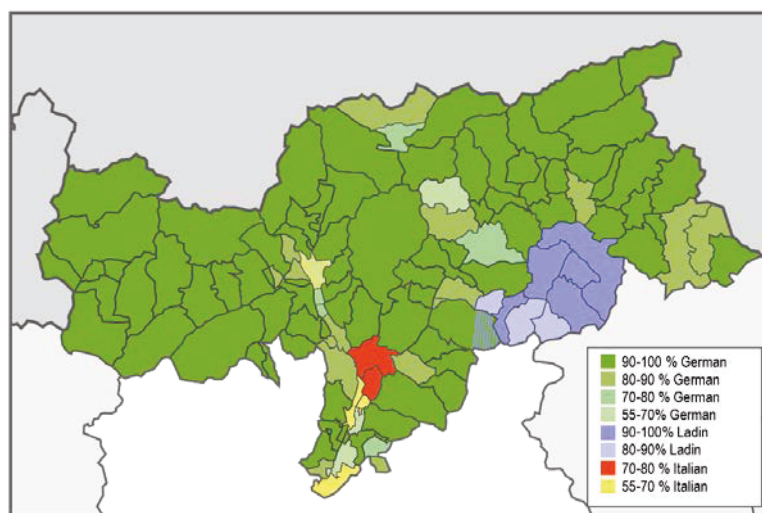


Figure 6: Distribution of members of the three language groups by municipality, based on the 2011 census (ASTAT, 2012)¹²

¹² adapted from Sprachenkarte Südtirol 2011 by Furfur (CC BY-SA)

According to this census, a large part of South Tyrol is populated majoritarily by declared members of the German language group, declared members of the Ladin group are the large majority in the municipalities of the previously mentioned ‘Ladin’ valleys Gherdëina/Val Gardena/Gröden and Val Bdia/Gadertal, and declared members of the Italian group represent the majority of residents of the cities Bolzano/Bozen and Laives/Leifers and of some municipalities to their south. In Meran/o, the numbers of residents declaring as members of the Italian and German language groups are roughly even. However, it needs to be stressed that these percentages are based on declarations of language affiliation, and thus cannot serve as direct indicators of language practices and of speech communities’ linguistic repertoires (in fact, multilingualism is not taken into account in these maps, which is reminiscent of the process of *erasure*, see Irvine & Gal, 2000).

This insight is also corroborated by some of the research on linguistic repertoires. For instance, Mioni (2000) distinguished not only between the Italian, the German and the Ladin language groups as major speech communities, but also identified two sub-communities within the Italian group, and speakers residing in the southernmost area of South Tyrol as speech communities that differ in their linguistic repertoires. According to Mioni, the linguistic repertoire of the German speech community would range from Standard German, German dialect and an intermediary variety between the two, to standard and regional Italian. The linguistic repertoire in the two Ladin valleys would include the Ladin spoken in the respective valley, Standard German, an intermediate variety of German and dialect, and regional and standard Italian. Members of the Italian language group residing in urban areas would speak standard and regional Italian, remnants of Italian dialects of their respective places of origin and Standard German, while those residing in rural areas would additionally speak the local dialect of German as well as an intermediary variety of German. For the southernmost area of the province, Mioni (2000) states that it has been characterised by bilingualism even before South Tyrol’s annexation by Italy, and he regards the speakers there as one speech community independent from individual speakers’ affiliation to a language group. Their repertoire, in turn, would span all the aforementioned languages and varieties, excluding remnants of different Italian dialects, but including an Italian dialect linked to the province of Trento.

A slightly different perspective is taken by Dal Negro (2017), who investigated community repertoires in South Tyrol by way of collecting sociolinguistic questionnaires from 46 participants. She thereby aimed at drawing conclusions on the distribution of individual linguistic repertoires within language groups, and thus structured her analysis on the basis of the language that the respective participants identified as their first language. Dal Negro found

that the repertoires of Italian speakers ranged from monolingual ones to repertoires including Standard German and local varieties of German (Tyrolean) and Italian (Trentino). She also found that the repertoires of German speakers always included both German and the local variety Tyrolean, which was nearly always accompanied by Italian used in domains outside of the family, and that the repertoires of the participating Ladin speakers mostly included Ladin, German, Tyrolean and Italian. These observations lead Dal Negro (2017) to conclude that Italian seems to be present in all repertoires, whereas the same is not true for German and even less so for Ladin. Her insights, however, are based on a neat distinction between first language Italian, German or Ladin speakers established a priori. In fact, Dal Negro (2017:60) speaks of a “bilinguismo bi-comunitario” in relation to South Tyrol’s sociolinguistic make-up, thus taking the existence of two distinct communities already as a starting point.

More recent studies (Engel & Hoffmann, 2016; Stopfner & Engel, 2019; Zanasi & Platzgummer, 2018; Zanasi et al., 2020) have started adopting approaches that do not focus on the repertoires of speech communities, but on the different linguistic resources that individual speakers dispose of. The mentioned studies have all focused on adolescents attending lower or upper secondary schools, and have shown that the participants’ linguistic repertoires are more complex and diverse than the bi- and trilingualism that is commonly associated with the province. Their repertoires always include English and oftentimes other languages acquired in varied contexts as well as different named dialects associated with different named languages. Moreover, as Stopfner and Engel (2019:60) have shown, adolescents’ actual communicative practices can vary considerably even if the same kinds of languages or dialects are involved. In this context, they stress that it is important “to critically reflect on traditional categorizations [of monolingual, bilingual or plurilingual children] that run the risk of simplification”.

It thus becomes clear that within research on linguistic repertoires on South Tyrol, a shift has taken place from an exclusive focus on community repertoires to an investigation of the linguistic repertoires that individual speakers employ in interaction. Characteristic of this switch is also a critical engagement with categorisations and simplifications, and an awareness that language group affiliation does not provide reliable insights into communities’ or speakers’ linguistic repertoires and language practices.

3.4.2 Language practices and linguistic variation

Besides studies on linguistic repertoires, and often in connection with the latter, several scholars have published in the broader fields of language practices and variation, investigating both the three official languages and associated dialects. Studies have been conducted in the

fields of phonology (e.g. Kaland, Galatà, Spreafico, & Vietti, 2016; Vietti & Spreafico, 2014), lexicology (e.g. Abel, 2018; Abfalterer, 2007; Putzer, 1982), dialectology (Iannàccaro & Dell'Aquila, 2001; Lanthaler, 2018; Meluzzi, 2015; Vietti, 2017) and language variation more generally (Lanthaler, 1997). Moreover, bilingual speech (Dal Negro, 2018; Dal Negro & Ciccolone, 2018), language practices in the digital realm (Glaznieks & Frey, 2018) and in intercultural communication (Veronesi, 2000) have been investigated. This research provides valuable insights into the kinds of language variation in South Tyrol that has been deemed worthy of investigation over the years, and some of the mentioned publications will also serve a valuable backdrop against which to interpret the students' positionings addressed in the empirical chapters.

Research on the German language and its varieties in South Tyrol initially focused on the effects of language contact with Italian (Egger, 1977; Putzer, 1982). Egger (1977:163) was cautioning against the development of a “Mischsprache”, i.e. a ‘mixed’ language due to the adoption of an increasing number of Italian loanwords, and Putzer (1982) also warned against Italian loan words entering into common use from specialised language. He did however also examine factors influencing the use of loanwords and came to the conclusion that they did not pose a danger to German in South Tyrol generally. Such purist tendencies have somewhat abated in later years, and research has now shifted to investigating the relation between local varieties and the kind of Standard German oriented to in the province (Abel, 2018; Risse, 2010, 2015). In fact, Abel (2018:315) stated that there has been a “move away from research working with a predominantly negatively connoted concept of interference towards the documentation of specific lexical items from a variational linguistic perspective”¹³. Risse (2015:103) even argued for the existence of a South Tyrolean standard that would constitute “an independent variety of German”.

Moreover, Risse (2015) stressed the importance of the local dialects, who are also increasingly being used in writing in informal contexts. In this regard, Glaznieks and Frey (2018) provided empirical evidence with their study on language use on the social network Facebook, where the preferred variety especially for young users are their respective local varieties of German. In a similar vein, Risse (2010) observed that children and adolescents in South Tyrol use Standard German only ever in a school context. Similarly, Ciccolone (2010a, 2010b) found conflicting attitudes in his study on South Tyrolean German speakers' perceptions of Standard

¹³ My translation; in the original: “Abkehr von einer vorwiegend negativ konnotierten Interferenzforschung hin zur Erfassung eines Sonderwortschatzes aus variationslinguistischer Perspektive”

German: on the one hand, they oriented to a standard from Germany as the norm with the highest prestige, but on the other hand, they considered this standard as somewhat ‘foreign’ to them.

Investigations on Italian and its varieties in South Tyrol have had a later start. Cavagnoli (2000) still observed a near-total lack in studies on this subject, but the Italian used in the province has been investigated in several studies since then and can no longer be considered a marginal topic. While Cavagnoli (2000) and Mioni (2000) claimed that the Italian spoken in South Tyrol was neutral and free of dialectal variation due to the migration processes that brought speakers from different parts of Italy to the province, more recent publications have started to paint a different picture. Vietti (2017) argued for the existence of a new dialectal koiné in the city of Bolzano, and Meluzzi (2015) claimed that dialects of origin are still used in the city of Bolzano and are central for Italian linguistic identity in this context. She does however point to a difference between older users, who use dialects in everyday life, and younger speakers, who only use single dialectal expressions in informal contexts.

Research on the Ladin language has mostly underlined its variability, to the point where Ladin is not considered as a single language, but as composed of five different major varieties representing the five different valleys in the Dolomites where it is spoken (see section 3.2.1). Variation is also present within those valleys, with differences from one village to the next (Videsott, 2011). There have been attempts to introduce a standard written language for all five Ladin valleys – referred to as *Ladin Dolomitan* – on the model of the rhaetoromance standard *Rumantsch Grischun* in Switzerland. However, Ladin Dolomitan has as of yet lacked widespread public support and use (Videsott, 2014).

A limited number of studies has also been interested in bilingual speech and in communication between members of different language groups. For instance, Veronesi (2000) investigated intercultural communication in South Tyrol from a conversation analytic perspective. She examined conversations between interactants of different language backgrounds in different contexts (a language school, a youth counselling centre, a political party and during project work of university students with their teacher). She showed how conversational routines differ considerably between contexts, ranging from Italian as a default language to different modes of German-Italian bilingual practices to relatively flexible language practices. Dal Negro (2018) and Dal Negro and Ciccolone (2018) have also investigated communication between German, Italian and bilingual speakers, and have focused primarily on identifying patterns of code-mixing, code-switching and code alternation. In her analysis of language biographical interviews with young adults from bi- or multilingual families in South Tyrol, Leonardi (2020)

also found more flexible, bilingual language practices to play a role in communication in the family. Such investigations are especially meaningful in the light of other sociolinguistic descriptions (e.g. Abel et al., 2007; Risse, 2015) that stress that communication between members of the Italian language group and those of the German language group generally occurs in Italian. While such observations are corroborated by statistical investigations on language in South Tyrol (ASTAT, 2006, 2015), studies on bilingual speech illustrate that it might be a simplification to consider Italian the default language in such interactions.

3.4.3 Second language competence

Second language competence, in its local definition as the acquisition of Italian or German (or both in case of the Ladin valleys) has received considerable scholarly attention in South Tyrol. Research in these fields has largely aimed at investigating students' second language attainment levels (e.g. Vettori & Abel, 2017; Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a; Comitê, 2010), and at the identification of the factors that influence second language learning in the province (Abel & Stuflesser, 2006; De Angelis, 2007; Gross, 2019; Paladino et al., 2009).

Second language attainment levels have been tested most extensively in two large-scale projects on secondary school students' German and Italian competences in the German and Italian tracks respectively. These studies were conducted at two different points in time (in the school years 2007/08 and 2014/15) and were based on representative samples of the student population a year before their school-leaving exam (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a; Vettori & Abel, 2017). The tasks to be completed by the students were geared towards allowing conclusions on the students' attainment levels as described by the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), on the basis of which the achievement of education policy aims could be monitored. In both studies, the authors concluded that a large proportion of secondary school students had not yet reached the B2 level that would be required for them to pass their school-leaving exams (Abel, Vettori, & Forer, 2012; Vettori & Abel, 2017).

Other research conducted in a quantitative paradigm has used second language attainment levels as independent variables with the purpose of identifying factors that influence successful second language learning. Such research has been carried out focusing on different age groups, ranging from grade 4 students of primary school (Gross, 2019) to lower secondary school students (De Angelis, 2012) to upper secondary school students (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012b, 2012a; Paladino et al., 2009; Vettori & Abel, 2017). A range of factors were thereby identified as positively correlated with second language attainment, including the use of the second language outside of school (Gross, 2019; Vettori & Abel, 2017), high learning

motivation (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a, 2012b; Gross, 2019), and high socioeconomic status (Gross, 2019; Vettori & Abel, 2017). Other factors that were found to have an effect were language attitudes (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a, 2012b), the type of school attended (Vettori & Abel, 2017), the relative population of language groups in the students' hometowns (De Angelis, 2012) and the students' gender (Gross, 2019).

It thus becomes apparent that second language learning seems to have been a central focus of research in applied linguistics in South Tyrol. Cennamo (2017) observes that the topic is also of highest relevance to stakeholders in education and generally receives considerable attention from the media and consequently from the general public. She criticises the fact that research conducted under this paradigm mostly measured competences against monolingual norms and pre-selected and/or categorised participants along cultural, ethnic or linguistic lines. Indeed, the studies reviewed in this section all adopted a homogenising perspective on their participants, either by only selecting members of the Italian language group (De Angelis, 2012; Paladino et al., 2009) or by strictly differentiating between first language German or Italian speakers in their analysis (Abel, Vettori, & Wisniewski, 2012a, 2012b; Gross, 2019; Vettori & Abel, 2017). While this is certainly a common practice for studies in a quantitative paradigm, a critical sociolinguistic perspective also urges us to critically engage with such categorisation practices.

3.4.4 Identity and belonging

A number of recent publications have investigated the nexus between language, identity and belonging in South Tyrol. While I do not apply the concept of identity in the present thesis, my theoretical elaborations on positioning theory have shown positioning and processes of identification to be closely interwoven (see section 2.4). Belonging, in turn, has emerged as particularly relevant to my interview partners' affective positionings. Engaging with research on language, identity and belonging in South Tyrol is thus certainly warranted.

One of the relevant studies in this context is Veronesi's (2009) study on the language biographies of eight adults residing in South Tyrol. Veronesi collected their language biographies by way of narrative interviews, focusing her analysis on how participants represented the two languages Italian and German and bilingualism as a whole, and how they discursively constructed their identities. With respect to the latter, she concluded that, in particular, interview partners that had grown up with both German and Italian struggled to find a legitimate identity for themselves, and she saw a polarisation of South Tyrolean society at the root of these struggles.

Another relevant study is Risse's (2010) exploration of the concept of *Zugehörigkeit* (i.e. belonging/affiliation). Risse followed Hausendorf's (2000) conceptualisation of belonging as the expression of affiliation to a social group that is achieved in linguistic interaction. She claimed that South Tyrolean German speakers employ the local dialects of German to differentiate themselves not only from Italian speakers but also from other speakers of German such as tourists or immigrants from Germany or Austria. However, Risse also conceded that further research will be needed to investigate these kinds of linguistic behaviour.

Brannick (2016) studied discourses on bilingualism in Bolzano/Bozen and South Tyrol and found language to be continuously mobilised as language-as-identity in this context. He based this conclusion on analyses of talk from a private association for multilingualism, of relevant newspaper discourse from the 1920s to the present, of legal discourse, political speeches and of discourse around the Victory Monument in Bolzano/Bozen, and argued that his data "all illustrate ideologies which view language as a fundamental part of group (or national) identity, despite separation by genre and time" (Brannick, 2016:177). Brannick claimed that socio-political discourse as well as social action in South Tyrol are characterised by ethnolinguistic and ethnonationalist politics, reflecting ideologies that are by no means unique to South Tyrol, but circulate globally.

Meluzzi (2017) focused on the linguistic identities of members of the Italian language group in Bolzano/Bozen and investigated their attitudes to Italian, German and to the local dialects used by the German language group. In her analysis of over 40 semi-structured interviews, she found that her participants constructed the Italian language group, i.e. the group they considered themselves a part of, as a marginalised minority. Moreover, they constructed the local dialects of German as inferior to Standard German – an observation that can be linked to a general hierarchisation of linguistic resources and to the circulation of standard language ideologies described by Horner and Weber (2018).

Cennamo (2017) investigated secondary school students' practices of 'doing difference' in relation to linguistic diversity and migration. She conducted classroom observations and narrative-biographical interviews with first generation migrant adolescents and investigated how they perceived their multilingualism at their schools and how they narratively constructed their affiliation to at least two countries and languages. She analysed instances of students being 'othered' at their schools and questioned the capability of the South Tyrolean school system to enable children to develop as multilinguals and as possessing multiple affiliations.

Leroy (2019) also focused on secondary school students in the city of Bolzano/Bozen, and investigated their representations and appropriations of linguistic heterogeneity in the city with

the use of photographic inquiry. She encouraged students to take photographs of the linguistic landscape surrounding them and hence aimed at instigating reflection in the students. In her analysis, she showed that secondary school students in Bolzano do not conceive of their city as a ‘hybrid’ between languages and cultures, but rather portrayed it as a mosaic composed of clearly demarcated entities. She linked these portrayals to discourses about language and language groups in the province, which she argued consist in a reproduction of ethnolinguistic groups and identities on different levels (e.g. in the school system, with the declaration of affiliation to a language group, or even in statistical enquiries and research on the province).

Colombo, Ritter and Stopfner (2020) approached identity constructions of members of plurilingual families from a sociocultural lens. They examined identity constructions expressed in sociolinguistic interviews and claimed that families navigate “between preserving old and acquiring new linguistic identities, between appreciating plurilingualism in general and showing a general concern for becoming an outgroup member” (Colombo et al., 2020:77f.). Moreover, the authors argued that despite South Tyrol’s official trilingualism, the idea of a monolingual identity seems to be very much present in the province and to impact on families’ identity constructions.

It thus seems that sociolinguistic investigations on identity and belonging in the South Tyrolean context have been conducted from diverse theoretical and methodological lenses, and find a common denominator in the ways in which identity constructions are enabled and constrained by ethnolinguistic categories, and by the language ideological assumptions that inform the latter.

3.5 Researcher positionality

In the different sections of this chapter so far, I have aimed at providing a kaleidoscopic overview of South Tyrol’s history, of the role that language and language groups play in social and political life and in education in the province, and of the kinds of sociolinguistic research that has been conducted in and on South Tyrol. Throughout the sections, I have shown how specific aspects of this overview link back to the aims of the present project. In this section, I will engage with my own positioning as a person and researcher within the context that I have described.

In critical sociolinguistic research, an increasing emphasis has been placed on the ways in which researchers’ positions in time and place shape their respective research endeavours. A reflexive engagement with these positions is essential within such approaches. In this context, Heller, Pietikäinen and Pujolar (2018) see autobiography as a way to direct an ethnographic

gaze also to the researcher in order to generate situated understandings of the processes he or she studies. Similarly, Reed-Danahay (2009) proposes autoethnography, as a form of writing and social analysis that blends ethnography and autobiography, as a way to acknowledge researcher positionality that goes beyond a dualistic self-identification as an insider or outsider to the investigated social context.

In this section, I will thus draw on elements of autobiography or autoethnography in order to approach my positionality within South Tyrol, and my own linguistic repertoire and self-positionings in relation to language. It is only consistent that I do so, considering that the remainder of the present thesis will be dedicated to examining repertoires and self-positionings of the adolescents that participated in this research. In order to do so, I will employ similar methods to the ones I have employed with my interview partners (for a detailed discussion of these methods see Chapter 4): I will first present two language portraits that I created in different contexts towards the beginning of this project, before presenting and discussing an autoethnographic text about my language biography.

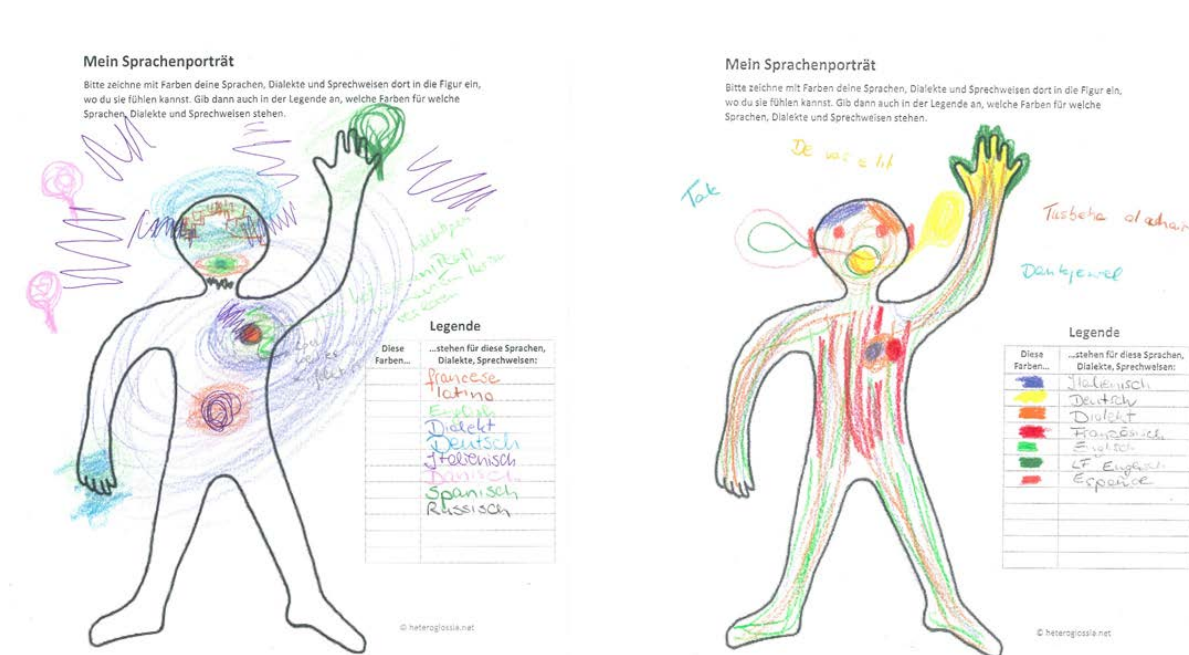


Figure 7: Two language portraits I created, in June 2017 (left) and February 2018 (right) respectively

The two language portraits in Figure 7 are to be regarded as creative representations of what I considered to be my linguistic repertoire when I coloured the portraits in June 2017 and February 2018, and they give a first impression of continuities and changes in my language biography. Some linguistic resources seem to have disappeared between the first and the second portrait, while others only appear on the second one. The ones represented on both

portraits, in turn, are French, English, *Dialekt*, German, Italian and Danish – and the ways in which these are represented could be explored to uncover what they meant to me at the time. I will not go into detail about these meanings here, but continue instead with a text that attempts to present my language biography. Language biographies follow their teller's trajectory through time and space, focusing on their experience of language. A text of this sort thus provides an added layer of insight that will be relevant to the discussion of my positionality as a researcher that will follow it:

I was born in Schlanders, a village in the Vinschgau valley that spans the western part of South Tyrol, from two parents that had grown up in this same valley themselves. In fact, both sides of my family have lived in different villages of the Vinschgau for some generations now. The valley has long been characterised primarily by farming – traditionally livestock, and for some time now apples, but like in other places, the tertiary sector has been on the rise. Still, the valley represents a rather rural reality. Schlanders, as the biggest village of the valley, counts only about six thousand inhabitants.

I spent my entire childhood in this valley, only moving from one village to another when I was about two years old. Like most rural parts of South Tyrol, the Vinschgau is quite homogeneously populated by the German language group (see the graph on the distribution of language groups in section 3.4). I thus grew up with the German dialects commonly used in my surroundings. Dialects in the plural, because my father and mother already spoke slightly differently, as there is considerable variation also from one village to the next. This is something that I realised very early on, as the other kids in preschool made me understand that 'my' dialect was different to 'theirs'. At least that is a story that my parents tell me – I do not remember myself, and indeed, I later 'lost' that 'other' dialect.

I attended schools of the German track throughout all levels of schooling. Schools of the Italian track did not exist in my village. I did learn Italian, though: I remember that already in preschool, our teachers taught us some bits and pieces of the language, and I started really learning it at school in grade 2. I enjoyed the Italian lessons as a child, sometimes more, sometimes less, but I was rarely enthusiastic about them. For English, that was very different. At the time, English was taught only from the second year of lower secondary school, and not already in primary school like nowadays, and I remember longing for finally starting to learn English. I also remember being envious of one of my classmates for taking after-school classes in English already in grade 4, and begging my parents to enrol me as well. They did, and so the next school year, I could take English classes even before the subject was introduced at school.

After lower secondary school, I chose to attend the *Sprachengymnasium* in Schlanders – an academically oriented upper secondary school with a focus on modern languages. This meant many weekly hours of German, Italian and English and additionally taking up Latin and French. I enjoyed all language subjects, and was good at them: memorising vocabulary came easy to me, and so did understanding complex grammar rules. I always remained most passionate about English, and also started reading books and watching movies and TV series in English around that time. Apart from that, I still mostly used 'our' dialect of German outside of school, and Standard German for reading and TV.

After school, I wanted to continue doing 'something with languages'. I went on to study translation in Innsbruck (Tyrol, Austria), but switched to studying English and French within a teacher training degree after one semester. During this time, I incorporated still different kinds of German into my linguistic repertoire. I enjoyed studying French but, initially, not with the same passion I still felt for English. My Italian, on the other hand, went somewhat into disuse. During my studies, I went on a term abroad to Ontario, Canada, where I mostly spoke English – for compensation, I organised an internship for myself in France the summer after, to improve my French. This was the moment when I got hooked with French, and while this language then found

a place in my heart, my passion for English was no longer burning so bright. In fact, I also chose to move to France to work as a German language assistant after my studies.

I had always found going abroad exciting, and I did not see myself moving back to South Tyrol anytime soon, despite the fact that I had always remained attached to the place. However, when I got a PhD position in Bozen/Bolzano, I decided that this warranted moving 'back' to South Tyrol. I settled in Bolzano and once more, my language practices changed. Much to my dismay, I hardly got to speak French anymore. Instead, I came to speak Italian a lot, and improved a lot, but never quite reaching a level that would be to my satisfaction – even now that I am using it daily with my partner. Overall, I now speak English, Italian, and different kinds of German in my everyday life, often alternating between them and mixing them as well.

Which kinds of insights do the two language portraits and the autoethnographic text above provide about my positionality as a researcher? Returning to the insider/outsider dichotomy, one could conclude that, having grown up in South Tyrol, I am an 'insider' to the context in which I am undertaking this study. This conclusion is warranted to some degree: at the outset of this project, I was already familiar with the language policies and many of the discourses around language in South Tyrol because I had experienced some of them first hand.

However, as has become clear in the previous sections, being an 'insider' in the context of South Tyrol also means positioning oneself within a system that is structured to a certain extent by ethnolinguistic categories. Before moving to Bolzano, I would always have positioned myself as firmly rooted in the German category. My family and friends all identified as members of the German language group, and so did I. At 18, I signed my declaration of affiliation to the German group without thinking twice about it. It was only over the last couple of years that I started questioning the 'realness' of the three neat language groups, and this steered me in the direction of adopting a critical sociolinguistic approach in this investigation of adolescents' positionings to language.

The Italian language is now a part of my everyday life, but I still do not feel like an 'insider' to the Italian language group in South Tyrol. This is connected to recurring experiences of being other-positioned in everyday interactions, where people would swiftly position me as *Sudtirolese* – German South Tyrolean because of my accent. Sometimes, I find myself desiring to be considered a 'real' Italian, and at other times, I find myself rejecting such positionings when they are offered to me. Sometimes, I do so because I do not feel I can legitimately call myself Italian, at other times I do so because I wish to affirm my German South Tyrolean identity instead, and at other times still, I do so to more generally reject any equation of a nation with one language.

However, having grown up speaking German(s) in South Tyrol is certainly not the only aspect of my positionality that has shaped this research process. For instance, my experience as a

language learner and later as a teacher have contributed to my choice of research questions. Similarly, my age, my gender, my skin colour, my experience as a language learner, teacher, and researcher all enabled certain ways of talking about language during interviews, and constrained others. In the following chapter, I will discuss in more detail how different aspects of my positionality were relevant throughout the research process.

4 Research Design and Process

The title of this chapter reflects the insight that the research design tends to be a “projected work plan” (Heller et al., 2018:43), in other words, one that involves projecting decisions into a future not yet to be foreseen, and reviewing those decisions along the research process. The following sections thus aim to present the work plan I created at the outset of this research endeavour as well as the ways in which the research process unfolded. I will elaborate on my epistemological position and on the methodological principles I followed (4.1), delineate the aims of this research project (4.2), engage with the methods I envisioned for generating data (4.3), describe the actual processes of data generation (4.4) and lay out the principles and processes of data analysis (4.5).

4.1 Epistemological and methodological principles

In my research, I take a constructivist approach and I assume that knowledge is socially constructed, consequently rejecting the idea that research can produce objective, value-free and unbiased knowledge (e.g. Heller et al., 2018; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Instead, I regard research as “a personal and socially situated experience” (Heller et al., 2018:3). This understanding applies to all facets of doing research, from the choice of a research question and appropriate methods, to the generation, representation and analysis of data, and to engaging in conversations about one’s findings.

From this follows that the knowledge I aim to produce is, and ought to be, situated in nature. *Situated* hereby means that the generated knowledge “attend[s] to the specific conditions and contexts in which the processes we are interested in unfold” (Heller et al., 2018:2). This commitment has a series of consequences for my research, ranging from the lengthy engagement with the socio-political context of this research in Chapter 3, to an analysis of interviews as social action (see section 4.5). Thus, while the present project is not ethnographic in the stricter sense, in that it does not employ ethnography’s trademark method of observation, it is ethnographic in a wider sense in that it shares some of the central epistemological and methodological principles of an ethnography.

Another one of those methodological principles concerns the concept of *reflexivity*. My reflections in section 3.5 – on my positionality as someone having grown up and living in South Tyrol – are an example of how I aimed to be reflexive about the ways in which my personal and social situatedness informs the research I undertake. Heller, Pietikäinen and Pujolar (2018:10) provide an insightful and comprehensive definition of this principle:

The principle of reflexivity requires that we be the first to examine and explain the position from which we speak both as social scientists and as persons of our times and places and histories. It involves owning up to our theoretical and political affiliations, which inform the topics that we choose to analyse and the perspective from which we analyze them.

Traces of this reflexivity will be apparent throughout this thesis, not necessarily in separate sections but interwoven in elaborations concerning choice of research questions and methods, field access, interpretation of data, and conclusions drawn.

4.2 Research aims and questions

At the outset of this research project stood a general interest in the linguistic repertoires of secondary school students in South Tyrol, as well as a special interest in their emotional or affective experience of language – an aspect that is often described as under-researched (Busch, 2015c; Kramsch, 2009). In this context, Brigitta Busch's (e.g. 2012, 2015, 2017a) notion of the linguistic repertoire, in connection with her conceptualisation of the lived experience of language, seemed especially well suited for taking on the task of meaningfully linking these two interests (see section 2.2 for a detailed discussion). Moreover, this concept also pointed me in the direction of language ideologies, an investigation of which seemed necessary for arriving at an understanding of the ways in which speakers experience language (see section 2.3). The concept of positioning, combined with a sociolinguistic perspective on stance-taking in discourse, provided me with the theoretical and analytical tools to generate knowledge about adolescents' lived experience of language, or rather about their accounts of the latter. From these insights, four guiding research questions for the present project emerged:

1. Which linguistic resources do adolescents in South Tyrol construct as (not) relevant to their lives?
2. How do these adolescents position themselves in relation to these linguistic resources?
3. How do their positionings relate to their emotional experience?
4. How do these positionings relate to language ideologies circulating in the social spaces these adolescents inhabit?

These research questions subsequently guided my research design. They impacted my choice of methods for data generation, the decisions I took during data generation, as well as the selection of appropriate approaches to analysis. An investigation of these questions stood especially to reason in a context that is officially trilingual, where language structures social life in various ways, and where all secondary school students dispose of linguistic resources associated with different named languages but also with named dialects (see Chapter 3).

Moreover, despite a general proliferation of research in linguistics on the South Tyrolean context, speakers' linguistic repertoires and their lived experience of language have remained underexplored and only recently have researchers begun to critically engage with the role of language in processes of differentiation in the province (Brannick, 2016; Cennamo, 2017; Leroy, 2019; Veronesi, 2009).

While these general research questions remained a constant throughout the research process, it will become apparent in the following chapters that in this research endeavour, I have ended up asking slightly different, more specific questions:

- How do adolescents in South Tyrol describe their language practices in the different social spaces in which they participate? How do they position in relation to these practices, and in what ways are these positionings informed by language ideologies (Chapter 6)?
- How do these adolescents position themselves as (in)competent speakers of different named languages and dialects, and in what ways are these positionings informed by language ideologies (Chapter 7)?
- How do these adolescents position themselves in relation to language in affective terms, and in what ways are their affective positionings informed by language ideologies (Chapter 8)?

These research questions emerged from my interactions in the field, from different processes of data analysis and from an engagement with relevant literature during those processes. As I went along, I began to organise my research questions around themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in the students' positioning practices (see section 4.6 for a more detailed discussion). My participants turned out to describe their language practices, to position themselves as more or less competent speakers, and to position in affective terms in relation to language. These three themes occurred in all interviews, albeit with differing importance, and they are all part of what makes up the linguistic repertoire (Busch, 2012, 2015a, 2017b). Language ideologies, in turn, were intertwined with my participants' positionings across those themes, and I thus chose not to treat them as a separate aspect, but as a red thread to follow across themes.

4.3 Methods

After this discussion of the research questions and their evolution along the research process, I will now loop back to the outset of this research and to the design of the methods for data generation. In the present study, I combined the use of the specific visual method of the

language portrait (Busch, 2018b) with language biographical interviewing. This section will consequently provide a brief overview of methodological insights of research based on language biographical interviews (4.3.1) and of research in applied linguistics employing visual methods in general and language portraits in particular (4.3.2).

4.3.1 Language biographical interviewing

One of the central aims of this study was to explore secondary school students' lived experience of language. Experience, however, is never directly accessible, but needs to be reconstituted in order to be available for investigation (Busch, 2020). There are different ways in which researchers can indirectly access experience: they can tap into their own experience, potentially through autoethnographic writing (e.g. Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Reed-Danahay, 2009), they can conduct analyses of other people's introspective texts, as has been undertaken with language memoirs (Kramsch, 2009), or they can actively elicit introspection in research participants.

As I am interested in the lived experience of adolescents, who do not happen to already have written language memoirs, only the latter alternative was viable for this study. Eliciting introspection in participants, in turn, can adopt different formats, ranging from diary studies (e.g. Numrich, 1996) to language biographical interviews (e.g. Franceschini, 2001; Pavlenko, 2007) to visual and creative methods (Kalaja & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2017). Diary studies have already been carried out in the 1970s and 1980s, but somewhat decreased in popularity over the last two decades. Conversely, the use of autobiographic data generated in the context of language autobiographical interviews has been on the rise since its incipience in the 1990s (Pavlenko, 2007), whereas visual methods seem to be a more recent trend (Kalaja & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2017).

Language biographies can be described as "life histories that focus on the languages of the speaker and discuss how and why these languages were acquired, used, or abandoned" (Pavlenko, 2007:165). As such, they have been used as a basis for analyses in sociolinguistics and in second language acquisition (Pavlenko, 2007). While a number of studies in this context follow such a holistic conceptualisation of a language biography, they tend to focus on specific aspects in their analyses, ranging from language learning experiences (Franceschini, 2001; Thüne, 2020; Veronesi, 2008) and issues around language, identity and belonging (König, 2011; Schnitzer, 2017; Thüne, 2011; Treichel, 2004), to language experiences in different contexts of migration and displacement (Betten, 2010; König, 2011; Thoma, 2018; Thüne, 2011, 2020). Conversely, some language biographical research also aimed to restrict its focus

already when interviewing, not generating holistic biographies but a priori only collecting narratives about specific moments or themes. For instance, Gabryś-Barker and Otwinowska (2012) have examined Polish learners' experience of learning English and French, De Fina and King (2011) and De Fina (2013) have explored narratives of language conflict told by immigrant women in the US, and Relaño Pastor (2014) has investigated the language experiences of Mexican women at the border between Mexico and the US.

The present study can benefit from the methodological insights of the range of language biographical research that has been conducted to date. A key principle in this context is that despite the use of individuals' language biographies, this kind of research is not primarily interested in the singularity of biographical experience. Busch (2017a:55) argued that language biographical research is above all concerned with what individuals' language biographies "reveal about specific dimensions of language practices and ideologies that are neglected when taking an assumed 'average' speaker as representative of a certain group". Such research may thus aim to arrive at dimensions of language biographical experience that are of relevance in specific places at specific moments in time, or to focus on the language experience of a specific set of speakers, whereby these interests naturally intertwine (Franceschini, 2004). This is for instance the case for Thüne's (2020) analysis of the language biographies of Kindertransportees, or of König's (2011) investigation of the linguistic identity of Vietnamese women who immigrated to Germany. This insight also informed my decision to work towards identifying thematic patterns in positioning practices, and not to present individual language biographies as case studies.

Other important insights from language biographical research are equally valid for ethnographic interviewing more generally. One of these is to recognise that language biographical interviews and interviews generally are never only the product of participants' emic perspectives, but products of situated interactions (Heller, 2011; Heller et al., 2018; Pavlenko, 2007). Insights from the field of narrative studies are particularly relevant to language biographies. These studies have convincingly shown that narratives are recipient-designed and co-constructed between the people present in the interactional situation (Deppermann, 2013). From this, it follows that participants' introspections and narrations in the interview interaction need to be interpreted in the light of the specific context in which they were produced (Busch, 2020). At the same time, attending to such interactional aspects of narrative generated in interviews can help uncover how the former are informed by wider social processes, and inform these in turn (De Fina, 2013; Heller, 2011).

Another important principle is to be reflexive about power relations between interviewers and interviewees. Pavlenko (2007:180) argues that autobiographic narratives can be transformative as they are “making the object of the inquiry into the subject and granting the subject both agency and voice”. When interviewing, it is therefore crucial to give interview partners room for developing their subjective perspectives, and to be aware of how both relations of power and the meaning of the interview encounter itself are negotiated – a crucial element of ethnographic interviewing more generally (Heller et al., 2018).

Another set of insights from narrative studies on language involves language choice for interviews. Pavlenko (2007) argued that it needs to be acknowledged that language use in an interview impacts on the presentation of events. She underlined that researchers ought to discuss their rationale for their language choice, and should also consider to allow more flexible language practices such as code-switching, which may exert a variety of semantic and affective functions for interviewees. She also recommended to analyse the specific interview language practices, which I will discuss further in section 4.6.

4.3.2 Visual methods and the language portrait

Beside and alongside biographical methods, visual methods are increasingly adopted in order to access participants’ subjectivities, as stated by Kalaja & Pitkänen-Huhta (2017:3) in their introduction to a special issue of the *Applied Linguistics Review*:

“[T]he use of visual methods has become popular in studying subjective experiences of language learning and teaching and language use, as visuals are often thought to offer participants an alternative to verbal means to express their experiences and feelings and to reflect on their language practices, identities and learning and teaching processes.”

The authors suggest that drawing may give access to abstract and complex aspects of speakers’ selves and, as such, may complement other methods of data generation such as interviews.

Drawing has also widely been discussed as a method to be employed with children and adolescents (e.g. Literat, 2013; Punch, 2002; Scheid, 2013). Literat (2013:84), for instance, proposes drawing as “a highly efficient and ethically sound research strategy that is particularly suited for work with children and young people across a variety of cultural contexts”. Punch (2002) additionally underlines that visual methods are productive in lessening the power imbalance between an adult researcher and a younger participant. She states that such methods decrease the pressure that participants may feel to give ‘correct’ answers.

In research on multilingualism, drawing has been applied as a method for data generation in different forms. Studies have used drawings to investigate children’s representations of multilingualism by instructing them to draw what they imagine to be going on in a

multilingual's head (Castellotti & Moore, 1999) or by having them draw themselves as multilingual speakers (Melo-Pfeifer, 2017). Similar drawings have also been made use of in order to explore children's linguistic repertoires and their relationship to Portuguese as their heritage language (Melo-Pfeifer & Schmidt, 2013). A slightly different approach was taken by Purkarthofer (2018), who included children's situational drawings in her investigation of spatial and language practices in a German-Slovene bilingual school in Austria, encouraging the participating children to reflect on and draw situations in which they use their main languages.

While the mentioned methods have mostly been applied on a one-off basis, the creation of language portraits has been used more extensively. The method consists in participants colouring a body silhouette to represent their linguistic resources and was initially developed as an instrument to raise awareness of linguistic diversity in primary schools in Germany (Neumann, 1991) and in Austria (Krumm & Jenkins, 2001). Language portraits have since continued to be used for similar purposes in schools across age ranges, at universities, and in teacher education (Gogolin, 2015), and most recently, the method has also been adapted for digital use in an app aiming to encourage families to talk about language use and emotions in the family (Di Giovanni, Di Napoli, & Allegra, 2019).

Over the last two decades, the language portrait has increasingly been adopted as a research method. As such, it has been used in different forms (see Figure 8) and with different purposes. It has been employed in action research with teacher candidates (Coffey, 2013; Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2016; Vetter, 2011), and it has been used to investigate connections between participants' linguistic repertoires and their identities (e.g. Dressler, 2014; Farmer, 2012; Krumm, 2009; Martin, 2012; Prasad, 2014; Seals, 2018), emotions (e.g. Janíková, 2016; Krumm, 2002, 2003), constructions of agency (Obojska & Purkarthofer, 2018) and their lived experience of language (Busch, 2010a, 2010b; Obojska, 2019).

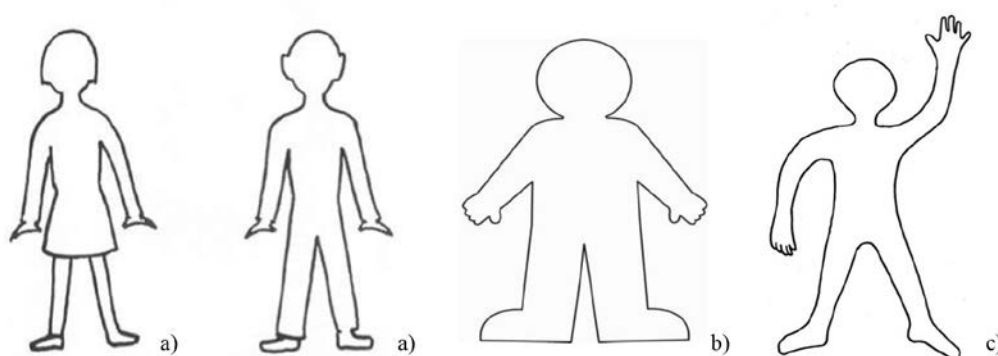


Figure 8: Language Portrait silhouettes taken from a) Krumm, 2010, b) Martin, 2012 and c) Busch, 2018a

Moreover, language portraits have been used as a research method with participants across a wide age range and in various contexts. They were created for research with primary school children (e.g. Busch, 2014; Martin, 2012; Seals, 2018), secondary school students (e.g. Daase, 2014; Farmer, 2012; Prasad, 2014) and adults of diverse age groups (e.g. Busch, 2010a; Kusters & De Meulder, 2019; Park Salo & Dufva, 2017). Contexts spanned all five continents: for instance, Salo and Dufva's (2017) participants were North Korean refugees in South Korea, Singer (2018) investigated members of an indigenous speech community in Australia, Farmer and Prasad (2014) focused on secondary school students in Ontario (Canada), Botsis (2018) examined language biographies of university students in South Africa, Obojska and Purkharthofer (2018) worked with transnational families in Norway. Additionally, particular non-dominant school settings have also often been a special focus: Busch (2014) investigated a multi-grade primary school classroom inspired by Freinet pedagogy, Martin (2012) focused on German-English bilingual schools in Berlin, Dressler (2014) conducted her research in a German-English bilingual program in Canada, Prasad (2014) in a French international school in Toronto and Seals (2018) in a primary school in the United States with a Russian heritage language programme.

Uses of the language portrait also differ with respect to the kinds of data that they are used in conjunction with. Most research does not focus on the portrait alone in analysis, which is linked to the methodological insight that meanings are not inherent in language portraits, but are arrived at through an interpretative process in which both researcher and participant take part (Busch, 2018a). Instead, analyses of language portraits are most often combined with insights from verbal interactions around their creation, spanning from think-aloud protocols and questionnaires (Martin, 2012), recorded peer-to-peer presentations (Prasad, 2014), written descriptions (Coffey, 2013) or, most frequently, focus group or one-on-one interviews (e.g. Kusters & De Meulder, 2019; Obojska & Purkharthofer, 2018; Park Salo & Dufva, 2017; Singer, 2018). It is the latter kind of interviewing that I chose to adopt for the present study.

The language portrait studies conducted to date also diverge from one another regarding their methods of analysis. For instance, Martin (2012) conducted a qualitative content analysis of verbal data and portraits, Coffey (2013) performed an analysis of the use of metaphors, Park Salo and Dufva (2017) combined narrative analysis with an analysis of visual narratives, Busch (2010b, 2011, 2014), in some of her publications, proposes segment analysis as an analysis method inspired by visual sociology, and Kusters and De Meulder (2019) suggest analysing the use of body language in the verbal narrations accompanying the portrait. Consequently, the language portrait method seems rather versatile with respect to analysis methods.

The manifold uses of the language portrait as a research method offer a wide array of insights into its affordances, which were crucial for my choice to employ them in the present study. As Busch (2017a:55) has argued, language portraits can be a means to open conversations about language by creating a space for reflection that is potentially different from narration in that it “allows contradictions, fractures, overlappings and ambiguities to remain unresolved more easily”. Additionally, the visual mode encourages placing more attention on the whole and on the relations between its parts, in contrast to the sequential structure of talk (Busch, 2011). Moreover, like other visual methods, the language portrait is participant-centred in that it affords participants a more powerful position as creators of their portraits, lessening a potential power imbalance between them and the researchers (Busch, 2018a; Obojska, 2019).

When language portraits are employed to elicit language biographical narrations, then the drawing often structures those narrations and serves as a reference point throughout (Busch, 2017a, 2018a). Changes and additions to the portrait may also be made throughout the interaction, thus rendering it a dynamic tool for “thinking in and with images” (Busch, 2018b:7). Similar to other biographical research, language portraits then do not only offer insights into the singularity of speakers’ experience, but can also be conceptualised as a point of intersection between the biographical and the discursive. As such, they enable investigations into the ways in which discourses enter and affect speakers’ experience, but also into the ways in which speakers themselves negotiate, reproduce or contest such discourses or ideologies (Busch, 2018b).

Moreover, the creation of language portraits is especially useful in light of the focus on the lived experience from a phenomenological perspective. Their creation encourages reflection on emotional and bodily dimensions of language, which often find expression in the portrait through metaphors, such as the heart standing for closeness and intimacy or the head representing reason (Busch, 2018a). Kusters and De Meulder (2019) also highlight this potential of the method, and state that it “allows and aids researchers to see languages as embodied, experienced and historically lived”. Moreover, it also enables interview partners to alternately take up an internal perspective on the lived experience of language as well as an external perspective on languages and varieties as objects in allowing a move “between the experiencing subject-body and the observable object-body” (Busch, 2018b:9). As such, language portraits are not considered as mere representations of an independently existing linguistic repertoire, but they become performative in that they enable seeing experience in ways otherwise not accessible (Busch, 2018a).

In fact, Busch (2018b:7) conceives of the language portrait “as a situational and context-bound production that is created in interaction between the participants, framed by the specifications [...] and the setting”. Such a view also emphasises the process of drawing and talking about the portrait instead of a focus on the portrait as a final product. In this context, Kusters and De Meulder (2019) rightly criticise that analyses of language portraits have too often concentrated one-sidedly on the portrait rather than on the process of its creation.

The language portrait thus seems a powerful method for investigations on linguistic repertoires, speakers’ subjectivities, and their lived experience of language, as well as on the social discourses and ideologies that enable and constrain the former. It combines affordances of visual methods and of language biographical interviewing, leaving participants enough space to develop their ideas and thoughts, which seems especially crucial in the context of conducting research with children and adolescents.

4.4 Data generation

In the previous section, I have provided my rationale for choosing to conduct language biographical interviews based on language portraits for the present project. In this section, I will describe in a more detailed manner how I accessed the field (4.4.1), how I conducted interviews (4.4.2), and how I ensured reflexivity throughout this process of data generation (4.4.3).

4.4.1 Accessing the field

I conceived of the present project as a project within *RepertoirePluS*, a larger study undertaken at the research centre Eurac Research investigating the linguistic repertoires of secondary school students in South Tyrol (see Engel, Barrett, Platzgummer, & Zanasi, 2020; Zanasi & Platzgummer, 2018; Zanasi et al., 2020). This larger project pre-structured my access to the field and to my interview partners, as they had all participated in the first of two phases of data collection for RepertoirePluS.

RepertoirePluS was designed to include participants who were attending secondary schools of all three tracks of the South Tyrolean education system (i.e. German, Italian, and the paritetical model of the Ladin valleys). In total, fourteen school classes from seven schools, four lower secondary and three upper secondary, participated in the project. The study included two phases of data collection: the first, conducted in 2017, consisted in collecting sociolinguistic questionnaires from the individual students, and the second, conducted in 2018, in audio and video-registering the students as they completed multilingual tasks in small groups. Two school

classes per school participated in the 2017 phase of data collection, while only one class per school, and an additional pre-test class, were selected to participate in the second phase.

My access to the field was facilitated by RepertoirePluS, as my colleagues had already established contact with the provincial school administrations, who, as project partners, had helped in selecting the schools and in setting up contact between the schools and the research team. When I started designing the present study, the collection of sociolinguistic questionnaires was already under way, while I conducted my interviews at around the same time as the second phase of data collection of RepertoirePlus. In order to avoid overlaps with this project, I thus decided to select my interview partners among the students who would not participate in the second data collection phase of the larger project.

In line with common procedures in qualitative research, I aimed to choose a diverse set of participants in order to be able to “throw light on meaningful differences in experience” (King & Horrocks, 2010:29). It followed from this criterion that I would choose participants from all six classes who would not participate in the second phase of RepertoirePluS, as they would differ in age and in track of schooling attended, that I would also choose male and female students, and that I would choose interview partners with varying linguistic repertoires. In this context, the sociolinguistic questionnaires collected for RepertoirePluS in 2017 formed a valuable basis on which to select interview partners, as they already contained information about the students’ language practices, their language biographies, their self-assessment of their proficiencies and partly also their language attitudes. With my choice of interview partners, I thus aimed to be able to explore diversity along different axes, which stands especially to reason in the South Tyrolean context, where linguistic research has often selected, excluded or categorised participants based solely on ethnolinguistic criteria (see section 3.4).

4.4.2 Conducting interviews

The RepertoirePluS questionnaire did not only present a means of selecting participants, but it also included an element that would later be central for the interviews: the first task of the 2017 questionnaire was to colour a language portrait (Zanasi & Platzgummer, 2018). The interviews I conducted took place 1-1.5 years after the questionnaire study, between spring and winter 2018, and involved the creation of a new language portrait, but also a recontextualisation of the questionnaire language portrait. This introduced a quasi-longitudinal element to the present study, as the contemplation of the earlier portrait offered an entry to reflections on changes and continuities in the participants’ linguistic repertoires. So far, such a use of language portraits

in a longitudinal perspective and as a tool for retrospection has only been explored to a limited degree in a Master's thesis (Dreo, 2016), and seemed especially promising.

The interviews roughly followed these major phases:

1. an introductory phase, including an introduction to the language portrait task
2. the creation of a language portrait by the participant
3. a conversation around the newly created portrait
4. a conversation around the portrait created within the questionnaire in 2017
5. further questions and conclusion

In order to test the interview guide I had developed (see Appendices 11.411.5 and 0 for the final versions), I conducted two pilot interviews in spring 2018, with one student from the lower and one student from the upper secondary school of the German track and audio- and video recorded these interviews. As I found the interview guide to be productive for these interviews, the major interview phases remained consistent over all twenty-four interviews. For this reason, I also later chose not to exclude the pilot interviews from analysis.

The pilot interviews were crucial for me to understand where I needed to adjust interviewing techniques and sequence of questions. One of these adjustments was to include a longer introductory phase in which participants would also be prepared that I would ask open-ended questions and give them space to elaborate (as recommended also by Heller et al., 2018), and would not ask a series of questions in the style of a questionnaire. This introductory phase also included the prompt instructing the participants to create their language portrait, the importance of which has been underlined by several authors (e.g. Busch, 2018a; Chik, 2017; Kusters & De Meulder, 2019). In this context, the pilot interviews were also used to test the comprehensibility and effectiveness of those instructions.

I formulated the language portrait prompt for the two pilot interviews in what is socially constructed as local German dialect, as I suspected these interviews would be held mainly in such varieties. A gloss of the prompt in English would go as follows:

I don't know if you will remember, but for the other studies you created a language portrait, right?

[possibility for participant to reply]

In any case, those portraits are a little different every time you create them. And so I would ask you now to create another one of those portraits for me. You can take this silhouette and colour in all the languages, dialects and ways of speaking that play a role in your life. You can choose colours that seem to fit for you, and try to represent in this portrait what these languages and dialects mean to you, and the experiences you have made with them.

Apart from the reference to the previously created language portrait, this gloss also strongly resembles a prompt that Busch (2018b:8) recommended in her most recent methodological

paper, and stated to have used in a project on resilience and multilingualism. The reference to the past portrait turned out to be important not only to situate the task within the students' experience, but also to probe students' previous understandings of what the task entailed and to make sure that these were not a cause for misunderstandings.

The gloss clearly insinuates that linguistic resources are to be coloured *within* the body silhouettes (which might explain why in the end, hardly any portrait contained elements outside of the silhouette). In mentioning colour and space, this prompt also already indicates some of the semiotic resources that the participants can make use of for their representations. What is to be represented, however, remains rather vague: "all the languages, dialects and ways of speaking that play a role in your life", as well as the kinds of roles that these play. This vagueness is of course strategic: it aims to open up a space for participants to choose what they consider important about the linguistic resources in their lives.

After explaining the task to the respective participant, I handed him or her coloured pencils and a sheet of paper, containing a body silhouette entitled *Mein Sprachenportrait* in German or *Il mio ritratto linguistico* in Italian, as well as a legend. The silhouette was based on Busch's (2018a) language portrait silhouette, while the legend was taken from the language portrait task in the 2017 questionnaire (see Figure 9). The legend instructs the creators of the portrait to insert colours into the column on the left and linguistic resources into the column on the right. Linguistic resources, in this case, are glossed as *Sprachen, Dialekte, Sprechweisen* in German and *lingue, dialetti, gerghi* in Italian to indicate that any bundle of linguistic resources is eligible to be represented – not only named languages or named varieties, but any way of speaking. At the same time, however, it needs to be acknowledged that this does of course insinuate that linguistic resources can be divided up into such bundles.

The 2017 questionnaire language portrait additionally included a description of the task below the title, as well as empty lines for participants to add information on their portraits. These differences between the two task sheets reflect the different interactional settings in which the portraits were created. Entire school classes of between 14 and 24 students each took part in the 2017 questionnaire study, in which the language portrait task was mainly a means of setting participants up for the remainder of the questionnaire, whereas the interviews I conducted in 2018 were one-on-one interviews during which I presented the creation of the language portrait and the conversation around it as the main contents of the interview interaction.

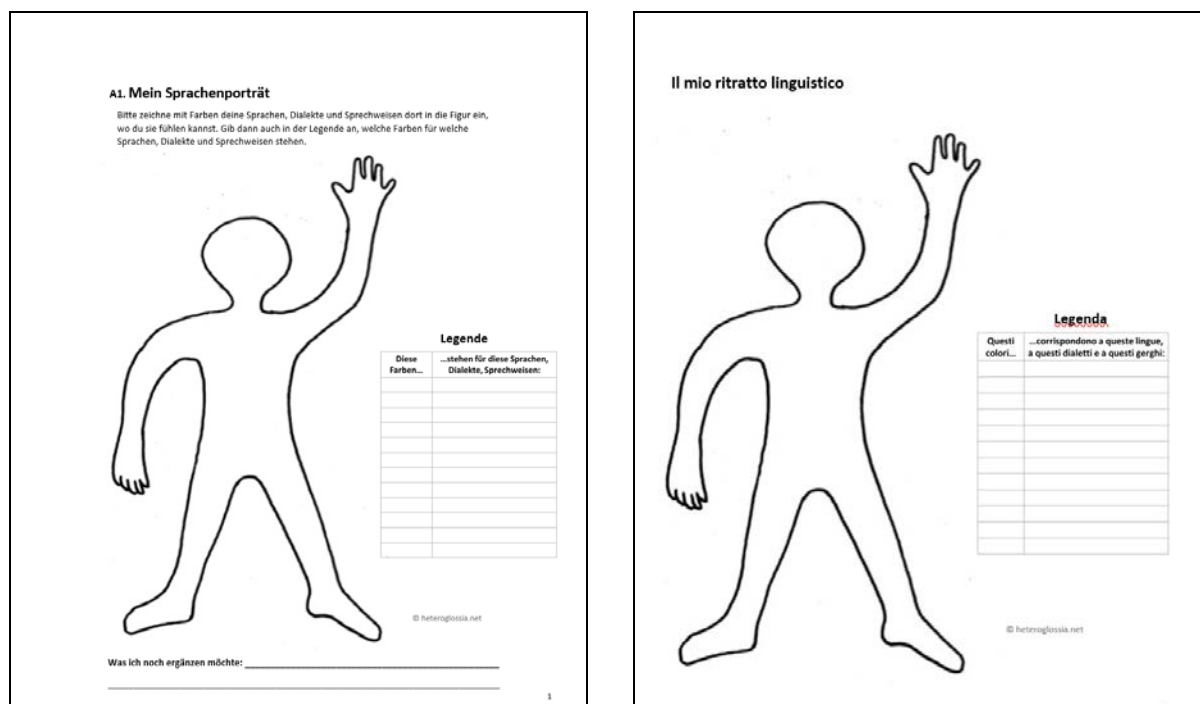


Figure 9: The language portrait task for the 2017 questionnaire in German (left) and for the 2018 interview in Italian (right)

When my participants signalled that they were done creating their language portrait, I asked them to narrate their respective portrait, and a conversation about their linguistic repertoires thus ensued. Depending on what the participants had already described, I asked them a series of open-ended questions, e.g. *how did you choose the colours you used in the portrait? What did you mean to express with the body parts you coloured? What is your history with the languages and varieties you coloured?*

Only then were the participants presented with the questionnaire portrait they had previously created. During the interview, we conjointly compared the two portraits, asking also in how far the portraits might reflect changes that occurred in the participants' repertoires, and giving them the option to modify their present portrait. Further questions asked towards the end of the interview included imagining how their repertoires would develop in the future, and checking whether they could think of any other linguistic resources they had come across but had not coloured.

After conducting and transcribing pilot interviews, I selected further interview partners on the basis of the 2017 questionnaires. I mostly arranged the date and time for the interviews in accordance with the teacher who had been our contact person for the larger project, and I conducted interviews during school hours in rooms that were available at the respective schools, including empty classrooms, consultation rooms, a school café and a library, and I audio- and video recorded them. Even though I noticed an initial awkwardness around being

recorded generally, and being video-recorded in particular, I chose to proceed with both kinds of recordings as that enabled me to look at interviews as multimodal, embodied interactions. Students and their parents had already given their consent to recordings within RepertoirePluS, but I informed interview partners once more about possible uses of this data, and assured them they would receive pseudonyms and thus remain anonymous.

Interviews followed the interview guide that I had prepared and adjusted after the pilot interviews and also translated into Italian. I discussed the language choice for our interview with the participants at the beginning of the interview, usually addressing them first in German and/or ‘my’ local dialect when at schools of the German and Ladin track and in Italian when at schools of the Italian track. There were however exceptions to this rule: I took up the language choice of some students at the schools of the Italian track, who had addressed me in German, and I agreed when some students at the schools of the Ladin track asked if interviews could be conducted in Italian before agreeing to be interviewed. At the same time, I usually underlined that language practices during the interview could be flexible, and that what was paramount was that they would be comfortable.

At the completion of data generation for this project in December 2018, I had thus conducted twenty-four interviews with 13 female and 11 male adolescents between 13-18 years of age, and generated a total of almost 22 hours of interview data. Interviews lasted between just above 25 minutes and almost two hours. Each interview yielded a language portrait and an interview protocol to be considered in analysis, and an additional language portrait plus a sociolinguistic questionnaire were linked to each interview partner. Table 1 presents an overview of the interviews, including information about both interview partners and the interview interaction.

Pseudonym	School	Age at Interview	Predominant Interview Language Practices	Duration Interview
	Lower Secondary, German track			
Younes	=	13	Italian	1:04:12
Giorgia	=	13	Local German dialects	0:53:30
Thomas	=	13	Local German dialects	0:40:14
Marie	=	14	Local German dialects	0:41:47
	Upper Secondary, German track			
Stefanie	=	16	Local German dialects	1:15:00
Fabian	=	15	Local German dialects	0:48:48
Philipp	=	17	Local German dialects	0:52:21
Carolin	=	15	Local German dialects	0:44:48
	Lower Secondary, Italian track			
Christian	=	14	Italian	0:44:43

Caterina	=	14	Italian	0:53:43
Aria	=	14	Italian	0:43:29
Francesco	=	13	Italian	1:01:47
	Upper Secondary, Italian track			
Alessio	=	16	Italian	1:07:00
Elena	=	15	Italian	1:30:00
Sofia	=	16	Italian	0:48:00
Giulia	=	16	Italian	1:07:00
	Lower Secondary, Ladin track			
Simon	=	13	Local German dialects	0:25:11
Eva	=	13	Local German dialects	0:26:08
Daniel	=	13	Italian	0:44:21
Sara	=	13	Local German dialects	0:31:06
	Upper Secondary, Ladin track			
Veronika	=	16	German and local German dialects	0:43:38
Lukas	=	17	German and local German dialects	1:19:11
Giada	=	17	Italian	0:51:02
Ermir	=	18	Italian	1:58:33

Table 1: Overview of conducted interviews

4.4.3 Being reflexive

In the light of the principle of reflexivity, the different processes connected to interviewing were also recorded in interview protocols and in a research diary. Interview protocols (see Appendix 11.6) were based on Helfferich's (2005) recommendations and included key details such as name of interview partner, date, place and duration of interview, how contact had been established, impressions of the interview interaction regarding the general atmosphere, the rapport established with the interview partner, and any difficulties that were encountered. Entries to the research diary were less structured and included subjective impressions of interview interactions and other interactions in the field, e.g. observations of school life or conversations with teachers.

Among others, these entries also provide insights into how I positioned myself and was positioned in the field. For instance, in the upper secondary school of the Italian track, I was clearly positioned as a German speaker by the German teacher. I partly resisted this positioning on my first visit to the school by not taking up the teacher's language choice, and speaking Italian to the class. I reflect on the reasons for this choice in my research diary:

„Ich möchte nicht, dass die Schüler*innen denken, es geht hier um deren Deutsch-Kompetenz. Deshalb möchte ich mich nicht mehr als Vertreterin der ‚deutschen Sprachgruppe‘ präsentieren, als ich es

ohnehin schon durch mein Italienisch tue. Sobald ich also das Wort ergreife, rede ich Italienisch, erkläre die Studie auf Italienisch.“

„I don't want the students to think that this is about their German language skills. I don't want to present myself as a member of the 'German language group' more than I will anyway because of the way in which I speak Italian. Therefore, as I begin to speak, I do so in Italian and explain my study in Italian.”

By speaking Italian to the students, I pre-emptively tried to avoid that students would feel as if their German language skills would be tested, and thus aimed to avoid creating mistrust. I also link this choice to the ways in which I would like to be positioned in ethnolinguistic terms by the students: I seem to consider it unavoidable to position as a member of the German language group due to my accent in Italian, but I also distance myself from this positioning in the diary entry by expressing a desire to reduce the students' grounds on which to position me thus, and through my use of scare quotes. I seem to have assumed that being positioned as ethnolinguistically German would lead to students assuming that their German was going to be tested – which already points to the central role of discourses of language competence that also emerged in analysis (see Chapter 7 for a detailed discussion).

In several research diary entries, I reflect on the fact that I do not consider myself able to situationally 'pass' for a native speaker (as has been described by Piller, 2002b) in Italian, and on the ways in which this restricts my subject positions. However, I also write about other subject positions that this enables: for instance, interview partners less easily interpret requests for clarifications as odd, as they may be owed to my language skills or to a limited knowledge of Italian realities within and outside of the province – and the same applies to Ladin realities. Moreover, power imbalances that are otherwise found in interviews (Heller et al., 2018; Talmy, 2010), and are claimed to be redressed to some degree with the use of the language portrait (Obojska, 2019), were sometimes transformed by the unbalanced language skills between me and my respective interview partner. During some interviews, for instance, my interview partner and I co-constructed the position of a language learner for me, when I had needed to paraphrase a term that did not come to my mind in Italian or when I had asked them to paraphrase a term I did not understand. Conversely, conducting interviews in local dialects of German constrained such positions, and instead enabled others.

Other entries in my research diary are less concerned with language, but more with my relationship to interviewees and with emotionality during interviews. For instance, I reflect on my own excitement or nervousness before or during interviews, or on my reactions to a perceived nervousness of my interview partners. Moreover, I discuss the ways in which boundaries for our interviews are negotiated: for instance, I phrased certain questions

especially tentatively and gave students the option of not replying, and in two instances, students stated that they preferred not to answer a specific question.

Overall, interviews were quite diverse with respect to the rapport that was established and the positions that were co-constructed. Some interviews were more personal and emotional and others less so, some interviews felt like conversations with friends, others felt slightly artificial. Beside my linguistic repertoire, my age and gender also enabled and constrained certain subject positions, which I have also considered in analysis where relevant.

4.5 Data analysis

4.5.1 Principles of analysis

Before describing the way in which the analyses for this study unfolded, it is necessary to discuss the principles that guided these processes from a methodological point of view. As I detailed in Chapter 2, the present study follows Busch's (2015a, 2017a, 2020) approach of investigating linguistic repertoires and speakers' lived experience of language by meaningfully combining tenets of interactional, phenomenological and poststructuralist theories. From a methodological perspective, this study draws largely on positioning analysis and on different approaches to interaction, including conversation analysis, narrative analysis and interactional sociolinguistics. It aims to combine these approaches in a way that allows for insights on experience as conceptualised in phenomenology, without however regarding the subject as pre-given, thus investigating how discourses and ideologies figure in the subject's lived experience of language.

Some principles of analysis have already been discussed with regard to the language portrait method, including a focus on the language portrait as a process (Kusters & De Meulder, 2019) and an acknowledgement of the situational and context-bound nature of its production (Busch, 2018b). The latter applies not only to language portraits, but to any kind of interview interaction, as has been pointed out by several scholars in the fields of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics (e.g. De Fina & Perrino, 2011; Heller et al., 2018; Talmy, 2010).

Talmy (2010) states that while conducting interviews is a highly popular research method across applied linguistics, this means of data generation has been conceptualised in different ways. He argues that the different takes on interviewing can be summed up under two main approaches: the interview as a research instrument, and the interview as social practice. The former conceptualises the interview as enabling access to a participant's reality that exists independently from the interview interaction, and as such is not compatible with a

constructionist framework. The latter, in turn, understands the interview as a situated interactional encounter, and aims to acknowledge this nature in analysis.

Several authors (e.g. De Fina & Perrino, 2011; Deppermann, 2013c; König, 2017) have advocated for such an approach to interview analysis and have outlined methodological consequences of conceptualising an interview as social action. Such an analysis does not concentrate exclusively on the content, i.e. the *what* of an interview, but also includes the *how* of the interaction, i.e. the way in which the interview is linguistically and interactionally co-constructed (Talmy, 2010). According to Deppermann (2013c), this involves taking account of the processes of negotiating questions, answers, meanings and evaluations that unfold in any interview, independently from the specific interview method. Utterances consequently need to be analysed as responsive moments in a sequentially organised social process (Deppermann, 2013c), and attention needs to be paid to the ways in which meaning is constructed in the context of interactively established expectations.

Different branches of linguistics and other disciplines such as sociology or anthropology have worked towards developing analytical approaches to arrive at analyses of interaction, and thus also of interview interactions. Talmy (2010) identifies discourse analysis, narrative analysis, positioning analysis, conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics in this context, whereas Busch (2020) only mentions the latter two, adding however linguistic anthropology and ethnomethodology. Some of these approaches are more theoretical, whereas others offer fine-grained analytical tools for interactional analyses. Among the latter figure conversation analysis, narrative analysis and interactional sociolinguistics. Positioning analysis, in turn, has been adapted for and applied in different ways in all three of these overarching approaches to interaction (see section 2.4).

Conversation analysis, often referred to as CA, has its roots in ethnomethodology and in sociology more generally, but has also been taken up as a branch of linguistics (Deppermann, 2010). It was originally developed in the 1960s by Harvey Sacks (1992), and has since found numerous applications in a wide variety of disciplines. One of the basic principles of CA is to study interaction in its sequential organisation, departing from the central tenet that interactions are both context-shaped and context-renewing. Conversations are thus studied turn by turn, each interactant's turn referring back to previous turns and projecting future turns. The aim hereby is to link form to function in the specific interactional context (Schegloff, 2007).

The interest of CA in identities in conversation ranges far back to the investigation of practices of social categorisation under the heading of *membership categorization analysis*, or MCA (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Sacks, 1992), while an investigation of positioning practices

within CA approaches to interaction has been proposed more recently (Deppermann, 2010, 2013b). Deppermann (2013b) argues that the aspects that MCA is interested in, i.e. how category membership is made salient and how characteristics are ascribed to category members, can also be explored using positioning analysis, while the latter additionally enables exploring performative claims and narrative constructions of identity - still within the larger methodological framework of CA.

The objects of study of narrative analysis, in turn, are restricted to story-telling events (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008). Story-telling, too, is conceived of as social action and experience, and as simultaneously about social action and experience (Slembrouck, 2015). De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008) thus argue for an analysis of narratives as social practices, and recommend exploring the ways in which narratives are locally occasioned in interactions. They acknowledge the role that CA can play for analyses of this kind, but identify a weakness of these approaches in their reluctance to go beyond the level of local interactions. They propose a *social interactional approach* to narrative, whereby analyses need to take “the local level of interaction as the place of articulation of phenomena that may find their explanation beyond it” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008:384), those phenomena being wider social processes such as the reproduction of social roles or the enactment of institutional routines.

Positioning has entered the stage of narrative analysis relatively early on, as I have discussed in more detail in section 2.4. Bamberg’s (1997) adaptation of positioning for narrative analysis has been seminal in this respect, and his three levels of positioning have also been revisited and applied in more recent publications (e.g. De Fina, 2013; Deppermann, 2013a; Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2004). Positioning analyses also represent a cornerstone of the approach that Lucius-Hoene and Deppermann (2004) advocate for reconstructing narrative identities constructed in biographical interviews. The authors argue that positioning activities allow for insights into how interactants understand and negotiate the interview interaction, and into the ways in which both past and present identities are co-constructed. The authors’ suggestions for interactional analyses are again inspired by CA methods, including asking *what* is portrayed *how* and *why* it is portrayed *like that now*.

A third approach to interaction is Interactional Sociolinguistics, developed by Gumperz in the late 1970s. Gumperz (2001:215) understands this approach as a form of discourse analysis that aims to “account for our ability to interpret what participants intend to convey in everyday communicative practice”. He argues that conversational analysis has similar aims and origins, but is overly form-focused. Interactional Sociolinguistics, on the contrary, is primarily concerned with arriving at situated interpretations of interactions. As such, it is interested in

the presuppositions that are at work in interactions. Moreover, this approach does not take interpretive processes for granted, but aims to elaborate on assumptions and inferences by which it arrives at likely interpretations of interactions and on how these inferences connect to linguistic form. Interactional Sociolinguistics also differs from CA in that it includes a phase of ethnographic research into the methodological design of its studies. This phase is supposed to yield insights into the communicative practices in the field under investigation, and thus forms the grounds on which interactions are chosen for recording (Gumperz, 2001).

In comparison with CA and Narrative Analysis, this last approach most explicitly includes an interest not only in interactions as such, but also in understanding the social orders (re)produced, negotiated or contested within them (Heller, 2001; Jaspers, 2011). Indeed, Heller (2001:250) points out that within such approaches, “the specifics of linguistic practices are linked to more broadly shared, and ideologically framed, ways of using language”, which enables producing insights into social action, social structure, and into the ways in which the two relate to one another. Such investigations, in turn, are not only valuable as a means for theory-building, but also as a “conceptually informed basis for social action” (Heller, 2001:261).

More recently, research within and across these approaches has increasingly turned to investigate social interaction as embodied interaction, attempting to redress an imbalance resulting from a near exclusive focus on verbal action (Bucholtz and Hall, 2016; König & Oloff, 2018; Mondada, 2016). Such research has begun to reveal how bodily resources such as facial expressions, gaze, gesture, body posture and movements are mobilised alongside linguistic resources in organising social action (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000; Mondada, 2018). CA approaches, in particular, thereby distinguish themselves in their “careful and precise attention to temporally and sequentially organized details of actions that account for how co-participants orient to each other’s multimodal conduct” (Mondada, 2016:340). If interviews are conceptualised as social action, this emerging research tradition can be drawn upon productively for the interpretation of interview interaction. In the present study, I thus aim to apply some of the shared principles of the presented approaches to interaction, such as sequentiality and a close attention to linguistic form, but also of embodied action. I discard the preoccupation with an exclusive focus on local interactions of some CA approaches, and include ethnographic knowledge into my analyses, aiming to identify patterns in my interview partners’ positionings and to link these to larger social processes and ideologies.

4.5.2 Processes of analysis

This section will now turn to the ways in which the processes of analysis unfolded in practice. Like the research process as a whole, analysis did not proceed in a linear fashion, but was characterised by a number of recursive processes. The different steps of analysis involved going back and forth between them as well as going back to methodological and theoretical literature, continually refining analyses.

A first step in data analysis involved familiarising myself with the data I had generated by creating an overview of the content of each interview. Lucius-Hoene and Deppermann (2004) refer to such an overview as an *interview inventory*, and underline its importance for structuring further analysis processes. I created these overviews on the basis of the audio recordings and the language portraits, where necessary with the aid of the video recordings and the interview protocols. The resulting overviews formed an important basis for selecting passages for fine-grained interactional analyses and, as a prerequisite for the latter, for transcription. They were sequentially structured and included time markers, and consequently enabled me to find specific interactional passages again at later stages.

From my choice to consider interviews as social action, it followed that the interactional nature of the interviews needed to be represented and made available for analysis through transcription. From the range of available transcription conventions, I selected the second version of the *Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem* (GAT-2) proposed by Selting and colleagues (2009). The first version of these conventions were published in 1998 and were largely based on Gail Jefferson's (1983) transcription conventions for conversation analysis. GAT had already been applied extensively, especially to data in German, and its second version had drawn lessons from the experience accumulated with GAT and aimed to increase compatibility with other conventions applied in conversation analysis and interactional linguistics on an international scale.

The level of detail that seemed suitable for the present study was GAT-2's *Basistranskript*, which is recommended as a standard for investigations that are aimed at conducting interactional analyses, but do not intend to study functions of phonetic or prosodic features in detail. This level includes the verbatim notation of interactants' utterances segmented into intonational phrases, as well as overlapping talk, hesitations, pauses, lengthened syllables, laughter, relevant nonverbal actions or events, and a notation of intonational stress and pitch movement at the end of intonational phrases (Selting et al., 2009). Additionally, transcriptions included an extra tier for representing embodied action where relevant to interpretation. These

in turn were based largely on Mondada's (2018) transcription conventions for transcribing multimodality. The specific transcription conventions applied in the present study are summarised in Appendix 11.3.

If the principle of reflexivity throughout the research process is taken seriously, it also needs to be applied to transcription and the representation of interaction it entails. Consequently, as De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008:385) have suggested, researchers need to acknowledge that "transcription and translation are not [...] transparent processes , but [...] choices with strong implications for data analysis". In this context, Vakser (2017) identifies key issues relevant to the transcription of data in more than one language, including choices to be made regarding the use of scripts, translations, demarcations of linguistic resources assigned to different named languages, and, in the light of these issues, formatting and readability.

Apart from the choice of one or several scripts, the mentioned issues were highly relevant to the present study. For instance, while the developers of GAT-2 (Selting et al., 2009) generally recommend to adapt transcripts to the respective norm of reference, I chose to transcribe interviews conducted in the local German dialects and not 'adapt' or 'translate' them into a German that would be closer to a standard norm. For the sake of readability, however, I opted against the use of special characters and chose to only represent phonetic realisations as closely as possible with the regular Latin script.

Decisions regarding the representation of original and translated transcripts were harder to take. I wanted to represent both, but I chose not to include the same amount of interaction detail for the translation, as that would be an artificial representation. Therefore, only the original transcript would include aspects such as syllable lengthenings, intonational stress or pitch movement. For this reason, it was important to enable readers who are not familiar with the original languages or varieties to shuttle easily between translation and original, and I thus chose to represent translations between the lines. Moreover, in the representation of the original, I did not demarcate linguistic resources differently depending on the named language they are assigned to according to standard language norms. However, where I do consider the indexicalities of code-switches, borrowings or similar phenomena important for my interpretations, I changed the formatting of the translation from italics to non-italics.

Even though I followed Pavlenko's (2007) advice to always conduct analyses based on transcripts and recordings (in my case audio and video) and never on translations, I noticed that in many instances, translating transcript passages actually deepened analysis. Thinking about how to represent a concept in English often helped me see segments of interactions in a new light and thus better interpret their meaning. This was especially true for the interviews I

had conducted in different kinds of German, whereas my insecurities about meanings and indexicalities in interview interactions in Italian led me to doubt interpretations already at an earlier stage of analysis.

Analysis itself then involved a cyclical process of moving between interactional analyses of individual students' positionings in different segments of the interview interaction, identifying patterns and overarching themes across my interview partners' positionings, linking results back to relevant literature and refining research questions and sub-questions. As detailed in the previous section, the analysis of selected interactional segments focused on the form and function of students' positionings in the specific sequential context of the interaction, taking into account both linguistic and bodily resources. The next step involved uncovering recurring patterns and themes across analysed passages, whereby I applied some of the methodological insights of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, reviewing themes for their internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity and checking them both at the level of single positionings as well as in relation to the entire data set of interviews. For this process, the use of the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA proved useful, as it enabled me to code for patterns in the data and thus made the relevant interactional passages easily recoverable, while not losing sight of the interactional context they stemmed from.

By going back and forth between interactional analyses of an increasing number of segments, and a comparative and contrastive analysis of segments already analysed, I was thus able to continually consolidate or restructure patterns of positionings and identify overarching themes and functions. Throughout this process, I also continually referred to relevant literature in order to relate my analysis to patterns, themes and ideologies that other authors had already identified. It was through this process that I arrived, in the end, at the more specific research questions that I presented in 4.2, and which will structure my empirical chapters 6, 7 and 8.

5 Interlude: A social semiotics of language portraits

This chapter occupies a position as interlude between method and empirical analyses. Its aim is to show how having interview partners create language portraits served to construct, or rather co-construct, their linguistic repertoires in the interview interactions, and it thus constitutes an empirical investigation into the creation of language portraits that also has important methodological implications. In recent publications, Busch (2018a, 2018b) and Kusters and De Meulder (2019) have argued for a critical engagement with the ways in which the language portrait is actually employed to make meanings about linguistic repertoires. The latter, in particular, have urged for more process-focused analyses of language portraits and the surrounding talk. In this chapter, I will contribute to this body of work by examining the language portraits created for this project from a perspective of social semiotics and providing an analysis of the semiotic processes that were at play as my interview partners represented the languages and dialects in their lives as a language portrait.

Social semiotics can be a fruitful lens with which to look at language portraits for three major reasons. First, this perspective stresses the social context of sign-production: contrary to Saussurean semiotics, social semiotics does not consider the sign as a “pre-existing conjunction of a signifier and a signified”, but focuses “on the process of sign-making” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:8), where forms and meanings are conjoined by the sign-maker in a specific social context. Therefore, such a perspective ties in well with Busch’s (2018b:7) view of language portraits as “situational and context-bound production[s]” created by the participants in the specific context of the interview. Second, a perspective of social semiotics can be applied to verbal, visual and any other modes of meaning-making. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) developed a social semiotics specific to the visual in their seminal book *Reading Images*. Third, this perspective foregrounds the sign-maker’s subjectivity, since signs are regarded as motivated and always in some way newly made by their producers. Consequently, it is the sign-makers’ subjectivities that lie at the heart of their combinations of forms and meanings (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

In this chapter, I will first focus on the language portraits as material products (5.1) before drawing on the conversations my interview partners and I had around the portraits to examine their creation as an interactional process (5.2). I will then shed light on the semiotic resources and processes at play in the creation of the portrait (5.3), as well as on the functions that both the newly created interview portrait and the older questionnaire portrait fulfilled within the interview interactions (5.4).

5.1 Language portraits as products

While I have stressed the importance of looking at language portraits as created in a specific interactional process, in this section I will begin by presenting them as *products*. Language portraits can be considered as products or artefacts of a specific research process, and as such they can be treated as very specific visual representations of linguistic repertoires that are anchored in the moment of their creation. By showing some exemplars of the 49 portraits created in the context of this project (24 portraits created for the questionnaire study in 2017 and 25 portraits created during interview interactions in 2018), I will illustrate the features they share and the ways in which they differ, grouping them loosely according to the different ways in which my interview partners designed them. In the light of cautions against analysing language portraits independently from their narrations (Busch, 2018b; Prasad, 2014; Purkarthofer, 2017), I will finally discuss what language portraits alone can and cannot reveal about their creators' linguistic repertoires.

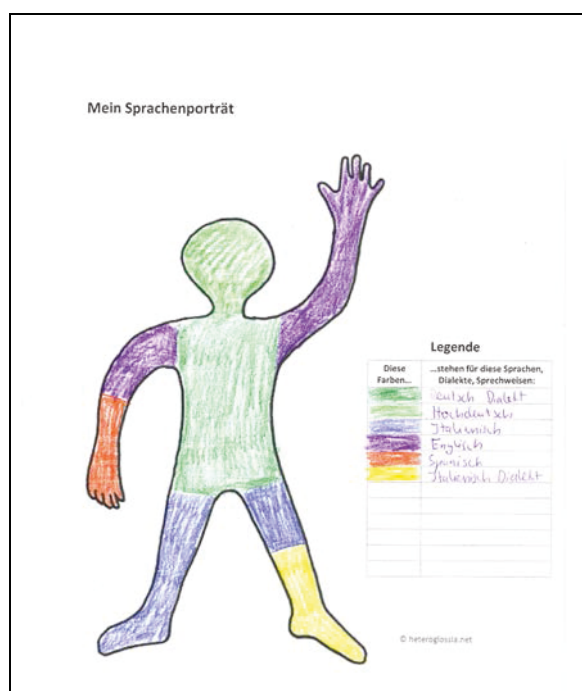


Figure 10: Thomas' language portrait (interview, 2018)

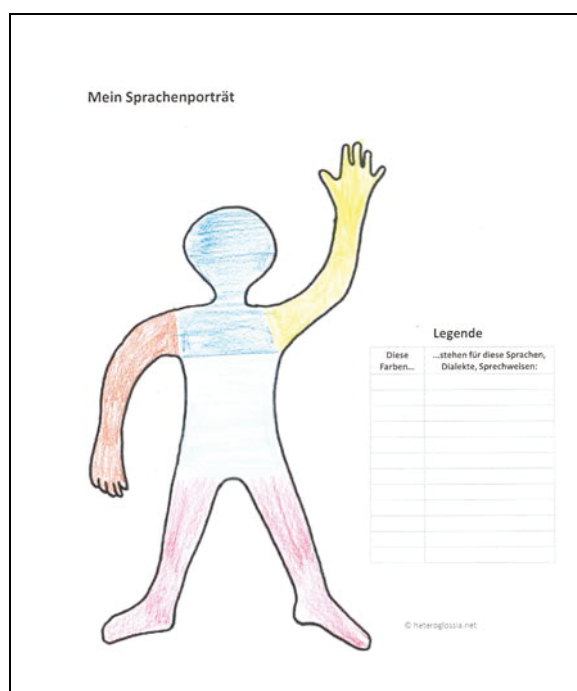


Figure 11: Philipp's language portrait (interview, 2018)

Figure 10 and Figure 11 present the first two examples of language portraits, created by Thomas and Philipp respectively during our interviews in 2018. They are exemplars of portraits in which participants represent named languages and dialects by colouring the body silhouette in more or less neatly divided sections that are more or less clearly linked to body parts, thus filling the entire body. This pattern is shared by just over a third of the 49 portraits created for this project.

Mein Sprachenporträt

Legende

Diese Farben...	...stehen für diese Sprachen, Dialekte, Sprechweisen:
■	Karisch
■	Dänisch
■	Schwedisch (Allgemein)
■	Norwegisch

© heteroglossia.net

Mein Sprachenporträt

Legende

Diese Farben...	...stehen für diese Sprachen, Dialekte, Sprechweisen:

© heteroglossia.net

Figure 13: Carolin's portrait (interview, 2018)

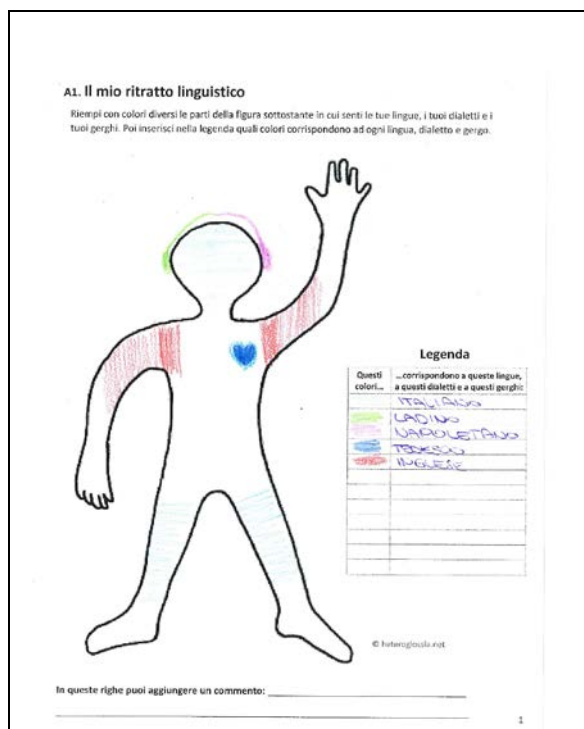


Figure 14: Elena's portrait (questionnaire, 2017)

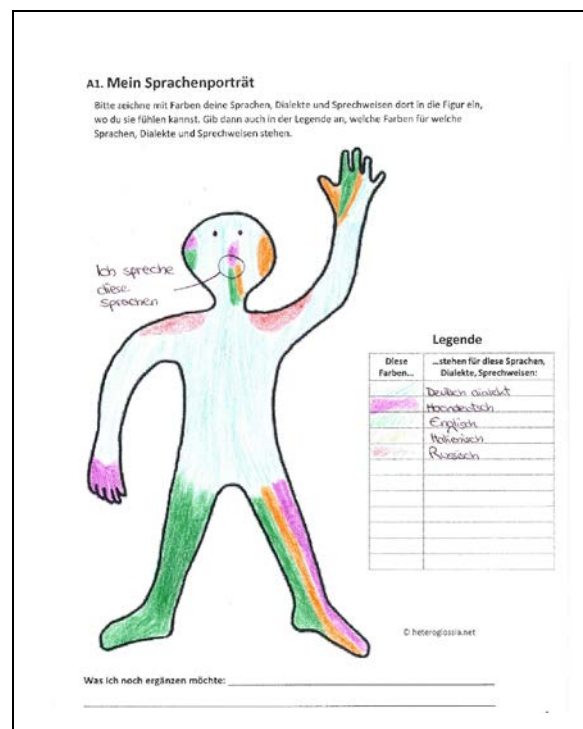


Figure 15: Carolin's portrait (questionnaire, 2017)

Figure 14 and Figure 15 show the portraits that Elena and Carolin created in the context of the questionnaire study in 2017. I chose them as exemplars of portraits that introduce additional elements that are afforded, but not predetermined by the body silhouette. For instance, Elena drew a headset in two different colours, representing Ladin and *napoletano*, and a heart containing two colours, representing German and Italian. Carolin, in her questionnaire portrait, added eyes and a mouth, and probably also ears to her portrait. For the mouth, she moreover added an explanatory note saying that she ‘speaks these languages’. We can therefore assume that Carolin made a distinction between the named languages and dialects represented by the four colours within the mouth circle, i.e. a dialect of German, Standard German (*Hochdeutsch*), English and Italian, as languages and dialects she speaks, and Russian as a language she does not or not yet speak.

While of course the distinction between elements that are predetermined by the body silhouette, and the ones that are only afforded by it, is not exactly neat, it is still useful in describing differences between the portraits regarded as products. Around half of the 49 portraits created for this project roughly falls into this category. It is interesting to note that the most frequently added body part was indeed the heart, which was represented as a heart shape or as a splotch of colour in the heart area in 20 portraits. Mouths occurred only four times and ears six times, including Elena’s headset. In fact, ears and this headset are one of the few examples in which participants actually coloured outside of the silhouette.

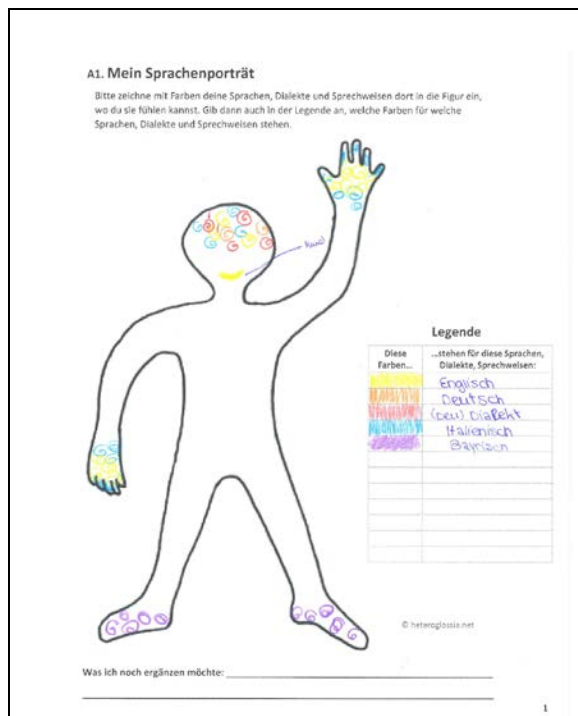


Figure 16: Giorgia's portrait (questionnaire, 2017)

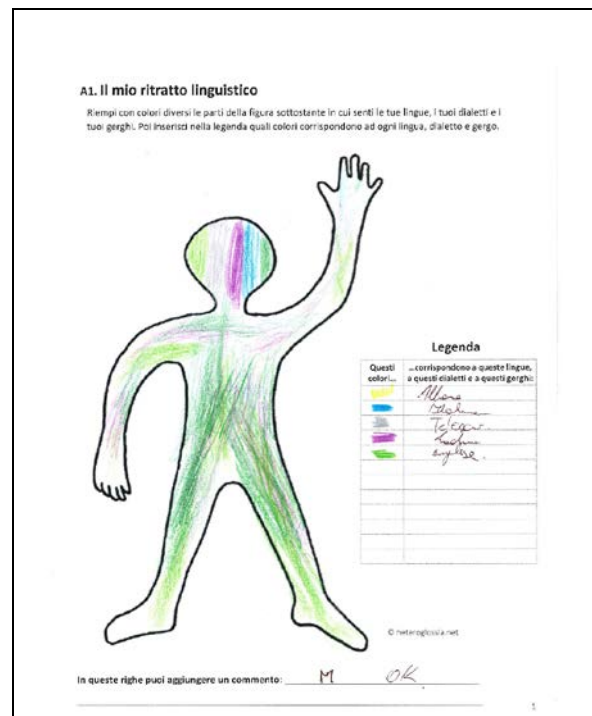


Figure 17: Ermir's portrait (questionnaire, 2017)

Figure 16 and Figure 17 are the only two portraits that could not quite be grouped with the language portraits presented so far. They were both created for the questionnaire study in 2017, which may or may not be a coincidence. Giorgia represented named languages and dialects not as coloured sections or body parts, but as swirls - localised in different body parts, but forming a whole especially in the brain area. Ermir coloured the head of the silhouette in neatly differentiated sections which represent, according to the legend, English (*Inglese*, light green), German (*Tedesco*, grey), Ladin (purple), and Italian (blue). It remains unclear what the darker shade of green stands for, but it might refer to Albanian, since the colour yellow, to which he associated Albanian in the legend, is not actually present in the portrait. Even more interestingly, Ermir filled the remaining silhouette by blurring colours into a whole, to the extent that it becomes hard to tell which of the colours indicated in the legend are actually present.

Applying Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) terminology from *Reading Images*, all language portraits can be considered *analytical structures*, in that they are visual representations composed of different elements related to one another in a part-whole structure. We can equally assume that these analytical structures are to be read as *exhaustive*, in that the participants represent all the parts that they want to show this whole to be made up of, at least for the purpose of this particular interaction. In most cases, the legend tells us which named languages and dialects my interview partners wanted to represent as having a role in their lives.

Analytical structures can also be looked at in terms of their degree of *abstraction* and their *accuracy*. Since linguistic repertoires are not exactly palpable entities, their representations will always be abstract to some degree. Beside the geometrical symbolisms that Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) identify for such visuals, the language portrait additionally affords the use of body symbolisms (Busch, 2018b), as we saw with the mouths, ears and hearts added to some portraits, but possibly also with the division of the bodies into sections corresponding to body parts. However, the semiotic processes at play in the production of those symbols, and the meanings made with them, remain opaque when looking at the portraits only as products.

Accuracy of representation, in turn, can be *topographical* or *topological*: topographical accuracy intends that visuals are either drawn to scale or that their size represents some quantitative attribute of what is represented, while topological accuracy means that the representation accurately shows some kind of relation between the parts represented (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Applied to the language portraits, topographically accurate portraits might for instance show how frequently a participant uses a named language or dialect, or how important it is to him or her. In turn, we might call a language portrait topologically accurate when it shows some relation between named languages and dialects, for instance by depicting them in shades of the same colour – which might indeed be the case for Thomas’ representation of *Hochdeutsch* and a German dialect in two shades of green (see Figure 10). Again, however, we can only speculate about these meanings without taking the conversations following the portraits’ creation into account.

Thus, in looking at language portraits as products, we may be able to tell, as long as a legend is present, which named languages and dialects their creators wanted to show as constitutive of their linguistic repertoires in the particular social interaction of their creation. Otherwise, however, the portraits alone give relatively little insight into the subjective meanings the participants were making with them. This is linked to the fact that the portraits are created in a very specific interactional context, with no aims of being stand-alone representations. This underlines the importance of Busch’s (2018b:6) assertion that when analysing language portraits, we need to consider that “the image, the caption, and the spoken (or written) interpretation of the image form a whole” – which I will put into practice in section 5.3.

5.2 Creating language portraits in an interactional process

Before I turn to an analysis of the language portraits created for this project, I will follow both Busch’s (2018b) and Kusters and de Meulder’s (2019) calls to focus also on the process of their creation, and present an analysis of the interactional process of creating language portraits

in the interview setting, taking into account the language portraits themselves and the audio and video recordings of interview interactions.

In Chapter 4, I have already expanded on the implications that the specific prompt used to introduce the language portrait activity has for its realisation. For instance, my prompt clearly insinuated that languages, dialects or ways of speaking would be coloured *within* the body silhouettes, and in specifically mentioning colour and body parts I already pre-selected these as salient semiotic resources to draw on for representations. While the prompt was purposefully vague with respect to the contents of what ought to be represented (i.e. all the languages, dialects and ways of speaking that play a role in the participants' life, and the kinds of roles), what the participants finally chose to represent, and how, always needs to be regarded as an outcome of their specific interaction with me as the interviewer.

In this context, it is especially telling how negotiations of the task unfolded after the initial prompt, either before or shortly after the participants started creating their language portraits. Excerpt 1 presents a brief example of such an interaction.

Excerpt 1: Giorgia – does the entire body have to be filled?

001 GIO muas der GONze körper voll sein,
does the entire body have to be filled?

003 INT NA muas er NIT des konsch du dOrstelln wia du mOgsch,
no, it doesn't, you can represent this the way you want.

Giorgia asks me if she needs to colour the entire body, as opposed to only parts of it, as the stress on *GONze* ('entire'; 001) underlines. Her question seems to suggest that she believes there to be a right and a wrong way in which she could complete the task that I have set for her, and that I would be the one to judge – which is understandable, seeing that I had just given her instructions to the task. I first reply to her question (*NA muas er NIT*), but subsequently confer the authority back to her by telling her that she can represent the implied languages and dialects the way she wants (002).

Some negotiation of the task occurs almost in all interviews. The question that Giorgia asked recurred, in different forms, in five different interviews. Other participants wanted to know if they needed to fill the legend, or colour nicely and precisely, or whether it was possible or allowed that a single body part could hold more than one colour. While these discussions were less concerned with linguistic resources than with mere aspects of the design of the language portrait, they reveal that my interview partners initially understood the drawing of the language portrait to be similar to other tasks they might perform at school, expecting to get clear instructions and assuming there to be rights and wrongs in colouring language portraits.

Such assumptions also recurred regarding the kinds of meanings that the participants thought they were expected to make with their language portraits. Excerpt 2 is a case in point:

Excerpt 2: Alessio – so the more I know the language the more I colour the person?

- 001 ALE cioè più conosco la lingua più coloro, (1.0) la persona,
 so the more I know the language, the more I colour the person?
- 002 INT se (-) se per te (--) ti sembra che questo abbia senso puoi
 farlo;
 if, if for you that makes sense you can do that.
- 003 ALE mhm.
 uh-huh
- 004 INT le persone lo fanno in modi molto diversi quindi puoi fare
 come vuoi,
 people do it in very different ways, so you can do it as you like.

Alessio asks me if he is meant to colour the silhouette proportionally to his competence in the respective languages (001), which reminds of the concept of *topographical accuracy* of representation. Alessio seems to have interpreted the task of colouring the languages and dialects in his life as creating an accurate representation of his respective competences, and attempts to check if this is what I intended. I first tell Alessio that he can indeed represent resources proportionally to competence, if that makes sense to him (002), and then stress his freedom of representation by referring to the multiple ways in which people have created language portraits (003). Thus, like in the previous excerpt, I work at underlining that I am mostly interested in subjective meanings.

Alessio is not the only participant who attempts to clarify what exactly they ought to represent about their languages and dialects and how. For instance, some interview partners asked if colouring a language into the head would mean they think in this language, or if they ought to colour the silhouette proportionally to the frequency with which they use some named languages and dialects.

Moreover, not only the means of representing languages and dialects are sometimes discussed, but also which named languages and dialects to include or exclude. The following is another excerpt from Giorgia's interview.

Excerpt 3: Giorgia - also languages that you use a little bit but not a lot?

- 001 GIO a sprochn dei vos man iatz (1.2) a BISSL benützt oba ned VIEL,
 also languages that you use a little bit but not a lot?
- 002 INT KONSch du A zeichnen wenn du si zeichnen mogsch,
 you can draw those, too, if you want to draw them.
- 003 INT wenn du fIndesch dass si a ROLle in dein lEbn spielen donn
 konsch si zEIchnen;
 if you think that they play a role in your life then you can draw them.

Giorgia asks whether she is meant to (or allowed to) also represent languages she only uses little (001). My reply is affirmative and again underlines the importance of her subjectivity for the task (002). In line 003, I reiterate elements of this task, telling Giorgia that the relevant criterion for deciding whether a linguistic resource ought to be represented or not, is whether it plays a role in her life.

Giorgia's question in line 001 indicates that she considered the low frequency with which she uses one or several languages and dialects as a criterion for their potential exclusion from her portrait. Judging from this excerpt, it seems that not only did some participants assume there would be rights and wrongs in designing their language portraits, but that they also assumed there to be named languages and dialects they could or could not legitimately include, according to how they are positioned as speakers. Low frequency of use was in fact mentioned by five other participants as the reason why they did not include some named language or dialect into their portraits. This concerned either languages they relegated to the school domain (English for Younes and Christian, and Russian for Fabian), or a local dialect of German that they only heard, but did not use themselves (Lukas, Ermir and Christian).

Another criterion for in- or excluding some named language or dialect concerned the participants' level of competence. This occurs during the colouring process in one interview, where a participant asks if he is allowed to colour languages he only knows a little, and it occurs in seven more interviews at a later stage, as a justification for not having coloured some resources that my interview partners did turn out to mention during the interview. This concerned named languages they come in contact with through popular culture (Philipp watches Japanese anime and Aria Korean anime), languages they would like to learn in the future (Latin and Chinese for Caterina), a dialect present in their family that they do not speak themselves (a local German dialect for Christian), and, in four cases, languages of which they have learned only single terms from friends or family who speak them (French for Philipp, Portuguese for Giorgia, Serbian for Ermir and Spanish for Lukas).

Excerpt 4 shows how such an exclusion is interactionally negotiated in the interview with Lukas.

Excerpt 4: Lukas - But with the Spanish people you could also speak Span eh Italian

- 001 LUK aber mit den spaniern konnte man auch äh viel span äh: VIEL,
italienisch reden,
but with the Spanish people you could also speak Span er Italian.
- 002 LUK die verstanden alles <<p> italienisch> (1.5) und spanisch
war auch nicht so schwierig <<p> zu verstehen>.
*they understood everything, Italian and Spanish was also not that
hard to understand.*

003 LUK weil mein bester freund von der (--) grundschule und
mittelschule der (--) war auch halb spanier;
*because my best friend in primary school and middle school was also half
Spanish*

004 LUK dann hat er mir (-) mehrere wörter beigebracht.
so he taught me several words.

005 INT mhm (--) mhm,

006 INT (1.0) okay (-) das heißt ein bisschen spanisch sprichst du
auch,
okay so that means you also speak some Spanish,

007 LUK <<shaking his head> mh:>.

008 INT ((pointing to the portrait)) aber du hast es NICHT
eingezeichnet,
but you did not draw it.

009 LUK ja: (--) <<shaking his head> zwei drei> <<:-)> WÖRter>;
yes, two or three words.

Previously to this excerpt, Lukas and I had been talking about a recent holiday where he went to Spain with his family. In lines 003-4, Lukas narrates that a friend of his had taught him some words of Spanish, and through his use of *weil*, he presents this as a reason for his previously stated ability to understand some of the Spanish he heard on holiday (002). I thus tentatively position Lukas as someone who speaks a bit of Spanish (006), which he rejects (007), but I still go on to question the fact that he did not include it in his portrait (008). In line 009, Lukas accepts the positioning as a speaker of Spanish, but immediately restricts it, accompanying his statement once more with a shake of his head.

The bits and pieces of Spanish that Lukas knows are examples of single word learning, which scholars such as Blommaert and Backus (2013) have argued also ought to be considered part of our repertoires. My contribution in lines 006 and 008 can be read in this light: I am insinuating that Lukas could have coloured Spanish, even though he seems to know it only a little. However, Lukas does not seem to agree with me, and does not consider his limited knowledge of this language as warranting to include it into his language portrait.

While the last two excerpts concerned doubts about the legitimacy of certain kinds of speakers (low frequency and low competence speakers) to include named languages or dialects into the portrait, in some cases it was also the legitimacy of the linguistic resources themselves that was doubtful. Two participants already asked during the process of colouring whether they were allowed to also colour a dialect (*Dialekt/dialetto*), even though I had already explicitly mentioned in the prompt that they were. One participant realised that she had not coloured the local dialect of German when she saw it on her earlier questionnaire portrait – and then admits she did not colour it because she thought they were only supposed to colour ‘languages’. This

shows how ideological differentiations between named ‘languages’ and named ‘dialects’ (Horner & Weber, 2018; Jaffe, 2007) also infuse the colouring of language portraits.

While the conversations surrounding exclusions of named languages or dialects from the portrait did not result in any modifications to the language portraits, ten of the 24 participants modified the first portrait version in the course of the interview interaction. Some of these modifications were made in order to better align the portrait with my interview partners’ narrations, and as such were often co-constructed. For instance, one participant extended the surface area of Ladin after I asked her if the portrait represented what she had said about considering German and Ladin as equally important. Another participant added German-Italian as a ‘mixed’ language to her portrait after I asked her why she had not represented it.

Other modifications were made after I had shown the participants their questionnaire portraits, and subsequently asked them if they would change something about their interview portraits. These modifications included adding named languages or dialects or additional meanings to the ones they had already represented. For instance, one participant added English to his portrait, or one participant added a heart in the colour she had assigned to German. Other participants did not physically modify their portraits, but explained how they would change them, i.e. by adding a named language or dialect or by increasing or decreasing the surface area coloured for some resources.

While I already played a considerable role in these modifications, the co-construction of the language portrait went a step further in the particular interview interaction with Elena, which presents a telling example of the performative character that language portraits adopt when they render something visible that is otherwise not accessible (Busch, 2018b). In Elena’s case, this concerns the role of German in her life, of which she herself initially was not able to make sense. Already while colouring, she asked me how to proceed if she did not know where to place a language. This started a reiterative process, where she first told me about parts of her portrait, realised she still did not know where to put the language in question (German), continued colouring other named languages and dialects into the portrait, told me about them, and expressed that she still did not know where to place German. Finally, I asked Elena to suspend the search for the way of representing German and to tell me about her relationship with the language instead. Excerpt 5 is taken from the stretch of talk that follows. Previous to this extract, Elena told me that when she was little, her mother spoke to her in German, but she mostly stopped somewhere along the way and now they mostly speak Italian. Elena expressed

that she now felt dissatisfied with her level of competence in German, and also constructed her mother thus.

Excerpt 5: Elena – and, I don’t know

- 001 ELE e: (--) <<p> non lo so>;
and, I don’t know
- 002 ELE <<gazing at the portrait>(4.3)>
- 003 ELE non capisco neanche se ho un buon rapporto col <<laughing>
tedesco oppure no> [perché:]–
I don’t even understand if I have a good relationship with German or not, because
- 004 INT [mhm],
- 005 ELE credevo di sì ma ogni volta mia mamma mi dice MAH (-) vai a
studiAre che (---) sembra che tu non: sappia neanche di cosa
stia <<laughing> parlando>;
*I thought I did, but my mom tells me every time “Oh, just go study, ‘cause it seems like you
don’t even know what you’re talking about”.*
- 006 INT mhm mhm,
- 007 ELE <<p> e (-) non lo so>;
and I don’t know,
- 008 INT mhm (2.0) okay;
- 009 INT quindi forse ANche per quello che non sai [bene dove]
metterlo;
so maybe that’s also why you don’t really know where to put it
- 010 ELE [sì;]
yes.
- 011 ELE <<laughing> probabilmente;>
probably.

The excerpt begins with Elena stating that ‘she does not know’ – it is not clear what she is referring to – the means of representing German or her actual relationship with German. Line 002 continues with a long pause of over 4 seconds, during which Elena gazes at the portrait, still reflecting. Line 003 then indicates that she has been reflecting on her relationship to German, which she states she does not know whether to define as positive or not. Her laughter in this utterance is to be interpreted as marking a delicate action (Glenn, 2013): there is nothing humorous about her statement and indeed, I do not join in the laughter. Elena then provides an explanation for what inhibits her in unmistakably saying she has a good relationship to German (005): she animates her mother’s words (Clift & Holt, 2006; Thüne, 2008) constructing the latter as someone who would repeatedly tell her to study and practise her German, judging Elena’s competence as insufficient. Elena’s laughter here may have two functions: it might signal that she ends her mother’s reported talk here, but it might also characterise her utterance once more as a delicate action, as she indirectly engages in self-deprecation by voicing her mother’s depreciative statement and leaving it unchallenged. Elena restates that she ‘does not

In the end, Elena represented German with two different colours (see Figure 18): one that she had already previously assigned (red) and that she placed around the heart in order to represent the affective attachment she felt towards this language, as it reminded her of her mother and her childhood – and another one, black, as a sad colour to stand for a fear of disappointing her mother, depicted in the stomach as she states that she feels emotions like anxiety in the stomach. In employing two different colours and body symbolisms, Elena thus created a language portrait she was satisfied with, and that, more so than that of other participants, was also the result of a reiterative process of searching for the kinds of meanings to make in our interview interaction.



5.3 Semiotic resources and processes in the creation of language portraits

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circles, it most likely chose wheels as salient features of a car (the first metaphoric process), and then draws wheels as circles (the second metaphoric process). In this section, I will draw on the conversations I shared with my interview partners around their language portraits to examine the semiotic resources and processes lying behind the portraits, thus providing an analysis of some of the meanings that the participants and I made around their language portraits.

A first set of metaphoric processes at play was the use of spatial or orientational metaphors, of which I could identify three different kinds. First, five different participants stated that the amount of surface area coloured was meaningful to them: colouring ‘more’ of a linguistic resource is thus a metaphor for it being more important (for two participants), or for using it more frequently, being more competent in it, or both (for one participant respectively). Second, three participants structured their portraits in a top/bottom logic, although this was not deemed to be meaningful but merely practical for one of them. The other two, however, represented from top to bottom what they speak more (top) or less (bottom) frequently. Third, three students applied a centre/periphery metaphor to their portraits. For all three of them, the periphery of the body silhouette represented resources that are less important to them and/or they use less frequently.

The mentioned spatial and orientational metaphors are particularly interesting because they are inherently relational: the amount of surface coloured or the location on the body chosen only acquires its meaning in relation to the other splotches of colour on the portrait, and as such also relates the represented named languages and dialects directly to one another. The spatial and orientational distribution of these linguistic resources on the portrait can thereby be considered the second metaphoric process, whereas the first metaphoric process would be choosing which criterial aspects to represent about them. In the examples so far, this ranged from frequency of use to competence to a somewhat vague notion of *importance*.

A second set of metaphoric processes, which was found in 19 of the 24 interviews, involved body parts as semiotic resources. This included meanings attached to the head or brain (fourteen participants), the hands (eleven participants), the heart (nine participants), the legs (eight participants), the mouth (three participants), the ears and the stomach (two participants each) and the arms, feet and side body (one participant each). However, the single body parts were not necessarily always linked to the same meanings. For instance, for some participants, colouring a linguistic resource into the head meant that they think in this named language or dialect, whereas for others it meant needing to think hard when speaking this language, or mainly associating it with school.

The same holds true for a series of other body parts: hands stood for named languages and dialects my interview partners were using or would be using for practical purposes, including for a future job, or for those in which they gestured a lot when using them, or for those they used in writing. The heart was used to represent named languages or dialects that were important to the participants, that they associated with a place or activity important to them, that they linked to an ethnolinguistic positioning, or that they considered their favorite language or their mother tongue (*Muttersprache/madrelingua*). The legs could stand for named languages they thought they needed for travelling, that they thought they still needed to learn, that they metaphorically considered as their ‘roots’ because they spent their first years speaking them, or that they linked to positive feelings that would spread from the feet up. The mouth either simply represented named languages or dialects the participants used in speaking, or that they associated with music or singing. The stomach stood for a positive gut feeling or for anxiety, whereas ears stood for languages and dialects that the participants heard but could not speak.

Considering the ensemble of meanings made with body parts, it becomes clear that a wide range of metaphoric meanings could be made with body parts. Via different semiotic processes, body parts stood in for different kinds of language practices (writing, speaking, singing, hearing) in different contexts (work, travel, school), for different competences (still need to learn, cannot speak it), and for affective meanings of, or experiences with, named languages or dialects (e.g. gut feelings, anxiety, favourite languages).

Some of the body part metaphors that were drawn upon were rather conventional, e.g. the head for thinking, or the heart for affective attachment. Since Lakoff and Johnson’s (2002; 1980) work on conceptual metaphors, there has been a growing awareness that such conventional metaphors are largely grounded in our embodied experience: we actually ‘feel’ it in our head when we are thinking, and we feel affective attachments where our heart is, or at least in the chest (Demmerling & Landweer, 2007). Other body part metaphors might be less conventional, but are still grounded in bodily-emotional experience of language: for instance, it makes sense to choose the hands to represent a named language that one would usually accompany with gestures, seeing as people gesture with their hands, or it makes sense to represent a named language that one associates with anxiety in the stomach, seeing as people do experience anxiety or a so-called gut feeling in their stomach.

The last set of semiotic resources to be discussed are colours. Interestingly, only 14 of the 24 participants stated that they selected at least some colours on their portraits meaningfully. The

semiotic potential of colours was thereby used in different ways, ranging from very personal habitual associations to metaphoric processes and more conventional symbols.

Habitual associations regarded relatively stable links that my interview partners had forged between a language and a colour either because they had repeatedly used folders or books in the same colour for the respective language subject, or, in the case of participants attending the lower secondary school in the Ladin valleys, because the languages are assigned specific colours for strategic pedagogic purposes in schooling in the Ladin valleys (Verra, 2016). In fact, three of the four students of this lower secondary school explicitly stated that since preschool, Ladin had always been green, German red, Italian yellow and English blue. In fact, this is also evident in their questionnaire portraits, where there is also a clear tendency to colour these specific resources in these specific colours. Verra (2016) notes that this system of colours was introduced alongside multilingual integrated learning around the year 2000, and served the purpose of clearly identifying languages during such multilingual learning units.

Metaphoric processes, on the other hand, were at play when participants used the semiotic potential of similar colours to represent some relation of similarity between named languages or dialects, as I mentioned in section 5.1. This was stated explicitly by three students: for one participant, Elena, this similarity was about the relation between the linguistic resources themselves, because one was the named standard language (German) and the other the respective dialect; for Sofia, it was about using two languages, English and German, for similar purposes, i.e. imagining to use both of them in a future job, whereas for Stefanie it was about placing two languages, Italian and German, on an equal footing both regarding her affective stance towards them and her levels of competence.

Another double metaphoric process was at work when participants chose to represent their affective stances towards specific resources by choosing colours that they liked or disliked. For instance, Giada explicitly stated that she chose green for German because she did not like the colour and neither did she like the language, whereas Caterina explained she chose colours she liked for the languages and dialects she liked. Other metaphoric processes included representing a resource in green that was linked to activities in nature (Giulia: the Italian dialect *trentino*), in yellow because the language is spoken in a sunny country (Stefanie: Spanish), in red to represent a stance of affective attachment (Sofia: an Italian dialect) or in black to represent sadness or anxiety (Elena: German). Some of these colour meanings already enter into the realm of conventional symbols, such as red for love or black for sadness, which, however, are always historically and culturally contiguous (Busch, 2018b).

The prime example of the use of conventional symbols concerned participants' use of colours from national flags in order to represent the respective national language. This has been attested in numerous research conducted with language portraits, including the use of entire flags to represent languages (Busch, 2018b; Coffey, 2013; Dressler, 2014; Farmer, 2012; Farmer & Prasad, 2014; Obojska, 2019; Prasad, 2014; Seals, 2018; Singer, 2018), and has even caused criticism against the method for thus reproducing language ideologies that tie nations to languages (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2016). While it is true that such ideologies can be reproduced in the creation of language portraits, this also means it renders such ideologies visible and thus potentially open to deconstruction.

In this study, however, no participant reproduced an entire national flag, and only three participants mentioned a flag as the reason why they chose a colour: both Christian and Elena said they used green to represent Italian for this reason, whereas Lukas used green as part of the Ladin flag. This last example is particularly interesting, as the Ladin flag is not necessarily a universally recognised symbol – this is already apparent from the fact that I needed to ask Lukas what this flag looked like and what it stood for. Moreover, the Ladin flag does not symbolise a nation state, but it can be framed as a national flag if one considers Ladins from all five Ladin valleys as a 'nation' (Craffonara, 1999).

While we can assume that the semiotic resources and processes discussed thus far were also at play when the participants created their first language portraits for the questionnaires that my colleagues collected in 2017, I cannot examine this question empirically as it was not part of the questionnaire design. However, the recontextualisation of the questionnaire portrait during the interview interaction still yielded interesting insights. Most importantly, the experience confirmed once more the context-bound nature of language portraits (Busch, 2018b:7), as most interview partners struggled to remember the meanings they had attached to their year-old language portraits at the time, or even overtly delegitimised their questionnaire portrait. Excerpt 6 is a particularly drastic example, in which Ermir contemplates the portrait that I represented and briefly discussed in section 5.1.

Excerpt 6: Ermir - what do you think when you see this?

- 001 INT cosa pensi <<:-)> se vedi questo>;
 what do you think when you see this?
- 002 ERM (0.5) ((laughs)) <<:-)> che ero un po' creTIno>-
 that I was a bit of an idiot.
- 003 INT (-) cretino?
 an idiot?
- 004 ERM <<laughing> sì stupido> boh non so;

yes, stupid, dunno, I don't know.

005 INT perché,
why?

006 ERM (-) perché (.) ho ho mischiato tutte le lingue che avevo in
Una,
because I mixed all the languages I had in one

007 ERM (-) e qua un attimo le ho separAte;
and here I separated them a bit

008 ERM (-- e:: non so quanto senso Abbia;
and I don't know how that makes much sense.

009 INT ((laughs silently))

010 (2.0)

011 ERM visto (-- le COse che fai <<:-)> solo perché le devi fAre>;
you know, the stuff you do only because you have to do it

012 INT [pensi];
you think so?

013 ERM [qua] quando sei a fine Anno
when you're at the end of the [school] year

014 ERM (-- e e: <<laughing> devi fare> qualcosa, ((laughs))
and and you have to do something

015 INT (-) quindi pensi che questo non (-- non rappresenti la tua:
realtà linguistica, (2.0) [di un anno fa];
so you think that this does not represent your linguistic reality from a year ago?

016 ERM [esatto].
exactly.

Ermir humorously self-deprecates by positioning his past self as ‘a bit of an idiot’ (002). When I ask him to justify this assessment (005) he describes his portrait (006-7) and distances from the way he coloured it, stating that he thinks it does not make any sense (008). Ermir then explains the portrait with a supposed lack of motivation at the end of the school year (011, 013-14), upon which I tentatively offer the conclusion that he thinks the portrait does not represent his past linguistic repertoire (015), which he affirms emphatically with ‘exactly’ (016).

The fact that the participants often did not remember the meanings they were making with their questionnaire portrait, however, also resulted in the adoption of an interesting, alternative perspective: their contemplations of the portraits show how they themselves interpret their portraits ex post. In so doing, they often apply the semiotic processes described in this subsection as ‘keys’ to reading their portraits. For instance, Thomas interprets the smaller surface for English as meaning that the language was less important then (of which he is doubtful), while Carolin interprets the large surface for a local German dialect as indicating that she spoke and speaks it the most, and Giulia rationalises her colouring several named languages in the hand as representing the languages she uses. Spatial and body metaphors were

thus also applied in the reading of language portraits after the passing of time seemed to have caused participants to forget the original meanings.

5.4 Functions of the language portrait in interview interaction

In the last section of this chapter, I will now briefly outline the different functions that both the interview portrait and the questionnaire portrait fulfilled in the interview interactions.

Firstly, the language portraits served as structural guides for the participants' portrait description, which was evident in their frequent use of pointing gestures as well as in their continuous gaze shifts from the interviewer to the portrait during the latter. In one case, a participant even looked at his portrait and loudly asked himself which named languages and dialects from the portrait he had not yet talked about. The function as a structural guide reoccurs also in other phases of the interview: when I asked my interview partners what their stories with the different named languages and dialects on their portrait were, or where they were using them, what they meant to them, they often referred back to their portraits to make sure they were addressing everything they had coloured on the portrait. Moreover, I used it for the very same purpose and sometimes reminded interview partners to also talk about languages or dialects they had not expanded on yet, or even asked specifically about a certain resource on their portrait.

Second, as an artefact that is permanently visible throughout the interview interaction, the language portrait also served as context or reference point at different moments of the interview. When I asked participants follow-up questions about their linguistic repertoires, I often pointed to their language portrait and asked about 'all of this'. Participants made use of the language portrait in the same way, for instance when one participant, Simon, looked at the portrait and stated that he thought that it would 'all' (i.e. the named languages and dialects on his portrait and their roles in his life) stay the same in the future. Sometimes, the portrait also served as a reference point to very specific named languages or dialects. Alessio, for example, referred to the amount of German he coloured on his portrait and stated that if he had worked harder in the past, he might not only have coloured half a leg but an entire leg.

Additionally, it was apparent from the video recordings that the portraits occasionally served as a sort of refuge for my interview partners' gaze. This might be linked to a general awkwardness around the interview interaction, especially initially, or to the specific awkwardness of being recorded on video. As detailed in Chapter 4, I chose to accept the awkwardness around video recording in exchange for the possibility to analyse interviews as

multimodal interactions. In this context, I considered it positive that the language portrait gave participants somewhere to look and thus shield themselves from this awkwardness.

The functions that the 2017 questionnaire portrait fulfilled for the 2018 interview interaction mostly regarded the purposes of serving as a point of departure for reflections on continuities and changes in the participants' linguistic repertoires. As an artefact from around a year before the interview interaction, it instigated and anchored such reflections in this specific timeframe and potentially brought in new perspectives from the past. For instance, Giulia realised that she used to be affectively attached to Sardinian only upon contemplation of her 2017 portrait.

5.5 Summary

In this chapter, I first examined the language portraits created for this project as material products, grouping them roughly into portraits that divided up the entire body silhouette, portraits that contained localised splotches of colour, and portraits that contained additional metaphoric and symbolic elements such as ears or hearts. However, not all portraits could be neatly grouped, and I also concluded that the portraits alone give relatively little insight into the subjective meanings that my interview partners were making with them.

For this reason, I subsequently drew on our conversations around the portraits to examine their creation as an interactional process, detailing how the task was interpreted differently by different participants, how much interactional work I needed to do in order to attempt to dispel normative assumptions about the task, how ideologies of legitimate resources and legitimate speakers were at work in the creation of language portraits, and how language portraits were performative in rendering visible what was previously not accessible.

I then focused on the semiotic resources and processes at play in the creation of the language portraits, and presented the different kinds of spatial and orientational metaphors, body metaphors and colour associations and colour metaphors that my interview partners drew upon in order to express particular meanings about their language practices, their positionings in terms of competence, and their affective stances towards specific named languages and dialects – representing the three themes on which I will elaborate in the following empirical chapters. Finally, I highlighted that the language portraits served the function of structuring and anchoring interview interactions at different moments, that they were available as reference points, and that the 2017 portraits worked as starting points for reflections on changes and continuities in the participants' repertoires.

6 Co-Constructing language practices

In the previous chapter, I examined the ways in which my participants and I co-constructed their linguistic repertoires through a methodological lens, focusing on the roles that the language portraits played for our interview interactions. In this chapter, I will begin to address which kinds of linguistic repertoires were thus co-constructed, focusing on the ways in which my interview partners described their language practices. As I have outlined in Chapter 2, I will do so from a perspective that considers my participants as speaking subjects, and their linguistic repertoires as being constituted as they move across a variety of social spaces along their biographical trajectories (Blommaert, 2009; Busch, 2012, 2015a). Therefore, I will first elaborate on the ways in which my interview partners described their past, present and imagined future language practices in various social spaces of family, school, leisure and work (6.1), before critically examining the social constructs around which these practices seemed to pattern (6.2).

6.1 Language practices in social spaces

In this section, I will illustrate how my interview partners and I conjointly constructed their language practices in four groups of social spaces that turned out to be salient for most participants: family, school, leisure and work. In contrast to sociolinguistic studies that focus on language practices in only one of these spaces (e.g. school ethnographies like Heller (2006) or Purkardthofer (2014), or ethnographies of leisure-oriented groups like Pujolar (2001)), language-biographical research opens up possibilities to investigate how speakers move across different spaces, or rather how they construct themselves as doing so. For this reason, I will now focus one by one on the spaces *family* (6.1.1), *school* (6.1.2), *leisure* (6.1.3) and *work* (6.1.4), and will also elaborate on the ways in which those spaces, and my interview partners' language practices within them, were interconnected.

6.1.1 Family spaces

Language practices in the family were a topic of conversation across all interviews. In some cases, this involved very little detail. In particular, this was the case when it only consisted in participants identifying one named language or dialect as what was spoken in the family: Francesco and Giulia stated they spoke Italian in the family, for Eva and Lukas this was Ladin, for Philipp and Carolin it was what they referred to as *Dialekt* or *Deutsch Dialekt*, and for Younes it was Arabic – which he later specified was 'Arabic dialect'. Even in some of those cases, however, a layer of complexity was later added to their language practices in the family.

For instance, Younes noted that since his sister had married an Italian, he also sometimes spoke Italian in the family, and Francesco and Giulia mentioned that one of their grandparents also spoke *veneziano* and *trentino* respectively when the family was together.

More detailed accounts of family language practices usually involved different named languages and/or dialects and a description of the different situations in which, or people with which, these are spoken in the family. Excerpt 7, in which Daniel describes the language practices in his family, is an example for the former:

Excerpt 7: Daniel - so you said, eh, at home you speak all three languages?

- 001 INT quindi avevi DEtto (.) ähm: (2,2) a casa parlate tutte e tre
le LINGue;
so you had said, erm, at home you speak all three languages?
- 002 DAN sì;
yes.
- 003 INT okay ähm:: mi pu:oi: raccontare un po' di piÙ come funziona,
okay erm can you tell me a bit more about how that works
- 004 DAN eh con papà solo: italiano e ladino,
er with dad only Italian and Ladin
- 005 DAN invece con mamma l'italiano ma anche il croato,
while with mom Italian but also Croatian
- 006 DAN solo che mio papà non capisce il croato quindi (.) spesso
parliamo più italiano,
only that my dad does not understand Croatian so we often speak more Italian
- 007 DAN però quando siamo da soli <<all> mia mamma io e mio fratello>
poi parliamo solo croato;
but when we're alone, my mom, me and my brother, then we only speak Croatian
- 008 INT mhm,
- 009 DAN così ANche per rispetto che mio papà capisce;
like that, also out of respect, so that my dad understands.

Before this excerpt, Daniel had already told me that he also spoke Croatian and a Croatian dialect because his mother had emigrated from Croatia, and he had already mentioned that they spoke Italian, Ladin and Croatian in the family, which I restate summarily in (001). I then ask Daniel to go into more detail about their language practices at home (003), and thus co-construct his account. Daniel first states which of these three languages he speaks with which of his parents: Italian and Ladin with his father (004) and Italian and Croatian with his mother (005). The qualifier 'only' (*solo*) in line 004 could indicate two things: either Daniel considers Italian and Ladin to be few languages, or something else is excluded beside these two languages. In line 005, Daniel mentions the two languages that he speaks with his other parent, his mother. However, he does not qualify these as 'only' Italian and Croatian (and not Ladin, perhaps), but he stresses that they not only speak Italian, 'but also' Croatian.

Line 006 then makes it clear that Croatian is not available in interaction with his father, as his father does not speak it, and thus recontextualises the former two utterances, presenting Italian as the only language shared by the entire family, which they consequently speak more than the others. In turn, when his father is not around, his mother, he and his brother speak Croatian (007). The position of ‘only’ within this utterance is particularly interesting: by placing it before *croato*, Daniel stresses that whenever only the three of them are around, they speak Croatian and nothing else. In line 009, Daniel names ‘respect’ as the reason why their language practices are organised this way. The notion of ‘respect’ explains why the two brothers and their mother do *not* speak Croatian when his father is around: Daniel states that being respectful means speaking in a way that his father would understand, implicating that Croatian is outruled when the entire family is present. His statement almost seems like a justification for not speaking more Croatian in the home, especially in the light of his underlining that they speak *only* Croatian when their father is not around, thus positioning himself as someone who does speak quite some Croatian in the family.

What is interesting beyond this single case is how Daniel, like other participants, describes their language practices in the home as alternating between named languages depending on the people taking part in the interaction. If it is just him and his mother, or maybe also his brother, they will speak Croatian, and if his father is around, too, mostly Italian. Ladin is mentioned as another language Daniel speaks with his father, and Daniel notes at a later point in the interview that this happens mostly when they meet with his father’s friends from the same valley. Similar patterns of describing family language practices as depending on the people present occurred for example in Sofia’s interview, in which she notes that they mostly speak Italian in the family, but also a local dialect if her grandmother is around and her father is not, or in Ermir’s interview, in which he states that if they are all together, they speak Albanian, but he and his sisters often also speak Italian with his littlest brother.

In most interviews, however, interview partners did not go into detail about the constellations of family members present, but linked a single named language or dialect to individual family members. For instance, Stefanie and Thomas note how they speak Italian with their respective fathers and German with their respective mothers; Sara states that she speaks Ladin with her father, Italian with her mother, and Spanish with her relatives in South America; Aria notes that she speaks Sicilian with all the members of her family apart from her mother – who, according to Aria, speaks Italian to her because she thinks Aria needs the practice.

Another aspect that is rendered visible in the interviews I conducted is the way in which some participants constructed their family language practices as changing over time. For instance,

Giorgia recounts how her mother seemingly decided at some point that her father should stop speaking Italian in the family in order to prepare Giorgia for going to an elementary school of the German track, and that they would only speak German at home since then. Stefanie, in turn, narrates how she only ever wanted to speak Italian when she was little, even if her mother and grandmother spoke German to her, and frames this as a tale of maturation (Woolard, 2016), positioning her past self as ‘stubborn’, and her present self as not only speaking German in the family, but also as affectively attached to the language. Within this larger story, Stefanie describes their language practices as continuously fluctuating between periods where she and her parents speak more Italian and periods where they speak more or exclusively German. Such changes in family practices can be narrated as abrupt ones, as in Giorgia’s case, or as gradual ones, as in Stefanie’s case. Moreover, they can be constructed as more or less motivated: for instance, Giorgia attributes a specific rationale to her mother’s decision to change the family language policy, i.e. preparing Giorgia for school, whereas Stefanie describes the fluctuations in their language practices as somewhat arbitrary. However, she also links at least one of them to her switch from an Italian preschool to a German elementary school, pointing to interactions between family and school spaces. Overall, it seems that even if interview partners narrated language practices in the family as not restricted to one named language or dialect, they mostly constructed them as ordered alternations between different bounded languages or dialects, even when they narrated changes over time. The only exception to this pattern concerns Giada’s description of her language practices with her mother, represented in Excerpt 8. Giada describes practices that one could refer to as *code-mixing* (Dal Negro & Ciccolone, 2018; Muysken, 2000), *translanguaging* (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Otheguy et al., 2015) or *polylinguaging* (Jørgensen et al., 2011), but her evaluation of this way of speaking remains still at least ambivalent:

Excerpt 8: Giada - and now at home, what do you speak?

- 001 INT e: ehm: invece, (--) ora a casa, (---) cosa parlate?
and, erm, while, now at home, what do you speak?
- 002 GIA (-) io con mia mamma parlo: (.) più italiAno però faccio un
 po' un * (--) un: italiano un po' ladino: (.) un po' tutto*-
**gesture with hands, Figure 19*
*me, with my mom I speak more Italian but I make a bit of an, an Italian that is a bit Ladin,
 a bit everything.*
- 003 GIA perché mia MAmma (-) sa il ladino; lo sa anche molto bene però
 (-) parliamo: italiAno;
because my mom knows Ladin, she even knows it really well, but we speak Italian
- 004 INT mhm.

- 005 GIA con mio papà ho sempre parlato italiano; e con mio (.) no con
laDINO;
with my dad I've always spoken Italian, and with my, no, with Ladin.
- 006 GIA e con mio fratello (.) ladino <<p> sempre>. (-) [mhm].
and with my brother, Ladin, always.
- 007 INT [mhm]. (---)
okay. (--)
- 008 INT e:: (-) ehm: e come te lo spieghi che con tua mamma, (-) parli
sopra+tutto (--) italiano ladino? +
+gesture with hands, Figure 20 +
*and erm how do you explain it to yourself that with your mom you mostly speak a Ladin
Italian?*
- 009 GIA (--) m: (-) sinceramente non lo so nemmeno io-
mh, to be honest, I don't even know
- 010 GIA però (.) so che (---) eh già con mio papà quando eravamo più
piccoli; (-) c'era anche una che ci aveva detto-
*but I know that, er, already with my dad, when we were little there was this woman who told
us*
- 011 GIA che (-) mia mamma avrebbe dovuto parlare italia eh ladino con
noi-
that my mom should speak Italia er Ladin with us
- 012 GIA (-) perché altrimenti facevamo un po' confusione con le
LINGue;
because otherwise we'd get confused with the languages
- 013 GIA perché mio pa mio fratello (-) non (-) riesce a parlare il
ladino con mia mamma.
because my da, my brother can't speak Ladin to my mom
- 014 GIA io son stata abituata °h di PIÙ che (.) parlava più ladino;
I got used to it more, that she spoke more Ladin

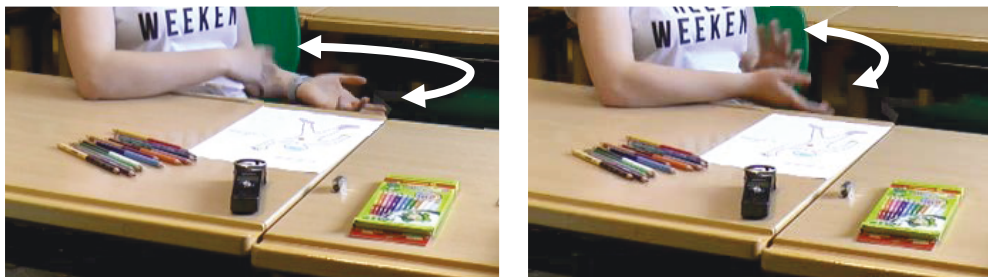


Figure 19: Giada - gesture: "an Italian that is a bit Ladin, a bit everything"

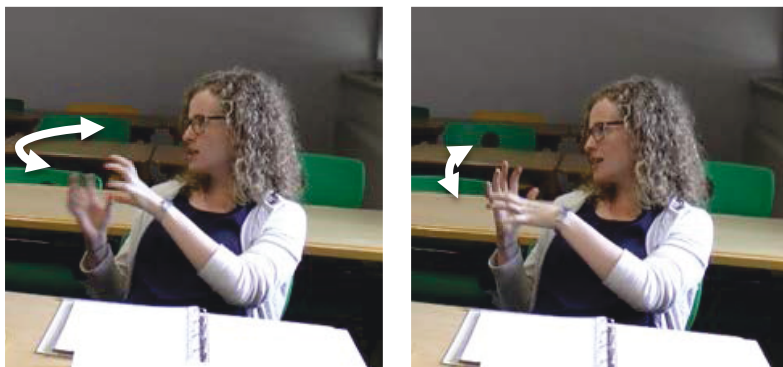


Figure 20: Verena - gesture: "a Ladin Italian"

The sequence follows a conversation around some particular language practices in Giada's family, especially with her mother, when she was little. In line 001, I ask 'what' they speak at home now, thus already implying bounded entities as an answer. It is all the more striking that Giada specifies that what she speaks with her mother is not quite what one would normally refer to as 'Italian'. Instead, she describes it as 'an Italian that is a bit Ladin, a bit everything'¹⁴. The two screenshots from the video recording in Figure 19 show Giada gesturing with her hands as she utters those words, moving one hand forward with her palm facing up, and then switching positions with her hands, going back and forth. This gesture helps Giada characterise this kind of language practice, as it is as of yet unnamed and needs to be constructed ad hoc in this specific interaction. The effort placed in doing so might even already be identifiable in Giada's self-repair sequence in line 002, when she first pauses and then repeats the indefinite article *un* before uttering the above-mentioned description of this language practice.

In line 003, Giada underlines that her mother speaks Ladin well – probably to preclude the possibility that they might be speaking Italian because of a lacking competence in Ladin on her mother's part. Lines 003 and 005-6 once more follow a pattern I have already discussed, with Giada linking different bounded languages to the different people in her family. Her 'mhm' at the end of line 006 then treats her reply to my question as completed. As an interviewing strategy, I do not immediately take the turn, but Giada still does not expand on the topic. At this point, in line 008, I ask Giada why she thinks she speaks in this way with her mother. The two screenshots in Figure 20 show me making a gesture similar to Giada's previous one, precisely as I refer back to this language practice in slightly modified terms, 'a Ladin Italian'. Moreover, I, too, hesitate briefly before labelling it as such. Giada and I thus aligned and interactionally constructed this specific kind of language practice. We have put two different labels on it, aided by gesture, but these labels and gestures are now available to refer back to this practice.

Giada replies to my question stating that she does not know why they speak in this way, framing this dispreferred answer with the phrase 'to be honest' (Edwards & Fasulo, 2006), and subsequently launches into a small story (Georgakopoulou, 2003). She recounts an incident from when she was little, where an unspecified woman told her father that her mother should speak Ladin to her and her brother, or else they would get confused (010-12). This echoes a

¹⁴ In the original Italian, Giada uses a noun phrase with *Italian* as head noun and *a bit Ladin, a bit everything* as adjective phrases, which I chose to translate as a relative clause. I did translate *Ladin* as an adjective for my own characterisation of this language practice in line 008.

commonly held belief that growing up bilingually somehow hampers language acquisition, with language mixing indexing ‘confusion’ (Lanza, 2004).

Giada’s own stance with respect to her ‘Ladin Italian’ language practices with her mother remains vague. In line 013, she states that her brother cannot bring himself to speak Ladin to his mother, and she seems to present this fact as evidence for the unspecified woman’s calls for avoiding ‘confusion’. She also claims that she herself does not have the same issues as her brother, as her mother seems to have spoken more Ladin around her (014). While Giada’s small story had been launched to explain her *own* language practices of mixing Italian and Ladin, it focuses instead on her brother’s language practices. She frames his not speaking Ladin to their mother as problematic, and thus supports the unspecified woman’s evaluation of her mother’s language practices at the time. Thus, Giada’s positioning towards her own practices remains somewhat ambiguous.

Beliefs that posit that it might be best for children to grow up monolingually, as identified by Lanza (2004), are clearly linked to both mother tongue ideologies and ideologies of ‘pure’ language (see Chapter 7 for more detailed discussions of both these ideologies). The concept of a *mother tongue* or of a *native speaker* has been shown to come with a range of ideological implications, including that one inherits a language through birth, is consequently competent in it, identifies with it and the associated group, and one typically only has one mother tongue (e.g. Bonfiglio, 2010; Rampton, 1990). Purist language ideologies, on the other hand, are at work where language practices that do not stick to the boundaries of bounded, named languages are devalued, and consequently not considered as language competence (Horner & Weber, 2018). These two sets of ideologies come together to form the idea that bilingualism as a hybrid system is problematic, and is consequently only valued as “parallel monolingualisms” (Heller, 2006:5) with high competences in two separate, standard languages. Growing up with two languages risks breaking the apparently inherent link between a mother tongue and the monolingual kind of competence, and speaking a ‘Ladin Italian’ is seen as a manifestation of that rupture.

The fact that hybrid language practices are also often devalued (Heller, 2006; Horner & Weber, 2018; Vetter, 2013) might even be part of the reason why participants mostly did not describe their language practices in such terms. It seems highly unlikely that apart from Giada, no other participant’s language practices would include practices that could be labelled as code-mixing or translanguaging. It thus seems probable that we see the ideological process of erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000) at work during interviews, whereby actual language practices are simplified (in representation or even in perception) to fit some ideological scheme. If what comes to be

recognised as hybrid language practices is devalued, and interviews are situated performances during which language ideologies are not suddenly suspended (Heller, 2011), then it makes sense for participants to describe their family language practices not as hybrid, but as ordered alternations between bounded codes.

Conversely, the family has also been shown to be an important space where some language practices are constructed as particularly valuable (Bourdieu, 1991; Heller, 2006). This was observable in my participants' narrations when Giada recounts that her father sometimes tells her jokes in German in order to encourage her to put more effort into learning the language; when Aria says that her mother insists on speaking Italian and not Sicilian to her; when Daniel notes that his mother always corrects his non-standard Croatian; when Thomas narrates that he sometimes speaks English to his father for practice, and when Christian says that he insists on speaking German and not Italian to his extended family because his father tells him German is important.

As becomes evident from this list of examples, what is thus elevated in value are all standard languages and, apart from Daniel's Croatian, these languages all occupy a central role in school education in South Tyrol (see Chapter 3), suggesting that my interview partners' parents might be orienting to the institutional spaces of the school when they attribute value to these named languages. Some participants also discursively establish this interconnection of family and school spaces by constructing a direct relation between their family language practices and their performance in the respective subjects at school, or by attributing their parents' language practices (of telling jokes in German, of insisting on speaking Italian and not Sicilian) to their parents' desire for them to do well at school and, later, on the job market. Thus, interactions within family spaces seem to interlink and interact both with school spaces and imagined future work spaces that can be considered as linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1991).

Overall, my interview partners thus largely described their family language practices either by assigning a single named language or dialect to practices in the family, or by presenting them as orderly alternating between different named languages and/or dialects depending on the specific family members they would be talking to. Some participants also constructed their family language practices as changing over time, which also consisted in describing them in terms of alternations between different languages or dialects as bounded entities. Only one participant constructed parts of her family language practices as hybrid, and took up an ambiguous stance towards these practices. The devaluation of such practices that has been documented elsewhere (e.g. Heller, 2006; Horner & Weber, 2018) might be at work here and lead to erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000) of such hybrid practices in my interview partners' account

of their family language practices. Other named languages, in turn, are attributed particular value through family language practices, and the fact that these largely coincide with what is institutionally valued at school, but also on the job market, points to an interconnection between the spaces of family, school, and work. It is the institutional spaces of the school that I will now turn to.

6.1.2 School spaces

School is another social space that is relevant to all participants. It encompasses institutional spaces of education, but also informal spaces where my interview partners spend time with their friends and peers. Excerpt 9 shows very well how these differing spaces are also assigned different kinds of language practices. It is taken from my interview with Younes, and is part of a sequence during which I ask him more specifically about the roles that the different named languages and dialects on his portrait play in his life.

Excerpt 9: Younes - then, what role do German, German dialect have for you?

- 001 INT POI (-) quale ruolo hanno tedesco (-) tedesco dialetto per te;
then, what role do German, German dialect have for you?
- 002 YOU (3.0) <<f> il tedesco>, (1.5) tedesco tedesco lo uso con i
profi (-) <<p> con i professori>.
German, German German, I use with the teaches, with the teachers
- 003 YOU (---)il dialetto, (1.5) forse mi scappa una parola in dialetto
(--) con i professori.
the dialect, maybe some word in dialect slips out with the teachers
- 004 YOU (---) ma il dialetto lo parlo con gli amici,
but the dialect I speak with my friends
- 005 YOU (--) ma il tedesco siccome (---) la regel della scuola (-)
parlando il tedesco (--) con i professori ma il dialetto-
but German, since, the rule of the school, speaking German with the teachers but dialect
- 006 YOU (4.2) außerhalb (--) <<p> der schule so mhm> sì.
like outside of school, mhm, yes.

Prior to this excerpt, Younes and I had already talked about the relevance of Arabic dialect and standard and Italian for his life. In line 001, I thus ask Younes about the role of German and German dialect. In his reply, Younes self-repairs his reference to ‘German’ by referring to it as ‘German German’, attempting to resolve the ambiguity of which kind of German he is talking about (002). By thus naming this variety, he builds on our shared knowledge to make it clear that it is Standard German that he speaks with his teachers. He then switches over to talk about *il dialetto* (003), which I had originally referred to as *tedesco dialetto* (001). He notes that he ‘maybe’ uses some words of this dialect with his teachers, but through his use of *mi scappa*, he evaluates this as involuntary slippages (003). Thus, these are not the main instances where

he speaks dialect – those seem to be when he talks to his friends (004). In line 005, he explicitly formulates the ‘rule’ of the school: Standard German is spoken with the teachers. Interestingly, he switches into German when uttering the word ‘rule’, suggesting an intricate link between his experience of this policy, and the language in which it is articulated.

Younes interrupts his next utterance after ‘but dialect’, and then assigns, again switching into German, spaces ‘outside of school’ to these kinds of language practices. He thus does not take up what he previously said about speaking dialect with friends most probably also in informal moments at school (004), and relegates dialect to other spaces (006). However, when he initially described his language portrait, he did assign this kind of dialect primarily to school. These represent two contradicting statements. It is possible that this contradiction came about because his utterance in line 006 was conditioned by his own previous formulation of the norms of school language practices, where Standard German seems to be enforced.

The normative requirement to speak *tedesco tedesco* in the institutional space of the school, or *Hochdeutsch* as it is most often referred to, is also mentioned by other students of the German track. Philipp narrates how he initially had to get used to this practice when he started primary school, whereas Stefanie still sometimes needs to remind herself to speak Standard German at school. While other students of the German track do not necessarily refer to the normative nature of these school language practices, they do relegate Standard German to school spaces. For instance, Marie symbolically selected the upheld arm of the body silhouette to represent Standard German (*Hochdeutsch*, in her formulation), because it reminded her of raising her hand at school. The insight that secondary school students in South Tyrol seem to link Standard German mostly to school spaces is also in line with previous research (Risse, 2010).

Interestingly, interview partners at schools of the Italian track hardly mentioned general school language practices. If so, this consisted in self-evidently assigning the named language Italian to such spaces. The only instances where language practices were described in more detail by my interview partners concerned practices at their past schools for those who had previously attended schools of the German track. This is the case for Francesco with preschool, and Christian with primary and elementary school. Francesco narrates that there were only few children at preschool with whom he could speak Italian, and that general language practices there only included German. Christian, in turn, notes that in elementary school, he only spoke German during the more formal moments at school, while he mostly spoke Italian with his peers during breaks.

For participants attending schools of the Ladin track, in turn, it was quite common to describe their school language practices in more detail. Excerpt 10 is an example of this, and is taken from Eva's interview as she was beginning to colour and comment on her language portrait.

Excerpt 10: Eva - so, Italian I only speak at school

- 001 EVA also italienisch tua i lei (.) in der schUle reden,
well, Italian I only speak at school
- 002 EVA so mit dei vos mit mir in der klasse sein monche reden (.) fost
ollm lei italienisch,
like, with the ones that are in my class, some almost only ever speak Italian
- 003 EVA und sonst a mit der LEARerin von italienisch,
and otherwise also with the teacher of Italian
- 004 EVA und sonst so außerholb von der schule red i NIT viel
italienisch;
and otherwise, like outside of school I don't speak much Italian.
- 005 EVA (colouring the portrait)
- 006 EVA donn DEUTSCH tua i mit meine freundinnen reden und a in rest
von der klasse und a in der schule,
then German I speak with my girlfriends and also with the rest of the class and also at school.

Eva first assigns language practices involving Italian 'only' to school (001) before describing these practices in more detail: she notes that some of her classmates mostly speak Italian, and it is with them that she does, too (002), and with her Italian teacher (003). She then confirms her initial link between speaking Italian and school spaces by noting that she does not speak much Italian outside of school, placing the stress thereby on 'not', shaking her head alongside (004). After a pause, during which she colours another spot on her portrait, Eva turns to talking about German and assigns this named language to three situations: she speaks it with her girlfriends, with the rest of her class, and at school (006). Her reference to 'the rest' of the class could thereby refer either to the classmates that do not only speak Italian, or to the classmates that are not also her girlfriends. Her reference to 'at school', in turn, suggests that she, like Younes, is differentiating between speaking German with her friends and peers, possibly also at school, and an 'at school' that refers to more formal interactions such as ones with teachers during lessons. In the remainder of her narration, which is not represented here, Eva lists two more languages: she links Ladin to home and family spaces, and English, again, 'only' to school spaces.

Eva has thus provided an ordered description of the spaces and moments in which the named languages on her portrait play a role for her language practices, assigning three of them to school spaces. English and Italian seem to be relevant 'only' there, whereas the relevance of German seems to go beyond school in that she also speaks it with her girlfriends – who, most

probably, are also friends from school. It is interesting to note that Ladin is the only language that Eva does not link to school spaces – this might be because family spaces are more relevant to Eva when talking about this language, or because Ladin plays a marginal role in those spaces for her. Indeed, she later notes that in school spaces, she only speaks Ladin during Ladin lessons.

Eva's observation that mostly German (dialect) and Italian are spoken among the students in her class is confirmed when comparing her statements to those of her classmates that I also interviewed. German and Italian were central as languages of instruction for them, too, and they also hardly ever mentioned Ladin in connection to school spaces. Language practices at the other school of the Ladin track that I interviewed seemed to be different, however: while the role of German and Italian as languages of instructions was also touched upon by these participants, Ladin was much more central for them in comparison. They mostly referred to Ladin as the main language in which students interacted among themselves; Giada even noted that she and her classmates also speak Ladin when they are not supposed to, for instance when their German teacher admonishes them for not speaking German. Interestingly however, interview partners from both schools did not orient to Ladin as central for the more institutional moments of school spaces. The only one to do so was Ermir, who initially spoke mostly Italian to peers and rationalises his switch to Ladin as an opportunity to also improve in the subject Ladin.

Overall, it seems that school language practices as they were narrated by my interview partners did pattern in similar ways in schools of the same track, reflecting the policies of the respective institutions: students at schools of the Italian track constructed Italian as the language of their school, students at schools of the German track did so with *Hochdeutsch*, and students at schools in the Ladin valleys did so with German and Italian. However, more informal language practices between them and their peers were narrated as differing from these practices in particular at schools of the German and Ladin track. In the former, *Deutsch Dialekt* but also Italian were narrated as central for the students' informal language practices, and in the latter, this was *Deutsch Dialekt* and Italian at one school, and Ladin at the other.

Another aspect to note is that school language practices were mostly narrated in static terms, invariable over time. The few instances in which participants described school language practices as changing revolved around transitional moments of moving from one school to the other. Philipp's experience of moving from preschool to elementary school and finding that Standard German was expected there is one such example; other examples involved transitions from a school of one language track to a school of another, which is recounted as an experience

in the past by Younes, Stefanie, Christian, Francesco and Lukas, and imagined as an experience in a projected future by Sara, Eva, Daniel and Elena. Other instances of transitions to different schools are linked to having come to South Tyrol from other parts of Italy (Alessio and Sara) or to projections of spending time going to school abroad in the future (Philipp and Giulia).

In all of these cases, interview partners narrated such transitions as having impacted on their language practices overall, or as impacting on them in the future. For instance, Lukas narrates how starting school outside of the Ladin valleys put *Deutsch Dialekt* on his 2017 portrait, as he always spoke it with his classmates at school. On his 2018 portrait, the dialect had disappeared again, and he explained this by referring to the fact that he had chosen to change to a school from the Ladin track again, and was therefore no longer speaking the dialect. However, at the time of the interview he was projecting to switch to a different school from the German track for the following school year, and imagined that the dialect might consequently gain renewed importance.

For others yet, imagined language practices at a future school are the precise reason for choosing these schools. This is the case for Philipp, who would like to improve his English and thus spend a year going to school abroad, or for Elena, who would like to spend a year going to a school of the German track in order to improve her German. In Chapter 8, I will argue that these decisions are informed by personal desires, which however are not entirely personal in that they link to ideologies that construct some named languages as particularly valuable.

In general, institutional spaces of education have been shown to contribute largely to the attribution of value to linguistic resources, and thus to their construction as linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991; Heller, 2006). It seems that in South Tyrol, what is constructed as valuable concerns in particular the two standard languages German and Italian. While my interview partners positioned differently to these named languages, they all oriented to them as valuable and valued within the institutional space of the school. English was also constructed as valuable and valued in such spaces. The value of Ladin, in turn, seemed to be restricted: there seems to be no place for it at schools of the German and Italian track, and the participants from schools in the Ladin valleys either link it exclusively to family spaces, or to informal interactions among classmates, and only in very few cases to formal lessons.

6.1.3 Leisure spaces

Another set of spaces that was salient for all my participants were spaces of leisure, where they spend their free time when they are not at school or with their families. In contrast to family and school spaces, which were relevant in similar ways for all participants, my interview

partners navigated very different kinds of leisure spaces. Some participants regularly participated in more structured spaces such as sports associations or music schools, most participants also narrated engaging in more or less social leisure activities such as playing videogames, spending time on social networks, listening to music or watching TV or videos on the internet. One aspect of leisure space that was relevant to all of them, however, was spending time with friends – which can overlap with the more informal school spaces, but also with family spaces.

During our interviews, most participants touched upon the ways in which they were speaking with friends. Similar to descriptions of family language practices, for some participants this was restricted to assigning one named language or dialect to such interactions. Thus, Christian, Elena and Daniel note that they always speak Italian with friends, Eva, Philipp and Sara state to always speak *Deutsch Dialekt*, and Giada seems to always speak Ladin. Other participants did assign more than one named language or dialect to interactions with friends, and, similar to descriptions of family practices, noted that this differentiation depended on the particular friends concerned. For instance, Thomas notes that he speaks dialects with most friends, but also Italian with some; Ermir notes that he speaks Italian with those friends he has known for longer (as he did not know Ladin well at the time) and Ladin with more recent friends; and Giorgia notes how she speaks a bit of Albanian with some of her friends when she is at their family's home.

Another instance of linking particular kinds of language practices to specific people occurs in Stefanie's interview, which also represents the only instance in which a participant constructed language practices with friends as hybrid and not assigned to a single named language or dialect or to an orderly alternation between them. Stefanie already mentioned this kind of hybrid practice during her initial description of her language portrait, and in Excerpt 11, I ask her to elaborate:

Excerpt 11: Stefanie - and then you also said, you are bilingual and ...

- 001 INT u:nd ä:hm: donn hosch nou gsog ähm: (-) eibn du bisch
ZWOAsprochig und wenn a mit freindinnen (.) unterwegs bisch
donn: <<:-)> hobs eis enkre OA[gene ort za] reidn>;
*and, erm, then you also said, erm, you are bilingual and when you're hanging out with
girlfriends then you have your own way of speaking*
- 002 STE [((laughs))]
- 003 INT <<:-)> des tat mi iatz A nou a bissl interessieren> wia a des
genau gmuant hosch;
I'd also be interested a bit in how you meant that exactly
- 004 STE jo: weil i hon eibn a freindin di hell isch A zwoasprochig,
yes because I have a girlfriend who is also bilingual

- 005 STE (-) u:nd ähm: und mit der und mit der redmer oanfoch (--)
oanfoch so a an misch zum bei an misch masch;
and, erm, with her, and with her we just speak, just like a mish, for exa, a mishmash
- 006 STE wenn zum beispiel mir folllt nit es wort in deitsch in nor sog
is holt in italienisch oder i moch (-) an MIX zwischen
deitschn und italienischn;
**if for example I cannot think of a word in German, then I'll just say it in Italian or I'll
make a mix between German and Italian**
- 007 STE also i tua a wort (-) so MISchn;
that is, like, I mix a word
- 008 STE (-) u:nd und des geat OLLM ban ins aso,
and and we always do it like this
- 009 STE zum beispiel a wenn ondere leit dabei sein de zum beispiel
LEI deitschsprachig sein oder dahoam lei deitsch redn;
**for example also if other people are with us who are for example only German-speaking
or that only speak German at home**
- 010 STE und INS do hearn donn miasn si ollm so lochn und leimear mitn
kopf schütteln weil des (-) sein wörter do hobn GOR koan
sInn,
**and they hear us, then they always have to laugh and just shake their heads because these
are words that have absolutely no sense**
- 011 STE obr obr mir verSTIAN ins;
but but we understand each other.

In line 001, I reiterate Stefanie's previous self-positioning as bilingual and refer to interactions with her girlfriends and their 'own way of speaking' that seemingly characterises these interactions, thus rephrasing the language practices that she previously already described as 'mishmash' and as continuously alternating between Italian and German. In so doing, I contribute to marking these practices as unusual. Possibly out of embarrassment (Katz, 1999), Stefanie reacts with laughter to this rephrasing (002). I then express interest in knowing more about this way of speaking (003). Stefanie begins her elaboration by mentioning a particular girlfriend of hers, who she also positions as bilingual (004). She once more characterises what they speak together as a 'mishmash' (005), and subsequently elaborates on what that entails: if she cannot think of a word in German, she will say it in Italian instead, or she will create a blended word out of German and Italian elements (006-7). Stefanie also positions these practices as frequent for interactions with this particular friend (008), thus underlining the link between the described practices and this friend.

Stefanie then goes on to introduce other people and their reactions to this particular way of speaking. She initially positions those other people as 'only German-speaking', and thus as non-bilingual. The stress on 'only' in this context could insinuate that these people would speak only German and not Italian – however, Stefanie then repositions these 'other people' as those that only speak German at home. Consequently, what is relevant does not seem to be their

ability to speak the respective languages, but rather their family language practices, which in turn are indexically linked to ethnolinguistic positionings (Heller et al., 2018). It is the people thus characterised that seem to react with laughter and the shaking of their heads to Stefanie's language practices with her friend. She rationalises these reactions as linked to the fact that their hybrid words make 'absolutely no sense' (010), but also introduces a concessive remark that she and her friend understand one another (011).

At a later point in the interview, Stefanie takes a strong stance of affective attachment to the 'mix' between Italian and German that she speaks with her friend (see Chapter 8 for a detailed account of affective stances of attachment). However, when I ask her about how her portrait would develop in the future, she also notes that she might no longer speak in this way in the future, as she really only does so with some girlfriends. Thus, while she is affectively attached to these language practices, and seems to accrue value to them within specific leisurely spaces, she is not projecting a role for them in the future. This, in turn, might link to the fact that it is not such language practices but 'pure' monolingual ones that are clearly assignable to one of the two named languages that are socially valued (Dal Negro, 2011; Heller, 2006).

If other leisure spaces came up during our interviews, this was mostly linked to the fact that language practices in these spaces somehow differed from those in family and school spaces. For some, this concerned the more structured spaces: for instance, Giorgia otherwise mostly spoke German dialect, but was member of an (ethnolinguistically) Italian soccer club, and Simon noted that he spoke English during ice hockey practice, as his coaches were from abroad. For others, this concerned watching TV shows in languages that they otherwise did not know (Aria watches anime in Korean, and Philipp in Japanese). English was most frequently mentioned in connection to listening to music, or even making music, to watching videos online and to browsing social networks. It also played a particularly important role for playing video games for two of my interview partners, which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 7.

Another specific set of leisure spaces where language practices deviate from everyday practices concerns experiences that my interview partners have made, or are imagining to make, as tourists and travellers. Many participants narrated language practices from when they were on holiday with their families, or from when they went on trips to different places with their school or with their sports associations. For instance, Giada narrates how she has been to different places in Europe with her sports team, and how she has had to make use of gestures to make herself understood there; Caterina recounts how she went on holiday with her family and acted as mediator between an Italian-speaking and a German-speaking friend she had made there; and Lukas narrates how he and his family were making use of English and Italian to

communicate with the receptionists at their hotel on a holiday to Spain. Thus, not only do they narrate interactions while travelling as deviating from their routine language practices, but they also sometimes construct them as not restricted to single bounded languages.

Many of my interview partners also expressed a desire to travel widely in the future, which may link not only to economic developments that have made travel more accessible and practical, but also to cultural practices that construct travel as desirable (O'Reilly, 2006). As Excerpt 12 shows, 'languages' are discursively bound up with this kind of desire. The excerpt is taken out of an interaction towards the end of my interview with Sara, when I ask her if there is anything important that she would like to add to what we have discussed.

Excerpt 12: Sara - I don't know, I wouldn't know what to say

- 001 SAR <<p> boh i wisst net no wos sogn> (-) HOLT,
I don't know, I wouldn't know what to say, well
- 002 SAR i (-) mir gfolllt auch sprochen zu lErnen weil (.) mir gfolllt
 volle gut zu REIsen;
I, I also like learning languages because I really like travelling
- 003 SAR (-) und i denk für sell ischs auch wichtig (--)) sprochn zu
 wissn,
and I think for that it is also important to know languages
- 004 SAR (1.0) und: (1.3) jo;
and, yes.

With her use of the Italian interjection *boh*, which I translated as 'I don't know' and which has been documented as a frequent borrowing in local German dialects (Dal Negro, 2013), Sara initially signals that she cannot think of anything to say, but with her use of *holt* [Standard German: halt], she keeps the turn and signals that she would like to add something. In line 002, Sara takes a positive affective stance towards language learning, and causally links this to an even stronger positive affective stance for travel. She further specifies this relation, expressing that 'knowing languages' is important for travel (003), before treating the sequence as concluded (004). In this excerpt, Sara thus positions as someone who enjoys travelling, and who enjoys learning 'languages' precisely because they enable her to follow up on this desire. She thereby constructs the ability to speak not further defined 'languages' as necessary for travel.

A generalised view of 'languages' as useful for travel reoccurs in Eva's, Thomas' and Giada's interview – just as often, however, it is one very specific named language that is linked to travel: English. At an earlier point of her interview, Sara calls English the 'most important language for travelling', Caterina calls it 'essential' for travel, Christian imagines improving his English to be able to travel, and Stefanie notes that she will have to speak English whenever

she will travel abroad. This links to an almost symbolic association between English and tourism that has been documented elsewhere (Duchêne & Piller, 2011), but also to the insight that tourism already starts at home, with my interview partners already learning what it means to be a global tourist (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010).

Overall, it seems that for some participants, language practices in leisure spaces mirrored those of family and/or school spaces one on one, whereas for other participants, their linguistic configuration was different. For some, specific practices played a role there that otherwise did not in their lives – this includes Stefanie’s mix of Italian and German, but also Giorgia’s practices with the families of her Albanian-speaking friends. For others yet, named languages that are otherwise only present as subjects at school acquire different meanings in those spaces, for instance when Lukas listens to and memorises Italian and English rap music, or when Simon speaks English during ice hockey practice. The leisurely spaces of travel also constituted spaces where different language practices were experienced or envisioned for the future, whereby such practices were narrated as potentially hybrid from past experience, but imagined as largely including English when set in an imagined future.

6.1.4 Work spaces

Many of my interview partners established a link between language practices, or language skills, and social spaces of work. Most of them did not have experience of such spaces yet – only two participants narrated to already have worked jobs in the summer – but they already oriented to work spaces they imagined for their future. While most of them only had vague ideas about the kinds of jobs they were envisioning for themselves, they evaluated some of the named languages and dialects on their language portraits as particularly useful for navigating work spaces, or constructed them as necessary to be able to secure work in the first place.

Sofia was one of the participants for whom projected future work spaces were particularly salient. She already addressed them in her initial description of her language portrait, stating that she had coloured English and German onto the hands of the body silhouette because she would use them at work, and that she chose similar (brownish) colours because she would use them both for similar purposes. Both the colours and body parts that she had chosen to represent English and German thus symbolically stood in for the usefulness she perceived these two named languages to have for her future work – and she did not imagine using them outside of work.

Like other participants, Sofia ties the importance of specific named languages and imagined work spaces in the future to specific geographical or political spaces. This is apparent in Excerpt 13, where it also becomes clear that such links are also reproduced in school spaces.

Excerpt 13: Sofia - and, well, at school we always speak Italian

- 001 SOF e:: (---) vabbè (-) a scuola si parla tutto in italIANO,
and, well, at school you speak all Italian
- 002 SOF (-- e però (1.3) si da importanza soprattutto al tedesco qua,
and, but, here importance is placed especially on German
- 003 SOF (-- che può servirti (-- PIÙ secondo me qua in trentino alto
adige però (---) comunque anche (---) se vai all'estero,
which in my opinion you may need more here in Trentino Alto Adige, but anyway also if you go abroad
- 004 SOF (1.0) [e::-]
- 005 INT [mhm posso] fermarti un secondo?
mhm, can I stop you for a second?
- 006 INT eh cosa intendi si da importanza soprattutto (1.0) [al
tedesco?]
er, what do you mean, importance is placed especially on German?
- 007 SOF [boh (-)
cioè da quando sono] qui: (---) eh: cioè prima magari a scuola
(-) l'inglese (-- era (---) più importante,
I don't know, that is, since I've been here, er, that is, maybe before at school English was more important
- 008 SOF quando andavo: alle medie a X;
when I went to middle school in X [anonymised village in a different Italian province]
- 009 SOF e il tedesco sì era importante perché comunque (-) magari
arrivano turisti tedeschi però (1.2) dicevano: meglio se
studiate l'inglese se dovete scegliere una lingua,
and German, yes it was important because anyway, maybe German tourists come but, they said: it's better if you study English if you have to choose a language.
- 010 SOF (---) invece quando sono qui: (---) sì dicono se vuoi rimanere
qui a lavorare magari meglio se sai il tedesco;
while when I am here, yes, they say, if you want to stay here to work, maybe it's better if you know German
- 011 SOF se vuoi andare: cioè se vuoi rimanere a bolzano a tre (-- beh
trento c'è di meno (-- o a merano così,
if you want to go, that is, if you want to stay in Bolzano, in Tre, well in Trento there is less, or in Merano or so
- 012 SOF (1.5) e:: (-- quindi magari ti fanno anche a scuola facciam
più tedesco che inglese;
and so maybe they make you, also at school we do more German than English.

The excerpt follows a sequence in which Sofia lists some of the ways in which Italian is part of her language practices. Line 001 represents the end of this sequence: Sofia notes that only Italian is spoken at school, and characterises this as somewhat obvious through her use of *vabbè*. She then introduces a concessive remark that introduces a new topic: while Italian is

the only language spoken at school, German seems to be particularly important ‘here’ (002). This ‘here’ could be interpreted as referring to the specific school in which we are conducting our interview, but line 003 warrants a wider interpretation: according to Sofia, German is particularly useful ‘here in Trentino-Alto Adige’, i.e. in the wider political region, and also abroad. The stress that she places on *più* suggests that there may be places where German is less useful – following the logic of her utterance, this would be places outside of Trentino-Alto Adige, but within Italy.

As Sofia pauses (004), I interrupt her narration (005) and ask her to elaborate on what she said about importance being placed on German (006). Her interjection *boh* serves as a disclaimer that mitigates the responsibility Sofia takes for the following utterance (Deppermann, 2015) – after all, she is being held to elaborate on a generalised statement she made about the importance of German in the region. Sofia then begins to talk about her personal experience since going to school ‘here’, before she interrupts herself to state that ‘before’, i.e. when she still went to school in a village in a different Italian province (008), English was more important than German. She thus draws on her personal experience of having gone to school in two different places, one outside of Trentino-Alto Adige and one within, to establish a contrast between the two geographical and political spaces.

In line 009, Sofia elaborates on her statement about the relative importance of German and English at her past school. She notes that while German was also considered important, they were told that if they had to choose between the two, it would be better to study English. Sofia does not attribute this statement to anyone in particular, but the context of her utterance makes it plausible that she is attributing it to teachers at her former school. She then continues her argument by talking about a contrasting ‘here’, where it is again an unspecified ‘they’ who says that if she wanted to stay ‘here’ for work, it might be better to know German (010). Sofia then begins listing specific places where this applies, starting with Bolzano and continuing with Trento, but immediately restricts the importance of German there. Thus, while she initially spoke of the entire region of *Trentino-Alto Adige*, she evaluates German as important to a lesser degree in the capital of the province Trentino. The fact that the third place she mentions, Merano, is again located in South Tyrol suggests that she is constructing German as important for work primarily in the province of South Tyrol. Finally, Sofia notes that there are more German lessons than English lessons at her present school and, with her use of *quindi* (012), constructs this as a consequence of the local importance of German that she has argumentatively established.

Sofia is not the only one to stress that knowing German seems to be of particular importance for work in South Tyrol: especially the participants who were attending a school of the Italian track pointed out that German competence was not just useful, but even necessary to get a job in South Tyrol. It thus seems that my participants were constructing German as a ‘hard skill’ (Flubacher et al., 2018) that would be required from any worker in South Tyrol. Italian competence was constructed in a similar manner, although by fewer participants and less explicitly. In turn, only one participant constructed Ladin as a requirement to get a job: Stefanie notes that speaking all three official languages of South Tyrol might be advantageous on the job market, and provides the fact that her mother’s job requires this kind of competence as evidence. Interestingly, however, none of my interview partners who live in the Ladin valleys constructed this language as important in the future work spaces they imagined. Competence in other named languages was constructed less as a requirement for employability in South Tyrol, and more as potentially useful on the job. This becomes apparent in Excerpt 14, taken from my interview with Philipp. The excerpt follows my question about what the different named languages and dialects on his portrait mean to him.

Excerpt 14: Philipp - ehm, when I learn a language

- 001 PHI ähm wenn i a sprochen lern (-) zum beispiel russisch hon i mir
holt a denkt (---) für wos kannet i de no geBRAUchn,
*erm, when I learn a language, for example Russian, I was also thinking about what I
could use it for*
- 002 PHI weil mir hobn a (-) dorhoam londwirtschaft,
because we also have a farm at home
- 003 PHI ähm und nor weil mir ziemlich viel a: (-) ausländische
ORbeiter hobn a (.) weil susch net (.) olls dormochn kannesch,
*erm and then, because we also have quite a few foreign workers, also because otherwise
you wouldn’t be able to do everything,*
- 004 PHI (---) hot holt a dr tata gsog lernsch vielleicht russisch weil
nor hosch in vorteil dass dornoch mit imene REdn kannesch-
*my dad actually also said, maybe you could learn Russian because then you’d have the
advantage that you could talk to them then*
- 005 PHI weil de kennen net bsundersch viel DEITSCH und a net
italienisch englisch a netta;
because they can’t really speak much German and also not Italian and neither English
- 006 PHI (---) muasch holt ollm a bissl probiern in de zu erklärn wos
sie (.) zu MOchn hobn,
you just always have to try a bit to explain to them what they need to do
- 007 PHI u:nd äh i tua iatz ollm als summerjob in tourismusbüro fan
dorf orbeithn,
and er I now always work in the tourist office of the village as a summer job
- 008 PHI nor hotr holt a gsog bei ins kemmen mehr RUSsn (-) ähm dass
hell vielleicht a BISsele konnsch (.) amoll a bissele zu sogn-
*then he actually also said, here there are more Russians coming, erm, so that you can
speak that a bit, to say a bit*

009 PHI (1.0) ähm (--) j○.
 erm, yes.

In line 001, Philipp begins uttering a generalisable statement ('when I learn a language'), and interrupts it with a specific example about 'Russian': when he started learning it, he thought about what this language could be useful for. By implication, Philipp positions himself as someone who considers the potential usefulness of a language whenever he begins learning one. In the remainder of the excerpt, Philipp details this for Russian, and mentions two work-related contexts in which this specific language would be of use: the first is work on the family farm (002-6), and the second is work in the tourism sector (007-8). For both of these examples, Philipp introduces his father as an authoritative figure that provided him with these assessments of the usefulness of Russian (004, 008). It is important to note that at the particular school that Philipp was attending, students need to choose between Spanish and Russian for the second foreign language they want to take, and the excerpt needs to be seen in this light.

In the excerpt, Philipp constructs Russian as a valuable asset on the job in both work contexts he mentions, but Russian does not seem to be required from Philipp in order to gain access to these jobs in the first place. In the first context, he constructs Russian as a potential 'advantage' because as it stands, his family is finding it difficult to communicate with the agricultural workers that they seasonally employ on their farm. They do not share a language with them, and so language practices in this context usually involve trying 'a bit to explain what they need to do' to the workers. Being able to speak Russian, then, would ensure more efficient communication. The second context, in turn, is presented as linked to work experiences that Philipp has already made. He notes that he regularly works summers at the local tourist office, and there, too, speaking Russian would enable communication – with Russian tourists. Russian thus seems to be envisioned more as a 'soft skill' for work in South Tyrol, in contrast to the 'hard skills' German and Italian (Flubacher et al., 2018).

Interestingly, also English was mostly constructed not as requirement from any worker in South Tyrol, but more as a 'soft skill' that would be valuable on the job, especially in the tourism sector, which is one of the more important sectors of the local economy (WIFO, 2019). However, English did acquire the status of a 'hard skill' for some interview partners who oriented to wider geographical spaces when imagining their futures: for instance, Francesco noted that it might be easier to find employment as a technician if he could also work abroad, and English, or in other places French or Spanish, would be necessary to do so.

Overall, many of my interview partners thus oriented themselves to different labour markets in which (prospective) workers are differentially positioned according to the kinds of language skills they possess. Whether they construct their language competences as ‘hard skills’ or ‘soft skills’, they do construct them as being valuable on the job market (Urciuoli, 2008). This is not surprising, as it seems that this idea is perpetuated both in institutional spaces of schools, as in Sofia’s excerpt, and within their families, as in Philipp’s excerpt. Consequently, my interview partners also positioned themselves as strategically making choices that would ensure their value on the labour market. Such patterns of positioning have been investigated by Martín Rojo (2020), who sees them as originating in neoliberal governance, and as indicative of a linguistic version of the entrepreneurial subject. She refers to this model of speakerhood as the “*self-made speaker*” (Martín Rojo, 2020:163), and observes that the university students participating in her study seem to have internalised a discourse of the economic value of languages, as well as a discourse of self-entrepreneurship that requires that they manage and are accountable for investments into their own worker selves. Similar observations have been put forth by Costa, Park and Wee (2016:695), who define linguistic entrepreneurship as “an act of aligning with the moral imperative to strategically exploit language-related resources for enhancing one’s worth in the world” (emphasis omitted). My analyses suggest that my interview partners oriented to aspects of such a model of speakerhood.

It also needs to be acknowledged that not all kinds of competences seem to have the same value on the labour market, but very specific ones within specific economies. Within South Tyrol, German and Italian were constructed as requirements to even be able to compete for jobs. In some instances, this was even explicitly linked to the requirements for bilingualism for jobs in the public sector (see Chapter 3). English was constructed as the next most valuable language on the local job market, and Ladin seemed to have only a marginal role despite being the third official language of the province. Aside from the relevance of Russian for very specific jobs, no other named languages were constructed as relevant to work in South Tyrol – including the ones that my participants did speak, such as Arabic, Albanian, or Croatian.

6.2 Socially constructed practices: naming languages, naming dialects

The previous section has shown that the language practices described by my participants, and included in their language portraits, were largely restricted to named languages or dialects, i.e. to languages and dialects as social constructs that carry a socially shared label unlike Giada’s ‘Ladin Italian’ or Stefanie’s ‘mix’ of Italian and German. For a large portion of the language portrait descriptions, named languages and dialects served as a structuring principle, whereby

my interview partners listed them one by one and assigned them to different social spaces. The fact that this is also afforded by the method has previously been judged as problematic (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2016), but it also enables a critical examination of named languages and dialects precisely as the social constructs as which they are talked about by interview partners.

First, it needs to be mentioned that I chose to represent *named languages* and *named dialects* as distinct, as they are different *kinds* of social constructs. Named languages tend to be discursively linked to codified standard norms that one may or may not adhere to, and these norms often have institutional backing. Named dialects are different in that they do not have standard norms – which does not mean that there are no social norms to their use, and indeed, people might be sanctioned for not adhering to these social norms, but they are not codified or institutionalised (Jaffe, 2007). The distinction between named languages and named dialects is perhaps most acutely felt where it is struggled over: for instance, Weber (2008) notes how Luxembourgish went from being constructed as a Germanic dialect to gaining the status of Luxembourg’s ‘national language’. Similarly, Jaffe (2007) has documented how, starting from the mid-seventies, language activists on Corsica fought to have Corsican constructed as a language instead of as an Italian dialect. She also establishes a link between the legitimisation of Corsican as a language to it being taught at schools, which is another distinction between named languages and named dialects that is relevant to the present project: the former can be school subjects, while the latter cannot.

As far as named languages are concerned, all 24 interview partners included German, Italian and English on their portraits, i.e. the three standard languages that they are all in contact with through schooling (Alber, 2012; Meraner, 2011). Across different contexts of my interviews, German was referred to as *Deutsch*, *Hochdeutsch*, *normal Deutsch*, *Standardsproch*, *tedesco*, *tedesco normale* or *tedesco tedesco*. These differing labels link to the fact that *Deutsch* or *tedesco* on its own seem to be able to encompass both varieties constructed as Standard German and varieties constructed as dialect. Consequently, most of these labels serve to differentiate this all-encompassing notion of ‘German’ from a notion that only includes what is evaluated as standard. The label most frequently used for this purpose across my interviews was *Hochdeutsch* – interestingly, this label was even employed during two interviews that were otherwise conducted in Italian. Barbour and Stevenson (1990:275) define *Hochdeutsch* as the “non-technical term for formal standard German”, and Koppensteiner and Lenz (2017) have noted that this designation is the most frequent one applied in Austria to language use

constructed as standard by laypeople. *Normal Deutsch*, *tedesco normale*, and *tedesco tedesco*, in turn, each occurred only once.

The labels applied to Italian were slightly more restricted: it was usually referred to as *italiano* or *Italienisch*, but also as *italiano normale* or even as *parlare normale* (i.e. speaking normal). While the latter two designations were also applied to differentiate what was considered as standard Italian from a specific named dialect, or from dialects generally, it seems that unlike with German, references to *italiano/Italienisch* already indexed a variety constructed as standard. English, in turn, was referred to only as *Englisch* or *inglese*, and variation within this named language was not addressed.

Ladin, which is part of the schooling in the Ladin valleys (Verra, 2016), was represented on the language portraits of all the participants attending such a school, and additionally by two participants whose mothers were originally from one of the Ladin valleys. Aside from that, the language was only mentioned by one other participant, who stated that she sometimes watched the Ladin section of the local news on TV. Ladin was referred to as *ladino* or *Ladinisch*, and in some interviews, variation between different valleys or even villages were also addressed.

The remaining named languages that were coloured onto the body silhouettes were Spanish (*Spanisch/spagnolo*) by six participants, Albanian (*Albanese, Albanisch*), French (*francese*), Russian (*Russisch*), Latin (*latino*) by two participants respectively, and Arabic (*arabo*) and Croatian (*croato*) by one participant respectively. Spanish had been represented as a language that some participants had come in contact with on holiday or with friends, as a present or future school subject, and, in one case, also as a family language linked to the mother's migration trajectory. Albanian was coloured once as a family language linked to the students' own migration trajectory, and once as a language learned from friends and their families. French, Russian and Latin were coloured as present or future school subjects, Arabic as a family language linked to the family's migration trajectory and Croatian as linked to the mother's migration trajectory.

As far as named dialects are concerned, around half of the participants coloured a variety they termed *Deutsch Dialekt* or *dialeto tedesco* or more simply even just *Dialekt* onto their body silhouette, thus characterising this dialect as assigned to the wider construct 'German'. Similarly, one participant coloured something he labelled *Arabic dialect*, and another *Italian dialect*. Other named dialects that the participants included in their language portraits carried geographical and political labels such as *Bayrisch*, *napoletano*, *trentino*, *veneto*, *veneziano*, *siciliano*, *istriano*, and *lastesano*.

In the light of their lack in institutional backing, it is especially interesting to examine which kinds of labels especially named dialects carry. As mentioned, many of the listed labels index geographical and, not always entirely congruent, political spaces: *Bayrisch* indexes the German state Bavaria, *trentino*, *veneto* and *siciliano* respectively index an Italian province or region, *veneziano* and *napoletano* index Venice and Napoli respectively, and *istriano* a Mediterranean peninsula and Croatian region. This kind of labelling practice for dialects is quite commonplace (Erker, 2017), and it has to be noted that it represents and thus reproduces a relatively stable connection between speakers and places – one of the connections that sociolinguistics as a discipline has been based on (Heller, 2011).

Bearing this in mind, the labels *Arabic dialect*, *Italian dialect* and the recurring *Dialekt*, *Deutsch Dialekt* or *tedesco dialetto* are odd ones out. For Arabic dialect, this might be linked to the possibility of the participant assuming that I would not have any notion of Arabic dialects anyway, and thus might not be interested in such details – and indeed, I did not press him for such details. By contrast, I did ask the participant who had coloured Italian dialect for more details, and he did provide a tentative, geographical label based on a small South Tyrolean village for the dialect.

For *Dialekt*, *Deutsch Dialekt* and *tedesco dialetto*, the reasons for the geographical unmarkedness of these labels seem to be different. In fact, I would argue that these labels are not necessarily unmarked, but that they do still index a precise geographical and political space – only that this space is merely implied. Beside the autoethnographic knowledge derived from having grown up in South Tyrol myself, a number of interactions across interviews point to the fact that the mentioned labels indexed *South Tyrol* as a space. Excerpt 15, which constitutes Carolin's reply to my question what the languages on her portrait meant to her, is a telling example:

Excerpt 15: Carolin - so, dialect is important to me

- 001 CAR ähm (1.5) also dr dialekt isch mr (.) WICHTig;
erm, well, the dialect is important to me
- 002 CAR weil (.) mir kimp fir der: spoltet ins (.) südtiroler und
ollgemein jede region für sich selber O,
because it seems to me that it splits off us South Tyroleans and generally every region for itself
- 003 CAR weil donn (.) isch man ollm a bissl (2.0) geTRENNT sozusogn
fa dr masse,
because then you are always a bit separate from the bulk, so to speak
- 004 CAR von dr masse de eibn DEITSCH redet,
from the bulk of people that speaks German
- 005 CAR (1.5) und (3.5) jo::;

- and, yes.*
- 006 INT (2.5) also er isch (-) dr dialekt isch dr WICHTig weil;
well, it is, the dialect is important to you because...
- 007 INT (2.0) wia hosch des iatz [genau gmuant?]
how did you mean that exactly?
- 008 CAR [weil man IRGndwia fa dr masse]
getrennt isch;
because you are somehow separate from the bulk
- 009 CAR obr hell isch nit lei INSR dialekt hell isch ollgemein jEder
dialekt;
but that's not just our dialect that's any dialect in general
- 010 CAR hell isch (.) schun so kimp mir vor;
it is a bit like that, it seems to me
- 011 CAR weil es hot jo a so ziemlich jeds DORF in südtirol sein
dialekt,
because in South Tyrol every village has its dialect, really.
- 012 CAR und DON (--) jo.
and then yeah.
- 013 INT mhm (.) wenn du: wenn du iatz sogsch INSR dialekt (.) ähm;;
mhm, if you're saying our dialect, ...
- 014 CAR hell war dr OLLgemeine südtiroler dialekt so;
that would be like the general South Tyrolean dialect

Line 001 contains hesitation markers (*ähm* and the considerably long pause) on Carolin's side, which indicate that the question might not be easy to answer for her. When she does launch into her reply, she singles out *Dialekt* from her portrait, and takes an affective stance of attachment to this dialect (see Chapter 8 for a detailed discussion of such stances). In lines 002-4, Carolin provides an explanation for this attachment: the dialect is what 'separates' South Tyroleans from other people (002-3), more precisely from other people who speak German (004). Both the framing of these utterances as subjective statements (*mir kimp fir* – 'it seems to me') and the vagueness marker *sozusogen* ('so to speak') serve the purpose of weakening the participants' claims to epistemic authority on the matter.

Carolin has however put a finger on an aspect that we are interested in as sociolinguists: the function of language to construct social difference (Heller et al., 2018). After I invite her to do so (006-7), Carolin also expands on this thesis, and constructs it as a fact that is universally applicable to all dialects (009). Even though she immediately readjusts this as a subjective statement of hers (010), she provides further evidence by stating that in South Tyrol, almost every village has a distinctive dialect (011), thus distinguishing itself from other villages. The particle *jo* also frames this as knowledge she assumes to be shared between the two of us (Deppermann, 2015). When I ask Carolin to clarify what she means by 'our dialect' (013), she

however does not refer to one of those specific dialects, but to a ‘general South Tyrolean dialect’. It thus seems that it is this dialect, indexing the entire province, to which Carolin takes up a stance of affective attachment in our interaction.

Moreover, Carolin also explicitly positions herself as ‘South Tyrolean’ in line 002. When she speaks of ‘us South Tyroleans’, she conjures up a group to which she belongs. ‘Us’ in this context could also be read as an inclusive *we*, whereby she includes me into this group of South Tyroleans. Whether or not Carolin includes me in this collective, Carolin conjures it up once more when she speaks of ‘our dialect’, forging a link between the dialect and an ethnolinguistically defined people.

The existence of a general South Tyrolean dialect, as distinct from the ones spoken in neighbouring Austrian North Tyrol, is up for debate among more structurally oriented sociolinguists (Lanthaler, 2007; Riccabona, 2007). What emerges from this and other interview interactions is that it clearly does exist as a social construct. In addition to the interaction with Carolin, Giorgia contrasts the Bavarian dialect she speaks with her mother with South Tyrolean dialect, and Fabian states that he does not speak *Vinschger* dialect (indexing the valley Vinschgau in which I grew up), but more of a general South Tyrolean dialect.

This social construct also seems to be powerful enough to hold together a considerable degree of linguistic variation: Carolin mentions how every village has a different dialect, but they all belong under the umbrella of the South Tyrolean dialect. Since I am talking to my participants in South Tyrol, and in many cases in such a dialect, it does not seem to be necessary to geographically label it. When participants call it *Dialekt* or *Deutsch Dialekt*, they can just assume I will know what they are referring to. This implicitness is rendered possible by the shared common ground that is already established, and that is linked to the localness of the interview situation.

Overall, participants drew on a range of named languages and named dialects as social constructs in order to describe their language practices. All interview partners included German, Italian and English on their portraits, even though the differing labels with which they referred in particular to German are already indicative of the socially constructed nature of named languages. Other named languages that the participants constructed as part of their repertoires included Spanish, Albanian, French, Russian, Latin, Arabic and Croatian. Named dialects, in turn, included *Dialekt/Deutsch Dialekt/tedesco dialetto, Bayrisch, trentino, veneto, siciliano, veneziano, napoletano, lastesano*, Arabic dialect and Italian dialect. While some of these designations assign the respective named dialect to a standard language, most index geographical and political spaces, thus reproducing a connection between speakers and places

that sociolinguistics has been based on (Heller, 2011). While *Dialekt/Deutsch Dialekt/tedesco dialetto* does not fall in this category on the surface, it often indexed South Tyrol as a geographical and political space across my interviews.

6.3 Summary

Throughout this chapter, I have addressed how my interview partners described their language practices in the social spaces of family, school, leisure, and work. In all of these spaces, they largely talked about such practices by either assigning one named language or dialect to a social space, or by describing them as orderly alternations between a set of named languages and/or dialects. Within family spaces, language practices were also constructed as potentially changing over time, whereas language practices in school spaces were narrated as more static, and only changing as the participants themselves transitioned from one school to the other.

Hybrid practices that could not be assigned to a single named language or dialect as social construct were described by two interview partners, but they did not seem to be particularly valued as linguistic capital, as has previously been observed (e.g. Heller, 2006; Horner & Weber, 2018). Some named languages, in turn, were constructed as particularly valuable both within family, school, and work spaces. This concerned in particular German and Italian conceived as standard languages, but also English and to a restricted degree Ladin.

Language practices in leisure spaces were similar to those of family and/or school spaces for some participants, whereas they differed for others. Most striking in this context is the relevance of leisurely spaces of travel, which seem to play a role especially in relation to my participants' imagined futures, and were largely linked to English. Similarly, my interview partners were also imagining future work spaces, and positioned themselves as strategically investing in linguistic capital that would enhance their value on the labour market. Such patterns of positioning have previously been linked to neoliberal models of speakerhood (Costa et al., 2016; Martín Rojo, 2020), and the present study suggests that adolescents in South Tyrol also orient to aspects of this model of speakerhood.

Moreover, I have engaged with the socially constructed nature of participants' language practices as named languages and dialects. In this context, it seemed that the designation 'German' encompassed both varieties conceived as standard and as dialect, while 'Italian', 'English' and other named languages were exclusively linked to standard varieties. The designations of named dialects, in turn, either assign these varieties to standard ones, or index geographical and political spaces. One set of designations, *Dialekt/Deutsch Dialekt/tedesco*

dialetto, which also represented the most frequently mentioned named dialect, does not index a geographical or political space on the surface, but in fact often indexed ‘South Tyrol’.

Finally, what I have described throughout this chapter are but the ordinary lives of teenagers: they have a family, they go to school, they might do sports, listen to music, play videogames. This eclectic list of social spaces, however, also shows how necessary the shift from the clearly delimitable speech community (Gumperz, 1964) to a subject-centred perspective (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a) was in order to have any explanatory power over linguistic repertoires.

7 Positioning as (in)competent speakers

In this chapter, I will examine the ways in which my interview partners positioned themselves in terms of their competence as speakers, as well as the ideologies that informed these positionings. This particular focus emerged out of analysis, as I realised that positionings as more or less competent speakers were abounding in interview talk. In Chapter 5, I have already shown that competence occurred as a structuring principle of language portraits, and was salient as a criterion for including or excluding linguistic resources from the portrait. Competence seemed to be an important theme across most interviews, which is particularly significant since my prompt for the creation of a language portrait did not mention competence or proficiency.

Research in critical sociolinguistics has pointed to the historically and spatially contingent nature of competence, and has revealed it as a social and ideological construct (e.g. Heller, 2006, 2011; Jaffe, 2013; Park, 2011). When competence is conceived of as such, it becomes particularly important to investigate the processes and practices by which models of competence emerge, the kinds of ideologies they are informed by, and the consequences they have for how speakers are positioned (Jaffe, 2013). Especially this latter aspect ties in well with Busch's (2015a:3) notion of the linguistic repertoire, where the focus might not lie "on how many and which languages speakers have available to them, or how 'proficient' they are in their L_1 , L_2 , or L_n ", but it can lie on the ways in which speakers are constructed as particular kinds of subjects based on ideological notions of competence.

Present discourses about language competence are to be seen as part of a larger discourse that pushes for the orientation of educational aims towards (measurable) competences (Caspari et al., 2008; Reusser, 2014). In Italy, the education reforms of ministers Moratti in 2003 and 2005, and Gelmini in 2010 were of particular significance in this regard (Briguglio, 2011), and the South Tyrolean curricula of all three tracks of schooling naturally followed suit (Deutsches Bildungsressort, 2010; Direzione Istruzione e Formazione italiana, 2012; Intendenza Ladina, 2011). A focus on competences generally, and on communicative competence in the second and foreign language subjects, has thus been institutionally anchored.

The notion of *communicative competence* goes back to Dell Hymes (1972:292), who defined it as "the capacities of persons, the organization of verbal means for socially defined purposes, and the sensitivity of rules to situations". This notion of competence was introduced in second or foreign language teaching and learning already in the 1970s as a reaction against the previously dominant grammar and translation oriented pedagogies (Kramsch, 2006a), which

were rooted in different ideological formations. Since then, *communicative competence* has travelled far, and has served as the basis for one of the most influential instruments of language policy, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (henceforth CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001), which in turn has been influential for operationalising communicative competence as a test construct (McNamara, 2012), thus making it measurable. In this chapter, I will first address the different ways in which participants positioned as more or less competent speakers before turning to underlying ideologies of competence. I will follow Johnstone (2007) in distinguishing between two major ways of accomplishing positionings as (in)competent speakers: positioning by performance (7.1) and positioning by claiming (in)competence for oneself (7.2). I will then turn to a special case of claiming competence that consists in positioning as a (near-)native speaker (7.3). Finally, I will elaborate on overarching ideological constructions of competence underlying my interview partners' positionings (7.4).

7.1 Positioning by performance

In this section, I will address three different ways in which my interview partners and I positioned as competent speakers by performance. The first of these concerns the very straightforward manner in which participants interactionally positioned as competent through their language practices during our interviews (7.1.1), the second is concerned with performances of competence within reported speech (7.1.2), and the third is most closely related to the kinds of performances Johnstone (2007) observed in sociolinguistic interviews on *Pittsburghese*, and considers interactionally elicited performances (7.1.3). I will show how performances were particularly effective as positionings in terms of competence, and how they were interlinked with my participants' epistemic authority as interview partners and, on my side, with my positioning as a researcher.

7.1.1 Positioning by interview language practices

As I mentioned in Chapter 4, I usually offered my interview partners the choice between three options in terms of language use for our interview, i.e. Italian, German, or *Dialekt*, and I also presented the possibility to switch flexibly between these options as well as to use other linguistic resources. While there were instances of more flexible language use throughout interviews, we oriented to one of the three mentioned options in most interviews. Consequently, both my participants and I thus positioned as competent speakers of what we had interactionally established as the main interview language.

While claims to competence also played a role for negotiating language choice, interview language practices were one of the strongest ways in which participants could interactionally position as competent speakers. These kinds of positionings usually stayed implicit, but they also came to the forefront in particular instances of our interviews.

Excerpt 16 is an example of such an instance. It is part of a sequence during which Giulia and I talked about her first experiences with German. She had already told me about the kinds of German lessons they had done at preschool, and then introduced a different context of contact with German:

Excerpt 16: Giulia – and then also because we went to the mountains

- 001 GIU e poi anche perché andavamo: in montagna,
and then also because we used to go to the mountains
- 002 GIU prima di andare in trentino (--) andavo con la mia famiglia
in un: maneggio (--) in a carezza (-) che è qua vicino,
before we started going to Trentino I used to go to a stable in, in Carezza, which is close to here
- 004 GIU (---) e:hm in un maneggio che era tedesco (-) e quindi tutte
le ragazze lì parlavano tedesco e: (-) dovevo un po' capire,
erm, to a stable that was German and so all the girls there spoke German and I had to understand a bit
- 005 GIU però lì ero già più grande (-) avevo sei anni (--) sette.
but then I was already a bit older, I was six years old, seven
- 006 INT (--) <<p> maneggio?>
stable?
- 007 GIU è dove ci sono i cavalli;
that's where the horses are
- 008 INT ah <<laughing> okay>, ((laughs))
- 009 (1.3)
- 010 GIU e: quindi dovevo un po' (-) capire.
and so I had to understand a bit.

My interest in this excerpt does not lie primarily with Giulia's contact with German at this point, but with the interactional negotiation of the meaning of *maneggio*. Giulia first uses this word in line 002, telling me that she and her family used to go to a *maneggio* in some place in the mountains, adding that this *maneggio* was (ethnolinguistically) German (003). At the first transition relevance place, indicated by the short pause (006), I repeat *maneggio* with rising intonation. Giulia treats this as a request for clarifying the meaning of the word, and supplies a definition: *maneggio* is where the horses are. My subsequent *ah* is to be read as a change-of-state token that signals that I now understand the meaning of *maneggio* (Deppermann, 2015; Heritage, 1984), whereas my *okay* treats this side-sequence as concluded – and in fact, after a pause, Giulia leads the conversation back to the focus on her contact with German.

What remains to be explained is my laughter in line 008, which is not taken up by Giulia, but to which she responds with a smile. Laughter has been shown to potentially have the function of bypassing shame and of marking contradictions (Katz, 1999) or delicate actions (Glenn, 2013). What is delicate about this sequence is that my signalled non-understanding of *maneggio* threatens my positioning as a competent speaker of Italian, which in turn threatens my positioning as a competent interviewer. By not taking up my laughter, however, Giulia does not orient to this threat and continues to treat me as both a competent speaker of Italian and a competent interviewer. Her own positioning as a competent speaker of Italian thereby remains constant or is potentially even strengthened by this interaction.

Similar interactional sequences also occurred in other interviews. I asked other participants for clarifications of lexical items in Italian, and I sometimes also asked them to supply a lexical item in Italian to me, either by paraphrasing the desired item in Italian or by switching into German. In the latter cases, this not only positioned participants as competent speakers of Italian, but also as competent mediators between German and Italian. For the most part, however, competence in the main interview language remained the baseline and both my interview partners' and my own positionings as a competent speaker became entrenched merely by continued engagement in the language practices of the interview.

7.1.2 Positioning by reported speech

Another way of positioning as competent speakers by performance were code-switches in reported speech. Research in conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics has shown that reported speech works to authenticate and dramatise narratives (Clift & Holt, 2006), and several authors have observed how code-switches in such contexts contribute to the stylisation of figures in narrative (e.g. Günthner, 2002; E. Thüne, 2008). Where such code-switches occurred across my interviews, they not only marked the reported speech off from the rest of the participants' talk, but also served to position them as competent speakers of the 'code' into which they switched.

A particularly striking example of this is represented in Excerpt 17, in which Francesco tells me about his language practices in interaction with an English-speaking peer when playing a video game online.

Excerpt 17: Francesco – and I do talk to him in English

001 FRA e: io ci parlo comunque in inglese parliamo anche dei: di
 quello che abbiamo fatto nella giornata,
 and I do talk to him in English anyway, we also talk about the, what we did during the day

002 FRA e:: (--) ad esempio gli ho anche detto che:: <<:-)> mi piace cucinare>,
and for example I also told him that I like cooking

003 FRA ehm anche lui mi ha detto che lui <<p> a lui piace fare basket e quindi> comunque ci parliamo;
and he also told me that he likes playing basketball, and so we do talk

004 FRA e non solo di un gioco quindi (--) <<:-)> [can i have] a pump>?
and not only about a game, like, 'can I have a pump'

005 INT [mhm],

006 INT come?
sorry?

007 FRA can i have a pump posso avere una pompa,
can i have a pump, can i have a pump

008 FRA [o (-) o <<:-)> rush>]
or, or, rush

In lines 001-3, Francesco puts forth several examples of types of interactions that he and his peer have while playing video games. It seems that these examples serve as evidence of the fact that they have meaningful conversations aside from talking about what happens in the game, which Francesco stresses himself in line 004. He then switches into English to re-enact a speech act typical of game talk: *Can I have a pump?* I then signal that repair is needed (006), possibly because this switch is partly overlapping with my backchannelling *mhm*. Francesco consecutively orients to two possible interpretations of my request: he first repeats the utterance, and then translates it into Italian to clarify its meaning. He then goes on to supply another re-enactment of typical game talk, *rush* representing a call to attack one's enemies in the game (008).

Both *Can I have a pump* and *rush* can be considered as reported speech, even though not of specific speech acts but of the ones that Francesco routinely accomplishes in the game. He thus positions as someone who is not only enthusiastic about his video game, but also competently uses English expressions to interact on this game. His switch into English fits in nicely with the overall argumentation that positions Francesco as competently interacting with his English-speaking peer also outside of game talk.¹⁵

Similar sequences occurred in my interview with Francesco with regard to German, as well as in Elena's and Ermir's interviews. Elena re-enacted typical phrases she and her mother would always say in German (*Gute Nacht, ja danke*), and while Elena interactionally uses these

¹⁵ It might also be noteworthy that online video games have also attracted the attention of scholars in language learning (Peterson, 2010), and that both Francesco and Philipp mention such games as a way of interacting in languages they are learning.

switches to argue for her limited competence in German, they do authenticate her claims to this limited competence. Ermir, in turn, switched from Italian to Ladin when quoting the speech of someone else during his narration a specific incident. His switch serves both a dramaturgical function in the context of the narration, but also positions him as a competent speaker of Ladin. Similar to what Johnstone (2007) observed, such performances were particularly effective in positioning as competent speakers.

7.1.3 Positioning by elicited performances

Across my interviews, there are a number of interactional sequences during which I ask participants to elaborate on a specific named dialect that they had included in their language portrait. Sometimes, I explicitly asked for ‘examples of the dialect’, and thus for dialect performances, and sometimes this was just how participants chose to treat requests for elaborations on the dialect. As previously mentioned, this set of performative positionings comes closest to the kinds of performances that Johnstone (2007) observed in a number of sociolinguistic interviews aimed at eliciting talk about *Pittsburghese* by Pittsburgh locals. In her study, Johnstone concluded that performances of the local dialect by the latter were a crucial interactional resource when it came to taking epistemic stances of authority and thus to self-position as an expert on the dialect. Performances of dialect served similar functions across my interviews. Excerpt 18 shows an example of an ‘elicited performance’ when Aria performs a number of Sicilian expressions and thus positions herself as a competent speaker of Sicilian, simultaneously taking up an epistemic stance of authority.

Excerpt 18: Aria – what can I imagine Sicilian to be like?

- 001 INT com'è che il siciliano me lo posso immaginare?
what can I imagine Sicilian to be like?
- 002 ARI (1.0) mm:,
- 003 INT <<p> perché non sono (-) sono mai stata in sicilia>,
because I've never been to Sicily.
- 004 ARI (2.2) m: si storpiano un po' le parole non so eh vai a
pigliate stu cosu (--) per esempio.
mm, words are a bit mangled, I don't know, er, vai a pigliate stu cosu [go and get that thing there], for example
- 005 ARI oppure (---) non so nessuno capisce mulinciana (-) mulinciana
sarebbe (-) la melanzana;
or, I don't know, nobody understands mulinciana, mulinciana would be aubergine
- 006 INT [ah:,]
- 007 ARI [oppure] carusi (--) sono i bambini.
or carusi are the kids
- 008 ARI son delle parole che proprio non si capiscono; (---)
it's words that you really don't understand

In line 001 and 003, I signal my non-familiarity with Sicilian and thus offer an epistemic stance of authority on Sicilian to Aria. While Aria initially hesitates, as indicated by the pauses in 002 and 004, she then metalinguistically describes Sicilian before providing the first example of an utterance in Sicilian. This utterance, in turn, could be likened to the instances of reported speech presented previously, as Aria is voicing a typified request to ‘go get something’ possibly directed to her by someone else. She then goes on to provide two further examples, this time of single words (005, 007), and frames these twice as difficult to understand (005, 008). While this excerpt is also interesting for its language ideological undercurrent of devaluing the non-standard variety as incomprehensible (Milani & Jonsson, 2011), the point I would like to make is that Aria interactionally takes up the epistemic stance of authority that I offer to her by performing Sicilian speech for me. She thus not only positions as a competent speaker of Sicilian, but also as an interview partner with expert status.

Similar performances occur in Caterina’s, Alessio’s, Sofia’s, Giulia’s, Giada’s and Daniel’s interview. In each of these cases, performances were directly or indirectly elicited by my questions about a specific linguistic resource on their portraits (*veneto*, *dialetto del Sud*, *livignasco*, *dialetto trentino*, *lastesano* and Croatian respectively). Most of these are named dialects, the only exception being Daniel’s performance of Croatian. However, the latter occurs at an entirely different interactional place: I only ask him to ‘say something in Croatian’ after the interview, and frame this request as off the record.

The fact that I only elicited performances of named dialects, and not of languages, ‘on’ the record is by no means coincidental: eliciting performances by my participants necessarily involved taking an epistemic stance of ignorance about the respective linguistic resource. Doing so with respect to named languages (e.g. with Ladin, Spanish, French, Arabic, or Albanian) would stand in stark contrast with my positioning as a researcher interested in ‘language’. In fact, I also do not ask Daniel what Croatian ‘sounds’ like, but I immediately ask him to ‘perform’ Croatian, which contrasts to a lesser degree with my researcher positioning, since I can reasonably be expected not to actually know any Croatian. While there is still some tension around my epistemic stances when it comes to named dialects, as my insistence on the fact that I had not been to Sicily indicates, these stances did not clash as much with my positioning as a researcher expected to be knowledgeable about language.

Another aspect of tension around the elicitations of dialect performances concerns the possibility that participants might not wish to take up the position of a competent dialect speaker due to a stigma that might be attached to some dialects, particularly in the Italian context (Cavanaugh, 2004; Dal Negro & Vietti, 2011). Aria’s hesitations at the beginning of

the excerpt above may be interpreted as a reluctance to take up such a position, and her metalinguistic comments about Sicilian are indicative of a stigma attached to the dialect. However, as we shall see in Chapter 8, Aria does position as affectively attached to Sicilian and proudly positions as ethnolinguistically Sicilian at other instances of her interview, which makes it less likely that her hesitations would be linked to attempts of avoiding a stigmatised position as a dialect speaker.

While the previously mentioned interview partners followed my requests for elaboration or performance, some did not and were consequently not necessarily positioned as competent and authoritative in the respective dialect. For instance, Elena could not perform *Napoletano* and only described it, which immediately resulted in her explicitly positioning as not competent in speaking the dialect. Consequently, she could not take an authoritative epistemic stance of authority on the dialect. Carolin also only describes a named Italian dialect that her parents sometimes speak, but is still able to take an authoritative stance by devaluing this dialect altogether: she considers it as a mixture of Italian and something ‘incomprehensible’, spoken only by older people and destined to die out. By strongly disaligning with the dialect, her positioning as ‘incompetent’ in it thus even acquires positive value, and she does not need to renounce on an expert status in relation to this dialect.

Overall, performances of dialect thus positioned participants not only as competent in the respective dialect, but also as collaborative interview partners that would take on an expert role in relation to the respective dialect.

7.2 Claiming (in)competence

In this subsection, I will move from positionings by performance to claims of competence or incompetence by my participants. This was a particularly rich analytical category, and I identified five different ways in which my interview partners claimed to be more or less competent speakers. They did so by evaluating their competence within their linguistic repertoires (7.2.1), by comparing their present competences to their own past ones and imagined future ones (7.2.2) as well as by comparing them to those of others (7.2.3), and they presented how they had been other-positioned (7.2.4). I will now examine forms and functions of these different ways of positioning and touch upon the language ideologies that underlie them.

7.2.1 Claiming (in)competence by drawing comparisons within one's repertoire

At different points during our interviews, the large majority of my interview partners claimed their own competence or incompetence as speakers by mobilising comparisons within their own repertoires. This, in turn, took two different forms: either participants drew comparisons between their competences in different named languages or dialects, or between different skills or modalities within a named language or dialect.

Excerpt 19 serves as a good example of comparisons between competences in different languages, and also shows how competence positionings can be at the centre stage of the creation and description of language portraits despite a prompt suggesting otherwise. The excerpt represents the entirety of Alessio's initial language portrait narration, the portrait itself being represented in Figure 21.

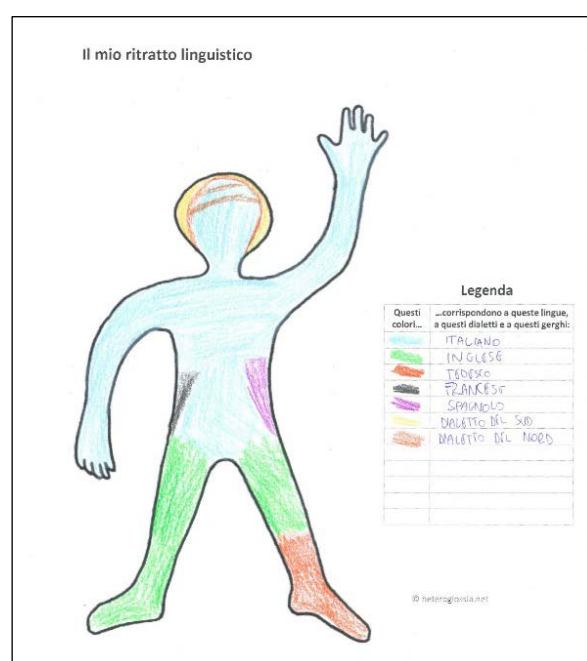


Figure 21: Alessio's language portrait (interview 2018)

Excerpt 19: Alessio - so, I coloured light blue the most

- 001 ALE allora (1.0) <<len> ho fatto di più l'azzurro perché l'italiano (-) cioè è quello che> (---) insomma quello che uso sempre.
so, I coloured light blue the most, because Italian, you know, is what, in the end, what I always use
- 002 ALE (---) poi ho fatto un po' di inglese perché è quello che insomma me la cavo meglio dopo l'italiano.
then I coloured a bit of English because that's the one I manage best after Italian, in the end.
- 003 ALE (1.3) ehm il tedesco (--) eh ho fatto un po' di meno perché cioè non sono qui da tanto e quindi non (-) cioè non lo

- capisco molto;
erm, German, er, I coloured a little less because, you know, I haven't been here for long and so I don't, you know, I don't understand it much.
- 005 ALE cioè (-) [lo] lo capisco poco.
that is, I understand it little.
- 006 INT [mhm].
- 007 ALE (1.5) il francese l'ho fatto: ho fatto l'ho fatto due anni alle medie (-) e mi ricordo pochissimo;
French I studied for two years in middle school and I remember very little.
- 008 ALE allora ho fatto un pochino.
so I coloured a little bit.
- 009 ALE (1.0) e questo è lo spagnolo che cioè (---) leggermente <<pp> lo so>.
and this is Spanish that, you know, a little bit I know.
- 010 ALE (---) e questo è il dialetto del sud (-) e questo del nord.
and this is the dialect of the South and this the one of the North.

In line 001, Alessio explains the surface area he covered in light blue with the place that Italian takes up within his language practices, it being what he uses ‘always’. In the following lines (002-8), he speaks one by one about the remaining named languages on his portrait (English, German, French and Spanish), and positions himself in terms of competence for every single one of them. His positioning in relation to English is particularly interesting as it implicitly invokes his competences across his entire repertoire: Alessio says he knows English best after Italian, thus explicitly positioning as a rather competent speaker of English, and by implication as a highly competent speaker in Italian and as a less competent speaker in all other named languages or dialects on his portrait. The only resources to which he does not explicitly position in terms of competence are the two named dialects on his portrait, *dialetto del Sud* and *dialetto del Nord* (009).

Alessio’s positioning as a competent speaker of Italian works mainly implicitly: it is the language in which we are conducting the interview, he claims an important role for it within his language practices, and he also evokes the figure of the self-evidently competent native speaker (see section 7.3 for a discussion of this figure). This kind of competence then serves as a yardstick against which Alessio measures competences in other named languages. The only additional pieces of information are functional to justifying his competence: the fact that Alessio has not been living ‘here’, probably referring to South Tyrol, for long, works as a justification for his low competence in German, and the fact that he learned French at middle school works to explain how he could have forgotten most of it. In general, it thus seems that

lines 003-9 are entirely functional to his positionings in terms of competence, even though the initial prompt for the creation of the language portrait did not mention competence.

Another interactional context in which participants compared their competences particularly between German and Italian concerned our negotiation of interview language practices. In these contexts, such comparisons serve as justifications of choosing one named language over the other as the main interview language. This is the case in Christian's, Ermir's and Giulia's interview. Moreover, for Younes and Lukas, similar comparisons serve the function of justifying their language choice for the 2017 questionnaire. In Sara's interview, in turn, a comparison between her perceived competence in Italian and German works towards justifying a much more consequential decision: she names the fact that she considers herself more competent in Italian as the reason for choosing, against her mother's wish, to attend an upper secondary school of the Italian track.

Slightly different are claims to competence whereby my interview partners compared their competences for different skills or modalities within *one* language, and not across languages. In this context, I identified two patterns in terms of axes of comparison: writing vs. speaking, and understanding vs. speaking. The former was mentioned by four participants for some of the named languages that they were studying at school, claiming to be more competent writers than speakers (Elena for German and Lukas for Italian and English) or vice versa (Giulia and Sara for German). A comparison of competence in understanding with speaking, in turn, was drawn on more frequently (by ten participants) and always involved claiming a higher competence in understanding than in speaking. The linguistic resources concerned included the local named German dialect, two named Italian dialects, Ladin, Italian, Albanian and Spanish. Apart from Italian, these were all linguistic resources that the participants had come in contact with through their families and/or their friends.

It thus seems that 'writing vs. speaking', as two modalities of language production, was a particularly salient axe of comparison for school languages, whereas 'understanding vs. speaking' as two aspects of oral interaction come to the forefront for named languages and dialects used in non-institutional contexts. This difference might also link to the particular value that is attributed to literacy in educational contexts, whereas a competent dialect speaker need not necessarily be a competent dialect writer. The distinction between named languages and named dialects (Jaffe, 2007) thus also proves salient here.

7.2.2 Claiming (in)competence in relation to past and future selves

Alongside drawing comparisons within their linguistic repertoires, my interview partners also claimed competence for themselves by positioning their present competence either in relation to their competence in the past, or in an imagined future. This kind of claim can thus be looked at in terms of Bamberg's (1997) third level of positioning, whereby narrators position themselves to themselves. Overall, my interview partners constructed both continuities and changes in positioning their present selves to their past or their imagined future selves. While I will discuss one particular kind of continuity that some participants constructed for their 'mother tongue' in greater detail in section 7.3, in this subsection I will address constructions of continuity and change that seemed to serve the interactional function of positioning as competent language learners.

One kind of continuity that some participants constructed consisted in positioning both their past and present selves as competent speakers in relation to the relevant age-related standards. Such positionings not only served the function of positioning themselves as competent speakers, but also as competent language learners. Excerpt 20, in the light of other positionings across Thomas' interview, can be read as a case in point:

Excerpt 20: Thomas: in English, I knew it a bit already in preschool

001 THO in englisch (.) hon i (1.0) schun in dr g (.) in kindergortn
gonz bissl (.) gwisst (1.3) die zohn und so;
in English, I knew a bit already in p, in preschool, the numbers and such

002 THO bis (-) neinaneinzig,
until ninety-nine

Thomas' utterances are occasioned within a sequence in which I ask him about his story with the named languages and dialects he coloured on his portrait. When he gets to English, he positions his past, preschool self as 'already' partly competent (001). The use of 'already' in this context evaluates this past competence as something that is not necessarily to be expected from a child at that age. Particularly interesting is also his self-repair *schun in dr g (.) in kindergortn*, whereby he utters a 'g' that might have become *Grundschule* (primary school) only to correct it to preschool. After all, knowing some English in primary school might not be considered special, as it is part of the curriculum from grade 4 (Meraner, 2011). Thomas also specifies that what he knew were 'the numbers and such' (001), 'until ninety-nine' (002). This kind of precision serves to authenticate his claim to past competence. If Thomas' utterances are read in conjunction with his other positionings as someone who has continuously improved his competence in English, they serve to position him as a competent learner of English. Similar

patterns of positioning occurred in my interviews with Marie, Carolin, and Philipp in relation to English, and with Giulia in relation to German.

Even where participants positioned their past selves as not quite competent, they were able to position as competent language learners by narrating their language competences as improving with the passing of time: well over half of my interview partners positioned their present self as more competent in a named language or dialect than their past self, and just over half of them imagined an improved competence in the future. Excerpt 21 is an example for the former:

Excerpt 21: Eva - what do you think, has anything changed since last year

- 001 INT ähm: was kimp dir fir (-) hot sich seitn leschtn johr (1.2)
mit dir und deine SPRACHEN und (-) wia du die sprachen (-)
erlebsch hot sich do was verändert?
*erm, what do you think, has anything changed since last year, with you and your
languages and how you experience those languages?*
- 002 EVA (1.6) <<p> eigntlich net viel>;
not much really
- 003 INT net viel obr schun eppes,
not much but something?
- 004 EVA jo zum beispiel englisch hon i schon eppes dazuglernt;
yes for example English I did learn something more
- 005 EVA hell isch holt a johr mehr und zem lernt man a epps,
that is a year more and you also learn something then

The excerpt follows Eva's description of the portrait she created for the questionnaire in 2017. I ask her if anything about her linguistic repertoire has changed since she coloured this portrait (001). Her rather long pause before replying, and potentially also her quiet voice, frame her reply as a dispreferred answer. This is also evident from her use of *eigentlich*, which indicates contradicting knowledge elements in an interaction (Schilling, 2007) – in this context, the contradiction seems to concern my assumption that changes would have occurred in Eva's repertoire. Indeed, I take up the restricted character of Eva's negation to ask her once more about what might have changed (003). Thus pressed, she replies that she has *eppes dazuglernt* in English (004), which literally means 'adding' something to what one already knows by learning. In the following utterance, she establishes a relation between her improved competence and the time that has passed and, with the use of the impersonal pronoun *man*, posits this as a general rule (König, 2014).

In this excerpt, Eva constructs it as self-evident that the passing of time, and by implication the time spent on language classes, would lead to learning. While this might be grounded in her lived experience, this pattern of positioning that occurred across interviews also seems to be

infused by an ideology that represents language learning as a process whereby language competence continuously increases. As previously mentioned, the curricula of language subjects are organised around this idea, and it is also often operationalised in the form of CEFR scales as educational aims (Caspari et al., 2008).

It is also interesting to observe which kinds of participants narrated or imagined improving competences for which kinds of linguistic resources. Narrated improvements in competence from past to present concerned mostly the three named languages English (9 participants), German (7 participants) and Italian (6 participants), but for single participants also Ladin, Albanian, Russian, German dialect and Trentino. Imagined improvements in competence from present to future concerned mainly English (5 participants) and German (5 participants), but also Ladin (2 participants) and, for single participants, Spanish and Trentino.

The overall strong incidence of such positionings in relation to English, German and Italian is linked to the fact that they are the three named languages that are school subjects for all participants, which in itself points to the high social value that lies in improving particularly those three kinds of language competences. Thus, while my participants' positionings also point to experienced improvements in competence, they can also be read as manifestations of the social value of these specific competences, or, in Bourdieu's (1991) terms, of their value as linguistic capital.

Not surprisingly, the mentioned positionings were also patterned in relation to the tracks of schooling that my interview partners were attending: those who narrated their Italian as having improved were attending schools from the German or from the Ladin track, whereas those who narrated or imagined improving competences in German were mostly attending schools of the Italian or of the Ladin track. Narrations and imaginations of improving English competences, in turn, cut across all three tracks of schooling. The fact that the participants were more likely to narrate and imagine improved competences for named languages that were not their respective language of instruction points to an underlying ideology that regards competence in the latter as a 'given' (even though school effectively continues to work on this competence), while competences in 'second' or 'foreign' languages are to be acquired, and this process of acquisition is imagined as a continuous improvement of competences.

Interestingly, there seems to be something peculiar about Italian, as none of my interview partners imagined to improve their competence in Italian in the future. One could hypothesise that this means that not only participants from the Italian track of schooling considered their Italian competence as a 'given'. This might be true for some participants, but certainly not for all: in fact, four participants from the German track narrated continuous, affectively

experienced, struggles with learning Italian (see Chapter 8) - oftentimes alongside narrating improvements in competence. Why these participants did not imagine to improve their competence in Italian remains an open question.

7.2.3 Claiming (in)competence in relation to others

Another way of positioning as more or less competent speakers was for participants to place their own competence in relation to that of others. Those others could be of two different kinds: about a quarter of them established such relations between their competence and that of the members of their immediate family, i.e. their parents and/or their siblings, whereas about half of the participants compared their own competence to that of their classmates.

What is particularly interesting about comparisons between the participants' competence and that of their immediate family members is that they nearly always positioned their own competence as superior: Elena underlines that her German is better than that of her brothers, Ermir positions himself as more competent in Ladin than his siblings, Thomas positions his mother as not quite competent in English, Younes states that his family does not speak German at all, and Christian narrates how he sometimes helps his father out with German for work. This pattern might simply be linked to the fact that it is more remarkable to be more competent at something than one's parents or one's older siblings than the other way around.

In the case of comparisons between participants' competences and those of their classmates, there was a balance between participants' positionings as superior or inferior in competence. Some of my interview partners positioned themselves as *more* competent than their classmates in Italian (Ermir, Sara), German (Christian, Francesco), English (Marie), Ladin (Eva) or Croatian (Daniel), whereas others positioned themselves as *less* competent in Italian (Carolin, Marie, Giorgia), German (Ermir, Sofia) or English (Sofia about classmates at a language school, Elena about past classmates). With the exception of Ladin and Croatian, such comparisons were only drawn for the languages taught as second or foreign language at the participants' respective schools, but not for the respective languages of instruction, suggesting once more that competence in the latter might be considered as pre-given. What is particularly interesting about Carolin's, Marie's and Giorgia's positionings as less competent Italian speakers is that they explicitly put their competence in relation to that of classmates that they consider as *zwoasprochig*, i.e. bilingual, in German and Italian. The category of 'bilinguals' that serves as a reference point here, and to which Thomas and Stefanie count themselves, will be further discussed in section 7.3.

Overall, the linguistic resources in question for such self-positionings were all named languages, and again mostly German, Italian, and English, highlighting once more the need to look at the role that German, Italian and English play as valued linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991).

7.2.4 Claiming (in)competence by positioning as other-positioned

Another way of positioning oneself is by presenting other-positionings of the self (Harré & van Langenhove, 1991). My interview partners also claimed competence or incompetence by reporting on how they had been positioned in terms of competence by their classmates or peers, by their parents or by their teachers, and they also narrated institutionalised other-positionings such as test grades or end-of-year grades (which are specific kinds of positionings by teachers), language certificates, and in one interview also selection procedures for extracurricular activities. These kinds of positionings, in turn, fulfilled a range of interactional functions from supporting claims to (in)competence to explaining affective experiences and language practices.

The most frequent of these functions of narrated other-positionings was that of supporting participants' claims to (in)competence. While this function was found across different kinds of other-positionings, it was especially recurring for other-positionings in the institutional context, i.e. by teachers as informal comments or formal test grades. In Excerpt 22, for instance, Fabian first claims an improved competence in Italian in comparison to the year earlier, and narrates an informal comment of his Italian teacher in order to support this claim.

Excerpt 22: Fabian - what, did the classes change something for you?

- 001 INT ähm:: (2.0) was (--) hobn de kurse donn eppes: verÄNDERT
 [(1.0) für] dir?
erm, what, did the classes change something for you then?
- 002 FAB [jo:];
yes
- 003 FAB jo (--) mh (---) i hon mi (.) LEICHter getun;
yes, mh, it was easier for me.
- 004 FAB im endeffekt (-) <<p> jo (-) es mir (-) hon i mir leichter
 getun>;
in the end, yes, to me, I found it easier
- 005 (1.7)
- 006 INT wia hosch sell GMERKT?
how did you notice that?
- 007 FAB <<len> jo sogmr eher> also es hot (--) man hots mehr am
 ONfong vom schuljohr gsegn,

well let's rather say, well it, you could see it more at the beginning of the school year

008 FAB u:nd (--) jo: dass holt (1.5) jo OLLgemein holt dass i mi in italienisch leichter (3.0) geton hon-

and yes, that I just, that I just generally, that Italian was easier for me

009 FAB <<len> und a (--) die <<p> profess> (---) professorin hot gsog> (-) und jo (---) dass <<p> es so> (1.2) dass sie MERKT dass i irgendwia geübt <<p> hon und so>;

and also the teach, teacher said, and yes, that it, that she is noticing that I kind of practiced and so...

In line 001, I ask Fabian if the additional Italian classes he had taken over summer had changed anything for him. His reply is affirmative, and he goes on to say what the classes changed: he now finds Italian ‘easier’. After a longer pause (005), I ask Fabian to elaborate on the ways in which he noticed this relative ease. Fabian states that the improvement was more noticeable at the beginning of the school year (007), possibly implying that it faded away later on. The pauses and repairs in lines 007-08, the use of the impersonal pronoun *man*, as well as a reiteration of the already mentioned increased ease in Italian (008), might point to difficulties that Fabian has in explaining exactly how he noticed Italian had become easier for him. This, in turn, troubles his entire claim to an improved competence. Fabian’s introduction of his teacher’s comment thus serves to support this claim and neutralise this trouble – and indeed, I subsequently move on to ask a different question.

The institutional mission of a teacher includes assessing language skills, which renders Fabian’s teacher’s comment authoritative. In our interview, I offer Fabian an authoritative stance by asking him about his ‘noticing’ of his improved competence, but he does not quite take this stance up and resorts to his teacher’s authority. From a structural perspective, this is particularly evident in the repetition of the verb *merken* (i.e. ‘notice’), which also carries the stress of the intonational phrases represented in line 006 and line 009: while I ask for Fabian’s own ‘noticing’, he ultimately concludes his reply with his teacher’s ‘noticing’.

The interactional function of narrated other-positionings to support claims to competence occurred in a number of interviews, and they not only concerned teacher’s assessments but also comments by parents or peers. For instance, in the context of narrating her choice of her future school, Sara claims the position of a competent language learner, and supports this claim by presenting her parents’ agreement with this assertion. Similarly, Lukas claims a position of low competence in Italian as he identifies his ‘mixing’ Italian with Ladin as problematic, narrating how both his teacher and his peers make sure to let him know when he ‘mixes’ (see section 7.4.2 for a detailed discussion).

In a number of cases, other-positionings in terms of competence also served to explain participants' language practices. For instance, Aria explains that she speaks Sicilian with most of her family but Italian with her mother, because the latter considers it important that she learns Italian well. While this is again indicative of a broader discourse of differing values of different kinds of competences (Bourdieu, 1991), it also means that Aria rationalises the language practices within her family as a consequence of her mother positioning her as not quite competent enough in Italian. Ermir, in turn, presents his low grades in Ladin as one of the motivating factors behind his decision to start speaking Ladin to his peers in upper secondary school. Thus, institutionalised other-positionings of him as an incompetent speaker of Ladin seem to have guided his language practices, and in fact, he narrates this strategy as successful in that he now reliably passes his Ladin classes.

In a number of cases, participants also narrate other-positionings in the context of explaining affective stances and experiences. For instance, Marie is frustrated when the Italian-speaking peers from their partner school treat her as if she could not understand Italian, or Elena grapples with differing other-positionings in terms of German competence by her mother, her teacher and her school grades, also in comparison to those of her brothers, to attempt to explain her affective stance to German. These ways in which other-positionings in terms of competence are experienced affectively will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

An interesting observation with respect to narrated other-positionings by parents is that these concerned almost exclusively mothers (only in one case they concerned both father and mother, and never only fathers). Moreover, there was a tendency for those mothers to judge their respective child's language competences as inadequate. This includes Fabian's narration of his mother sending him to Italian classes, or Stefanie's mother finding her daughter's *Hochdeutsch* wanting, or Sara's mother preferring that she chose a school of the German track to improve her German. Only Francesco narrates how his mother always underlines that he was already a competent speaker of Italian as a small child, and Sara notes that her parents think that she is generally gifted for language learning. From these other-positionings, we can already tell how parents invest in their children's language competences. Moreover, it seems like these investments are still mostly managed by the mother, as Bourdieu (1991) had observed some decades ago.

What is particularly interesting across all narrated other-positionings is the strong incidence of the two named languages German and Italian. In fact, only four other-positionings concerned other named languages or dialects, including Ladin in the above-mentioned example, as well as English for Giada, French for Alessio, and Italian dialect for Thomas. All other narrated

other-positionings, from comments by parents, peers or teachers to grades and language certificates, concerned German and Italian.

In this respect, narrated other-positionings differed from the other ways of claiming (in)competence that I have investigated in this section: when participants claimed (in)competence by drawing on comparisons within their repertoire (7.2.1), between their present and past selves (7.2.2), and between themselves and others (7.2.3), competence in English seemed to be just as relevant as competence in German and Italian. When it came to other-positionings, however, English was no longer mentioned. This might point to the particular relevance that Italian and German have as linguistic capital on the local linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991).

7.3 Positioning as (near-)native speakers

In this section, I will turn to an examination of the ways in which my interview partners drew on the figure of the native speaker in order to position themselves as competent. While the interrelated concepts of the *native speaker* and the *mother tongue* have a long history of being problematised in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics (e.g. Bonfiglio, 2010; Horner & Weber, 2018; Knappik, 2016; Rampton, 1990), the terms and their underlying ideologies continue to circulate, and were drawn upon as interactional resources for participants' positionings in my study. One of the implications inherent in these terms seems to be a self-evident competence that they attribute to the respective speaker: by calling a language one's mother tongue, one already implies one's positioning not only as a competent, but also as a legitimate and authoritative speaker of this language, as the dominant ideology considers the notion of the *native speaker* as "an objective description of someone possessing natural authority in language" (Bonfiglio, 2010:1). The native speaker can thus be considered as an ideological figure.

In this section, I will investigate the ways in which my interview partners positioned themselves in terms of competence by drawing on the ideological figure of the native speaker. I will delineate how they self-evidently positioned as competent speakers by positioning as native speakers (7.3.1) and how they negotiated their competence where a native speaker status was not so self-evidently available (7.3.2). I will also argue that some participants positioned themselves in relation to the bilingual native speaker, who I regard as a similar ideological figure (7.3.3). Finally, I will illustrate that the native speaker figure was also salient for positionings as highly competent speakers of a language the participants were learning (7.3.4).

7.3.1 Claiming self-evident competences

Excerpt 23 is an example for an interview partner claiming self-evident competences as a native speaker. It was occasioned within a sequence in which I had asked Lukas about what the linguistic resources on his portrait meant to him. He first took a positive affective stance to all four languages he coloured (Ladin, German, Italian and English) before addressing his competences for all four individually, beginning with Ladin:

Excerpt 23: Lukas - and yes with Ladin and, yes with Ladin it's really easy

001 LUK und: (---) ja (-) bei ladinisch und (---) ja bei ladinisch
geht es <<p> ja> (1.3) ja sehr leicht weil ichs ja (--) es ist
ja die muttersprache,
*and, yes, with Ladin and, yes with Ladin it comes really easy because I, it is the mother
tongue after all*

Lukas positions himself as a competent speaker of Ladin by stating that this language ‘comes very easy’ to him, and he causally links this positioning to Ladin being his *Muttersprache*. What is particularly striking about this excerpt is the recurrence of the modal particle *ja*, usually indicating shared knowledge (Deppermann, 2015). In this excerpt, two pieces of information are thus treated as shared knowledge: the fact that Lukas is a native speaker of Ladin, which I could already have inferred from previous talk in our interview, as well as the more general idea that speaking a language as a mother tongue is tied to a considerable degree of ease at using this language. Lukas’ competence in Ladin is thus treated as self-evidently resulting from it being his mother tongue.

In half of the interviews I conducted, my interview partners referred to one or two specific named languages as their *Muttersprache(n)*, *madrelingua/e*, or mother tongue(s). Lukas employs the term in an argumentative sequence to account for his competence in Ladin, and so does Veronika with respect to Ladin and German. In other interviews, the mother tongue was associated more indirectly with competence: interview partners linked it to the idea of thinking in this language (Caterina for Italian), or not having to think about it when speaking this language (Alessio and Francesco for Italian). For other participants still, competence was not explicitly addressed, and they linked what they had identified as their mother tongue to language practices: for Christian, Italian is the language he speaks the most, for Giulia, Italian is what she speaks always, for Sara, Ladin is what she has been speaking since she was little and still speaks a lot, and for Younes, Arabic is what he has been speaking since he was little, and what he projects to continue speaking throughout his life. It thus becomes clear that most of my participants did not link their positionings as native speakers as explicitly to positionings

as competent speakers as Lukas did. However, the powerful ideological association means that they did not need to: positioning as a native speaker sufficed to position themselves as competent speakers.

Positionings in relation to the term *Muttersprache* have also been investigated in recent language biographical studies in German-speaking contexts, where researchers identified similar patterns of positioning. König (2016) found that the term was employed in argumentative sequences by her German-Turkish interview partners to justify claims to a self-evident competence. The term *Muttersprache* thus served a similar interactional function to the one it served for Lukas and Veronika. Melo-Pfeifer (2019) found that the university students from whom she had collected written language biographies often linked their identified mother tongue to continuity along their life trajectory. They described it as the first language they learned and/or linked it to their place of birth, or the place where they grew up – which is similar to the way in which Sara and Younes positioned themselves to what they called their mother tongue.

Thoma (2018), in turn, found that her interview partners employed a number of argumentative strategies to position as competent and legitimate speakers of German: they underlined their eloquence, their adherence to standard norms, their thinking in this language, an experience of spontaneity and natural ease in using it, as well as their frequent use of German. My participants mentioned some of the same elements when they identified a language as their mother tongue, such as thinking in the respective language (Caterina), spontaneous, natural language use (Francesco and Alessio), and frequent language use (Giulia, Christian, Sara).

The positionings investigated by Thoma were slightly different, however, as her interview partners were non-dominantly positioned students of German at Austrian universities. *Non-dominantly positioned*, in this context, refers to students who are ascribed the socially salient category of a *Migrationshintergrund*, which subsumes the categories of first, second or even third generation immigrants, and is linked to these students often being ascribed a non-native status in German. Thoma argues that the argumentative strategies she identified served the function of placing her interview partners in the vicinity of the ideological figure of the native speaker without explicitly having to claim native speaker status. The reason for which most of them did not claim such a status lies in other implications of the ideological figure of the native speaker, to which I will turn in the next section.

7.3.2 Negotiating the native speaker

Several authors have pointed out that the terms *native speaker* and *mother tongue* not only imply competence, but also inheritance (Leung et al., 1997; Rampton, 1990) or even ethnicity and nationality (Bonfiglio, 2010; Holliday, 2006; Knappik, 2016). Subjects are ascribed the status of a native speaker, and can claim it without trouble, if inheritance, ethnicity, nationality and competence align. Consequently, they can consciously or unwittingly enjoy the privilege of being attributed competence and linguistic authority. However, positionings as native speakers become troubled or even impossible when these elements do not align. The status of the native speaker thus becomes visible as a border for the subjects concerned, and they have to find other ways of legitimating themselves as speakers (Knappik, 2016; Thoma, 2018).

The positionings discussed in the previous section involved positionings as native speakers of Italian, Ladin, German and Arabic. These positionings were not troubled like those of Thoma's (2018) interview partners, because the respective interview partners' inheritance and ethnolinguistic positioning could be made to align. However, I did identify argumentative strategies of placing oneself in the vicinity of the native speaker in Younes' and Ermir's interview – while they more or less explicitly positioned as native speakers of their 'inherited' languages Arabic and Albanian, they employed such strategies to position as competent speakers of Italian. Younes, who is attending a lower secondary school of the German track, and whose family has immigrated to South Tyrol from a country in the Maghreb region, chose to conduct our interview in Italian and underlined that he thinks more in Italian than in Arabic or German. While he does assign mother tongue status to Arabic during our interview, he thus also positions as a legitimate and competent speaker of Italian. Ermir, in turn, immigrated to South Tyrol at the age of four, and Excerpt 24 shows him negotiating the ideological figure of the native speaker for Albanian and Italian.

Previously to this excerpt, Ermir had coloured Albanian into his legs, and metaphorically identified it as his 'root' language, and also as the one he speaks at home and in which he has spent the first years of his life. The figure of the native speaker was thus discursively present even though Ermir neither explicitly categorised himself as a native speaker of Albanian, nor did he categorise the language as his mother tongue.

Excerpt 24: Ermir - And Italian is the language I think I can use best.

- 001 ERM E l'italiano (1.0) è la lingua che penso °h (1.0) io sappia
 usare mEglio,
 and Italian is the language I think I can use best.
- 002 ERM s: sia nel parlato sia nello scritto,
 both in speaking and in writing

003 ERM (2.0) ehm: (1.0) lo parlo mEglio dell'albanEse-
erm, I speak it better than Albanian

004 ERM perché anche l'ho studiato a scuola non ho mai studiato °h
 (1.0) albanese,
because I also studied it at school; I never studied Albanian,

005 ERM (---) e (1.0) ne mai scritto ma so scriverlo e parlarlo;
and neither did I ever write it, but I can write it and speak it,

006 ERM (1.0) ho imparato col tempo,
I learned with time

007 ERM (2.0) ma: so comunque usare meglio l'italiano.
but I can still use Italian better.

008 ERM adesso non è che so le (--) le reghi (-) le regole di
 <<laughing> grammatica> albanesi (-) ma so che così è giusto
 ma non so spiegare il perché,
*now it's not like I know the, the ru, the Grammar rules in Albanian but I know that
 something is correct but I can't explain why*

009 ERM ((quietly colours portrait))

010 ERM e l'italiano lo (--) lo so anche s:pieGare s:: so
 destreggiarmi molto di più,
and with Italian I can also explain it, I can manage much better

In line 001, Ermir transitions from talking about Albanian to talking about Italian, and claims the position of a competent speaker by placing his competence in Italian in relation to other languages in his repertoire: Italian is what he knows best. He supports this claim by underlining that this holds true both for spoken and written modalities (002). Ermir then states that he speaks Italian better than Albanian (003), and argumentatively supports this by noting that he has studied Italian at school, but not Albanian (004), and he has also never written it (005). This positioning could point to a particularly low competence in Albanian, but Ermir immediately adjusts his positioning by claiming to be able to competently write and speak Albanian (005-6). He then shifts his focus back to Italian, which, despite his competence in Albanian, he says he knows better (007). Ermir launches into another argumentative sequence, stating that in Albanian, he only knows instinctively what is correct, but is not able to explain why, since he does not know any grammar rules (008), but with Italian he does. He ends by restating and upgrading his initial claim to competence in Italian in comparison with Albanian: not only can he manage 'better' in Italian, but 'much better' (009).

The excerpt shows how much argumentative work Ermir needs to do to position as a competent, legitimate and authoritative speaker, given that the status of a native speaker is troubled or not available in this case. He draws on comparisons within his repertoire, both to other languages and across modalities, and on claims to normative correctness and to metalinguistic knowledge in order to position as highly competent in Italian. Throughout the

sequence, this competence is continuously set in relation to Albanian, the more obvious candidate for native speaker status, whereas the other languages that Ermir more or less competently speaks (Ladin, German, and English) are not mentioned.

The concept of the *native speaker* is thus ideologically tied up both with ideas of competence, legitimacy and authority, but also with particular ideas of ethnicity and nationality. Interestingly, my interview partners only explicitly positioned as native speakers by calling a specific named language their *Muttersprache/madrelingua* (i.e. mother tongue), but not by employing the German and Italian equivalents of the term *native speaker* (i.e. *Muttersprachler/madrelingua*). Participants did however use the latter terms to refer to others, whereby these terms might also imply competence, but their primary function in those cases was to position others in ethnolinguistic terms.

What is important for the discussion of competence-related aspects of the figure of the native speaker, however, is its ideological link to a (national) standard language (Bonfiglio, 2010; Kramsch, 1997). Kramsch (1997:363) describes the native speaker as “an imaginary construct – a canonically literate monolingual middle-class member of a largely fictional national community whose citizens share a belief in a common history and a common destiny”. She thus ironically but accurately refers to the fact that the figure of the native speaker is associated with monolingualism, with a specific nationality, and with a specific position in social structure, which also comes with a high degree of education and with literacy in the standard language. This also links to Bonfiglio’s (2010) argument, according to which being a native speaker can also be a matter of degree: one can be ‘more’ or ‘less’ native depending on one’s position in social structure.

These observations are relevant to my study in that they might explain why some interview partners did and others did not refer to specific named languages or dialects as their mother tongues. In terms of such explicit mentions, seven interview partners identified Italian as their mother tongue (Alessio, Aria, Caterina, Christian, Elena, Francesco, Giulia), two Ladin (Sara and Lukas), one German (Fabian), one Arabic (Younes) and one both Ladin and German (Veronika) as mother tongues. Thus, the interview partners that did identify a mother tongue all identified a named standard language as such. In some cases, this considerably simplifies their actual language practices: for instance, both Aria and Alessio call Italian their mother tongue, even though Aria states that she mostly speaks Sicilian at home, and Alessio states that for most of his life he spoke a Southern Italian dialect before moving to South Tyrol three years prior to our interview. This kind of linguistic variation does not trouble their positionings as native speakers, as such patterns are quite common in the Italian context, but their cases

underline how what gets assigned mother tongue status more likely is the standard language than nonstandard varieties or named dialects (Dal Negro, 2011).

Moreover, the strikingly low incidence of German in the list of mother tongues identified across my interviews might also find its explanation in the association between mother tongue and standard. In fact, many interview partners used argumentative sequences commonly associated with native speaker status to refer to *Deutsch Dialekt*, but not to German as a named standard language. Carolin says she thinks in *Deutsch Dialekt*, and it comes most natural to her, for Philipp it is what he always speaks, and Marie states that she has grown up with it and projects continuing to use it. With regard to Standard German, however, they take up different positions: they link it mostly to school life, are affectively detached from it (see Chapter 8), and Philipp even narrates instances where he struggled with the standard, thus troubling his positioning in terms of competence. Thus, these three interview partners clearly do not position Standard German as a mother tongue. If anything, it is *Deutsch Dialekt* that is positioned as such, but only ever implicitly – possibly because an explicit positioning would be troubled by the ideological link between the mother tongue and the standard.

7.3.3 The monolingually bilingual native speaker

Another feature of Kramersch's (1997) native speaker is an assumption of monolingualism. This aspect has also been pointed out by other authors (Dal Negro, 2011; Horner & Weber, 2018; Rampton, 1990), but this assumption does not seem to hold for all cases: for instance, König (2016) points to the possibility for German-Turkish people to claim both languages as native languages, Heller (2006) refers to claims to double authenticity of children of an English-speaking and a French-speaking parent in Ontario and Dal Negro (2011) notes the legitimacy and prestige that German-Italian bilinguals enjoy in the South Tyrolean context.

Dal Negro's observation is certainly in line with what I have found across my interviews, and becomes most apparent in Thomas' positioning in Excerpt 25.

Excerpt 25: Thomas - were there any other things in your life that were important for, for these languages?

- 001 INT ähm (---) SEIN (-) sunscht no sochn in dein lebn gwesn (-) dei
(.) wichtig worn für (1.0) für dei sprochn?
erm, were there any other things in your life that were important for, for these languages?
- 002 THO (2.8) hm.
- 003 INT <<len> oder intressant ode:r LUschtig ode:r>,
or interesting or funny or...
- 004 THO (5.4) ah wenn i kloan wor bin i zwei (--) sprochig aufgwochn,
ah when I was little I grew up bilingual
- 005 THO mein papi italienisch (.) meine mama deitsch,

my dad Italian, my mom German

006 THO (2.0) <<p> und sell hot man nor holt gsegn in dr grunderschual
(--) dass i guat wor>;
and you could just see that then in primary school, that I was good

My question in line 001 comes towards the end of the interview. Referring to the portrait, I ask Thomas if anything else happened in his life that was important for what he has coloured on the portrait. When he hesitates (002), I provide two alternative adjectives to ‘important’ and, by linking them with ‘or’ and ending the list with another ‘or’, I signal that Thomas can narrate anything that might potentially be of relevance. After a longer pause, Thomas self-selects one element as particularly relevant: he narrates that he grew up bilingual (004), specifying in elliptical manner that he grew up with Italian on his father’s and German on his mother’s side (005). Aside from referring to his parents’ language practices, Thomas might also be positioning his parents in ethnolinguistic terms with this utterance. In line 006, Thomas notes that his having grown up bilingually was visible later in primary school, in that he was ‘good’. It is not clear whether he is positioning his past self as a good student generally, or specifically in the subjects German and Italian. However, he clearly constructs this being ‘good’ as a natural consequence of his bilingual upbringing.

In the excerpt above, Thomas not only positions as a bilingual native speaker, but also claims the self-evident competence that this status entails not for one but for two languages. He is able to do so by invoking his parents, each of whom represents one language, and potentially also one ethnolinguistic group. Thus, Thomas’ inheritance legitimises his double competence, and, as Dal Negro (2011) noted, his kind of bilingualism is not only legitimate but even prestigious in the South Tyrolean context.

While it may seem that Thomas’ case illustrates that the native speaker might not be ideologically imagined as monolingual after all, this is not entirely the case. In fact, Thomas’ bilingualism is similar to the kind of ‘parallel monolingualisms’ that Heller (2006) has identified as particularly valuable in the (Franco-)Ontarian context, or that Schnitzer (2017) has documented in the context of a German-French bilingual school in Switzerland. Thomas has acquired two monolingualisms from his parents, and he can function just like a monolingual native speaker in each of them. The monolingual ideology underlying the concept of the native speaker thus remains constant to some degree in the seemingly paradox ideological figure of the monolingually bilingual native speaker.

The existence of such an ideological figure is particularly apparent when considering deviant cases. Two of my interview partners represented such cases in relation to German-Italian bilingualism. In our interview, they interactionally negotiated the fact that they do not correspond to a monolingual-bilingual native speaker figure despite their family background potentially suggesting they would. Christian is one of these two participants, and Excerpt 26 represents the entirety of his initial language portrait narration.

Excerpt 26: Christian - So I, what I speak, with my parents I speak more Italian

- 001 CHR allora IO (quello che io) io parlo ta (.) più (.) parlo con i miei genitori (.) italiano;
So I, what I, I speak mu, most, with my parents I speak Italian
- 002 CHR e anche con gli amici (-) solamente con i miei zii e nonni parlo tedesco; (--)
and also with friends; only with my aunts and uncles and grandparents I speak German
- 003 CHR e quindi ho fat ho colorato di più il verde (--) per dire che nella mia vita parlo più italiano che il tedesco.
and so I coloured more green to say that in my life I speak more Italian than German
- 004 CHR e ho messo meno tedesco perché i miei nonni i miei nonni le vedo poche volte come i miei zii,
I put less German because I rarely see my grandparents or my aunts and uncles
- 005 CHR (-- e quindi parlo poche volte tedesco.
so I rarely speak German
- 006 INT mhm?
- 007 CHR a parte adesso in classe <<dim> il tedesco (comunque) cioè>.
apart from now in class. anyway,
- 008 INT mhm (-) mhm,
- 009 CHR <<pp> basta>.
that's it.

In line 001, Christian states that he speaks ‘more’ Italian with his parents, already implying that he also speaks something else with them. His utterance also contains a self-repair after *ta*, potentially *tanto* (a lot), indicating that Christian is carefully weighing in which relation to one another he positions the two languages on his portrait. He goes on to state that he also speaks Italian with friends, and that ‘only’ with his aunts and uncles and his grandparents he speaks German. This specification thus minimises his use of German, a line of argument that continues in the following utterances: Christian explicitly notes that he designed his portrait so as to reflect that he speaks more Italian than German (003); he causally links the comparatively small amount of German he coloured to seeing his grandparents and aunts and uncles rarely, which results in him speaking German rarely (004-5). My *mhm* with its rising intonation invites Christian to continue (006). He adds that he also speaks German at school, but his use of ‘apart from’, his shoulder shrug accompanying the utterance, and his speaking in a quieter voice

characterise this addition as not quite noteworthy (007). While my two backchannelling *mhms* once more invite Christian to continue, his *basta* frames his narration as complete (009).

In the excerpt above, Christian thus carefully positions Italian as occupying a greater role for his language practices than German does. The fact that he speaks some German with his extended family places him in the vicinity of the figure of the German-Italian bilingual, but he clearly works against positioning as such. While his first utterance suggests that he also speaks something other than Italian with his parents on occasion, he does not expand on this. Only later does Christian clarify that he also speaks German with his mother, but immediately minimises the amount of German they speak. In doing so, he negotiates the fact that he does not conform to the ideological figure of the monolingually bilingual native speaker.

Similar positioning moves of distancing from the bilingual native speaker figure occurred in Giorgia's interview, who positions German as the language she uses almost always, and only halfway through the interview positions her father as ethnolinguistically Italian. Towards the end of the interview, she then also explicitly expresses her frustration at not having been raised bilingually, thus invoking this very figure. Stefanie, in turn, clearly positions as bilingual both in terms of competence and in terms of her ethnolinguistic positioning, which I will discuss in Chapter 8. These positionings show that by virtue of their family background, particular kinds of subjects also need to position themselves to the bilingual counterpart of the monolingual native speaker.

7.3.4 Positioning as near-native speakers

While Christian discursively worked towards distancing himself from a bilingual native speaker figure, I have already discussed how interview partners like Ermir worked towards placing themselves in the vicinity of the competent native speaker figure. Some interview partners also placed themselves in the vicinity of this figure in a slightly different manner: they drew upon this figure to position themselves as language learners who had reached a high degree of competence in a particular named language.

An example of this is to be found in Francesco's interview as we discuss the language portrait he had coloured a year previous to the interview. Before Excerpt 27 sets in, Francesco interpreted the similar size of the three larger splotches of colour on this portrait as indicating that he might have considered the three languages they represent (Italian, German and English) 'the same'.

Excerpt 27: Francesco - and the parts of the body, they also changed a bit right?

- 001 INT qui:ndi diresti che (---) perché la tua teoria era che questi
TRE [li hai consi]derati [uguali]>-
so would you say that, because your theory was that you considered these three the same
- 002 FRA [sì.]
yes
- 003 FRA [s:i,]
yes
- 004 FRA comunque di importanza uguali comunque so praticamente (1.0)
parlare (--) <<p> praticamente>.
in any case of the same importance, anyway I can practically, speak them, practically
- 005 INT quindi: mh quello diresti che: (-) che è VERO,
so that you'd say is true
- 006 FRA mhm,
- 007 INT che (-) che consideri:-
that you consider...
- 008 FRA sì praticamente parlare come (-) QUASI le mie madrelingue.
yes, practically speaking like almost my mother languages

I begin my utterance in line 001 as a question ('so would you say that'), but then self-repair and recontextualise Francesco's previous statement about probably having considered the three languages English, Italian and German the same, accompanying the deictic 'these three' with pointing gestures to the portrait. Francesco's two overlapping 'yes' reaffirm this statement, and he then adds an elaboration, listing two ways in which he considers them the same: they are of the same importance, and he can speak all three of them. My *quindi* frames my next utterance, in which I suggest that Francesco would confirm his previous interpretation, as a deduction of what he has just said (005). Indeed, Francesco confirms with *mhm* and an accompanying nod (006), and only then I begin to reformulate what exactly it is that Francesco would confirm (007). He orients to this reformulation as a request for clarification, and states that he speaks the three languages almost like his native languages (008). With his choice of the plural, he does not liken his competence in two of the languages to one native language, but puts all three on equal footing as coming close to mother tongue competence.

The excerpt above is probably the most explicit positioning as a near-native speaker, but similar kinds of positionings occurred in other interviews. For instance, Marie positioned herself as sometimes thinking in English, consequently drawing on one of the argumentative strategies I have discussed in the previous sections to position herself as highly competent. Elena and Giulia, on the other hand, draw on the theme of natural and spontaneously correct speech to project the way in which they would like to be able to speak German in the future, thus placing their imagined future selves in the vicinity of the native speaker figure.

The mentioned positionings show how the strong ideological association between the concept of the mother tongue and language competence can also be mobilised to position oneself as a highly competent speaker in a language without aligning inheritance or ethnolinguistic positioning. This is not surprising, considering that the native speaker has long been the target for language learning (Kramsch, 2012). Early scholarly deconstructions of this figure, like those of Rampton (1990) or Kramsch (1997), have certainly made their mark and succeeded in problematising this practice. The CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001:36) already outspokenly rejects an interpretation of the C2 Level as indicating native or near-native speaker competence, underlining that this level instead stands for “the degree of precision, appropriateness and ease with the language which typifies the speech of those who have been highly successful learners”. ‘Native speakers’ nonetheless were recurring figures in the CEFR, as numerous descriptors referred to them as potential interlocutors of the learner, who may or may not accommodate him or her. However, the recently published modified version of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018:50) abolishes even those references with the justification that the “term [native speaker] has become controversial since the CEFR was published”.

It thus seems that a discursive shift has taken place around the native speaker figure, and it is no longer upheld as the target of language learning and teaching, neither in scholarly literature (Kramsch, 2012) nor in crucial policy documents such as the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2018). However, the naturalised ideological association of the native speaker with competence, legitimacy and authority is still very much present in my data. It is drawn upon as an interactional resource by my interview partners to self-evidently position as competent, it is negotiated if native speaker status is not so self-evidently available, it can take the form of a double monolingual native speaker, and it was drawn upon to position oneself as a highly competent speaker of a language one is learning. In Knappnik’s (2016) terms, it thus seems that subjects cannot *not* position themselves to the figure of the native speaker.

7.4 Ideologies of (in)competence

The previous section has already touched on ideologies of competence in presenting the native speaker as an ideological figure that is automatically attributed competence and authority. As outlined in the introduction to this chapter, research in sociolinguistics has increasingly pointed out that language competence itself can and ought to be considered a social and ideological construct (e.g. Heller, 2006; Jaffe, 2013; McNamara, 2012; Park, 2011). In this section, I will depart from this insight and investigate the kinds of ideologies of competence and incompetence that underlie my interview partners’ positionings as more or less competent

In line 001, Aria asks me what we had been talking about previously, signalling that she considers her reflections to have gone off track. I orient to her question and begin to formulate that we had been talking about changes that had occurred in the previous year (002). Before I can say what these changes could be about, Aria overlaps with my talk and signals that she has found the thread of the conversation. She reiterates what she had previously told me: in the time between the previous and the current language portrait, Aria took a B1 exam in German, took classes in order to pass this exam, and consequently improved in German (003). Her *questo* at the end of the next utterance treats this summary of what we had been talking about as completed (004), whereas her *poi* in the next utterance treats what follows as new information: at school, by implication during German lessons, they ‘did a lot of grammar’ (005), and now her sentences are ‘more or less correct’ (006). The correctness of her sentences is thus marked as something that distinguishes her present self from her past self from a year ago, and, through the use of *allora* (Mascherpa, 2016), this correctness is constructed as a consequence of grammar lessons at school. Aria thus directly relates the correctness of her sentences, and thus their conformity to normative standards, to ‘grammar’.

Such references to ‘grammar’ are not only employed by participants who position themselves as quite competent, like Aria does here, but also by participants who position themselves as insufficiently competent. Not surprisingly, the languages concerned are always named standard languages that the participants were also taking as subjects at school. Stefanie, Giada and Giulia position themselves as struggling with the grammar of Standard German, Veronika and Lukas evaluate Italian grammar as difficult, Younes and Giada come to the same conclusion for English grammar, and Fabian for Russian. In turn, Thomas mentions ‘grammar’ as one of the aspects where it was noticeable that he was good at German and Italian in primary school, and Francesco underlines that he acquired specific aspects of German grammar early, and invests time in studying English and German grammar during private tuition. ‘Grammar’ thus emerges as an aspect of language that several interview partners construct as salient, and that seems to derive its salience from the institutional context of the school.

Some participants, in turn, point to even more specific aspects of language where they (or, in one case, others) supposedly ‘go wrong’ and fail to respect normative standards. Aspects of Standard German figure on top of that list: interview partners mentioned ‘articles’ (Giada, Elena, Stefanie and Lukas), ‘cases’ (Giulia and Stefanie) and ‘verb position’ (Giulia and Elena) as aspects they struggle with, sometimes expressing frustration at just not being able to get it ‘right’. Veronika observes something similar with respect to her use of ‘tenses’ in Italian, and Ermir complains about his peers’ faulty use of the Italian verb mode *congiuntivo*. The

underlying notion thereby is that there are ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ uses of articles, cases, verb positions and tense, and in order to position as competent, one’s speech or writing needs to conform to those ‘right’ uses.

Depending on the specific aspects one looks at, the normalised assumption of such ‘rights’ and ‘wrongs’ can be more or less easily deconstructed. For instance, while most nouns in German do have one ‘right’ and two ‘wrong’ articles according to their respective gender (male, female, neuter), a number of nouns can actually be used with two different genders and consequently with two different articles (e.g. *der* vs. *das Ketchup*, *der* vs. *das Teller*, *der* vs. *das Virus*). Some of these variations, such as the gender and article of *Teller* (i.e. ‘plate’), can be explained as regionally differing standards, and consequently norms, for German. Such differing standards are often defined in national terms, e.g. ‘the’ standard applied in Germany or Austria, analogous to ‘the’ standard English applied in the UK or in the United States – and the mere existence of such differing standards already exposes them as social constructions and weakens claims to universal ‘rights’ and ‘wrongs’ (Milroy & Milroy, 2012).

However, as Heller (2006) notes, appeals to universality in terms of the ‘quality’ of language serve to conceal the role that prescriptive norms play for the reproduction of social relations of power. The fact that prescriptive norms do play such a role comes out most strikingly in an interview sequence during which Ermir and I talk about judgements based on language. This sequence emerged after we had steered off topic, and Ermir had told me how he generally dislikes being judged, but does enjoy judging others in contexts such as playing beach volley. Excerpt 29 sets in when I aim to steer our conversation back to the topic and ask Ermir about ‘judging about language’.

Excerpt 29: Ermir - do you also judge based on language?

- 001 INT giudichi (-) anche per la LINGua?
do you also judge based on language?
- 002 ERM (1.5) no.
no.
- 003 INT (1.5) mai successo?
never happened?
- 004 ERM (1.0) n:o;
no.
- 005 INT (-) che ti sei accorto che qualcuno faceva:: errori e:: stavi giudicando?
that you realised that somebody made mistakes and you were judging them?
- 006 ERM (---) l'Italiano;
for Italian.
- 007 INT (-) ah sì?
ah yes?

- 008 ERM sì se <<:-)> sbagliano per esempio i congiuntivi (.) o queste cose>;
yes, if for example they use the congiuntivi wrong, or these things
- 009 ERM (--) poi QUA (--) nella val X (1.5) o anche quando (--) si parla tedesco (--) si: (1.5) si sbaglia tAnto;
then here, in the X valley, or also when German is spoken, people make a lot of mistakes
- 010 ERM (---) sbagliano tantISSimo l'italiano;
they make very many mistakes in Italian
- 011 ERM (---) e e io li correggo molto spesso,
and and I really correct them very often
- 012 ERM (-) e magari dicono io avREI e io li ripeto in sottofondo io (--) se io avESSi;
and maybe they say io avrei, and I repeat in the background, io, se io avessi
- 013 ERM (---) loro <<dim> eh sì sì è la stessa cosa> ((laughs)) cioè cOsa (.) mi cambia;
they: yeah yeah it's the same thing, like, what does it change!

After a longer reflection pause, Ermir initially replies in the negative (002) to my initial question of whether, aside from judging unsuccessful beach volley moves, he also makes judgements about other people's language (001). However, I insist on the matter, asking him first whether that really never happened (003) and, when he answers in the negative again (004), reformulating an aspect of what I meant by 'judging about language' (005). The notion of normativity is thus rendered explicit by my reference not only to judgements, but also by the introduction of the concept of someone 'making mistakes'. Ermir's reply turns out different this time: he notes that in fact, he does judge people's Italian (006). My *ah sí*, uttered with rising intonation, can be interpreted as signalling surprise in the light of his previous negative responses (007).

Ermir orients to my response as a request for affirmation and elaboration. He provides an example of when he judges people: when they make mistakes about the *congiuntivi* and 'those things' (008). What he means by the latter remains rather vague, but it seems that mistakes linked to the Italian verb mode of the *congiuntivo* represent a prime example for the kinds of mistakes people make¹⁶. Interestingly, Ermir shifts to the third person plural for this utterance: it is not yet clear whom he is referring to, but it is no longer the 'somebody' I introduced in line 005, but a 'they'. Who 'they' are is clarified in the following utterance when Ermir notes that people 'here', in the Ladin valley where he has lived since coming to South Tyrol at age four, make a lot of mistakes also in German, aside from the previously mentioned mistakes in

¹⁶ The *congiuntivo* is a subjunctive mode, but is used more widely than the English subjunctive. Its basic functions are to express subjectivity, irreality, hypotheticalness.

Italian (009).¹⁷ With his use of the stressed superlative *tantissimo*, Ermir goes on to reiterate and augment his assessment that ‘they’ make mistakes in Italian (010) to finally position himself as correcting ‘them’ (011).

In lines 012-13, Ermir scenically enacts one particular interaction of this sort as a typified small story (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008). He first juxtaposes ‘their’ [*se*] *io avrei* with his correction *se io avessi*, which he would supposedly utter in the background in such an interaction. While doing so, he carefully places utterance stress on the two syllables that differentiate the verb mode *condizionale* (*se io avrei*) from *congiuntivo* (*se io avessi*). Ermir goes on to animate his hypothetical interactants’ reaction to his correction (Clift & Holt, 2006; Thüne, 2008): they would affirm his correction with a reduplicated *sì*, but also fend it off by stating that both options are ‘the same’ and asking the rhetorical question ‘what difference does it make to me’ (i.e. none). He thus constructs the ‘others’ as warding off his correction or criticism with a lazy attitude, and consequently positions himself as attentive to using the *congiuntivo* right. Seen in the larger context of his language biography, he is thus also able to position himself as not only different from, but also superior to ‘them’ regarding Italian competence.

Ermir’s selection of the *congiuntivo* as the feature with which to position as a competent speaker is by no means coincidental. The *congiuntivo* is highly socially salient. Already in the 1980s, Italian sociolinguist Gaetano Berruto (1987) observed that Italians were worried about the ‘death’ or ‘disappearance’ of this mode. Berruto links the non-use of this mode primarily to informal situations and notes that the substitution of *congiuntivo* with *condizionale* in if-clauses like the one exemplified by Ermir, is rather frequent in *italiano popolare*. *Italiano popolare*, in turn, is a term coined by Berruto (1987:25) himself to designate the “varietà tipica dei parlanti poco colti o incolti“, i.e. the variety typical of uneducated or poorly educated speakers.

While the indexicality of *se io avrei* has not been researched, a multitude of memes circulating on social networks testify to the fact that the phrase indeed indexes the figure of the poorly educated speaker that Berruto (1987) links to *italiano popolare*. Ermir’s insistence on correcting other people’s use of the phrase to *se io avessi* thus works to position himself not only as a competent but also as an educated speaker, and thus distinguishes him from the others who do not seem to care so much. On the surface, what is at stake here is the choice of the

¹⁷ In fact, this is a commonly reiterated trope about Ladin speakers that Brannick (2016) has analysed in the context of political debates about a possible introduction of German-Italian bilingual schooling in other parts of South Tyrol.

‘right’ verb mode, when really it is about producing the kind of language that confers distinction to the speaker and positions him (or her) advantageously in a web of social relations of power.

7.4.2 Ideologies of purity

The next set of ideologies is one I have already referred to in Chapters 3 and 6, and concerns the value that is attributed to ‘pure’ language. Such ideologies are intricately linked to ideologies of normativity, since ‘pure’ language can be normatively prescribed and anything else can be devalued as ‘incorrect’. ‘Purity’, in this context, refers to the idea that there exists an authentic core of a language that consists only of elements that ‘belong’ to this language (Horner & Weber, 2018). Foreign elements from other languages, or possibly even from what are considered regional varieties of the same language, would conversely render the language ‘impure’ (Spitzmüller, 2007). Such elements can consequently become targets of language ideological debates, in which some actors construct the ‘pure’ language as threatened (e.g. Horner, 2005; Jaffe, 2007; Spitzmüller, 2007). In this section, however, I am addressing a slightly different aspect of linguistic ‘purity’. I am not concerned with broader ideological debates around a specific language whose ‘purity’ some want to preserve or restore, but with the role that ‘purity’ plays for my interview partners’ positionings in terms of competence.

Excerpt 30 is an example of an interview sequence during which ‘purity’ in terms of adherence to monolingual norms emerges as salient for competence. The excerpt is part of a sequence during which Lukas positions himself as more or less competent in the different named languages on his portrait (in fact, it almost directly follows Excerpt 23 represented in section 7.3).

Excerpt 30: Lukas - Italian, if I have a text or something it's ok, but

- 001 LUK äh italienisch: (1.4) wenn ich einen text habe oder so dann
 geht_s schon aber,
 er, Italian, if I have a text or something then it's okay, but
- 002 LUK (1.8) ja ich mache (-) ich manchmal beim (-) wenn ich
 italienisch rede dann misch äh: ladinisch mit italienisch und
 dann <<p> mach ich>.
 yes I make, I, sometimes when, when I speak Italian then I mix, er, Ladin with Italian and then I make
- 003 INT (1.8) okay (--) wie fällt dir das auf?
 okay, how do you notice that?
- 004 LUK (1.4) mh:: j:a (--) die <<:-)> anderen sagens> mir,
 mh, well, the others tell me
- 005 LUK <<p> oft wenn ichs>;
 often when I

- 006 INT mhm (--) hast du (-) fällt dir da eine konkre (-) ein konkretes
beispiel ein?
uh-huh, do you have, can you think of a concrete example for that?
- 007 LUK äh::: f: mh (6.8) ah zum beispiel äh (---) io so äh: io sono
andato io s: p: dann sag ich manchmal (--) io sono BEN andato;
er, mh, ah for example, io sono andato, then I sometimes say io sono ben andato
- 008 LUK (--) weil auf ladinisch sagt man i sun ben jü,
because in Ladin you say I sun ben jü
- [...]
- 030 INT mhm (1.0) und (1.0) wie hast du gemeint also du hast (---) zum
beispiel mal zur professorin gesagt io sono ben andato und dann
was hat sie dann gesagt,
*uh-huh, and, how did you mean, you for example you once said to your teacher io sono ben
andato, and then what did she say then?*
- 031 LUK (1.0) ja dann (---) ja si::e ja so sie <<:-)> verarscht mich
immer> wenn ich zum beispiel (---) li ladinisch mit italienisch
mische aber (--) nur so zum spaß <<p> dann>;
*yes then, yes she, yes like she always makes fun of me when for example I mix li Ladin with
Italian but just for fun, then*
- 032 LUK (1.2) [ja.]
yes
- 033 INT [wie mein]st sie verarscht dich,
how do you mean, she makes fun of you?
- 034 LUK ja si:e ja sie lacht halt und so (1.0) <<pp> (ja)>.
yes she laughs and so, yes.

Lukas first evaluates his competence as acceptable when it comes to texts – it remains unclear whether he is referring to reading or writing texts or both. However, the concessive conjunction *aber* with which he continues this statement already suggests that there seems to be another aspect for which his Italian competence is not quite sufficient (001). This contextualises Lukas' next utterance, and thus constructs his 'mixing' of Ladin with Italian in speaking as problematic (002). After a longer pause, I ask Lukas how he notices that he 'mixes'. Lukas initially hesitates before stating in a smile voice that others tell him so. Who these 'others' are remains implicit: he might be talking about teachers, parents, peers, or all of the above. The fact that people make Lukas aware that he 'mixes' Ladin with Italian points to the fact that this practice seems marked, and, in this context, constructed as negatively correlated with Italian competence.

Lukas begins a new utterance that might be the beginning of a narration of a typical situation (005), but he does not continue this narration upon my backchannelling *mhm* (006). I thus keep the turn and ask Lukas to elaborate not on a typical, but on a concrete example. Lukas' hesitation markers and the rather long pause are contextualised as reflection time by the following change-of-state token *ah* (Heritage, 1984) (007). He then frames what follows as the requested example: he first utters *io sono andato*, and then introduces *io sono ben andato* as

what he would sometimes say, placing utterance stress on *ben* to indicate that this element is out of place in the sentence. He causally links his production of the second sentence to the corresponding utterance in Ladin, *i sun ben jü* (008) – thus, the example he is narrating becomes evidence for his ‘mixing’.¹⁸

In the conversation that ensues after lines 001-8 represented above, I ask Lukas if he can think of a precise example of when he uttered this sentence. While he does not provide any details, he does mention that he said it in the presence of his teacher, and adds a sequence about another example of the sort. When I then ask him how his teacher reacts when he says *io sono ben andato* (030), Lukas notes that she ‘always’ makes fun of him when he ‘mixes’ Ladin with Italian (031). Upon my request to clarify what he means by ‘making fun of him’ (*verarschen*, 033), he states that his teacher ‘laughs’ (034). In this sequence, Lukas thus constructs his own language mixing, as well as his teacher’s evaluation of it, as recurring (‘always’). While he frames his teacher’s comments as harmless banter ‘for fun’, it is also clear that he himself has internalised the negative evaluation of his practice of mixing Italian with Ladin. What is valued when it comes to Italian competence, at school and beyond, is a ‘pure’ Italian without influences from Ladin.

Ideologies of competence that are informed by ideologies of purity emerge also in other interviews. In Chapter 6, I have already drawn on an excerpt from my interview with Giada to illustrate how ‘mixed’ language practices are often evaluated as problematic and how such evaluations can link to both mother tongue ideologies and ideologies of purity. While Giada at least partly distances herself from such evaluations when her language practices in the family are at stake, she draws on them herself when she positions as an insufficiently competent speaker of German. In this context, too, it is her teacher that makes her aware that she clearly ‘translates’ her sentences from Italian to German, keeping Italian sentence structure.

While teachers are not always overtly present as authorities in such interactional sequences addressing monolingual, ‘pure’ standards for language, their authority is sometimes implicit in the anticipation of their evaluation of students’ competence at tests. For instance, Aria refers to her ‘confusing’ English and German during English tests as indicative of her low competence in English, whereas Carolin speaks of her difficulties during Italian tests when only English words come to her mind. The implicitness of teachers’ judgements in those

¹⁸ However, whether or not Lukas’ *ben* is out of place is actually debatable: the use of *ben* as a discourse marker, albeit with differing functions, has been researched for spoken Italian in general and the regional Trentino variety in particular (Cognola & Schifano, 2018).

sequences suggests that ideologies of ‘purity’ are naturalised to a point that they seem to have been internalised.

This is further corroborated by other segments of interaction during which participants apply normative judgements based on ideologies of ‘purity’ to their more informal language practices. Ermir depreciatively narrates how he ‘mixed’ Italian and Albanian as a child, which his younger brother now luckily does not. Younes, in turn, positions as competent and links this to the fact that whenever someone speaks to him in one language, he is able to reply in this language, and Stefanie notes how, on a recent holiday to Germany, she had to be attentive to speak proper Standard German and not a hybrid form between *Hochdeutsch* and *Dialekt*.

The strong evaluative force that ideologies of linguistic purity can develop has been commented on by Weber and Horner (2018); Heller (2006) has observed that bilingualism is valued only as parallel monolingualisms in a francophone school in Ontario, and Jaffe (2007) notes how mixed forms tend to be devalued in Corsica despite the introduction of a polynomic norm that at least acknowledges and values variation within what is labelled as Corsican. While ‘mixing’ might be accepted in some social contexts, as Giada’s family language practices and Stefanie’s mixed language practices with some of her friends have shown, ideologies of purity hold sway when it comes to determine who is a competent speaker and who is not.

7.4.3 Ideologies of effortlessness

Intertwined with ideologies of normativity and purity, an ideology of effortlessness also emerged from my interviews. In order to position oneself as highly competent, it does not suffice to speak a ‘pure’ and normatively correct language, but one also needs to do so effortlessly. This ideology is illustrated by Excerpt 31, in which Elena positions herself as insufficiently competent in German.

Excerpt 31: Elena - well, one question already

- 001 INT beh una domanda già (--) hai detto che (--) ti dispiace un po' (2.4) ma non ho capito bene cosa (---) ti dispiace (-) ti dispiace di:?
well, one question already, you said that you regret a bit, but I did not quite understand what you regret, you regret that?
- 002 ELE (---) non saperlo: parlare:: (--) bene;
that I can't speak it well,
- 003 ELE (-) cioè nonostante io qua (-) sin da quando ero piccola lo parlavo lo sentivo eh (1.0) aDESSo (-) non è che:: sia proprio: così brava in tedesco;
that is, despite the fact that I, since I was little I spoke it, I did hear it, now it's not like I am that good at German
- 004 ELE (1.0) sì me la cavo (-) cioè nello scrivere sono molto meglio

- perché ho il tempo di pensare (-) a come formulare la frase ma se devo pensare: cioè se devo parlarlo,
yes, I can get by, that is, in writing I am much better because I have time to think about how to formulate the sentence, but if I have to think, that is, if I have to speak it
- 005 ELE (1.0) voglio che sia tutto (-) perfetto e allora non (-) cioè devo pensarci MOLto;
I want everything to be perfect and so I don't, you know, I have to think about it a lot.
- 006 ELE e (1.0) sì non sono molto fluida: (-) nel parlare.
and, yes, I am not very fluent in speaking.

The excerpt sets in after my admission to Elena that I had forgotten what exactly I had wanted to tell her to elaborate on after a longer narration of hers. My framing of ‘one question already’ (001) is to be seen in this light. I subsequently take up a previous statement of Elena’s and ask her to clarify what exactly she ‘regrets’. Elena then positions herself in terms of German competence, and identifies her inability to speak the language ‘well’ as the source of her regret (002). With the use of *nonostante*, she then constructs her early exposure to German as standing in contrast to her low competence. Elena subsequently adjusts her positioning slightly, stating that she does ‘get by’, and particularly so in writing, linking this causally to the fact that writing allows for time to think. She constructs speaking as a contrast and notes that in speaking she has to think hard as a consequence of wanting ‘everything to be perfect’ (005). The utterance stress lies on *molto*, underlining the seeming effort Elena needs to put into speaking German. By her utterance-initial *sì*, Elena characterises her next utterance as a concluding statement, in which she notes that she is ‘not very fluent in speaking’ (006).

Elena’s reference to perfection is clearly linked to normative ideologies of language. It seems that at least in writing, she manages to meet those standards, thinking time allowed. As regards speaking, we only know that she strives to meet them – and that precisely this striving causes her to fall short of the ideal of speaking effortlessly. To be able to position herself as sufficiently competent, it seems, she would also need to be able to speak *without* thinking. In fact, this links closely to the kind of competence ascribed to the native speaker figure that I have addressed in section 7.3, where I noted that Thoma (2018) identified a pattern of referring to spontaneity and natural ease in speaking in the language biographical interviews she conducted that served the purposes of legitimising her interviewees’ German competences.

The association of competence with effortlessness was also evident in instances where my interview partners referred to effortlessness *ex negativo*: many of them justified their positionings as insufficiently competent by recurring to a lack in fluency, natural ease and effortlessness. The named language in question was most often Standard German (Elena, Aria, Giada, Giulia, Stefanie, Ermir), followed by Italian (Marie, Carolin, Giorgia, Philipp) and

English (Thomas, Sofia). Thomas' positioning is slightly different, however, as he states that 'apart from' not being quite so fluent in English than in the other languages he speaks, he is quite good at it. He thus positions himself as relatively competent in English, and simultaneously positions himself as fully competent in Italian, German and German dialect.

7.4.4 Ideologies of successful communication

Until now, the ideologies I have reviewed applied more to universal criteria of language quality, and neglected the communicative aspect of competence. ‘Correct’, ‘pure’ and ‘effortless’ speech was at stake, and participants usually spoke of these aspects in universal terms, even though we have known at least since Hymes (1972) that what is concerned as such largely depends on the communicative situation. Some positionings in terms of competence, however, also had *communication* as their primary focus, with participants addressing in how far they can understand others, and make themselves understood. One such incidence is represented in Excerpt 32, where Giorgia narrates how she has become competent in Albanian.

Excerpt 32: Giorgia - what I also noticed while you were narrating

- 001 INT was mr währendn: dorzeiln nou AUFgfoln isch (-) weil du jo
gsog hosch ähm: (--) du findeschs COOL albanisch zu [kennen],
***what I also noticed while you were narrating, because you said, erm, that you think it's
cool to know Albanian***
- 002 GIO [mhm],
- 003 INT äh: DO ischs sell nou nit drinnen in dr zeichnung;
er, here it is not yet in the drawing
- 004 GIO <<:-)> i woas>,
I know
- 005 GIO (1.5) letzts johr hab i (--) ähm (-) net so viel ghaltn fa
albanisch,
last year I, erm, did not think much of Albanian
- 006 INT (---) [mhm],
- 007 GIO [obe::r] (zu zeit zu zeit) (-) hab i (-) holt selber A a
bissl immer (1.3) mehr dorzua glernt weil (--) wenn du;
but with time I just learned more and more myself because if you
- 008 GIO wenn i iatz zum beispiel deine freinde immer albanisch reden
mit deine (.) mit ihre ELTERN (--) donn willsch holt a
verSTEAN was sie sogn;
***if now for example if your friends always speak Albanian with your, with their parents,
then you also just want to understand what they are saying***
- 009 GIO (1.2) u::nd (---) noch und noch hob i mr holt (-) immer so
gedonken gmocht <<h> jo was HOASStn des> (.) hab sie holt
gfrog und sie hobns mir immer gsog,
***and little by little I always thought about, what could this mean, I just asked them and they
always told me***
- 010 GIO (--) und donn: (---) <<len> ob de:s jo:hr> oder (-) a un (.)
schun letzts (-) ungefähr letzts johr (--) anfang der schual

(--) dritte (---) ähm:: hab i dann schon (-) a bissl sprechen
KENNen und iatz (--) jo (-) iatz kann i schon guat (2.6)
albanisch jo,
*and then since this year, or already last, around last year, at the beginning of the [school]
year, in third, erm, I was already able to speak a bit then and now, yes now I am already
quite good at Albanian, yes.*

Previously to this excerpt, Giorgia had already told me that she spoke ‘a bit of Albanian’, and that she is happy about that. In line 001, I refer back to this utterance of hers as something I had picked up on, thus also reiterating Giorgia’s positioning as competent in Albanian and even augmenting it by my omission of the determiner ‘a bit of’. Giorgia ratifies this formulation in line 002, aligning with the way in which I had positioned her. Pointing to the previous language portrait, I then observe that Giorgia had not included Albanian at the time (003). In a smile voice that possibly suggests that she feels somewhat caught, Giorgia notes that ‘she knows’ that she had not included it.

In the following lines of the excerpt, Giorgia orients to the thus interactively established task of explaining the absence of Albanian in the former portrait, and its presence in the current one. She reports on an affective stance of her past self that ‘did not think much of Albanian’ (005), thus implying that this stance has changed by now. She then explicitly introduces a change in competence by noting that she has since then accumulated knowledge or competence (007). Giorgia’s use of an ‘if ... then’ construction in the next utterance, which is moreover rendered impersonal by the use of the possessive and subject pronoun ‘your’ and ‘you’ (König, 2014), constructs it as self-evident that one would want to understand one’s friends when they speak to their parents in a different language (008). Line 009 then serves to tie this self-evident desire to Giorgia’s increased competence in Albanian: Giorgia first positions herself in a more personal manner as continuously wondering about the meaning of utterances by reporting and animating her own thoughts at the time (Thüne, 2008), and positions her past self as actively inquiring about these meanings, receiving a response, and, by implication, learning to understand Albanian. Giorgia then moves from the narration of the development of her capacity to understand to her capacity to speak (010). After a couple of repairs, which indicate both the difficulty and the importance to locate this development in time, Giorgia notes that since the beginning of this school year she has been able to speak Albanian a bit, and that she is now relatively good at Albanian. The ‘yes’ at the end of her utterance then treats the sequence as concluded.

In the excerpt overall, Giorgia thus constructs her competence in Albanian as emerging from a self-evident desire to communicate in specific social situations. She constructs her learning

process as initially involving a continuous interpretation of interactions in the context of her friends' families, and a continuous enrichment of her own capacity to understand whenever she asked for and was furnished with new meanings, and of subsequently starting to speak, and improving her capacity to speak in those same situations. From Giorgia's description of the sequential development of her competence, we can also glance at how she understands being 'quite good at Albanian' (010) as being able to participate in communicative interactions with her friends' families, both by understanding what is being said and by contributing to the conversation herself.

This understanding of language competence recurs in a number of other interviews. Positionings in terms of competence were often linked to being able to understand others and to make oneself understood in specific communicative situations. For instance, Christian narrates how one of his classmates did not understand a shopkeeper in Vienna, and called him for help as he knew Christian 'knows' German. Similarly, Sara states that she mostly understands when people speak Spanish when she and her family visit the extended family in South America, and even though she does not speak it that well, she speaks it well enough. From such elaborations, one can tell that the figure of the competent speaker is one that is not only able to understand others in specific social situations, but also to make him- or herself understood and, thus, *successfully communicate*.

This does not preclude that my interview partners also position themselves as only competent in understanding others and not in making themselves understood within the bounds of a named language or dialect. For instance, Giulia narrates how she has progressively acquired the ability to understand *dialetto trentino*, and so her friends speak it with her even though she replies in Italian. Giulia does however stress that she is not able to speak *dialetto trentino* herself, and imagines learning to do so in the future, thus reproducing a socially shared belief that in order to be fully competent, one needs to be able to both understand and speak a named language or dialect in communicative situations.

Moreover, the interview partners sometimes also differentiated between different kinds of communicative situations. For instance, Philipp states that he manages to accomplish everyday tasks in Italian, like buying something at a shop, but he struggles when things get more complicated. Giada mentions something similar in relation to German: she manages to order a drink in German, but struggles to express herself in other kinds of conversations. This progression of difficulty in communicative interactions is certainly reflected in the CEFR scales (Council of Europe, 2001), and both these scales, as well as the participants' utterances,

imply that a more competent speaker can successfully communicate across the widest spectrum of interactions.

It is particularly interesting to note that in most narrations of communicative interactions, the responsibility for successful communication is placed on the participant. This is true for Philipp and Giulia in the more complex situations in which they seemingly struggle with Italian or German respectively, and it also comes out when Daniel narrates how he would not speak German dialect in Germany or the Croatian dialect he knows all over Croatia because people would not understand, or when Marie notes she is not quite able to hit the right register in Italian so that people understand her. Only two interview sequences paint a slightly different picture of communication. On the one hand, this concerns Ermir's reproachful note that he would understand people, for instance in a shop, if they did not speak German dialect to him but standard, and if they spoke slower. The other sequence is represented in Excerpt 33, and concerns Giulia's experiences during a two-week language trip to Germany.

Excerpt 33: Giulia - also in the swimming pool or when we were playing football

- 001 GIU (---) anche: in piscina così o quando andavamo: a giocare a calcio che c'era il campo al lago,
also in the swimming pool or so or when we went to play football because there was a court by the lake
- 002 GIU (---) lì anche (-) magari ti veniva automatico (--) chiamarli in italiano o così o parlare però poi dovevi dire (-) no devo parlare tedesco;
there it might also have come automatically to you to call out to the others in Italian or so or talk but then you had to say, no, I have to speak German
- 003 GIU perché sennò non capivano.
because otherwise they didn't understand
- 004 INT mhm mhm (--) e com'era questa cosa per te?
uh-huh, uh-huh, and how was that for you?
- 005 GIU bella e anche difficile a volte perché magari non ehm (---) non eh (-) non riuscivo a farmi capire-
nice and also difficult sometimes because maybe I didn't, erm, didn't, er, manage to make myself understood
- 006 GIU però poi magari c'era anche un'altra allora insieme riuscivamo (-) a dire quello che volevamo dire;
but then maybe there was also another girl, so together we managed to say what we wanted to say
- 007 GIU o anche loro sapevano che noi non sapevamo benissimo il tedesco e quindi (-) riuscivano <<:-)> a capire (--) intendevano>.
or also they knew that we didn't know German so well and so they managed to understand, they got it.

Previous to the excerpt, Giulia states that the language classes in Germany were pretty much similar to what she knew from school in South Tyrol, but what was special about the trip were

the opportunities to speak German during their free time. Lines 001-3 elaborate on this idea: Giulia first lists swimming and playing football as two activities during which her habitual language practices would ‘automatically’ lead her to speak Italian, but then – enacting her thoughts – she would remind herself she had to speak German (002). She then causally links this obligation to the fact that otherwise her German-speaking peers would not understand her (003). When I ask her what that was like (004), she describes it as ‘nice’ but also ‘sometimes difficult’, which in turn she causally links to not always being able to make herself understood (005). So far, the logic is thus still that Giulia is responsible for communication to take place, and needs to make sure that the others understand her. However, in line 006, she introduces a concessive remark with *però*: in those situations where she could not make herself understood, she sometimes managed to do so together with another girl. Or, alternatively, it also helped that ‘they’ – the people speaking German – knew that the girls’ German was not great and consequently (*quindi*) they managed to understand anyway. Thus, successful communication is presented as something that is achieved in tandem – both by collaborative efforts to make oneself understood, as well as by the efforts of others to understand.

The observation that communicative competence, and communication generally, emerges “out of embodied, intersubjective, and multimodal interaction” (Kataoka, Ikeda, & Besnier, 2013:345) and does not reside in the individual is not necessarily new. For instance, Goodwin (2004) has famously demonstrated how a man suffering from severe aphasia can nonetheless function as a competent speaker by linking the few words he can speak and his embodied action to the speech and action of others. Similarly, Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck (2005:197) note in relation to multilingualism that it “is not what individuals have and don’t have, but what the environment, as structured determinations and interactional emergence, enables and disables”. A lack of communicative competence can thus no longer be perceived as an individual deficit, but a lack of fit between “individual communicative potential and requirements produced by the environment” (Blommaert et al., 2005:198).

However, Kataoka et al. (2013) also note that the myth of the independent individual is constantly reinforced through institutions such as schools. Therefore, it might not be a surprise that my interview partners not only mostly located the responsibility for understanding and being understood within themselves, but were also able to claim competence without reference to communicative interactions. Bearing in mind the different ways of claiming (in)competence that I presented in section 7.2, it becomes clear that language competence is conceived as an abstract, measurable skill. One can be more aptly skilled in one skill than in another (see 7.2.1), one’s skills can increase or even decrease with time (see 7.2.2), one can be more skilled than

other people (see 7.2.3), and one's skills can be evaluated or measured, even in institutionally authoritative terms, by others (see 7.2.4). None of these positionings require a reference to real communicative encounters: we can talk about communicative competence in entirely abstract terms of being 'good' or 'bad' at a specific, usually standardised, named language.

While there are certainly merits to making communicative competence measurable, these developments also come with their very own perversions. For instance, standardised assessments may be and are used for immigration gatekeeping and employee recruitment (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Flubacher et al., 2018; McNamara, 2012; Piller, 2016) with agendas that do not necessarily take actual communicative exigencies of the people concerned into account. Most importantly, however, we might lose sight of the fact that communication is intersubjective and embodied (Goodwin, 2004; Kataoka et al., 2013), and that language is by no means a neutral tool that transparently conveys information (Kramsch, 2006a; Park, 2016).

7.5 Summary

In this chapter, I took the insight that language competence is a social and ideological construct as a starting point (e.g. Heller, 2006; Jaffe, 2013; McNamara, 2012; Park, 2011) and investigated the different ways in which the participants positioned themselves as more or less competent speakers, and the ideologies that informed such positionings. I showed that the participants performatively positioned themselves as competent by their interview language practices, by code-switches within reported speech, and by interactionally elicited performances. I also examined claims to competence and observed that the participants claimed to be more or less competent by drawing on comparisons within their linguistic repertoire, between their present and past and imagined future selves and between themselves and others, and by narrating how others had evaluated their competence. Across these claims to competence, the named languages that recurred most frequently were German, Italian and English, which points both to their relevance in education in South Tyrol (Meraner, 2011), and to their value on the local linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991).

I have separately addressed a particular type of claims to competence that draws on the figure of the native speaker. I have shown that ideological implications of self-evident competence, but also of inheritance and ethnicity (Bonfiglio, 2010; Knappik, 2016; Rampton, 1990) informed my interview partners' positionings as self-evidently competent native speakers, as well as their negotiations of competence when this status was not readily available. Moreover, I have pointed to the existence of a bilingual counterpart to this ideological figure, which however is conceived paradoxically as a monolingually bilingual native speaker. Some of my

interview partners drew on this figure to position as ‘bilingual’, implying double inheritance and double competence, whereas others had to distance themselves from it since only part of these implications applied to them. I have further demonstrated that my interview partners also invoked the figure of the native speaker to position themselves as highly competent speakers of a language they were learning.

Finally, I have drawn on my interview partners’ positionings in terms of competence to uncover the more general ideologies of competence that informed these positionings. One set of such ideologies related to normativity, i.e. to the idea that there are ‘rights’ and ‘wrongs’ in language. Norms were thereby constructed as universally applicable, when in fact they are socially constructed, and play a role for the reproduction of social relations of power (Heller, 2006). A related set of ideologies were those concerned with purity, which became evident when my interview partners constructed themselves as less competent if their speech did not conform to monolingual norms. Moreover, I found that an ideology of effortlessness was intertwined with ideologies of normativity and purity, meaning that only who speaks a ‘pure’ and normatively correct language effortlessly can position as a highly competent speaker. Lastly, I addressed ideologies of successful communication, whereby the competent speaker is constructed as able to understand and make himself understood across the widest spectrum of communicative interactions, and as solely responsible for the success of communication. What thus emerged overall was that language competence was largely conceived as an abstract, measurable skill, which stands in contrast to views of communication as intersubjective and embodied (Goodwin, 2004; Kataoka et al., 2013), and as a symbolic system that does not transparently convey information (Kramsch, 2006a; Park, 2016).

8 Affective positionings

Already during their initial description of their language portraits, over half of my interview partners took affective stances, and thus positioned themselves in affective terms, and practices of affective positioning were integral parts of all interviews. In the previous chapters, I have already referred to such positionings occasionally: I have mentioned how Elena expressed both affective attachment to German, but also a certain anxiety in the process of colouring her language portrait, and I have mentioned Giada's dislike of German and Sofia's attachment to the local dialect of the village she has grown up in (Chapter 5). I have narrated how Stefanie took a stance of affective attachment to the mix of German and Italian she speaks with her peers, and how Carolin took a similar stance to *Deutsch Dialekt* (Chapter 6). I have also referred to some of the affectively experienced struggles with Italian of some participants, including Marie's frustration when her Italian peers treat her as if she could not understand them, and to a sort of detachment or indifference that some interview partners seemed to express towards Standard German (Chapter 7). It thus seems that practices of affective positioning were in fact pervasive throughout the interviews I conducted for this project.

In this chapter, I will review my participants' affective positionings in more detail, and thereby take a wide range of linguistic and semiotic resources into account for analysis in order to do justice to the embodied nature of affective positioning (Busch, 2020; Giaxoglou & Georgakopoulou, in press; Goodwin et al., 2012; Wetherell, 2012). Moreover, I will draw on Wetherell's (2012) insight that affective practices tend to be socially patterned, and on Ahmed's (2015) call to investigate what kind of work emotion *does*, and examine how and with what effect affective positionings clustered around specific kinds of speakers and specific kinds of linguistic resources. I will first examine affective positionings in which my interview partners took affective stances to named languages or dialects as stance objects (8.1), before turning to their affective positionings as they were narrating instances of their lived experience of language (8.2). Finally, I will show how these positionings were entangled with one another, with language ideologies and with affective positionings of my own (8.3).

8.1 Taking affective stances to language

Du Bois and Kärkkäinen (2012:439) argue that "affect requires a stance object" and that "[t]his affective stance object can be anything or anyone that participants express an emotional orientation toward". Similar to Spitzmüller's (2013) move for a model of metapragmatic positioning (see Chapter 2), I will focus in this section on the affective stances my participants

took to named languages or dialects as stance objects. Moreover, I will explore how these stances were sometimes simultaneously acts of positioning towards person types and types of behaviour that are either indexically associated with these languages and dialects, or that the participants experientially linked to them. In this manner, I will review five kinds of affective stances that my interview partners took to different named languages and dialects: stances of affective attachment (8.1.1), of desire (8.1.2), of enjoyment (8.1.3), of indifference (8.1.4) and of dislike and hate (8.1.5).

8.1.1 Affective attachments

I have already referred to several stances of affective attachment to a named language or dialect across the empirical chapters of this thesis. All my interview partners took such a stance at one point or another in their interviews. Excerpt 34 serves as an example of what such a stance entails. The excerpt is the last part of Giulia's language portrait description, where she presents the last coloured spot on her portrait, a circular shape in the heart area of the body silhouette:

Excerpt 34: Giulia - and then in the heart like this I put the Trentino dialect

- 001 GIU e poi::: nel cuore così (--) ho messo il dialetto trentino
perché,
and then in the heart, like this, I put the Trentino dialect because
- 002 GIU (--) cioè (--) IO non lo so parlare-
that is, I can't speak it
- 003 GIU PERÒ (-) eh:: (--) come si dice cioè (--) quando vado
d'estate in montagna che sto sempre in montagna (--) coi
cavalli così,
*but, er, how do you say, you know, when I go to the mountains in summer, because I
always stay in the mountains with the horses and so*
- 004 GIU e ci son tutti miei amici che parlano il dialetto trentino e
mi piace. (--)
and all my friends are there that speak the Trentino dialect and I like it.

Giulia notes that she put *dialetto trentino* in the heart of the silhouette, and her *perché* at the end of line 001 signals that she is intending to explain why. She then inserts a disclaimer that she herself does not speak it, whereby the stress on the 'I' already implicates that others do (002). Her *però* marks her next utterance as a concessive remark, and what follows is a description of the experiences she associates with *dialetto trentino*: she spends her summers horse riding in the mountains (003), and her friends there speak this dialect, towards which she also takes an explicit affective stance with 'I like it' (004).

Dialetto trentino carries the name of the neighbouring province with which South Tyrol makes up a region. Giulia links her colouring of this dialect into the heart to her lived experience of

it, associating it with friends and with summers spent on the mountains. In fact, she coloured it in green to represent the fact that she also associates it with nature. Her affective attachment to this dialect is thus linked to her experience of a place where she is happy and to people where she feels like she belongs.

Ahmed (2015:11) argues that emotions “are about attachments or about what connects us to this or that”, whereby “attachment takes place through movement, through being moved by the proximity of others”. From this perspective, Giulia is moved by the proximity of her friends who speak *dialetto trentino*, and thus gets affectively attached to her friends and to their way of speaking. The affective attachment she is constructing thereby simultaneously positions her as belonging to this particular group of people who share the same enthusiasm for horse riding. It is interesting to note that Giulia’s concessive remark constructs the fact that she does not speak *dialetto trentino* as presenting somewhat of a contradiction to her affective attachment. This attachment is thus constructed as deviant from the norm in that it is not accompanied by a positioning as a competent speaker. However, Giulia is not the only participant to take up such a stance: Giada expressed a stance of attachment to a particular dialect of Ladin that she does not speak, but that her mother grew up with, thus linking it to her family and childhood. Similarly, Elena positions herself as attached to *napoletano* despite not speaking it, since she spent several childhood summers in a place near Napoli. She links this place to her family, and has recently returned there and enjoyed herself. Thus, while such stances might not be constructed as the norm, it seems that one does not need to position as a competent speaker in order to affectively position as attached to a named language or dialect.

While the root of Giulia’s attachment to *dialetto trentino* seems to be a link between the dialect, her friends and an activity she enjoys, many other participants constructed their attachments to a named language or dialect as rooted in an experiential link to family and childhood. Caterina takes such a stance to Italian, noting that it reminds her of home; Giorgia takes such a stance to Bavarian, linking the dialect to her mother and to the experience of feeling at home when in Bavaria; Younes positions himself as attached to the dialect of Arabic that he speaks with his family, noting that it will always be important to him because his family will always be important; Daniel positions himself as attached to the local Croatian dialect of the place where his grandmother still lives, and also as attached to Croatian for the history of displacement that lies behind his mother’s experience of migration. In Ahmed’s (2015) terms, thus, it seems to be the proximity of their family and their childhood memories, that move these participants and cause their attachment not only to their family but also to the language practices associated with it.

In some of these cases, an ideological notion of the *mother tongue* is additionally bound up with stances of affective attachment. This is evident from Excerpt 35, taken from the very beginning of Caterina's language portrait description.

Excerpt 35: Caterina - now you can tell me a bit what you made, what you thought

- 001 INT <<:-)> ora (--) mi puoi raccontare un po' eh cosa hai fatto
(-) cosa hai pensato;
now you can tell me a bit what you made, what you thought.
- 002 CAT (---) allora (-) l'italiano è la mia lingua madre quindi l'ho
messa (--) nel cuore;
so, Italian is my mother tongue and so I put it into the heart.
- 003 CAT perché (---) eh (-) sono nata parlando questa Lingua (-) e mi
ricorda comunque (-) casa Mia;
because, I was born speaking this language and it reminds me of home, after all.

In line 001, I ask Caterina to tell me about her portrait, and about her reflections while creating it. She begins with Italian, and states that it is her 'mother tongue', and that she coloured it in the heart. Her *quindi* thereby characterises this choice as a consequence of Italian being her *lingua madre* (Mascherpa, 2016). Caterina then launches an argumentative sequence that further explains her representation of Italian, stating that she was 'born speaking' Italian and that it reminds her of home.

Following the metaphoric process of representation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), it becomes clear that Caterina's choice of the heart to represent Italian stands for an affective attachment to this language. The argumentative link that Caterina forges between Italian being her 'mother tongue', and her colouring it in the heart, is enabled by implications of affiliation or allegiance that are intrinsic to the concept of 'mother tongue' (Rampton, 1990), alongside its implications of competence and inheritance (see section 7.3). In the remainder of the excerpt, Caterina stresses the continuity of Italian in her life. While Caterina certainly cannot literally have been born a 'speaker' of Italian, she evokes the metaphor of nativity that Bonfiglio (2010) has shown to have been ideologically interwoven with the concept since the late Middle Ages. Caterina's affective attachment to Italian thus seems grounded both in her lived experience, and in an ideological link between the 'mother tongue', affection and nativity.

Some interview partners also discursively linked their positioning as affectively attached to a named language or dialect to a positioning in ethnolinguistic terms. This was for instance the case when Carolin positioned as affectively attached to *Deutsch Dialekt*, linking her attachment to this dialect to an ethnolinguistic positioning as a 'South Tyrolean', by implication of the German language group, as I discussed in section 6.2. In Chapter 7, I also briefly touched upon

diffuse characterisation in terms of language, territorial origins, and culture (Bourdieu, 1991; Mecheril, 2003; Reyes, 2010).

Besides Aria and Carolin, a number of other interview partners more or less explicitly constructed a link between an affective attachment to a named language or dialect and an ethnolinguistic positioning. Lukas positioned as *Ladiner* and as affectively attached to Ladin, and Stefanie positioned as *zwoasprochig*, i.e. bilingual, and affectively attached to both Italian and German. The categories that they draw on for their positionings can be considered *ethnolinguistic*, because they are particular kinds of ethnic categories that are closely intertwined with, or even primarily constructed around, language. Affective practices are part and parcel of such processes of boundary-making (Ahmed, 2015; Wetherell, 2012). By positioning themselves as affectively attached to both a specific named language and the associated ethnolinguistic category, my interview partners were in fact engaging in such processes.

The ethnolinguistic categories in question are social constructs that slightly differ from one another in nature, and consequently engender different kinds of affective practices. In this context, it is already interesting to note that no interview partner explicitly linked a positioning as ethnolinguistically, or ethnonationally, ‘Italian’ to a positioning as affectively attached to Italian. Such explicit links were restricted to the ethnolinguistic categories mentioned above, and thus to the regional or subnational category ‘Sicilian’, to categories like ‘(German) South Tyrolean’ or ‘Ladin’, whose compatibility with the ethnonational category ‘Italian’ is not so straightforward (Riehl, 2003), and to ‘bilingual’, whose status as an ethnolinguistic category is debatable altogether.

Ladin, as a language and as an ethnolinguistic category, seems to have engendered positionings as affectively attached that were also tinged with pride. This was the case for Simon and Lukas, who both refer to Ladin as ‘special’ and ‘rare’, and thus also construct themselves as ‘proud’ of Ladin and, especially Lukas, of ‘being Ladin’. It seems that such affective stances are particularly common among those who construct themselves as members of a minority group (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Relaño Pastor, 2014), and that the minority status might even be part of what engenders this pride.¹⁹

¹⁹ Note that following Demmerling and Landweer (2007), I am differentiating between these more enduring sensations of pride, and between acute experiences of pride, which I will discuss in section 8.2.2.

- 009 STE (-) u:nd äh:m (---) eben DO so ba der brust so her ban herz
deutsch und italienisch weil i mi oanfoch zu BEAde sprochn (-
-) gebUnden föhl und so,
*and erm here, at the chest like this, at the heart German and Italian because I just feel
attached to both languages*
- 010 STE und nit sOgn kon i BIN a deutsche oder i bin an italienerin
oanfoch (-) °h BEADS,
and I can't say I am German or I am Italian, just both

As Stefanie begins uttering line 001, she takes a pen and points it first to the legend of the portrait for *DEITSCH*, then to the mouth of the body silhouette, where she has located German, among other body parts. As she utters *hOls*, i.e. throat, she touches her throat with her other hand, thus beginning to perform her portrait in an embodied manner (Kusters & De Meulder, 2019). She argumentatively links these locations for German to her listening and singing along to German music (001), before she shifts attention to the rest of the head, pointing and moving her pen around this area as she explains that she coloured it ‘half and half with Italian’. She causally links this to a positioning as ‘bilingual’ (003), which she then argumentatively links to speaking Italian with her father (004) and German with her mother (005). Accompanied with a hand gesture, for which she moves both hands from left to right and back in front of her head, Stefanie positions herself as ‘always in a half-half mode’, and constructs this as a consequence of her being bilingual with her use of *desholb* (006). In lines 007 and 008, she describes the ‘mish mash’ language practices I have discussed in more detail in section 6.1.3, and provides them as evidence for the ‘half-half mode’. By positioning the friends with which she speaks in this way as ‘also bilingual’ (007), she reiterates her own positioning as bilingual. Stefanie then shifts her attention back to the portrait, points her pen to the chest area as she says ‘here’ (*DO*), indicates her own chest area with her other hand for ‘at the chest, at the heart’ and points to each of the spots on the body silhouette for *deutsch* and *italienisch*. She explains that this kind of representations stands for the fact that she feels ‘attached’ to both languages, whereby the stress on ‘both’ (*BEAde*) already indicates that this assertion is not unmarked. This is confirmed in line 010, where Stefanie distances herself from ethnolinguistic positionings as either-or, ‘German’ or ‘Italian’, and emphatically reasserts her positioning as *BEADS*. By its proximity to her positioning as affectively attached to ‘both’ languages (009), Stefanie’s ethnolinguistic positioning is thus constructed as a direct consequence of her affective attachments.

As I have explained in Chapter 3, ‘bilingual’ is not among the officially recognised ethnolinguistic categories in South Tyrol, but in section 7.3, I have shown that an ideological figure of the ‘bilingual’ native speaker does seem to exist, and can be drawn upon for positionings as self-evidently competent in two named languages. Judging from the excerpt

above, however, it seems that a positioning as ‘bilingual’ in ethnolinguistic terms is not unmarked, and may need to be struggled for. Stefanie’s insistence on not being able to say that she ‘is’ Italian or German points to the fact that ideologies who postulate that one ‘is’ either one or the other still circulate, and seem to have structured Stefanie’s experience.

Indeed, Stefanie takes up this theme several times across our interview. In particular, she narrates several instances of having been misrecognised as ‘Italian’ among ‘German’ South Tyroleans – either for her last name, or for the way in which she pronounces her r-sounds. The latter seems to function as a first order indexical (Silverstein, 2003) in South Tyrol in that a uvular r indexes German-dominance and an alveolar/r indexes Italian dominance, as has been examined in sociophonetic studies (Kaland et al., 2016; Vietti & Spreafico, 2014). The production of these r-sounds thus seems to be especially salient for ethnolinguistic self- and other-positionings, and can consequently be considered real shibboleths (Busch, 2017b). Stefanie experiences these misrecognitions as painful, as they position her as non-belonging, and they also anger her. She argues both for a recognition for ‘bilinguals’ (the specific, South Tyrolean kind) as belonging to South Tyrolean society, and against any sort of animosity against people who are differently positioned in ethnolinguistic terms.

Out of my participants, Stefanie is the only one who negotiates a conflictual ethnolinguistic positioning, but Veronesi (2009) and Leonardi (2020) have found similar positionings in several language biographies generated in interviews in South Tyrol. Veronesi (2009) notes that her interview partners who considered themselves ‘bilingual’ also mention an “impossibility of fully feeling one belongs to one or the other group”, which “seems to mirror the polarisation of South Tyrolean society” (my translation).²⁰ Two participants of Leonardi’s (2020) study, in turn, explicitly report on their difficulty in officially declaring themselves a member of only one of the three language groups. In the excerpt above, it seems that Stefanie is claiming a sense of belonging to both the ‘Italian’ and the ‘German’ ethnolinguistic group, and grounds this belonging also in an affective attachment to both languages.

However, as I have shown in Chapter 3, a German-Italian polarisation is also a simplification of social reality in South Tyrol. The now recognised option to declare oneself as ethnolinguistically ‘other’, created for ‘bilinguals’ and other ‘others’, points to this, and not least does the existence of ‘Ladin’ as an ethnolinguistic category beside a German-Italian polarity. Interestingly, the potential of Ladin to trouble this polarity is recognised also by

²⁰ In the original: “l’impossibilità di sentirsi pienamente appartenente all’uno o all’altro gruppo; un tema, questo, che pare rispecchiare la polarizzazione della società altoatesina”

Stefanie: her mother is originally from one of the Ladin valleys, and Stefanie narrates that her parents declared her as ‘Ladin’ when she was little, probably in the context of the 2011 census. When I ask Stefanie about the declaration of affiliation she will have to sign when she turns eighteen, she notes that she has not thought about it yet, and that she would still like to learn Ladin and maybe declare herself Ladin. Thus, Stefanie is taking an affective stance of desire towards Ladin, which also seems to represent an escape from a German-Italian polarity that she experiences as conflictual. In the following section, I will thus focus in more detail on such stances of desire.

8.1.2 Desires

The next set of affective stances I will address concerns stances of desire. Ahmed (2010:31) theorises desire as “both what promises us something, what gives us energy, and also what is lacking”. Thus, desire implies moving toward an object of desire that is lacking, and the affect is what supplies the energy for that movement. As I have argued above, Stefanie takes such a stance towards Ladin, and in Excerpt 38, she takes another such stance to Spanish:

Excerpt 38: Stefanie - you coloured Spanish next then, right?

- 001 INT SPAnisch hosch nor als negschtes ingezeichnet gell?
you coloured Spanish next then, right?
- 002 STE mhm,
- 003 INT sem hosch gsog (-) du: ähm: (1.0) äh dir GFOLLTS guat [gell
(-) weil],
there you said you, erm, er, you like it, right, because...
- 004 STE [jo
mir mochn] in dr schual seit (.) leschts johr spanisch a;
yeah, at school we've been studying Spanish, too, since last year
- 005 STE u:nd (---) und hell gfolllt mr a richtig (.) guat weil i:
<<p> bin> (-) oft SPAnien gwedn und so und ollm mitn
schimmen also trainingsloger, (---)
*and, and I also really like that because I have been to Spain many times and so and
always with my swimming team, that is, training camp*
- 006 STE und hell: wenn i nor (-) spa spanischunterricht und so <<p>
und nor hots mr ollm so> (1.3) inTREssiert und so weil i
moan spanien isch a schians lond also mir gfolllts volle
guat, (1.0)
*and that, when I then had Spa Spanish lessons and so, and then I was always like
interested and so, because, I mean, Spain is a beautiful country, I really like it*
- 007 STE u:nd (1.0) und jo desholb gfolllts mr (---) richtig [guat];
and, and yeah, that's why I like it a lot.

In this excerpt, I direct Stefanie’s attention to Spanish (001) and refer back to what she said about it when she initially presented her language portrait. Before I finish my invitation to expand on the reasons for which she likes Spanish (003), Stefanie already begins narrating that

she currently studies Spanish at school (004). In the following utterances, she reorients to my question from line 003, and launches an argumentative sequence to explain her affective stances towards Spanish. She begins by taking up and intensifying the affective stance I had reintroduced (*richtig guat*, 005), and presents her experience of a number of stays in Spain as a cause for this stance. Stefanie then shifts the focus to the effect of those experiences and positions herself as ‘interested’, since the beginning of the Spanish lessons (006), which in turn she links causally to Spain being a beautiful country, and to her positive affective positioning towards this country. She concludes the sequence by establishing once more a causal relation between her affective stance towards Spain and her stance towards Spanish (007).

A desire for Spanish shines through Stefanie’s repeated positionings as ‘liking’ the language and being ‘interested’ in it. Her affective stance to the language is intertwined with her affective stance towards Spain as a country. This stance, in turn, is informed by her experience of Spain as a place where she repeatedly went for training camp, of which she seems to have fond memories. Stefanie is only a beginning learner of Spanish, and as such is probably ‘lacking’ in competence, but this lack is accompanied by an energy that makes her move towards this competence.

In the field of language learning research, desire has received increasing attention over the last two decades (Kinger, 2004; Kramsch, 2005; Kubota, 2011; Motha & Lin, 2014; Piller, 2002a; Piller & Takahashi, 2006; Soudien & Botsis, 2011; Van Mensel & Deconinck, 2019). The first to theorise desire for these purposes was Claire Kramsch (2005, 2006b), and she did so by drawing on Kristeva’s (1980) notion of *desire in language*. This kind of desire comes from a need to identify with an imagined other, and as such it is dialogic and intersubjective. Kramsch (2005:211) defines desire in language learning as “the never ending striving for self-fulfilment and the sense of plenitude that can be found in the act of acquiring a semiotic system and making it our own”. She notes that such desires can be deeply felt longings that may also be ambivalent or even conflictual, and she also observes that particularly adolescents may desire a foreign language as a way of escaping the constraints of their social environment.

In the excerpt above, Stefanie does not explicitly mention an ‘imagined other’, in terms of people speaking Spanish, but this ‘other’ is indexed by the country – an index that is made available by the set of ideologies that equate a nation, a people and a language (Irvine & Gal, 2000). At other points of the interview, Stefanie explicitly associates Spain and Spanish with the sun and the sea, and music that makes her happy. Moreover, Stefanie’s desire also connects to her experience of escaping her usual environment during training camps. It thus seems that a desire for language is, more often than not, also a desire for something else.

This is reminiscent of findings in research on desire in language learning that have repeatedly pointed to a link between a desire for language and a desire for acquiring different identity or subject positions (Kinging, 2004; Kramsch, 2009; Piller & Takahashi, 2006). For instance, Kinginger (2004) insightfully showed how her research participant Alice's desire for French could be read as a desire to escape her disadvantaged background, to be able to position herself as cultured and to advance herself professionally. Piller and Takahashi (2006), in turn, focus on the experience of Japanese women learning English in Sydney and argue that their desire for English is bundled up with desires for an emancipated 'Western' life and for a white 'Western' man as a partner.

Ahmed (2010) argues that the desirability of an object of desire is its promise of happiness, wherefore desire is always already double. One might argue that for my interview partners, just like for Kinginger's (2004) or Piller and Takahashi's (2006) participants, desire is always at least triple: they desire language for the subject positions it affords, and those subject positions, in turn, promise happiness. The kinds of subject positions that hold this promise are varied, and range from that of a cultured woman (Kinging, 2004), to that of the cosmopolitan Japanese wife of a white man (Piller & Takahashi, 2006). For my participants, a desire for a named language was often also a desire to be away from home or to travel, like for Stefanie, or even to live abroad. For others, it was a desire to belong, either within a specific affinity group, like that of video gamers or that of rap culture, or more generally within the circle of their peers and within wider society.

Recent conceptualisations of desire for language also underline its situated and co-constructed nature, and urge us to acknowledge that "our desires are not solely our own but are intersubjectively constituted and shaped by our social, historical, political, institutional, and economic contexts" (Motha & Lin, 2014:331). As such, desires are always mediated by ideologies (Kubota, 2011; Soudien & Botsis, 2011), which inform who can or even should desire what and why. Research based on these insights has uncovered gendered and racialised patterns of desire, as well as indexical links between certain subject positions and a certain language or way of speaking that instil desire in subjects (Park, 2010; Piller & Takahashi, 2006; Soudien & Botsis, 2011).

A look at the 'what' of my participants' stances of desire already shows some patterning: except for one case, the objects of desire were always named languages. Most frequently, this concerned English (seven participants), but also German (three participants), and less frequently Italian, Russian, French, Spanish and Latin. The strong prominence of standard languages, and very specific ones at that, underline the ideological underpinnings of desire. It

seems that my interview partners considered standard languages to be more desirable than non-standard varieties, and some standard languages seem to have been more desirable than others – which closely links to ideological hierarchisations of languages and varieties (Horner & Weber, 2018). Moreover, the mentioned named languages are also the ones that have institutional backing in that they are offered as school subjects (Motha & Lin, 2014), which not only confers value to them, but also structures the participants' access to them.

A look at the 'who' of my interview partner's stances of desire is also instructive when placed in relation to the 'what'. It seems that English was desired across the board, whereas German was only desired by female participants at schools of the Italian track. The fact that they were all from the Italian track could be linked to a discourse about particularly students at these schools as insufficiently competent, and thus 'lacking' – a discourse that has even been drawn upon to test effects of stereotype effect in a quantitative paradigm (Paladino et al., 2009). The fact that they were all female, in turn, might just be a coincidence, but could also link to gendered patterns of desire found elsewhere (Kramsch, 2009; Piller & Takahashi, 2006).

A look at the 'why' of my participants' stances, in turn, is particularly worthwhile in relation to English as the most frequently desired language. This desire was mostly linked to a desire to travel or even to live and study or work abroad. Some of these desires were rather general, whereas others were more specific. For instance, Lukas wanted to go to the US one day to be in touch with the rap culture that he so much admired, Caterina was thinking of going to university in England later, and Philipp was already planning to study for a scholarship to spend one year of upper secondary in a place where English is spoken. Sara and Lukas, in turn, desired English in the light of a general desire for travel. For most of these positionings, English is the object of desire as the ideologically constructed global language that enables one to lead a mobile life (Park, 2009; Schendl, Seidlhofer, & Widdowson, 2003).

It seems that, in this context, my participants have desires similar to the ones that Martin-Rojo (2020) observed in her university students, or that Heller (2006:218) observed in her ethnography of a Francophone secondary school in Ontario. The latter noted that "[t]hese are not students who long nostalgically for close-knit communities and large families; [...] they long for exciting careers and the world at their feet." This kind of desire, which informed my participants' desire for English, can thus also be seen as part of a larger pattern, and as situated and socially constructed and not entirely their own.

8.1.3 Enjoyment, fun and pleasure

In three different interviews, participants took affective stances that could be referred to as stances of enjoyment, fun and pleasure. This kind of affective positioning was thus not particularly frequent, but it was analytically interesting, especially in its relation to the notion of desire I have just discussed. An example of such a positioning is represented in Excerpt 39, in which Caterina reacts to me asking about her personal story with the named languages and the one dialect, *veneto*, which she coloured on her portrait.

Excerpt 39: Caterina - so Italian and veneto I always speak at home

- 001 CAT allora l'italiano e il veneto lo parlo sempre a casa,
so Italian and veneto I always speak at home
- 002 CAT quindi mi ricorda (-) appunto (-) casa MIA i miei genitOri la
mia famIglia;
so it reminds me, exactly, of my home, my parents, my family
- 003 CAT ehm: (---) e (---) l: sono (-) il veneto è una lingua (--)
molto (-) <<:-)> divertente>,
erm, and they are, veneto is a really funny language
- 004 INT [mhm].
- 005 CAT [e] (--) il tedesco invece lo imparo sin da picc[ola]-
while German, I've been learning it since I was little
- 006 INT [di]
divertente in che senso,
fu, funny in what sense?
- 007 CAT ehm (---) eh mi piace parlarlo e sentirlo lo capisco-
erm, er, I like speaking it and hearing it, I understand it
- 008 CAT perché (---) ha (-) un accento un po' (--) e delle parole (-)
divertenti nel senso (-) eh da sentire,
because it has an accent a bit, and some funny words, in the sense, er, funny to hear
- 009 CAT (1.4) ehm: (--) ed è (---) divErso dall'italiano però (-) non
trOppo,
erm, and it's different from Italian but not too much
- 010 CAT quindi è facile ehm ((clicks her tongue)) divertente in senso
(--) ehm (1.6) che (1.0) ehm (-) <<:-)> spiritOso un po'>,
so it's easy, erm, funny in the sense, erm, that, erm, a bit amusing

Caterina first positions herself as always speaking Italian and Veneto at home, the latter being a dialect that carries the name of an Italian region bordering on South Tyrol (001). She associates them with her home and her family (002) and thus takes a stance of affective attachment towards them. She goes on to evaluate Veneto as *divertente* ('funny', 003), and underlines this evaluation by smiling as she utters it. Caterina then moves on to German as the next linguistic resource to discuss (005), but in the first transition relevance place of her utterance, I take the turn and ask her to elaborate on this evaluation of Veneto (006). She does

so in lines 7-10, and the considerable number of pauses across those utterances indicate that this question is not straightforward for her to answer. Caterina first takes another positive stance toward Veneto and positions herself as someone who likes speaking and hearing it (007), and then introduces an argumentative statement with *perché*: Veneto is funny because it has funny words; it is funny to listen to (008). She positions Veneto as different from Italian, but still in close proximity to it (009), which makes it easy to understand. Caterina then concludes her answer to my question by providing a synonym to *divertente* to clarify this evaluation: *spiritoso* is similar to *divertente*, but it underlines the meaning of humorousness, of its property to cause amusement. Once more, this meaning is underlined by a smile that is audible as smiling voice (010). In what follows the excerpt, I ask Caterina to narrate some situation in connection with *Veneto*, and she tells me about reading a collection of recipes that was written in the dialect. The recipes were her grandmother's, and she narrates how they were reading them together and her grandmother told her how certain words were pronounced, and Caterina states that she enjoyed herself (*mi sono divertita*) during this activity.

Divertente can mean both 'funny' in the sense of *spiritoso*, but also 'enjoyable' – and *divertirsi* consequently can mean both enjoying oneself and finding something humorous. Caterina's experience of Veneto, and especially of trying out its sounds with her grandmother, can be likened to what Kramsch (2005, 2009) calls pleasure. For Kramsch (2009:208), "pleasure is an aesthetic concept that has to do with the perceived match between form and content". She links it to language play and creativity and, in connection with desire, speaks of the sensual experience of acquiring a semiotic system (Kramsch, 2005). Trying out the sounds of *Veneto* certainly was such a sensual experience for Caterina, but it did not give her the kind of pleasure that would result in desire. It is more a pleasure of enjoyment and fun, with the humour of it possibly resulting from the tension between the familiar and the strange that comes together for Caterina in Veneto (Katz, 1999).

If enjoyment and pleasure can result in desire, or are part of it (Kramsch, 2005), then why does Caterina not desire Veneto, why does Francesco not desire the German dialect that he likens to a pastime (*passatempo*), and why does Giada not desire her mother's family's dialect of Ladin that she enjoyed imitating when she was little? The answer to these questions might be linked to the limited value these linguistic resources are assigned in terms of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991): it is certainly not a coincidence that in all three cases, the linguistic resource being 'fun' is not a standard language. However, it might also be precisely this lesser degree of normativity around these resources that enables them to function as objects of pleasure and humour.

8.1.4 Indifference or the absence of affect

Indifference towards specific named languages or dialects is an affective stance that I identified in almost all interviews. Doing so, however, also posed particular analytical challenges. More often than not, I identified indifference as the absence of any sort of affective stance towards a named language or dialect that we talked about during our interview. However, as Du Bois and Käärkäinen (2012:438) state, “even where it [affect] is not overtly marked in an obvious way, it may still be oriented to as interactionally relevant – by its dispreferred absence, if nothing else”. For this reason, I chose to also include such absences of affective stances into my analyses.

In very few cases, the participants did openly take a stance that could be called one of affective indifference or detachment. Excerpt 40 is an example of such a case. It is part of a sequence in which I asked Simon what the languages and dialects on his portrait mean to him. Previous to the excerpt, Simon referred to the omnipresence and –relevance of *Deutsch Dialekt* in his life, and only when I prompt him to also talk about the other resources on his portrait, he talks about Ladin and English. The excerpt sets in after this sequence.

Excerpt 40: Simon - and Italian?

- 001 INT und italienisch?
and Italian?
- 002 SIM <<len> mah italienisch *eigentlich mh: isch net s:o große
rolle>* <<p> (odr holt)>;
*shakes head *
well, Italian actually is not such a big role, or just
- 003 SIM i red sell holt lei in dr schual holt und mit mein mit oanr
tante sunscht (.) fost [nia],
I really only speak that at school and with my, with one aunt, otherwise almost never
- 004 INT [mhm] (-) mhm, (1.0) okay,
- 005 INT und hochdeutsch?
and High German?
- 006 INT <<p> was verbindesch mitn hochdeutsch>,
what do you associate with High German
- 007 SIM mh hochdeutsch;
mh High German
- 008 SIM bah jo hell red i lei *proprio lei mit (.) dr deutschlehrerin
sunscht mit niamand;*^ ^
*lightly shakes head
*^shrugs mouth^
dunno, yeah that I only, really only speak with the German teacher, otherwise with no one
- 009 SIM °h und deswegn (-) jo eher a KLEine rolle <<p> obr
^(-) jo>; ^
^shrugs mouth^
and therefore, yeah, rather a small role, but yeah.

My elliptical question about ‘Italian’ is to be read as a continuation of the overarching question about the meaning that the resources on his portrait have in Simon’s life (001). In reply, Simon takes a stance towards Italian: its role for him is ‘not that big’, and he underlines this utterance by shaking his head (002). The modal particle *eigentlich* (Schilling, 2007), and the pragmatic marker *mah*, which is borrowed from Italian here (Fiorentini, 2017), thereby signal that this stance runs counter to the expectations he projects onto my question. Simon goes on to describe when and where he speaks Italian, and positions these practices as marginal by his use of ‘only’ and the additional ‘otherwise almost never’ (003).

I signal that I accept this reply (004), before I ask him about the last resource on his portrait, ‘High German’, i.e. Standard German, and about his associations with this language (005-6). Here, too, Simon positions *Hochdeutsch* as marginal for his life: he speaks it ‘only’ with his German teacher, which is further restricted as *proprio lei* (008), with *proprio* representing a less frequent borrowing from Italian. Simon also accompanies part of this utterance with a slight shake of the head, and at the end of the utterance, he displays a so-called mouth shrug. This facial expression consists in a closed mouth with its edges pulling downwards. It is one of the components of the gesture of a full shrug, but Debras (2017) has shown that the mouth shrug is also meaningful on its own. While, in Debras’ study, this facial expression accompanied stances of epistemic indeterminacy (i.e. non-expert status), I would argue that here it stands for indifference as another of the possible meanings of the full shrug. Indeed, Simon explicitly takes such a stance right after his mouth shrug (*eher a kleine Rolle*), and by his use of ‘therefore’, he constructs the previous description of his language practices as evidence for the ‘rather small role’ of *Hochdeutsch* in his life (009).

In this excerpt, Simon thus takes a stance of affective indifference towards both Italian and Standard German. The two named languages are part of his repertoire, but they do not seem to have a particular emotional resonance for him; he is not attached to them, nor does he desire them, but he also does not dislike or reject them. His indifference is discernible in the marginalising evaluations of his language practices that involve Italian and *Hochdeutsch*, in his accompanying gestures and face expressions as well as in his more explicit mentions of the ‘rather small’ and ‘not so big’ roles the two named languages play in his life. Moreover, in particular with Italian he signals that his indifference seems to run somewhat counter to the expectations that he projects onto me as an interviewer.

An investigation of ‘who’ takes stances towards ‘what’ is worthwhile also for these kinds of affective stances. In terms of the ‘what’, it seems that the participants could show themselves as indifferent to or detached from both named languages and named dialects. Indifference

seems to have been the only affective stance taken towards Latin, whereby the interview partners concerned were all attending upper secondary schools, which links to the fact that only at this stage of schooling is Latin introduced at school in South Tyrol and in Italy more generally (Meraner, 2011). Interestingly, a stance of indifference was also taken up quite frequently towards English, as desired as it was by other participants. Such stances of indifference mostly consisted in linking English to school spaces only. Very few participants took a stance of indifference towards Italian – this concerned only Simon and Eva, both from a school of the Ladin track, and there, too, it consisted in relegating the language primarily to school spaces.

The named language towards which such a stance occurred most frequently was *Hochdeutsch*. Two interview partners from the Ladin track, Simon and Sara, two participants from the Italian track, Sofia and Alessio, and as many as four participants from the German track of education took a stance of indifference towards Standard German. As I have mentioned in Chapter 6, particularly the latter underlined that their use of Standard German was relegated to school, which confirms insights from previous research (Risse, 2010). It thus seems that this pattern of language practices is consequential for affective stances.

Other stances of indifference were taken towards named languages that were linked to histories of migration or displacement. For some, this concerned their own family histories: for instance, Ermir immigrated to South Tyrol at the age of four, and now displays a certain degree of indifference toward Albanian; Younes was born in South Tyrol from parents who immigrated from a country in the Maghreb region, and took a stance of indifference toward what he calls the ‘right’ Arabic; Elena’s mother has moved away from one of the Ladin valleys, and she herself now seems indifferent toward Ladin. For one participant, Aria, this concerns named languages she hears spoken in her neighbourhood – in particular, she mentions Albanian, Chinese and Arabic. Such stances of indifference may link to discourses that do not grant the same kind of value to these languages than they do to the hegemonic official languages Italian and German and to other languages anchored in the school curriculum (Horner & Weber, 2018). However, it is important to bear in mind that this same fact in other cases is linked to stances of a particular affective attachment, such as with Daniel’s Croatian dialect, or Younes’ Arabic dialect, as discussed in section 8.1.1.

Particularly illustrative is also a pattern of indifference that I identified towards a generalised notion of dialects. Such stances were taken especially by students from the Italian and Ladin track. While this, too, might link to discourses that evaluate non-standard languages as lower in a linguistic hierarchy than standard languages (Horner & Weber, 2018), it is noteworthy that

such stances were never taken by interview partners from the German track. Participants only displayed indifference towards specific named dialects there: Thomas towards the ‘Italian dialect’ that his father sometimes speaks, and Carolin towards a ‘mixed’ dialect that her parents speak to older people in the place where she lives. This differential affective pattern between students from the German track on the one side, and students from the Italian or Ladin track may be connected to the strong affective attachments that the former often displayed towards the local ‘German dialect’.

Finally, one could argue that a specific stance of indifference towards specific named languages or dialects also consisted in their absence from the interview interaction. Most participants never mentioned named languages other than the ones taught at their schools. This also includes Ladin for the interview partners who did not attend a school of the Ladin track of education, with the exception of Elena and Stefanie, whose mothers were speakers of Ladin. While it might be a bit of an analytical stretch to interpret absence from the interview as a stance of affective indifference, at the very least this absence indicates that the respective interview partners did not perceive the respective named languages as having a role in their lives.

8.1.5 Dislike and hate

In this last subsection, I am turning to more negative affective stances, ranging from dislike to hate. Just below half of my interview partners took such a stance toward a named language or a named dialect. The stance that Sara takes towards German in Excerpt 41 is an example of such an affective stance. The excerpt is part of a sequence in which Sara replies to my question of what the languages and dialects on her portrait mean to her. Following the order in which she coloured them into her portrait, she begins with Ladin, towards which she takes a stance of affective attachment, and then goes on with German:

Excerpt 41: Sara – German is not, well, as a language I don’t like it that much

- 001 SAR D:EUTSCH isch net (-) holt (.) als sproche gfolfts mr net
Soffl,
German is not, actually, as a language I don’t like it that much
- 002 SAR <<all> und zum beispiel so (--) in der schule magari zum
beispiel beim schrei schreibn oder so> mocht mr auch SCHWER
oder so (-) a bissl schwerer <<p> so>;
*and for example, like at school maybe for example when wri writing or so I find it difficult
or like, a bit more difficult*
- 003 SAR °h (1.8) OBR sunscht (-) <<p> holt s geht schun> <<all> i merk
beim redn geht schun>; (---)
but otherwise, it’s okay, I notice that when speaking it’s okay

In line 001, Sara takes an affective stance towards German that is one of a slight dislike. She modulates this dislike by stating that she does not like the language ‘that much’. Interestingly, she also specifies that this stance refers to German ‘as a language’ – what exactly she means by this remains opaque, but she might be setting up an opposition between German as a language, and ‘German’ as an ethnolinguistic category – which in turn might be highly relevant to our interaction, as she potentially understood me to be ‘German’ in this way. Sara then refers to her experience of learning German, and states that she struggles at school when writing in German (002²¹). By the proximity of the two utterances, as well as by Sara’s framing of the second one as an ‘example’, a relation between her not liking German ‘that much’ and her struggling with the language is established. Sara’s second *zum Beispiel* frames ‘writing’ as only one example of an activity at school where she struggles with German. Her repair from finding German ‘difficult’ to ‘a bit more difficult’ adjusts her positioning: she does not necessarily position herself as an incompetent writer of German, but she finds writing in German harder than writing in other languages. She might thereby implicitly refer to both Ladin and Italian as the two languages in which she has already positioned herself as competent earlier in the interview. Sara then further adjusts her positioning in terms of her competence in German and states that when speaking, which she also previously linked to the school context, she is not struggling and finds it ‘okay’ (003).

An affective stance that seems slightly stronger than mere dislike is taken by Veronika in Excerpt 42. This excerpt, too, follows my question for the meaning that the linguistic resources on her portrait have for her personally. Veronika first takes a stance of affective attachment to both Ladin and German before she takes a different kind of affective stance to Italian:

Excerpt 42: Veronika - Italian is rather like my hate language

001 VER <<len> italienisch ist eher so meine> (1.0) <<:-)>
hasssprache>; ((laughs))
Italian is rather like my hate language

002 INT [okay?]

003 VER [<<:-)> weil] (--) ich mag halt italienisch nicht (-) ganz so
sehr>,
because I just don't like Italian that much

Veronika designates Italian as her *Hasssprache*, a term she has coined to express that she supposedly ‘hates’ Italian (001). *Eher so* thereby posits this stance as a contrast to the one she

²¹ A reader who is familiar with Germanic languages or with Italian might also pick up on Sara’s use of the Italian *magari*, which constitutes another example (besides *boh*) of a frequent borrowing into local German dialects (Dal Negro, 2013). I chose to translate it as unmarked ‘maybe’, since I perceive *magari* as rather unmarked, too.

has just taken towards Ladin and German. My *okay* (002), pronounced with rising intonation, can be interpreted as a request for Veronika to expand on her stance. Overlapping with this request, Veronika's *weil* frames her next utterance as argumentative. In the end, her utterance seems more of a rephrasing of *Hasssprache*: Italian is her hate language, because she does not like it that much. This rephrasing is weaker in negativity than the original term, and the use of the particle *halt* serves a closing function and appeals for my acceptance of the content of her utterance (Betz, 2015).

Veronika's recurring smile voice (001 and 003), as well as the non-shared laughter at the end of line 001, are of particular relevance to her affective stance-taking. I have repeatedly referred to smile voice and non-shared laughter as indicators of delicate actions (Glenn, 2013). The delicateness of this particular act of stance-taking might be linked to the fact that hate generally represents a cultural taboo (Demmerling & Landweer, 2007), but it might also be linked to the fact that the object of hate, Italian, is socially valued and institutionally supported, particularly within the Ladin track of education that Veronika is attending. This, in turn, would also explain why Simon framed his stance of indifference to Italian as contrary to expectations that he projected onto me.

Both Demmerling and Landweer (2007) and Ahmed (2015) describe *hate* as a negative attachment to an object, and argue that this attachment is usually constructed as grounded in a (perceived) experience of injury. Demmerling and Landweer (2007) also note that hate is characterised by an impulse to injure or even destruct the object of hate. Seen in these terms, it is difficult to ascertain whether Veronika really *hates* Italian as a language. Her stance is certainly more negative than Sara's from the previous excerpt, but I would argue that it is not as negative as it seems at first glance. At other points in the interview, Veronika also mentions that she speaks Italian with some of her friends as well as with some relatives who are from a different part of Italy, and she does not necessarily exhibit a destructive impulse towards Italian. However, Veronika does construct her hate of Italian as rooted in what could be considered a form of injury: when I ask her to expand on *Hasssprache*, she connects her dislike of Italian to a positioning as not quite competent, stating that she has trouble with Italian grammar and that she does not speak it well. If Veronika hates Italian, she seems to do so because of an unpleasantly experienced positioning as insufficiently competent.

A pattern of a dislike of a named language that links to positionings in terms of competence occurred across a large portion of affective stances of this kind. For instance, Alessio dislikes French, and states that he never did well in the subject; Elena used to dislike English, and notes that she was not as good at it as her classmates were in lower secondary school. Ermir strongly

dislikes *Deutsch Dialekt*, and explicitly links this dislike to his inability to understand people when they speak it to him. Some participants even explicitly presented this as a chain of causality, argumentatively explaining their dislike of a language by their perceived lack in competence as in Sara's excerpt. They thus construct an unpleasantly experienced lack in competence as the root of their dislike of a named language, and thus justify an affective stance that seems to be less socially accepted.

Another pattern in terms of explaining stances of dislike for a named language concerned the narration of negative experiences with a particular teacher and the way the particular language was being taught. Such a narration was put forth by Alessio concerning his dislike and low proficiency in French, by Fabian for his dislike of Italian, and by Elena and Giulia for their (past) dislike of English. Both Alessio and Elena describe their respective teachers as particularly strict and, in Elena's case, anxiety-inducing. Fabian narrates a particularly painful experience of having been singled out along with others in his class as 'stupid' by his Italian teacher. Giulia, in turn, is one of the few participants who considers herself proficient in English, but still takes an affective stance of dislike and explains this by referring to discontinuity in teaching methodologies.

Like for the previously discussed stances, an investigation of 'who' dislikes or hates 'what' was insightful. In terms of the 'who', it is first of all important to remember that in contrast to stances of (positive) attachment, which were taken by all participants at some point, less than half of my interview partners took stances of dislike or hate. In terms of the 'what', such stances were taken almost exclusively towards named languages that were also school subjects, including German, Italian, English and French. This might indicate that experiences of being constructed as insufficiently competent are often linked to school spaces. The one exception to this is Ermir's rejection of *Deutsch Dialekt*, which as previously mentioned was linked to his experience of not understanding it in specific interactional encounters.

While only a single interview partner respectively took a stance of dislike to English and French, such stances were taken by more than one participant with regard to German and Italian. Beside Sara, Giada and partly also Christian and Elena took stances of dislike or rejection towards German, whereas Italian was disliked, beside Veronika, by Fabian and Philipp and partly by Marie. Christian's, Elenas' and Marie's stances were only partly once of dislike because they were more nuanced: Christian liked speaking German with his family but disliked studying it at school; Elena, whose case I have discussed in sections 5.2 and 7.4.3, mainly disliked not feeling adequately competent in German, but also felt attached to the language; and Marie liked the sound of Italian, but disliked speaking it herself. Such stance-

taking towards both German and Italian tended to be marked as a delicate action (Glenn, 2013), and it also needs to be considered that taking such a stance towards German might have been even more delicate if interview partners positioned me as ethnolinguistically ‘German’.

Stances of dislike towards German or Italian also patterned around tracks of schooling: participants who took an affective stance of dislike towards German attended either a school of the Italian or the Ladin track, whereas the ones who took a stance of dislike towards Italian attended a school of either the German or the Ladin track. There are differential possible explanations to this patterning. First, analogous to other regions with a conflictual past, as has been investigated for the more recent and more violent conflictual past of Cyprus (Charalambous, 2013; Charalambous, Charalambous, & Rampton, 2015), a dislike for German or Italian could be rooted in discourses that construct relations with the ‘other’ ethnolinguistic group as characterised by animosity. Alternatively, however, my interview partners’ dislike might be less rooted in an animosity against the respective language than in their subjective experience of not meeting the standards they themselves set or that others set for them. While the former explanation can obviously not be refuted based on my interview data, the latter does find support in the explanations that my interview partners gave themselves for their stances of dislike. Thus, their stances of dislike might be less linked to animosity towards the ‘others’, and more to an unpleasantly experienced positioning as insufficiently competent speakers.

8.2 Narrating affectively lived experience of language

In this section, I will examine my interview partners’ affective positionings when they were not oriented to a named language or dialect as a stance object, but when they were narrating instances of their lived experience of language in affective terms. I will discuss affective positionings involving shame and anxiety (8.2.1), pride (8.2.2), and regrets and pain, anger and frustration (8.2.3).

8.2.1 Shame and Anxiety

Shame and anxiety are among the more frequently researched emotions in relation to language. Both of these affects have been investigated in the field of language learning (e.g. Galmiche, 2018; Horwitz, 2010; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Santos, Gorter, & Cenoz, 2017), largely in a quantitative paradigm, and shame in particular has been examined from the perspective of the lived experience of language (Busch, 2015a; Relaño Pastor, 2014). Busch’s (2015a) work on shame already figured in my theoretical framework as an example of an emotion that is part of the lived experience of language, but is also mediated by ideology (see Chapter 2). Busch

teased apart the work that shame can do by drawing on a written narrative of a student in Austria, who recalls her experience of being ashamed of the ‘rural’ German she was speaking in the environment of the secondary school in the city she had just started to attend, and argued that shame is experienced at the transgression of a norm.

Similar shameful experiences were narrated by four of my participants. Excerpt 43 is particularly illustrative in this respect. It is part of a sequence in which Marie narrates her experience of an arts project that her school, a lower secondary school from the German track, carried out with a school from the Italian track sharing the same school building. They were supposed to partner up with students from the Italian track in small groups and colour the columns in the schoolyard. Marie offered this narration when I asked her for a concrete example after she had positioned herself as insufficiently competent in speaking Italian.

Excerpt 43: Marie - and I do try to speak as well as I can

- 001 MAR und (1.0) äh: i probier holt SCHUN (-) so guat z wia meglich
zu reden we-
and, er, I do try to speak as well as I can
- 002 MAR (--) i hon eigentlich jemand AUSgsuacht,
I actually chose someone
- 003 MAR (-) wo i WOAS dass er guat italienisch kon
where I know that they speak Italian well
- 004 MAR folls i eppes nit verSTEa dass magari übersetzt oder so,
in case I don't understand something that they can maybe translate or something
- 005 MAR ober die SELL isch awian (-) <<laughing> schÜchtern (.) und
nor rEdet sie nit>;
but she is a bit shy and so she doesn't talk
- 006 MAR (1.0) und: (.) nocher isch mir holt a nit so: (---) ähm (--)
ischs holt a nit so FEIN mit (1.0) italiener (-) italienisch
zu reden;
and then for me it's also just not so, it's not so nice to speak Italian with Italians
- 007 MAR (--) und SIE: holt,
and they just
- 008 MAR (1.0) nor SCHAM i mi oftramoll awiang weil,
then I feel a bit ashamed sometimes because
- 009 MAR weil sie holt SECHN dass i a nit guat kon,
because they see that I'm also not good

Marie first states that she does give her best to speak Italian as well as she can (001) before narrating an unsuccessful avoidance strategy: she had partnered up with someone from her own school who speaks Italian well, but as the girl concerned is shy, Marie cannot rely on her to do the talking (002-5). Marie's face expression during those utterances, as well as the laughter accompanying the realisation that the avoidance strategy failed (005) characterise this sequence as humorous. What follows is a sequence in which Marie displays shame: accompanied by a

number of shorter and longer pauses and repairs, Marie states that she does not quite like speaking Italian with (ethnolinguistic) Italians (006) and she feels shame in such situations (008) because the others realise that her Italian is not good (009). Her face expression changes from a smile to a more serious one for these utterances, and Marie ends her narration with a downward-directed gaze.

Busch (2015a:14) draws on Demmerling and Landweer (2007) to argue that shame as a bodily experience is often described “as though everyone is looking at you, or wishing the earth would swallow you up”. It is experienced as a sudden paralysis that can be felt quite intensely, and as such can materialise in the form of a blush (Katz, 1999). Marie does not evoke such bodily sensations herself, and I do not press her on the matter, but it is noteworthy how her tone changes from humorous to serious, accompanied by the transition from smiles to more serious face expressions.

As previously mentioned, what underlines shame seems to be a perceived transgression of a norm, whereby it is crucial that this norm is accepted by its transgressor (Busch, 2015a; Demmerling & Landweer, 2007). This is where ideology comes in: socially shared beliefs of how a particular person *should* speak are what causes people to feel ashamed when they do *not* speak that way if they are recognised, or want to be recognised, as that kind of person. Seen in this light, it seems that Marie experiences shame because she perceives herself as insufficiently competent in Italian, and thus the norm she is transgressing would be for her to speak Italian well.

Another crucial element for experiences of shame is that they usually involve witnesses to shame, as has been theorised within philosophy (Demmerling & Landweer, 2007) and social science (Ahmed, 2010; Katz, 1999). It is rare to be ashamed when nobody is there to witness our transgression – if we do so, we still imagine the glances of others, as we have internalised the norm. Indeed, Marie establishes a causal relation between her ‘Italian’ peers noticing that she does not speak Italian well (009) and her feelings of shame (008). In Busch’s (2015a) example, the student becomes aware of the ‘norm’ in the first place by comparing her speech to that of her classmates, and she feels shame by perceiving herself through their eyes.

Shame can also be a moral emotion, as the norms we are transgressing are often of moral nature (Ahmed, 2010; Demmerling & Landweer, 2007; Katz, 1999). Katz (1999:144) calls shame “a confession to self of moral incompetence in some regard” and Ahmed (2010:106) notes how shame is vital for moral development because “the failure to live up to an ideal is a way of taking up that ideal and confirming its necessity”. I would argue that for Marie, it is precisely such a norm that she is transgressing. This also becomes evident when she underlines that she

tries to speak good Italian (001), thus pre-empting possible interpretations of her just being lazy, and thus failing the moral duty to at least try her best.

Katz (1999) and Demmerling and Landweer (2007) also point out a crucial difference between shame and embarrassment: shame is experienced as a failure as a person and as discrediting the self, whereas in embarrassment we perceive shortcomings to be situational. If Marie felt she was able to speak Italian well in principle, and only did not do so on that day for some reason (fatigue, headache ...), she might only have been embarrassed. However, her positioning as an insufficiently competent speaker of Italian is one that stays with her, even when she does not experience it acutely as shame. Her affective positioning as ‘ashamed’ is firmly located in the present through use of the present tense and of the adverb ‘sometimes’ (008), and thus characterises it as a recurring emotion that she experiences every time her perceived incompetence becomes visible, or rather audible, to others.

It is interesting to note that Marie’s case and Busch’s (2015a) unnamed student represent examples of two different ways of dealing with shame. I have already hinted that Marie tried to adopt a strategy of avoidance. She attempted to get by without shameful experiences by having a classmate translate for her, or at least do so should she herself run into trouble. The girl from Busch’s example, on the other hand, trained herself to speak like her peers at her new school, eventually blending in and restructuring her linguistic repertoire. What both narratives have in common, however, is the impulse to avoid shame - for shame shows us that we failed to uphold ideals that we cling to, and is experienced as an unpleasant emotion.

Aside from Marie, shame is mentioned by Veronika as an emotion she experiences when tourists ask her for directions in English and she gets them wrong, and by Giorgia about occasions in which she had to speak Italian. It is interesting to note that shame was only mentioned by girls. This does not necessarily mean that girls experience less shame than boys, but norms of affect display might be at play here: expressing shame lays bare one’s vulnerability, and there are gendered patterns to that (Brody, 1999). Moreover, it might have made a difference that the female participants and I shared the same gendered positionality, while it might have been more difficult for my male adolescent interview partners to avow shame to the young woman interviewing them.

I have paired shame up with anxiety, because I see a focus on anxiety as a continuation of a discussion on shame. The fact that anxiety and shame often work in tandem has already been pointed out by Galmiche (2018). It seems that we experience anxiety as we seek to avoid failure, and we are afraid to fail because failure means shame.

In Excerpt 44, Sofia narrates an instance of her lived experience of language in which she positions her past self as anxious. The sequence of utterances is part of our conversation around her coming from a different Italian province to go to secondary school in South Tyrol, and learning German in a classroom with students who are more advanced, as they have been studying German for longer. Sofia tells me that this was hard for her, and I then ask her if she can remember a concrete situation that was part of this experience. She initially struggles to think of one, which is where the excerpt sets in:

Excerpt 44: Sofia - or I don't know, a conversation with your teacher when she told you something

- 001 INT oppure non so una conversazione con la professoressa quando ti ha detto (--) qualcosa [non lo so-]
or I don't know, a conversation with your teacher when she told you something, I don't know
- 002 SOF [no io non] non capivo quando mi chiamava <<laughing> alla lavagna>,
no I didn't, didn't understand when she called me to the blackboard
- 003 INT [okay] ,
- 004 SOF [cioè] sì vieni alla lavagna io non capivo <<p> però>
that is, yes, come to the blackboard, but I didn't understand
- 005 SOF (--) o non capivo le consegne delle verifiche;
or I didn't understand the test assignments
- 006 SOF e allora lei mi diceva <<p> prendi il dizionario>-
and so she would tell me, take the dictionary,
- 007 SOF (---) e sì però (--) concrete non so,
and, yes, but concrete ones I don't know
- 008 SOF cioè in generale proprio (-) cioè anche quando mi parlava
* (---) entravo (--) * mi <<laughing> agitavo> perché non capivo
allora capivo ancora di meno (--) allora lei me lo ripeteva:
<<p> però>,
gesture, Figure 24
that is, in general really, you know, also when she talked to me, I would get really, I would get nervous because I didn't understand and so I would understand even less, so she would repeat for me, but...

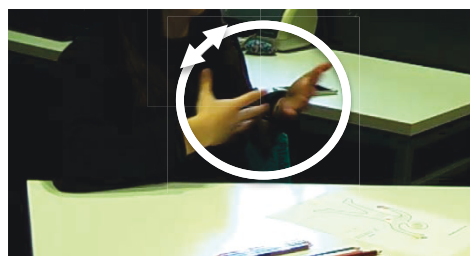


Figure 24: Sofia – “entravo”

In line 001, I propose an example of a situation that could fit the description of the ‘concrete example’ I had previously asked Sofia for, i.e. her German teacher telling her something. By ending this utterance with ‘I don’t know’, I characterise this as a suggestion she can or cannot follow up on (Deppermann, 2015). Sofia does take up my suggestion, and narrates that she did

not understand when her teacher called her to the blackboard (002). Her laughter accompanying this utterance might be seen as a means to cover up the shame she felt at the time (Katz, 1999). She then supports her narration by re-enacting it, animating her teacher's summons and stating her non-understanding. Line 004 can be considered a so-called 'dense construction', which have been shown to signal emotional involvement (Günthner, 2011): the teacher's voice is not framed metapragmatically, and Sofia's reaction to the summons is not overtly linked to it.

Sofia then offers a different example – she did not understand when her teacher explained test tasks to them (005), and this time metapragmatically frames her voicing of her teacher's reaction. Once more, the reported utterance is an imperative, i.e. 'take the dictionary'. Sofia's quiet voicing of it stands in contrast to the content of the utterance. Possibly, while she is positioning her teacher in the story world as strict, she wants to avoid being perceived of accusing her teacher of being too strict on the interactional plane. Sofia then states that she cannot think of a concrete example (007), and goes on to narrate the more general, recurrent experience of her teacher talking to her (008). She states that she felt nervous in those situations because she did not understand, and, through her use of *allora*, she frames the fact of her understanding even less as a consequence of her nervousness (Mascherpa, 2016). The emotion term Sofia uses here is *mi agitato*, 'I got nervous', which she utters as self-repair of her initial interrupted *entravo*, which might have been *entravo in ansia*, i.e. 'I got anxious / really nervous', or *entravo in panico*, 'I panicked'. It thus seems she corrected the displayed intensity of her emotional experience downwards.

Sofia's gestures in relation to these expressions are also particularly interesting: before and while uttering *entravo*, Sofia makes a circling gesture with her right hand that she subsequently continues with both hands in the pause after *entravo* (see Figure 24). While this gesture might also just accompany her search for the right term, and signal that she does not want to give up the turn, it could also be seen as a gestural representation of the vicious circle of anxiety she repeatedly found herself in. She got nervous because she did not understand what her teacher was saying, which caused her to have an even harder time to understand, which in turn caused her to get even more nervous and reach a state of anxiety.

Even though Sofia does not mention shame in this excerpt, it is quite possible that experiences of not understanding her German teacher were shameful for her, especially as an entire school class was bearing witness. In this reading, Sofia's nervousness and anxiety might be nothing other than a fear of shame. She gets nervous while her teacher talks to her, because she is anticipating the shame she will feel if her non-understanding is laid bare before the others.

Thus, shame does not work alone in holding up the norms shared by a community (Demmerling & Landweer, 2007), but is joined in such efforts by anxiety.

Like Sofia, other participants also took stances of anxiety, mostly as an emotion that they experienced in the past. Only Elena also took a stance of anxiety in her biographical present, as she tries to avoid having her mother hear her speak German. Elena also positions her past self as experiencing anxiety, more specifically during English lessons in middle school, whereas Giorgia was nervous about her classmates' reactions to her not speaking the same kind of German dialect as them. Even though such stances were taken by few participants, there seems to be another gendered pattern: a stance of anxiety, much like shame, was only taken by female participants. Possibly, once more, because such a stance positions one as vulnerable, which might have been easier to do for the female participants in our respective interview interactions.

8.2.2 Pride

Narrations of affectively experienced pride related to language occurred in seven different interviews. One example of such a positioning are Younes' statements about his learning process of German that are part of his sequence of sharing his story with the different resources on his portrait, represented in Excerpt 45:

Excerpt 45: Younes - after preschool I changed to a German elementary school

- 001 YOU dopo l'asilo sono: sono passato alle elementari tedesche,
after preschool I changed, changed to a German elementary school
- 002 YOU (2.8) per me non era così: qualcosa: m: (1.0) di FAcile di
imparare così subito il tedesco (-) quindi,
for me it wasn't so, something, mh, easy to learn German so quickly, so
- 003 YOU (4.2) POco tempo ci ho messo;
it took me little time
- 004 YOU (---) secondo ME ci ho messo poco tEmpo ad imparare (---) una
lingua per me nuOva;
in my view it took me little time to learn a language that was new to me

Line 001 is to be read as a continuation of Younes' narration and introduces his switch from a preschool of the Italian track of schooling to an elementary school of the German track of schooling. Given the context of this introduction, we can also already assume that this switch is what introduced German into his repertoire. Younes goes on to evaluate his learning process of German as 'not easy', especially because he learned it 'so quickly'. He further elaborates on the little time it took him to learn German (003), also in the light of it having been a new language to him (004). His learning process of German is thus characterised by hardship ('not

easy'), but it is still a success story. He might have perceived it as a necessity to learn German quickly, attending a school with German as a language of instruction, but his repetition of the speed with which he acquired German indicates that it is precisely what causes him to be proud of his accomplishment.

Demmerling and Landweer (2007) describe pride as a kind of affect that positively impacts on a person's sense of self-worth. This can be a general disposition or an acute sensation in connection with particular events or accomplishments. The latter is phenomenologically experienced as a widening and swelling sensation; one metaphorically grows tall with pride. They further note that three elements are necessary in order to speak of pride in an accomplishment: the person experiencing the pride must feel in some way responsible for his or her accomplishment, they must consider the accomplishment as of some value, and they must feel that the accomplishment thus confirms or augments their own value as a person.

If we consider Younes' pride in this light, this means that he experienced agency in his learning process of German, i.e. he considers himself responsible for his success; he considers knowing German as something valuable, and having learned it so fast is linked positively to his self-worth. This kind of pride in the context of language learning is mentioned by Woolard (2016) and Walsh (2019) in relation to having become proficient speakers of Catalan in Catalonia and Irish in Ireland respectively. Kramsch (2009) mentions pride as an emotion that language teachers appeal to in their students, by giving praise and rewards.

Demmerling and Landweer (2007) further note that pride can also be experienced about the accomplishments of other people to whom we are close. Ermir's talk about his brother's language skills in Excerpt 46 is an example of this kind of pride:

Excerpt 46: Ermir - and with my brother

- 001 ERM e con mio fraTELLLO (--) noi altri tre fratelli usiamo (-) più
che altro l'italiano,
and with my brother, us other three siblings we mostly use Italian
- 002 ERM per comunicare con lui (1.5) e i due genitori l'albanese.
to communicate with him and the two parents Albanian
- 003 ERM [e:] a sei anni riesce (--) a capirsi in entrambe le lingue
adesso;
and at the age of six he now manages to understand in both languages now
- 004 ERM (-) cosa che per esempio noi alla sua età non riuscivamo a
fare;
something that for example we at his age were not able to do
- 005 ERM (-) perché se ci (1.0) ci veniva chiesto qualcosa in
albanese, (1.0) certo lo sapevamo e tutto;
because if we were asked something in Albanian, of course we knew it and all
- 006 ERM (2.0) ma: bastava poco per metterci in difficoltà in

[italiano];
but little was enough to cause us trouble in Italian

007 INT [mhm].

008 ERM (1.0) cosa che a lui non succede,
something that doesn't happen to him

009 ERM perché (-) anche non (---) essendo mai andato a scuola per
 esempio (--) sa contare fino a: venti in albanese (.) in
 italiano (--) fino a dieci in ladino e tedesco (1.0) e fino a
 tre <<:-)> in inglese> [((laughs))]
*because, also never having gone to school, for example, he can count to twenty in
 Albanian and in Italian, to ten in Ladino and in German and to three in English.*

010 INT [((laughs))] ah: okay.

This excerpt is part of a sequence on how Ermir and his family speak at home. He had previously stated that they mostly speak Albanian, at least among the older members of the family, but this is different with his little brother who is attending preschool. In line 001, he thus notes that with him, Ermir and his sisters speak more Italian. Only the parents speak Albanian with his little brother (002). Consequently, Ermir's brother now understands both Italian and Albanian (003). Ermir then contrasts this with his own experience, which he shared with his older sister as they were both not born in Italy. At the age his brother now is, they could not understand both languages (004); they were fine with Albanian (005), but had trouble in Italian (006). Ermir then switches back to focus on his brother, who does not have these kinds of problems (008), and subsequently showcases his brother's language skills (009), listing the languages in which his brother can count to twenty, ten, or three. The last one in this list is presented jokingly, framed by the smile voice and the following laughter, as if being able to count to three did not quite count as an accomplishment.

Talk about children's counting skills in different languages is quite commonplace – I remember engaging in such talk myself when my little cousins were concerned. In this case, the counting skills are presented as evidence for Ermir's brother's language skills (similar to how Thomas presented them as evidence for his past self's competence in English, see section 7.2.2). Ermir's brother can count to twenty in Albanian and Italian, the two languages present in the home, and he understands both languages well, and Ermir is proud of his brother for that. Moreover, one could argue that in steering the family language policy and speaking Italian to his brother, Ermir is also indirectly responsible for his brother's accomplishments. Interestingly, these accomplishments are also contrasted with hardship like in Younes' case, but not hardship experienced by Ermir's brother, but by Ermir himself.

Experiences of pride were narrated by Christian in the context of his successful attempt at communicating in English while on a school trip to Vienna; by Giorgia for having learned

Albanian; by Philipp for having learned some English even before school; by Francesco for having passed a German exam and by Daniel for speaking Croatian as a language that his classmates do not speak. By taking up such a stance, they all position themselves positively to themselves and to their accomplishments, and they simultaneously evaluate these accomplishments. If they did not consider being speakers of English, Albanian, German and Croatian to be of value, then they would not take stances of pride towards these accomplishments. Since this value is socially constructed, what emerges overall from this discussion of pride, is that it seems to be mediated by ideologies of language and speakerhood just like shame is.

8.2.3 Regrets and pain, anger and frustration

Across the interviews, about eight participants took affective stances of anger, frustration, pain or regrets. I chose to treat these four emotions in one section, because they were often entangled, with one or more of these emotions occupying centre stage, but others working in the background. For instance, while the affective stance being taken in Excerpt 47 is mostly one of regret, affects such as anger, frustration and pain also shine through Elena's positionings as a speaker of German. As discussed in Chapter 5, the interaction around Elena's portrait stood out for her initial inability to find a suitable way of representing German on her portrait, which is where the excerpt sets in:

Excerpt 47: Elena - maybe if you explain your relationship to German a bit to me

- 001 INT forse: ehm:: (---) se mi spieghi un po' il tuo rapporto con il tedesco forse troviamo un posto;
maybe, erm, if you explain your relationship to German a bit to me, maybe we'll find a place
- 002 ELE (1.2) beh (--) io sin da quando ero piccola lo parlavo cioè parlavo un po' con mia mamma;
well, I, since I was little I had been speaking it, that is, I had been speaking a bit with my mom,
- 003 ELE (---) che ci aveva rinunciato con i miei fratelli perché loro rispondevano comunque in <<:-)> italiano quindi> era un po' inutile,
who had given up on it with my brothers because they answered in Italian anyway, so it was a bit useless
- 004 ELE (---) e:: solo che crescendo ha smesso infatti adesso parlo: quasi sempre italiano,
and, only that as I grew up she stopped, in fact now I almost always speak Italian
- 005 ELE (1.8) e: e mi dispiace perché comunque (--) quando ero più piccola riuscivo a parlare un po' meglio mentre adesso faccio (-) ho più difficoltà a (-) esprimermi in tedesco,
and, and I think that's a shame because after all, when I was younger I managed to speak a bit better while now I am finding it more difficult to express myself in German

I ask Elena to tell me more about her relationship to German, and in telling her that ‘we’ might find a place where to put it in the portrait afterwards, I reassure her that she does not need to colour the entire portrait immediately, and I also frame the colouring of German as a shared endeavour (001). After a pause, Elena launches her narration and states that she had been speaking German with her mother ‘since she was little’ (002). While this phrase often suggests a continuity that goes from the present well into a biographical past, the tense of the verb, *parlavo*, already suggests a rupture with these past language practices. Moreover, Elena states that she spoke ‘a bit’ of German with her mother, suggesting that despite being continuous, speaking German might have been something they did on occasion, but not necessarily the only way of speaking between her and her mother. Elena goes on to contrast her past language practices with those of her brothers, who, unlike her, did not reply to their mother in German, causing the mother to ‘give up’ speaking German to them (003). Elena then explicitly addresses the rupture: at some point, her mother stopped speaking German to her and consequently, Elena now speaks almost always Italian (004). Elena does not locate this ‘stopping’ in a specific time, nor does she explain the circumstances of this development. She positions her mother as responsible for ‘stopping’ to speak German, and it seems as if this happened almost out of nowhere.

With *mi dispiace* (005), Elena then takes the affective stance we are interested in here. *Mi dispiace* can be translated as ‘I think that’s a shame’ or ‘I regret that’. I opted for the former, even though it needs to be kept in mind that what Elena is expressing is not only an act of thinking, not a mere cognitive evaluation, but also an act of *feeling* (Landman, 1993). This stance of regret refers back to her previous utterance: Elena thinks it is a shame that she now only speaks Italian. She then justifies this stance by establishing a contrast between her past and present positioning as a speaker of German: when she was younger, she spoke ‘a bit better’, whereas she is now ‘finding it more difficult’. What becomes tangible in this utterance is that Elena also experiences frustration when she now attempts to speak German. Her regret about having lost the bit of ease she had in speaking German as a child seems to be met with frustration in the present.

As I announced at the beginning of this chapter, Elena’s narrative not only contains frustration and regret, but also pain and anger. Pain, in fact, is already a constitutive part of the experience of regret: Landman (1993:36) defines regret as “a more or less painful cognitive and emotional state of feeling sorry for misfortunes, limitations, losses, transgressions, shortcomings, or mistakes”. Some anger, in turn, alongside more pain and frustration, comes out in Excerpt 48, which represents the continuation of the previous excerpt:

Excerpt 48: Elena, continued

- 006 ELE e::hm (1.5) <<p> e boh>.
and, and, I don't know
- 007 ELE (---) e quando mia mamma mi sente parlare in tedesco: (1.2)
si vuol tagliare le <<:-)> orecchie> perché dice o mio dio
cioè (--) è tutta la vita che parlo in tedesco eppure (-)
<<laughing> sei così>,
*and when my mom hears me speak German, she wants to cut her ears off because she
says, oh my God, I've been speaking German to you my whole life and yet you're like that*
- 008 INT ah sì?
oh really?
- 009 ELE s:i,
yes
- 010 ELE (---) cioè devo pensare alle parOLE a tutto quanto mentre
quando ero piccola mi veniva (-) un po' più naturale
ovviamente
*that is, I have to think about the words, about everything, while when I was little it came a
bit more natural, obviously*

Elena directs her gaze to the portrait as she pronounces a lengthened *e*, which corresponds to the conjunction ‘and’ but also functions as a hesitation marker. Her gaze stays with the portrait as she pauses and then utters the interjection *boh* (006). This *boh* could signal an insecurity about how to continue her narration, a reference to her not knowing how to colour the portrait, or an attempt to end her narration – especially since her intonation is falling at the end of the utterance. However, after another pause, Elena continues (007). Her mother now figures for the first time in the present, as Elena presents her mother’s reaction to hearing her speak German. She positions her mother as ‘wanting to cut her own ears off’ – something one might wish to do when having to listen to something utterly unpleasant, wishing that one could stop hearing it. This is not a conventional expression in Italian, and as such comes across as rather crass. However, Elena’s tone, the smile voice and her smiles characterise it as humorous, which might be a case of a strategic ambiguity on Elena’s part (Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012). The ambivalent affect is also discernible in my reaction, as the recording shows me smiling, but also frowning and raising my eyebrows just after Elena has uttered *orecchie*.

Elena goes on to animate her mother’s words (Clift & Holt, 2006; Thüne, 2008): she has her mother utter the affectively loaded interjection ‘oh my God’, and contrast her own efforts at speaking German to her daughter with their outcome, which she has supposedly just witnessed (‘you’re like that’). In this utterance, Elena thus positions her mother as other-positioning her in terms of competence, and evaluating her German competence as insufficient, but also as expressing disappointment or possibly even contempt at her competence. Elena also constructs

her mother as blaming Elena, and not herself, for this state of affairs, because she has supposedly been speaking German to Elena for all her life – which does not match what Elena has previously stated. This part of the utterance is also keyed as humorous, with *sei così* even being accompanied by laughter, but it seems that Elena's laughter rather marks a delicate action (Glenn, 2013): either that of indirectly self-deprecating herself through her mother's words, or possibly even that of accusing her mother of being too strict on her. I react to Elena's animation of her mother's voice in a way that can be interpreted as surprise and disbelief (008), thus taking an affective stance myself. My disbelief could refer to Elena's mother's words (*Did she really say that?*) or to her evaluation of Elena's German skills (*Do you really speak the way your mother says you do?*). Elena treats it as the latter, as she first replies affirmative (009) and then goes on to rephrase her own evaluation of her German skills, expressing once more a kind of frustration at having to think hard about everything whereas it came more naturally to her as a child (010).

Despite the smiles and laughter, one can tell that these are painful feelings for Elena to work through. She is frustrated when she speaks German, and she regrets having lost the ease with which she did so as a child. In the first excerpt I discussed, she holds her mother somewhat responsible for her lacking competence – after all, her mother just stopped speaking German to her at some point. In the second excerpt, Elena constructs her mother as disappointed in her and blaming her for her lacking German skills. Elena seems deeply hurt by her mother's words, and she is possibly also angered by them. She constructs her mother as not doing her justice, as her mother does not see her own responsibility for Elena's low proficiency (after 'stopping' do speak German), and she also does not appreciate that Elena was a lot more cooperative than her brothers were. Overall, Elena thus narrates instances of her lived experience of language that involved frustration, regret, pain and even anger - intricately intertwined with one another, as well as to an overall ambiguous affective stance to German (see section 5.3).

The different affective stances taken by Elena in her narration also recur in different combinations in other interviews, and were sometimes additionally entangled with other affective stances. For instance, Giorgia positions herself as both frustrated by and ashamed of her lacking Italian skills on different occasions. Moreover, she, too, holds regret at not having grown up with Italian despite the fact that her father is Italian-speaking, and is angry at her mother who she constructs as having made that decision. Frustration and pain can also be identified in Giorgia's narrations of people not speaking German dialect to her, linked to the past experience of having her classmates mock her for not speaking the same kind of dialect as them. Frustration, pain and shame go together in Sofia's narrations of just not understanding

in her German classes, but also in Marie's narrations of not always managing to make herself understood in Italian. Pain and anger, in turn, entangle in Stefanie's narrations of being misrecognised as ethnolinguistically Italian when she constructs herself as bilingual.

In many of these cases, affective experiences of pain, frustration and anger thus seem to be intertwined with experiences of unbelonging that were linked to language. This is also the case for some of the affective stances where only one of the emotions discussed in this subsection is addressed. For instance, Daniel states that he would feel frustrated if he were in a place where he did not speak the language, but needed to communicate. Ermir narrates a painful experience of when he and his sister started going to preschool but did not share any language with the teachers and could not tell them that they wanted to go home. Ermir also narrates a continuing pain of not having been able to play with others when he still did not share a language with them.

8.3 Entangled affects

Wetherell (2012, 2015) calls for an attention to the ways in which feeling, meaning making and social action entangle. In this last section, I aim to refer to three kinds of ways in which affects appeared as entangled across this project: the entanglement of participants' affective positionings with one another, their entanglements with language ideologies, and their entanglements with affective positionings of my own.

Throughout the different sections of this chapter, I have mentioned some of the ways in which those positionings can be entangled. For instance, I illustrated how shame and anxiety are intertwined, in that the latter is often fuelled by a fear of shame. I have also shown how regrets are inherently painful and oriented towards a past that cannot be changed, and as such were often accompanied by anger and frustration in the participants' present. Similarly, shame and its constitutive experience of the incapacity to act can be frustrating or even angering – but precisely the dynamicity of the latter emotions can also help leave shame's inaction behind. Anger, in turn, generally often translates pain and injury (Ahmed, 2015).

I have also shown how overall stances towards specific linguistic resources can be quite ambiguous and, similarly to what Kramsch (2005) has argued about desire, even conflictual. In this context, Elena's stance towards German was particularly telling, but she is by no means the only one with ambivalent stances towards her linguistic resources. For instance, participants like Caterina, Sofia and Giada display both affective attachment and indifference towards different kinds of named dialects in their families. Similarly, some of them find enjoyment in playing with a linguistic resource, but display indifference about it in other contexts.

Some of these ambiguities can be explained by turning to entanglements of affective stances and ideologies of language. I have shown how stances of indifference can be linked to some linguistic resource's lack in value as cultural capital, and consequently a lack of convertibility into economic capital. Thus, while we can get affectively attached to a linguistic resource because we tie it to a sense of belonging experienced within the family, we can simultaneously be indifferent about this resource as it does not provide us with added value in other parts of our lives.

Several other affective stances and practices are linked to this idea of the value of linguistic resources. We can only be proud of an accomplishment if we consider it of value, we only experience shame or frustration at not being able to speak in a certain manner if this manner of speaking is valuable in some way, and our desire sticks more easily to linguistic resources that we imbue with value. Thus, ideologies of language that establish hierarchisations between more or less valuable ways of speaking (Horner & Weber, 2018), and determine their value as capital on linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1991), are influential for what are otherwise often considered highly personal affects.

As I have mentioned, affective stances also entangle with other kinds of ideologies that determine who is 'in' and who is 'out', who belongs and who does not based on language. A desire for a linguistic resource is also a desire for an imagined other (Kramsch, 2005), and for being recognised by this imagined other as belonging. Shame comes into play when we violate a social norm that could risk making us unbelonging. If we are marked as unbelonging due to the way we speak, we can feel pain, anger or frustration. In turn, we can be affectively attached to and even proud of speaking a certain way precisely because it marks us as belonging. We experience such inclusions and exclusions in emotional terms, and our subject position as belonging or unbelonging can be traced to group boundaries that are made, among others, through linguistic differentiation.

Thirdly, but not unimportantly, my own affects were and are entangled with and across this research endeavour. I was affectively moved by what participants told me during interviews, and often re-experienced the same emotions during analysis. I felt sorry for Elena and the pain she felt at having disappointed her mother. I shared in Giorgia's anger towards her mother for having established a monolingual German language policy in their home. I was amused by Ermir's narrations of the playful back-and-forth of correcting each other's language among classmates.

Moreover, many of the affective stances that my participants took resonated with emotions I felt or am still feeling in the context of my own lived experience of language. Marie's shame

about speaking Italian resonated with me and I could relate to Sofia's anxiety, as I myself was doubly anxious before the first interviews I suspected I would conduct in Italian. The participants' enjoyment of interesting-sounding words was familiar to me; some of their desires reminded me of my past self, as did some of their prides; and I saw myself in their affective attachments in particular to the named dialects.

Of course, my interview partners' affective positionings were contingent on our particular interview interaction. They might take completely different affective stances at the dinner table with their parents, when hanging out with their friends, or when writing an essay for school. After all, interviews are "situated performances", and thus "what a certain kind of person tells another certain kind of person, in certain ways, under certain conditions" (Heller, 2011:44). If understood in this way, however, interviews can give rich insights into people's affective stances and positionings, and the language ideologies these are informed by.

8.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed my interview partners' affective positionings, both as affective stances to named languages or dialects stance objects, and as positionings within narratives of their lived experience of language. I also considered the ways in which affective positionings entangled with one another, with language ideologies, and with my own affective positionings. I observed that stances of affective attachment to a named language or dialect were often intricately linked to similar affective stances to the places, people, and ethnolinguistic categories associated with them. Desire, too, was not restricted to desires for language but also for associated places and subject positions. However, in contrast to affective attachments, it concerned mostly named languages that the participants were in the process of acquiring. English in particular seems to have been desired for its promise of travel and mobility, and thus as the ideologically constructed global language (Park, 2009; Schendl et al., 2003). Stances of enjoyment, in turn, were about the pleasure of unfamiliar sounds and of creativity with language (Kramsch, 2009). Stances of indifference towards specific named languages or dialects in almost all interviews often consisted in linking specific named languages only to school spaces. Most notably, this was the case with *Hochdeutsch* particularly for students at the German tracks of schooling, which confirms insights from previous research (Risse, 2010). Stances of dislike or hate were taken by fewer interview partners, and often linked to positionings as insufficiently competent or to negative experiences with a particular teacher or teaching style. Most frequently, such stances concerned German or Italian, with a patterning around tracks of schooling in that they were taken to Italian by students at the German or Ladin

tracks, and to German by students at the Italian or Ladin tracks. This could be rooted in discourses that construct relations with the 'other' ethnolinguistic group as characterised by animosity, but it might also be related to their subjective experience of not meeting the standards they either set themselves or that others set for them.

In terms of affective positionings within narrations of their lived experience of language, I analysed participants' positionings as ashamed, anxious, proud, regretful, pained, angry and frustrated. I argued that shame comes with a feeling of inaction, is rooted in a perceived transgression of a norm that one accepts, and is experienced as diminishing one's self-worth. Anxiety, in turn, is closely related to shame in that it might be an affective experience of the impulse to avoid shame. Pride is in many ways an opposite to shame, in that it positively impacts on self-worth, and is experienced as a widening or swelling sensation in relation to particular accomplishments. I argued that each of these affective experiences is grounded in ideology, in that they are based on socially constructed notions of what counts as valuable and what does not. Affective experiences of regret, pain, frustration and anger, in turn, seemed to be linked to positionings as insufficiently competent, as well as to experiences of unbelonging that were linked to language. Since both competence and subjects positions as (un)belonging are socially constructed, these affects, too, are mediated by ideology.

9 Conclusion

In this thesis, I adopted a subject-centred perspective on the linguistic repertoire and on the lived experience of language (Busch, 2015a, 2017a, 2020) in order to investigate how adolescents in South Tyrol construct their linguistic repertoires and position themselves as speakers, as well as how these positionings relate to ideologies of language. In so doing, I aimed to produce a situated account of how such ideologies affect speakers' linguistic repertoires, which represents a question that scholars in sociolinguistics have only partially answered.

For these purposes, I conducted language-biographical interviews with twenty-four adolescents from the three different tracks of schooling in South Tyrol around language portraits as visualisations of their linguistic repertoires (Busch, 2018b). I considered these interviews as co-constructed interactions (Talmy, 2011) and drew on the analytical toolkits of conversation analysis, narrative analysis and interactional analysis to examine how my interview partners and I co-constructed their linguistic repertoires and their positionings. In this conclusion, I will summarise my findings and show how they contribute to sociolinguistic research in theoretical and methodological terms. I will also provide suggestions for further avenues of research and address what this research can mean for different kinds of people in South Tyrol.

In my analysis, I found that my interview partners' accounts of their linguistic repertoires essentially grouped into three major themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006): they involved descriptions of language practices, positionings in terms of competence, and positionings in affective terms. I engaged with each of these themes in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 respectively.

I first examined how my interview partners described their language practices in the social spaces of family, school, leisure and work, and I showed how they largely talked about such practices by either assigning one named language or dialect to a social space, or by describing them as orderly alternations between a set of named languages and/or dialects. I also explored what the specific labels carried by these named languages and dialects reveal about their nature as social constructs.

As far as positionings in terms of competence are concerned, I found that such positionings as more or less competent speakers took different forms and served different functions within our interviews, and that they were generally abounding in interview talk. I based my analysis on the insight that language competence is a social and ideological construct (e.g. Heller, 2006; Jaffe, 2013; McNamara, 2012; Park, 2011) and showed how positionings in terms of

competence were at times informed by the ideological figure of the native speaker, who is conceived of as self-evidently competent (Bonfiglio, 2010; Knappik, 2016; Rampton, 1990). I also demonstrated that language ideologies construct the competent speaker as one who speaks a normatively correct, ‘pure’ language effortlessly, and can successfully communicate across the widest possible spectrum of encounters.

In terms of affective positionings, I found that my interview partners took stances of affective attachment, of desire, of enjoyment, of indifference and of dislike towards specific named languages or dialects, and that they narrated instances of their lived experience of language in which they positioned themselves as ashamed, anxious, proud, regretful, pained, angry or frustrated. I also showed how these affective positionings often entangled with one another, and that they were often informed by ideologies of language.

Taken together, these findings provide insights into the ways in which different kinds of language ideologies affected my interview partners’ repertoires and their lived experience of language. With regard to ideologies that tie language to ethnicity and to the idea of a nation (Heller, 2006, 2011; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Pujolar, 2001), I found that the participants sometimes mobilised ethnolinguistic categories to rationalise their own language practices, those of relevant others, such as their parents and other relatives or their friends, and those of specific social spaces such as sports clubs. Ethnolinguistic categories were also salient for positionings in terms of competence, in that they could enable or constrain positionings as self-evidently competent. As has been shown in previous research (Bonfiglio, 2010; Knappik, 2016; Rampton, 1990), speakers could easily lay claims to competence by drawing on the ideological figure of the native speaker when the respective named language, their linguistic inheritance and their ethnolinguistic positioning could be made to align. If these elements could not be made to align, participants resorted to other kinds of argumentative strategies to position as competent speakers. Positionings in ethnolinguistic terms were also sometimes linked to positionings as affectively attached to a specific named language or dialect associated with the respective ethnolinguistic category. An analysis of one interview interaction in particular (see Excerpt 37) showed a participant emphatically positioning herself as a German-Italian bilingual in ethnolinguistic terms, and narrating painful and angering experiences of not having been recognised as such. This also indicated that ideologies that consider being ‘German’ and being ‘Italian’ as two mutually exclusive positions still seem to circulate in South Tyrol at the time of interviewing.

Ideologies that construct language as an abstract, measurable skill (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Park, 2016) were particularly evident from my analysis of my participants’ claims to

competence. Interviews were abounding with such claims, which were achieved by participants comparing their competence across named languages and dialects, between their present selves and their past and imagined future selves and between themselves and others, and by narrating how parents, teachers or language tests had evaluated their competence. Moreover, I could also demonstrate how the participants' affective positionings were often intricately linked to such positionings in terms of competence. For instance, this was the case when the participants narrated feeling proud when others perceived them as competent. More often than not, however, it was positionings as insufficiently competent that were linked to stances of dislike towards a named language or to feelings of shame, anxiety, regret, pain, frustration or even anger. I could also show how some interview partners oriented to language as a skill with which they could market themselves on the labour market in an imagined future (Urciuoli, 2008), positioning themselves as strategically investing in acquiring such skills. My analysis allowed me to link these patterns of positioning to neoliberal models of speakerhood, thereby adding to an increasing body of research that has investigated such models from a perspective of critical sociolinguistics (Costa, Park, & Wee, 2016; Martín Rojo, 2020)..

Moreover, my research has also elaborated on some of the ways in which both kinds of understandings of what language might be – an expression of one's ethnolinguistic positioning or a measurable skill one possesses – interact and can conjointly inform which kinds of language practices are constructed as (not) valuable. For instance, when the participants took up ambivalent stances towards hybrid language practices that cannot be assigned to a single named language or dialect as social construct, then this was connected to such practices being devalued from both perspectives. Hybrid practices clash with an ideology that ties a person's mother tongue to their one ethnicity, but also with an ideology that constructs language as a skill that is measured against a monolingual standard. At the same time, when the participants oriented in particular to competence in Standard German or Italian as measurable and marketable skills (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Urciuoli, 2008) in South Tyrol, this was rooted to a great extent in understandings of language as the essential core of an ethnolinguistic group. It seems that the two named languages German and Italian are now recognised as particularly valuable in South Tyrol because the ethnolinguistic conflicts of the past required making German just as valuable on the provincial linguistic market as the nationally valued Italian. The value accrued to English seemed to be slightly different, as participants mainly constructed it as relevant to travel and mobility, and thus invoked the ideologically constructed global language (Park, 2009; Schendl et al., 2003).

Aside from these more specific considerations, the findings of my research has also pointed more generally to the merits of shifting the focus from the clearly delimitable speech community (Gumperz, 1964) to the speaking subject (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a) in conceptualising linguistic repertoires. The language-biographical interviews I conducted allowed me to trace my interview partners' biographies and thereby look at the role that they constructed for language in different geographical and social spaces across different periods of their lives. These lives, in turn, were but the ordinary lives of teenagers: my interview partners spent time with their families, they went to school, listened to music, some of them did sports, some played videogames. They travelled, or at least imagined themselves doing so in the future. Some of them had transnational ties with family in South America, North Africa, or in other European states. Adopting a subject-centred perspective on the linguistic repertoire allowed me to understand how their linguistic repertoires tie to this eclectic list of geographical and social spaces, and how they formed across interactions in the participants' pasts, and in anticipation of their futures. Moreover, this perspective also enabled me to productively link my interview partners' repertoires and their lived experiences to language ideologies, and thus draw conclusions on the specific kinds of ideologies that seem to circulate in the social spaces they inhabit (Busch, 2015a).

Further research could now examine how other age groups in South Tyrol construct their linguistic repertoires and position themselves as speakers. It might also be worth investigating how the very same participants position themselves as speakers in future moments of their biographical trajectory. It can be hypothesised that their linguistic repertoires will be reconfigured substantially as they leave school (and possibly South Tyrol) and enter the workplace or tertiary education (Busch, 2015), and longitudinal interview studies are as of yet relatively rare (Prior, 2011; Woolard, 2016). Moreover, future research conducted in other socio-political contexts could adopt a subject perspective on the linguistic repertoire to investigate the interplay between repertoires, the lived experience of language and language ideologies under different context-specific conditions.

Alongside the theoretical insights described above, my research has also contributed methodologically to research involving language portraits and language biographies. My detailed interactional analyses of the interview talk around language portraits has strengthened Busch's (2018b) and Kusters and De Meulder's (2019) argument of the need to look at language portraits in conjunction with the interactional process of their creation. My research confirmed and extended Kusters and De Meulders' (2019) insight that language portrait narrations are performed in an embodied manner – not only when they are narrated in signed

languages, but also when they are narrated in spoken languages. Moreover, by introducing a previously created portrait to the interview interaction, I extended the language portrait method and demonstrated that participants' positionings in relation to such previously created portraits can yield interesting insights about how they construct continuities and changes in their linguistic repertoires. This variation on the language portrait method could be replicable in other contexts. Additionally, aspects of my approach to interview analysis might also be relevant to sociolinguistic interviews more generally. In drawing on insights from research on bodies in social interaction (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000; Mondada, 2016), I have illustrated one possible way in which sociolinguistic research could include video recordings into their interpretation of interview interactions. By tending to the participants' (and sometimes also my own) shaking of their heads, their nodding, their full shrugs or mouth shrugs, their gazes and their gestures, I was able to significantly strengthen my interpretation of what was going on in our interview interactions. As Heller (2011) as well as Bucholtz and Hall (2016) argued, future research in sociolinguistics can certainly benefit from engaging with video recordings and the concomitant analysis of embodied social interaction.

Certainly, the findings of this research cannot be considered representative for the linguistic repertoires and the lived experience of language of all adolescents in South Tyrol generally, and even less so for other generations - and yet, I believe that they may speak to different kinds of people in South Tyrol and beyond. Like critical sociolinguistic research in other contexts (e.g. Heller, 2006; Heller et al., 2018; Jaffe, 2009b; Pujolar, 2001), this thesis aims to encourage a critical engagement with language and its conditions and consequences for people. Such a critical engagement should lead researchers in different fields of linguistics to reflect on some of the assumptions informing their selection or categorisation of research participants. It should lead policy-makers in education to engage with the implications of the structures around which education is built in South Tyrol and elsewhere, and with the implications of the standards they set. It should also encourage educators and parents to reflect on how they position their students and children. Last but not least, it can encourage just about anyone to reflect on their linguistic repertoire and their lived experience of language.

10 References

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11 Appendices

11.1 Abstract

Formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the northernmost Italian province of South Tyrol is now looking back on about a century as part of Italy, since its annexation in 1920. In many ways, social and political life in the province today is organised around affiliation with either the German, Italian or Ladin *language group*, and thus around ethnolinguistic categories. Research in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology has shown how such categories ideologically tie language to ethnicity and to the idea of a nation (Heller, 2006, 2011; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006; Pujolar, 2001). More recently, however, research from within the same fields has observed the emergence of a different set of ideologies that treats language primarily as a measurable skill and an economic resource, and has shown how the two sets of ideologies coexist and interact in complex ways (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Heller, 2011).

This thesis has contributed to these lines of research by adopting a subject-centred approach (Busch, 2015a, 2017a, 2020) in order to examine how adolescents in South Tyrol construct their linguistic repertoires and position themselves as speakers, and to investigate how such positionings relate to ideologies of language. It thereby aimed to produce a situated account of how language ideologies enter and leave traces on speakers' linguistic repertoires, which represents a question that scholars in sociolinguistics have only begun to answer. The South Tyrolean context lends itself to such an investigation, as issues around language are highly salient there (Alber, 2012).

In the present thesis, I have drawn on language-biographical interviews with twenty-four adolescents attending different 'German', 'Italian' and 'Ladin' secondary schools in South Tyrol. I conducted these interviews around language portraits as visualisations of their linguistic repertoires (Busch, 2018b) and considered our interviews as co-constructed interactions (Talmy, 2011). From this analytical principle, it followed that alongside concepts of positioning (Bamberg, 1997; Davies & Harré, 1990; Spitzmüller, 2013), I drew on the analytical toolkits developed within different approaches to interactional analyses and also included embodied aspects of interview interaction into analysis (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000; Mondada, 2016).

I found that my interview partners' accounts of their linguistic repertoires grouped into three major themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006): they involved descriptions of language practices, positionings in terms of competence, and positionings in affective terms.

With regard to language practices, I showed that my interview partners largely described these by either assigning one named language or dialect to a specific social space, or by describing them as orderly alternations between a set of named languages and/or dialects. I also explored what the specific labels carried by these named languages and dialects reveal about their nature as social constructs.

As far as positionings in terms of competence are concerned, I found that such positionings as more or less competent speakers took different forms and served different functions within our interviews. I showed how positionings in terms of competence were at times informed by the ideological figure of the native speaker, who is conceived of as self-evidently competent (Bonfiglio, 2010; Knappik, 2016; Rampton, 1990). I also showed that language ideologies construct the competent speaker as one who speaks a normatively correct, ‘pure’ language effortlessly, and can successfully communicate across the widest possible spectrum of encounters.

In terms of affective positionings, I found that my interview partners took stances of affective attachment, of desire, of enjoyment, of indifference and of dislike towards specific named languages or dialects, and that they narrated instances of their lived experience of language in which they position themselves as ashamed, anxious, proud, regretful, pained, angry or frustrated. I also showed how these affective positionings were informed by different sets of ideologies of language, with affective attachments often being linked to ethnolinguistic categories or with stances of dislike often being linked to positionings as insufficiently competent speakers.

The findings of this thesis point to the merits of shifting the focus from the clearly delimitable speech community (Gumperz, 1964) to the speaking subject (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015a) in conceptualising linguistic repertoires. The thesis shows how a subject-centred approach that combines interactional, poststructuralist and phenomenological perspectives on the speaking subject is well suited for producing a situated account of how language ideologies enter speakers’ linguistic repertoires.

11.2 Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Südtirol blickt mittlerweile auf rund ein Jahrhundert als Teil Italiens zurück, seitdem das Gebiet 1920 vom damaligen Königreich Italien annektiert wurde. In vielen Bereichen des gesellschaftlichen und politischen Lebens in dieser Autonomen Provinz Italiens spielen ethnolinguistische Kategorien in Form von Zugehörigkeiten zur deutschen, italienischen oder ladinischen Sprachgruppe strukturell eine wichtige Rolle. Forschung im Bereich der Soziolinguistik und der linguistischen Anthropologie konnte zeigen, wie solche ethnolinguistischen Kategoriendiese Sprache, Ethnizität und Nation ideologisch miteinander verknüpfen (Heller, 2006, 2011; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006; Pujolar, 2001). Neuere soziolinguistische Arbeiten haben zudem auf das Entstehen von Sprachideologien hingewiesen, nach denen Sprache in erster Linie als eine messbare Fähigkeit und eine wirtschaftliche Ressource konstruiert wird. Diese beiden zugespitzten Vorstellungen von Sprache existieren nebeneinander und wirken auf komplexe und teils widersprüchliche Art und Weise aufeinander ein (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Heller, 2011).

Die vorliegende Arbeit verfolgt einen subjekt-zentrierten Ansatz (Busch, 2015, 2017, 2020) und untersucht, wie Jugendliche in Südtirol ihr sprachliches Repertoire darstellen, wie sie sich selbst als sprechende Subjekte positionieren, und wie solche Positionierungen mit Sprachideologien zusammenhängen. Ziel ist es dabei, Einblick darüber zu erlangen, wie Sprachideologien Eingang in die sprachlichen Repertoires von Sprecher*innen finden – eine Frage, die ein wichtiges Desiderat für die Soziolinguistik darstellt. Der Südtiroler Kontext bietet sich für eine solche Untersuchung angesichts der besonderen gesellschaftlichen Bedeutung von Sprache an (Alber, 2012).

In der vorliegenden Arbeit stütze ich mich auf sprachbiographische Interviews mit vierundzwanzig Jugendlichen, die in Südtirol verschiedene 'deutsche', 'italienische' und 'ladinische' Sekundarschulen besuchen. Am Anfang dieser Interviews stand die Erstellung eines Sprachenportraits als kreative Visualisierung ihrer sprachlichen Repertoires (Busch, 2018), und auch ein früher erstelltes Sprachenportrait wurde besprochen. In der Analyse betrachte ich die Interviews als ko-konstruierte Interaktionen (Talmy, 2011), woraus folgt, dass ich neben Konzepten der Positionierung (Bamberg, 1997; Davies & Harré, 1990; Spitzmüller, 2013) auf verschiedener Ansätze der Interaktionsanalyse zurückgreife und auch körperliche Aspekte der Interaktion miteinbeziehe (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000; Mondada, 2016).

Die Schilderungen meiner Interviewpartner*innen zu ihrem sprachlichen Repertoire gruppierten sich um drei Hauptthemen (Braun & Clarke, 2006): sie beschrieben ihre

sprachlichen Praktiken, positionierten sich als mehr oder weniger kompetente Sprecher*innen, und positionierten sich affektiv-emotional.

Beschreibungen von sprachlichen Praktiken beschränkten sich größtenteils darauf, eine Sprache oder einen Dialekt einem bestimmten sozialen Raum zuzuweisen, oder zu schildern, wie einem bestimmten Ordnungsprinzip folgend zwischen Sprachen und/oder Dialekten gewechselt wird. Sprachen und Dialekte wurden in der Analyse als soziale Konstrukte gefasst, und es wurde auch untersucht, was die Bezeichnungen dieser Konstrukte über die Konstrukte selbst aussagen.

Kompetenzpositionierungen nahmen unterschiedliche Formen an und erfüllten im Interview unterschiedliche Funktionen. Einige solcher Positionierungen waren von der ideologischen Figur des Muttersprachlers geprägt, dessen Kompetenz als selbstverständlich dargestellt wird (Bonfiglio, 2010; Knappnik, 2016; Rampton, 1990). Zudem habe ich darauf hingewiesen, dass Sprachideologien kompetente Sprecher*innen als solche konstruieren, die eine normativ korrekte, "reine" Sprache mühelos sprechen und sich in einem möglichst breiten Spektrum von Interaktionen erfolgreich verständigen können.

In Bezug auf affektive Positionierungen stellte ich fest, dass meine Interviewpartner Positionen der Verbundenheit, des Begehrens bzw. Strebens, der Freude, der Gleichgültigkeit und der Abneigung gegenüber bestimmten Sprachen oder Dialekten einnahmen. In Erzählungen aus ihrem Spracherleben positionierten sie sich außerdem als beschämt, ängstlich, stolz, bedauernd, verletzt, wütend oder frustriert. Diese affektiven Positionierungen waren wiederum von unterschiedlichen Sprachideologien geprägt, wobei z.B. Verbundenheit oft mit ethnolinguistischen Kategorien zusammenhing, oder Abneigungen mit Positionierungen als nicht ausreichend kompetente*r Sprecher*in.

Die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit zeigen, was eine Verlagerung des Schwerpunkts von der klar abgrenzbaren Sprachgemeinschaft (Gumperz, 1964) auf das sprechende Subjekt (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Busch, 2012, 2015) für das Konzept des sprachlichen Repertoires leisten kann. Ein subjektzentrierter Ansatz, der interaktionale, poststrukturalistische und phänomenologische Perspektiven auf das sprechende Subjekt miteinander verbindet, eignet sich gut dafür, das Zusammenspiel zwischen Sprachideologien und sprachlichen Repertoires von sprechenden Subjekten zu untersuchen.

11.3 Transcription Conventions (based on GAT-2, Selting et al., 2009)

General

[utterance]	overlapping utterances
(utterance)	assumed utterance, if not clearly intelligible
UTTerance	main stress of intonational phrase (syllable in capital letters)
Utterance	side stress of intonational phrase (only vowel in capital letters)

Pauses and Lengthenings

(.)	estimated micropause of up to 0.2 seconds
(-)	short pause estimated between 0.2-0.5 seconds
(--)	medium long pause estimated between 0.5-0.8 seconds
(---)	long pause estimated between 0.8-1.0 seconds
(0.4)	measured pause of 0.4 seconds
Äh, eh, ähm, ehm	filled pauses
u:tterance	lengthened sound (0.2-0.5 seconds)
u::tterance	lengthened sound (0.5-0.8 seconds)
u:::tterance	lengthened sound (0.8-1.0 seconds)

Pitch movement (at the end of intonational phrases)

?	strongly rising
,	slightly rising
-	steady; no pitch movement
;	slightly falling
.	strongly falling

Nonverbal actions (if integrated into utterance line)

°h / h°	audible breath (in / out)
((description))	nonverbal actions, e.g. ((laughs)), ((sighs)), ((clicks tongue))
<<description> utterance>	nonverbal actions with utterance, e.g. <<laughing> utterance>
<<:-)> utterance>	utterance produced with smile voice
<<f> utterance>	loudly produced utterance
<<p> utterance>	quietly produced utterance
<<len> utterance>	slowly produced utterance
<<all> utterance>	utterance produced fast

Nonverbal actions (if annotated in a separate line, based on Mondada, 2018)

*/ + / ^	beginning/end of annotated nonverbal action (one symbol per action per utterance)
<i>description</i>	description of nonverbal action in italics, e.g. <i>shakes head</i> , <i>shrugs mouth</i>
<i>Fig./Figure</i>	reference to a figure representing the described action in a photo

11.4 Interview Guide in German

1. Überblick über das Dissertationsprojekt
2. Einleitung zum Sprachenportrait
3. Gestalten eines Sprachenportraits
4. Erzählung zum Sprachenportrait mit eventuellen Nachfragen:
 - a. Welche Bedeutung haben die Farben, die du gewählt hast?
 - b. Was bedeuten die Orte im Körper für dich?
 - c. Was meinst du mit „...“?
 - d. Erzähl mal, wie bist du denn zu all diesen Sprachen und Sprechweisen gekommen?
 - e. Wo verwendest du ... (Sprache/Sprechweise)?
 - f. Was bedeutet ... (Sprache/Sprechweise) für dich? Welche Rolle hat ... für dich?
 - g. Hättest du dafür ein Beispiel?
5. Betrachtung des Sprachenportraits aus RepertoirePluS (vor einem Jahr ca. gestaltet)
 - a. Was denkst du, wenn du das jetzt siehst?
 - b. Was hat sich denn bei dir und deinen Sprachen verändert in der Zwischenzeit?
 - c. Was bedeutet es für dich, dass ... (Veränderung im Sprachenportrait)?
 - d. Würdest du an deiner heutigen Zeichnung jetzt noch etwas verändern?
6. Weitere Nachfragen
 - a. Gibt es sonst noch Situationen in deinem Leben, die mit Sprache zu tun hatten, die wichtig für dich waren?
 - b. Wie denkst du, wird sich das in der Zukunft verändern?
 - c. Gibt es sonst noch eine Sprache oder Sprechweise, mit der du in Kontakt kommst, die du jetzt vielleicht vergessen hast?
 - d. Fällt dir sonst noch etwas ein, das du mir erzählen möchtest?

11.5 Interview Guide in Italian

1. Panoramica sul progetto di tesi di dottorato
2. Introduzione al ritratto linguistico
3. Creazione di un ritratto linguistico
4. Discussione/confronto sul ritratto linguistico con possibili domande:
 - a. Cosa significano i colori che hai scelto?
 - b. Cosa significano per te i luoghi del tuo corpo?
 - c. Cosa vuoi dire con "..."?
 - d. Come sei arrivato a... (lingua/modo di comunicare)? Qual è la tua storia con questo?
 - e. Dove usi ... (lingua/modo di comunicare)?
 - f. Cosa significa per te ... (lingua/modo di comunicare)?
 - g. Avresti un esempio?
5. Osservazioni sul ritratto linguistico di RepertoirePluS (circa un anno fa)
 - a. Cosa ne pensi, vedendo questo ritratto ora?
 - b. Cosa è cambiato per te e le tue lingue nel frattempo?
 - c. Che cosa significa per te che... (cambiamento del ritratto linguistico)?
 - d. Oggi apportaresti delle modifiche al tuo disegno?
6. Altre domande
 - a. Ci sono altre situazioni nella tua vita relative alle lingue e al linguaggio che potrebbero essere interessanti per me?
 - b. Come pensi che cambierà in futuro?
 - c. C'è qualche altra lingua o modo di parlare con cui entri in contatto che ora potresti aver tralasciato?
 - d. C'è qualcos'altro, che vorresti dirmi?

11.6 Interview Protocol

Befragte/r Schüler/in: _____

Datum: _____

Dauer: _____

1) Kontaktweg:

2) Ort, Räumlichkeit:

3) Interviewatmosphäre

4) Personale Beziehung zwischen mir und der/m befragten Schüler/in

5) Umgang mit dem Sprachenportrait

6) Interaktion im Interview

7) Schwierige Passagen, technische Probleme u. ä.

8) Sonstiges

Visitenkarte dagelassen? _____

Kontaktwunsch von seiten der/s Befragten? _____