Discourses on language and diversity
A sociolinguistic-ethnographic study of multilingualism in Austrian schools

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2019
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<td>rising intonation</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1. Introductory remarks

Cities are widely acknowledged as sites of increasingly complex ethnolinguistic plurality. Higher mobility rates and the dynamics of transnationalism and globalization have led to growing rates of multilingualism among urban populations. Through migration dynamics, many languages have come to Austria and are continuously transforming the urban space. Central to this study is the phenomenon of an expanding societal diversity, which is characterized by plurality and heterogeneity among the population. As a result of post-Cold war migration, changes in mobility patterns, and further consequences of globalization, a new cultural and linguistic diversity has emerged. This new diversity has been described as *superdiversity* (cf. Vertovec 2007, Vertovec 2010, Blommaert & Backus 2012, Arnaut et al. 2016). *Superdiversity* illustrates the complexity of recent migration developments where local neighborhoods are shared by ‘old’ and ‘new’ migrants with complex patterns of migration, and the internet and mobile phones provide the opportunity to both develop and maintain transnational contacts. Moreover, the concept of superdiversity challenges the application of notions such as *minority* and “forces us to see the new social environments in which we live as characterized by an extremely low degree of presupposability in terms of identities, patterns of social and cultural behavior, social and cultural structure, norms and expectations” (Blommaert & Backus 2012: 5).

This thesis seeks to assess linguistic diversity in a way that takes into consideration the fluidity, heterogeneity, and discontinuities of modern urban populations and their linguistic repertoires (see Creese & Blackledge 2010, Blommaert & Rampton 2011, Jørgensen et al. 2011, Otsuji & Pennycook 2010). Even though superdiversity has so far been the hallmark of big metropolises, mid-sized cities can nonetheless be characterized as superdiverse. Public places such as schools reflect the superdiversity of a city’s population, and, moreover, disseminate and maintain dominant discourses on heterogeneity, plurality, and linguistic diversity.
The main focus of this thesis is discourses on linguistic diversity in schools. The linguistic diversity in schools consists of the variety of languages that are taught as subjects, in addition to the complex linguistic repertoires among pupils. The heterogeneity of pupils’ linguistic repertoires is a result of their individual migration backgrounds and, as such, reflects the city’s current superdiversity. Thus, this thesis focuses in particular on discourses concerning the linguistic repertoires of pupils. In order to make it more comprehensible, this thesis will use the term *home language* to subsume the diverse linguistic repertoires of pupils. The term *home language* is used in educational linguistics (cf. García et al. 2006, Spolsky & Hult 2008, Cummins 2005) in opposition to *school languages*, i.e. languages covered in the syllabus, and refers to languages that are predominantly spoken in the family domain. Here, it is important to note that, even when the diversity of languages is limited to the category of *home languages*, a holistic understanding of complex linguistic repertoires is maintained.

In the following chapters, an intellectual puzzle will guide the research process. Qualitative research may be established around an intellectual puzzle with the aim of explaining that puzzle, or providing an argument (cf. Mason 2002: 18). Thus, in this thesis, the research questions are formulated on the basis of such a puzzle, and a research strategy is developed. The intellectual puzzle guiding this project is thus:

What is going on in heterogeneous schools concerning the diversity of pupils’ linguistic repertoires and which discourses on multilingualism/linguistic diversity are conveyed?

Prominent discourses in the media served as catalysts for this research project, as did the personal experiences of the author. Prior to the beginning of this project, new school policies directed at multilingualism were introduced, which met with a variety of responses from citizens, practitioners, and politicians. The discourse particularly addressed the topic of linguistic diversity among students, as well as how to deal with students’ diverse linguistic repertoires. Consequently, further discussions on diversity emerged that were often accompanied by debates on related issues such as migration, integration, and globalization. Because of the general dominant discourses in media and society on the topic of linguistic diversity – especially with relation to schools – it is of great interest to explore the discourses related to this topic that are reproduced in schools. To frame this simplified intellectual puzzle in the context of critical sociolinguistic research, Spolsky’s
(2004) notion of language policy will be employed. In general, language policies can be
described as either de jure or de facto. De jure language policies are legally recognized
practices concerning languages, language varieties, or linguistic minorities in the form of
legal documents or statements. De facto language policies, on the other hand, are language
practices as they exist in reality, even if they are not legally defined. They describe the
everyday measures, beliefs, and decisions related to language use (cf. Spolsky 2004: 9); in
other words, a de facto language policy is every choice made concerning language and a
response to existing language policies. Nevertheless, in order to interpret de facto language
policies, it is crucial to take de jure language policies into consideration. Even though de
facto language policies occur in all settings, public places like schools in particular apply
a variety of language policies. Schools, in general, establish language education policies
in relation to foreign-language classes and, as a result of their pupils’ diverse linguistic
repertoires, some schools prepare official policies to address linguistic diversity among
pupils. However, in reality, every school adheres to de facto language policies.

Language policy is a comprehensive concept that incorporates the basic components
of language practice, language ideology, and language management (cf. Spolsky 2004,
Shohamy 2006). Language practices refer to the language choices that shape individual
linguistic repertoires, while language ideology describes our beliefs about languages, and
language management denotes efforts to change language practices (cf. Spolsky 2004: 5).
Language policy occurs in every situation in which language is involved, and is applied
through both overt and covert mechanisms, as well as on the micro, meso, and macro levels
of society. While schools are part of a macro level organization, they operate on a meso
level, and cover micro level practices between the people they involve. Thus, language
policy exists in highly complex and dynamic contexts and covers practices from macro to
micro levels (cf. Heller 2001).

Previous research on language policy in schools has concentrated on schools with
bilingual programs (e.g. García & Baker 1995), schools with minority and/or indigenous
languages (e.g. Hornberger 1987, McCarty 2011), or has focused on multilingual practices in
schools (e.g. García et al. 2006, García & Li 2014, Creese & Martin 2003). Based on research
in educational linguistics and critical sociolinguistics, this project aims to investigate
discourses on multilingualism in superdiverse schools. The schools investigated do not
adhere to a particular bilingual/minority language program, but display nonetheless a
significant linguistic diversity among their pupils. The objective of this thesis is to explore discourses on multilingualism in the school context and to analyze them in the framework of a *de facto* language policy, in other words, to document “[…] what actually happens in schools concerning linguistic diversity” Skilton-Sylvester (2003: 10).

1.2. How this work is structured

Chapter 2 will introduce the theoretical approach of this study, which is based on a poststructuralist framework. It will present concepts by Bourdieu and Foucault, and focus, in particular, on their central ideas of discourse, power, knowledge, and space. Additionally, the chapter addresses relevant issues in current research in critical sociolinguistics, such as superdiversity and the correlation between language and space. Thus, it provides an overview of recent studies, and presents their similar research methods, topics, and contexts, to support the framework used in this research project.

Chapter 3 provides detailed information on the research field of this study. It looks at the general background of linguistic diversity in Austrian schools, and presents an outline of language education policies in Austria. Even though this study focuses on *de facto* language policies, it is important to establish a comprehensive background of language education policies in general.

Chapter 4 describes the two schools that participated in this study, and provides information on the types of schools involved, their language education policies, and their respective educational priorities. In addition, it considers the activities and projects that take place outside of the schools’ curricula, in relation to relevant topics such as language, diversity, and migration. The aim of Chapter 4 is to facilitate a closer look at the two schools, and to embed them in the wider landscape of Austrian language education policy.

In Chapter 5, the overarching research objectives and methodology are addressed. The research questions of this thesis were formulated based on the aforementioned intellectual puzzle, which guided the research process. The methodology follows a qualitative linguistic-ethnographic approach, and consists of observations, interviews, and linguistic landscape research. This chapter will describe the methodological approach of this study, in terms of gaining access, establishing rapport, and following ethics guidelines. It will
also provide insight into various aspects of ethnographic research, and outline the entire research process. In addition, an essential part of the process will be to address general questions about the reliability of qualitative research.

Chapter 6 will present the results of this study. Section 6.2 addresses the topic of normativity with regard to language competencies and multilingualism, which emerges in discourses on homogeneity, multilingualism, the academic register, and notions of language learning. Section 6.3 describes discourses on the association between languages and social functions. It is concerned with the construction of in- and out-groups as well as language practices inside the school. Section 6.4 moves on to consider discourses related to the ethnolinguistic diversity among pupils, such as indexical associations, equality, and discrimination, while Section 6.5 addresses the spatial presentation of languages in the schools, and describes potential asymmetries.

Finally, Chapter 7 provides a concise summary of the research project, as well as its methodological approach and results. Chapter 8 concludes with practical reflections on the application of a sociolinguistic-ethnographic approach.
2. Theoretical and methodological framework

2.1. Language policy

Language policy describes any decision made concerning languages and language varieties in a designated context. It refers to the legally bound regulations by institutions of authority, as well as the language choices made in the context of private domains. Formal regulations are based on judicial orders, established by the law, and can therefore be described as *de jure language policies*. While language choices are often based on *de jure* language policies, in practice, language use is adapted according to the practical implications of everyday routines. Thus, a distinction is made between *de jure* (‘in law’) and *de facto* (‘in practice’) language policies (cf. Spolsky 2004, Shohamy 2006).

In general, languages may receive certain rights through the application of language policies. These rights may be restricted in the sense that they apply only under specific circumstances, or in certain geographic areas, as is the case for most minority languages. At the same time, granting rights to some languages also excludes other languages, and affects language behavior as well as meta-discourses on languages (e.g. language ideologies and language attitudes). Consequently, language policy serves as a tool for preserving ideologies and influencing language behavior (cf. Shohamy 2006: 45), and thus, extends through language attitudes, (dominant) discourses, and, finally, language choices. This thesis draws on the concept of language policy established by Spolsky (2004, 2012). Spolsky (cf. 2004: 5ff.) defines language policy as an entity comprising the three components of language practices, language management, and language ideology. All of the components are intertwined, influence each other, and mutually embody the language policy of a given context.

*Language practices* describe the choices individuals make concerning their linguistic repertoire, which is used in this context to refer to all of the languages, language varieties,
registers, and styles used by a speaker. Originally, Gumperz (1964: 137) defined the concept of linguistic repertoire as the collection of all linguistic forms available in everyday communication, in which the speaker’s language choice is restricted by grammatical and social constraints. While, in Gumperz’ sense, the concept of linguistic repertoire was anchored in the traditional ethnographic understanding of speech communities¹, it has recently been adapted for contemporary circumstances, based on factors such as the implications of globalization and a growing ethnolinguistic plurality (e.g. Blommaert & Backus 2012, Busch 2012). Thus, the concept of one’s linguistic repertoire has been dissociated from use in a particular speech community and the assumption that it consists of various fully acquired languages. All available linguistic resources—including different levels of competencies, slang, or single words in a language—determine the valid linguistic resources available to an individual, and shall therefore be included in their linguistic repertoire (cf. Blommaert & Backus 2012: 15f.). Furthermore, Busch (2013: 21) emphasizes that the repertoire is an entity, wherein languages (and language varieties, registers, and so on) are not perceived as separate units, but rather present one single entity encompassing all available communicative forms. Consequently, language practices are seen in light of the most recent definition of the linguistic repertoire. In the context of language practices, Spolsky (2004) refers to an ethnography of speaking (Hymes 1967). According to Hymes’ (1967) approach, language practices are acts, which reflect social structures and norms. Language choices are made, for example, with regard to the use of different levels of formality in each language depending on the social context. According to Hymes’ ethnographic approach, it is not only possible to identify what has been said; one can also infer the choices behind particular language practices.

The second component of language policy is language management. When language practices are decided not by the individual, but by an authoritative figure, we use the term language management (Spolsky 2004, Spolsky 2009). Language management includes all attempts to alter the language practices of speakers; in other words, it is: “[...] 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).

¹ Accordingly, a speech community shares a common repertoire and is defined by it, since it fosters mutual understanding and guarantees successful communication within a community (cf. Gumperz 1964: 138).
management is thus any action, by which someone (or something) seeks to intervene with another person’s language choices. In practice, this means telling someone to use or not use—teach or not to teach—a specific language or language variety. Language management generally requires the presence of a language manager, someone who is responsible for such interventions, and who actively controls language practices. Where there is no controlling figure or authority in place, but the speaker’s choice is nonetheless questioned, we speak of language ideology: “[…] language ideology is language policy with the manager left out, what people think should be done” (Spolsky 2004: 14). Spolsky (2009: 4) explicitly differentiates between the application of language management and language planning, a practice that has its origins in the late 1950s and 1960s. At first, language planning focused on actively addressing social concerns. It came to the fore as part of the decolonization process, in which many countries claimed their independence from colonial powers, and were confronted with the challenges of modernization, and thus also relating to their language policies (cf. Nekvapil 2006, Ricento 2000).

Finally, the third component of language policy is language ideology. Language ideologies are beliefs about languages and language varieties that are linked to other dominant ideologies. Their scope extends beyond the subject of language since language ideologies are attached to social, political, economic, and individual interests:

[…] language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group. A member’s notions of what is ‘true’, ‘morally good’, or ‘aesthetically pleasing’ about language and discourse are grounded in social experience and often demonstrably tied to political-economic interests. These notions often underlie attempts to use language as the site at which to promote, protect, and legitimate those interests. (Kroskrity 2010: 195)

Accordingly, opinions about language are never simply views about one language or language variety, but are rather intertwined with ideas about society, culture, gender, etc. Similarly, Irvine (1989: 255) defines language ideology as: “[…] the cultural (or subcultural) system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests […]”. Both definitions demonstrate that language ideologies refer to ideas beyond individual opinions and suggest that language ideologies are based on several belief systems. As mentioned above, the three components of language policy are inevitably connected; in considering language ideologies, one notices that they can
also form the basis for decisions regarding language management and language practices. At the same time, language ideologies are also the result of language management and practices (cf. Spolsky 2004: 14).

In practice, discourses convey, reproduce, and reveal language ideologies. Thus, there are certain concepts that are important to grasp for an understanding of language ideologies and other meta-discourses (cf. Busch 2013: 94f.). First, it is necessary to borrow from semiotics the notion that signs refer recursively to each other. In this way, the meaning of a sign is never static, but changes during the process of being interpreted. Thus, discourses are in a process of constant negotiation, de-construction, and reproduction. Secondly, discourses are always changing, transforming, and conforming to the current historical context. If certain discourses appear together in representations of a historical era, they affect how we perceive and understand a particular period. By repeating discourses, and referring to them, they receive power (see Chapter 2.3 on Bourdieu and Foucault on the relationship between language and power). Thirdly, Busch (cf. 2013: 94f.) stresses the topic of *Subjektivierung*, the process by which discourses establish subjects². It is by applying forms of categorization, based on differences and division (such as male versus female), that subjects receive both their individuality and their identity.

One ideology that has been persistent since the emergence of nation states in Europe, is that of a nation state, with its concomitant ideology of a national language. Since the 19th century, a central element of nationalism has been the delineation of entities unified by a common political orientation, language, and culture (cf. Hobsbawm 1992). The argument for unification is still apparent in public discourses on homogeneity. Blommaert and Verschueren’s 1992 investigation of the mainstream press in Europe confirmed that ideas are represented according to the dominant ideologies of the respective nation states (cf. Blommaert & Verschueren 1992). Their results show the ideology of a homogeneous society with an intrinsic understanding that homogeneity shall be the norm, and they conclude that, notably in public discourses, languages take on a political role by unifying the population (cf. Blommaert & Verschueren 1992: 374f.). In contrast to the assumption of dominant nation state ideologies, Shohamy (2006) reports a change in the ‘traditional’ nation state. She indicates that newly emerged nation states stand in opposition to ‘traditional’

² In the scope of this project, *subject* refers to the establishment of individuals becoming ‘subjects’ through social processes.
ones thanks to their variety of ideologies and the influence that the effects of globalization has had on challenges to traditional views. Shohamy (cf. 2006: 47) notes that this change has led to a rise in new(er) language ideologies that are increasingly plurilingual.

Nevertheless, one still prevalent language ideology, which is associated with the ideology of the nation state, is the standard language ideology (cf. Milroy & Milroy 1991, Milroy 2001). According to the standard language ideology, speakers think about languages and linguistic varieties by means of an ideology that is rooted in the history of the nation state and linked to the idea of a standard language culture. The standard language ideology communicates the notion that only the standardized form of a language is the accepted and correct form. It disapproves of deviations from that form in terms of spelling or grammar, and furthermore, perceives other language varieties, dialects, or accents as inadequate.

Lippi-Green (2012) labels this phenomenon the standard language myth because it entails a constructed idea about one particular language variety that is indisputably identified as the accepted form and—comparable to a myth—becomes manifested in discourse. Furthermore, the standard language ideology is responsible for a number of actions with regard to the maintenance and transmission of the standard language. Belief in a common standard language results, for instance, in the development of grammar and spelling books, which represent a core element of the educational system. It is thus not surprising that schools are the main institutions that convey the standard language ideology (cf. Lippi-Green 2012: 78ff.). The standard language myth has an impact on both societal and individual behavior, which can be observed, for instance, in discriminatory behavior towards a certain language variety or accent. Occasionally, the idea of one language form as being superior to others is so powerful that speakers themselves subordinate their own linguistic repertoire (cf. Lippi-Green 2012: 55ff.). The standard language ideology thus generates a wide range of implications for public discourses, the institutional decisions, language attitudes, and individual language choices.

Language ideologies directly affect language policies, and, in particular, language education policies. Schools in general play a significant role in conveying language ideologies through discursive practices, or, as Spolsky (2009: 90) puts it, language policies in schools are “one of the most powerful forces in language management”. Furthermore, language education policies can be seen as a “powerful tool as it can create and impose language behavior in a system which is compulsory for all children to participate in”
Shohamy (cf. 2006: 77). Thus, language policies in schools can both cause and change individual language behavior.

In superdiverse contexts with an increasingly ethnolinguistic plurality, Spolsky (2009) observes a gap in language policies and management; more specifically, language management in schools is in conflict with the opposing language management taking place in children’s homes. Schools typically follow a language management policy based on students acquiring the standardized variety and its written form, whereas the family’s own language management approach may follow plurilingual practices. Combining both aims and improving the recognition of plurality in public institutions is challenging precisely because of the abovementioned language ideologies.

To conclude, this chapter has described the basic concept that will be used throughout this thesis—language policy—as defined by Spolsky (2004). Language policy consists of the three components: language practices, language management, and language ideology. These components make up the de facto language policy of any domain; thus, they are both present in discourses and applied in practice.

2.2. Application of language policy: overt and covert mechanisms

Language policy is applied in a wide range of situations. Policy practices occur on many levels, starting with the individual, the family, and moving into public places, such as schools, and beyond to cities, regions, and the international level (cf. Shohamy 2006: 48). For instance, language policy includes decisions about which language(s) to use at home, with one’s children, with other family members, friends, when shopping in one’s neighborhood, or online in social media. In contrast, official institutions predominantly conform to the demands of de jure language policies. Nonetheless, they apply other forms of language practices as well, which are seldom recognized as language policies, and can thus be described as hidden agendas (Shohamy 2006, Schiffman 1996).

Generally, language policy is carried out through overt or covert mechanisms. Covert mechanisms refer to the less visible forms of language policy, for instance, the presence of street signs in specific languages or language tests in schools. By using both overt and
covert mechanisms, figures of authority (mostly but not exclusively) manipulate and control language use in order to foster language practices in their favor (cf. Shohamy 2006: xv). Shohamy (cf. 2006: xv) analyzes the effects of such mechanisms, and concludes that both overt and covert mechanisms are tools of language policy that might even affect democratic and personal rights.

The hidden language policy of the United States serves as an example of this (cf. Schiffman 1996: 14). Officially, the USA does not have an explicit language policy with regard to the English language; however, this is not the same as having no language policy at all. After all, the covert mechanisms at play that concern the English language form a *de facto* language policy. English is the dominant language used in all areas of life; it is the primary language of instruction everywhere from schools to sports. English is commonly recognized as the primary language of the United States even though it has no official status. This demonstrates how covert mechanisms influence *de facto* language policies, and, additionally, predispose individuals towards dominant language ideologies, in this case, the way people think about the status of English in the United States and the rights that English is assigned. Because languages are bound to political and social contexts as well as to historical circumstances, the mechanisms operating in favor of certain languages are biased. These mechanisms exercise agendas and thereby represent ideological aims of social or economic origin, or are related to questions of identity (cf. Shohamy 2006: 55ff.).

![Diagram](image.png)

**Figure 1** Covert mechanisms positioned between ideologies and *de facto* language policy (Shohamy 2006: 58).
Figure 1 presents covert mechanisms, such as language tests, languages in public spaces, ideologies, myths, rules and regulations, and language education. These derive from ideologies and result in a *de facto* language policy. Nearly all covert mechanisms mentioned in Figure 1 are related to language policies as they are present in schools. Both implicit and explicit language education policies are compelling in their guidance of language choices within the school system. Moreover, they have an impact on perceptions of language correctness, speakers’ linguistic choices in speaking and writing, definitions, and the perceived importance of certain languages. It can further determine criteria for language correctness, oblige people to adopt certain ways of speaking and writing, create definitions about language and especially determine the priority of certain languages in society and how these languages should be used, taught and learned (Shohamy 2006: 77).

The hidden agendas of both overt and covert mechanisms are in direct relation to positions of power in society. Even though overt and covert mechanisms are used widely when reproducing ideologies and discourses, people in positions of authority are entitled to more power (cf. Shohamy 2006: 54).

The primary focus of this project is on select covert mechanisms in schools, that is, the discourses that contribute to the formation of *de facto* language policies. This includes what people say about languages, how languages are represented within the school itself, as well as the ideologies transported via discourses. It will also take overt mechanisms—such as official language education policies—into account in order to compare the two, and possibly detect overlaps between overt and covert mechanisms at work.

### 2.3. Poststructuralist critical framework

#### 2.3.1. Poststructuralism and critical theory

This project follows a poststructuralist critical framework; thus, the aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the essential aspects of poststructuralist approaches. Empirical research on language policy has undergone three historical phases (cf. Ricento 2000). Accordingly, research conducted in the third phase has been influenced by critical and postmodern theories. One of these, poststructuralism is a school of thought that evolved
in France in the late 20th century. Its central ideas include an extensive critique of society and the significance of ideology; its main thinkers are considered to be Bourdieu, Derrida, and Foucault. In general, approaches in the field of poststructuralism follow a ‘critical’ stance. Language policy-research uses the term *critical* in different ways, as illustrated by Tollefson (cf. 2006: 42f.): First, research may be critical in the sense that it approaches traditional research in a critical way. Secondly, it may be research that is directed towards social change, for instance, investigations of bilingual education in the context of heritage language maintenance (e.g. Cummins 2005). Thirdly, critical theory covers research that is carried out in the framework of a critical approach:

Critical theory includes a broad range of work examining the processes by which systems of social inequality are created and sustained. Of particular interest is inequality that is largely invisible, due to ideological processes that make inequality seem to be the natural condition of human social systems. Critical theory highlights the concept of power, particularly in institutions, such as schools, involved in reproducing inequality. (Tollefson 2006: 43)

Thus, the intention of critical research is to question social inequalities that are commonly invisible, but powerful, since they are carried out through ideologies and in institutions.

An additional concern of both poststructuralist and critical approaches is to counter positivist methods and to concentrate in particular on issues that are disregarded by positivists. By following a positivist approach, researchers distance themselves from the group or individuals who are the subject(s) of the research. Poststructuralism, in contrast, involves the participants of the research project and is particularly interested in topics such as social inequality, power, and ideological processes.

McNamara (cf. 2012: 478) identifies three main differences between poststructuralism and other critical theories. First, new ways of understanding power and ideology were developed through poststructuralism and the works of Foucault, in particular. Power not only relates to structural categories of social class, but is also created through discursive constructions that shape the connections between sources of power and ideology. Discourses are continuously reproduced and internalized; they are present in every context, and derive from multiple sources. Secondly, poststructuralism focuses on social changes in terms of power, inequality, and justice. And thirdly, it disapproves of all systems, especially totalizing ones, and is consequently critical of postmodern positions. The following points
subsume the core ideas of critical theory used in research on language policy (cf. Tollefson 2006: 46f.):

− **Power:** Power expresses that someone has control over something or someone. It is performed in order to fulfill a set goal and is commonly associated with social positions, so that a superior social position equals more power. Consequently, power is an essential concept in language policy making and executing.

− **Struggle:** It is common for dominant groups to have power/control in society, while oppressed groups have less power/control. However, through struggles, oppressed groups aim to claim their interests and receive rights, while the goal of dominant groups is to maintain their privileges.

− **Hegemony and ideology:** Hegemonic practices are responsible for the unequal distribution of power-relations. They show how power remains in the possession of a few people, while ideologies are the invisible forces behind those relations.

− **Resistance:** Resistance describes how people become aware that they are choosing to use languages in contrast to certain expectations or requirements. This concerns individuals as well as communities, wherein some groups may resist language policies or dominant groups by consciously using their language variety and acknowledging it.

Some of the core ideas of critical theory are clearly observable in an educational context. Power and struggle, for instance, are specifically related to the school system and its handling of languages. In addition, these ideas are reflected in theories and works by the main thinkers of poststructuralism. Works that have become a fundamental part of critical theory and are therefore particularly relevant to this project include texts by Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1991, 2000) and Michel Foucault (e.g. 1980, 1995). Their ideas and theoretical viewpoints will guide the focus of this study and serve as a basis for the analysis that follows.
2.3.2. Bourdieu: Symbolic power, the linguistic marketplace, and habitus

According to Blommaert (2015: 1), Pierre Bourdieu can be considered “one of the most influential social-scientific thinkers of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st.” In the context of this study, his most important ideas are connected to the symbolic power of language, the linguistic marketplace, and the habitus. Bourdieu was also particularly concerned with the educational system and interested in the methodology of ethnography, both of which are fundamental to this thesis.

Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic power does not refer to a single manifestation of power, but rather to a form of unrestricted power that is exposed in everyday social life. Generally speaking, forms of power go beyond simple physical strength, but are transformed into power by a process of legitimization (cf. Thompson 2005: 25). In his work *Language and symbolic power*, Bourdieu (1991) describes the characteristic features of symbolic power. While we assume that power is constantly visible, symbolic power is an invisible force that can only be exercised when those carrying it out are unaware of it, and those who are controlled by the power comply with it. Furthermore, symbolic power is used to construct reality by creating meaning in the world (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 164ff.).

Furthermore, according to Bourdieu, those who are dominated give their consent to being in a subsidiary position (cf. Blackledge 2005: 208). By subordinating themselves to a process of power, an order of domination becomes the natural state. Besides, subordination happens unconsciously and without a purpose; on the whole, it is a reflex towards the social order being reproduced in discourses in society. Blackledge (cf. 2005: 208f.) further illustrates this by providing the example of a minority language-speaking parent in the school context; as they enter the school to talk with their child’s teacher, the parent is walking into a domain where their symbolic capital (that is, the minority language) is perceived as insufficient for conversations and is further associated with a lack of proficiency in the dominant language.

Dominance of one language over the other is part of the symbolic power that results from a discrepancy between those in dominant and those in dominated positions, and represents what Bourdieu (2000: 172) further labels the ‘structuring of structures’. With *structuring structures*, Bourdieu is referring to the social origin of acts of compliance and
obedience. Thus, social structures, which are strengthened by principles of the state, such as an order of division, are responsible for the development of separate groups in society.

The significance of language—with relation to symbolic power—becomes evident when contemplating Bourdieu’s concept of the linguistic marketplace. According to the linguistic marketplace, language is not exclusively a tool for transporting messages, but conveys an inherent purpose, namely the symbolic profit of language. By being adequately competent in the dominant language, one gains authority in society (cf. Bourdieu 2005: 73ff.). It is important to note that, Bourdieu’s approach criticizes structural linguistics and the dichotomies it has constructed, such as Chomsky’s (1965) notion of performance versus competence. Following Bourdieu, competence is the ability to find the right words suitable for the right situation (cf. Bourdieu 2005: 8, 47ff.). His view is in accordance with early sociolinguists such as Gumperz (1964) and Hymes (1972), as well as the current notion of plurilingualism and the linguistic repertoire.

As a result, knowledge consists of expertise of a particular language, and is seen in comparison to other linguistic abilities and practices. Bourdieu stresses that all linguistic practices are assessed in comparison to what is considered to be the legitimate practice. However, speakers in dominant positions are responsible for determining what is judged as legitimate (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 53). Consequently, the concept of the linguistic marketplace affects, in particular, those who do not share the linguistic capital of a context, or have not yet acquired it, but are in an environment where linguistic capital is imperative. Such situations may result in negative language attitudes since speakers might assume their language knowledge to be insufficient and/or start to devalue their own linguistic capital.

The central notions of capital and marketplace were originally associated with economic and material capital. Bourdieu (cf. 2002: 280) refers to economic theory by describing the principal aspect of capitalism, which is defined as an exchange of things aiming to maximize profit. Notwithstanding, there are other situations in which exchange occurs, for example, when immaterial forms of capital, such as cultural, linguistic, or social capital take on the role of exchangeable goods. Generally, these goods are characterized as uninteresting to the economy. However, all types of capital have economic aspects due to the fact that capital can be equated with power, and capital can be exchanged. Three different forms of capital are thus: economic capital (which can be converted into money and rights), cultural capital (which is difficult to convert, but can be established in the
form of educational qualifications), and social capital (which can—through interpersonal relationships—be converted into economic capital and social positions) (cf. Bourdieu 2002: 281). In general, Bourdieu distinguishes between economic and symbolic capital, whereas linguistic capital is one of the sub-types of cultural capital, a symbolic capital (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 72ff.).

With respect to the act of *structuring structures* and the principle of division mentioned above, Bourdieu sees symbolic violence as the force behind the division and creation of social structures. As a result of symbolic violence, processes of *othering* emerge:

> What is at stake here is the power of imposing a vision of the social world through principles of di-vision which, when they are imposed on a whole group, establish meaning and a consensus about meaning, and in particular about the identity and unity of the group, which creates the reality of the unity and the identity of the group. (Bourdieu 1991: 221)

Through symbolic violence and divisions, social groups and their unities, realities, and identities are created. At the same time, through the creation of certain groups, other groups are excluded or marginalized. In this way, *othering* likewise becomes an act of symbolic power. *Othering* affects the creation of different groups, and additionally, inherently represents power relations. Besides groups consisting of individuals, Bourdieu mentions institutions, such as the educational system, as examples of social entities that represent the realization of symbolic violence (cf. Bourdieu 2005: 27).

Another important concept established by Bourdieu is *habitus*. In short, *habitus* is defined as the sum of ‘dispositions’ that influence how individuals execute events and react to them (cf. Bourdieu 2005: 14), or:

> ... the structures characterizing a determinate class of conditions of existence produce the structures of the habitus, which in their turn are the basis of the perception and appreciation of all subsequent experiences. The habitus, product of history, produces individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history. (Bourdieu 1990: 54)

Habitus is linked with historical events; however, it is not static, nor does it rely on particular historical moments—rather, it is constantly reproduced in subsequent historical practices and can be described as durable (cf. Blommaert 2005a: 222). A practical application of the *habitus* concept can be seen in Gogolin’s (1994, 1997) investigation of the monolingual *habitus* in a multilingual school. Gogolin accepts *habitus* as a suitable
concept for understanding the current practices in the multilingual schools investigated, since, even though the teachers’ attitudes showed no explicit favor of monolingualism, their practices were anchored in the *habitus* of the school, which developed in the 19th century. Especially in situations of change—for instance, when the ethnolinguistic plurality in schools increases—a monolingual *habitus* becomes obvious (cf. Gogolin 1994: 262f.). Moreover, Gogolin’s study emphasizes that *habitus* incorporates both micro and macro structures, which is significant for an investigation of language in society.

Ultimately, aspects of Bourdieu’s work have been and still are crucial to the study of languages in society. In addition to Bourdieu’s theoretical input, he showed tremendous interest in research methodology in general and ethnography in particular (cf. Blommaert 2005a, 2015). Evidently, the key concepts of *habitus*, symbolic power, and the linguistic marketplace are appropriate for an ethnographic approach.

### 2.3.3. Foucault: discourse, knowledge, and power

The second major poststructuralist thinker that will be addressed here is Michel Foucault. His notion of discourse and his understanding of power have been exceptionally influential (cf. McNamara 2012: 475ff.), while the way he approaches language from a socio-semiotic viewpoint laid the groundwork for new foundations in sociolinguistic research (cf. Blommaert 2005: 22). *Discourse* is the main subject of Foucault’s reasoning and methodology. Following Foucault, the concept of *discourse* subsumes a collection of statements, which shape the way people think about things and act on them. Consequently, discourse describes what people know about the world, and is responsible for the way the world is perceived and how people behave in it (cf. Rose 2001: 136). Therefore, discourses provide restrictions on what is possible to know or not know (cf. Foucault 1970). Even though *discourse* mainly addresses spoken language, it also incorporates other semiotic activities, such as visual images, symbols, architecture, and so forth. Following Foucault, Blommaert (2005: 3) defines discourse as consisting of “[…] all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns and developments of use.” Consequently, this thesis has adapted the definition of *discourse* to encompass all forms of language-in-action in addition to any form-carrying semiotic meaning that shapes practices and ideologies.
In agreement with Foucault’s work, discourse is interpreted as a form of control and related to issues of power (cf. Rose 2001). Foucault observes the interplay between discourse, knowledge, and power and the various ways in which power is carried out. Accordingly, discourses are both powerful and productive since their mechanisms are to govern how people think and act, and thereby, ultimately shape the self-perception of individuals (cf. Rose 2001: 137f.). It is important to note here that Foucault understands power not as spreading from the top of society down, and controlling those at the bottom, but rather operating across the entirety of society (cf. Foucault 1978: 94f.). In short, power is performed by conveying discourses, while discourses are present at all levels of society. Foucault refers to the diverse discourses that exist and compete in society as resistance and points of resistance, stating that, “where there is power, there is resistance [...] a multiplicity of points of resistance” (Foucault 1978: 95). Thus, the concepts of discourse, knowledge, and power go hand in hand, and are undeniably embedded in diachronic as well as synchronic developments (cf. Blommaert 2005: 100).

Knowledge is connected to issues of both power and discourse. The term has been translated from Foucault’s original writings, in which a distinction between the two French words connaissance and savoir was made. Connaissance describes specific bodies of knowledge, like those referring to a discipline such as Biology. Savoir, on the other hand, refers to general knowledge, in other words, to the sum of all connaissance. It serves as a form of underlying knowledge, which is determined by historical conditions (cf. Foucault 1982: 15). The term knowledge thus includes the meanings of both French terms.

The interplay between knowledge and power is highly relevant since the execution of power produces knowledge, while, at the same time, knowledge continuously gives rise to power (cf. Foucault 1980: 52). Hence, power and knowledge correlate in the sense that they constantly affect one another:

We should admit rather that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. (Foucault 1995: 27)

In order to capture different forms of power, Foucault considers it necessary to understand knowledge and power in reference to regions, domains, and spaces. By analyzing spatial
connections, processes of knowledge and the effects of power can be observed (cf. Foucault 1980: 69). In his early works, Foucault (1967) used the term *heterotopia* to describe spaces that have an inherent meaning to them, following their own rules and norms. These spaces can be geographical or physical spaces, but they can also be abstract, such as the space of a phone call; that is, they are created by society and constantly reflect history as well as social conditions (cf. Foucault 2013: 11). Thus, Foucault’s notion of *space* draws on social circumstances, and sees spaces as immaterial places that are created through practices. To conclude, this thesis applies the concept of *discourse* according to Foucault’s (1980, 2013) framework, in addition to considering his basic notions of *knowledge* and *space*.

### 2.4. Superdiversity and superdiversity in schools

The notion of *superdiversity* first emerged in the field of migration studies (cf. Vertovec 2007, 2010) and has since been used increasingly in critical sociolinguistics. In the latter context, superdiversity refers to a state of complex ethnolinguistic plurality in areas that have experienced a rapid growth in diversity in comparison to their previous situations. Vertovec (2007) coined the term in the context of an investigation of the migration history of Great Britain. He noticed that earlier understandings of mobility were associated with a shared historical connection between two countries, such as colonialism. However, the development from early migration movements to current migration processes shows a continuously increasing complexity, due to the fact that people from many different countries—not only those that have a shared colonial history—immigrate. Furthermore, individual and general reasons for migration have evolved. Superdiversity is characterized by a dynamic interplay in terms of nationality, ethnicity, religion, language, and integration in host societies (cf. Vertovec 2010: 87).

Vertovec’s concept naturally correlates with the circumstances of a globalized world. As a result of technological and communicative advancements, there are a variety of reasons for which people maintain transnational contacts. While migration previously resulted in separation from one’s country of origin, it is nowadays possible to maintain transnational relationships between friends and family alive. Vertovec (2010: 89)
describes the phenomenon of transnationalism as “an inescapable fact of migration under contemporary conditions of globalization”.

Generally, there has also been a paradigm shift in both language and society, with the central concerns of researchers shifting towards mobility, dynamic changes, as well as social and historical embedding (cf. Blommaert & Rampton 2011: 3). This shift was initiated by the works of decisive linguistic anthropologists such as Gumperz and Hymes, as well as social thinkers like Bakhtin, Foucault, and Bourdieu. In the context of superdiversity, the shift in focus from homogeneity to heterogeneity is especially relevant. The main concerns of studies analyzing superdiversity are first, to provide revised definitions of concepts such as ‘language’, which argue against the idea of separate languages and see categorizations as dominant ideological constructs (see Jørgensen et al. 2011). Secondly, studies on superdiversity discuss the image of ‘nation’ and ‘a people’, from a position against the assumption of closed language communities, homogenous speech groups, and nations, while preferring the plurality of the linguistic repertoire (cf. Blommaert & Rampton 2011: 4f.). Thirdly, studies are concerned with language practices that consider language as a social communicative practice, which is the core issue of ethnographic research in critical sociolinguistics as well. Consequently, Blommaert and Rampton recommend an ethnographic approach to superdiversity (cf. 2011: 15). Superdiversity, therefore, serves as both a feature with which to describe society and, in addition, as a theoretical and methodological perspective (cf. Blommaert & Rampton 2011). With respect to the paradigm shift, Blommaert (2013: 2f.) recognizes ‘uncertainty’ as the center of this approach. In other words, superdiversity does not entail straightforward predictions about the subject or context of research, but is instead a fluctuating and expanding concept. He further explains that this results in two central methodological issues: 1) complex, hybrid, or other unusual characteristics of the research subject or field are subsequently accepted as conventional, and 2) as a result, an ethnographic approach appears to be ideal, since understanding language practices as part of the context is the main goal of the superdiversity perspective. Blommaert (2013) argues for using the superdiversity paradigm even beyond ‘classic’ superdiverse contexts.

Based on superdiversity, many authors argue against an understanding of languages as distinct and ideological constructs. For instance, Jørgensen et al. (2011) analyze the idea of languages as distinct units such as ‘German’ and ‘English’ by following the notion
of a superdiverse society and its inherently diverse language practices. Their analysis considered language use in the conversations of adolescents, in which they discovered that their language use could hardly be classified, and that students, for instance, mixed features of standard Danish, youth Danish, Turkish, and Armenian. Jørgensen et al. (cf. 2011: 23) conclude that language practices are divided into distinct units as sociocultural abstractions, which, however, avoids reflection on actual language use. The authors furthermore establish the concept of polylanguaging, and they argue for an understanding of languages in terms of features rather than as separate languages. They agree with Makoni and Pennycook (2007), who consider languages to be sociocultural and ideological constructs. With respect to superdiverse societies, Jørgensen et al. (2011: 28f.) see ‘features’ as opposed to ‘languages’ as suitable categories for analyzing and describing language use. Their proposed concept of polylanguaging states that language use is characterized by a diversity of language features, which can be ascribed to different languages, and that speakers reach their communicative goals by drawing on the variety of their linguistic repertoire, following a polylingualism norm (cf. 2011: 34). Therefore, the authors disapprove of terms such as monolingualism and multilingualism, since they reflect the same assumptions of languages as categorizable and countable.

Creese and Blackledge (2010) agree with the notion above. They too investigate linguistic practices, but focus on how individuals negotiate their linguistic resources in a superdiverse society. Their study draws on ethnographic research, with a focus on language use among children in schools. The authors emphasize the importance of reflecting on translanguaging practices, as well as historical and geographical conditions:

What we find as we look closely at language practices in superdiverse settings is that new repertoires are emerging as people use linguistic items from a range of sources to make meaning. […] In developing a sociolinguistics of superdiversity we should look closely at practices of translanguaging, and consider the histories, geographies, and indexical orders which shape them. (Creese & Blackledge 2010: 570)

The notion of translanguaging is similar to polylanguaging, and, in particular, describes the complete use of a person’s linguistic repertoire, while rejecting social and political restrictions made with reference to the categorization of languages (cf. Otheguy et al. 2015: 281). Jørgensen et al. (2011), as well as Creese and Blackledge (2010), address the issue of incorporating the concept of superdiversity into the field of sociolinguistics. In general,
sociolinguistic studies, which include the concept of superdiversity, observe language practices in diverse societies, the correlation between superdiversity and identity, and superdiversity in urban and public spaces, such as schools. Recent studies have concentrated on exploring superdiversity in the school. A special issue of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (2016, issue 241) is concerned with the topic of superdiversity in US schools. The issue discusses topics that have arisen since or parallel to the *multilingual turn* (May 2014), which refers to a move towards “conceptualizations of languaging as fluid social practices that can be flexibly adapted by language users to fit their particular needs” (Flores 2016: 1). In accordance with the multilingual turn, reconceptualizations, such as polylanguaging (Jørgensen et al. 2011), translanguaging (Otheguy et al. 2015, García & Li 2014) and metrolingualism (Pennycook & Otsuji 2015) have become significant.

In practice, superdiversity can guide an approach to investigations of schools with complex ethnolinguistic plurality among the students. A recent study by Malsbary (2016) presents ways in which qualitative research can contribute to investigations of superdiversity in schools and vice versa. Thus, Malsbary (2016) applies both horizontal and vertical research methods. Researching horizontally means carefully choosing participants, so that their language use can provide thorough insight into language practices in a superdiverse context. Researching vertically is concerned with language management and relations of power in the same complex environment. In this approach, superdiversity serves as an instrument for describing the research context, while, at the same time, it is a theoretical heuristic concept – especially useful in qualitative research – that aims at describing the complex relation of social practices and ethnolinguistic backgrounds (cf. Malsbary 2016: 10).

The focus of Malsbary’s study lies on investigating how qualitative research can grasp the superdiversity in classrooms, and on discovering suitable methods of displaying different kinds of diversity that influence language practices (cf. Malsbary 2016: 13). At the same time, it objects to studies in the field of education that are limited to single groups and often attribute groups to specific languages or ethnicities. As Malsbary (2016) notes, single group studies are quite problematic, since they predominantly rely on one decisive descriptor, for instance, ethnicity. In cases where language is exclusively linked to ethnicity, the author refers to what Paris and Alim (2014) call ‘one to one mapping’. Since young people are actively involved in developments of globalization, Malsbary concludes
that qualitative researchers investigating superdiversity must consider affiliations in a holistic sense (cf. Malsbary 2016: 17). For her horizontal approach, Malsbary selected key informants with different affiliations in terms of their ethnicity, language, and gender, but who also, nonetheless, belong to transnational peer groups sharing certain features and interests. Through her key informants, she obtained knowledge about her participants’ language practices, got access to the peer groups, and gained information about the complex transcultural practices of young people in superdiverse schools (cf. Malsbary 2016).

In Malsbary’s work, issues of power and racism are investigated by means of a vertical approach, based on Vavrus and Bartlett (2006). Her aim is to connect micro-level activities with social structures and policies, in order to observe the application of policies in a specific site, such as the school. Malsbary’s results show that the school values multiculturalism and interactions between participants of different ethnicities, while at the same time, it excludes multilingualism and multinationalism by following an English-only policy (cf. Malsbary 2016: 26). Furthermore, her study demonstrates the benefits of including the concept of superdiversity in research of extremely diverse contexts. This approach allows a holistic perspective on language practices, while also offering the possibility to reflect critically on the situation. With respect to its application in further fields, Malsbary (2016: 33) notes the significance of research in this area, “[…] this work must be done if we wish to accurately document the problems and possibilities of schooling in a world diversifying through immigration within contexts of persistent discriminatory policy.”

In the context of this thesis, the concept of superdiversity is significant because the schools can both be characterized as superdiverse, and they are both challenged by aspects of globalization and transnationalism. On the one hand, pupils and teachers represent the diversity of today’s society with different ethnicities, migration histories, religions, and languages. On the other, superdiversity challenges notions of homogeneity, integration, and migration. Discourses on superdiversity indicate that there is a negotiation process with regard to schooling in an extremely diverse context. Moreover, a theoretical approach of superdiversity is in accordance with poststructuralist theories, as one of the prevailing concepts in critical sociolinguistic research.
2.5. The study of multilingualism in schools

This section presents the recent research projects that have had an impact on the conceptualization and execution of this project. In general, most of the studies mentioned below are attributed to the field of educational linguistics, a research area that draws on linguistics and other social sciences to examine topics that connect the fields of language and education. Educational linguistics evolved in the 1970s as an area of research associated with applied linguistics, with works by Bernard Spolsky (e.g. 1978). On the whole, the field of educational linguistics incorporates theoretical linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropological linguistics, and discourse analysis (cf. Hult 2008: 16). Usually, problems or challenges in practice are the main reasons for carrying out research in educational linguistics. Thus, educational linguistics can be defined as solution-oriented and adhering to critical thinking, which is a central aspect of poststructuralist theories. Due to the vast amount of research carried out in the field of educational linguistics (e.g. Tollefson 1995, Little et al. 2014), and language policy (e.g. Hornberger 2002, Hult 2014), the discussion in this section is limited to a few decisive studies that have been conducted in the recent years. Below, this section presents some exemplary studies of similar topics that used a similar methodology and/or were carried out in similar contexts to this thesis.

The volume by Teresa McCarty (2011) collects studies that combine a critical ethnography of language use with research on language policy. The overall aim of these studies was to analyze the emergence of de facto language policies in school contexts through overt as well as covert processes. The authors’ approaches are described as critical since they investigate “policy as a practice of power” (Levinson et al. 2009: 767) from micro to macro levels, and, in particular, focus on forms of inequality. For instance, the contribution by Combs et al. (2011) concentrates on de facto language policies in US-American schools in Arizona, close to the Mexican border. The authors pay attention to forms of (in)equality and (in)justice that refer to discourses on language and immigration, and consequently, lead to unofficial language policies. Specifically, Combs et al. (2011) apply the methodology of critical ethnography, which means that research and practice are closely linked, the research process is embedded in the context, and that critical ethnography leads to social

³ For an overview on the emergence of educational linguistics as a field see Hult (2008).
change. The authors present two interrelated case studies: the first is concerned with discussions in court, which debated the rights of undocumented students to receive free education. Based on this debate, the researchers conducted an ethnographic case study in two schools, in order to better understand the impact of the case. The second case study was carried out in an elementary school with an English immersion program, located in a predominantly Spanish-speaking community (cf. Combs et al. 2011: 189f.). Combs et al. (2011) used a number of ethnographic data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and video sessions. Their findings present how language ideologies supported by the state are practiced in reality, and how they receive support by certain pedagogies. In this case, the language ideology declaring the importance of acquiring English was of particular interest. The ideology proclaims that learning English in school is of the highest priority, while other linguistic resources are neglected.

In their first study, Combs et al. (2011) emphasize the role of the symbolic violence used by the state to uphold its English-only policy. This leads to the unjust treatment of children with low proficiency in English, which is manifested in the positioning of such pupils in the lowest levels of the curriculum, teaching them English via poor pedagogies, while also disallowing them to use their linguistic resources and, therefore, their previous knowledge on subjects. The second case study illustrates how human agency can contribute to challenging the dominant language policy, e.g., by displaying ways of including home languages that are potentially beneficial. In practice, this means that the teachers draw on a pedagogy, in which using Spanish, the home language of most children in the school, fosters the teaching and learning of academic subjects (cf. Combs et al. 2011: 199f.). In sum, Combs et al.’s (2011) study stresses the interplay between dominant language policies, practices, and ideologies. Their ethnographic, critical, and holistic approach facilitates the understanding of complex practices in schools with regard to language policies as well as pedagogical tasks.

Another noteworthy study examines classrooms in the United States, which use an English/Khmer bilateral approach (cf. Skilton-Sylvester 2003). In an empirical study, Skilton-Sylvester (2003) analyzed methods of policy-making in relation to minority languages in a Cambodian middle school. She combines policy-making and ideologies with actual practices in the classroom: “A crucial part of the argument this paper is making has to do with the interplay of policy making and the ideologies that support those policies.
at multiple levels” (Skilton-Sylvester 2003: 10). The author’s focus lies on the acquisition of English, and especially on how ESL (English as a second language) teachers negotiate their concerns. Hence, the results reveal the power of discourses on de facto language policies, and show how students and teachers reproduce the official rights of the minority language in their classroom practices. In other words, the participants engage in language practices that reflect what is permissible according to legal regulations, and apply them in the classroom.

Skilton-Sylvester (2003: 14ff.) further discovered that teachers produce their own language-policies on micro levels in the classroom, which are based on common language ideologies. The conclusion of this paper is that policy-making on the micro level is insufficient, and that teachers ought to expand their policy-making outside of the classroom in order to provide better support for biliteracy in Khmer and English (cf. Skilton-Sylvester 2003: 22). Skilton-Sylvester’s (2003) investigation is beneficial for this thesis because it presents how micro and macro levels interact, how dominant discourses are reproduced, and how teachers influence language policies initiated at micro levels.

At this point, let us turn to one recent study carried out in Austria, which investigates linguistic diversity from a similar standpoint. Purkarthofer (2016) explores the spatial aspect of multilingualism in a bilingual minority language school in Carinthia, Austria. She draws on the concept of space to conduct research on multilingualism in order to explicate how language policies become part of the school environment. Her study determines the role of space in conveying discourses on languages in the school, as well as the negotiation and construction of space in a multilingual school. In addition to being situated within the school building, language regimes are also distributed via discourses. Purkarthofer uses a combination of methods including ethnography, interviews, group discussions, and particularly drawings and photographs produced by pupils. By interviewing her participants about their own drawings and photographs, the author actively includes her research participants in the research process. In general, her approach follows a poststructuralist critical framework.

Last but not least, Pietikäinen (2012) uses an innovative approach, including active participation by children, to investigate multilingualism in an indigenous Sámi-language community in Finland. Even though this study is not located solely in a school context, its remarkable ethnographic and visual approach are worth discussing here. On the basis of
observations in a school, in which Pietikäinen (2012: 166f.) noticed that Sámi children speak Sámi with their teachers, but return to speaking Finnish with their peers during breaks, the author carried out a multimodal and interactive study, consisting of observations, questionnaires, written stories, photographs, and drawings. The focus of the study was on the relation between identity and language, as well as the children’s perception of the minority language and languages in general. By including the children collaboratively in the research process—they were asked to take photos that represent the Sámi language in their eyes—Pietikäinen was able to gain insight into the children’s individual experiences and attitudes: “The photos can be seen to reflect these children’s sense of the Sámi language environment and its place in their lives.” (Pietikäinen 2012: 171).

Pietikäinen concludes that her method—labeled visual ethnography—is incredibly useful when participants are asked to reflect on their language experiences. Furthermore, it offers ways of representing multilingual identities and assists participants in expressing their affinity for the linguistic repertoire (cf. Pietikäinen 2012: 177f.). Thus, Pietikäinen’s (2012) case study is in alignment with the notion of linguistic repertoire as flexible, diverse, and ever changing, as discussed in Chapter 2.1, a notion that will also guide this project.

Similarly, to the above-mentioned studies, this thesis will use a combination of ethnographic methods to both obtain data and explore the visual space. Additionally, I will take into consideration the interplay between language policy on the macro level and practices that happen on the micro level. Moreover, this study will not be limited to one group of speakers, but will incorporate speakers with a variety of linguistic and ethnic affiliations. Thus, I aim to portray the current superdiversity in schools, and to avoid making undesirable restrictions in terms of ethnicity or language, following Malsbary’s (2016) proposition.
3. The research field

3.1. Overview

This chapter will frame the context of the following study; the first section provides an overview of the ethnic and linguistic diversity of pupils in Austrian schools, as documented in statistical data. Section 3.2 moves on to inform the reader of de jure language education policies in Austria as regard the language of instruction, foreign languages, and minority languages. In addition, it offers some critical remarks on existing language education policies. Finally, Section 3.3 captures a view of the discourses on language education policies prevalent in media throughout 2015 and 2016. It is safe to say that these discourses had and still have a significant impact on public discussions of ethnolinguistic diversity, both in public and in schools.

3.2. Ethnolinguistic diversity in Austrian schools

This section briefly describes the ethnolinguistic situation in Austrian schools, as it is portrayed in official statistical data. According to the Austrian Statistics Agency (Statistik Austria 2015), approximately 25% of children in primary schools have a vernacular language other than German. In secondary schools, this number varies depending on the type of school: 21.8% in Hauptschulen, 28.2% in Neuen Mittelschulen, and 17% in Allgemeinen höheren Schulen (AHS). Generally, the most common languages among pupils who speak a vernacular language other than German are Turkish and the languages of countries that were formerly part of Yugoslavia (i.e., Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian) (cf. Statistik Austria 2015a: 24). However, public media, such as the Medienschwerpunkte, have generalized this number to claim that a total of 20% of all Austrian pupils have a first language other than German (cf. Medienschwerpunkte 2014).

Statistical data in Styria notes that in the 2014/2015 school year, 151,457 pupils
attended school in Styria, of which 20,185 claimed that they speak a language other than German. According to these numbers, 11% of the students in secondary higher education schools speak a language other than German (cf. Statistik Austria 2015). Furthermore, as documented by the Statistics Agency, many pupils who speak other languages than German—which is often associated with having a family history of immigration—do not proceed to secondary schools where they can receive university admission certificates, but rather attend vocational schools or begin work as an apprentice (cf. Statistik Austria 2015a: 28). The individual differences in students’ educational choices are not within the scope of this paper; however, they do influence the diversity of pupils at individual schools, and thus also the circumstances under which teaching is carried out in each type of schools.

In general, it is imperative to consider statistical data carefully, and to bear in mind that the conclusions that can be drawn from it depend on how the data was collected and the way it was prepared. For instance, there may be inconsistencies between the sampling and classification strategies at various levels of government. When it comes to collecting data on language use, a variety of terms are used to categorize languages other than German as well as their speakers. The Austrian Statistics Agency records information on the **Umgangssprache**, which can be translated in an international context as *spoken language* (cf. Arel 2004: 94). School statistics refer to the feature of *spoken language* as “die im Alltag gebrauchte Sprache der Schülerin bzw. des Schülers/the language pupils use in everyday life” (cf. Statistik Austria 2014: 26). In contrast, the last national census, which was carried out in 2001, defines *Umgangssprache* as the language that is usually used in private domains such as with family, relatives and friends (cf. Statistik Austria 2005: 8).

Data collection on language practices draws on a variety of categories to distinguish between languages. However, Busch (2016: 2) notes that, by assigning speakers to certain categories, language ideologies are implicated. Thus, the way languages and people are categorized in official data contributes significantly to the ways in which society thinks about languages and their speakers. At this point, it is crucial to remember that statistic agencies follow specific guidelines and recommendations in order to provide comparability for other countries. For example, the European Statisticians Conference (cf. United Nations 2006: 96) recommends that multilingual countries collect data on mother tongue, main language, as well as knowledge of language; in order to generate a set of data suitable for illustrating the diverse linguistic repertoire of their people.
In Austrian schools, the process of documentation has been carried out according to the *Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz* (cf. Bundeskanzleramt 2002) since 2003. Thus, schools are obliged to collect data on their pupils and transmit this data to Statistik Austria. The data is then further used by decision-makers in education policy, and consulted by international statistics organizations, including OECD, EUROSTAT, and UNESCO (cf. Statistik Austria 2014). In general, the school staff is responsible for obtaining the data through questionnaires upon enrolment at the school. Per the *Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz*, it is possible to state that one speaks a maximum of three languages. These are entered into the database with 1- to 2-character codes, assembled on a list, for example, D for German, TR for Turkish, and BO for Bosnian.

Overall, the instructions of the *Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz* indicate that for monolingual pupils, the language selected shall be recorded as ‘mother tongue 1’, whereas in the case of multilingual pupils, the L1 is entered as ‘mother tongue 1’ while the following fields ‘mother tongue 2’ and ‘mother tongue 3’ should record other languages spoken daily (cf. Statistik Austria 2014: 3). When in doubt of the rank order, the language first mentioned by parents should be considered as ‘mother tongue 1’ (cf. Statistik Austria 2014: 3f.). As a result, the data recorded depends on the parents’ willingness to reveal their child’s knowledge of another language, and on parents’ as well as teachers’ habits when ranking languages. Furthermore, it is possible for languages that are mentioned first but not considered to be mother tongues to become registered as such. Besides, a hierarchical listing from one to three implies that the languages are not of equal ranking, and inherently suggests “most important language versus other languages” rather than what it is supposed to record (“first language and following languages”).

The Austrian Statistics Agency offers a list of 83 languages, including such ambiguous categories as, other African languages, other American languages, other Asian languages, other European languages, and other languages (cf. Statistik Austria 2016). In a recent article, Busch (2016: 7) describes how the approach of naming languages can be problematic since certain languages are often subsumed into one category without explanation (for instance, ‘Asian languages’), while others are not, and some languages are identified with states, while others are not. She goes on to say that political changes have an impact on the establishment of new language categories, for example, the differentiation between the languages of former Yugoslavia, and the addition of minority languages, such as Romani.
and Austrian Sign language. Busch (cf. 2016: 9) proposes that the concept of language and, consequently, language categorizations need to constantly be adjusted to social and political demands. For this reason, she identifies two problematic issues with language classification: the classification of languages as such, and the assignment of speakers to those classifications.

In the case of the schools investigated in this research project, it was possible to obtain access to the schools’ data on the spoken languages of their pupils. In accordance with the points mentioned above, it is obvious that the figures taken from statistical data collected in schools should be understood as a rough outline, not necessarily reflecting the linguistic repertoires actually in practice. Nonetheless, it is important to mention the methods schools use to document the linguistic diversity of their pupils and to consider the results of that documentation.

3.3. Language education policy in Austria

This section provides an overview of current language education policies in Austria. Language education policies are official policies, which determine the teaching of foreign languages, autochthonous languages, and allochthonous languages, as well as the language(s) of instruction. In cooperation with the Council of Europe, the Austrian Language Education Policy Profile was published in 2009, after being approved by the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture and the Federal Ministry for Science and Research in November 2008. As part of this process, experts, decision-makers and stakeholders analyzed and reflected upon the situation in Austria concerning language learning, teaching, and language education policies (cf. ÖSZ et al. 2009). The published profile provides insight into how languages are taught and learned from kindergarten to University, and also considers adult education, early language learning, research, and teacher training. It further addresses bilingual childrearing, the languages of neighboring countries, and support for children whose home language is not German, and provides recommendations for further language education policies. In the context of this project, I will focus on language education policies in compulsory schools, and the support that is offered to children speaking a language other than German, in addition to highlighting
some critical remarks made by sociolinguists. According to Article 8, paragraph 1 of the Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz, German is the national language (cf. §8(1) Bundeskanzleramt 1930). Thus, German is the language of instruction in schools, as specified in Article 16 of the Schulunterrichtsgesetz:

§16. (1) Unterrichtssprache ist die deutsche Sprache, soweit nicht für Schulen, die im besonderen für sprachliche Minderheiten bestimmt sind, durch Gesetz oder durch zwischenstaatliche Vereinbarungen anderes vorgesehen ist.

§16. (1) The language of instruction is German, with the exception of schools that are specifically provided for linguistic minorities, and schools that have been specified as otherwise by law or bilateral agreement. (translation by the author)

The Schulunterrichtsgesetz also notes that it is legal to use a different language as the working language in private schools (§16(2)(3) Bundeskanzleramt 1986).

In addition to the languages that pupils bring with them from home, the syllabus includes ‘Fremdsprachen’ (foreign languages) that are taught via language learning classes. Schools give their students the possibility to learn a variety of languages; in fact, the syllabus for foreign languages in secondary higher education schools (henceforth referred to as AHS/Allgemeine Höhere Schule) states that the following languages may be offered as foreign languages: English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Czech, Slovene, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Hungarian, Croatian, Slovakian, and Polish. In practice, nearly all schools choose to offer English, French, Italian, Spanish and/or Russian (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung 2016).

Eurydice and Eurostat’s (2012) data on language teaching in schools provides comprehensive information on language teaching in European countries. In addition to the list above, Eurydice and Eurostat mention the following foreign languages as included in the Austrian school syllabus⁴: English, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Latin, Turkish, Polish, Classical Greek, Croatian, Hungarian, Slovak, Romani, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Czech, and Slovene (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 48). The list provided by Eurydice and Eurostat comprises languages that are designated by official documents as possible foreign languages in the syllabus. It includes languages that have regional and/or minority status

⁴ Please note that the listing by Eurydice and Eurostat (2012) subsumes primary and secondary education, whereas the listing by the Bundesministerium für Bildung (2016) refers only to secondary education.
in Austria and incorporates classical languages, such as Latin and classical Greek. With regard to classical languages, some category ISCED\(^5\) 2 and 3 schools, which are for lower and upper secondary education, consider classical Latin to be a core curriculum, while classical Greek is a core curriculum option exclusively in upper secondary education (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 52). Because AHS predominantly focus on academic studies, Latin and/or Classical Greek are compulsory subjects in this type of school.

The lists and numbers presented so far concern the implementation of languages in the official syllabus. However, they do not tell us much about pupils’ actual participation when it comes to attending foreign language classes. Nevertheless, Eurydice provides detailed data on this subject: In primary education, the majority of pupils learn one foreign language, with 98% of all pupils opting for English (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 59f.). In ISCED level 2, 99.6% learn English, 4.7% French, 0.7% Spanish, and 0.3% Russian, while in ISCED level 3, 99.4% learn English, 44.2% French, 15.1% Spanish and 3.1% Russian (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 78). Please note that the overlap in percentages results from the fact that some pupils learn more than one language. These numbers refer to languages that are considered foreign languages in the syllabus, but do not provide information on elective subjects or lessons taken outside of school.

To conclude, even though there are a variety of foreign language classes offered, in practice, Austria resembles many other countries, which offer fewer languages. In general, a small percentage of pupils attend classes in languages other than prestigious European languages like English, French, and Spanish (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 49). Occasionally, courses in the languages of neighboring countries or immigrants’ home countries are offered as either compulsory or optional subjects. However, English is the most learned language, and English is most frequently at the center of attention in terms of language education, with the syllabus aimed at giving pupils a high proficiency in it (cf. ÖSZ et al. 2009: 17).

Furthermore, the profile by ÖSZ et al. (2009) addresses the language education policy of official minority languages in Austria. Based on the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages\(^6\) Austria recognizes six autochthonous languages as part of the country’s diverse ethno-linguistic history; these are Croatian, Slovene, Hungarian,

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\(^5\) ISCED stands for “international standard classification for education”.

\(^6\) cf. Council of Europe, http://www.coe.int/minlang
Czech, Slovak, and Romani. These minority languages are sometimes implemented in geographic areas with minority language communities; however, language policies vary depending on the administrative responsibilities involved and the number of minority speakers. In Burgenland and Carinthia, the incorporation of minority language proposals appears to be well established, with significant numbers of pupils attending bilingual schools/classes, and primary schools offering bilingual programs (cf. ÖSZ et al. 2009: 46ff.).

Education laws (Schulgesetze) have been enacted for Slovene in Carinthia, and Croatian and Hungarian in Burgenland, which make it possible for pupils to receive bilingual education throughout their time at school. However, there are no de jure regulations for Romani, Czech, Slovak, or Austrian Sign language (cf. de Cillia 2010: 248). Austrian Sign Language was recognized as an independent language in 2005; nonetheless, no additional specifications of education policies for Austrian Sign Language have been established (cf. §8, Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz Bundeskanzleramt 1930, de Cillia & Wodak 2006: 59f.).

As far as allochthonous languages—that is, the languages of ‘recent’ immigrants—are concerned, the school’s role in social and political developments towards a diverse society forms a central idea of the curriculum. It states that:

Wenn Schülerinnen und Schüler mit unterschiedlichen kulturellen Hintergründen—z.B. unterschiedlichen Muttersprachen—gemeinsam unterrichtet werden, ist neben der sicheren Verwendung der Unterrichtssprache der Begegnung der Kulturen im Alltagsleben besonderes Augenmerk zu widmen. (Bundesministerum für Bildung, 2016a: 2)

If pupils with different cultural backgrounds—for instance, different mother tongues—attend the same classes, besides focusing on the confident use of the language of instruction, special attention must be devoted to the encounter between cultures in everyday life. (Bundesministerum für Bildung, 2016a: 2, translation by the author)

The educational system offers pupils the possibility to learn one’s home language via lessons in mother tongue (muttersprachlicher Unterricht). This model of home language education emerged in the 1970s in order to enable children from immigrant parents working in Austria (so-called Gastarbeiter) to master their first language. At first, the aim was to provide the children with basic knowledge of their first language, so that they could

⁷ For a detailed description of the history and practice of education in Slovene in Carinthia see Busch 2008.

⁸ Please also refer to http://www.schule-mehrsprachig.at/
re-enter the school system of their home countries, in case their parents re-emigrated. However, most immigrants stayed in Austria; thus, the model was adapted in the 1990s (cf. de Cillia 2003: 29f.).

Currently, *lessons in mother tongue* are language classes offered as voluntary exercises or elective subjects. Mother tongue lessons are available in a total of 25 languages, though whether or not lessons actually take place depends on the availability of teachers instructing the language in question, as well as the number of pupils enrolled. In the 2013/14 school year, 37 teachers held 505 lessons in 14 languages to a total of 2,686 pupils. In alphabetical order, the taught languages were Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Chechen, Chinese, French, Hungarian, Persian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovene, Spanish, and Turkish (cf. Garnitschnig 2014: 7, Çinar 1998: 23).

In the case of *lessons in mother tongue*, language education policy clearly distinguishes between foreign language and home language education. First, *lessons in mother tongue* are not included in the syllabus even though some languages are also considered foreign languages and, second, lessons are dislocated from the schools. In practice, lessons take place in a few selected schools, so that attending lessons in mother tongue entails a necessary separation from daily school routines.

Moving on, I will present some critical remarks concerning the implementation of home languages in Austrian language education policy. First, home languages are virtually invisible in the syllabus, which provides few opportunities to learn or use other languages than the most common ones in a school context. With respect to the language learning practices of migrants, Krumm (cf. 2008: 7f.) notes that policy and practice usually refer exclusively to migrants’ acquisition of German as a second language, and avoid the significant role of home languages in this context. As a result, pupils’ acquisition of German frequently occurs as a ‘duty’ rather than in natural contexts (cf. Krumm 2008: 7f.). However, language proficiency in one’s home language, and feeling comfortable using it, are necessary prerequisites for further language acquisition (cf. Gogolin & Neumann 2009, Little et al. 2014) and the development of personal and social identity (cf. Oksaar 2003).

Krumm refers to the language ideologies underlying multilingual education policies, which are described by Hornberger (2002) as an ideological paradox. The ideological paradox in multilingual education refers to the fact that, on the one hand, multiple programs exist in order to support multilingual education, but, on the other, migrants’
existing multilingualism is ignored. As a consequence, a common discourse on language prestige is strengthened, namely, that certain languages (such as English) are worth learning, while others (such as migrant languages) are less worthy of attention. Krumm (2008: 9) emphasizes that this paradox can be viewed in language education policies in the same way that lessons in mother tongue are marginalized, in the sense that they are extra-curricular and limited to pupils of particular home languages. Nonetheless, language policies and language education policies are important with regard to communicating language ideologies. If language education policies do not address societal multilingualism, they convey the meaning that multilingualism is of no value to society (cf. Krumm 2008: 13). Since this is the current attitude in the educational context, Krumm suggests a broad approach towards public awareness of multilingualism, recommending:

Die Nutzung und Wertschätzung der MigrantInnen- und Minderheitensprachen zum Beispiel durch ihre öffentlichen Sichtbar- und Hörbarmachen, ihre Anerkennung als eine wichtige Kompetenz, die MigrantInnen mitbringen, trägt zur Schaffung eines sprachenfreundlichen Klimas bei […] (Krumm 2008: 13)

The use and appreciation of migrant and minority languages, for instance, by making them visible and audible for the public; their recognition as an important competence, which is brought along by migrants, contributes to the creation of a language-friendly environment […] (Krumm 2008: 13, translation by the author)

Concerning the implementation of children’s diverse linguistic repertoires in Austrian schools, we need to return to the Language Education Policy Profile (ÖSZ et al. 2009). The report not only illustrates positions on the importance of the language of instruction, but also addresses the inclusion of pupils’ first languages as a mechanism for successful plurilingualism (cf. ÖSZ et al. 2009: 41). The following statements taken from the syllabus for AHS (Bundesministerium für Bildung 2016a) illustrate educational concerns regarding pupils’ ethnolinguistic plurality:

in besonderer Weise sprachlich und kulturell geprägt sind. Wenn die Begegnung mit anderen Kulturen und Generationen sowie die sprachliche und kulturelle Vielfalt in unserer eigenen Gesellschaft als bereichernd erfahren wird, ist auch ein Grundstein für Offenheit und gegenseitige Achtung gelegt. (Bundesministerium für Bildung 2016a: 3)

To a great extent, language competence determines one’s ability to express, think, communicate and act. Every subject should empower pupils by using language—for instance descriptive language—to use and expand their cognitive, emotional, social, and creative capacities. Dealing with different social conditions facilitates the insight that one’s worldview and thought patterns are formed in a specific way by language and culture. If encounters with other cultures and generations, as well as the linguistic and cultural diversity in our society, are experienced as life enhancing, a foundation for openness and mutual respect is laid. (Bundesministerium für Bildung 2016a: 3, translation by the author)

The above excerpt from the syllabus focuses on positive interactions between other cultures and generations as a means to foster the perception of linguistic and cultural diversity as an enriching contribution to society. As further mentioned by the syllabus, one didactic principle appears to provide an approach to pursuing this goal in practice, which is referred to as intercultural learning:

Intercultural learning is not only limited to learning about other cultures. Rather, it encompasses collective learning, and a collective understanding, experience, and creation of cultural values. It is also about piquing interest and curiosity in cultural differences, in order to present not only cultural unity, but also diversity as valuable experiences. [...] Different conditions shall be considered. Any bi- or multilingualism shall be received positively and pupils shall be encouraged to reasonably introduce knowledge of their mother tongue into the class. (Bundesministerium für Bildung 2016a: 5, translation by the author, highlighted by the author)
The last sentence of this quote, stating that pupils should be encouraged to “reasonably introduce knowledge of their mother tongue into the class”, is of particular interest since it refers to the possibility to actively include pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires. In practice, some schools have incorporated subjects such as ‘intercultural learning’ into their curricula. However, Fleck (cf. 2003: 69) argues that by limiting the didactic principle of intercultural learning to specific lessons, teachers of other subjects are virtually relieved of the task of incorporating topics on intercultural learning and multilingualism into their lessons. Thus, the didactic principle of intercultural learning is not to introduce an overarching approach to all classes, but instead makes it one subject among many others.

Lastly, this section will report some criticism with regard to an imbalance between foreign languages and home languages in Austrian language education policy and the Austrian educational system. Fleck (2003) points out that, even though the number of foreign language classes offered has been expanded, the benefits of students learning their home languages in an educational context have not yet become common knowledge among teachers. Concerning foreign language classes, Fleck (cf. 2003: 68) observes that as long as only one foreign language can be selected in lower secondary classes, English remains the primary foreign language chosen by pupils. To illustrate the difficulties resulting from this, let us assume, for instance, that a student chooses Bosnian as a foreign language in lower secondary school, but then transfers to a different school that does not offer classes in Bosnian. As a result, problems in terms of integrating into other foreign language classes are likely to emerge. To avoid situations like this, most students choose English even when other language options are provided. Thus, the demand for other foreign language classes shrinks, and the offering is reduced. Fleck (cf. 2003: 69) concludes that pedagogy in societies with a growing ethnolinguistic diversity relies on three pillars: support for the national language, support for the home language, and active intercultural learning. However, to implement this pedagogy successfully into practice, constant adjustments to the context need to be made, and more advanced training for teachers and educators is imperative. Furthermore, the scope of foreign languages must be adapted to meet current demands since the variety of foreign languages offered in schools does not reflect the need for languages in society (cf. de Cillia 2010: 250). All areas of society, ranging from health care to social jobs, require staff who are proficient in a variety of languages (cf. Meyer 2008, Korb et al. 2015).
To sum up, Austria’s language education policy exhibits certain differences in theory and in practice. In theory, the language education policy enables the inclusion of a variety of languages into the syllabus; in practice, however, prestigious languages are preferred by both schools and pupils themselves. Officially recognized minority languages have been implemented in certain schools and do receive legislative support. In contrast, migrants’ home languages are only taught to pupils who elect to learn them through lessons in mother tongue.

3.4. The sociopolitical context: prominent discourses in the media

As indicated in Section 2.2, de facto language policies are not mere static rules, but rather, are constantly reproduced and adapted through the power of discourses. Thus, the public space establishes and reinforces ideological discourses about languages, languages of education, and linguistic practices such as multilingualism from micro to macro levels. The public space of schools bears a significant role in communicating discourses on the meso level, while media and social media reproduce discourses on the macro level. This section aims at illustrating the sociopolitical context that was shaped through discourses before and during the time this study was carried out, from November 2015 to July 2016.

Between 2015 and 2016, discourses addressing the so-called ‘language of the school’ (‘Schulsprache’) and ‘language of the break’ (‘Pausensprache’) emerged. In March 2015, the principal of a secondary school in Vienna published a memorandum, declaring the use of German as the only official language in the school building. According to the memorandum, German should be the sole language used among pupils during breaks; if, for instance, pupils should need to talk on the phone in a different language, for example, they had to do so in privacy. This particular case spread in both public and social media, leading to critical reactions from NGOs and political figures.

Following the school’s memorandum, further discourses emerged connected to language management in schools, integration, migration, and language proficiencies in

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⁹ e.g. Slovene-German bilingual schools in Carinthia, see http://www.2sprachigebildung.at/

German. In addition to discussions about whether or not German should be the sole language of communication in schools during breaks, general discourses about the status of German as ‘the language of the school’ (‘Schulsprache’) circulated in the media. Some politicians argued that a German-only-language policy would have positive aspects, such as children’s better integration and faster language acquisition:


I’ve yet to meet someone who’s said that it’s a stupid idea. In Upper Austrian schools, children should speak with each other in the national language. This makes it easier for them to make friends—and language acquisition happens faster. (Thomas Stelzer, Der Standard, 3.12.2015, translation by the author)

The quote above illustrates that discourses on language management in schools extend beyond language practices in the school environment, and address topics such as language acquisition.

Similarly, the Styrian state education authority (Landesschulrat) considered to propose a recommendation on ‘compulsory German’ (Deutschpflicht) to schools. In Styria, the discussion peaked at the beginning of 2016, when a political party submitted an independent resolution proposal. The resolution proposal focused on the role of German as a tool for integration, arguing that the continuous use of German—during classes, as well as breaks—is a necessary means of acquiring the national language. As a matter of fact, neither regional governments nor the state education authority are entitled to establish language policies in schools, which restricts the use of other languages than German. Hence, the government can only make recommendations, while individual schools and their principals are authorized to create their own specific language policies.

Various political parties, NGOs, educators and academics have all disagreed with these suggestions. The Netzwerk SprachenRechte, a group of experts including linguists, lawyers, educators, and social organizations published a statement right after the publication of

the original memorandum in March 2015. They emphasized the significance of children’s proficiency in their first language in enabling them to acquire further languages, and, moreover, mention that prohibiting the use of a language is a violation of the pupils’ basic human rights. They state that in order to learn German, it is necessary for students to possess a solid foundation in their first language, and that prohibiting the use of home languages leads to fear, and creates negative learning environments (cf. Netzwerk Sprachenrechte 2015). Furthermore, any prohibition violates the UN *Conventions on the Rights of the Child* (cf. United Nations 1989), which Austria signed in 1990. According to Article 2 of the Conventions, discrimination on the basis of characteristics such as language shall be avoided:

> States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. (United Nations, Conventions on the Rights of the Child, § 2(1)).

Netzwerk SprachenRechte’s statement was acknowledged by the Federal Ministry, who confirmed that the prohibition of languages in schools does contradict Austria’s legal framework (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen 20.5.2015). The Ministry of Education and Women’s Affairs (now Ministry of Education, Science, and Research) replied that:

[…] die aktive Förderung von Mehrsprachigkeit und Sprachenvielfalt ein wichtiges Bildungsanliegen darstellt, wie u.a. aus diversen Lehrplänen hervor geht. Demgemäß kann festgehalten werden, dass das Festlegen von Deutsch als einziger außerhalb des Unterrichts in der Schule zulässiger Sprache bzw. das Verbot einer bestimmten bzw. mehrerer bestimmter Sprachen im Rahmen von Hausordnungen oder Verhaltensvereinbarungen unzulässig ist, da es im Widerspruch zur Achtung des Privat- und Familienlebens gemäß Art. 8 EMRK und zu Art. 1 BVG über die Rechte des Kindes (BGBl. I Nr. 4/2011) steht. (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen. 10.7.2015)

[…] the active promotion of multilingualism and language diversity is an important concern in education, as noted in a variety of syllabi. Thus, defining German as the only acceptable language outside of classes, or prohibiting a specific language or a group of languages in the context the school’s rules or agreements is unacceptable since it contradicts the respect for private family life subject to Art. 8 EMRK and
Art. 1 BVG on the rights of the child (BGB1. I Nr. 4/2011). (Ministry of Education and Women’s Affairs. 10.7.2015, translation by the author)

To sum up, this section has aimed to provide an overview of this study’s sociocultural context, looking, in particular, at the prominent discourses regarding language management in schools that emerged in Austria in 2015/2016. In general, the discourses reflect the core topics of Austria’s language education policy, including different views on the languages in the syllabus and the languages within the pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires. They also address related issues such as migration and integration. Furthermore, the discourses involve ideologies on languages and power-relations and shape individual linguistic practices.
4. The research site

4.1. Remarks on the investigated schools

The schools that were investigated in the course of this project are known as AHS (Allgmein bildende höhere Schule), which can be roughly translated as an academic secondary school. Students can attend AHSs after finishing primary school at the age of 10. This type of school is organized into lower and upper level classes, both consisting of four grades. Students can proceed to the upper level only if the lower level has been concluded successfully. Finally, their education is completed by exams for the university admission certificate, known as the *Matura*. AHSs focus on general education in a variety of subjects; while in terms of languages, all AHS teach English, most teach French and Latin, and some offer Italian and Spanish courses (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung 19.2.2015).

This project focuses on academic secondary schools for the following reasons: First, the number of AHS pupils who speak a language other than German is remarkably high and rising (cf. Statistik Austria 2015). Secondly, since this type of school unites both lower and upper levels, it contains pupils in different age cohorts. In terms of the data collection, which included interviews with pupils, I chose to conduct interviews with older students who had internalized prevailing discourses, possess sufficient metalinguistic abilities\textsuperscript{14}, and are more comfortable talking with a non-member of school than younger pupils. Thirdly, secondary academic schools are underrepresented in local research projects; moreover, most studies focus on schools with bilingual or minority language programs, or schools with exceptionally high numbers of children with diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Hence, the intention of this thesis is to analyze schools that present a more common picture of linguistic diversity in Austrian schools.

Before approaching individual schools, I conferred with experts from *Bundeszentrum Interkulturalität, Migration und Mehrsprachigkeit Steiermark* and the University for

\textsuperscript{14} In this context, metalinguistic ability (cf. Bialystok 2001: 124) refers to the ability to use one’s knowledge of languages to reflect on one’s personal linguistic repertoire, social multilingualism, and connections between language and society.
Teacher Education, all of whom are in close contact with schools as a result of their intercultural training programs. This gave me an overview of potential schools as well as guiding principles for their selection. Possible schools were selected based on the following criteria:

- The schools should exhibit ethnic and linguistic diversity among their pupils.
- The schools should preferably be located in an ethnolinguistic diverse district in Graz.

After listing the chosen schools in order of relevance, I contacted the school principals by telephone and e-mail. The study was carried out in two schools in order to collect a wide range of data concerning discourses on multilingualism. The following Sections 4.1 and 4.2 present the two schools in terms of their location in the city of Graz, their academic focus, and the diversity of the students according to school statistics.

### 4.2. Description of School A

School A is located in the center of the city of Graz. Many of the pupils who attend School A commute from other city districts. The school has an average of 550 pupils, with 24 classes in total. The school offers a variety of different classes, including language, arts, and science classes. As part of the school’s mission, the institution supports its pupils’ academic potential by operating on a course system in the upper level classes. Through this system, students are encouraged to select a certain number of elective classes based on their individual interests. The school also maintains partnerships with other schools abroad as well as with universities in Graz.

While conducting my ethnographic fieldwork in school A, I was provided with information about the pupils’ home languages. As mentioned above, data about students’ home languages are collected upon their enrollment, at which point, parents inform teachers of their children’s ‘mother tongue(s)’ (cf. Statistik Austria 2014). The list provided
to me included various languages and the numbers of pupils who speak them. At least 31 different home languages are spoken by the pupils at School A, which includes the problematic category of ‘other languages’. From a researcher’s perspective, there are several problems with School A’s list of pupils’ languages that need to be addressed.

First, the list uses different abbreviations for the same language, for instance, AR, ARA, and ARB for Arabic. In fact, the list seems to follow different guidelines for the abbreviation of languages, which complicates the process of interpreting its meaning, on the one hand, and suggests that the process of collecting the list is unorderly, on the other. Second, in some cases, the categorizations of languages seem to be random or simply generated as required. For instance, the list includes the category ‘other languages’ ('sonstige Sprachen’), abbreviated as SO. Not only is such a category trivial per se, but it also works against the purpose of listing the languages in the first place, in that it conceals the language it was intended to classify. In addition, by categorizing specific languages as other languages, these languages are not given equal status to the other categorized languages. With regard to the categorization of languages from former Yugoslavia, it is necessary to point out the complex history of naming and categorizing each language (cf. Busch 2016: 8). School A’s list of languages includes the following categories: BO and BOS for Bosnian, KRO and KT for Croatian, SER for Serbian, and SKR for Serbo-Croatian. This variety of categories might lead to confusion, while at the same time the use of a collective term such as Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian (BKS) is not used as a category in the list. The list also includes some recently added classifications of languages, such as SYR – Syrian Arabic, which was introduced as a result of the recent influx of refugees from Syria.

Third, School A’s list lacks information on any additional languages spoken by the pupils, which could, according to Statistik Austria (2016), be added and classified as language 1, language 2, and language 3. It is possible that information on additional languages was collected, but simply not made accessible to the researcher. Consequently, the list as is conceals any potential multilingualism among pupils.

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15 School A: Pupils’ home languages, school year 2015/2016 (in alphabetical order): Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Chechen, Chinese, Croatian, Dari, Dutch, English, French, Georgian, German, Hungarian, Italian, Kurdish, Latvian, Other languages, Persian, Polish, Romanian, Serbian, Spanish, Syrian Arabic, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese.

16 The list of languages and procedure of acquiring has been discussed during fieldwork with the responsible person in the school.
4.3. Description of School B

School B is situated in a district on the left bank of the Mur river in Graz. Both the fourth and the fifth districts of Graz, which are located on the left bank of the Mur river, have the highest numbers of citizens of other nationalities in Graz in comparison to the other districts. According to the city of Graz, 31.87% of residents in the fourth district come either from another EU country or a non-EU country (cf. Präsidialamt Stadt Graz 2016: 39).

Approximately 700 pupils divided into an average of 26 classes attend School B. Many pupils live within the same district, but a fair number of children live in other districts of Graz or commute from other municipalities outside of Graz. The school’s main emphasis, besides providing a well-rounded education, is on the sciences and computer science. The school offers an assortment of additional classes, ranging from science classes to foreign languages. Apart from its focus on science, the school is engaged in multiple projects with reference to multiculturalism and multilingualism.

During my fieldwork, my contact person at the school provided me with a detailed list of languages spoken by the pupils. Each pupil in each class was listed alongside the languages they speak, which were categorized as language 1, language 2, and language 3. The list contained the names of the languages in their full forms, and, in total, listed 35 different languages, including three different types of ‘other languages’: other European languages, other African languages, and other Asian languages. Additionally, it uses distinct terms for Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian: Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, BCS, and Serbo-Croatian. In comparison to the list at School A, this list provides more information about students’ home languages since it allows teachers to record up to three languages. Among these, German is regularly mentioned as language 1, whereas other languages are added under language 2. Nonetheless, the challenges resulting from the process of

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17 For more on the current situation of social segregation in Graz, see Amsüss (2013). For a more precise account of the history of segregation in Graz, see Kubinzky (2009).

18 School B: Pupils’ home languages, school year 2015/2016 (in alphabetical order): Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, B/C/S, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Chechen, Chinese, Dari, English, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Kurdish, Macedonian, Norwegian, Other African languages, Other Asian languages, Other European languages, Pashto, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovene, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese.

19 The pupils’ names were deleted by my contact person beforehand, so that it solely contains an affiliation between class and languages.
language categorization are the same as mentioned in Section 4.1, for instance, the issue of categorizing Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and the presence of categories such as ‘other Asian languages’.

As far as the schools are concerned, School A and School B display a few similarities, but there are also disparities between them. Both are the same type of school, follow the standards of secondary academic schools, and educate pupils of the same age cohort. In addition, both schools are located in central districts in Graz and enjoy significant diversity among their students. Both School A and School B attract a variety of pupils. School A focuses on providing a broad general education, in which each pupil has the chance to set their own focus in terms of subjects; School B, on the other hand, focuses on subjects related to science, but also provides students with opportunities to participate in arts and language projects.

In summary, Sections 4.1 and 4.2 aimed to describe the two schools that participated in this research project in terms of their locations in the city, their educational objectives, and the linguistic diversity of their pupils. In general, this project aspires to avoid any comparison between School A and School B, but rather intends to gather general impressions from both schools in terms of the discourses that represent multilingualism and de facto language policies.
5. Research process

5.1. Intellectual puzzle and research questions

The intention of this project is to identify discourses on multilingualism and their impact on *de facto* language policies in two schools in Graz. An intellectual puzzle (cf. Mason 2002: 18) and the research questions that emerged from its consideration initiated the research process. The intellectual puzzle is defined as “[...] something which the researcher wishes to explain” (Mason 2002: 7) and its purpose is described as follows: “Intellectual puzzles can and do take a variety of forms connected to the ontological and epistemological positions encapsulated in the research, and grounded within the specific context of their research problem” (Mason 2002: 18). Consequently, the intellectual puzzle guiding this project is:

What is going on in heterogeneous schools concerning the diversity of pupils’ linguistic repertoires, and which discourses on multilingualism/linguistic diversity are conveyed?

This intellectual puzzle emerged from my own personal experience, a growing interest in research in this field, and intense public awareness of the issue of language management in schools while this project was under development. It is particularly important to bear in mind that, in ethnography, research questions evolve during interactions in the field (cf. McCarty 2015: 83). The aim of the research questions is to describe and understand a set of complexities, which often only appear in the field. Thus, formulating research questions in ethnography (or qualitative research in general) represents a process that is intrinsically linked with research in the field. The research questions of this thesis are, therefore:

1. Which discourses regarding language(s) (e.g. language of instruction, foreign languages, home languages, as well as multilingualism) are conveyed in the school?

2. How are the pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires perceived by teachers and pupils?
3. Where and how is linguistic diversity visible in school spaces?

4. How can an overall language policy be described in terms of language practices, language management, and language ideologies?

As a starting point, the first research question addresses the general notion of discourses in the school. It inquires as to which discourses about languages are reproduced in the data. By answering this question, I will gain insight into dominant discourses and underlying ideologies with regard to languages. In addition, responses to this research question may show traces of language ideologies present in the wider social context.

The second research question concentrates on teachers’ attitudes towards the complex linguistic repertoires of their pupils. Since the focus of this project is on diversity in schools, based on the diversity of those attending the school, it is most relevant to investigate how teachers perceive their students, and, in addition, how they discursively reproduce their pupils’ linguistic affiliations.

Research question number three considers the visibility of linguistic diversity in the school space. In addition to investigating visual forms of language (i.e., the linguistic landscape), this inquiry explores audible language practices in the school. Answers to this research question will provide information on how, where, when, and in what form pupils use and/or display their diverse linguistic repertoires, which subsequently provides insight into language practices and prevailing language ideologies.

The final research question attempts to provide an outline of the de facto language policy in both schools, based on the research questions. By exploring the three components of language policy—language ideologies, language practices, and language management—I aim to identify how de facto language policies are created, reproduced, and manifested in schools, and how emerging discourses shape de facto language policies.

5.2. Methodology

5.2.1. General remarks on qualitative research

This project was carried out in the interdisciplinary field of critical sociolinguistics and covers areas of research such as language policy and educational linguistics. Sociolinguistics,
language policy, and educational linguistics are all inherently interdisciplinary fields that engage with language, society and politics (cf. Ricento 2006: 9). In general, these research areas use both qualitative and quantitative methods. With regard to the objectives of this thesis, a qualitative methodological approach appears to be the most suitable. This section will attempt to capture the essence of qualitative research in general, before discussing its application in this project.

Qualitative research aims to understand and describe the research context to its full extent. Qualitative research differs from quantitative approaches primarily with regard to how each deals with context. According to Marvasti (2004: 11), quantitative approaches perceive context as interfering with data, meaning that context should be avoided at any cost. In contrast, qualitative research recognizes context as a crucial element of the research findings, and its influence is acknowledged as a given fact.

Another important aspect of qualitative research is the selection of one’s research participants. Participant selection follows a ‘purposive’ sampling procedure (rather than a ‘random’ selection), meaning that the purpose of the project and its theoretical aims determine the choice of appropriate participants (cf. Marvasti 2004: 9). Furthermore, qualitative research prefers a smaller sample size since data is analyzed closely and in multiple stages (cf. Silverman 2001: 248f.). The process of participant selection in superdiverse contexts can be described as follows:

Just as biologists track particular birds to understand patterns of a species, so too do qualitative researchers select case study groups to understand patterns that illuminate contemporary transmigration and its impact on education systems, foregrounding youth and teachers’ lives. Unlike in statistical work, where the goal of selecting participants is to provide generalizable findings to a larger population based on the population sampled, in qualitative work the goal of selecting participants is to generalize to larger theoretical issues. For research in and on super-diverse schools, this means that a primary goal of participant selection is to expand knowledge about what it means to live, learn and go to school in a global and transnational age. (Malsbary 2016: 18f.)

Thus, Malsbary (2016) emphasizes the importance of selecting participants in order to gain knowledge of the research site. She refers to the objective of quantitative work, which is to produce generalizations based on the population sampled. Qualitative research, on the other hand, selects participants in order to “generalize to larger theoretical issues”
With regard to the ability to make generalizations, qualitative research is subject to a few constraints in comparison to quantitative approaches. However, Mason (cf. 2002: 8) argues for the generalizability of qualitative studies, in the sense that the results of qualitative research can be expanded beyond the investigated object and provide reasoning that can be generalized to a wider context. Thus, qualitative research projects should avoid idiosyncratic positions that solely describe the context they investigate, and rather appreciate their connection to other contexts. Mason (2002: 39) acknowledges the potential of the concept of generalizability, and refrains from rejecting it as a positivistic one: “Generalizability involves the extent to which you can make some form of wider claim on the basis of your research and analysis, rather than simply stating that your analysis is entirely idiosyncratic and particular.” McCarty (2015: 83) agrees with Mason’s view of generalization in qualitative data and concludes, “[…] generalizability is not a goal of ethnography, although that does not preclude the broader applicability of ethnographic studies beyond a single context or site.”

Another concern of qualitative research is to ensure both its reliability and its validity, two concepts that are defined as follows:

A research procedure is ‘reliable’ if it produces the same results each time it is employed. A procedure is ‘valid’ if the results it yields are correct or true. Obviously, neither of these criteria is easy to apply in interpretive sociolinguistic research, since we work with people. (Johnstone 2000: 61)

Basically, a study can be deemed reliable when the researchers collect and treat their data in an unbiased way so that other researchers in a similar position could potentially arrive at the same conclusions. Nevertheless, as Johnstone points out, reliability is difficult to achieve when it involves people, as it does in sociolinguistic research. Moreover, whether or not results can be considered reliable depends on the theoretical stance of the researcher.

Agar (cf. 1986: 11), for instance, refers to one stance in research, which concentrates on the fundamental role of testing and confirming hypotheses. He emphasizes that a hypothesis-oriented approach is suitable for some research methods, but cannot be applied to all. For instance, the application of a hypothesis-oriented view to ethnographic research tends to be inappropriate since ethnography addresses more descriptive, context-specific research questions. So, the concept of reliability, which is usually associated with research based on hypotheses and experiments, can scarcely be adapted to qualitative research for
the following reasons. First, individual experiences make of the core element of qualitative and ethnographic research; since people—both the researchers and the researched—never behave in exactly the same way, the data derived from them is not quantifiable. Second, context—a major factor in qualitative research—can never be replicated exactly.

Thus, the question that remains is how is it possible to ensure that the results of qualitative research are reliable? Johnstone (2000: 61f.) suggests a few ways of generating reliable results. On the one hand, similar procedures can be repeated, such as asking slightly different questions or collecting data at various times and in diverse settings. On the other hand, Johnstone suggests using triangulation, which means combining a variety of methods to investigate the research goals. She further claims that, “reliable procedures are the result of time and care” (Johnstone 2000: 62). Consequently, spending enough time at the research site leads to more comprehensive insight into the research context.

The same goes for the concept of validity, or the need for research results to be accurate. The concept of validity must be adapted to the objectives of qualitative research to avoid any bias by quantitative viewpoints. To ensure validity in qualitative research, Johnstone (2000: 62f.) recommends that we, as researchers, repeatedly ask ourselves whether we are still focusing on the research question and truly observing what we intended to observe. Furthermore, she explains that “[…] reliability and validity really involve having enough good evidence and examining it repeatedly and thoroughly, with a critical eye on one’s own assumptions” (Johnstone 2000: 64). Thus, a central aspect of ethnographic research is the procedure of revisiting one’s data frequently, even while the processes of data collection and analysis are still in progress.

Thus, with regard to the current project, reliability will be ensured through the application of a variety of methods of data collection, consisting of observations, interviews, and notes on the linguistic landscape, in addition to using triangulation during the data analysis. Validity will be guaranteed by following an ethnographic approach, which is a research method that self-evidently relies on revisiting the data. Finally, this project will attempt to provide a certain degree of generalizability in connection to other schools, particularly, as regards the wider effects of discourses on multilingualism in society.
5.2.2. Ethnography

This section provides insight into the methodological approach used in this study as well as the main features of ethnography (cf. Agar 1980, Hammersley & Atkinson 2007, Hornberger 2013, Heller 2010). Initially, ethnography was a method used in the fields of anthropology (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007) and anthropological linguistics. In general, its methodological approach originates from the social sciences; however, since its adoption in a variety of research fields, ethnography no longer fits under a single standard definition (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 2). Therefore, the approach is best defined by describing its’ application: it determines how a researcher collects and analyzes data.

In simple terms, ethnography is the study of other people—people that are not ourselves—which consists of the systematic and comprehensive participation in and observation of a group (cf. Hymes 1980: 89f.). Thus, ethnography is an extensive process in which the researcher participates in people’s daily lives—watching, listening, and interacting with their subjects in interviews, in addition to collecting documents, with the aim of acquiring data that will help them investigate the topic of concern (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 3). The following list summarizes the main features of ethnographic research (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 3):

- Research takes place in the field, rather than an artificially created setting. In the field, the researchers observe their participants without explicitly interfering with their daily routines.

- During the process, the researchers collect a wide array of data. Blommaert and Jie (2010) refer to it as ‘collecting rubbish’, a process of assembling everything from documents to photographs. The material collected might not become central data, but it will complement the final results and support the data’s reliability.

- The entire research process can be described as ‘unstructured’, which refers to the fact that data collection follows no pre-determined research design or set schedules, as an experiment does, for instance, but rather happens in accordance with the context. Similarly, the analysis evolves from the process of data collection and is continuously reevaluated during the process.

- Ethnographic studies focus on small samples, such as one specific setting or one group.
The process of data analysis concentrates primarily on descriptions, explanations, and implication for wider social contexts, rather than on quantifications and statistics.

One particular characteristic of ethnographic research is its ‘exploratory character’, which refers to the possibility of unexpected situations arising at the research site, as well as the researcher’s need to adapt to them. Thus, by exploring the research site, the research methods are constantly being adapted and emanate from different circumstances, for instance, observations of specific sites might only occur as a result of the exploratory character of the research, or one’s manner in interviews may evolve during the research process (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 3). Agar (1980: 69f.) accurately compares ethnographic investigations with a learning process on part of the researcher.

The main goal of ethnography is to acquire knowledge of something previously unknown and to explain it; as such, it is an interpretation of the observable world. Consequently, ethnographers are interested in determining the meaning of objects, people, and events in particular situations, groups, and societies. The ability of ethnographers to decode observations, utterances, and other perceptions, and reproduce them in the form of text is an act of ‘paraphrasing’ (cf. Agar 1980: 78).

With regard to wider theoretical frameworks, Heller (2010: 252) locates ethnography in poststructural approaches, and considers it to be, “constructivist, interpretivist, subjectivist, and socially located”. In addition, she describes ethnography as critical since it inherently addresses issues such as social inequality and power. Hence, it is possible to conclude that ethnography is effective for investigations of unique societal situations, society in general, and individual people or groups. Ethnographic approaches provide explanations for research questions beyond the scope of quantitative experiments or questionnaires (cf. Johnstone 2000: 82f.). By using ethnography, one is able to establish connections between discursive spaces and the trajectories of social agents, as well as the creation of social restrictions, such as instances of inequality (cf. Heller 2010: 253). In sociolinguistic research, ethnographic approaches have proven suitable for exploring topics such as language use, language and culture, linguistic ideology, power relations, and language policy (cf. Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 59f.).

When using an ethnographic approach, a few preliminary issues need to be discussed beforehand. Since the researcher is immersed in the research context and in constant
contact with participants, a preliminary issue is the role of the researcher themself. Because the researcher is continuously present, they become part of the research context, which means that their role needs to be established prior to the beginning of the project. On the one hand, ethnographers may already be familiar with their research site or be members of the group they’re investigating; on the other hand, they may be new to the research site or outsiders. Johnstone (cf. 2000: 86f.) states that both cases are beneficial in their own way, depending on the circumstances. However, one should be cautious when occupying roles in the research context, and be aware of the fact that the subject group will assign roles to the researcher as well. Remaining too much of an outsider to the group is counter-productive for participant observation, while becoming too connected to the participants could lead to obstacles when it comes to the researcher’s ability to carry out a critical analysis. In general, taking on the role of a fly on the wall is an unrealistic and impossible goal. Even as an ‘outsider’, the researcher is still visible, and their presence has natural consequences, such as the inevitable observer’s effect in ethnographic research (cf. Blommaert & Jie 2010: 27).

In this project, ethnographic data was gathered from November, 2015 to July, 2016. The data was collected through participatory observations in the school building, conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers and group interviews with pupils, and documenting the linguistic landscape of the schools. Section 5.3 provides a detailed description of the research process with regard to the central aspects of ethnography mentioned above.

5.2.3. Linguistic landscape

Landry and Bourhis (1997) first established the concept of linguistic landscape in examining how visual manifestations of language influence ethnolinguistic vitality. Accordingly, linguistic landscape is defined as the “visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region” (Landry & Bourhis 1997: 23) or, as described by Gorter (2006: 2), “the language in its written form in the public sphere”. The method of analyzing linguistic landscape is a relatively new development, but it has been of growing interest in sociolinguistics and urban multilingualism. It has been applied in studies investigating language policies, language ideologies, linguistic diversity
in specific areas, and grass-roots movements. When considering a linguistic landscape, the researcher documents any instance of text (cf. Kress 2003), such as signs, warnings, commercials, handwritten notifications, and private signs, in their selected environment. Since the research methodology can be applied in various ways, this section will highlight preliminary issues that should be addressed when applying linguistic landscape research, which go hand in hand with the overall research process of linguistic landscape research.

One preliminary issue is sampling, that is, what should be included with regard to the selected forms of text and the chosen setting (cf. Gorter 2006: 3f.). It is important to bear in mind that a linguistic landscape not only includes the languages that are visible, but also considers the fact that other languages are absent. This is of particular interest in places, such as designated regions of ethnic minorities, since language is never placed arbitrarily or randomly in its environment (cf. Shohamy & Gorter 2009: 2). After a sample has been obtained, the single units are categorized in order to conduct an analysis. In general, texts such as signs can be categorized according to their functionality (e.g. symbolic or functional), bottom-up or top-down (e.g. initiation by a local shop or by the government), and in terms of their location, language use, and medium (cf. Ben-Rafael et al. 2006).

Linguistic landscapes can be analyzed using either quantitative or qualitative approaches. Earlier studies focused on quantitative approaches, for example, counting the number of signs and languages and evaluating them in comparison to each other with regard to their particular locations (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter 2006). For instance, Cenoz and Gorter (2006) gathered data in two commercial streets in minority language regions in both Friesland and the Basque country. Subsequently, they coded their data according to 16 variables (cf. Cenoz & Gorter 2006: 70f.), with the aim of determining the presence of each language, its extent, and the characteristic features of the signs. By drawing on a quantitative approach, the authors were able to measure the expansion of specific languages and to compare the two minority language regions.

In contrast, a qualitative analysis of a linguistic landscape focuses on a few examples, and is rather interested in analyzing the meaning of the text types identified, the producer of the sign, as well as the people involved in its environment (e.g. Szabó 2015). As a result, qualitative analyses of linguistic landscapes require different methodological approaches, such as semiotic analysis or the incorporation of emic viewpoints. In their pioneering work *Discourses in place*, Scollon and Scollon (2003) refer to a semiotic analysis that describes
how signs imply discourses. Accordingly, signs and other forms of text serve to index discourses in relation to their materialization in space:

The meaning of a sign is anchored in the material world whether the linguistic utterance is spoken by one person to another or posted as a stop sign on a street corner. We need to ask of the stop sign the same four questions we would ask of a person: Who has ‘uttered’ this? [...] Who is the viewer [...]? What is the social situation [...]? Is that part of the material world relevant to such a sign [...]? (Scollon & Scollon 2003: 3)

When investigating the meaning of a sign, indexicality is the key concept in use. Indexicality means that a ‘sign’ refers to something other than itself (cf. Scollon & Scollon 2003: 3). In particular, a sign can be any material object, such as a warning sign, a picture, or either written or spoken language. Signs do not have predetermined properties, like a computer or a cat; rather, the signs’ relations to what they are supposed to represent determine their properties (cf. Johansen & Larsen 2002: 25). As a consequence, virtually anything is a sign and can become the object of investigation in linguistic landscape. Nonetheless, the focus of this thesis is on written language and the discourses manifested therein. For the purposes of my research on a particular linguistic landscape, I will draw on the term text instead of sign, which follows Kress’ (2003: 47) definition of text as “the stuff of communication”.

Studies on linguistic landscape are usually limited to particular geographic areas or specific (public) places. Linguistic landscape analyses of schools and other educational settings have recently received considerable attention in this field (cf. Brown 2012, Dressler 2015, Szabó 2015). The aim of such studies is to uncover choices regarding the use and visibility of languages in spatial domains, which reflect explicit ideological discourses on languages. Hence, during her research on the revitalization of minority languages in a minority language school in Estonia, Brown (2012) coined the term schoolscapes. She explains that “[...] schoolscapes [...] refer to the school-based environment where place and text, both written (graphic) and oral, constitute, reproduce, and transform language ideologies” (Brown 2012: 282).

Within this thesis, the term schoolscape is used to refer to visual forms of text that can be found in educational spaces, with special emphasis on texts produced by pupils, multilingual texts, and texts in other languages than German. By incorporating the concept of the linguistic landscape into the methodological approach of ethnography, I
aim to analyze the reproduction of ideologies through texts, as well as the manifestation of discourses in the school building. This investigation will employ a qualitative approach since a detailed analysis of single forms of text is relevant to the research questions. Moreover, schoolscapes are inherently embedded in the school context; thus, observing the placement, production, and functionality of a few examples of text will contribute significantly to the fulfillment of the research objectives of this thesis.

5.3. Description of the research process

5.3.1. Gaining access, conducting observations, interviews, and collecting linguistic landscape

This section describes the research process in further detail with the aim of providing information about the procedure of this project. It will address the issues of how I gained access to the school sites, established contact with the research subjects, carried out my observations, conducted interviews, and collected impressions of the linguistic landscape.

In preparation for the project, I had to receive permission to conduct research in educational institutions from the state education authority (Landesschulrat), which required a written report of the project and the permission of the individual schools. After contacting the research sites (see Chapter 4), I gained permission from the principals of both schools. Both principals assigned me a contact person at their school, with whom I then established further contact. These contact people were responsible for guiding and supporting me in carrying out this research project. The role of the contact person can be compared to what Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) term the gatekeeper, that is, someone who serves as the first person to approach in situations of concern. Gatekeepers facilitate cooperation with the researcher; however, they also seem to influence the research project in some ways (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 59). With regard to this project, the gatekeepers offered support in choosing and contacting the sample classes that would be involved in the observations. In both cases, I requested heterogeneous classes with students of various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Nonetheless, the gatekeeper of School A advised me against this choice. According to her, heterogeneous classes are a rare phenomenon in
School A, and they are usually associated with being more ‘problematic’ than average. She thus provided access to ‘moderate’ classes, which she thought would better represent the school as a whole. Evidently, it was impossible to refuse the gatekeeper’s recommendation on this matter. Apart from their own impressions, the gatekeepers may also have been biased as a result of their social contacts among the teaching staff, due to the fact that classes with familiar form teachers (Klassenvorstand) were more easily accessible to them. As a consequence, the sample of classes available for observations was arguably affected by the gatekeeper’s view of the project as well as their relationships with other teachers.

The principals and gatekeepers were presented with a thorough explanation of the research project and the qualitative research process. Since both schools declined my offer of a formal introduction of the project to all teaching staff, the gatekeepers received brief but comprehensive handouts to provide the form teachers. At the beginning of each observation period, both the teachers and the pupils were presented with a short introduction to the project. The introduction included comments on the purpose of this study, the extent of the researcher’s presence in the classroom, and a description of the researcher herself. Afterwards, pupils had the opportunity to ask further questions, which some of them did. On this point, I followed the advice of Heller (cf. 2010: 254f.), who states that being honest and revealing our intentions to people is a better way to build trust and begin one’s ethnographic research than trying to be invisible. However, my aim was nonetheless to present the general intentions of this project without giving away too much information about the project, which may have influenced or confused the participants.

With respect to the issue of roles in ethnography, as discussed in Section 5.2.2, I described myself as a PhD student conducting research on linguistic diversity in schools in Graz. It is important to highlight that activities such as taking on a role, establishing contact with one’s subjects as well as building rapport are all part of the researcher’s process of self-representation (cf. Goffman 1956). These actions determine how we present ourselves in front of the researched group in addition to how we are perceived by it. Here, the significance of the researcher’s physical appearance is also worth mentioning. While some features, such as height and hair color, are less modifiable, others, like clothing, may be adapted to the research context. Thus, I aimed to distance myself from any resemblance to either teacher or pupil by selecting dark and discreet colors, and by avoiding both skirts and high-heeled shoes.
The observations were carried out in five classes between November, 2015 and February, 2016, including three classes from School A and two classes from School B. Data was gathered during periods without many other activities or tests. Depending on the subject, the classes would be mixed with other classes or divided into groups, which provided me with the opportunity to observe different constellations of pupils in a variety of classrooms. During the first few lessons, the pupils were very aware of my presence, but they soon became accustomed to having me around.

Since the aim of my observations was to gain insight into a variety of classes, I observed the students in different subjects: all of the language classes offered (English, Latin, French, German, Old Greek, Spanish, and Italian), science classes (mathematics, physics, biology), arts classes (music, art), history, geography, religion, and physical education. Furthermore, I also observed specific classes such as intercultural learning and language-aware content lessons (*sprachsensibler Fachunterricht*). Most of the lessons were taught by teachers, while some were led by student teachers or language assistants (in French and English). In addition to observing students during their regular subjects, observations were also carried out in the hallway and schoolyard during breaks, before the first period, and, occasionally, in the staff room. The staff room, however, is difficult for non-teachers (pupils, parents, or student teachers) to approach unless they are involved in a conversation with a teacher.

After my observations had been carried out, further data was obtained through interviews with teachers, principals, and pupils. In accordance with Heller (2010: 256), interviews are considered as “accounts which are situated performances in and of themselves […] they are what a certain kind of person tells another certain kind of person, in certain ways, under certain conditions.” Thus, interviews are understood as interactions between two people, co-constructed by all participants, rather than as factual accounts of information (cf. Codó 2008: 163). In this respect, the purpose of these interviews was to identify discourses on multilingualism, ethnolinguistic diversity, language practices, and multilingual pupils.

Contact with potential interviewees was established during the observations in schools. All of the interviews were held after the observations had been completed, which meant that we were able to discuss the events, topics, etc. that were salient in the school while the observations were being carried out. In total, eight teachers—including both principals—20

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20 For more information please refer to http://www.oesz.at/sprachsensiblerunterricht/
and eleven pupils were interviewed. Interviews with the teachers and principals were held individually, whereas my conversations with pupils took the form of focus group interviews. I contacted teachers for interviews during and after my fieldwork in the schools, and aimed for a balance of genders, ages, and subjects taught by the teachers. However, while teachers of language subjects and teachers engaged in projects relating to societal diversity responded eagerly to my interview requests, teachers of science-related subjects were more reluctant to participate in this study.

In order to find pupils to participate in the focus group interviews, I approached classes from fifth to seventh grade (14 to 18 years of age). This was intended to compile a sample consisting of pupils who had already been through several years of education, and, as a result, who were able to reproduce and reflect on the discourses they have internalized from their experience at school. I avoided requesting interviews with pupils in the eighth grade (17 to 18 years old) since they are occupied with studying for the university admission certificate. In appropriate classes, I briefly presented the project and made a request for participants in front of each class. I emphasized that the study was particularly concerned with pupils with a diverse linguistic repertoire or who exhibit a general interest in languages. In addition to my presentation, I distributed flyers and put up posters in the classrooms in question. Pupils who were intrigued by the study were subsequently able to contact the researcher via WhatsApp or email.

It is necessary to stress the fact that the gender of the researcher has a significant impact on certain parts of the research process (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 73). For instance, the interview participants of this project were predominantly female, which might be attributed to the fact that the researcher is female, which may have appealed more to girls. Nevertheless, the sampling of pupils complied with the set criteria regarding age cohort and affiliation with multilingualism. As compensation for their time and effort, the participants received a gift card to their choice of store.

The interviews with pupils took place in the form of focus group interviews. In focus group interviews, a group of participants is guided through the interview process, talking about a set of topics or a focus (cf. Mason 2002: 64). This interview method is interactive since it “[...] takes shape by [...] the synergistic dynamics of participants responding to and building on each other’s views” (Edley & Litosseliti 2010: 167). Consequently, the interactions that happen between participants, and which go beyond the scope of questions
asked by the interviewer, form a central aspect of group interviews. On the one hand, focus group interviews result in participants’ use of natural conversation and genuine interaction, while, on the other hand, the researcher has less control. For instance, the interviewer may initiate discussion of a particular topic, while the participants may end up wandering away from the point (cf. Edley & Litosseliti 2010). Nonetheless, Edley and Litosseliti (2010) stress that incidences such as these should be seen as advantageous to ethnographic research, since they mean that the interviewees are highlighting what they intend to contribute to the conversation, and thus reveal their positioning and perceptions. In the context of focus group interviews, it is crucial that the interviewer takes on the role of a moderator, whose task it is to keep the conversation flowing and avoid unnecessary interruptions (cf. Edley & Litosseliti 2010: 168).

For this project, one focus group interview was held at each school, with seven pupils participating in School A, and four pupils contributing in School B. All of the interviews were carried out based on an interview guide, which was prepared in advance. The interview guide follows a semi-structured and open-ended scheme, providing both the interviewer and interviewees with flexibility concerning the order of questions and the extent of their answers. Audio from interviews with teachers was recorded using a Zoom H4 portable recorder. Both audio and video of the group interviews were recorded with a Zoom H4 portable recorder and a Zoom Q4 video recorder.

Last but not least, impressions of the linguistic landscape were captured using a Nikon camera and the camera on my mobile phone, predominantly after daily observations. Occasionally, this researcher used free periods to explore the school and document the schoolscape. Rooms that were closed to the public were inspected, with the permission of the principals and contact persons, at a pre-arranged time.

5.3.2. Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance for this study was obtained from the state education authority (Landesschulrat) before individual schools were approached. Subsequently, the principals granted their informed consent to the research, in particular, for observations and linguistic landscape research to be carried out in their schools. With regard to the classroom observations, each teacher received a handout about the project, as well as a
short introduction of the proceedings before their lessons. The teachers then had the option to decline observations during their lessons, or to request the researcher leave at any point. As mentioned in the previous section, pupils were also presented with a short introduction of the project and had the opportunity to ask questions or refuse to participate in the observations.

Observations were documented solely by written field notes produced by the researcher. The option of audio/video-recording in classes was ruled out for the following reasons: (1) getting the consent of all pupils in all classes in addition to the consent of their parents seemed to be a task beyond the realm of possibility, and, at the same time, limiting the research to one class seemed detrimental to the research objective; (2) audio/video-recording during breaks would only have captured a few pupils since they spread out to different places (e.g. bathroom, hallway) and following them would have violated their privacy; and (3) in some classes, the volume increased during certain lessons and breaks, so only parts would have been captured.

When it came to the interviews, the individual participants gave their informed consent prior to being interviewed. They were informed about the subject matter of the study, the methods of data collection, their own role, and the methods of ensuring confidentiality. The wording varied between teachers’ (adults) and the pupils’ (adolescents) consent forms. Nonetheless, both versions confirmed that the audio and video data collected would not be displayed anywhere else, and would only be used by the designated researcher. The consent forms also confirmed that their private information would be omitted and that their names would be replaced by pseudonyms. By gaining their informed consent, the interviewees affirmed that the research project had been explained in an understandable manner. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher addressed the matter again, and provided the participants with a face-to-face explanation of the procedure, topic, and aims of the project, as well as a guarantee of confidentiality. Since informing the participants about the research question in detail can bias their responses, participants merely received a general introduction to the PhD topic (cf. Johnstone 2000: 48). Concerning the collection of linguistic landscape data, I was given the principals’ permission to take photographs inside the school, as long as I ensured that no names or faces were discernable.
5.4. Data analysis

Research data—whether qualitative or quantitative—continues to be raw until it undergoes thorough interpretation and analysis, and thus, becomes able to present meaningful results. Thus, “[…] sociolinguistic work is always ‘interpretive’ […]” (Johnstone 2000: 36). The ethnographic approach considers data collection and analysis to happen simultaneously, which means that the process of analysis is already incorporated and happens to an extent before and during fieldwork. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note, analysis is a practice that starts with formulating one’s research questions before going into the field:

In ethnography, the analysis of data is not a distinct stage of the research. In many ways, it begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues through to the process of writing reports, articles, and books. (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 158)

Coffey and Atkinson (cf. 1996: 11) further stress that the complete course of a research project, ranging from the initial research questions to methodology, data collection, and analysis, form a unity in which the individual components imply one another. They emphasize that one should avoid looking at separate steps of the research process as distinct stages, and that analysis should not be viewed as a ‘later stage’ of the research process. However, to some extent, it may be advantageous to distinguish between two phases, as suggested by Heller (2010). According to Heller (cf. 2010: 255), ethnographic work consists of two consecutive stages: the first provides a description of the research context and its practices, while the second stage produces explanations of the practices observed and the reasons behind them. The resulting explanatory data may specify why people follow certain practices and how people make sense of the world.

Within this project, the following process was applied: After the data collection had been concluded, all data was converted into text in order to provide comprehensibility (cf. Copland et al. 2015: 52f.). The interviews were transcribed using transcription conventions based on Tannen’s (cf. 2007: 193) recommendations. Field notes were complemented by a collection of further documents, flyers, and other written material. By following Blommaert and Jie’s (cf. 2010: 37) proposition to treat field notes as private commentaries, the originally handwritten field notes were revised, in order to produce a comprehensive text for analysis. The process of revising and rewriting is, thereby, part of the analysis. The
photographs of the linguistic landscape were numbered and categorized based on their functionality, authorship, location, and language in use.

After careful consideration, the computer-aided qualitative data analysis program MaxQDA was used to assist in assorting the ethnographic data. The reasons for applying a computer-aided tool are as follows: (1) it helps visualize all of the gathered data in one place and helps to create a systematic overview of the data; (2) it makes it possible to make cross-references between different types of data, such as correlations between the observations and interviews.

The next step consists of the generation of codes based on actual data, and derived from an interpretive and reflexive reading of the material (cf. Mason 2002: 154). Since the main objective of this project is the investigation of discourses, an interpretive reading is imperative. Complementing this, the researcher herself was engaged in reflexive reading throughout the entire process. With reference to this, Mason (cf. 2002: 154) stresses that both interpretive and reflexive reading go beyond what is literally present in the text, and, in particular, review the context of the research. Therefore, the methods of both interpretive and reflexive reading conform to poststructuralist views (see Section 2.3) and will be seen in relation to the notions of Bourdieu and Foucault. In addition, certain concepts by Mikhail Bakhtin, in particular his concept of dialogism, will be incorporated as a means for analysis. Dialogism describes the characteristics of utterances; as explained by Bakhtin (1986: 69), utterances\textsuperscript{21} are a response to something that has been part of a discourse before. Thus, utterances produce dialogues and are reproductions of perceptions and ideologies:

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\text{[...] any speaker is himself a respondent to a greater or lesser degree. He is not, after all, the first speaker […] Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances. […] There can be no such thing as an absolutely neutral utterance. (Bakhtin 1986: 84)}
\]

In interviews, people tend to produce narratives in which they refer to situations they have experienced at some point. They consequently reproduce incidents and perceptions in their own words, while, at the same time, they reconstruct previous utterances. The same can be assumed when examining visual data, such as linguistic landscape or documentations

\textsuperscript{21} According to Bakhtin, the basis of communication consists of utterances instead of single words or sentences: "Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity" (Bakthin 1986: 60). This appears to be relevant in terms of analyzing spoken data because interviews need to be recognized as an interaction between participants in a particular context. Moreover, interviews include participants that are present, but also involve people that are absent.
of observations. In fact, as signs, they reveal references as well as *dialogisms* and powerful discourses.

As indicated by examples in the following chapter, in this project, single utterances were frequently assigned to more than one code because they were concerned with more than one topic. Hence, the codes should be understood as helpful mechanisms that support the interpretive and reflexive reading process, rather than as tools for dividing utterances. Categorizing utterances via MaxQDA was particularly helpful when it came to highlighting relevant utterances and providing a focus for further analysis. By observing the material cross-sectionally and considering it in relation to existing research in the field, this analysis will provide answers to the research questions defined above.
6. Results

6.1. Overview

This chapter presents the results of this project, ordered according to subject, in an attempt to provide an accessible structure. The first section begins by discussing the issue of the normativity of language competencies and multilingualism in which, for instance, controversies regarding the characteristic features of a multilingual person arise. Section 6.3 then considers the social functions of languages, in particular, examining which functions are associated with pupils’ home languages, and which are inherent in school languages. Subsequently, Section 6.4 provides a critical assessment of discourses on diversity in the two schools. As a result, it addresses topics beyond language, but that nonetheless relate to diversity, such as discrimination and equality. Section 6.5 describes the asymmetries between languages in the schools by illustrating how languages manifest themselves in school spaces and define a hierarchy of prestige.

As clarified in Chapter 5, it is important to note that the researcher actively participated in the research process, and, hence, to some extent the presence of the researcher contributes to the formation of discourses. As a consequence, this paper incorporates and acknowledges the discourses that were produced and co-constructed by the researcher. I follow the approach taken by other researchers who treat interviews as an interaction between interviewee and interviewer (cf. Baker & Johnson 1998, Roulston 2000) in which talk is “jointly constructed for local purposes” (Rapley & Antaki 1998: 588). Therefore, the researcher does not occupy a neutral or invisible position, but rather themself recreates dominant ideologies, while establishing discourses together with the participants. This stance is considered to be an essential aspect of ethnographic and poststructuralist frameworks.
6.2. Normativity of language competencies and multilingualism

This section deals with the normativity of languages and multilingualism, which is a prominent discourse with reference to language use in general. When referring to languages, the perception of multilingualism, multilingual individuals, and their languages is predominantly embedded in context: “Multilingualism is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence, enables and disables them to deploy” (Blommaert et al. 2005: 213). Thus, one’s context in society is primarily responsible for determining what is seen as valid multilingualism or valid language use in specific situations, and, as a consequence, determines which discourses are reproduced in terms of what society thinks of multilingualism and multilinguals. With regard to this project, both teachers and pupils referred to multilingualism in compliance with dominant views. However, this thesis considers multilingualism\(^\text{22}\) to be equal to the notion of linguistic repertoire. One’s linguistic repertoire can be defined as the sum of all of the linguistic resources an individual uses and is characterized by features of creativity and fluidity (cf. Blommaert & Backus 2012, Busch 2012). The linguistic repertoire is considered to be a fluid entity and not a fixed set of languages, since it is constantly changing and adjusting to new life circumstances.

The following section will begin by analyzing utterances taken from my interviews with teachers. It is necessary to stress that people’s associations with multilingualism differ significantly according to their personal experiences and life histories. For instance, most of the teachers interviewed experienced a German-based education in Austria, with exposure to regional varieties and other foreign languages in school and at university, whereas some of the pupils have experienced more diverse ethnolinguistic environments due to growing urban diversity.

Section 6.2.1 begins by analyzing utterances regarding teachers’ perceptions of multilingualism, which can be described as an ‘ideal concept of multilingualism’. Section 6.2.2 then addresses the issue of homogeneity, a perception that goes hand in hand with

\(^{22}\) In addition, this paper refrains from using the term bilingualism, which—strictly speaking—refers to the use of two languages. Even though the terms bilingualism and multilingualism are often used synonymously, this paper will limit itself to the term multilingualism in order to ensure its readability.
the school system and notions of normativity. The following section (6.2.3) is concerned with the view that languages need to be learned in a formal environment in order to be recognized as adequate, while Section 6.2.4 continues in a similar line and focuses on the acquisition of an academic register.

6.2.1. Ideal multilingualism

Generally, the following interview excerpts illustrate that teachers tend to reproduce discourses around multilingualism which see multilingualism as an ideal state, meaning that multilingual individuals are equally proficient in their languages. According to such a view, linguistic competencies in multiple languages should be balanced, so that speakers are able to gain equal knowledge of, for instance, literacy and the standard language variety in both languages. In addition, language use should avoid any interference between the languages such as translanguaging (cf. MacSwan 2017). Grosjean (cf. 2008: 10) refers to this view of ‘ideal multilingualism’ as the monolingual view of multilingualism, while Jørgensen et al. (cf. 2011: 33f.) conceptualize it as a double monolingual norm. Both views suggest that monolingual habits are the norm. In practice, this view claims that a multilingual person is, more or less, two (or more) monolinguals in one person, who demonstrates proficiency on all levels in all languages. This monolingual bias—seeing monolingualism as the uncontested norm and benchmark against which further language competencies are measured—also influences the learning of other languages (cf. May 2014a).

In the context of my research project, utterances concerning the normativity of multilingualism primarily occurred in my interviews with teachers. The data reproduces a monolingual view, in the sense that multilingualism is described as an isolated language asset that has been acquired before students begin their schooling, and which can be compared to monolingual first language acquisition. At the same time, the acquisition of multilingualism is perceived as both a process happening outside the school, and as being already accomplished. The following extract illustrates this view of ideal multilingualism.

Extract (1) shows how Helene\textsuperscript{23}, a teacher of languages, generates the idea of multilinguals as having already fully acquired language competencies, and thus presenting two monolinguals in one person. Prior to this utterance, Helene had described

\textsuperscript{23} In what follows, all of the participants names have been changed to protect their anonymity.
how she enjoys incorporating her pupils’ home languages into the class and invites them to contribute knowledge related to their home languages, for instance, highlighting grammatical or phonological differences. I then asked how the multilingual pupils react to her demeanor and react to being set apart from the rest of the class.

**Extract (1)** Helene (paragraphs 95-100)

Christina: ähm beziehst du da andere Erstsprachen von den Kindern in den Unterricht mit [ ein?

Helene: [ immer. ich reg das immer an also von denen wo i a bissl a Ahnung hab. natürlich auch nachfragend beziehungsweise von denen i gar ka Ahnung hab versuch i von denen Kindern halt was raus zu holen. wobei die in dem Alter net immer so bewusst sind der (.) Metaebene in ihrer eigenen Muttersprache oder Zweitsprache. aber dann mit der Zeit kommt sozusagen doch a bissl a Reflexion und dann sagens sehr wohl (.) was da jetzt wie das in ihrer Sprache is

Christina: und wie finden die das so wenn die da (.) hervorgehoben werden?

Helene: i glaub es tut ihnen gut. und i tus a gern aber i versuch auch ähm die die nicht zweisprachig sind net dass die sich auf einmal diskriminiert fühlen. das wär jetzt a blöd. ”a super du bist zweisprachig und du bist zweisprachig und du bist zweisprachig und der der net zweisprachig ist der denkt sich dann ”jetzt i hab nix besonderes”. jetzt versuch i das irgendwie mit Samtpfoten zu machen ’hhh allerdings wann ma jetzt ins Fettnäpfchen trifft oder net das weiß ma a nie

Christina: ja

Helene: aber i versuch ihnen auch immer wieder bewusst zu machen dass jede Sprache ganz wichtig ist (.) auch Sprachen die halt ähm aus einem nicht so tollen Wirtschaftsraum kommen (.) also auch das Kurdische das viele auch von unseren kurdischen Kindern garnet als Schriftsprache können

Christina: uhm do you incorporate children’s other first languages into your [ lessons?

Helene: [ always. I always like to encourage it from those I know a little bit about. of course also inquiring of those where I have no idea I try to get something out of the children. well but at that age they aren’t always aware of the (.) meta-level of their mother tongue or second language. but then with time so to speak there starts to be a bit more reflection and then they do say (.) what this means in their language now and then

Christina: and how do they take it when the (.) attention is placed on them?
Helene: I think it’s good for them, and I like to do it but I also try to uh make it so that those who are not bilingual don’t feel discriminated against all of a sudden. That would be silly. “Oh great you are bilingual and you are bilingual and you are bilingual” and then someone who’s not bilingual thinks, “now I have nothing special”. Now I try somehow to approach it very sensitively ‘hhhh but you never know when you’re going to put your foot in it.

Christina: yes

Helene: but I always try to make them aware that each language is important, (. ) even languages from not-so-great economic areas (. ) like Kurdish which many of our Kurdish children are not even literate in.

This utterance was introduced by the researcher asking about the possibility of incorporating pupils’ linguistic repertoires into the teacher’s lessons. Helene then refers to her method of including pupils’ home languages, which is based on their metalinguistic abilities. After implying that this practice might lead to pupils feeling ‘set apart’ from the rest of the class, the teacher justified her approach by stressing that mentioning their home languages evokes positive associations.

The following utterance also contains an idea of multilingualism: “and I like to do it but I also try to uh make it so that those who are not bilingual don’t feel discriminated against all of a sudden. That would be silly. ‘Oh great you are bilingual and you are bilingual and you are bilingual’ and then someone who’s not bilingual thinks, ‘now I have nothing special’.” In this extract, Helene expresses a comparison between the students who are multilingual (or bilingual) and those who are not, thereby, intrinsically reflecting the notion that multilingualism is a feature attributed to some but not to others. Consequently, both the concepts of the fluidity of multilingual repertoires and a continuum between multilingualism and monolingualism are neglected. Even though Helene appears to appreciate multilingualism, she nevertheless acknowledges monolingualism as the norm when she characterizes multilingualism as ‘something special’. By describing multiple language competencies as an additional feature to regular linguistic competence, she reproduces a discourse on multilingualism as differing from the monolingual norm. Furthermore, with this statement, Helene positions herself as being aware of the diverse linguistic repertoires within her classes, open to their inclusion in the classroom, and, finally, aware of possible conflicts between highlighting multilingualism and the monolingual norm in school.
The following extract from my interview with Kristin includes similar references. Prior to this part of our conversation, I had shown Kristin several images of the linguistic landscape of her school, and one of the examples reminded her of a similar project she had done with her class.

**Extract (2) Kristin (paragraphs 205-210)**

Christina: oh das haben Sie gemacht?
Kristin: das hab i net ich gemacht, nein. das war noch in der anderen Bibliothek aber i hab sowas gemacht ja. auch äh dieses Sprachenmännchen wo man sagt wo sitzen meine- kennen Sie das? ((Interviewerin nickt)) meine Sprachen ja. das voriges Jahr hab i dann gemacht was sie wissen von ihren Ländern also von den Ländern aus denen die Eltern kommen und so weiter

Christina: mhm und wie daugt das den Schülern?
Kristin: ja eigentlich schon. es is sie hören da zu es is interessant und und jeder hat dann a- is dann amal steht amal im Mittelpunkt. das is wichtig auch dass ma sich interessiert und dieses Personalisieren oder? dass ma etwas was man Bescheid weiß über die Kinder (. ) ach ja das war dann so lustig voriges Jahr also “ich spreche das und das” sag i “warum sprichst du diese Sprache” “ja weil wenn ma Fußball spielen gehen da sind lauter Kroaten oder was und jetzt kann ich auch Kroatisch”

Christina: ja
Kristin: “und Italienisch kann ich auch weil mein Papa hat eine Freundin die war Italienerin gehabt” und so weiter ja dann und dann war a Mädchen und die hat gesagt “und ich spreche Deutsch und Oststeirisch” damit sie auch zwei Sprachen hat gel da waren dann die eigentlich fast benachteiligt die die Grazer waren ((kichern)) weil ( ) sie war dann so lieb sagt “ich sprich Oststeirisch”

Christina: oh you did that?
Kristin: I didn’t do this no. it was still in the other library but I have done something like that yes. also these language portraits in which one says my language is there- do you know it? ((interviewer nods)) my languages yes. then last year I did what they know about their countries well know about the countries where their parents are from and so on

Christina: mm-hmm and do the pupils like that?
Kristin explains how she once used the method of creating language portraits (cf. Busch 2006, Busch 2013) to foster language awareness among pupils. In her answer to my question regarding whether her pupils enjoy doing such projects, the teacher described the relevance of students being placed at the center of attention and how important it is for teachers to have some knowledge of their students’ family backgrounds. She then recollects some utterances of students describing their linguistic diversity. One girl’s utterance was described as particularly entertaining because she claimed to be multilingual due to the fact that she speaks German as well as a local variety of German called ‘Oststeirisch’ (Eastern Styrian). Therefore, the teacher associated the girl’s utterance with her desire to be characterized as multilingual. Moreover, she notes that, in that situation, pupils from Graz were seen as being at a disadvantage since they are presumably monolingual: “[...] then the others were kind of disadvantaged the ones who are from Graz [...]”. Accordingly, pupils from Graz are perceived as using standard German as opposed to pupils living outside of Graz, which conveys discourses on a standard language ideology.

In general, Extracts (1) and (2) highlight a few issues with regard to a so-called ‘ideal multilingualism’. First, the teachers’ utterances refer to beliefs about what counts as a ‘valid’ language and what counts as valid multilingualism. According to Kristin’s description of a lesson in Extract (2), languages such as Croatian or Italian are identified as valid constructs, while, in contrast, local varieties such as Eastern Styrian are discredited as legitimate languages, and, therefore, the pupil’s characterization of herself as multilingual was described as an amusing instance and a reaction to the other students’ multilingualism.
Kristin thus reproduced discourses relating to both the concept of language and a valid scheme of categorizing and identifying languages (cf. Makoni & Pennycook 2007), which are consequently related to discourses on valid multilingualism.

Second, both Helene and Kristin draw a distinction between two groups of pupils. Both teachers distinguish between those who are monolingual and those who are multilingual when referring to situations in which they encouraged multilingual pupils to speak up. Generally, the diversity of pupils’ linguistic repertoire is associated with other features, such as their family backgrounds or where they live. As a result, ‘local’ pupils from Graz become associated with ‘monolingualism’. Both teachers mention that, in situations addressing multilingualism, seemingly monolingual pupils appear to be disadvantaged because they do not have equally diverse linguistic repertoires. Utterances like these reproduce discourses relating to an obsolete picture of a linguistic repertoire as static, combined with membership in a particular language community (cf. Gumperz 1964) and consisting of supposedly eligible languages.

Overall, this section has provided examples of teachers referring to an ideal form of multilingualism—a multilingualism that consists of standardized languages and constitutes an asset. However, each time multilingualism was mentioned, it was compared to a monolingual norm, and, consequently, discourses on ideal, acceptable, or unmarked language use emerge. The following section will continue with the complementary topic of discourses of homogeneity in schools.

6.2.2. Homogeneity as the norm

Homogeneity and monolingualism are central ideas of the nation state ideology, which is a view proclaiming that each nation shall coincide with one language, and thus ensure a cohesive community. This view is strengthened by the idea that a population sharing a common language fosters a strong, secure, and coherent society. As such, linguistic nationism—the connection between one language and one nation—is a relatively recent phenomenon, which appeared during the rise of nationalism that occurred between the 18th and early 20th centuries (cf. Hobsbawm 1992). According to this, ethnolinguistic diversity may be perceived as a potential threat to social cohesion (cf. Cooke & Simpson 2012: 120). In the context of this project, the topic of homogeneity is relevant insofar as
schools are seen as relatively homogeneous places, and they tend to reproduce discourses on homogeneous language practices. The following excerpt from my interview with Anna, a teacher of Arts, is interesting because, while my initial question addressed the topic of linguistic diversity among pupils and did not refer to school languages or the language of instruction, her reply focuses on the language of instruction.

**Extract (3) Anna (paragraphs 25-26)**

Christina: mhm cool. ähm kannst du mir a bissi was über die Sprachenvielfalt unter den Schülerinnen und Schülern erzählen? 

Anna: mhm. also natürlich die die Unterrichtssprache is Deutsch. °kann ma ja erwähnen° relativ Hochdeutsch jetzt auch wenn- i hab so die Beobachtung gmacht a wenn Leute jetzt eigentlich daheim Dialekt sprechen sprechen sie aber untereinander in der Klasse eher Hochdeutsch. 

Christina: mm-hmm cool. uhm can you tell me a little bit about the linguistic diversity among pupils? 

Anna: mm-hmm. well of course the the language of instruction is German. °one can mention that° relatively High German now even when- I have observed that even when people actually speak dialect at home they speak more or less standard German among themselves.

Of particular interest in this utterance is the fact that Anna instantly strays from the topic of the researcher’s question. She states outright that German is the language of instruction and then quietly adds, “one can mention that”. This gives the impression that the interviewee was articulating a slight feeling of guilt when she revealed the German-based school policy, but, in a way, she also defends herself for addressing the fact. Subsequently, Anna describes how she has noticed her pupils speaking standard German, even though she assumes that they speak a regional variety at home. She moves from the term Deutsch/ German to Hochdeutsch/High German, which suggests a more sophisticated and standard association. By addressing the importance of German as the language of instruction in school and the perceived fact that pupils only use German in school, the utterance in Extract (3) demonstrates the dominance of a *standard language ideology* (Milroy 2001, Milroy & Milroy 1991, Lippi-Green 2012). The standard language ideology can indisputably be attributed to schools since one of the main tasks is to teach proficiency in the standard
language, and thus also the standard language ideology (cf. Lippi-Green 2012). Hence, Extract (3) by Anna reproduces a discourse on the standard language by avoiding the question related to pupils’ linguistic diversity and emphasizing the role of the language of instruction instead. The following extract from my interview with Kristin shows that she holds a similar perspective.

**Extract (4) Kristin (paragraphs 25-26)**

Christina: mhm in der- in welchen Betreuungsstunden machen Sie das?
Kristin: äh zum Beispiel hab i Religion-Betreuungsstunden also alle die nicht katholische Religion [ haben
Christina: [ ah ok das
Kristin: das is fast die Hälfte also die ohne Bekenntnis oder islamisch oder was eben auch immer. ja orthodox koptisch alles mögliche hama ja
Christina: und generell wenn Sie so die eben alle Schülerinnen und Schüler jetzt auf am Haufen sehen würden ähm welche Sprachen kommen da vor?
Kristin: ah da wird nur Deutsch gesprochen. also das is (.) kommt also bei uns an der Schule is wirklich noch nie ghört ja? weil wenn i so auf meinem Heimweg bei der **Schule vorbeifahr da mit dem Rad da hört man ja alle möglichen Sprachen. (.) ähm aber das is bei uns is wirklich die die Sprache auch in der Freizeit (.) is immer Deutsch. ja (.) außer bei diesen beiden ** zum Beispiel einer kann gut Englisch und der übersetzt dann seinem Freund der der Probleme hat noch größere.

Christina: mm-hmm in the- in which lessons do you do that?
Kristin: uh for instance I have those free period mentoring lessons in religious education where all pupils who are not [ Catholic
Christina: [ uh ok that
Kristin: that is nearly half well those who have no religious denomination or are Islamic or whatever. yes Coptic Orthodox we have everything possible yes
Christina: and in general if you would now see all pupils in one place uhm which languages are present?
Kristin: oh they only speak German. well that is (.) it happens well at our school I have never really heard it right? because when I’m on my way home and ride my bike past the **school one hears all kinds of languages. (.) uhm but that is with us it is really also the language used in the free time (.) it is always German. yes (.) except with those two from ** for instance one is good in English and then he translates for his friend who has bigger problems.
Before Extract (4), Kristin and I had been speaking about linguistic diversity among the pupils at her school. She described a significant amount of diversity, and then focused on specific approaches to addressing this ethnolinguistic diversity in class, such as by carrying out small projects. My follow-up question was intended to take us back to the topic of linguistic diversity among her pupils. It is important to note, here, that the interviewer used verbal imagery when she asked: “if you would now see all pupils in one place uhm which languages are present?” in order to guide the focus of the teacher towards all of the pupils in the school. Consequently, it seems that a discourse on homogeneity was co-constructed by the interviewer and the interviewee. Kristin responds to the question by limiting her answer to observations on language use in school. She states that German is the only language spoken in the school context, even during pupils’ free time, and emphasizes that she never hears any other language. She compares the language choices of her school to a different school in Graz, which is well known for its diversity. However, earlier in the interview (paragraphs 12-14, 16), it became evident that Kristin is well aware of the diversity of backgrounds among her students since she lists a few countries of origin and says, “es ist sehr bunt geworden/it has become very diverse”. Nevertheless, in Extract (4), Kristin returns to a discourse that portrays a homogeneous and monolingual norm especially in terms of the language choices made by pupils in the school.

To sum up, Kristin’s statement reproduces discourses on heterogeneity versus homogeneity. By bringing up a comparison between her school and an apparently more diverse school, her utterance emphasizes the dominance of homogeneity in the school. Thus, the discourse implied by this utterance includes a comparison between legitimate and illegitimate practices, in which legitimate practices serve as guidance for what appears to be valid (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 53).

The following extract is taken from my field notes in School A, and illustrates how teachers reproduce discourses on homogeneity within their classes. These notes were documented after an informal conversation with two teachers in the staff room.

Extract (5) field notes A3; staff room

The first lesson was canceled, so the pupils were allowed to enjoy their free time whilst keeping quiet. I observed some interactions inside and outside of the classroom, then went into the staff room to get some coffee. I met Sylvia (my contact person in School A) in the staff room and we started to chat. She asked me if I had observed anything interesting so
She then talked about a pupil from "country", who, as a refugee, received the status of an **außerordentlicher Schüler** and attends class **. Sylvia says that he and another adolescent from "country" attend this school on the condition that they make an effort to learn German. Another teacher, Gerd, joins us. He tells me that he is not able to include one of the pupils from "country" in his lesson because of their lack of a common language. He said that he sometimes asks another pupil—who is from Egypt and proficient in Arabic—to translate for him. Gerd also tells me that he is aware of the many different varieties of Arabic and that he knows that asking a student to serve as a translator is not an ideal solution, but he cannot think of a better way of handling the pupil from "country", who hardly speaks any German or English.

In Extract (5), Gerd, a teacher of English and history, describes his experience of having to teach a student whom he can hardly incorporate into the lesson due to language barriers. This extract reproduces a discourse on homogeneity, initiated by the teacher. In the situation depicted by Gerd, the homogeneous unity of the class is in jeopardy, since, typically, the whole class is proficient in German and the teacher can carry out his lesson; however, in this case, a student is unable to understand German (and only little English), and, thus, presents a challenge. Overall, if a teacher’s expectations of teaching a homogeneous group are not met, it may lead to insecurities for the teachers, particularly with regard to language use. The discourses documented in my field notes thus raise questions about possible solutions in terms of the teachers’ language choices and language management. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the second teacher, Sylvia, also played a significant role in creating the discourse. Sylvia initiated the conversation on pupils with a different status, with Gerd adding his experiences to the conversation. Sylvia also stresses that **außerordentliche Schüler/außerordentliche Schülerinnen** have the responsibility to improve their language skills in German. Moreover, the teacher proclaims that a commitment to acquiring German is one of the conditions for these pupils to be allowed to attend regular school while having this status. Consequently, a discourse is reproduced that sees some students and their lack of proficiency in German as standing in opposition to the homogeneous group.

The preceding extracts illustrate that homogeneity is seen as a desirable trait, both in human society (cf. Blommaert & Verschueren 1998: 117), as well as in schools, in terms of the ethnolinguistic diversity of their pupils, language choices in the school building, and a standard language ideology.

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24 Principals have the possibility to grant pupils the status of **außerordentlicher Schüler/außerordentliche Schülerin**, if the pupils have difficulties following regular classes due to a lack of proficiency in the language of instruction. Pupils with this status receive grades only in subjects which they completed successfully. Schools receive financial resources in order to assist those pupils. See §4 Bundeskanzleramt 1986, *Schulunterrichtsgesetz.*
6.2.3. Discourses on learning languages

Learning in itself is the central focus and objective of schools. Since it is the school’s task to educate and transport knowledge, the concept of learning is inherently embedded in the discourses within the school. When addressing issues such as the home languages of pupils, further topics related to their language learning, proficiency, and competence are discursively constructed. In the following section, the verb *to learn* is used in the place of *to acquire* since the interviewees refer to processes of language learning in formal contexts, while ‘language acquisition’ is commonly used to describe language learning in private contexts (cf. Bickes & Pauli 2009: 92).

Particularly with regard to children’s home languages, discourses on learning processes and goals emerged on a regular basis. The following extract, taken from my interview with Oliver, a teacher of geography and history, provides an example of the emphasis placed on pupils learning their home languages.

**Extract (6) Oliver (paragraphs 167-170)**

Christina: welche Sprachen würdest du als *wichtig* beschreiben?

Oliver: i glaub i würd jede Sprache als wichtig beschreiben die die zuhause gesprochen wird. dass sie *die* gscheit erlernen also dass was immer wieder genannt wird. dass natürlich die Sprache die (. ) die zuhause gesprochen wird nie schriftlich lernen oder dass das natürlich auch ein Nachteil is wenn man die Sprache zwar versteht vielleicht aber das das Sinnvolle würd dass sies auch gscheit erlernen und dann natürlich auch wenn sie das gscheit können auch die Vergleiche zur deutschen Sprache ziehen können. ähm ja also wenn ma- fokusier ma uns jetzt auf Schüler mit Nicht-Deutsch als Erstsprache die anderen Schüler müssen wahrscheinlich auch das erlernen ((kichern)) die deutsche Sprache als Erstsprache wahrscheinlich das Wichtige.

Christina: ja. ähm welche Sprachen würdest du als *nützlich* beschreiben?

Oliver: die Sprachen die sie gscheit erlernen. die Erstsprache wenns zuhause gesprochen wird wirklich und die die Zweitsprache die die sie dann in der Schule sprechen und natürlich Englisch als lebende Fremdsprache.

Christina: which languages would you describe as *important*?
Oliver: I think I would describe every language that is spoken at home as important. that they learn *them* properly well which is always mentioned. that of of course the language that () is spoken at home is never learned in written form or that it is of course a disadvantage if they understand the language but it would be logical that they learn it properly and *then* of course if they know it fully they can make comparisons to the German language. uhm yes well if one- let’s focus now on pupils who don’t have German as their first language the other pupils probably also need to learn ((chuckling)) the German language as first language

Christina: yes. uhm which languages would you describe as *useful*?

Oliver: the language that they learn properly. the first language if it is spoken at home really and the the second language that they speak in school then and of course English as a foreign language.

The initial question asked by the researcher implies a hierarchy of which languages are important, a ranking that is frequently applied to languages even though it is incontrovertibly based on social status and prestige. It follows, then, that this interaction co-constructs a discourse on language prestige. However, Oliver refers to both the students’ home languages as well as their proficiency in their home languages in terms of the need to reach a certain level of competence, particularly by actively engaging in a learning process. Moreover, he mentions the significance of pupils learning their home languages ‘properly’ (a loose translation of the colloquial phrase ’etwas gescheit lernen’) in order to be able to improve their proficiency in German. After the first question, I asked Oliver a similar question about which languages he considers to be ‘useful’. In his answer, Oliver refers to his previous utterance and emphasizes that only languages that have been learned ‘properly’ can be considered useful. Furthermore, he assigns the utility of languages to particular places: the first language at home, the second language (German) in school, and English as a foreign language.

In this excerpt, Oliver frequently uses the phrase *learning properly/gescheit lernen* to describe the goal of a language learning process, for instance, “I think I would describe every language that is spoken at home as important. that they learn *them* properly well which is always mentioned.” This utterance underlines a difference between language competencies, namely, literacy and knowledge of the standard variety. Consequently, this discourse stresses the demand for complete language competencies in one’s multilingual
repertoire. The idea of complete competencies is rooted in the concept of *semilingualism* (cf. Hansegård 1968, Romaine 1995: 263f.), which sees bilinguals as exhibiting full competencies on all levels with regard to formal speech, literacy, reading, writing, and speaking in both languages. As a result, limited competencies are perceived as deficient.

Another discourse reproduced in this extract from Oliver’s interview applies to the idea of there being two stages to the learning process; first, the acquisition of basic language skills happens before children are enrolled in school, while, second, fundamental literacy skills are acquired in school. Because of this difference, the type of language knowledge obtained in schools is seen as crucial. As noted by Milroy (cf. 2001: 537) and Cameron (1995), linguistic knowledge needs to be acquired in a formal manner to count as adequate, something that generally takes place in schools, and under the supervision of a teacher who communicates and enforces language rules. Hence, this discourse conveys that there are different levels in terms of acquiring language skills. At the same time, it also underscores that learning specific skills is associated with certain spaces, such as the home or the school.

The third discourse that appears in Oliver’s utterance is concerned with the general assumption that language competencies are co-dependent. When he states that, “it would be logical that they learn it properly and then of course if they know it fully they can make comparisons to the German language”, he is referring to a general discourse according to which, one’s ability to learn a second language depends on one’s competencies in a previously acquired language such as one’s first language. This discourse appears frequently in conversations with teachers, presumably because it has been present since the late 1970s, and is widely known as Cummins’ (1979) *interdependence hypothesis*. Cummins, however, focuses on competencies concerning the academic register of languages, a topic that will be addressed in Section 6.2.4.

Similar discourses were reproduced in a group interview with pupils from School B. The following extract emerged when the conversation turned to the topic of the pupils’ education in their home languages. Initially, the interviewer inquired as to the pupils’ participation in *lessons in mother tongue* as well as their opinions of them. After receiving answers from other participants, the interviewer addressed Leon, whose utterance is reproduced in Extract (7).
Exract (7) School B, Leon (paragraphs 235-240)

Christina: ja ok. und bei dir? ((an Leon gerichtet))
Leon: ja also ich hab den nicht besucht. ich hab eigentlich drauf Wert gelegt
dass ich zuerst einmal richtig ähm Deutsch lerne. und eben dann
wenn die Zeit da ist auch ähm meine Muttersprache weiter-
Christina: mhm das heißt du kannst net lesen und schreiben?
Leon: äh doch doch kann ich. halt nicht so ganz- nicht so richtig gut aber es
reichet eigentlich zum Kommunizieren.
Christina: mhm wo hast du das gelernt?
Leon: ähm in der Familie.

Christina: yes ok. and for you? ((addressing Leon))
Leon: yes well I didn’t attend it. I actually decided to focus on learning
correct uhm German first. and then if there is still time also to
further- uhm my mother tongue
Christina: mm-hmm that means you cannot read and write?
Leon: uh no no I can. just not that- not really that well but well enough
actually to communicate.
Christina: mm-hmm where did you learn that?
Leon: uhm in my family.

In Extract (7), Leon mentions that he abstained from attending lessons in mother tongue
because he decided to focus on learning ‘correct’ German instead. While this utterance does
not provide any information about the circumstances of his or his parents’ choices with
regard to learning the home language in an educational setting, it nonetheless illustrates
a similar discourse as mentioned in Extract (6). In Leon’s utterance, “I actually decided to
focus on learning correct uhm German first. and then if there is still time also to further-
uhm my mother tongue”, his home language is subordinated to German. Furthermore,
Leon reproduces the notion of the need to learn German (or any other language) ‘correctly’.
Accordingly, he has internalized the need to learn languages to their full extent with
competencies on all levels. He mentions the need to learn standard German first as a
reason he chose not to attend lessons in his home language. In addition to the notion of full
competencies, this utterance reflects a discourse on the hierarchical positioning of certain
languages. It illustrates that, for Leon, attaining high proficiency in German is rated as
his primary goal, regardless of the diversity of his linguistic repertoire. Without a doubt,
sufficient competencies in German are an important prerequisite for social and economic positions in Austria, and literacy in the language of the dominant culture is crucial (cf. Maas 2010). Nonetheless, when it comes to minority languages, speakers often subordinate their home languages at the expense of acquiring skills in the majority language (cf. Lippi-Green 2012: 66ff.).

Furthermore, Extract (7) illustrates how both interviewee and interviewer co-construct the utterance. After Leon points out his current focus on learning German, the interviewer joins in the discourse on language proficiency by asking about his literacy skills in his first language. Fundamentally, his answer does not provide any more information about the extent of Leon’s proficiency or the learning process, but rather illustrates the necessity of ‘learning’ in itself, which is a principal discourse that is reproduced in the context of schools.

Moving on, in Extract (8), Kristin, a teacher, indicates the importance of learning one’s home language. In this utterance, associations between the inherent prestige of languages and motives for learning home languages emerge.

Extract (8) Kristin (paragraphs 15-16)

Christina: mhm mhm können Sie mir da noch a bissl die Sprachenvielfalt unter den Schülerinnen und Schülern [ beschreiben?

Kristin: [ ja die is enorm also i hab dann auch so Betreuungsstunden und da mach i das immer zum Thema weils mir wichtig is dass ma den Kindern (.) ähm klar macht dass das ein Schatz is wenn man mehrere Sprachen spricht und es gibt ja eben Sprachen mit am hohen Sozialprestige die daheim auch gepflegt werden und das Kurdische mit am niedrigen zum Beispiel wo die Eltern selbst mit den Kindern net die Muttersprache (.) sprechen weil sie Angst vor Stigmatisierung haben (.) u:nd äh i glaub dass ma das den Kindern immer wieder sagen muss dass das sehr wertvoll is und dass sie auch diesen Fremdsprachenunterricht der angeboten wird in Österreich ,hhh dass sie den besuchen und dass sie das auch verschriftlichen lernen also dass sie das auch dass sie die Schrift lernen. äh weil man damit einfach dann mehr anfangen kann.

Christina: mm-hmm mm-hmm can you describe the linguistic diversity among pupils a little bit [ for me?
Kristin: yes it is enormous well I also have those free period mentoring lessons and there I always broach the issue of it because it is important to me to make it (.) uhm clear to the children that it is a treasure if one can speak more languages and of course there are languages with high social prestige that are cultivated at home and Kurdish with low prestige for instance where the parents even don’t speak with their children in the mother tongue (.) because they are afraid of stigmatization (.) and uh I think that one needs to tell the children again and again that it is very precious und that there are these foreign language classes that are offered in Austria ’hhh that they should attend them and also learn the written form so that they also learn to write. uh because one can just do more with it.

The interviewer begins Extract (8) by asking Kristin to describe the linguistic diversity among her students, after which the teacher produces a short description of her attitudes towards learning home languages and literacy. In Extract (8), the teacher associates the social prestige associated with particular languages with a potential motivation to learn one’s home language. As an example, she cites Kurdish and expresses the view that Kurdish has low social prestige, and, as a consequence, is hardly maintained in families, “Kurdish with low prestige for instance where the parents even don’t speak with their children in the mother tongue (.) because they are afraid of stigmatization (.)”.

Kristin’s utterance suggests that prestige is an inherent property of languages. In fact, the concept of prestige is often used to describe the significance of languages, with the standard language variety typically attributed the highest prestige. However, the feature of prestige refers not only to languages per se, but also to commonly held attitudes towards the speakers of a particular language or language variety. Speakers attribute other speakers prestige on the basis of their general preconceptions of social status, and, thus, convert any language used by certain speakers into an index of social prestige (cf. Milroy 2001: 532). In her statement, Kristin reproduces the discourse that prestige is associated with speakers and languages and, consequently, takes the view that prestige is an unchangeable feature of particular languages. She also stresses that she aims to raise the language prestige of such languages.

The second discourse mentioned in Extract (8) refers to language learning in formal settings, such as lessons in mother tongue. As previously stressed, there is a general consensus that language learning that occurs in formal settings is considered to be more
legitimate than in informal settings. It appears that, especially in the context of schools, issues arise in relation to the so-called *gesteuerter Spracherwerb* (cf. de Cillia 2011: 2), that is, the acquisition of language in a formal context and guided by educators.

Concluding this section, it is possible to note that discourses on language learning address a particular need to learn languages in order to demonstrate full competencies in the language. With regard to pupils’ linguistic repertoires, the above excerpts from my interviews with teachers illustrate the existence of a discourse on learning languages ‘properly’, which means that speakers possess full competencies in formal speech, literacy, reading, writing, and speaking in both languages. Similarly, the pupil’s statement reveals an internalized discourse on the importance of learning the majority language first. Furthermore, each of these conversations highlights notions such as the interdependence hypothesis and the concept of prestige.

6.2.4. The academic register

On the one hand, the topic of language learning relates to children’s home languages, while, on the other hand, it is also concerned with the relevance of learning the academic register of German. As mentioned in Chapter 3.2, German is the designated national language, and therefore also the language of instruction in all schools. In general, one of schools’ main responsibilities is to teach the standard language variety and to familiarize pupils with the academic register. Since this is the primary objective of educational institutions, many discourses present in my observations and interviews dealt with the topic of standard language and the issue of acquiring the academic register.

The term *academic register* refers to the formal register of a standard language that is used in schools and other academic contexts. The concept emerged in the framework of educational linguistics provided by Cummins (1979) with regard to the concept of *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP). Cummins’ (1979, 2008) theory is based on a differentiation between *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS) and CALP: “BICS refers to conversational fluency in a language while CALP refers to students’ ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school” (Cummins 2008: 71). Language proficiency is acquired through interaction and—with the experiences pupils have in school—basic interpersonal
communicative skills become distinct from academic language skills. Thus, academic proficiency is developed in the context of schools and directly linked to achieving academic success (cf. Cummins 2008: 72). On the basis of previous studies, Cummins recognized that children who have a good command of BICS but poor academic performance could mistakenly be categorized as having lower levels of intelligence or other developmental restrictions. In fact, the main problem in many cases is pupils’ insufficient knowledge of CALP (cf. Cummins 2008: 73).

In this study, participants used a variety of expressions to describe the academic register, such as ‘gebildete Sprache’ and ‘Bildungssprache’. In the German-speaking context, the concept Bildungssprache as opposed to Umgangssprache was established by Scheler in 1960 (31f.). Gogolin (cf. 2009: 268) explains the significance of the concept of Bildungssprache in schools, and refers to its use in exercises, books, teaching materials, and exams. In addition, when pupils proceed to further educational institutions such as universities, Bildungssprache is used frequently and in more differentiated contexts. As a consequence, insufficient knowledge of the academic register can lead to difficulties when pupils aim to attend universities or other institutions that require fundamental knowledge of the academic register. Teachers regularly differentiate between standard language and the academic register, as do pupils, who refer to standard German as ‘Hochsprache’ or ‘gehobene Sprache’. In general, the teachers I spoke to recognized the teaching of the academic register as one of their main tasks, while pupils acknowledged its acquisition as essential to their school careers.

Considering the contributions of Cummins (2008) and Gogolin (2009), this section will use the terms academic register and Bildungssprache synonymously. It will continue by illustrating the issue of academic register in the investigated schools. In the following extract, the interviewer initially asked about language varieties that are perceived as appropriate in the classroom. After receiving no feedback, the interviewer provided the example of using dialect in school.

**Extract (9) Barbara (paragraphs 79-84)**

Christina: (. ) ähm so im Unterricht welche Sprache oder welchen Stil sehen Sie da als angemessen an? (. ) also zum Beispiel auf äh Dialekt a bezogen. is es ok wenn man als Lehrer Dialekt redet oder Umgangssprache?
Barbara: also i find ma sollt als Lehrer Standardsprache sprechen ja? also weil also ich mein (.) i bin ja selbst so ein bissl ein Chamäleon ähm (.) ich hab lang in der "Region" also ich pass mich immer wieder an. also i pass mich sehr sprachlich an und merk das dann a oft garnet ja? ähm also i hab dann wie i dann wieder hergekommen bin kann i mi erinnern dass Schüler irgendwie so mei so nachgeäfft is jetzt übertrieben aber so so bemerkt haben dass i irgendwie so obersteirisch red ja also da also i das kommt das und und als ich von "Land" zurück gekommen bin ham mich die Schüler gefragt ob ich ob ich Deutsche sei also äh da war der Standard dann wieder ein anderer ja? das heißt ma passt also ich pass mich da schon auch net immer ganz bewusst an an die Umgebung an ja aber im Prinzip im Prinzip

((eine andere Lehrerin betritt den Raum, um ein Buch zu holen und bleibt eine Zeit. Barbara sagt ihr, dass wir ein Interview führen))

Barbara: ja ähm also ich halt a Standardsprache für für angemessen ähm (.) also und es is eben unsere Aufgabe die Bildungssprache zu unterrichten-

Christina: ja

Barbara: quasi den quasi die die Schüler dorthin zu bringen ja.

Christina: () uhm so during lessons which language or which style do you see as appropriate? (..) so for instance with regard to dialect. is it ok if a teacher uses dialect or colloquial language?

Barbara: well I think as a teacher one should use standard language right? well because I mean (.) I myself am a little bit of a chameleon uhm (.) I lived in "region" for a long time and well I always adapt. Well I adapt linguistically and often I don’t even realize it right? uhm and then when I came back here I can remember that pupils somehow like mimicking is a bit exaggerated now but so so noticed that I speak kind of Upper Styrian and well right and and when I came back from "country" pupils asked me whether I am from Germany well because the standard there was a different one right? that means one adapts or I adapt not always consciously to the surroundings but in principle in principle

((another teacher enters the room to collect a book and lingers for a while, Barbara tells her that we are doing an interview))

Barbara: yes uhm well I think that standard language is is appropriate uhm (.) well and it is just our duty to teach the academic register

Christina: yes

Barbara: quasi to quasi to guide the the pupil there yes.
The utterance begins with Barbara, a language teacher, making a firm statement with regard to the teachers’ duty to use standard language. She then talks about how she herself has adopted many language varieties during her time as a teacher in different regions, and thus portrays herself as open to other language varieties. After a short description of how pupils previously perceived her language practices, another teacher enters the room and lingers for a while. Barbara tells her about our interview and addresses the initial question again, but in a more concise manner. She repeats the first statement and additionally addresses her role as a teacher by saying, “yes uhm well I think that standard language is is appropriate uhm (.) well and it is just our duty to teach the academic register-”.

Thus, Extract (9), reproduces a discourse on teachers’ correct language use. Both the interviewee and the interviewer co-construct a discourse on standard language as the appropriate means of communication for teachers to use in schools. Barbara additionally stresses the role of teachers in guiding pupils through the process of acquiring the academic register. Furthermore, she appears to reflect on teachers’ tasks in general, while at the same time positioning herself in the situation.

At a later point during the same interview, the notion of Bildungssprache emerged again. The conversation in Extract (10) is concerned with the situation of children with migration background, and generated a discourse on the importance of learning both the home language and German, before touching on the topic of the academic register.

Extract (10) Barbara (paragraphs 170-172)

Barbara: ja ja ja ’hhh i mein dass ma (.) klar ma kann sich überlegen “brauch ichs beruflich irgendwann” ja? und sonst is es halt mehr oder weniger ein Hobby beziehungsweise i mein also es gibt schon viele wobei i glaub das is a net wirklich hundert prozentig die Wahrheit oder vielleicht gibts dann a andere Forschungsergebnisse also ähm i muss a Sprache glaub i gut können und differenziert beherrschen dann geht dann is das fürs Denken einfach wichtig äh und dann kann i jede andere Sprache lernen ob das jetzt quasi diese Erstsprache is oder eine andere da denk i ma manchmal weiß i net genau ähm [ ob das so is oder net

Christina: [ phu das könnt i jetzt a net sagen

Barbara: also es gibt ja dann diese Verfechter die sagen “ma muss die Muttersprache gut können weil ma kann Deutsch a nur so gut wie ma die Muttersprache kann” und das glaub i is net richtig wenn man
zum Beispiel in Österreich *lebt* und in Österreich eingeschult wird und jetzt zum Beispiel wirklich äh Unterstützung im im Erlernen der Bildungssprache in Deutsch kriegt dann glaub i dann kann ma gewisse Sachen auf Deutsch aber kann sie net auf Bosnisch weil mas in Bosnisch nie ghört hat ja so?

Barbara: yes yes yes yes ‘hhh I mean that one (.) of course can ask “will I need it in my professional career at some point” yes? And otherwise it is more or less a hobby or rather I mean well there are many but I think that is not one hundred percent true or maybe there are other research results well uhm I think one needs to be proficient in one language and then it then it is very important for mental activities and then I can learn any other language no matter if it is the first language or another there I sometimes think that I don’t know for sure [ whether it is like this or not

Christina: [ phew I couldn’t tell

Barbara: well there are those advocating and saying “one needs to be very proficient in their mother tongue because one can only be as good in German as in the mother tongue” and I think this is not correct if someone for instance *lives* in Austria and has been sent to school in Austria and then for example really gets support in learning the academic register in German then I think then one knows certain things in German but not in Bosnian because one’s never heard it in Bosnian right?

Overall, this utterance reproduces a discourse on correct language acquisition in a migration context. Barbara refers to a view of language acquisition which claims that one’s level of proficiency in their first language serves as the basis for their further language learning. It has been shown that linguistic development in one’s first language is indeed crucial for the acquisition of further languages (and registers). Previous research has revealed a correlation between the acquisition of first and second languages, meaning that the acquisition of a second language can be impaired by insufficient proficiency in the L1 (cf. Cummins 1979). Moreover, with reference to pupils, language acquisition of their first language has not been completed by the time children enter school, which means that they have not yet finished acquiring literacy as well as more complex pragmatic skills (cf. de Cillia 2011: 3). By bringing up the example of a Bosnian child who has grown up and been to school in Austria, the interviewee expresses doubt regarding the view that further language acquisition is based on knowledge of the first language (cf. the interdependence
theory by Cummins 1979). Besides mentioning the topic of language acquisition and the interdependence of competencies, Barbara also referred to the issue of an academic register. In her utterance, “I think this is not correct if someone for instance lives in Austria and has been sent to school in Austria and then for example really gets support in learning the academic register in German then I think then one knows certain things in German but not in Bosnian because one’s never heard it in Bosnian right?” Barbara stresses that acquisition of the academic register is tied up with enrolment in schools, where it can only be learned via German as the language of instruction. Thus, this discourse reinforces the affiliation of the academic register with schools and the educational system (cf. Cummins 2008). It can also be said that the space of the academic register is in and around schools. The discourse includes power-relations between those who have power (having good access to the academic register), and those who do not have power (having restricted or poor access to the academic register), and therefore, reflects societal conditions (cf. Foucault 2013: 11).

Utterances concerning the academic register often also contain discourses on the opposite language register, known as BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills) (cf. Cummins 2008). The next excerpt from my interview with Barbara restates the differences between BICS and CALP. She addresses the topic of the linguistic diversity among her pupils after I explicitly ask about the languages she overhears in the school environment. The interviewee then describes the ‘invisibility’ of certain languages and narrates the experience of a pupil who speaks German fluently, but had difficulty when it came to literacy.

Extract (11) Barbara (paragraphs 39-42)

Christina: ja ja. ähm das heißt ma merkt da in der Schule schon dass viel Kinder sind die net Deutsch als Erstsprache haben?

Barbara: uh (.)

Christina: also hört ma das manchmal?

Barbara: naja hören tut mas glaub i net so viel. es sind also das is ja das war ja meine mein Aha-Erlebnis a in der in also wie ich das erste Jahr wieder hier unterrichtet hab in einer ersten Klasse. dass i äh bei eim Schüler a Zeit lang gebraucht hab nämlich a paar Monat bis i gmerkt hab hoppla der spricht ganz normal österreichisches Deutsch aber der ähm beim Schreiben plötzlich klaffts auseinander ja? also die schriftliche Kompetenz war weit hinter seiner mündlichen. natürlich
In Extract (11), the teacher reflects on her own experience of being confronted with the differences between BICS and CALP. She talks about how a student gave the impression of having sufficient knowledge of German, since he did not speak with an accent or struggled in his everyday use of the language. Correspondingly, Barbara expected a stereotypical situation in which his lack of linguistic competencies would be immediately apparent. In fact, his lack of proficiency regarding literacy and the academic register only appeared to her after a certain amount of time had passed. As a consequence, the interviewee refers to the role schools are obliged to fill when it comes to teaching the academic register, “I would say that there are many children who can speak totally normal uh Austrian German as their everyday language but then they have difficulty with the with the academic register
and that is certainly something where the school has a duty now right?“.

The utterance in Extract (11) reproduces a discourse regarding the distinction between BICS and CALP, as perceived by a teacher. All in all, this discourse refers to the notion of linguistic repertoire, as the fluid sum of all language varieties, registers, and styles one commands. Both BICS and CALP should thus be seen as parts of one’s linguistic repertoire since both serve different functions and are crucial in various contexts.

The following excerpt from my interview with Kristin, a language teacher, stresses the differences between BICS and CALP, particularly with regard to regional varieties of German. Frequently, regional varieties are considered to be in opposition to the standard form of a language. In the school context, teachers’ use of regional varieties is seen as a disadvantage for pupils, who are thereby deprived of an opportunity to learn the academic register. Thus, in Extract (12) the interviewer and interviewee co-construct a discourse on the importance of teachers using CALP, or a more formal register of German, as part of their responsibilities as teachers.

Extract (12) Kristin (paragraphs 106-107)

Christina: do you think it generally plays a role which language the teacher uses which which German?

Kristin: yes well I think that it is simply important yes. uhm () because I have seen that when I lived in the country that that pupils just uh had disadvantages in some areas because they haven’t mastered it and and it has always annoyed me when some of my colleagues who grew up in the country and then after their study went back to the
The discourse created in the utterance states that the school is a place for using and teaching the academic register. Kristin creates this discourse by referring to the language practices of teachers in a school she previously worked at, which is located in a rural area. Her utterance contains disapproval of teachers who use local language varieties. Moreover, Kristin refers to the equal opportunities given to pupils when teachers use the academic register to communicate, “I think that well in a gymnasium I think that in a second-level school I think it’s not right because that for me that’s part of equal opportunities because some children learn it at home, and some don’t and then they’re missing something.”

Thus, it is possible to conclude that when standard language is used in the classroom, it is perceived as functioning as a common or a “unitary language” (Cooke & Simpson 2012: 120) that helps provide equal opportunities to each pupil. Particularly in such a context, the concept of academic register underpins the standard language ideology.

Extract (13) contains utterances produced by pupils, and concerns the significance of learning German, the Bildungssprache, and the question of who bears the responsibility for pupils to learn German. The excerpt begins with the interviewer inquiring about the pupils’ personal experiences with regard to language prohibitions or recommendations. In her reply, Enise describes her primary school, talks about the predominant use of Turkish, and moves on to explain how she motivated herself to learn German. In a sense, she presents herself as an independent learner in this situation.

Extract (13) Pupils School A (paragraphs 517-520 and paragraphs 535-539)

Christina: wer hat da eigene Erfahrungen gehabt in der Volksschule?
Enise: ja ich ((lachen))
Enise: ähm in meiner Volksschule da waren ja viele (.). Türkisch gesprochen ((kichern)) Frau Professor also Frau Lehrerin hat nix verstanden. aber wir ham trotzdem weiter Türkisch gesprochen (.). einmal sie halt mit uns geschimpft und so.
Enise describes how, upon entering secondary school, she chose to focus on her acquisition of German. She mentions her difficulty in her German classes as the reason she was motivated to improve her language proficiency. The conversation then goes on in paragraph 535, in which Enise repeats herself, saying, "but here in the school then I really started with more German-". At this point, Enise’s friend Miray supports her utterance by stating that, since there were fewer people proficient in Turkish in this school, there were also fewer
opportunities to speak Turkish.

In comparison to the teachers’ utterances, above, it is interesting to note that this pupil sees herself as bearing the main responsibility for learning German (and, with it, the academic register). Whereas teachers stress the significance of their own role, Enise mentions neither the teachers nor the school in relation to her learning process. Thus, Enise reproduces a discourse according to which the responsibility of learning the majority language rests on the speakers themselves, a discourse that is widely present in regulations on integration in Austria. The Integration Agreement (Integrationsvereinbarung), for instance, obligates migrants from third countries to have achieved proficiency in German up to a certain level after a specific amount of time spent in Austria. The speakers themselves are responsible for finding language courses, as well as paying for the costs of courses and exams (cf. Bundeskanzleramt 2011). As a result, much of the accountability for social inclusion is reduced to proficiency in the majority language and relies on the responsibility of each individual (cf. Plutzar 2010).

To sum up, acquisition of the standard language, and especially the so-called Bildungssprache or academic register, is given the highest priority in the schools, and is reflected in the discourses of teachers as well as pupils. When addressing the issue of German, there is a particular focus on differentiating between spoken German and the academic register. The interview extracts illustrate how teachers reproduce the importance and responsibility of schools in teaching the academic register. Their utterances mainly reflect discourses stating that deviations from this register, such as regional varieties, are perceived as inappropriate within schools. Thus, one can observe that the use and teaching of a ‘correct’ standard language is a sensitive subject. The utterances mirror a standard language ideology, the notion of Bildungssprache, as well as the assignment of certain languages to certain spaces, and the awareness of individuals having particular roles in conveying the academic register. With regard to the appointment of roles, it is interesting to note that teachers perceived teaching the standard variety as their duty, while pupils emphasized their own obligation to learn the Bildungssprache in order to be successful in school.

While the acquisition and use of standard language and the academic register are of undeniable importance to be successful in a social and economic world, especially for children coming from educationally disadvantaged social strata (cf. Maas 2010), it is vital
to recognize that much of the work of mastering the academic register happens at the expense of pupils’ multilingualism.

6.3. Social functions of languages

6.3.1. Overview

This chapter is concerned with the idea that different functions are assigned to certain languages. The previous section discussed the link between competencies in the academic register and general educational success, which implies that there is a specific social function to the academic register. The following sections will now explore in more detail the perceived functions of pupils’ home languages, of German, and of other school languages, such as Latin and English.

Languages themselves exhibit no inherent particular social functions, but are rather designated according to the corresponding social context. Analogous to the concept of prestige (cf. Milroy 2001: 532), the functions attributed to a language variety are assumed to correlate with the position of its speakers in society and general language attitudes. Thus, Section 6.3.2 demonstrates how the use of home languages in the school context is repeatedly associated with excluding other peers. As a result, pupils’ language practices in their home languages are identified as powerful actions since they are assumed to lead to the formation of opposing groups among pupils. Section 6.3.3 then moves on to discuss the issue of group formation through language use. In Section 6.3.4, I assess how the use of their home languages is perceived by pupils themselves. While teachers predominantly link the use of home languages with instances of conflict and antisocial practices, pupils see individual advantages in accessing their full linguistic repertoires. Section 6.3.5 focuses on the functions assigned to German, which can be seen as a common language that guarantees mutual understanding. Finally, Section 6.3.6 discusses the perceived functions of two school languages—Latin and English—that emerged during data collection. Latin is particularly associated with an academic context, while English is primarily represented as an international language and global lingua franca.
6.3.2. Associating the use of home languages with the exclusion of peers

When addressing the topic of pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires, the teachers I interviewed regularly referred to issues of exclusion and assimilation. Their responses indicate inherent discourses regarding the construction of in- and out-groups among pupils, the teachers’ inability to comprehend home languages, as well as a mistrust of heterogeneity. The following examples illustrate these discourses as they were reproduced in my interviews with both teachers and pupils.

Extract (14), from my interview with Kathrin, an educator who supervises pupils during after-school care, begins with my question of whether or not there are any rules or regulations in her school concerning language management. With this question, I am referring to recent discussions in Austria regarding language management in schools (see Chapter 3.3).

Extract (14) Kathrin (paragraphs 130-131)

Christina: ja (.) gibts da an der Schule Richtlinien oder Empfehlungen (.) welche Sprachen man jetzt in der Pause sprechen soll oder oder welche Sprachen man nicht sprechen soll zum Beispiel?

Kathrin: welche Spr-? na Ausgrenzungen gibts sicher keine. äh generell wird schon gefordert wobei ich weiß nicht in den Pausen i kann das wirklich net sagen. wir fordern schon unten weils ja immer Pause is äh also immer mehr weil immer mehr fordern wir schon dass sie einfach in dass sie einfach deutsch sprechen. i mein weil das eine Ausgrenzung is wenn sie in einer anderen Sprache sprechen. weil das ja ein ein ein es is ja kein geschlossener Raum äh wenn sie sich irgendwo treffen und sie es und es sind alle da die eben nur Rumänisch oder oder Tschetschenisch oder was auch immer sprechen dann is das was anderes ’hhh aber da is immer einer Außenseiter und selbst wenn ichs bin muss i einfach sagen “ich versteh sie nicht” also i kann nix machen kanns immer nur betonen ich würds auch gern hören was sie sagen (.) wenn sie sich irgendwo zurückziehen und sich einfach unterhalten oder zu zweit unterhalten is das überhaupt kein Thema. wenn sies als Machtmittel einsetzen äh sag i zum Beispiel schon was.
Christina: yes () are there any rules or recommendations at this school () which language one should speak during the break or or which languages one shouldn’t speak for example?

Kathrin: which lang-? no there is definitely no exclusion. uh in general it is demanded but during the breaks I don’t know I really can’t tell. we demand it downstairs because there is always break eh well always we always we demand it more and more that they just speak German. I mean because it is an exclusion when they speak in a different language. because it is a a it isn’t a closed room uh when they meet somewhere and they it and all of them just speak Romanian or or Chechen or whatever then it is something different ‘hhh but here one is always the outsider und even if it is just me I have to say “I don’t understand you” so I can’t do anything I can only always stress that I would like to hear what they are saying () if they retreat somewhere and just talk or talk in pairs it is no big deal. if they use it as a form of power uh for instance I do say something.

Kathrin instantly distances herself from the initial reference to language management produced by the researcher’s question. In spite of stating that there is no policy of exclusion, she refers to a method of language management during after-school care. To accurately portray the context of Kathrin’s involvement in school, it is important to mention that she is responsible for supervising pupils after their school day is over, which presents a slightly different situation than regular lessons. Pupils who attend after-school care receive support while doing their homework, have access to a variety of activities, such as crafts or sports, and are generally free to spend their leisure time as they like. Thus, Kathrin describes the situation of after-school care as similar to breaks, in which the demand that pupils speak German is a fact. The way she hesitates and repeats her utterance—“we demand it downstairs because there is always break eh well always we always we demand it more and more that they just speak German”—illustrates the sensitivity of this topic. Kathrin justifies her decision by stating that it is obviously an act of exclusion when someone speaks a different language. Furthermore, her utterance brings up the issue of the distinction between using languages other than German in a closed space, like the classroom, versus speaking in pairs outside the classroom.

Kathrin’s utterance in Extract (14) reproduces the idea that using languages that are only understood by some is a way of actively excluding others. As an example, she cites languages such as Romanian and Chechen, which are languages that are not regularly
taught in school in Austria. Moreover, the discourse covers the issue of relating language use with space and power (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 221), particularly in the excerpt, “if they retreat somewhere and just talk or talk in pairs it is no big deal. if they use it as a form of power uh for instance I do say something”. In this case, the rooms dedicated to after-school care are seen as a common and public place. Kathrin stresses that she intervenes if language is used as a ‘form of power’ in those spaces, whereas the use of other languages than German in secluded places is acceptable.

Another teacher, Anna, refers to unfamiliar languages as ‘secret codes’, which she mentioned frequently during our interview. In the following sequence, the interviewer asked whether Anna had experienced any conflicts between pupils carried out in other languages than German. After a short interruption, she answers the question by indicating so-called secret codes used by pupils.

**Extract (15) Anna (paragraphs 220-221)**

Christina: mhm. äh hast du schon mal in der Schule so Konflikte oder Streite zwischen den Schülern bemerkt die jetzt ähm in einer anderen Sprache zum Beispiel austragen worden sind oder wo so andere Sprache oder a anderer Hintergrund irgendwie das Thema davon war?

Anna: ok. also wie gsagt es gibt eben diese Art Geheimcode wenn ma irgendwas- meistens is natürlich das das Ziel dass ma irgendwen ausschließt weil wozu sollt ma sonst a Geheimnis haben? grad wenns um Schimpfwörter geht oder irgendwie um coole Sprüche oder sowas is es meistens gegen wen anderen gerichtet. also net nur dieses Gemeinschaftliche sondern dieses (...) Ausschließende. auch je nachdem wie a oft die Stimmung in einer Klasse is es gibt welche die wie diese zweite Klasse mit der i das Projekt hab relativ wertschätzend mit dem ganzen umgehen.

Christina: mm-hmm. uh have you ever noticed in school any conflicts or quarrels between pupils that uhm were carried out in a different language or where other languages or a different background were part of the issue?

Anna: ok. well like I said there are these secret codes if you something-usually of course the goal is that someone be excluded because why else should you have a secret? especially when it is about swear words or any other cool saying or something it is usually directed
against someone. so it’s not that collective part but this (.) excluding part. also it often depends on the mood in the class there are some that are like this second class who I had the project with who appreciate the whole thing.

Of particular interest in this extract is the way that Anna describes her pupils’ use of languages she doesn’t know as secret codes. She explains her use of this term with the fact that communicating in an impenetrable manner equates to having a secret, which again equates to having the objective of excluding someone. Overall, Anna constructs her utterances on the use of other languages than German or school languages around the concept of ‘secrets’. For instance, she also referred to secret languages during an earlier part of her interview, in which we addressed the topic of her students’ linguistic diversity their multilingual language use:

[...] or rather they often have ehm such secret languages. so if I have now only if I let’s say there are a few Bosnians in class that are anyway- but partly especially if the teacher shouldn’t understand it or some groups shouldn’t understand the pupil then then they have those swear words or special words now in for instance Bosnian (Anna, paragraph 36).

In Anna’s utterance, an association emerges between using other languages than the majority language and the intention of excluding someone or hiding something. Thus, home languages are assigned the function of exclusion, since most speakers are unfamiliar with those languages in the school context. Furthermore, in situations like these, home languages are given a position of power even though, in the school space, they are naturally considered as powerless. In Extract (15), a discourse on home languages was co-constructed by the researcher and the interviewee. The question asked by the interviewer implies a connection between the use of other languages and conflicts among pupils. This utterance is embedded in the context of a wider discourse on the language management of home languages at school, which was present throughout my investigation, and thus presumably evoked certain connotations around the social functions of home languages.

The following utterance is from my group interview with the pupils of School A, and reproduces a similar discourse. After the previous part of the interview, which was
concerned with language practices among pupils, the interviewer inquired about the reactions of other people to the interviewees’ use of their linguistic repertoires in school. Daria and Aneta begin by describing their experiences with peers reacting to them speaking their home language, Romanian.

Extract (16) Pupils School A (paragraphs 55-64)

Christina: ok. und ihr sprechts untereinander Deutsch habts ihr gesagt ((an Zoe und Laura gerichtet, sie nicken)) ähm also ihr die ihr in der Schule a Rumänisch Türkisch sprechts ähm hats da irgendwie scho amal (.) Reaktionen von anderen Schülern drauf gegeben die euch jetzt so spontan einfallen? (.) die irgendwie aufgefallen wären

Daria: Naja wir ham-
Aneta: ja. wir sind ((lachen)) also unsere Freunde halt das das nervt manchmal weil die wissen nicht was wir sagen und die denken manchmal wir reden über sie. also ich hab das auch in "Land" experimentiert. da war ich auch mit einer Rumänin befreundet ‘hhh und wir haben immer da wollte ich immer halt Rumänisch reden weil (.) das meiste hab ich nicht verstanden. am Anfang wars voll schwer halt. und daraufhin haben auch die Lehrer so gsagt “ja: du sollst nicht Rumänisch sprechen du sollst Französisch lernen” und wir war- wir waren eigentlich wir dürften eigentlich gar nicht Rumänisch (.) reden also andere Sprachen als Französisch in der Schule.

Daria: ja wir versuchen hier halt Rumänisch zu sprechen nur wenn wir alleine sind. wenn jemand anderen dabei is dann Deutsch.
Aneta: ja
Daria: weil wir wollen keine [ ((gestikuliert eine Gruppe, einen Kreis))
Aneta: [ berücksichtigen
Daria: wer weiß was- ja
Aneta: ja
Daria: das is besser so

Christina: okay. and you said you speak German with each other ((to Zoe and Laura, they nod)) uhm so those who who also speak Romanian and Turkish in school uhm has there been something like (.) reactions to it from other pupils which you can remember now? (.) that somehow stood out
Daria: well we had-
Prompted by the researcher’s question about the potential reactions of their peers, Aneta explains that her non-Romanian friends are sometimes annoyed by her speaking Romanian with Daria, and assumes that her friends think that they are talking about them in Romanian. She then starts to narrate her experience at a school she attended in another country. Afterwards, Daria defines their language practices at their current school, according to which they speak Romanian only when they are alone, and switch to German whenever someone who does not speak Romanian is present. According to their utterances, they aim to avoid any possibility of exclusion. Thus, it is evident that Aneta and Daria reproduce an internalized approach of limiting the use of their home language in school to situations in which they are alone, while switching to the majority language when someone else joins them. Consequently, this extract represents the discourse on exclusion from the home language speakers’ perspective. The speakers express their concern regarding the possibility of actively excluding someone, and, as such, strengthen the discourse that equates using a language not commonly understood with social exclusion. At the end, Daria attempts to emphasize their intention not to exclude anyone, however, she is barely able to find appropriate words, and instead gestures a closed circle. Aneta then adds the
“berücksichtigen” (considering) and so turns the discourse from potential exclusion to consciously considering non-Romanian speakers as well.

To sum up this section, a dominant discourse related to the use of home languages in the school space is its apparent function of excluding others. Teachers, on the one hand, tend to fear that using a language not commonly comprehensible implies that pupils are actively attempt to exclude others or sharing ‘secrets’. Pupils, on the other hand, have already internalized this assigned function, and have experienced it firsthand when peers articulate their fears of not being able to understand them. As a consequence, they adapt their linguistic practices in order to avoid potential situations of exclusion. From the perspective of a poststructuralist framework, the utterances presented in this chapter refer to dominant discourses related to language and power (cf. Bourdieu 1991, Foucault 1980). By using their home languages—languages that are spoken by few people in Austria—in the school environment, pupils receive a certain amount of power, which is undesirable in a context that builds on strong connections between languages, places, homogeneous ideologies, and hierarchies.

In addition to the notion of the functions of home languages, the utterances presented in Extracts (14), (15), and (16) draw on the concept of in-groups versus out-groups (cf. Tajfel & Turner 1979). According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), belonging to a group is substantially linked to identifying with that group. They state that individuals can move freely between groups, and change their affiliations according to their intentions (cf. Tajfel & Turner 1979: 35). The development of groups is a critical topic that has frequently been related to the use of home languages; therefore, this topic shall be covered in more detail in the following section.

6.3.3. Constructing in- and out-groups

In this study, the construction of in- and out-groups, particularly as occurs via language practices, emerged as a topic in general discourse. As mentioned in the previous section, the use of languages other than German or other languages that are taught at school is primarily associated with being a potential way of excluding those who are not proficient in these languages. Utterances reproducing the function of exclusion are often associated with discourses on the creation of in- and out-groups (cf. Tajfel & Turner 1979) among
pupils. The following extract presents an utterance in which an association between home languages and conflicts among students is initially co-constructed by the researcher and the interviewee, Roland, principal of School B. The question refers to Roland’s experience of possible conflicts or fights based on language or culture, which implies a connection between the use of other languages and potential conflicts.

**Extract (17) Roland (paragraphs 259-262)**

Christina: mhm mhm äh haben Sie da in der Schule schon mal Konflikte oder Streite unter den Schülern bemerkt die jetz äh in einer anderen Sprache austragen worden sind oder wo irgendwie Sprache Kultur das das Thema [ davon war?

Roland: ja sicher kommt immer wieder vor. weil wir ham auch a Nachmittagsbetreuung an der Schule (.) da komnts oft so dass dann Schimpfwörter verwendet werden (.) die dann gegen andere verwendet werden die ma halt dann net versteht (.) wo dann Erklärungsbedarf besteht wo auch Missverständnisse oft entstehen wenn ma jetzt mehrsprachig unterwegs sind also mehrere Kinder dass ma dann eben eine gemeinsame Sprache finden wo ma uns ausdrücken und das es net sein kann dass da jemandem äh jemand was weiß i aufs wüstete beschimpft wird mit Wörtern die ma dann net verstehen. mittlerweile is es aber so dass viele Schüler die Schimpfwörter in den verschiedenen Sprachen kennen und genau wissen was was bedeutet

Christina: mm-hmm mm-hmm uh have you ever noticed any conflicts or arguments between pupils in this school that have uhm been carried out in a different language or in which somehow language or culture was the topic [ of it?

Roland: yes of course that happens again and again. because we have after-school supervision at this school (.) there it often happens that swear words are used (.) that are used against others that just can’t understand them (.) in which there is need for explanation and also often misunderstandings happen if you can’t understand it. but also sometimes in my view pupils with other first languages use these words skillfully (.) to: build a group to to sort of bind themselves together which means that we then try if we are multilingual or several children that we then find a common language
In this utterance, Roland refers to an incident during after-school care, which was also addressed by Kathrin in Extract (14). Roland indicates that pupils actively choose to use their home languages and occasionally do so in order to pursue the goal of forming a group. He explains the situation as, “but also sometimes in my view pupils with other first languages use these words skillfully (.) to: build a group to to sort of bind themselves together”.

This discourse links the potential of using languages to establish groups with the purpose of excluding those who then belong to the out-group. One aspect of language that goes hand in hand with the formation of groups is the fact that language serves as an act of identity (cf. Tabouret-Keller & Le Page 1985) and thus plays an essential role in the maintenance of group membership. However, it is possible for each individual to be part of multiple groups. With regard to language affiliation, the dynamics of a group are reflected by the degree of identification with the language or language variety of this group (cf. Coulmas 2005: 179). So, while group formation is a way to exclude people, it is also a way to build cohesion among a number of individuals who share certain features.

In our conversation, Roland also described their way of avoiding misunderstandings and in-group formation: “we then try if we are multilingual or several children that we then find a common language in which we can communicate and that it can’t be the case that someone uh someone whatever is insulted badly with words one doesn’t understand”. He thus refers to the idea of a shared language, which in this case is the majority language, German.25

The topic of the function of home languages vis-à-vis group formation surfaced again during my interview with Roland as we addressed the issue of language prohibition in Austrian schools. Notably, Roland positions himself and his school as receptive and tolerant, while dismissing such regulations as a restriction of personal rights. He outlines the school’s general policy before emphasizing that different approaches need to be

25 The discourse on German functioning as a common language will be addressed in Section 6.3.5.
established when languages are used for reasons of exclusion.

**Extract (18) Roland (paragraphs 312-317)**

Christina: in Österreich wird ja immer wieder diskutiert dass ma Deutsch als Pausensprache oder Schulsprache einführt was halten [ Sie davon?

Roland: [ na i bin dagegen weil das (.). also das wär wär meiner Meinung nach a Beschränkung der Persönlichkeitsrechte und und weiß net vom Landesschulrat hats amal in diese Richtung was gegeben aber i bin da völlig dagegen

Christina: mhm

Roland: nur wie gesagt ich hab dann meine Grenzen wenn die Sprache genutzt wird um andere auszuschließen. also um als Machtmittel um andere auszuschließen also nicht in der Gruppe teilzunehmen aber wenn das a natürlicher Sprachgebrauch is. das kann ja wunderschön sein dass ein türkischer Schüler dem anderen auf Türkisch erklärt wie das zu lösen is und wenns der versteht dann hama gewonnen net? also in dem Sinn is is jede Sprache a Gewinn ja

Christina: genau [ ja

Roland: [ mit dieser einzig Ausnahme

Christina: in Austria there is always the discussion of establishing German as the language of the break or language of the school what do you [ think of that?

Roland: [ no I’m against that because that (.). well that would would be in my opinion a restriction of personal rights and and don’t know there was once something like this from the state education authority but I’m totally against that

Christina: mm-hmm

Roland: just like said I have my limits if language is used to exclude others. so to use it as a tool for power to exclude others so not participate in the group but if it is a natural language use. that can be beautiful that a Turkish pupil explains to another in Turkish how to solve something and if he understands it then we have won right? in that sense every language is is an asset yes

Christina: exactly [ yes

Roland: [ with this one exception

Roland mentions that the only instance in which he supports a strict language management policy is in cases in which language is used to exclude others. He compares using languages
as a tool for exclusion with languages being an instrument of power. However, according to Bourdieu (1991: 82f.), language always carries symbolic power, but this power depends on the social context in which the language is produced. Thus, Roland adds that, in cases of ‘natural language use’, pupils may use their home languages for good reasons. By providing the example of a Turkish-speaking pupil, he reproduces the school’s language policy on receptiveness for multilingual language use. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the produced discourse focuses on the use of home languages for exclusion since Roland ends his utterance by repeating that this example of the beneficial use of home languages is an exception. As such, the possibility of pupils relying on the ‘power’ of accessing their diverse linguistic repertoires is present throughout this utterance. Since the interviewer addressed the general discourse on language prohibition in Austria, the utterance is framed in the context of language prohibition.

To sum up, the use of languages which are neither German nor other languages taught in the school is associated with the function of excluding those who are unable to understand them. This discourse is closely associated with a fear of pupils constructing groups on the basis of a shared home language. It presents one way in which teachers perceive the use of languages they do not understand and which are not connected to the school environment. In order to provide a balanced view, the following section will address the issue of using home languages in school from the perspective of the pupils themselves.

6.3.4. Using home languages in the school

Since the main focus of this thesis is on the perception of pupils’ home languages in school, their language practices when it comes to their home languages are of particular interest. Therefore, during our interviews, pupils were encouraged to talk about their home languages and the experiences they have had when using them in the school environment. The way the pupils talk about their language practices and the discourses that are conveyed shed light on the functions of home languages in a context in which home languages are generally subordinated. As apparent from the examples above, schools are recognized as places in which the language of instruction is considered the dominant language, and leaves little room for home languages. However, home languages still manage to obtain some space in the school. As such, the main focus of this section lies on investigating how
pupils use their diverse linguistic repertoires fluently and creatively (cf. Busch 2012), and, as a consequence, how they expose superdiversity in the school (cf. Malsbary 2016). The following utterances are taken from my group interviews with the pupils, and illustrate both their language practices and their attitudes towards home languages.

In Extract (19), the interviewees react to the researcher’s question about whether or not they write in their home languages at school. The purpose of this question was to gain insight into the pupils’ literary practices in a context dominated by the language of instruction.

**Extract (19) Pupils School A (paragraphs 738-746)**

Christina: ähm schreibts äh ja schreibts ihr das manchmal a in der Schule irgendwie? auf auf diesen Sprachen?

Enise: °ja° also wenn ich irgendwas jetzt nicht versteht ähm ich drück mich leichter Türkisch aus als Deutsch dann schreib ichs mal schnell auf Türkisch. wenn ich dann lerne Physik zum Beispiel. lern ich das halt so leichter eigentlich-

Aneta: oder zum Beispiel [ diese-

Enise: [ weil Deutsch kommt mir irgendwie komplizierter vor. wenn die Lehrerin irgendwas äh erklärt an der Tafel (.) äh muss ich das ganz schnell Wort für Wort abschreiben also schnell schreiben damit ich das dann später lernen kann aber (.) ich komm eben nicht mit und schreibs schnell auf Türkisch in meinen eigenen Worten

Christina: aber ( )

Enise: in Physik is es oft so. nein ich tu mir oft schwer beim Verstehen wenn so komplizierte Sätze sind ((kichern)) aber-

Miray: aber da musst dus ja übersetzen [ ist noch schwieriger oder?

Enise: [ nein ich- es ist zum es ist halt vom Verstehen her Experiment oder [ Inhalte irgendwas

Miray: [ ach so ok.

Christina: uhm do you write uh do you write sometimes in school somehow? in those languages?

Enise: ‘yes’ well if I don’t understand something uhm I can express myself easier in Turkish than in German then I write it quickly in Turkish. if I then am studying Physics for instance. I do learn it easier that way actually-

Aneta: or for instance [ these-
In this utterance, Enise describes her way of coping with advanced topics in classes such as physics. Accordingly, she prefers to take notes of experiments or explanations in her home language, Turkish, since Turkish appears to be more accessible and easier for her to learn in. Miray, her friend and also a speaker of Turkish, fails to understand her reasoning and asks whether it is not more complicated to translate during class. Enise then stresses that she uses Turkish only to make her own notes in order to understand experiments, for instance, not to translate definitions by the teacher. In this way, Enise presents a creative way of incorporating her home language into her lessons, thus, using her entire linguistic repertoire in the manner of polylanguaging (cf. Jørgensen et al. 2011) or translanguaging (cf. García & Li 2014). Her utterance clearly states that she follows objectives in doing so: “I need to copy it really quickly word for word uhm write it down quickly so I can learn it later”. First, she seems to aim to foster her ability to learn the content of a subject that is hard to understand, and second, she attempts to compensate for her lack of proficiency in German by accessing her home language. Even though Enise’s utterance does not give us any precise information about her actual language practices, it nevertheless reveals how Enise uses both her linguistic repertoire and her home language, in particular. She thus conveys a discourse stating that the use of home languages can be beneficial in school, and that multilingual language practices can provide individual assistance.

Next, this example from a group interview with the pupils at School B also addresses the topic of speaking home languages in school. When asked about their language use in
school, Esther, Shirin, and Leon denied that they use their home languages in school, while Anisa points out that there are other speakers of Serbo-Croatian (a classification used by the interviewee) in her class.

**Extract (20) Pupils School B (paragraphs 35-42)**

Christina: mhm ähm die die Sprachen die jeder von euch jetzt kann ähm sprechts ihr die a manchmal in der Schule?

Esther: mhh ["eigentlich nicht"

Shirin: [ nein

Leon: in der Schule nicht.

Shirin: in der Schule eher nicht.

Anisa: bei mir is eher so also es gibt auch schon Leute die auch in meiner Klasse die Serbokroatisch sprechen und das heißt manchmal wenns irgendwie ganz schnell gehen muss dann wechselt ma bissi unwillkürlich zur Sprache hin.

Christina: mhm

Anisa: ja.

Christina: seids ihr näher befreundet oder?

Anisa: ja teilweise schon.

Christina: mhm und um um welche Dinge gehts da?

Anisa: hängt auch immer irgendwie- ja: “alles in Ordnung” oder wenn sich irgendwer weh getan hat so ja schnell irgendwas sagen wenns also ganz schnell gehen muss.

Christina: ja.

Anisa: und sonst eigentlich immer Deutsch.

Christina: mm-hmm uhm those those languages that each of you now speak uhm do you also speak them in school sometimes?

Esther: hmm ["actually not"

Shirin: [ no

Leon: not in school.

Shirin: not really in school.

Anisa: well with me is more so that there are also other people in my class that speak Serbo-Croatian and that means that sometimes if something has to happen very quickly then one switches a bit involuntarily to the language.

Christina: mm-hmm
Anisa: yes.
Christina: are you close friends or?
Anisa: yes partly we are
Christina: mm-hmm and about what what things is it then?
Anisa: it always depends somehow- yeah “everything alright” or if someone gets hurt to say something really quickly if it has to happen really quick
Christina: yes
Anisa: but otherwise always German

Anisa explains that, in her class, a few of her peers share her home language, which is labelled in this utterance as Serbo-Croatian: “well with me is more so that there are also other people in my class that speak Serbo-Croatian and that means that sometimes if something has to happen very quickly then one switches a bit involuntarily to the language”. She describes how, for instance, if someone gets hurt physically, other speakers would react using their common home language. In addition, Anisa describes her language practice in situations like these as “involuntarily”, meaning that she has little control over her language choice. In this utterance, Anisa expresses her attitude towards code-switching, which according to a study by Dewaele and Li (2014), is linked to one’s personality, language learning history, and prevailing language practices. Their study demonstrated that teenage participants showed less appreciation for code-switching than older participants, which was, among other factors, linked to the general attitude in the environment (cf. Dewaele & Li 2014: 248).

With regard to the subject of this thesis, the school context, with its prevalent ideologies that favor homogeneity, may not only influence multilingual language practices, but also pupils’ attitudes towards them.

With this in mind, we can also look at how, in the course of this excerpt, the other interviewees emphasize that they barely use their home languages in school, while Anisa refers to specific situations in which her home language is of use. Despite the fact that she does use her home language, she suggests that this use is restricted when she describes her use of Serbo-Croatian as occurring only occasionally and “involuntarily”, while stating that she and her classmates usually use German, with “but otherwise always German”. Overall, Anisa conveys a feeling of insecurity about the fact that, on the one hand, using her home language might be an efficient communicative asset, while, on the other hand,
she is uncertain whether it is appropriate to use Serbo-Croatian in the school context.

In conclusion, in the excerpts mentioned in this section, the pupils produced utterances which state that their diverse linguistic repertoires can be used under specific circumstances in schools. The functions attributed to their home languages relate to practicality, in terms of promoting learning strategies, and to providing emphatic responses to peers who share the same language. Nevertheless, the pupils seemed to be well aware that the use of their home languages is restricted to particular contexts. The circumstances of such contexts might also limit their opportunities to creatively implement theirs vast linguistic repertoires in school. While privately taking notes in Turkish is a feasible method for Enise to access her full linguistic repertoire, speaking Serbo-Croatian with peers Anisa is confronted with a variety of *de facto* rules and thus her linguistic repertoire is confined. Consequently, in order to understand pupils’ perceptions of how they are permitted to use their home languages in school, one needs to consider the surrounding discourses in school.

### 6.3.5. German: language use for assimilation and mutual understanding

Discourses that have already been identified in this thesis convey that German is seen as the language of instruction, the standard language, and that it is linked with assimilation and functions as a common language for mutual understanding. This notion of a common language was briefly addressed in Section 6.3.2, in which participants referred to the use of home languages as ‘secret codes’ and simultaneously described German as the shared language of interaction. In general, the *standard language ideology* claims that a language shared by all is considered a tool for unification (cf. Cooke & Simpson 2012: 120). As a consequence, in a *standard language culture* (cf. Milroy 2001: 535ff.), those who are not proficient in the majority language must aim to assimilate in order to avoid marginalization.

The examples below illustrate the presence of a discourse on German as a language of assimilation and mutual understanding. In Extract (21), Kristin, a teacher at School A, responds to a question on language practices among pupils. Previously, the interviewee had stated that the only language used among pupils in her school is German, whereas in paragraph 72 she reflects on her utterance again.
Extract (21) Kristin (paragraph 72)

Kristin: yes because because one notices that children uh because you asked earlier whether they talk in different languages. uh (.) if one reflects about it it is just about belonging therefore they speak German or they don’t want to be outsiders somehow or speak something different.

In Extract (21), Kristin reproduces the idea of German as an instrument that merges groups together. She reconstructs the voices (cf. Bakhtin 1981: 262f.) of her pupils by expressing their desire to avoid being outsiders, and cites the means to achieving it as speaking German. Thus, the teacher produces a general discourse on the language choices of people with other home languages than German, in which German is attributed with the purpose of assimilating outsiders with the majority. The utterance creates a dialogism on language, which serves as a tool for integration and assimilation, and is predominant in public discourse as well as migration policies in Austria (cf. de Cillia & Dorostkar 2014, Plutzar 2010). Hence, using German is equated with belonging to the majority and belonging to society: “it is just about belonging therefore they speak German”.

In the next excerpt from my interview with Anna, a teacher at School A, she expands on the function of German and expresses her opinion about the influence of a standard language ideology. In this part of the interview, we discuss her language practices with regard to using German and varieties of German in class.

Extract (22) Anna (paragraphs 100–108)

Anna: i red Hochdeutsch mit ihnen.
Christina: mhm
Anna: also (.) für mi is das a a bissl a Sache von Respekt weil i eben (.) bisher a viele Schüler gehabt hab die woanders her sind.
Christina: ja
Anna: ähm ich finds halt einfach schön wenn man dann so a gemeinsame Sprache weil oft geht dann Hochdeutsch besser als Dialekt.

Christina: mhm

Anna: und i bins halt a a Stück weit gewohnt weil i relativ viele internationale Freunde hab und dann halt gleich mal- i kann net anders wenn i merk ok irgendwer redet da jetzt net so schön oder keine Ahnung oder das ichs halt dann einfach einfacher mach. wobei i würde eigentlich sagen am *Schule* reden die meisten Schüler halt afach a wirklich (.) muttersprachlich oder so wie muttersprachlich-

Christina: ja ja

Anna: Deutsch, aber es is halt keine Ahnung i kann das net anders ich switch halt dann um auf Hochdeutsch.

Anna: I speak High German with them.

Christina: mm-hmm

Anna: well (.) for me it is a bit about respect because I (.) until now I've had many pupils who come from somewhere else

Christina: yes

Anna: uhm I think it is just nice if there is then kind of a common language because often High German works better than dialect

Christina: mm-hmm

Anna: and also I am a little used to it because I have quite a few international friends and then at once- I can’t change it if I realize ok someone doesn’t talk that correctly or I don’t know or that I just make it easier. but I would say at *school* most pupils really speak (.) in their mother tongue or like their mother tongue-

Christina: yes yes

Anna: in German. but it is just I don’t know I can’t change it I just switch to High German.

Anna’s utterance underlines a connection between using a common language, mutual understanding, and respecting each speaker by accessing a shared communicative tool. The presence of unifying factors, such as the same language, religion, or education, are relevant for the development of group relations and the concept ‘we’ (cf. Ronen 1979: 9). Thus, by relying on one language or language variety, group cohesion is guaranteed.

The above example focuses on the differences between speaking a regional variety and standard language, with Anna concentrating on pupils “who come from somewhere
else”, which apparently means that some pupils commute from outside of Graz and use a regional variety. Geographical origin is thus linked with proficiency in the standard language. Anna insists on the usefulness of ‘High German’ in the school context, “uhm I think it is just nice if there is then kind of a common language because often High German works better than dialect”. She further illustrates it by mentioning a personal example. According to her utterance, she prefers to use standard German with her international friends, in order to accommodate to their varied competencies in German.

The dominant discourse that surfaces in Extract (22) is on the function of standard languages in relation to the unification of a group. According to the standard language ideology and the ideology of a nation state, a common language is not only necessary for the formation of group identities, but also understood as both a prerequisite for democratization and a sign of equality (cf. Coulmas 2005a: 12). However, while they may strengthen group identities and promote equality, national language regimes run counter to practices of plurality among society. Later on in our interview, Anna repeated the same discourse on a common language, while also referring to standard German as having the basic function of anacrolect (cf. Trudgill 2003: 3).

**Extract (23) Anna (paragraphs 124-131)**

| Christina: | mhm also von den Schülern. und von den Lehrern? |
| Anna: | von den Lehrern find (.) ich *für mich* find is ganz gut wenn die Umgangssprache a bissl gehobener is (.) weil so a (.) wie halt dann a gemeinsame Sprache is. und es is a ganz schön wenn mas irgendwo lernt dass man a bissi gehobener redet |
| Christina: | ja. |
| Anna: | weil braucht ma ja manchmal in am Kontext |
| Christina: | ja ja |
| Anna: | genau ähm (.) aber es es is durchaus legitim wenn wer lieber im Dialekt spricht weil es is ja trotzdem a a Sprachschatz den ma haben (.) ich kanns halt einfach nur net. |
| Christina: | ja |
| ((beide lachen)) |

Christina: mm-hmm so about the pupils. and about the teachers?
Anna: about the teachers I think (.) for me I think it is quite good if the spoken language is a bit more formal (.) because such a (.) it is then like a common language. and it is quite nice if one learns it somewhere to speak a bit more formally

Christina: yes

Anna: because one sometimes needs it in some contexts

Christina: yes yes

Anna: exactly uhm (.) but it is of course legitimate if one prefers to speak in a dialect because it is still one’s language treasure (.) I just can’t do it.

Christina: yes

((both laugh))

Prior to this excerpt, the interviewer inquired as to the language variety used by pupils during class, and afterward addressed the issue of teachers’ language use. Anna stresses the necessity of adopting formal language because it both serves as a common language and supports children in acquiring the standard language: “it is then like a common language. and it is quite nice if one learns it somewhere to talk a bit more formally”. She appears to justify her comment in favor of the standard language by saying that the formal register of standard German is indispensable in other contexts. She then mitigates her utterance by also showing her appreciation for dialect, “but it is of course legitimate if one prefers to speak in a dialect because it is still one’s language treasure”. Anna refers to competencies in a regional variety as “Sprachschatz/language treasure”26, a metaphor used widely by teachers when describing diverse linguistic repertoires.

All in all, the utterance presented in Extract (23) illustrates how the discourse on German as a common language is applied by those in the role of teacher. Accordingly, teachers act as exemplars of appropriate language use in the school context. As shown in Section 6.2.4, teachers perceive themselves as responsible for teaching the academic register, and the utterances considered in this section add to the teacher’s obligation of avoiding dialect in order to teach the shared language and acrolect of High German.

To sum up, this section was concerned with the use of German in the school context and its association with assimilation and mutual understanding. The use of standard German is a key factor in processes of assimilation, marking group identity, and ensuring unity.

26 Discourses on Sprachschatz/language treasure will be addressed in detail in Section 6.4.3.
within a group by using a common language. Furthermore, the use of standard German is seen as helpful in order to teach the acrolect of German. It is thus evident that discourses on the functions of German are fundamentally linked to the standard language ideology and the school’s standing as a place “where the real language learning takes place” (Milroy 2001: 537).

6.3.6. Functions of school languages: Latin and English

This final section of Chapter 6.3 will outline discourses on the functions of languages in the school, in particular, languages that are part of the school syllabus and thus everyday school life. The focus herein lies on Latin and English, which are compulsory foreign languages in both of the schools investigated. Analyzing how participants construct discourses on school languages is interesting insofar as they can be compared with pupils’ utterances on their home languages, and thus provide insight into the general language ideologies of the schools. Below, the connotations of the classical language Latin will be addressed first.

Latin is on the syllabus at schools that concentrate on providing a general education (secondary higher education, Gymnasium) in comparison to other types of schools in Austria. Consequently, learning Latin is considered to be a unique and advantageous opportunity offered by those schools, a sentiment that is transported through discourses. For instance, proficiency in Latin is frequently connected to benefits in further language learning. Helene, who teaches Latin in School A, illustrates this in the following excerpt. In this utterance, she emphasizes the engagement of her students and especially one pupil.

**Extract (24) Helene (paragraphs 48–50)**

Helene: also auch in der Türkei gibts ja verschiedenste soziale (.) Herkünfte und das war einer die sind aus der Stadt und haben auch entsprechend die Unterstützung geben dem Sohn mit Nachhilfe in Deutsch dass er einmal schneller rankommt. aber der hat ein Jahr Deutsch gelernt (.) und war der beste Lateinschüler weil mit Latein kannst Deutsch auch verbessern net? bissl kontemplativ die Grammatik analysieren

Christina: ja

Helene: kann a förderlich sein na
Helene: well in Turkey there are also different social backgrounds and he was one they came from the city and also gave their son appropriate support with private lessons in German so that he got quicker access. but he studied German for a year and was the best student in Latin because with Latin you can also improve your German right? analyzing the grammar a bit contemplative

Christina: yes
Helene: can also be beneficial

Extract (24) shows how Helene links her pupil’s improved proficiency in German to his success in Latin. The utterance, “because with Latin you can also improve your German right?” implies that knowledge in Latin may have an impact on the ability of a recently arrived pupil to learn German. The idea of Latin supporting the acquisition of other languages is also present in Figure 2. This poster from School B lists advantages of learning Latin, among them an utterance stating that knowledge in Latin helps one gain a better understanding of grammar: “Das Erlernen von Latein schafft ein besseres Verständnis für die Grammatik unserer Muttersprache.” The sentence suggests that the poster is written for an audience of German native speakers since it refers to ‘our mother tongue’.

*Figure 2* Linguistic landscape, example B95: Latein—wirklich eine tote Sprache?/Latin—really a dead language?
Figure 2 demonstrates how a language established as a subject in the school’s curriculum is given a special and ostensibly privileged role compared to other languages. The discourse then reproduces the belief that proficiency in Latin benefits pupils in terms of their ability to learn other languages as well as their metalinguistic abilities. It is, however, interesting to observe that a classical language such as Latin is perceived as a tool to assist pupils to learn complex grammatical concepts and project them onto additional languages. In addition to appearing in teachers’ interviews and the linguistic landscape, this discourse also emerged in group interviews with pupils. In the extract below, the initial question asked by the interviewer addresses the topic of prestige. After an extensive discussion of English and other languages, the interviewer turned to Laura, who initially answered by saying that Latin is the “most useful language”.

Extract (25) Pupils School A (paragraphs 393-401)

Christina: wieso hast du Latein gesagt?
Laura: ja ich weiß nicht. ähm Latein hat mir ziemlich bei Französisch weitergeholfen weil ähm man so vieles herleiten kann und so
Christina: von den Vokabeln her?
Laura: ja
Christina: mhm stimmt
Aneta: Latein auch in Medizin ist sehr hilfreich
Laura: [ ja
Aneta: [ also wenn du studierst dann musst du Latein können
Laura: oder das Gute ist an unserem Buch ist auch auf der Seite steht immer äh wie es also links steht immer das lateinische Wort und ganz rechts steht ähm wies im Englischen is wies im Spanischen is und wies im Französischen is aber es is meistens ziemlich ähnlich und ja is auch praktisch.

Christina: why did you say Latin?
Laura: I don’t know. uhm Latin really helped me with learning French because uhm one can derive so much from it and so
Christina: regarding the vocabulary?
Laura: yes
Christina: mm-hmm that’s true
Aneta: Latin is also helpful in medicine
The utterances produced by Laura and Aneta illustrate the fact that Latin is given an important role in the Austrian educational system. First, it is perceived as a ‘basis’ to learn other school languages, such as French and Spanish, which can be observed in Laura’s statement that, “Latin really helped me with learning French” and in her reference to the textbook. Second, Latin is connected to the field of medicine and to university studies in general; as mentioned by Aneta, “if you want to study you need to know Latin”.

Generally, my observations in the field revealed that teachers repeatedly make reference to other school languages in Latin lessons, particularly when they are teaching new vocabulary or grammar. It appears that teachers tend to refer to German since the main didactic aim is to translate Latin texts into German. In this context, participants focus on an ideal translation into ‘correct’ German, and thus, reproduce notions of a standard language ideology. In some cases, even a determined sense of verbal hygiene (cf. Cameron 1995) is present during lessons, which is illustrated by the following excerpt from my field notes, taken during a Latin class in School A.

**Extract (26) field notes A7, classroom**

The class translates a Latin text into German. It appears that the teacher is very keen on using clear standard German since he makes regular comparisons between Latin and German words. The teacher stresses that a ‘correct’ translation is most important; he reminds the pupils to “think of the German grammar”. He reminds the pupils to act more mature because next year will be their last before graduating school. While translating the text, the teacher repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the translated sentence to be “a German sentence”, which apparently means that it should be grammatically correct. He adds that it is possible to translate into “barbaric German language”, but this “is not the aim”.

The field notes highlight an instance, in which the teacher consistently stated his desire for the students to produce a ‘correct’ translation into German. He thus not only expects the pupils to provide a translation that conveys the content of the text, but also desires them to
express it in accurate standard language. By imposing such parameters for translations, the teacher reproduces acts of verbal hygiene, which is defined by Cameron (1995: 264) as “[…] the set of normative metalinguistic practices that arise from this urge to meddle.” However, acts of verbal hygiene are culturally constructed, specific, and based on the fundamental requirement that languages follow a norm (cf. Cameron 1995: 2). In this case, the teacher is not pursuing a specific individual goal, but rather reproduces already dominant discourses on language normativity.

To summarize the first part of this section on the function of Latin as a school language, it is possible to conclude that Latin is positioned as an essential subject in both schools. Latin is obligatory for each pupil and visible in both schools’ linguistic landscapes. Comparable to the academic register of German, Latin is almost exclusively associated with the school, the academic context, and university. Furthermore, Latin is considered to promote language learning due to the knowledge that pupils supposedly gain from its grammatical concepts and structures. In addition, associations between Latin and standard German are predominant. All in all, discourses on Latin are strongly present in schools and do seem to influence language education policies with regard to foreign languages in Austria.

Next, the discourses that emerged with reference to English and English as a subject in school will be discussed. One discourse that appeared in the course of this study is the view of English as an international lingua franca, a language that is used and understood worldwide. Generally, there is a widespread assumption that English constitutes the world’s lingua franca, while, at the same time, there is a belief that it poses a threat to national languages and multilingualism (cf. House 2003). The following example, taken from my field notes, illustrates the widely held view of English as an international language. The excerpt stems from my observations of a German class, in which the teacher was addressing the topic of language change.

**Extract (27) field notes B5; classroom**

German class: The teacher continues with the topic ‘language change’, which was started in the previous lesson. The teacher instructs the pupils to work with the textbook. The exercise includes questions on which words are out-of-date and which words have been developed recently. According to the textbook, many new words stem from English. The teacher asks why this is the case, then saying that English is “the one language in use if there is no other
language available”. Then, a pupil makes a comment, concluding that many modern words are English because “it is an international language”.

This excerpt shows how the discourse on English as the prevailing international language is reproduced in the classroom. This brief discussion of the role of English was initiated by an exercise in the German textbook, which provided examples of recent loan words as well as archaic words. Apparently, the didactic goal of this exercise is to give examples of ongoing language change. Based on the examples, teachers and pupils attempted to find reasons for the number of English loan words in German, with the teacher suggesting the cause to be the lingua franca-like character of English: “English is the one language in use if there is no other language available”. A pupil then highlighted the role of English by defining it as an international language. These utterances demonstrate how the teacher focuses on the practical use of English, while the pupil makes a definite statement. Both teacher and pupil, as well as the context of the class, reproduce the common discourse on English as a global language (cf. Crystal 2003), and the experience that most English language use happens in contexts in which it serves as a lingua franca (cf. Seidlhofer 2001: 133f.).

With regard to language management, it is interesting to observe how English does indeed frequently take on the role of an international common language. For instance, pupils who have recently arrived in Austria as exchange students and are assumed to have lower proficiency in German are addressed in English. The following extract from my interview with Anna, a teacher, presents her description of interactions with exchange students. The utterance begins with a conversation about pupils using their home languages during class.

**Extract (28) Anna (paragraphs 81-88)**

Christina: mhm und im Unterricht?

Anna: a net. also eben nur wenn jetzt keine Ahnung es geht um Griechenland und irgendwer sagt “ja i kenn das Wort” oder sowas oder zumindest es gibt a ähnliches Wort aber jetzt so dass i dass sie a andere Sprache sprechen is selten außer es is jetzt zum Beispiel in einer fünften Klasse hab i jetzt grad an neuen Schüler aus China. der kann halt nur Englisch.

Christina: ja
Anna: geh dann halt immer nachher zu ihm hin und sags ihm dann das gleiche nochmal auf Englisch also nur Englisch der kann ganz viele andere Sprachen nur i sprich die halt net. ähm und einen hab i aus Thailand in einer sechsten Klasse.

Christina: mm-hmm ja da war i i glaub da war ich in der**

Anna: ach ja**

Christina: ja kann sein ja

Anna: nhm genau also die die kriegen halt dann nachher immer die ,hhh das gleiche oder so ähnlich auf Englisch. nur meistens also die zwei ham gesagt sie würdens gern hören vorher auf Deutsch weil i gfragt hab i kann- mir is das ka Problem i unterricht gern auf Englisch. ähm aber sie haben gsagt sie sollen halt a das Deutsch lernen oder das Deutsch hören. jetzt mach is halt- es geht halt nur net so wenn i jetzt an Arbeitsauftrag gib und da jetzt zehn Seiten im Buch zu lesen sind und dann Fragen zum Ausfüllen so Kurzgeschichte. ( ) das Vokabular in einer anderen Sprache ähm aber so einfache Sachen gehn dann meist schon

Christina: mm-hmm mm-hmm and during lessons?

Anna: no. well just only if now I don’t know it’s about Greece and someone says”yes I know that word” or something or at least there is a similar word but now so that they speak a different language that happens rarely except now for instance in a fifth class I have a student from China right now. he only speaks English.

Christina: yes

Anna: then I always go to him and tell him the same thing once again in English well only English he can speak a lot of different languages but I just don’t speak them. uhm and there is one from Thailand in a sixth class.

Christina: mm-hmm mm-hmm yes I think I was there in the**

Anna: ohh yes**

Christina: yes that’s possible yes

Anna: mm-hmm exactly so they they always get ‘hhh the same or something similar in English then. just most of the time well the two said that they wanted to hear it first in German because I asked I can- for me that’s no problem I like to teach in English. uhm but they said they should also learn German or listen to German. now I make it- it is only possible like that if I give them a work assignment and there are ten pages to read in the book and questions to fill in like a short story. ( ) the vocabulary in a different language uhm but so simple things are okay most of the time
This part of the interview is concerned with the question of multilingual language practices during lessons. Anna first refers to all of the pupils in her class who, according to her, rarely contribute to the lesson in their home languages. Then, she speaks of an exchange student from China who “only speaks English” or “well only English he can speak a lot of different languages but I just don’t speak them.” At which point the teacher starts describing her language management with exchange students, which depends on the use of English as a common language. In this case, Anna’s linguistic practices can be described as language management since she consciously interferes with her own language practices and thereby also guides the pupils. The main discourse reproduced in Extract (28) is the idea of English as a lingua franca, or put simply, as “a useful instrument for making oneself understood in international encounters” (House 2003: 559).

While other teachers reported using English in their interactions with international pupils or those with the status of außerordentlicher Schüler/außerordentliche Schülerin, students themselves also use English when talking to the international children in the class. Observations in one class showed that a student accompanied an exchange student from Thailand and helped him follow lessons and even translated some of the teachers’ instructions into English for him. In general, it is important to note that the decision to use English with international students is certainly based on more than the dominant discourse of English as a lingua franca. Nonetheless, these utterances convey a discourse that presents English as being particularly international and versatile.

One teacher in a class I observed in School B had a different approach to using English during class, and thus, transporting the mentioned discourse. While teaching German, the teacher kept inserting phrases in English, such as “listen to me”, “oh my god”, and once explaining a task by saying, “you are the professor now, the teacher” (taken from field notes B2). I had the chance to observe this teacher’s practices in two different classrooms. In both classes, she regularly switched into English even though she is not an English teacher, nor was she addressing specific pupils. These observations demonstrate that English does enjoy a certain dominance even in lessons that are only vaguely related to English as a subject in school. Additionally, English appears to fulfill a particular function for this teacher since she uses it frequently and in a variety of contexts.

Besides its presence in language practices, language management, and the syllabus, English is also visually dominant in schools. The linguistic landscape in English includes
posters in science classrooms, scribbles by pupils in bathrooms and on desks, and other posters and documents in the classrooms and hallways, as demonstrated in Figures 3 to 7.

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**Figure 3** Linguistic landscape example A57: detail of a monolingual English poster; physics laboratory.

**Figure 4** Linguistic landscape example B82: English scribble by pupils; pupil’s desk.

**Figure 5** Linguistic landscape example B11: English scribble by pupils; bathroom.
Figure 3 shows a monolingual poster in English that was found in the physics laboratory of School A. Similar examples were also found in School B, where a teacher explained that the presence of posters in English is the result of decorating decisions, rather than having any didactic intentions. The number of English posters in both schools, as well as their placement in science laboratories possibly underlines the dominant role of English in science (cf. Ammon 2001). As can be seen in Figures 4 and 5, pupils access their knowledge of English (and other languages) to produce scribbles in a variety of places. Frequently, abbreviations such as ‘LOL’ (laughing out loud) and derogatively used words such as ‘gay’ are visible on school furniture.

Figure 6 indicates a poster, produced by a teacher, stating the consequences of good or bad behavior in class. The poster is placed on the wall right next to the entrance, with headlines and graphic art in English. Using English in this example appears to be intended
to emphasize the distinction between ‘good’ and ‘bad’. The sign in Figure 7 was placed right next to the entrance of the library. It signifies the necessity to be quiet in the library, and as explained by a teacher, also the need for quiet behavior in front of the library. The sign states a clear message in English without providing a translation. During the course of my fieldwork, this sign was replaced by a pictogram.

Thus, Figures 3 to 7 illustrate the omnipresence of English in the school space. Texts in English are produced by different participants, including teachers, pupils, and external sources, and applied in a variety of contexts. On the one hand, English is used by pupils in their scribbles on walls, desks, et cetera, while, on the other hand, it is employed by teachers for organizational communication. On balance, the overall impression is that English significantly shapes the linguistic landscape of the schools, and thereby also language ideologies around the English language and multilingualism itself.

As illustrated in the previous examples, English is perceived as an international language and considered to be useful in many areas of application. In addition, both proficiency in English and bilingualism in both English and German are seen as advantageous, which can be linked to the fact that language competencies are usually seen in the context of what the environment determines (cf. Blommaert et al. 2005: 197). The following extract, derived from my field notes, illustrates this point.

**Extract (29) field notes B2; classroom**

English lesson: the class is divided into two groups during English, one group stays in this classroom, the other group moves. The group of pupils staying in this classroom is relatively small, they are quiet and focus on the teacher. In this lesson, pupils have to read out dialogues in English; one pupil is especially good at reading. The teacher does not praise him in particular, but remarks “*name* knows his stuff” (“*Name* kennt sich eh aus”).

According to the form teacher, this pupil’s home languages are English and German.

The extract above shows how the English teacher attracts attention to one particular pupil because of his proficiency in English. Even though the teacher avoids praising the pupil, she nonetheless makes a comment on his reading skills. It seems that she dismisses his competencies as a natural condition, and thereby also devalues the diverse linguistic repertoires of other multilingual pupils, who do not have the opportunity to demonstrate theirs in school.

Lastly, we will consider an example taken from a group interview with pupils, in
which discourses regarding English emerge. After discussing a variety of languages, the discussion turns towards English.

**Extract (30) Pupils School A (paragraphs 362-383)**

Sara: Englisch is wichtig [Englisch
Zoe: [ja Englisch
Aneta: aber Englisch is international [das muss man überall
Sara: [ja das is sehr wichtig

() Aneta: weil ich ken viele Leute die können kein Englisch

((Zoe kichert))

Daria: das is tragisch
Aneta: “ja sehr”
Miray: na ich finds nicht so tragisch
Enise: nein ich auch nicht

((kichern))

Christina: weil?
Enise: ja () es [is
Miray: [ich ich zum Beispiel wenn ich hier in Österreich weiter leben

(.) würde brauch ich kein Englisch

Christina: mhm
Miray: wenn ich Deutsch kann reicht mir die Sprache. wenn ich in der Türkei

leb [brauch ich Englisch nicht

Sara: [ich hab. ich hab eine Freundin also es ihre ähm ihr Vater der

kann kein Englisch. hält nicht so gut aber er kann ein Esperanto und
der der kann trotzdem mit verschiedenen Ländern mit den Leuten
reden. (. ) braucht kein Englisch

Aneta: ja aber stell dir vor du arbeitest. wenn du irgendwo arbeitest wo du

Englisch wissen [musst

Sara: [ja eh Englisch is eh wichtig

Miray: ja dann lernst dus halt.

((kichern))

Sara: English is important [English
Zoe: [yes English
Aneta: but English is international [one needs it everywhere
Sara: [yes it is very important]
   
   ()

Aneta: because I know many people who can’t speak English
   
   ((Zoe chuckles))

Daria: that’s tragic

Aneta: “yes very”

Miray: no I don’t think that’s tragic

Enise: no me neither
   
   ((chuckling))

Christina: because?

Enise: yes (.) it [ is

Miray: [I I for instance if I would continue living in Austria (.) I
don’t need any English

Christina: mm-hmm

Miray: if I know German that’s enough for me. if I live in Turkey
   
   [I don’t need English

Sara: [I have. I have a friend uhm her uhm her father he doesn’t speak any
   
   English. well not that good but he knows Esperanto and he can speak
   
   with different countries with the people. (.) doesn’t need English

Aneta: but imagine you work. if you work somewhere where you need to
   
   know [English

Sara: [yes it is English is important

Miray: then you just learn it.
   
   ((chuckling))

The utterance begins with Sara shifting the focus of the conversation from German as a
useful language in Austria to English. Most of the students in the group agree that English
is important, with Daria even commenting that a lack of English proficiency is ‘tragic’.
Thus, Sara, Zoe, Aneta, and Daria reproduce the idea that knowledge in English is essential
since it is considered an international and widely spoken language. The comments of the
three pupils reflect the discourse on English as a lingua franca, whereas Sara later adds
Esperanto as a significant lingua franca. Aneta, who mentions that English is necessary for
work, brings up the second argument in favor of the usefulness of English.

However, Miray and Enise take a contrary position. It is necessary to point out that
the interviewer co-constructs the dominant view of English as an important international
language by addressing those who argue against the common discourse. Miray substantiates her position by saying that English is not a necessity if one lives in Austria or Turkey: “I I for instance if I would continue living in Austria (.) I don’t need any English (.) if I know German that’s enough for me. if I live in Turkey I don’t need English”. The discourse reproduced here refers to a contextualization of languages, arguing that one’s linguistic repertoire should be adapted to one’s living situation, in this case, either Austria or Turkey. The pupils assume that in both countries, knowledge of the national language is the most important, and therefore, they regard proficiency in English as being of lesser importance. This utterance is certainly embedded in the wider discourse on a *standard language ideology* (cf. Milroy 2001).

With regard to using English in working situations, Miray describes it as a skill that can be easily acquired, saying, “then you just learn it”. Her utterance is supported by the fact that English is the dominant foreign language taught in schools, and it is easier to receive access to English lessons than other languages, so that the acquisition of English, in general, appears effortless.

All in all, Extract (30) provides a good representation of the variety of discourses on English as a school subject and language. The utterances address how English is portrayed as an international lingua franca, a necessity in a globalized world, an essential part of the school system, and a counterpart of national languages (cf. House 2003).

This section has focused on utterances relating to the functions of school languages, in particular Latin and English. Latin is considered a compulsory subject in most academic secondary schools (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 53), and therefore a fixture of both schools. Comparable to the academic register of German, Latin is almost exclusively associated with education, school, and the academic context. The supposed advantages of studying Latin are transported in the school environment and reproduced in the linguistic landscape and pupils’ attitudes towards the language. Discourses regarding English are particularly connected to the view of English as an international language and as a global lingua franca. However, this perspective is viewed very critically by House (2003), and even described as a myth by Pennycook (2007). Furthermore, English is also an established subject in most schools, and, consequently, it is the most intensively taught foreign language in Austrian schools (cf. Eurydice & Eurostat 2012: 78). Samples from the schools’ linguistic landscapes reveal the omnipresence of English in the school building as well as its use by different
participants in various contexts.

Hence, discourses on school languages such as Latin and English are predominant in schools and do seem to influence language education policies with regard to languages and multilingualism in Austria. The perceived functions of school languages are relevant insofar as they provide a general understanding of language ideologies, language prestige, and emerging discourses.

6.4. Discourses on diversity

6.4.1. Overview

This section addresses the topic of diversity in schools and is, in general, concerned with the question of how participants perceive pupils’ ethnolinguistic diversity in schools. Thus, the following subsections deal with the perceptions and discourses that are reproduced as they pertain to the superdiversity present in both schools. First, Section 6.4.2 discusses discourses on apparent ‘signs’ of diversity, which, in short, refers to when certain features, such as the looks, names, or cultural affiliations of pupils are considered to signify ‘diversity’. The term ‘diversity’ was introduced in this research project as a way of avoiding other ascriptions such as ‘migration background’ or ethnicity when portraying the linguistic repertoire of pupils. By using ‘diversity’ I intended to avoid evoking any prejudices in terms of categorizing pupils into ‘migrants’ or ethnicities by the participants. Nevertheless, it appears that the term was then used to subsume and label pupils with migrant backgrounds.

Section 6.4.3 moves on to examine the ideology of equality that persistently surfaced in the utterances of the participants. The ideology of equality mainly refers to how teachers in particular tend to negotiate their identities and their school’s identity, in a way that coincides with an ideology focused on tolerance, openness, and anti-racism.

The final section, 6.4.4, focuses on discourses related to the sensitive issues of discrimination and segregation in school. The topics of discrimination and segregation are closely linked to the concept of othering, which was briefly defined in Section 2.3.1, and the construction of in- and out-groups that was addressed in Section 6.3.3.
6.4.2. Signs of diversity: looks, names, countries, and accent

When addressing the issue of language diversity in interviews, teachers seemed to primarily focus on languages that were part of their school syllabus. They would present the diversity of languages offered as subjects, and, at first, overlook the ethnolinguistic diversity of their pupils. Subsequently, teachers began to associate language diversity with pupils, although they primarily focused on the cultural affiliations, names, and looks of their pupils. In this way, highlighting certain features and pointing out a handful of pupils, their utterances are framed in processes of othering. The concept of othering originates from Pierre Bourdieu’s work on symbolic violence, according to which, acts of violence are the foundations for marking marginalized groups as ‘others’. Symbolic power, however, is defined as an invisible power that is employed through social mechanisms. Its central aspects include the division of people into separate groups, the need for people to fit the norms of social bodies, and the establishment of compliance between people.

Bourdieu (1991: 164) specifies that “[...] symbolic power is that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it.” Symbolic power is particularly effective because it operates on the basis of participants’ awareness, while at the same time, it is scarcely recognized as power in an ordinary sense. As a result, symbolic power allows one to use rules and social differences as advantages (cf. Samuel 2013: 401). One concept that is particularly relevant in the context of this thesis is the principle of ‘di- vision’ as a core element of symbolic power (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 221). Consequently, the formation of groups—whether by individual group members or as directed from outside of the group—is an act of symbolic power in which processes of othering take on a crucial role.

Othering, therefore, is the act of marginalizing those who are unmistakably different than the majority, while using their differences in habits and views to define them as the out-group (cf. Rawls & David 2006: 469f., Bunch 2015: 12). Othering is an applicable process rather than a theoretical mindset. Moreover, othering is practiced throughout society, not limited to one group, and aims to establish categories of people. For instance, those who define themselves as ‘Austrians’ categorize others as ‘immigrants’, and those who characterize themselves as ‘immigrants’ categorize others as ‘Austrians’. In addition, the marginalized group submits to the categorization imposed by the majority, so that
‘immigrants’ (or ‘foreigners’/’Ausländer’) also classify themselves as ‘immigrants’. Furthermore, with reference to linguistic diversity, a division between multilinguals and monolinguals seems significant. The following examples explore how ‘others’ are defined, and thus, what signs of diversity can be detected in the school.

Kristin, a teacher in School A, reproduces in her utterance her impression of the expanding diversity in her school. Initially, the interviewer posed a question about the general history of the school, which Kristin describes briefly before emphasizing that the school is often seen as attracting the children of parents with a higher social status. She then contradicts this by emphasizing that many children with migrant backgrounds attend the school.

**Extract (31) Kristin (paragraphs 8-14)**

Kristin: es war natürlich viele Kinder also schon bedingt durch die Lage von von Leuten die auch ähm ja a Studium haben die Eltern. äh sagt ma bis heute der Schule nach aber wir haben a Drittel bis zur Hälfte Kinder mit Migrationshintergrund also wenn man in den ersten es geht ungefähr bis zur dritten viertem wenn ma da schaut da sind wirklich sehr viele Kinder wo ma bei den Namen schon sieht dass die äh die ihre Wurzeln nicht in Österreich haben.

Christina: ja

Kristin: ja

Christina: seit wann ist das so?

Kristin: das hat sich schon geändert (.) es hat sich eigentlich massiv geändert in den 90er Jahren mit dem Balkankrieg (.) da waren vor allem Leute aus aus Ex-Jugoslawien (.) viele Flüchtlinge bis heute eigentlich. und dann natürlich ab 2- i würde sagen 2010 jetzt wo man diese Migrationsströme so beobachten kann.

Christina: ja ja

Kristin: Tschetschenien Georgien Armenien also Russland. viele auch aus Afrika es is sehr bunt geworden.

Kristin: there were of course many children well also caused by the location of of people who also uhm yes the parents studied at University. uh that is still said about the school but we have a third or half the children have a migrant background well if one looks at the first [classes] until the third fourth there are really many children where one can already see from their names that the uh their roots are not here in Austria.
In this utterance, Kristin reproduces a clear distinction between children who have a migrant background and those who do not. With her statement that, “there are really many children where one can already see from their names that the uh their roots are not here in Austria”, the teacher demonstrates that she considers names to be a sign of one’s country or culture of origin. Kristin also categorizes pupils according to their assumed countries of origin, noting that those who have migrated to Austria were either refugees or part of inflows of migrants. Moreover, by using the term ‘Migrationsströme’ (migratory streams) she refers to a prominent discourse on migration movements using metaphors (cf. Spieß 2016). Kristin ends her list of countries by acknowledging this diversity, saying, “it has become very colorful”, with a diversity of colors representing a diversity in countries of origin.

In this case, diversity is used to refer to a variety of countries of origin, pupils with migrant backgrounds, and those whose personal names seem to indicate that “their roots are not here in Austria”. Thus, diversity is perceived as an accumulation of signs or a single sign, such as names, or appearances referring to other countries of origin. Correspondingly, the following excerpt from my interview with Anna, a teacher of arts, illustrates this approach of linking linguistic diversity with pupils’ appearance and their countries of origin. During this part of the interview, Anna is describing a project that involves the linguistic repertoires of pupils in one class. The project consisted of a brief video game incorporating multilingualism.

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27 This thesis considers signs to be “[…] phenomena that represent other phenomena” (Johansen & Larsen 2002: 25) and that, in practice, “human intellectual and social life is based on the production, use, and exchange of signs […]” (Sebeok 2001: 8). Thus, everything can serve as a sign, be interpreted as a sign, or be exchanged as a sign.
In Extract (32), Anna describes the process of discovering diverse linguistic repertoires among the pupils in one class. She is outlining her experience of carrying out a project with a superdiverse class, in which their home languages were included in the development of a computer game. During the project, she notices how the pupils themselves notice the ethnolinguistic diversity of their families and their peers’ linguistic repertoires. In Anna’s words, “they did really much then with their with (.) that the others have a a second
language or a third language in cases in which one maybe can’t see it from the looks or (. ) where one maybe doesn’t know”. In this utterance, she reproduces the idea that either multilingualism or otherness can be detected from a person’s appearance. Additionally, her words convey that it is necessary to identify someone’s otherness on the basis of their looks, while an inability to identify their group identity is perceived as an exceptional case.

Another sign used to detect a migrant background is the pronunciation of German words and/or the presence of an unfamiliar accent. The general discourse is that if pupils reveal traces of an accent when they speak German, they are marked as ‘others’, while, on the other hand, a lack of accent is seen as unexpected. For instance, in the following example, Shirin, a pupil of School B, outlines two situations in which teachers have reacted to the way she speaks.

**Extract (33) Pupils School B (paragraphs 108-113)**

Christina: mhm und da an der Schule? glaubts ihr oder wisst ihr ob die Lehrer die ihr habts wissen dass ihr andere Erstsprachen habts?

Shirin: ja

Anisa: ja

Leon: denk schon

Esther: ja

Shirin: mich hat sogar mal eine Lehrerin die hat bei uns suppliert und sie hat gemeint ich red eher so mit einem Akzent und da hat sie mich halt gefragt was meine Erstsprache ist. u:nd unsere **lehrerin ähm die is auch sprachinteressiert glaub ich oder irgendwie sowas und sie interessiert sich auch für die Kulturen der Schüler. und ja mich hat sie auch schon mal gefragt wo ich aufgewachsen bin ob ich mich gut mit meinen Wurzeln auskenne und so weiter.

Christina: mm-hmm and here in this school? do you think or do you know if your teachers know that you have other first languages?

Shirin: yes

Anisa: yes

Leon: [I] think so

Esther: yes

Shirin: actually once a teacher she was a substitute and she said that I somehow speak with an accent and then she asked me what my first language was. a:nd our **teacher uhm she is also interested in
languages I think or somehow something and she is also interested in pupils’ cultures. and yes she also once asked me where I grew up and whether I am familiar with my roots and so on.

Shirin describes two situations in which her teachers confronted her about her first language and her cultural heritage. She describes one of them as being genuinely interested in pupils’ home languages and cultural affiliations. According to this utterance, however, teachers tend to identify Shirin’s difference from the majority group by her supposed accent. Her way of speaking German thus acts as a sign of her non-Austrian heritage. In addition to the discourse on signs of diversity, this utterance provides insight into perceptions of what tends to be acceptable in language use. Shirin’s speech is not significantly different, but it is possible that, when it is taken in combination with her appearance and her name, her teachers become more aware of her language mistakes or hesitations when speaking German. This utterance also refers to the concept of linguistic appropriacy (cf. Lippi-Green 2012: 82ff.), which is based on the assumption of ‘correct’ language use. As shown by Lippi-Green’s examples of African American English and Hawaiian Creole, children learn early on that they need to assimilate and lose their accent if they want to acquire good English and be perceived as good speakers of English (cf. 2012: 83ff.).

As addressed in Extracts (31) and (32), another sign that is interpreted as indicating a diverse ethnolinguistic background is the child’s first as well as their last name. The following two excerpts focus on teachers’ practices when it comes to dealing with pupils’ names, while Extract (34) gives the perspective of a pupil. To initiate this part of the interviews, the interviewer asked whether the participants knew if their teachers were aware of their diverse linguistic repertoires.

**Extract (34) Pupils School A (paragraphs 100-104)**

Aneta: Hauptsache alle Lehrer wissen weil wegen meinem Namen weils so schwer zum Aussprechen ist
((lachen))

Aneta: ich hasse das

Daria: ((führt Beispiele verschiedener Ausspracheoptionen an))

Aneta: niemand kann das aussprechen echt. und dann “woher kommst du denn?” ja so is es
Aneta refers to her experience of teachers reacting to her name. According to her, teachers typically attempt a variety of ways to pronounce her name, and thereupon also question her about her family background. Daria, her friend, backs her up by providing examples of different ways Aneta’s name has been pronounced in class. In this utterance, Aneta appears to be particularly emotional, which is reasonable since names are personal attributes, and cases in which pupils are addressed by their mispronounced name in front of the whole class might be exceptionally embarrassing. As a consequence, this utterance illustrates that processes of othering occur when names are highlighted as being different than others. Furthermore, Aneta stresses that her name leads teachers to the assumption that Aneta’s family migrated to Austria, when she imitates a teacher with, “no one can pronounce it really. and then ‘where are you from?’ yeah that’s how it is”. Thus, her name leads to discussions on a related otherness relating to her family’s country of origin or the family’s migration history.

The following extract from my interview with Anna provides the opposite perspective of cases like these, with Anna reporting on instances in which she, as a teacher, has been confronted with unfamiliar names of pupils.

**Extract (35) Anna (paragraphs 69-71)**

Anna: und oft a wenn irgendein Name da is der halt- den ma no nie ghört hat. also i frag schon öfter nach "aha woher is das jetzt" oder "wie spricht ma das aus?" das is eigentlich meistens so dieses "wie soll i’s ma denn hinschreiben dass i di nennen kann" was weiß i hab jetzt in der ersten Klasse zum Beispiel einen "Name" das hat a Zeit lang dauert bis i dann halt- also ganz anders geschrieben als mas ausspricht der will "Name" genannt werden weil (.) es kann eh meistens keiner aussprechen also so
Before this utterance, Anna and I were talking about the lists that teachers receive at the beginning of the school year, which provide them with data on their pupils and their countries of origin. The teacher explains that she deals with names she is unaccustomed to by asking the students directly how she should pronounce their names as well as how they would like to be called. Thus, Anna provides insights into her perspective as a teacher, expresses her concern about mispronouncing a name, and describes her approach to ensuring that she pronounces their name or desired nickname correctly. She then refers to the initial topic of different countries of origin and makes a general claim that about a third of the pupils originate from countries other than Austria, “it is for sure that I would say a third have somehow other countries of origin at least the parents. just by the names.” She thus attributes this estimate to her pupils’ names, and in doing so, reproduces the discourse that names serve as signs of diversity.

A similar discourse arises in my field notes from School B (field notes B2, paragraph 17), in which I document a conversation between a teaching assistant and myself. During a physical education lesson, the class went for a hike, and the teaching assistant and the researcher began a conversation about the ethnolinguistic diversity of the pupils at this school. Both participants co-constructed the view that many children with a migrant
background attend School B. The teaching assistant labeled pupils with diverse backgrounds as ‘Ausländer/foreigners’, and then added that these pupils are very proficient in German as well as that they can be identified by their surnames, with “die Hälfte der Nachnamen kann ich nicht aussprechen/half of the surnames I cannot pronounce”. His utterance appears to convey that the difference in surnames and his own resulting insecurity about their pronunciations signify the pupils’ otherness, whereas a lack of proficiency in German can no longer be expected.

On another note, signs of pupils’ diversity, such as their affiliations with other countries or cultures are sometimes also incorporated into lessons. The following excerpt from my conversation with Oliver, a teacher of geography and history, illustrates how pupils’ supposed countries of origin are used to address the (linguistic) diversity of pupils during class. According to Oliver, his subjects give him various opportunities to include his pupils’ diversity into his lessons.

**Extract (36) Oliver (paragraphs 63-64)**

Christina: natürlich das das hängt damit zusammen eh klar. mhm (.) so generell werden die anderen Erstsprachen von den Schülern und Schülerinnen in den Unterricht miteinbezogen? (.) weiß net vielleicht hast du a bissl an Einblick in den Unterricht von anderen?

Oliver: i werd jetzt bei (.) ich fang amal bei mir an wo ichs mitkrieg is äh bei Spracheneinbeziehung mach ich in Geschichte wenn ma jetzt historisch anfangen ich hab jetzt in der Klasse zum Beispiel vor kurzem über Hochkulturen in Ägypten weil wir nämlich zwei Schüler mit ägyptischen Wurzeln drin sitzen ham. äh dann bezieh ich das natürlich mit ein. obwohl natürlich mir die Sachen mit den beiden Ägyptern auch speziell is weil "Name" muslimisch is und "Name" koptischer Christ. und die Geschichte da in letzter Zeit reinspielt dass sie sich angefangen haben zu beschimpfen mit “du muslimischer hmhmhm” oder “du hhmhm” also das war is mir auch vor kurzem erst aufgefallen dass das wahrscheinlich ich glaub auch von den Eltern mit eingegraben wird in dem Fall. so eine Konfliktsituation ghabt ham wo die Eltern den anderen vorgeworfen haben dass alle Muslime so und so sind.

Christina: of course this is connected. mm-hmm (.) so in general are the first languages of pupils incorporated into lessons? (.) I don’t know maybe you have some insights into others’ lessons?
Oliver: I will now (...) I will first start with me where I notice it uh I include languages in history if we now start historically I have now for instance in a class recently [talked] about ancient cultures in Egypt because we have two pupils with Egyptian roots there. uh then of course I incorporate it. even though of course the thing with both Egyptians is also a special case because "name" is Muslim and "name" is Coptic Christian, and recently it plays a role that they have started to insult each other with “you hhmhmh muslim” or “you hhmhm” so that was it I also just noticed it recently that it probably is being pushed by the parents in this case. we had one conflict situation in which the parents blamed each other saying that all Muslims are like that.

In this utterance, Oliver refers to a history lesson focusing on Ancient Egypt, in which he apparently included two pupils with Egyptian backgrounds, “because we have two pupils with Egyptian roots there. uh then of course I incorporate it.” By placing an emphasis on their so-called roots, the teacher transports a discourse that links individuals with entire countries on the basis of their migrant background. Moreover, he highlights some pupils’ otherness in front of the class, and thus, positions himself in this discourse as appreciating diversity even in the context of school lessons.

Oliver also refers to a conflict between the two pupils based on their religious affiliations. He talks about a conflict between those pupils and the possibility of their parents influencing the scope of the disagreement. The discourse reproduced in Extract (36) thus shows how a teacher perceives and reflects the diversity among his pupils. Oliver, for instance, links pupils with their countries of origin and/or their corresponding religions, and is aware of potential conflicts that might arise from the differences in pupils’ superdiversity. On the one hand, Oliver engages in processes of othering, but, on the other hand, he also avoids the practices of a colorblind ideology (cf. Bonilla-Silva 2002, Lewis 2001) by transporting an awareness of the correlation between ethnic differences and conflicts.

Extract (37) follows the previous example by showing how individual pupils are linked to their home countries in the school context, as well as how Roland, a principal, conveys his consciousness of this practice. Furthermore, Roland and the researcher co-construct one of the school’s general objectives, which is to raise awareness of multilingualism.
Extract (37) Roland (paragraphs 181-190)

Christina: äh werden Erstsprachen von den Schülern und Schülerinnen (.) in den Unterricht miteinbezogen? also is das a Thema in den verschiedenen [ Unterrichtsstunden?

Roland: [ ja wir versuchen schon also dass zumindest die Klassenvorstände (.) wertschätzend damit umgehen dass ma sagt also jede Sprache is (.) ist ein Gewinn. jede Sprache is eine neue Welt (.) und dass ma so versuchen (.) die Wertigkeit zu heben. (.) es is net immer so dass die Kinder das mögen. also sie wollen eigentlich net immer (.)

Christina: weil sie dann hervorgehoben

Roland: ja genau weils dann extra hervorgehoben wird und (.) sies scheinbar (.) so gewohnt sind dass das eher was Negatives [ besetztes is

Christina: [ ja stimmt auch ja

Roland: leider leider. und und der Versuch sie dann da vor den Vorhang zu holen oder auf a Podest zu stellen oder zu sagen „boah toll du kannst das“ (.) es bringt oft mehr aus meiner Erfahrung wenn mas nebenher macht als sie wirklich hinzustellen. es is a kontraproduktiv das hama schon in einigen Projekten festgestellt das Kind mit einem Land zu identifizieren net? wenn ein Kind jetzt in zweiter Generation schon in Österreich is Großeltern kommen aus Ägypten (.) und ma dann sagt “ja du wirst was aus über Ägypten erzählen”

Christina: ja

Roland: is es teilweise sehr problematisch und und a Kind war amal bei mir vor vor (.) ungefähr drei Jahren war das schon. und hat gsagt “ich wurde jetzt eingeteilt für a Referat über Ägypten aber ich war noch nie in Ägypten”

Christina: mhm

Roland: ja. also es is irgendwo dann scho problematisch dass ma dann so dass ma dann (.) Rollen zuweist im im (.) im guten Gedanken sozusagen da dem Kind Wertung zu geben oder der Kultur Wertung zu geben aber garnet bedenkt dass das Kind entweder garnet diesen Bezug hat oder es nicht will

Christina: uh are first languages of pupils (.) incorporated into the lessons? well is it an issue in the different [ classes?

Roland: [ yes we try that at least the form teachers (.) act with appreciation that one says every language is (.) is an asset. every language is a new world (.) and that we try (.) to raise that worthiness. (.) it’s not always that the children like it. well they don’t always actually want (.)

Christina: because they are then pointed ou-
Roland: yes exactly because they are deliberately set apart and (.) they are apparently (.) used to it being more of a negative [ thing
Christina: [ yes that’s true

Roland: unfortunately unfortunately. and and trying to put them in front of a curtain or on a pedestal or to say “wow that’s great that you know that” (.) from my experience it is often better one does it in the background than to really put them out there. we have seen in many projects that it is counterproductive to identify children with a country right? if a child is a second generation migrant in Austria and his grandparents come from Egypt (.) and one says “yes you will tell us something about Egypt”

Christina: yes
Roland: it is partly very problematic and and once a child came to me about about (.) three years ago. and said “I was assigned a presentation about Egypt but I have never been to Egypt”

Christina: mm-hmm
Roland: yes. well it is somehow problematic that one then that one then (.) assigns roles with with (.) good intentions so to say give value to the child or the culture but one doesn’t consider that the child either doesn’t have the relation or doesn’t want it

In Extract (37), Roland refers to his experience of highlighting pupils’ superdiversity, noting that explicitly setting pupils apart from the rest of the class by highlighting their linguistic otherness, or, in particular, identifying children with particular countries is counterproductive: “from my experience it is often better one does it in the background than to really put them out there. we have seen in many projects that it is counterproductive to identify children with a country right?” Roland recounts a conversation with a pupil, in the course of which he aims to reflect the voice (cf. Bakhtin 1981: 262f.) of a pupil who complained about being assigned a presentation on Egypt due to his or her family background. By referring to this conversation, Roland critically reflects on these assignments and questions the usefulness of the practice.

At the same time, this utterance also considers teachers’ intentions when they link pupils and countries: “well it is somehow problematic that one then that one then (.) assigns roles with with (.) good intentions so to say give value to the child or the culture but one doesn’t consider that the child either doesn’t have the relation or doesn’t want it”. The
teachers’ intentions seem to be to acknowledge the cultural diversity among pupils and to appreciate their family histories as they are connected to other countries. Since affiliations with countries are a sign of diversity that is easily detected and incorporated into lessons, it is a practice that is often used by teachers. However, in doing so, one oversimplifies the relation between person and country, creates stereotypical connotations, and enforces exoticization. So, on the one hand, schools that make this connection act in a positive way, as they are aware of the diversity of their pupils and avoid colorblind practices; but, on the other hand, they also bind certain pupils to signs of diversity such as affiliations with countries.

Last but not least, an excerpt from one of the group interviews with pupils of School A is relevant to this topic. The following interaction between interview participants illustrates how pupils adapt processes of othering in the ways they refer to particular schools that have a high percentage of pupils with migrant backgrounds.

Extract (38) Pupils School A (paragraphs 517-534)

Christina: wer hat da eigene Erfahrungen gehabt in der Volksschule?
Enise: ja ich
((lachen))
Enise: ähm in meiner Volksschule da waren ja viele (. Türkische im- die haben die haben nur Türkisch gesprochen ((alle kichern)) Frau Professor also Frau Lehrerin hat nix verstanden. aber wir haben trotzdem weiter Türkisch gesprochen (. einmal sie hat halt mit uns geschimpft und so. (. und wir haben trotzdem Türkisch gesprochen ((alle kichern)) aber hier eben jetzt wenn ich dann angefangen hab in Deutsch Schwierigkeiten zu haben hab ich gesagt „nein jetzt nur Deutsch Bücher lesen nur Deutsch sprechen“ und jetzt da is es ziemlich egal "in der Schule ja”

Christina: mhm die hat wirklich geschimpft die hat net irgendwie [ nett?
Enise: [, naja (.)

wir haben in unserer Klasse eben waren viele Ausländer. wenige Österreicher so

Christina: welche Schule war das?
Enise: es war in ** ähm [ **
Sara: [ ach so wie heißt die?
Enise: ** gibt auch
Sara: “Schule” ((ruft den Namen der Schule, lacht und klatscht einmal))
Enise: ja (.) das nur eine Ausländer Schule so irgendwie wo-
Sara: “Schule” ist ja [ extrem
Miray: ja es gibt ja
Enise: ja hm? ((an Sara))
Sara: “Schule” is voll extrem
Enise: ja is extrem.
Sara: da sind-
((das Thema wird wieder gewechselt, Enise setzt in ihrer Erzählung fort))

Christina: who had their own experiences in primary school?
Enise: yes I did
((laughing))
Enise: uhm in my primary school there were many (.). Turks in- they only spoke Turkish ((everyone chuckles)) the professor uh teacher understood nothing but we still spoke Turkish (.). once she scolded us and so. (.). but we still spoke Turkish ((everyone chuckles)) but here now when I started to have difficulties in German I said “no now only reading German books only speaking German” and now it is whatever “in this school yes”
Christina: mm-hmm and she really scolded you she didn’t somehow [ friendly?
Enise: [ well (.). we had in our class there were many foreigners. only a few Austrians
Christina: which school was it?
Enise: it was in ** uhm [ **
Sara: [ ah right how is it called?
Enise: there is also **
Sara: “school” ((shouts the name of the school, laughs and claps once))
Enise: yes (.). it is a school just for foreigners so somehow wher-
Sara: “school” is so [ extreme
Miray: [ yes there are yes
Enise: yes hm? ((to Sara))
Sara: “school” is so extreme
Enise: yes it’s extreme.
Sara: there are-
The excerpt above illustrates how pupils reproduce discourses on othering in a similar manner. In particular, the interviewees recreate a process of categorization between ‘Ausländer’/‘foreigners’ and ‘Austrians’, and in doing so, they rely on an established differentiation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (cf. Rawls & David 2006: 476). Enise initiates the discourse with her description of her class in primary school as “well (...) we had in our class there were many foreigners. only a few Austrians”. The researcher then affects the progress of the interview by asking for the name of the school. Enise’s answer leads to Sara’s reaction: she laughs and claps her hands once. The following interaction between Enise, Sara, and Miray revolves around describing Enise’s former school as being predominantly attended by ‘foreigners’. The girls label Enise’s primary school an ‘Ausländerschule’ (school for foreigners)—a term that is frequently used in public discourses in German-speaking countries when referring to schools with a high percentage of pupils with migrant backgrounds—and is further characterized as ‘extreme’.

Extract (38) conveys two approaches concerning categorization and othering. First, Enise, a speaker of Turkish, talks about her primary school and the fact that many of her peers also spoke Turkish, so Turkish was regularly used among them. She then classifies her peers and herself as ‘foreigners’ in comparison to ‘Austrians’. Second, the interviewees reproduce a dominant discourse on categorizing schools as ‘Ausländerschule’. The school is characterized as ‘extreme’ and as one that is frequently attended by children with migrant backgrounds. Even though the pupils occasionally classify themselves as ‘foreigners’, they nonetheless adhere to the prevalent categorizations. Thus, pupils tend to rely on categories that strengthen boundaries between groups and provide contexts for processes of othering.

In this section, the selected extracts have shown that teachers appear to anticipate signs of ‘diversity’ or ‘otherness’ among pupils. Features such as accents, names, and affiliations to certain countries are perceived as signifying a migrant background or a marked difference from the majority group. However, oversimplifying the connections between individuals and countries or cultures may also be associated with reinforcing stereotypes or even exoticization. For instance, Extracts (36) and (37) provide examples of how teachers make a stereotypical association between a pupil whose family migrated from Egypt and the country itself. Overall, by othering pupils who exhibit signs of diversity, they are classified
as either ‘foreigners’ or ‘Austrians’, which follows the principle of ‘di-visions’ by Bourdieu (cf. 1991: 221). As Bourdieu (1991: 221) observes, dividing a group generates an idea of unity and identity, and, consequently, “creates the reality and the unity of the group.” In the same way, pupils who are themselves affected by processes of othering apply the same categorizations and notice signs of diversity in order to be able to make the necessary distinctions. As shown in Extract (38), pupils may classify themselves as ‘foreigners’ while simultaneously reproducing stereotypical discourses on so-called ‘Ausländererschulen’. Generally, the process of othering is closely associated with the discursive constructions of in- and out-groups (see 6.3.3), the notion of homogeneity (see 6.2.2), and discourses on discrimination and segregation (see 6.4.4).

6.4.3. Ideology of equality

As part of discourses on diversity, this chapter concentrates on an ideology that emerged during the ethnographic fieldwork, and which can be characterized as an ideology of equality. This ideology of equality follows the view that “[…] everyone should be treated as equal, irrespective of their social, ethnic and linguistic background” (Milani & Jonsson 2011: 250). Discourses framed according to this ideological matrix advocate equality between individuals and society as a whole; they encourage the pursuit of such equality, and present equality as a default state (cf. Milani & Jonsson 2011: 251).

With regard to this thesis, an ideology of equality reveals how participants position themselves in the discourse (cf. Davies & Harré 1990). Positioning happens on the level of conversational interactions when speakers portray their social intentions in the discourse. It is essential to remember that speaking is a social activity, which includes further social goals, such as the speaker’s aim of presenting him- or herself in a particular light and as a particular character. In the following examples, the teachers mostly aimed to present themselves as tolerant and nondiscriminatory. Moreover, discursive positioning is not a one-sided process, but is rather co-constructed through interactions, which means that the researcher is constantly positioning herself as well, and might thereby influence the way interviewees position themselves. Thus, the following examples illustrate how discourses co-construct an ideology of equality.

Extract (39) is from my interview with Kathrin, an educator who supervises children
during after-school care. In this extract, Kathrin answers the researcher’s question as to how teachers incorporate pupils’ home languages into their classes and/or projects. Kathrin starts a brief narration on the importance of appreciating linguistic diversity in schools and providing space for languages. The conversation was interrupted a few times by pupils, which led to short breaks, in which both Kathrin and I could reassess the question at hand.

**Extract (39) Kathrin (paragraphs 37-43)**

Christina: ähm werden da die Erstsprachen manchmal irgendwie in in weiß net Projekte miteinbezogen? oder ähm vielleicht-

Kathrin: ähm die Erstsprachen werden in Projekte also das kann i jetzt nur von mir aus sagen die werden aber so schulübergreifend also mit mit Schule übergreifend mit einbezogen also i hab zum Beispiel ,hhh diese Sprachenvielfalt ganz bewusst gnommen. i hab die Bibliotheksausbildung gmacht und das war eben das Projekt. also was i damals ghabt hab. äh was darum gangen is also die die diese Sprachenvielfalt aufzuzeigen an einer Schule und a den Wert der Sprachenvielfalt aufzuzeigen und das is das was wir (.) schon immer machen aber das wirklich in in den Gesprächen dass wir oder dass ich muss i da ganz sagen dass es für mich sehr wertvoll is dass sie mehrere Sprachen sprechen.

((Ein Schüler klopft an die Tür. Kathrin sagt ihm, dass der Raum besetzt sei))

Kathrin: äh und dass ich ihnen das a sag immer wieder selbst wenn sie sich schwer tun sag i immer wieder ”i kann keine zwei Sprachen perfekt”

((Der Schüler steht noch immer in der Tür, Kathrin fragt ihn, ob er etwas braucht, sie diskutieren kurz miteinander, Schüler verlässt den Raum))

Christina: genau den der Wert der Mehrsprachigkeit ja?

Kathrin: aber das mach ich im täglichen Leben eigentlich. also wenn wenn irgendwie oder wenn i merk also da wird gehänselt irgendwas weil er das halt net richtig hat. also dass i einfach immer drauf hinweis dass es einfach ganz toll is wenn ma zwei Sprachen spricht beziehungsweise drei wenns dann Englisch auch noch lernen ,hhh und dann halt Französisch noch dazu.

Christina: uhm are first languages sometimes somehow incorporated in I don’t know projects? or uhm maybe-
Kathrin: uhm first languages are in projects well now I can only speak for myself the but overall in school so with with the whole school they are incorporated well I have for instance ‘hhh consciously taken linguistic diversity. I did the library training and that was the project. well what I did back then. uh where it was concerned with uh demonstrating the the this language diversity at the school and also demonstrating the value of the language diversity and that is what we (.) have always been doing but really in in conversations or that we or that I have to say that it is very precious to me that they speak more languages.

((Pupil knocks at the door, Kathrin tells him that the room is occupied))

Kathrin: uh and that I always tell them myself if it is hard on them I always tell them “I cannot [speak] two languages perfectly”

((Pupil is still standing in the doorway, Kathrin asks him whether he needs something; following a short discussion, the pupil leaves the room))

Christina: exactly the value of multilingualism yes?

Kathrin: but I do that in everyday life actually. so if if somehow or if I realize that someone is picked on somehow because he doesn’t have this right. well that I always point out that it is just great if one can speak two languages or three if they then also learn English ‘hhh and then also French.

As mentioned, Kathrin supervises children during after-school care, which gives pupils from grades one to four the opportunity to do their homework and enjoy some leisure time. Kathrin’s role is to assist them with their homework and coordinate activities; in addition, she is involved in the school’s library. At the beginning of Extract (39) Kathrin describes how the school offers a variety of projects on the topic of linguistic diversity: “overall in school so with with the whole school they are incorporated […] also demonstrating the value of the language diversity and that is what we (.) have always been doing”. Further on, Kathrin specifies her opinion and stresses that, “I have to say that it is very precious to me that they speak more languages” and reflects, “if it is hard on them I always tell them ‘I cannot [speak] two languages perfectly’”. After the interruption, the interviewer leads her back to the value of multilingualism and Kathrin repeats “that I always point out that it is just great if one can speak two languages or three”.

Extract (39) illustrates how Kathrin aims to negotiate a position of diversity and
tolerance. It thus appears that she positions herself, while emphasizing her own opinion and practices in accordance with the ideological framework. In the course of this practice, she not only positions herself, but also the school as an entity. This utterance co-constructs a view that linguistic diversity is something that should be cherished by every person in everyday life, and reinforces an ideology of equality. A further extract from the same interview illustrates similar discourses.

**Extract (40) Kathrin (paragraphs 99-102)**

Christina: ja ähm also es sind einundreißig Sprachen (.) ähm was was sehen Sie das als die größten Herausforderung an? in Bezug auf diese sprachliche Vielfalt die da da is? jetzt für weiß net Unterricht oder generell äh den den Schulbetrieb.

Kathrin: die Herausforderung? (.) naja dass ma natürlich all diese Sprachen wirklich so so wertig eben oder so wertvoll empfindet dass ma die irgendwie allen einen Stellenwert gibt das is natürlich a Wahnsinn wenn so viel verschiedene Sprachen sind dass da alle irgendwann amal äh einfach einen Platz bekommen in dieser Schule. äh i denk ma da gibts gibts a- und die Wertigkeit der Sprachen macht a natürlich viel aus. also es is a Unterschied nach wie vor ob jemand äh Spanisch als Zweisprache hat oder 'hhh äh Tschetschenisch von mir aus also so irgendwas also oder Türkisch also was einfach eher (.)

Christina: also Sie meinen da sollt ma dran arbeiten dass da-?

Kathrin: da sollte man dran arbeiten denk i ma schon also find i schon wichtig dass da die die die Wertigkeit aller Sprachen oder gleich wert sind alle Sprachen. und alle Sprachen eben a doch einen Platz haben natürlich nicht diesen diesen klarerweise weil an dieser Schule wird Deutsch unterrichtet oder is Deutsch die Unterrichtssprache also das heißt das geht natürlich net aber i denk ma ma könnte schon mehr tun.

Christina: yes uhm so there are thirty-one languages (.) uhm what what would you consider as the biggest challenge? with regard to the linguistic diversity here? now for instance I don’t know in classes or for the general operation of the school.

Kathrin: the challenge? (.) well that of course all those languages are really that that significant or perceived as precious that one somehow gives them local value that is of course insane if there are that many different languages that all somehow get space in this school. uh I think there is is a- and the value of languages makes a big difference. so there is still a difference if someone has Spanish as a second
Christina: so you mean one should work on it that-?
Kathrin: one should work on it I think so I think it is important that the the value of all languages or that all languages are equivalent. and all languages also have a place of course not this this obviously because in this school German is taught or German is the language of instruction so that means that is not possible but I think one one could do more.

This utterance reconstructs the position taken by Kathrin previously in Extract (39). Notably, Kathrin’s speech is framed in an ideological matrix on equality becoming visible in the form of stressing how every language should be seen as equal, and be given value as well as status: “[…] well that of course all those languages are really that that significant or perceived as precious that one somehow gives them local value […].” Furthermore, she directs attention towards the creation of ‘space’ for linguistic diversity: “[…] that is of course insane if there are that many different languages that all somehow get space in this school […].”

In general, the researcher begins the utterance by directing Kathrin’s attention to the linguistic diversity in her school (“[…]there are thirty-one languages[…]”) and inquires about the possible challenges it poses. Kathrin, accordingly, focuses on the ethnolinguistic diversity, and states her desire for a situation in which all languages are valued and welcomed in the school. However, she seems aware of contradictory issues such as prestige when she compares the applicability of her stance to Spanish and Chechen or Turkish.

At the end of this utterance, after repeating her position towards equality: “[…] I think it is important that the the value of all languages or that all languages are equivalent. and all languages also have a place […]”, Kathrin refers to the actual language policy of German as the dominant language. She restates that German is the language of instruction, and that other languages certainly deserve space, but can hardly take the place of German: “[…] all languages also have a place of course not this this obviously because in this school German is taught or German is the language of instruction so that means that is not possible but I think one one could do more.” In conclusion, Kathrin’s utterance in Extract (40) reproduces an ideology of equality by emphasizing her desire for a situation in which all languages are valued, and attributed both status and space within the school.
Nevertheless, a contradiction between the desired outcome and the current language education policy becomes evident in the discourse.

The previous examples illustrate how interviewees use positioning in order to co-construct discourses and ideologies. During conversations and social interactions people are always positioning themselves; they present themselves in particular ways to be perceived by others according to their actions and to protect their face. The concept of face describes how people change their positions (or their faces) like masks in order to adjust to various encounters and social situations (cf. Goffman 1956). In the context of this chapter, it is interesting to consider Goffman’s concept of face in relation to the act of self-positioning.

The following extract provides another example of positioning and reproducing an ideology of equality. Helene, a teacher of languages, demonstrates that her attitude is in line with an ideology of equality by applying stylization. In the course of the interview, Helene expresses her awareness of her pupils’ linguistic repertoires, and, moreover, mentions so-called ‘Migrantendeutsch’/‘migrant German’.

**Extract (41) Helene (paragraphs 145-150)**

Helene: haben unsere Lehrer schon gemacht und wir haben’s witzig gefunden muss ich dazu sagen i habs net schlimm gefunden. aber ich würd das net machen „hhh und i find schon dass ma versuchen sollt eben Standarddeutsch zumindest an Großteil des Unterrichts zu gestalten aber ich hab *null* Problem damit wenn Schüler im Dialekt reden. ich hab null Problem mit Migrantendeutsch. bin sogar Fan davon. weil i hab a gsehen die können switchen

Christina: Mhm

Helene: die können untereinand das beste schönste Migrantendeutsch reden (.) und dann flupp umswitchen und (.) [Standarddeutsch oder Umgangssprache

Christina: [ ja ja

Helene: so wie Phrasen wie “gehst du Billa” ((stylisiert)) das mach i sogar im ganzen Schulhaus mit einer Freundin also einer Kollegin sag i “he wo gehst du?” ((stylisiert)) und dann schauen natürlich die anderen Lehrer ein bißi bö. aber manchmal bin ich auf Provokation ((lachen))
Helene: or teachers have already done that and we found it funny I have to say I didn’t think it was bad. but I wouldn’t do that ‘hhh and I do think that one should try to use standard German at least for most of the time during lessons but I have no problem whatsoever when pupils speak in dialect. I have no problem with migrant German. I am even a fan of it. because I have seen that they can switch

Christina: mm-hmm

Helene: among themselves they can speak the best most beautiful migrant German (.) and then swoop switch and (.) [ standard German or spoken language

Christina: [ yes yes

Helene: so phrases like “you go Billa” ((stylized)) I do that even in the whole school building with a friend a colleague saying to her “hey where you go?” ((stylized)) and then sometimes of course other teachers glare at me. but sometimes I like to provoke

((laughing))

Extract (41) shows how Helene positions herself in an ideology of equality in the course of expressing an appreciation of so-called migrant German—a supposedly ‘incorrect’ form of German, which refers to a pidgin-like German that was/is used predominantly by guest workers (Gastarbeiter). Thus, Helene stylizes her own German in order to underline her positioning. Stylization has received considerable attention in sociolinguistic research of the past decade (e.g. Coupland 2007, Rampton 2009). It is described as instances in which “[…] speakers produce specially marked and often exaggerated representations of languages, dialects, and styles that lie outside their own habitual repertoire” (Rampton 2009: 149). In stylized speech, people project social personas that differ from their own and try to reproduce other people’s styles in a “strategic inauthenticity” that aims to make stereotypical associations (cf. Coupland 2007: 154).

Accordingly, Helene imitates the stereotypical language of migrants and describes her observations of migrants who are able to shift into more formal, standard-like registers. First, she states her view on language use in the classroom, focusing on dialect, and then she addresses migrant German: “I have no problem whatsoever when pupils speak in dialect. I have no problem with migrant German. I am even a fan of it. because I have seen that they can switch”. Helene mentions the pupils’ ability to shift before using stylized speech herself: “[…] so phrases like ‘you go Billa’ ((stylized)) I do that even in the whole school
building with a friend a colleague saying to her ‘hey where you go?’ ((stylized)). It is, however, unclear whether Helene is referring to her students or migrants in general with this statement. Furthermore, she describes instances in which she performs stylization and as well as the reactions of her colleagues, which reveal that this variety is not accepted or is, at least, frowned upon, when used by a person of authority. In general, Extract (41) illustrates how positioning oneself within an ideology of equality can appear in forms of discourse. Helene positions herself as open-minded to linguistic diversity at a level that includes even jargon and dialects, and she even uses stylized language herself to strengthen this position.

Thus far, it appears that teachers position themselves as part of an ideology of equality, but that they are, in fact, unsure as to how to apply the concept of equality in practice. Even though in both research and practice there are a number of multilingual approaches in schools (e.g. Blackledge & Creese 2014), teachers are often unfamiliar with such approaches or their opportunities to perform them. The following extract from my interview with Oliver demonstrates this tension between ideology and practice.

Extract (42) Oliver (paragraphs 173-174)

Christina: ähm also laut der der Statistik die i da von der Frau Professor ** bekommen hab werden in der ganzen Schule fünfunddreißig verschiedene Sprachen (. ) gesprochen oder sind eben zumindest in der Liste drinnen äh welche Herausforderungen siehst du da in Bezug auf diese diese- ist eigentlich a ziemlich große Vielfalt?

Oliver: ich glaub also die Herausforderung is bei der Vielfalt dass ma sie überhaupt annimmt. äh ich tu mir jetzt schon schwer meine ich hab sehr viel Kontakt zu meiner Klasse aber ich wüsst jetzt zum Beispiel nicht bei allen (. ) im Moment was die Erstsprache is. und ich glaub für den Lehrer die Herausforderung is zu sehen was das für ein Potential is und welche Vielfalt es überhaupt gibt ,hhh und wenn man das mal weiß also ich will jetzt nicht die Schüler mit ein Button rumschicken wo die Erstsprache drauf steht aber das Thematisieren was jetzt ein bisschen durch den sprachsensiblen Fachunterricht ein bisschen mehr in Fokus rückt is is glaub ich sehr wichtig. das Wissen darüber dass es das gibt. ich brauch jetzt keinen klassischen ich hab das mal bei einem Schüler gesehen oder is mir erzählt worden diese klassischen Projekte mit jedes Kind steht auf und sagt “ich hab diese Sprache und bei uns sagt man dazu so und so”. nicht das Verstärken der Unterschiede sondern (. ) irgendwie schauen dass ma das nützt und dass man dass
Christina: uhm so according to the statistics that I got from Mrs ** there are thirty-five different languages spoken in the whole school (.) or are at least on the list uh which challenges do you see with regard to this this pretty big diversity?

Oliver: I think the challenge with diversity is to accept it in the first place. uh it is already difficult for me my I have a lot of contact with my class but I don’t know for instance with all (.) what’s their first language at the moment. and I think the challenge for teachers is to see the potential that is there and see the actual diversity that is ’hhh and if one knows that so I don’t want pupils to run around with a button displaying their first language but to raise the issue which is now happening a bit with ‘language-aware content lessons’ a bit more in focus is is I think it’s very important. to know that it exists. I don’t need now a typical- I have seen this once with a pupil or have been told of these typical projects in which every child stands up and says “I have this language and we say this for that” and so. not reinforcing the differences but (.) somehow try to use it and that one that the the first language or that the language- the language diversity it is possible to maintain it in school and not possibly destroy it. and I think that often in school a first language that is spoken at home has no importance in school ( )

In Extract (42), Oliver emphasizes the importance of awareness and acceptance of pupils’ linguistic repertoires. This view is continuously repeated throughout his utterance: “[...] the challenge with diversity is to accept it in the first place [...]”, “[...] to see the potential that is there and see the actual diversity [...]”, “[...] to know that it exists [...]”, “[...] somehow try to use it and that one that the the first language or that the language- the language diversity it is possible to maintain it in school [...]”. He explicitly mentions language-aware content lessons (‘sprachsensibler Unterricht’), an extracurricular class which aims to incorporate learning German (as a second language) into subjects such as biology and mathematics. Furthermore, Oliver argues against possible methods of raising awareness, such as asking pupils to stand up and inform the class about their linguistic repertoires, since such a method focuses on highlighting differences. In essence, this utterance co-
constructs a discourse on an ideology of equality: first, by affirming the ethnolinguistic diversity in the school, and second, by picturing a desirable though possibly impossible outcome of linguistic equality. In addition, Extract (42) reveals the presence of certain insecurities in terms of the feasibility of adapting an ideology of equality to the school’s daily routine. Oliver—like most of the teachers I interviewed—underscores the need for language awareness, but fails to express any actual approaches for how to bring it about. This contradiction between ideology and practice is likely rooted in the overarching language education policy in Austria.

In the paragraphs below, I intend to focus on the term ‘Sprachenschatz’ (language treasure) which was frequently used by teachers in relation to the value they place on linguistic diversity. The metaphor of ‘treasure’ is used to describe pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires. Thus, teachers reproduce the notion of multilingualism as an asset, a positive and enriching skill, comparable to a treasure chest. However, pupils themselves may disagree with that view, as can be seen in Extract (44), which shows how an individual’s personal experiences come into play and may affect the language ideologies they subscribe to. Typically, multilingual pupils grow up with diverse linguistic repertoires in their daily lives, yet are nonetheless surrounded by dominant monolingual ideologies. Most teachers, on the other hand, lack similar experiences, and, therefore, resort to describing linguistic diversity from the perspective of a powerful ideology. In general, by referring to the term ‘Sprachenschatz’ teachers reproduce an ideology of equality. The following two extracts illustrate this.

Before the interview-excerpt contained in Extract (43), the researcher and Kristin had been talking about the recent increases in the diversity of her school, with Kristin listing pupils’ different countries of origin and describing the process of refugees coming to Austria and the school. The researcher, then, attempts to shift the focus towards pupils’ linguistic diversity. Kristin utters that she addresses the topic in lessons, and emphasizes the importance of perceiving linguistic diversity as a ‘treasure’. The interviewee further refers to differences in language prestige, the issue of language transmission in homes, as well as the role of schools and mother tongue education.
In this excerpt, Kristin stresses her role in communicating the importance of language maintenance and language learning in one’s first language. In this utterance, she positions herself as someone who knows what is best for multilingual individuals, namely, the acquisition of a standard variety and literacy in their home language: “[...] I think that one needs to tell the children again and again that it is very precious and that these foreign language classes that are offered in Austria ‘hhh that they should attend them and also learn the written form so that they also learn to write. uh because one can just do more with it.”

28 Please note that this extract was included in Chapter 6.2.3, but needs to be addressed here with regard to teachers’ self-positioning in the context of an ideology of equality.
learn literacy so that they also learn to write [...]”. However, in the first part, her main focus is on describing pupils’ linguistic repertoires as something valuable, something that should be protected, “[...] I always broach the issue of it because it is important to me to make it (.) uhm clear to the children that it is a treasure if one can speak more languages [...]

This example highlights an ideology of diversity in the sense that it is her goal to ensure equal opportunities for everyone. She is aware of the social differences between languages, but aims to bridge this gap. She further reproduces an idea of prestige, in which prestige is linked to parents’ language practices and language management. Thereby, Kristin implies that an ideology of equality is not present in all situations, and that, for instance, families with languages of ‘low social prestige’ are more likely to disregard this ideology.

In Extract (44), similar descriptions of prestige and linguistic repertoires emerge. In this portion of our interview, Helene describes a Kurdish-speaking acquaintance of hers, and generally talks about the Kurdish language and its prestige. At this point, it is important to mention that Helene grew up bilingual, but admitted that she scarcely perceived herself as a bilingual speaker until her adulthood.

Extract (44) Helene (paragraphs 100-112)

Helene: aber i versuch ihnen auch immer wieder bewusst zu machen dass jede Sprache ganz wichtig ist (.) auch Sprachen die halt ähm aus einem nicht so tollen Wirtschaftsraum kommen (.) also auch das Kurdische das viele auch von unseren kurdischen Kindern garnet als Schriftsprache können. die können Türkisch als Schriftsprache aber nicht Kurdisch. also es gibt welche die können Kurdisch Türkisch Deutsch. Unterricht gehens Türkisch.

Christina: ja

Helene: Kurdisch die aus der Türkei (.) die Kurden auch die erwachsenen Kurden (.) könnens schriftlich net. weder Lesen noch Schreiben weil i hab selber mal Kurdisch glernt. hab ich mal wo hingelegt und gefragt “bitte sag mir wie ma das ausspricht”. der hat geschaut (.) dann hat er nach fünf- “ah das heißt ja das” und dann ist er erst draufgekommen

Christina: mhm mhm

Helene: also es war für ihn total ungewohnt was auf Kurdisch zu lesen die Kurden aus dem Irak die können schon weil dort wars erlaubt. die können schon Kurdisch schreiben aber wir haben ausm Irak weiß i net ob ma an Kurden haben. einer unserer zwei ** is Kurde allerdings
kann der ka Kurdisch. also die sind schon nach ** eingewandert
und (.) er is da schon seine Großmutter kann noch seine Mutter ein
bissl glaub i (.) also das is also i versuch da jede Sprache net nur die
die englisch- oder französischsprachig die werden so bewundert (.)
sondern dass man da jede Sprache in den Vordergrund rücken (.) und
dass das ein Geschenk ist. hab i letztens eh zu einem gesagt der is
aus ** glaub i (.) und hab gesagt “bist zweisprachig?” “ja” erste Klasse
dann hat er gemeint
((eine andere Lehrerin blickt in den Raum, Helene grüßt sie, sie
verschwindet wieder))
Helene: dann hab i gsagt “he super das is ja ein volles Geschenk was du
bekommst eine zweite Sprache gleich am Anfang mit” dann hat er
gsagt “i hätt lieber a PlayStation”
((lachen))
Christina: ja
Helene: aber ja: gut jetzt denkt er vielleicht so vielleicht immer vielleicht nur
jetzt dann hab i gedacht “oje”
((lachen))

Helene: but I always try to make them aware that every language is
important (.) also languages that uhm come from a poorer economic
area (.) so also Kurdish in which many of our kurdish children are not
literate. they are literate in Turkish but not in Kurdish. so there are
some that are proficient in Kurdish Turkish and German. they attend
lessons in Turkish.
Christina: yes
Helene: Kurdish those from Turkey (.) the Kurds also the adult Kurds (.) are
not literate in Kurdish. neither reading nor writing because I once
learnt Kurdish myself. I once put it on the desk and asked “please tell
me how to pronounce that”. he looked (.) then after five- “ah that’s
what it means” and then he guessed
Christina: mm-hmm mm-hmm
Helene: so it was totally unfamiliar for him to read something in Kurdish
the Kurds from Iraq they know it because it was allowed there.
they can write in Kurdish but we have from Iraq I don’t know if we
have a Kurd. one of our ** is a Kurd but doesn’t know Kurdish. they
immigrated to ** and (.) he is there his grandmother can still [speak
it] his mother a little I think (.) so that is so I try every language not
only the the English- or French-speaking they get admired so much (.)
but put every language in the foreground (.) that it is a gift. recently I
said to one he is from ** I think (.) told him “are you bilingual?” “yes”
first class then he said
In this extract, Helene repeats a view of Kurdish as a less prestigious language as well as the idea that it may not be acquired by speakers to its full extent, which emerged in the previous extract (43) from my interview with Kristin. After a short tangent about her experience with a Kurdish speaker, she returns to the topic of linguistic diversity and expresses that she strives to include all languages in her classroom. Helene describes her view of a diverse linguistic repertoire as being a ‘gift’: “[...] I try every language not only the the English- or French-speaking they get admired so much (,) but put every language in the foreground (,) that it is a gift.” She then reflects on an interaction she had with one of her students, in which she characterizes his linguistic repertoire as a ‘gift’ but he apparently disagreed: “[...] then I said ‘hey great this is such a great gift that you got a second language already at the beginning’ then he said ‘I would rather have a PlayStation’ [...]”.

Evidently, an ideology of equality emerges in this discourse since Helene’s utterance underlines her intention to treat all languages equally, irrespective of their social prestige. Additionally, Helene draws on the discourse of multilingualism as an indisputable asset, regardless of the social context. Nonetheless, according to her narrative, this ideology is not shared by all of her pupils. The pupil mentioned by Helene obviously does not subscribe to the view that she herself holds.

Besides spoken discourses, an ideology of equality is also present in the visual discourses of the schools, as can be seen in the following example from the linguistic landscape of School B. Figure 8 shows a project on linguistic diversity that was carried out in 2013. In the course of this project, pupils and teachers created signs that show the word ‘Welcome’ in different languages, which hang at the entrance to the school. The language
varieties chosen were based on the data on pupils’ home languages supplied by the school at the time the signs were produced, and also includes languages taught in the school. The signs display the corresponding languages below each ‘Welcome’.

Figure 8 Linguistic landscape, example B03: Welcome signs

In general, the signs serve as a symbolic presentation of the linguistic diversity in the school and provide no further function. They are situated in the hallway of the entrance to the school, and thus, instantly receive one’s attention upon entering the school. Signs in English and German are placed at the very top, with empty signs adjacent to them. This placement seems to reflect the overall asymmetry of languages in the educational system (see Chapter 6.5). According to a teacher and the pupils I spoke to, a Latin sign had previously filled the empty pane.

During our interviews, both the teachers and pupils of School B were asked about the signs. The teachers, as well as the pupils, reproduced a discourse on the objective of the project, which was apparently to communicate an ideology of equality in the school building. This can be seen in Extract (45):
Extract (45) Pupils School B (paragraphs 547-551)

Christina: ähm ja zum Schluss hab i jetzt noch a paar (.). Fotos i bin a paar Mal durch die Schule durchgangen ähm i würd einfach gern (.). von euch was dazu hören. es gibt äh beim Eingang unten zum Beispiel diese Willkommenstafeln die gibts ja glaub ich schon schon seit drei Jahren oder so was haltets ihr von diesen Tafeln? ((zeigt ein Foto der Willkommenstafeln))

Esther: ja ich find die Idee echt schön
Anisa: ich finds eine [ sehr süße Idee
Leon: [ ich finds cool.
Shirin: [ ja ja das ist das ist sehr tolerant und sehr einladend find ich vor allem für Schüler die aus einem anderen Land kommen und noch nicht so gut Deutsch sprechen können ,hhh dann haben sie wahrscheinlich sofort das Gefühl dass sie willkommen sind und dass es nicht so schlimm is wenn sie kein Deutsch können oder so.

Christina: uhm yes at the end I just have a few (.). photos I went through the school a few times uhm I would just like (.). to hear something from you about them. there are uh at the entrance downstairs for instance those welcome signs they have been there for I think three years or so what do you think of those signs? ((shows a picture of welcome signs))

Esther: yes I think the idea is really lovely
Anisa: I think it’s a [ very cute idea
Leon: [ I think it’s cool.
Shirin: [ yes yes that is that is very tolerant and very inviting I think especially for pupils coming from another country and who are not that proficient in German ’hhh then they probably instantly have the feeling that they are welcome and that it is not that bad if they are not proficient in German or so.

Extract (45) presents a part of my group interview with pupils at School B. All of the pupils produced positive utterances about the purpose of the signs, and described them with adjectives like ‘lovely’, ‘cute’, and ‘cool’. Shirin offers an extended explanation of what she perceives as the goal of the signs: "yes yes that is that is very tolerant and very inviting I think especially for pupils coming from another country and who are not that proficient in German ‘hhh then they probably have instantly have the feeling that they are welcome and that it is not that bad if they are not proficient in German or so." In this utterance, she outlines
her idea of the intention of the signs, namely, that they should welcome students who come from other countries and are unfamiliar with German. On the one hand, Shirin’s utterance may be an honest interpretation of the signs, on the other hand, it reflects a *dialogism* (cf. Bakhtin 1981), which means that her statement appears to reproduce an utterance that has previously or generally been made. Either way, the discourse presented in Extract (45) reinforces an interpretation of the signs as a symbolic presentation of an ideology of equality. Moreover, because this ideology is manifested in both the visual and spoken discourses of the school, it is reflected by all participants in the space.

Schools, in general, operate according to an ideology of equality (cf. Milani & Jonsson 2011). Their pedagogical aim is to ensure the education of children from all social and linguistic backgrounds; therefore, children’s multilingualism or diverse home languages are not considered as obstacles. However, as made evident by examples above, some teachers go beyond a pedagogical stance and reproduce an overly positive attitude towards diversity. They describe multilingualism as a ‘treasure’ or ‘gift’ and, at the same time, position themselves as believing the same. This positioning occurs in the way interviewees describe practices of incorporating the pupils’ home languages into lessons, and how they aim to give value to those languages. They emphasize their ‘pro-diversity-stance’ by highlighting their practices in school lessons. On the topic of positioning in discourses, Bakhtin (1981) states:

> [...] there are not ‘neutral’ words and forms- words and forms that can belong to ‘no one’; [...] All words have the ‘taste’ of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions. Contextual overtones (generic, tendentious, individualistic) are inevitable in the word. (Bakhtin 1981: 293)

Bakhtin emphasizes that every utterance is shaped by the professions, people, context, and intention with(in) which and by which it is used and can, thus, never be simply neutral. Therefore, the examples provided in this section illustrate how utterances are framed and contribute to a wider ideology. Overall, the utterances reveal a discrepancy between ideology as an idea and ideology as a practice. In comparison to the *standard language ideology*, which is applied in language education policies, the *ideology of equality* serves more as a guideline or an attitude that supports the positioning of speakers in discourses.
6.4.4. Discourses on discrimination and segregation

Chapters 6.3.2 and 6.3.3 considered how participants perceive language use as a tool for exclusion, and, thereby, as a tool for the creation of in- and out-groups. This section explores further topics related to exclusion, in- and out-groups, and othering, such as segregation and discrimination. In this project, discourses on segregation and discrimination emerged in a variety of contexts. Such discourses are, in general, related to ideologies on homogeneity and equality. This section attempts to show how segregation occurs in the school and as part of the syllabus, how discrimination and segregation play out among students, and how pupils perceive discrimination and segregation. By addressing these issues, the author aims to demonstrate how discourses transport these topics and withholds from any form of judgement regarding practices in the school context.

First, this section will address forms of segregation that occur in school, both as part of the syllabus and as part of the school’s administrative requirements. Schools use various methods to split pupils into groups for educational purposes. Due to organizational requirements, pupils are divided into classes in ways that make it possible to generate convenient schedules for each class. In order to schedule Islamic religious studies lessons and enable Muslim pupils to attend them, such decisions may be made on the basis of religious affiliation, so that the Muslim pupils, for example, are placed together into one or two classes rather than being distributed evenly across all classes of an age group.

Another example of this type of segregation is a type of lesson called ‘Interkulturelles soziales Lernen (IKSL)’, which can be roughly translated as ‘intercultural social learning’. This lesson takes place at the same time as religious studies lessons; thus, pupils who do not participate in religious education attend IKSL. The following field note provides some insight into one IKSL class.

**Extract (46) field notes A3; classroom**

Interkulturelles soziales Lernen (IKSL): the class is supervised by a teacher who usually teaches German and Latin. This lesson is attended by those children who do not attend religious education but are to be supervised. Therefore, pupils from different classes are mixed. I walk to the class with pupils; on our way, one pupil tells me about this type of lesson. She says that it basically is a supervised free period and in the last few lessons they did presentations on a topic of their choice. During the observed lesson, two pupils were in charge of the lesson. They organized a drawing contest; the class was divided into two...
teams, they had to draw a given object on the blackboard and their team had to guess it right. At the end of the lesson, the teacher wants to reflect on the lesson, she summarizes which topics have been addressed in their presentations so far, which topics were excellent, and which need improvement. She discusses it with her pupils and collects suggestions for improvement, which are: being quiet, respect each other, being prepared for the task. The teacher states that the objective of IKSL is to mention topics that are not addressed in other lessons.

During the break after that lesson, I talked with the teacher. She tells me that in other classes more relevant topics have been addressed, for instance, pupils made presentations about other religions or social topics. During summer they often go to the park. She adds that besides IKSL there is also a supervised lesson for individual learning for those who do not attend religious education.

Austrian education policy mentions ‘intercultural learning’ as one of its main principles (see Chapter 3.2). The policy states that intercultural learning should guide all forms of classes. It can occur in compulsory subjects, which address topics such as culture, language, communication, and discrimination (cf. Luciak & Binder 2010: 13f.). However, in the case described in the field notes, above, intercultural learning refers to an alternative subject for a specific group of pupils. As Fleck (cf. 2003: 69) points out, by limiting intercultural learning to specific subjects, others are practically relieved of directing attention to intercultural topics. In this case, intercultural learning is not part of the school’s overall approach to education, followed by all teachers, but rather becomes one subject among many others. In addition, the subject is attended solely by non-Catholic or non-religiously affiliated pupils. As a result, this type of subject and this kind of implementation of an intercultural approach serves to divide the class and create categories among pupils. Of course, divisions of individual classes happen all over in the school, in a variety of lessons (e.g. languages, physical education, and electives); nevertheless, in this case, the division is directly linked to pupils’ religious affiliations.

Similarly, pupils are also divided when children who are less proficient in German need to attend extra classes, such as the so-called language-aware content lessons (sprachsensibler Unterricht). The idea behind language-aware content lessons is that German-language skills are incorporated into regular school subjects such as mathematics and geography, so that pupils are able to acquire subject-specific language skills (cf. Carnevale & Wojnesitz 2014). Once more, this approach is intended to provide a general guideline for all subjects, but it is currently only carried out in the form of extracurricular classes.
Extract (47) presents part of my interview with Oliver, who teaches geography and history, and is involved in language-aware content lessons. Since he is actively occupied with teaching classes and completed a teacher training on language-aware content lessons, he is not only very passionate about this topic, but also well informed and critical about its current implementation. The following extract provides some insight into his opinion.

**Extract (47) Oliver (paragraphs 101-104)**

Christina: ja ja sicher.

Oliver: das is schwer zu verkaufen teilweise wollen Schüler wirklich aufhören obwohl sie sagen es macht ihnen Spaß aber sie hätten gern die zwei Stunden mehr Freizeit. (.) is natürlich auch grad mit anderen Nebenaktivitäten wie Chor (.) ‘oder was auch immer’ Aufgaben können sie an dem Tag schwer machen. andere Schulen glaub ich integrieren den sprachsensiblen Fachunterricht in äh in andere Stunden find ich auch eine schöne Idee dass Lehrer und Lehrerinnen bereit stehen. in der Woche so wie eigentlich Englisch äh native speaker da mitgehen und hin und wieder in die Stunden mitgehen was es bei uns in der Schule überhaupt noch nicht gibt das is etabliert vom Teamteaching gemeinsam den sprachsensiblen Fachunterricht zu machen das wär irgendwie meine Vorstellung was ich für die nächsten Jahren für an sinnvollen Einsatz fast halte als man zwingt die Schüler dazu. eher man geht hin und wieder Teamteaching rein. macht dann vielleicht gezielt was mit der ganzen Klasse oder auch teilweise in Kleingruppen wenns der Unterricht eben zulässt. Schülerinnen mit nicht Deutsch als Erstsprache (.) äh mit speziellen Aufgaben oder spezieller Betreuung. ich glaub ich würd keine kein Extraklassen jetzt hat so dass mans dass man das jetzt ein bisschen ( ) dass die „ja die Ausländer haben am Nachmittag noch ihre eigene Klassen“. das hat auch teilweise zu mehr (.) Unterschieden geführt als vorher wirklich in Klassen

Christina: yes yes of course.

Oliver: it is hard to sell it because pupils really want to quit even though they say it is fun for them but they would like to have two hours more free time. (.) it is of course also with other activities such as choir (.) ‘or whatever else’ it is difficult for them to do their homework on this day. other schools I think integrate the ‘sprachsensibler Unterricht’ into uh other lessons I think that’s also a nice idea that teachers are available. during the week actually like in English uh native speakers accompany them and from time to time accompany the lessons what actually doesn’t exist at all in this school is team teaching together
In this utterance, Oliver reflects on current practices related to language-aware content lessons and describes how he imagines its ideal application. He concludes that extracurricular classes can lead to more differences between pupils, and, therefore, that this additional subject reproduces a discourse on creating separate groups through the fact that the classes are only offered after school: “[...] I think I wouldn’t now any extracurricular classes now it is just so that one that one now a little ( ) that the ‘yes the foreigners have their extra classes in the afternoon’. that has led to some extent to more (.) differences than before in classes”.

Extract (47) describes a case of segregation that involves the creation of a separate space (cf. Foucault 1995, Blommaert et al. 2005) for the group of pupils who benefit from these classes. In this case, the separation is based on the requirement that pupils attend extracurricular classes in order to improve their German in comparison to other pupils, as well as the fact that these classes are scheduled after regular lessons have concluded. I would like to stress again that the aim of this analysis is not to evaluate the worth of these classes, but rather to focus on the discourses that accompany them, such as the discourse of separating students. Undoubtedly, segregation is not the intention of language-aware content lessons. Its goals are, in fact, to include language-related topics into regular subjects and to assist pupils in achieving a sufficient level in their academic register by addressing it in classes such as chemistry, in which language is typically of less importance.

In general, segregation occurs on a top-down level, as determined by the school; however, divisions may also be initiated by the pupils in the classroom. Field notes taken in a few classes illustrate that some groups are formed and indicate that a few pupils are not particularly well integrated into their classes. For instance, some pupils joined the
class later than is usual due to their migrant backgrounds, or have a special status, such as exchange student. In one class, two pupils at School B had only recently started attending the school and joined the class. During an informal conversation, their teacher expressed that the pupils had been living in Austria for about three years. The following field notes from two separate days describe how the students’ position in the class was perceived as well as how the teachers interacted with them.

**Extract (48) field notes B5; classroom**

Tuesday: German class with Mrs ** who is also the form teacher of the class. The class finishes a topic on language change. Then they start with a different topic: the text ‘Der arme Heinrich’ by Goethe in Middle High German. Pupils are told to read the text in turns out loud. When it’s Jelena’s turn to read she has a slight accent in her German while reading out loud. Then students need to fill in an exercise on their own; meanwhile, the teacher walks around the classroom. Mrs ** asks Jelena if everything is all right and starts a conversation with her. Afterwards, the teacher tells me that Jelena and another pupil have only been living in Austria for about three years; considering the whole week I spent in this class, it appears to me that both pupils are not that well integrated in the class.

Thursday: General observations about the class: Like Jelena, Albina entered the class at a later date. I overheard another female student talking to a teacher about Albina, saying that, “she avoids talking in class and has only said two sentences this year”. The student articulated that she found that very peculiar. Also, the teacher asked the student about Albina.

These field notes illustrate how two students who are perceived as different than the rest of the class—due to their migrant backgrounds and the fact that they entered the class later than other students—become segregated in discourse. The field notes from Tuesday reveal that Jelena receives special attention from the teacher, who addresses her more intensely than any other pupils during the class. Additionally, the teacher informed the researcher about the students’ backgrounds without my having inquired about any further information on them. The field notes taken on Thursday note a conversation between a teacher and a student in the class as they spoke about another student, Albina, and discuss the fact that Albina seldom talks in class. Thus, it appears that Albina’s silence and the circumstances of her entry into the class have led others to perceive her as intentionally avoiding becoming part of the class. Similar to pupils who start attending a school later than is normal, exchange students are also placed in particular positions. On the one hand,
exchange students are new to the class’s community, and, on the other hand, they usually have a language barrier since most of them are not proficient in German. According to my observations, in this case, either a student from the class is willing to approach the exchange student in English, or the student generally remains excluded from conversations. In general, my observations in these classes are insufficient to determine whether or not discrimination against or segregation of these two students occurs. Nonetheless, they demonstrate the presence of discourses on segregation and discrimination in the school.

Moving on, the following excerpt shows how a group of pupils and the interviewer co-constructed a discourse on discrimination. In it, the interviewees reproduce utterances about their own experiences with discrimination, as well as their opinions on that topic, and thereby reconstruct a general discourse on discrimination in Austria. Extract (49) comes from my group interview with pupils of School B.

**Extract (49) Pupils School B (paragraphs 477-496)**

Christina: i mein i hab mitkriegt dass es hin und wieder so rassis- also es gibt da die die Schule engagiert si ja gegen Rassismus auch offen. aber dass es halt schon hin und wieder so a paar rassistische Konflikte a gibt so wo halt dann “scheiß Muslime” [ irgendwie beschimpft werden

Esther: [ ja

Anisa: [ ja

Christina: und so-

Anisa: aber ich muss dann irgendwie sagen dass meistens eher Österreicher sind die (.) Ausländer (.) irgendwie blöd anmotzen.

Christina: ok

Anisa: zum Beispiel eben das mit den Schimpfwörtern also bei mir in der Klasse kennt fast also es sind nur österreichische Jungs die können ganz viele bosnische Schimpfwörter. aber ich hab doch schon öfter gsa- ghört wie sie gsagt haben “ja scheiß Jugos” so auf die Art. und dann wird man nicht- ist man doch schon bissi beleidigt bei so was.

Christina: ja

Anisa: weil auf die Art für die Schimpfwörter is man gut genug aber für den Rest nicht.

Christina: ja

Shirin: ja also ich hab das irgendwie nicht wirklich bemerkt an unserer Schule dass irgendwo solche Konflikte gegeben hat. nur was mir aufgefallen is halt wie die Anisa schon gesagt hat dass es eher die
Österreicher sind, dass sie sich mehr trauen sowas zu sagen, und bei
 den Ausländern is es halt so wenn sie über Österreicher oder über
 andere Kulturen reden dann machen sie das eher auf ihrer eigenen
 Sprache.

Christina: mhm
Shirin: “kommt mir so vor“
Esther: und ich find halt dass (.) Ausländer sich untereinander eher verstehen
 wenn sie (.) wenn sie wie soll ich das jetzt sagen? also Österreich
 beschimpfen ja Ausländer als Ausländer und Ausländer reden dann
 über Österreicher und Österreicher reden halt über alle Kulturen jetzt
da. und die Ausländer verstehen sich halt dann untereinander besser.

Anisa: es ist ja auch oft so dass man als Österreicher oft a bissi privilegiert is.
aus allein entweder eben vom Aussehen her oder vom Namen her, dass
 sie dann dass mans doch schon merkt dass die dann eben teilweise
 bevorzugt werden oder so [ jetzt nicht
Christina: [ mhm im Unterricht meinst du?
Anisa: nicht unbedingt im Unterricht sondern eher im allgemeinen Leben.
Christina: ach so ja.
Anisa: und dass ma das- also mir kommt auch oft vor dass auch deswegen
 auch die ganzen Ausländer oft ja zusammenhalten. so auf die Art. ja
((Esther nickt))

Christina: I mean I did notice that there are once in a while so racis- well there
 are the the school openly campaigns against racism. but that there are
 still once in while so racist conflicts in which so “fucking Muslims”
 [ somehow are insulted
Esther: [ yes
Anisa: [yes
Christina: and so-
Anisa: but I need to say somehow that usually these are more Austrians that
 (.) somehow stupidly bark at (.) foreigners.
Christina: ok
Anisa: for instance, the thing with swear words well in my class nearly
everyone knows well these are only Austrian boys that know a lot
of Bosnian swear words. but I have still often sai- heard them saying
“fucking Yugos” like that. and then one is not- one gets a bit offended
by that.

Christina: yes
Anisa: because it’s kind of like one is good enough for swear words but not for the rest.
Christina: yes
Shirin: yes well I haven’t noticed that really in our school that there have been such conflicts. what I just noticed is that like Anisa already said that these are rather Austrians. that they dare to say such a thing. and with foreigners it is just like if they talk about Austrians or other cultures then they do it in their own language.
Christina: mm-hmm
Shirin: ‘I think so’
Esther: and I think that (.) foreigners get along better with each other if they (.) if they how should I say it? so Austrians insult foreigners as foreigners right and foreigners then talk about Austrians and Austrians just talk about all other cultures now. and foreigners then get along better.
Anisa: often it is also that as an Austrian one is a bit privileged. just either from their looks or their names. that they then that one sees that they are partly favored or so [ not now
Christina: [mm-hmm you mean during lessons?
Anisa: not necessarily during lessons but rather in society overall.
Christina: ah right yes.
Anisa: and that one tha- well I find that often also because of that foreigners often hold together. in that way. yes ((Esther nods))

In Extract (49), the interviewer initiates the discourse by providing the example of a recent racist incident that happened in the school. I mention how the school openly advocates against racism, but also that I am aware that slurs such as ‘scheiß Muslime’ (‘fucking Muslims’) are used at times. With this statement, I am referring to a situation that occurred during my observations, in which the class discussed a particular case of verbal abuse. After agreeing with the interviewer’s utterance, Anisa carefully points out the agents in that discourse with, “but I need to say somehow that usually these are more Austrians that (.) somehow stupidly bark at (.) foreigners.”

Anisa continues by talking about the Austrian boys in her class who use Bosnian swear words, while, at the same time, they insult pupils with a Bosnian background. Shirin agrees with Anisa’s comment on the agents involved, but is again very careful in pointing
to a particular group: “[…] what I just noticed is that like Anisa already said that these are rather Austrians. that they dare to say such a thing […]”. She further notes that if foreigners say something about ‘other cultures’ they use their ‘own’ language. Shirin thus expands the agents as she contemplates that there is not a clear distinction between the two groups—Austrians and foreigners—since both have the potential to use the same methods, but do so in slightly different ways (please also refer to Chapter 6.3.2).

Next to speak up, Esther explains the categories and practices of insulting one another, “[…] Austrians insult foreigners as foreigners right and foreigners then talk about Austrians and Austrians just talk about all other cultures now. and foreigners then get along better.” Esther concludes that, through the creation of these categories, a sense of group identity is formed.

From the beginning of this extract, two opposing groups were co-constructed: those who generate insults and those who are insulted. In the course of the utterance, a discourse on discrimination emerges, that revolves around ‘Austrians versus foreigners’, regardless of the exact definition of the latter. The participants reproduced general discourses on discrimination: categorizations, agents of categorizing and insulting, as well as further impacts of discrimination. In general, this extract describes the process of categorization as one that creates solidarity and leads to the upkeep of discourses on differences.

At this point, I would like to include a similar example from School A, in which the pupils reflect on discriminatory behavior in connection with their teachers’ language use.

**Extract (50)** Pupils School A (paragraphs 94-143)

| Christina: | (.) ok ähm wie schauts im Unterricht aus? also wissen die Lehrer dass ihr noch andere Sprachen könnts? |
| Aneta: | ja |
| Sara: | eigentlich schon |
| Daria: | eigentlich schon |
| ((allgemeines Nicken)) |
| Christina: | und? |
| Aneta: | Hauptsache alle Lehrer wissen weil wegen meinem Namen weil so *schwer* zum Aussprechen ist |
| ((lachen)) |
| Aneta: | ich hasse das |
Daria: ((führt noch andere Beispiele an wie Anetas Name ausgesprochen wird))

Aneta: *niemand* kann das aussprechen echt. und dann “woher kommst du denn?” ja so is es

Christina: äh tun die das dann in den Unterricht a so miteinbeziehen so weiß net an Vergleich machen [ oder fragen sie?

Sara: [ ja manchmal

Daria: ja ganz am Anfang glaub ich [ war das

Sara: [ ja in Deutsch

Aneta: in *Deutsch* genau

Miray: wen habts in Deutsch?

Sara, Aneta & Daria: "Name"

((lachen))

Christina: also die bezieht dann das Rumänische oder?

Daria: nein also nicht nicht unbedingt Rumänisch-

Aneta: sie-

Daria: Sprachen anderer Leute die halt eine andere Muttersprache [ haben allgemein.

Christina: [ ok.

Daria: ja

((kichern))

Christina: sonst noch irgend a Lehrer?

Sara: ja schon mehrere. (.) sie erwähnens immer wieder

Daria: ja aber es is nix Böses [ gmeint oder so

Sara: [ nein.

Aneta: im "school" war auch (.) eine Deutschlehrerin gewesen die hat mich wegen den *Noten* irgendwie. ja wegen meiner Sprache hat sie mir immer so schlechte Noten geben aber ja.

Daria: ‘es gibt (‘)

Aneta: es gibt Leute und Leute

Christina: und das is wahrscheinlich mehr so im Sprachenunterricht einfach? [ Englisch oder Deutsch?

Aneta: [ ja

Christina: aber in so Physik oder Mathe [ da?

Sara: [ na ((schüttelt den Kopf))

Christina: ok
Aneta: sprechen die alle die selbe Sprache

Enise: aber die Deutschlehrer hier. also meine ich sag halt. die sollten schon berücksichtigen dass unsere Muttersprache eben nicht Deutsch ist und SO vielleicht benoten

Sara: es is so strenge

Enise: also wie ich sag nicht dass sie mir irgendwie immer Einser geben soll oder so. aber (. ) meine Lehrerin vergleicht immer die Schularbeiten ja voll ja voll

Enise: wenn sie vergleicht dann sieht man dass ich ja schlecht bin. also ich hab ja nicht die Deutsch- also ich hab. meine Muttersprache ist Türkisch. zuhause sprech ich auch nur Türkisch und in der Schule hab ich nur Deutsch gelernt

Christina: ja

Enise: deshalb bin ich eben auch nicht so gut wie die anderen also die eben Deutsch als Muttersprache haben so gutes Deutsch und wenn sie jetzt die Schularbeiten vergleicht

Sara: ja voll

Enise: bin ich eben schlecht und hab dann eben die schlechteste Note ((lachen))

Christina: ok uhm how about lessons? so the teachers know that you speak other languages?

Aneta: yes

Sara: actually yes

Daria: actually yes

((general nodding))

Christina: and?

Aneta: mainly all teachers know because of my name because its so difficult to pronounce

((laughing))

Aneta: I hate that

Daria: ((Daria gives examples of different pronunciations of Aneta’s name))

Aneta: no one can pronounce it really. and then “where are you from?” yeah that’s how it is

Christina: uh do they then incorporate it into lessons so I don’t know make comparisons or do they ask?

Sara: yes sometimes

Daria: yes so right at the beginning I think it was
Sara: in German class exactly
Aneta: who is your teacher?
Miray: who is your teacher?
Sara, Aneta & Daria: "name"
((laughing))
Christina: so she incorporates Romanian or?
Daria: no so not necessarily Romanian-
Aneta: she-
Daria: languages of other people who have a different mother tongue [ in general.
Christina: [ ok.
Daria: yes
((chuckling))
Christina: and other teachers?
Sara: yes several they mention it over and over
Daria: yes but they don’t mean it in a bad way [ or so
Sara: [ no.
Aneta: in "school" there was also a German teacher who did because of the grades. yes because of my language she always gave me worse grades but yes.
Daria: “there are ()"
Aneta: there are people and people
Christina: and this happens probably more in language classes? [ English or German?
Aneta: [ yes
Christina: but so in physics or maths there?
Sara: [ no ((shakes her head))
Christina: ok
Aneta: [ all speak the same language
Enise: [ but the German teachers here. so I may just say. they should consider that our mother tongue is not German and like THAT [maybe grade
Sara: [ it is so strict
Enise: so like I don’t want to say that they should always give ones ((the highest grade)) or so. but (.) my teacher always compares essays-
Sara: yes absolutely [ yes absolutely
Enise: [if she compares then one sees that I am bad at it. well I just don’t have the German- well I have. my mother tongue is Turkish. at home I only speak Turkish and I have only learnt German in school

Christina: yes

Enise: that’s why I am not as good as the others well those with German [ as mother tongue so good German and if she now compares the essays

Sara: [yes absolutely

Enise: then I am bad at it and then I get the worst mark ((laughing))

Extract (50) begins with the interviewer asking the pupils about language use during lessons, and assuming that the pupils’ teachers are aware of their diverse linguistic repertoires. However, in Aneta’s subsequent reply, a discourse on discrimination initiated by teachers emerges. She states that teachers are attentive because of her name: “mainly all teachers know because of my name because it’s so difficult to pronounce” (see discussion above in Chapter 6.4.2). The researcher then reframed the question to whether teachers incorporate the interviewee’s linguistic diversity, and thus, sparked a discourse on linguistic differences. Furthermore, the interviewer asks precisely about the incorporation of Romanian or other languages. Consequently, the participants co-construct a discourse on teachers’ practices of incorporating or addressing the pupils’ linguistic repertoires. While Sara says that teachers mention it repeatedly, Aneta describes a German teacher who marked her work with lower grades due to her language proficiency: “in school was also (. ) a German teacher who did because of the grades somehow. yes because of my language she always gave me worse grades but yes.” Aneta thus emphasizes the connection between her language practices and her teacher’s discriminatory behavior.

Subsequently, Enise reacts to Aneta’s story and takes up the position that teachers should consider their multilingual linguistic repertoires. She tells of her personal experience with a teacher who discriminated against her with regard to her performance in German classes:

“but the German teachers here. so I may just say. they should consider that our mother tongue just is not German and like THAT maybe grade […] so like I don’t say that they should always give ones ((the highest grade)) or so. but (. ) my teacher
always compares essays- [...] if she compares then one sees that I am bad at it. well I just don’t have the German- well I have. my mother tongue is Turkish. at home I only speak Turkish and in school I have only learnt German [...] that’s why I am not as good as the others well those who have German as mother tongue so good German and if she now compares the essays [...] then I am bad at it and then I get the worst mark”.

Enise narrates a situation in which her proficiency in German is compared to that of other students, whose first language is German, which leads to unfair treatment, in her opinion. This interview excerpt reproduces a discourse on language proficiency and discrimination. When discussing the possibility of incorporating the pupils’ home languages into lessons, the pupils refer to situations which do not reflect multilingual practices, but rather focus on a common objective of schools, that is, to further their pupils’ academic success. In Extract (50), the pupils claim their desire to be successful in school; however, teachers appear to focus on their lack of language skills in German. These utterances illustrate that the teachers’ awareness of the pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires is framed in an ideological matrix on performance in the educational context.

In addition, this excerpt reproduces practices of an ideology of equality when students reflect on how they are treated in German classes. Pupils are evaluated equally, meaning that all of the students’ essays are marked in comparison with the others’ performance. The intention behind this is, supposedly, to treat everyone equally; however, the teacher presumably acts in accordance with a monolingual bias (cf. Grosjean 2008), following a colorblind ideology. The colorblind ideology “presumes or asserts a race-neutral social context (e.g. race does not matter here)” (Lewis 2001: 800). In this context, the focus lies on the implications of a migrant background, and the colorblind ideology is applied in the fact that teachers grade based on a comparison between pupils’ performances. According to their utterances, the students perceive this process as unfair with regard to their multilingual repertoires.

Essentially, Extract (50) reproduces a discourse on discrimination by teachers and the grading process, which appears to be a significant issue for the interviewees. During the group interview, no other forms of discrimination or segregation came up, but a general discourse on academic success and performance emerges.

To conclude this section, discrimination and segregation are issues that arise in the
general discourses within schools, and they suggest further societal discourses. Segregation appears on the level of school authorities as well as in the classrooms themselves. Discrimination is reproduced by pupils as a way of categorizing and dividing students. What comes into play here are processes of othering, an ideology of equality, as well as a colorblind ideology. Furthermore, students reflect on how discriminatory behavior is put into practice and how it may affect their social relations and academic success in school.

To conclude Chapter 6.4’s look at discourses on diversity, I will summarize the main points. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the term ‘diversity’ was introduced by the researcher in the context of linguistic diversity since it seemed to be a suitable term to describe the multilingual repertoires of pupils with migrant backgrounds, since both the terms ‘migrant’ and ‘migrant background’ often have negative connotations. Diversity was, however, further used in the interviews to designate pupils with migrant backgrounds, or pupils who have a first language other than German. Consequently, the term diversity replaced terms such as ‘migrants’ and became in itself an application of colorblind mechanisms (cf. Bonilla-Silva 2002, Malsbary 2016, Lewis 2001). Even though most pupils are not first- or even second-generation immigrants to Austria, they are still seen as migrants due to the fact that their families immigrated to Austria, and due to other signs of ‘otherness’. According to the presented utterances, participants detect signs of diversity in the names, looks, cultural affiliations, and religions of pupils, as well as their affiliations with particular countries. On the basis of noticing these signs, practices of othering and categorization occur. Schools also follow an ideology of equality in the way that they attempt to treat everyone equally. This ideology of equality emerges in the excessively positive attitude towards diversity that came across in the teachers’ utterances. Teachers tend to position themselves in their discourse as tolerant, open-minded, and encouraging of linguistic diversity in their practices. At the same time, practices of discrimination and segregation still occur.

In general, discursive constructions of discrimination and segregation are part of a wider discourse on categorizing and othering. Thus, the ways in which students reproduce issues of discrimination in their utterances are of importance. Their utterances show the significance of accepting their linguistic repertoires with regard to their academic success, as well as the importance of being aware that inequality in society as a whole has an impact on their lives.
6.5. Asymmetries of languages

6.5.1. Overview

This chapter focuses, first, on the manifestation of languages in spaces, and, second, on emerging asymmetries of languages. With relation to social contexts, discourses create an inherent connection between languages and space. On the one hand, languages become visible through interaction, and, on the other hand, discourses are created through forms of text in various spaces. The issue of space as something that is generated in social dimensions has been addressed by Foucault (1980) and Lefebvre (1991). Based on their theoretical input, Chapter 6.5.2 will present examples of the linguistic landscapes of both schools, which are related to the visibility of languages and correlations between language and space inside the schools. Subsequently, Section 6.5.3 addresses the hierarchies of prestige (cf. Liddicoat 2013) that result from discourses on prestige, the connection with space, visibility, and power relations. Overall, differences in the space allotted to particular languages and the emergence of language hierarchies work to reveal how asymmetries between languages become manifested discursively, and, as a consequence, provide evidence of prevalent language ideologies as well as practices of de facto language policies.

6.5.2. The visibility of languages

According to a poststructuralist framework, spaces are socially constructed and inherently linked with notions of power (cf. Foucault 1980). The idea of space draws on social conditions and considers spaces to be immaterial; in other words, spaces are formed through practices. Correspondingly, a space is established through interactions, it is a sphere of heterogeneity and always in the process of change (cf. Massey 2005: 9). Furthermore, there is not one exclusive social space, but rather, the social space consists of a multiplicity of spaces, which again influence one another (cf. Lefebvre 1991: 86).

Chapter 6.3, on the social functions of languages, previously introduced the topic of space in the sense that school breaks, for instance, are discerned as places in which the use of home languages is tolerated, whereas using them in a different place—the classroom
or in a closed group—evokes different, more negative, associations. Language use is thus confined to spaces, in which it is socially acceptable. This implies that schools are spaces in which the social language is predominantly limited to the languages of the curriculum, and, primarily, the language of instruction; as a consequence, there is confined space for pupils whose linguistic repertoires exceed the variety of school languages. Space and context set rules and expectations of how to employ language in it (cf. Blommaert et al. 2005: 203). The following examples demonstrate that the affiliation of a particular space with particular languages is discursively constructed and manifested in the physical space. Moreover, they reveal how spaces are created inside the school.

In general, the linguistic landscape reveals that home languages—as their name implies—are barely visible in the school space, and their use is mostly limited to spaces associated with privacy such as the family or the neighborhood. Nonetheless, Figures 9-12 present places in the school in which pupils’ home languages appear.

Figure 9 Linguistic landscape, example B85: ‘Unsere Ziffern in verschiedenen Sprachen/Our numbers in different languages’

Figure 9 shows a sheet of paper with a table listing the numbers zero through nine in German, French, Bosnian/Croatian, Albanian, and Khmer. The sheet was found on a
board with posters from projects, as well as general notifications and rules in one lower secondary classroom. Based on the differences in writing styles and pens used, we can deduce that the table was filled in by various pupils.

**Figure 10** Linguistic landscape, example A15: ‘Wir sind eine Gemeinschaft/We are a community’

Figure 10 presents a poster that was found on the door of one classroom, which presents a map of the world with the title ‘We are a community’. Surrounding the world map, names and greetings have been written in different languages and scripts. Beneath the greetings, the relevant language has been written in brackets, with the following selection found counterclockwise around the poster (spelling according to the text on the poster): Servus (Styrian), Zrdravo (Serbian), Buongiorno (Italian), He (unrecognizable), Thai, Merhaba (Turkish), Mir dita (Albanian), 你好 (Chinese), and Barev (Armenian in latin script).

Figures 9 and 10 provide evidence of pupils’ home languages becoming visible in open spaces. They were found in places that are usually subject to teachers’ control, in the sense that pupils are not allowed to hang something on the classroom door unless they have permission to do so. Both posters appear to have been initiated by teachers as a classroom activity to address the variety of home languages.

Despite the examples above, home languages are predominantly found in places that can be considered ‘private’, similar to what Brown (2012: 287) denominates niches. Based
on her study of minority languages in an Estonian school, Brown (cf. 2012: 287) defines *niches* as ideological places in which languages take up a limited set of places, such as the classroom, foyer, and the school museum. In the scope of this project, *niches* are seen as places, in which students are the primary agents with access to the place and where pupils tend to use language in a creative way. These are places like pupils’ desks, pupils’ lockers, student bathrooms, and some other marginal places in the school. The following example illustrates how pupils use *niches* in order to bring their home languages into the school space.

*Figure 11* Linguistic landscape, example A06: lyrics in Turkish on a pupil’s desk.

Figure 11 portrays the scribbled lyrics of a Turkish song on a pupil’s desk. Desks are a pupil’s designated or chosen place to sit. They serve as places where one can communicate with peers, take notes, or be creative. According to the pupil who produced this example, she and her friend enjoy scrawling the lyrics of their favorite songs. In addition, they sometimes speak Turkish to one another during breaks and shared classes. In this case, the two friends are showing off their common home language in the school space by consciously using it and creating a space for it, in the form of written text.
In contrast, Figure 12 shows that pupils also place their home languages in public spaces, without the consent of a teacher. During a break in which the researcher spent some time in the hallway, pupils produced the above text on the blackboard. The teacher holding the following lesson ignored the text on the blackboard, and neither inquired as to who had generated it nor asked for a translation. She simply requested the students clean the blackboard in order to proceed with her lesson.

Figure 12 illustrates how students occasionally claim other spaces than *niches*. Generally, the blackboard is a place that is occupied by teachers and used as an instrument to communicate essential content related to school subjects. At times, however, pupils might use blackboards to be creative, scribble, or convey messages. This demonstrates that spaces are constantly under construction, negotiated, and used in whichever form is required of them. Furthermore, this example provides insight into the power relations of the school since the message on the blackboard is intended to convey a specific meaning. It was intentionally placed on the blackboard, which is typically regarded as a place in school that is reserved for the use of teachers. Thus, power relations are challenged by the pupils producing text in an exceptional language and script, in a space beyond their reach. In addition, it illustrates that pupils use their linguistic repertoires in creative ways (cf. Busch 2012, Li 2011) since their linguistic resources have been applied productively by mixing words and letters from two (or more) languages. The sentence МИ СМО СОЦИАЛИСТИ
‘we are socialists’) is written in Serbian, whereas the words Привет (‘hello’) and Россия (‘Russia’) are a mixture of Serbian and Russian.

Moving on, the following examples illustrate the opposing case of the visualization of a school language, such as English, in the school’s linguistic landscape. Some examples of the visibility of English have already been addressed in Chapter 6.3.6 in relation to the issue of English as a global and international language.

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**Figure 13** Linguistic landscape example B41: ‘Graphene – the perfect atomic lattice’, poster in the Physics classroom of School B, pinned on a board next to other posters in English.

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**Figure 14** Linguistic landscape example A11: ‘Hi I’m Sandra and I am in Klass 9b’, scribble on the wall of a toilet cabin (note regarding privacy: there is no class 9b).

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**Figure 15** Linguistic landscape example B50: ‘When your teacher says “pick a partner” but you’re nihilistic so you chose death...’, scribble on a pupil’s desk.
Figure 13 shows a similar poster to that presented in Chapter 6.3.6, found on the board of a physics classroom. This poster was produced by external sources, and, according to a teacher, is used as decoration rather than for teaching. This and similar examples of English posters in schools reiterate the dominance of English as the language of science (cf. Ammon 2001). Figures 14 and 15 both depict texts produced by pupils in private spaces, such as a bathroom wall and a pupil’s desk. Both display longer forms of text in English, whereas a variety of further linguistic landscape examples contain single words or abbreviations in English.

On the whole, this selection of examples showing English in school spaces emphasizes the omnipresence of English in the linguistic landscapes of the schools. In addition to the number of examples, different spaces, both private niches and public places, are employed, which represents the power of English in the school space. Furthermore, it reflects how English is manifested in the school’s discourses even though neither school has a bilingual program.

It is important to remember that distinct spaces are created socially within the school building. Teachers dominate public places since they have authority to decide, for example, what to hang in the school’s hallways or on notice boards. In contrast, pupils occupy so-called niches, private places where students employ their home languages and use language in a creative and explorative manner. Even though pupils’ home languages are generally more visible in private places, some spaces are created for them and serve a symbolic function (see Figure 8 above).

The linguistic landscapes of both schools can be described as heterogeneous and dynamic in that they reveal the pupils’ linguistic diversity and reproduce the power relations that are manifested in the space. As such, the assignment of certain languages to certain spaces, on the one hand, depicts the power of more prestigious languages and the language of instruction, while on the other hand, it also underlines the invisibility of pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires. Occasionally, as illustrated by Figure 12, speakers claim spaces for themselves, and thus, contest restrictions to their space as well as the ongoing power relations.
6.5.3. Hierarchy of languages

This chapter addresses topics that inherently reproduce a hierarchy among languages. The hierarchical order of languages became apparent in the data presented in Chapter 6.2 on the normativity of language competencies and multilingualism, in Chapter 6.3 on the social functions of languages, and in Chapter 6.4 on discourses on diversity. In general, the data presented in the previous chapters articulates a discourse on the ideological positioning of languages in the common discourse and refer to a prevailing discourse on the positioning of languages in the school context. As a result, a discourse on usefulness and functionality emerges, which confirms the dominance of the academic register, standard German, and other languages found on the syllabus. In contrast, discourses on home languages are often associated with negative practices, such as exclusion and group formation, but are also considered in relation to a positive attitude towards social diversity.

Certain conclusions drawn in the previous chapters can be explained by looking at the concept of *hierarchies of prestige*, which describes languages and their ecologies, “[...] the various languages present are in mutually influencing relationships. Moreover, these ecologies are not ecologies of equal members but rather are subject to hierarchies of prestige. That is, some languages are more successful in their ecologies than others.” (Liddicoat 2013: 5). Thus, languages that are present in one space affect the positions of others in terms of a hierarchical order and with reference to their ecology.

Liddicoat refers to the idea of language ecologies (cf. Mühlhäusler 2000) and an understanding of languages as applied in a market setting (cf. Bourdieu 1991). Accordingly, the significance of a language depends on how desirable that language is in a particular marketplace, which then carries consequences for that language’s prestige, value, and language ideologies:

 [...] in any society, the language variety of the dominant group will have more value and prestige than other varieties. These hierarchical differences between languages are not trivial, as they are bound up with ideological and cultural constructions, which attribute greater value to large, successful, dominant languages and lesser value to smaller, minority languages. (Liddicoat 2013: 5).

Hierarchical differences are connected to ideological constructions and differences of value, and, thus, have an influence on mechanisms of language planning in education.
With regard to schools, hierarchies of prestige are reproduced in both spoken and visual discourses, and in official language education policies. Looking at both points relating to language in the Austrian language education policy and data gathered in this project, the following hierarchy can be detected:

1. Academic German
2. Standard German and English
3. School languages (French, Latin, Spanish)
4. Home languages (unequally school languages)

Thus, Academic German is considered the most prestigious and valued language variety in both the school context and Austrian language education policies. It is followed by standard German and English. English is positioned at the same level as standard German due to the fact that it is framed in participants’ utterances as an international language that is crucial for general communication. In addition, according to Austrian language education policy, great emphasis is placed on achieving high levels of English in school:

As in most other Council of Europe member states, the teaching of English dominates to the extent of sometimes seeming to be synonymous with foreign language teaching. With the exception of arrangements that have been made for autochthonous minorities and migrants, whenever discussion focuses on early-start language learning it tends to focus exclusively on English. (ÖSZ et al. 2009: 88).

Following German and English come school languages that are part of the syllabus and labeled as ‘foreign languages’. Since school languages are used in schools on a daily basis, they receive certain privileges in the sense that their use is readily acceptable and even encouraged. Even though—as mentioned in Chapter 3.2—a wide variety of languages are included in the syllabus, schools tend to choose highly prestigious Indo-European languages, which are also embedded in the history of the educational system. The schools investigated in this study conform to the majority of Austrian schools; correspondingly,

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29 Since schools vary in terms of their language policies, hierarchies of prestige may depend on the circumstances of different schools. For instance, the role and prestige of minority languages may vary to a great extent depending on the engagement of schools; as such, there are some schools in Austria which promote bilingualism and bilingual teaching in minority languages such as Slovene (in Carinthia) or Czech (in Vienna).
they offer foreign languages such as English, French, Spanish, or Italian. Among these foreign languages, English receives the most attention and the highest visibility in the school, which is why it is placed separately in the hierarchy.

Pupils’ home languages can be positioned on the lower end of the hierarchy, after school languages (e.g. English or French). Their position can be justified, first, by their virtual exclusion from the school syllabus, and second, by discourses which suggest that their use in schools is associated with negative functions (see 6.3), and third, by their invisibility in public places in the school buildings (see 6.5.2). The visibility of languages in certain spaces in the school was discussed in the previous chapter, while the meaning of that visibility in reference to a hierarchy of prestige will be examined in this chapter. As has been noted, certain places are reserved for certain languages; public places are designated for languages from the top of the hierarchy, while languages at the lower end are located in private places. Texts produced in pupils’ home languages are, in general, found in private places, whereas, texts produced by authority figures are encountered in more public places and produced in official school languages. Indeed, some counterexamples show the presence of different languages in public places; however, these are primarily intended to illustrate diversity, internationality, and to convey other symbolic meanings.

A hierarchy of languages naturally relates to issues of symbolic power (cf. Bourdieu 1991: 164ff.) and raises questions such as who is allowed to produce text in which language in which context, and who is allowed to use which language in which context? The following examples illustrate the interplay of power between different agents (teachers as well as pupils) and space. Figures 16 and 17 both present similar phenomena: both images show a wall that has been used by pupils to display forms of text. However, Figure 16 shows a space that has been officially dedicated to that purpose, whereas Figure 17 depicts a space created for that purpose by pupils themselves.
The so-called *Kritzelwand* was designated as a space for pupils’ free and creative use by authority figures at School A. When this initiative was addressed in my interviews with pupils, they explained that they only used the Kritzelwand at a younger age, and usually limited their writing on this wall to trivial information. What is most interesting from the utterances concerning this wall is that the students stated that the Kritzelwand—a place where pupils can supposedly be creative and do anything—nonetheless places restrictions on the way that pupils can express themselves. First, pupils may be scolded for using materials such as spray paint, and second, teachers regularly interfere with the creative process by erasing and re-adorning the wall themselves.

In contrast, part of a wall at School B, visible in Figure 17, has been established as a creative space by the students themselves. This wall is located in a hallway that is widely used by students and teachers, but rarely seen by parents or people outside of the school context since it is located on the margins of the school building. Thus, the location can be considered quite constricted and private. The wall contains text in English and German, abbreviations, names, curses, drinking jokes, et cetera, and was obviously not designated for this purpose, but rather taken over by pupils themselves. In essence, it shows similar
forms of text as the wall in Figure 16, however, the initiative behind the scribbles and the application of text differ significantly.

Figure 17 Linguistic landscape example B28: wall next to lockers

The hierarchy of languages that emerges through these images of the linguistic landscape and as presented in the spoken discourses accords to a great extent with the general language education policy in Austria. As a consequence, discourses relating to this hierarchy have been internalized, and are repeatedly reproduced and strengthened. This hierarchy concerns the prestige and value of languages, and, furthermore, determines what is seen as ‘legitimate’ in the school. Milani (2007: 114), who investigates public language debates in Sweden, notes with regard to schools in Sweden that “[…] Swedish is presented as the only legitimate resource in the public space of the school, while all other languages
are dismissed as inappropriate, and thus devalued.” Similarly, in the context of the schools investigated in this project, this quotation could equally be applied to German.

Moreover, a hierarchy fosters the connection between language and power, referring to Bourdieu’s poststructuralist concepts of linguistic capital and symbolic power. Applying Bourdieu’s notion that linguistic capital fosters access to powerful domains, Blackledge (2005) explains that “this is not, as is sometimes suggested, a question of ‘more’ or ‘less’ linguistic capital, but of different linguistic capital having different power in different domains” (Blackledge 2005: 208). Thus, language dominance is a result of power structures. Essentially, power structures are not based on one side being the dominant and the other being oppressed, but on the fact that the oppressed party consents to the structure because it appears to be the natural state due to continuous discursive acts that reproduce a social order (cf. Bourdieu 2000: 172, 181). Thus, speakers who do not possess this linguistic capital (yet) might have negative experiences. They might develop negative language attitudes, from assuming that their language knowledge is insufficient and/or because they devalue their own linguistic capital.

The following extract from my field notes illustrates a pupil’s apparent negative attitude towards their own language, and reproduces the proposed hierarchy of prestige.

**Extract (51) field notes A7; Arts classroom**

Art: I followed the students to the Arts classroom. The students are supposed to finish self-portraits and readily take out their supplies and continue painting. It appears that pupils are allowed to work on their own. They are allowed to listen to music with headphones and can choose where they paint. I suddenly notice two female pupils talking in a different language (they are not whispering but talking in a normal voice). I realize I have seen them talking with each other before, in the hallway during the break, so I’m curious and ask one of them what language they are speaking. ** answers: “Turkish…does it bother you?”. I am taken aback, saying, “No, I’m just curious.”**

Extract (51) shows a situation in which the researcher asks two pupils about their language practices. Both were using their home language in the school context, and, when asked about it, instantly assume that speaking Turkish might bother others. This extract thus demonstrates that the visibility of home languages in schools—particularly, in this case, Turkish—is questioned not only by others, but also by the speakers themselves; consequently, home languages are placed on the lower end of the hierarchy.
Furthermore, dominant discourses in the media contribute to the manifestation of a hierarchy of languages. As pointed out in Chapter 3.3, recent discourses have primarily addressed the issues of ‘the language of the school’ and ‘the language of the break’. Central to these discussions are questions regarding which language is appropriate during breaks, and whether school policies should appoint one language as the main language of the school. Essentially, such discussions revolve around the position of German (as the official language of instruction) and other languages that are not part of the syllabus (home languages). In these discourses, German receives a symbolic role as the only legitimate language based on the fact that speaking German serves the social function of a common language; and thus, media discourses support a hierarchy of prestige.

In conclusion, a hierarchy of languages emerges in the discourses present in the school. The two schools investigated reproduce a language hierarchy, with academic German at the top and pupils’ home languages at the bottom. In between, come standard German, English, and other school languages. In general, the identified hierarchy is reproduced in spoken discourses, interactions in the school, and the linguistic landscape, and corresponds with official language education policies in Austria. As a result, dominant structures are maintained, while innovative approaches—approaches in which home languages receive space in the school—find less room for application. Therefore, it remains challenging to establish methods or *de facto* language policies that incorporate pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires.
7. Summary and discussion

7.1. Revisiting the research questions

Since the previous chapter presented the results in a topical order, and because various topics serve to answer the research questions, this chapter aims to concisely summarize answers to the research questions. As presented in Chapter 5.1, the research questions are based on an intellectual puzzle, which asks: What is going on in heterogeneous schools concerning the diversity of pupils’ linguistic repertoires, and which discourses on multilingualism/linguistic diversity are conveyed? Based on this intellectual puzzle, the following research questions were specified:

1. Which discourses regarding language(s) (e.g. language of instruction, foreign languages, home languages, as well as multilingualism) are conveyed in the school?

2. How are the pupils’ diverse linguistic repertoires perceived by teachers and pupils?

3. Where and how is linguistic diversity visible in school spaces?

4. How can an overall language policy be described in terms of language practices, language management, and language ideologies?

Research question 1 is concerned with the discourses regarding languages that are present in schools. This refers to the language of instruction, languages of the syllabus, and the languages that make up the linguistic repertoires of the pupils, as well as their multilingualism, per se. The results of this ethnographic study show that one essential discourse addresses the functions of languages, and the ways in which languages become assigned to a variety of functions. Accordingly, German—the national language and language of instruction—is perceived as the dominant language; however, its function goes beyond that and it takes on the role of a common language. This aspect is in alignment with the standard language ideology (cf. Milroy 2001). Therefore, the academic register
of standard German is given special attention in schools since it is linked with the school context, and its dissemination is perceived as one of the teachers’ core responsibilities. In contrast, the functions of home languages coincide with the notion of German as a shared language. The use of home languages in school is generally perceived as excluding those who are not proficient in the language in question, and thus, it is frequently seen as a tool for intentional exclusion or communicating secrets. Other school languages, such as Latin and English, take on the roles of prestigious languages, with English, in particular, recognized as an international language that is crucial for worldwide communication. Latin has a historically presence in the type of school investigated for this study, and therefore, knowledge of Latin is promoted as a fundamental proficiency.

Furthermore, a variety of discourses regarding the concept of diversity are reproduced. As a critical review of the material has shown, the term *diversity* was introduced by the author herself in order to avoid other controversial designations, such as ‘migrants’; however, in the course of the project, it was nonetheless used similarly. Discourses on diversity subsume signs of diversity, an ideology of equality, as well as issues of discrimination. Extracts from my interviews with both teachers and pupils illustrate that a variety of ‘signs’ are used to identify diversity, with signs being pupils’ names, their looks, their linguistic repertoires, as well as their cultural affiliations. If one or more of these signs index otherness, the pupil presumably becomes categorized as a ‘migrant’, ‘foreigner’ or simply as representing ethnolinguistic diversity. It is imperative to note here that the process of looking for and indexing signs, and then using them to build categories, is, in fact, a process of *othering*. Consequently, through othering, marginalized groups, in-groups and out-groups are determined, and, moreover, related discourses on discrimination and segregation—based on children’s backgrounds, linguistic repertoires, and looks—appear.

Nonetheless, many teachers may be unaware of the fact that their practices are framed in a process of othering; they simply aim to value the heritage and the migrant backgrounds of their pupils. As a result, teachers often reproduce an *ideology of equality* (cf. Milani & Jonsson 2011). This ideology states that everyone should be treated equally, regardless of any ethnic differences. In practice, this ideology is difficult to apply in schools because of individual differences between pupils. As a consequence, an ideology of equality is manifested in teachers’ discourses in their excessively positive attitudes towards (ethnolinguistic) diversity. During our interviews, teachers claimed to highlight
and value pupils’ linguistic repertoires, as well as to encourage their pupils’ language practices. While these statements did not provide any account of teachers’ actual practices in the classroom, they did provide insight into the teachers’ self-positioning regarding the discourse. Thus, teachers position themselves as open, tolerant, and welcoming diversity, which is an attitude that is most likely biased by their pedagogical profession. It stands in contrast to both the general perception of the use of home languages in schools and actual practices in the classroom, in which no encouragement of home language use was observed by the author.

These discourses contribute to a hierarchical positioning of languages, according to their status, their assigned functions, and their general prestige. The proposed hierarchy of languages (academic German – standard German and English – school languages – home languages), is based on the utterances of other teachers and pupils, and conforms with core points of the Austrian language education policy.

The second research question focuses on the perception of pupils’ linguistic diversity by teachers as well as pupils themselves. Discussions of linguistic diversity and particular languages frequently evoke notions of language proficiency; this fact might be emphasized in the school context, in which learning performance is essential. Consequently, discourses on the normativity of languages arise and entail views of ‘ideal’ multilingualism or ‘optimal’ linguistic knowledge. Repeatedly, multilingualism is seen as an ideal state, consisting of equal competencies in more than one language as well as knowledge of registers and literacy in all of the languages of one’s linguistic repertoire. This view, however, is based on the notion of monolingualism as the norm, and, furthermore, relies on the assumption that languages need to be formally learned in order to be recognized as ‘proper’ language proficiencies. It extends, in particular, to the acquisition of the academic register of German or a home language, which, in the case of German, is crucial in the educational context.

On the one hand, linguistic diversity and multilingualism are seen as an ideal state; on the other hand, monolingual proficiency is still used as a yardstick. And even though multilingualism as such is appreciated, the individual multilingualism of pupils is viewed differently. Significant differences arise when it comes to particular languages and the contexts in which they are used. In general, the use of home languages in the school building is associated with the exclusion of other pupils. Thus, speaking the common language, German, is widely promoted, while home languages become marginalized.
Concerning practices in both schools, it can be noted that, generally, teachers are aware of their pupils’ linguistic diversity, but they are essentially uncertain about why and how they should incorporate their students’ diverse linguistic repertoires into their classes.

Interestingly, pupils show similar perceptions of their own linguistic diversity. They reproduce comparable discourses, which might be a result of having internalized many of the institutionally held views during their school careers. Pupils are aware that the school provides limited space for languages other than those mentioned in the syllabus. Therefore, they make utterances in which they tend to devalue their home languages, for instance, by subordinating them, and, therefore, adhering to the dominant hierarchy of languages. Their linguistic repertoires are perceived in contrast to the demand for languages in today’s society, and in correlation with instances of discrimination and segregation.

Research question 3 considers the visibility of linguistic diversity in the school space. In this context, visibility refers to how languages are produced, both visually and audibly, in a particular space. The concept of space is created through social interactions, constantly changing, and can be immaterial or divided into further spaces. With regard to schools, space may refer to closed rooms, but can, moreover, also indicate locations established by participants. The connections between language and space can be observed by looking at the linguistic landscape, and are complemented by the findings of my observations and interviews. Generally, the results reveal a noticeable asymmetry between languages concerning spaces, meaning that certain spaces are reserved for specific languages, while other languages are excluded. Thus, public places such as the hallway, the bulletin boards, and official signs are dominated by German and, sporadically, school languages, such as English or French. Home languages, on the other hand, appear in public places mainly to carry symbolic meaning, and are, otherwise, reserved for private places, such as students’ desks, lockers, and bathrooms. However, even there, home languages are barely visible, with pupils’ scribbles produced mainly in English and German. Nonetheless, one example in particular showed that, occasionally, pupils claim public places such as the blackboard.

The oral use of home languages is predominantly limited to breaks in which pupils can, for instance, converse with friends who share the same language or talk on the phone. Sometimes, home languages are accessed by pupils when peers who are less proficient in German need assistance in class, or when taking notes in their home language strikes them as helpful. Nevertheless, the speaking of home languages is confined to private places.
The fourth research question asks for a description of the schools’ *de facto* language policies, which consist of their language practices, language management, and language ideology. As mentioned in previous chapters, language policies are applied through overt as well as covert mechanisms, meaning that, without stating obvious rules or regulations, everyday practices transport policies regarding languages. Below, I will briefly summarize my findings with regard to language practices, language management, and language ideology.

In terms of language practices, my ethnographic observations have shown that German is the language used predominantly in both schools. At times, students with other home languages than German talk to their peers in their home language during breaks or when they are on the phone. During classes, the use of home languages is exceptional, as shown by two examples in School A. In one instance, two friends spoke Turkish during an art class. Their unrestricted language use might be explained by the format of the lesson since the teacher allowed students to listen to music, chat, or change places while they were drawing or painting. Another case was witnessed during a French class, when one student explained something to another student in Romanian, which appeared to be encouraged by the teacher. Subsequently, it became apparent that the students were friends, and one of them had severe difficulties with French, so using their common language of Romanian was regarded as beneficial to their academic success.

Besides spoken language use, literacy and writing are also part of pupils’ language practices, and were addressed during the interviews and my investigation of the schools’ linguistic landscapes. Linguistic landscape data shows that home languages are visible in public places, where they are used symbolically to present diversity as well as in pupils’ private spaces, where pupils are allowed to use language creatively. Thus, language practices in home languages are predominantly restricted to certain places—places that are private, intimate, and less open to the public eye. From time to time, the school place is opened up and welcomes the diverse linguistic repertoires of pupils on an everyday basis.

With regard to language management, teachers generally refrain from actively advising against the use of a certain language. No instances of language prohibition or recommendations to use or avoid a particular language were observed during this investigation. However, some of my interviews with teachers confirmed that the use of home language in the school environment is perceived negatively, and some teachers suggested that pupils should avoid using their home languages at school in order to
prevent the exclusion of others. Likewise, pupils reproduced this notion during interviews and stated that using their home languages is undesirable in particular situations. It is thus possible to conclude that language management occurs through indirect clues as to which language use is appropriate or inappropriate in which context. In this case, ‘indirect’ means that—instead of being told directly or restricted by official policies—pupils are (1) urged to use their ‘common sense’ in deciding which language is appropriate, and (2) have internalized dominant discourses on language management from previous schools in which, for instance, the issue of home languages was addressed outright. It is possible that pupils’ experiences with speaking their home languages in previous schools significantly influenced the discourses they reproduced. As a consequence, students tend to subordinate their home languages, which is illustrated in discourses on hierarchies of prestige, the importance of learning the academic register, and the ascription of languages to places. Thus, even if the use of home languages is encouraged, pupils may perceive the opportunity with skepticism.

Language practices and language management are inevitably intertwined, while at the same time they are also influenced by overarching language ideologies. Language ideologies that have been detected in this study include the normativity and social functions of languages, an ideology of equality, a standard language ideology, as well as an ideology regarding a hierarchy of languages. The ideology relating to the normativity and social functions of languages describes how ideal language acquisition or language learning should take place, and how differences are established between the functions of distinct languages. For instance, while German is perceived as the standard language and a common language of communication, other home languages are associated with social exclusion, but also an ideal vision of multilingualism. The notion of ideal multilingualism in combination with the perception of diversity lead to an ideology of equality. Accordingly, there is a widespread belief that everyone should be treated equally, irrespective of their social or ethnic backgrounds; however, by explicitly reproducing this ideology discursively, participants underline that processes of othering take place in the school. Thus, students are marked by ‘otherness’—their looks, names, cultural affiliations, religious affiliations, and languages—which are constructed as signs of ethnolinguistic diversity or migrant backgrounds.
All of the mentioned ideologies counteract the promotion of linguistic diversity in practice. Nevertheless, they are in accordance with official language education policies, so that, for instance, in practice, only a handful of prestigious languages are included in the syllabus, even though the Austrian language education policy lists sixteen languages as potential foreign languages of instruction. Furthermore, on the one hand, language education policy states that home languages shall be encouraged and incorporated in classes, while, on the other hand, so-called *lessons in mother tongue* are separated from regular classes, and lessons on intercultural learning are reserved for students of different religious affiliations than the majority.

It is also important to note the schools’ general attitudes or activities in terms of linguistic diversity. School B has an impressive policy on multilingualism: its principal takes a strong stance towards an open policy, so that projects are developed and students are supported in participating in multilingual projects, for instance. In contrast, School A offers fewer activities that relate to multilingualism and linguistic diversity, but rather focuses on school languages and other academic achievements.

In general, I suggest that the attitudes of those in power have an impact on many of the practices carried out in the respective schools. As a matter of course, principals and teachers are expected to execute language education policies that lie beyond the scope of their responsibilities; however, they are also involved in the establishment of language education policies and carry them out through their language practices and language management in classrooms. Thus, educators shape discourses and *de facto* language policies. In a wider sense, the active involvement of teachers in processes of language education policies should be encouraged (cf. Shohamy 2009).

### 7.2. Implications for research and practice

This chapter aims to connect the results of this research project with those of recent projects in similar fields, in order to provide suggestions for potential changes or adaptations to school practices. First, it is possible to note that monolingual discourses are dominant in spite of a constant increase in the linguistic and ethnic diversity of Austrian society. In schools in particular, the monolingual *habitus* (cf. Gogolin 1994) persists and influences
everyday practices through the discourses that are reproduced. In order to adapt to the multilingual reality of superdiversity in schools and society at large, dominant monolingual and monocultural discourses need to be actively challenged. I therefore propose that consideration of the following points would contribute to a shift in dominant discourses.

Essentially, one needs to raise awareness of the fact that language policy not only happens on the level of laws and regulations, but is also exceptionally powerful in the covert mechanisms of a de facto policy. With the results of this study in mind, I consider language management to be an effective covert mechanism for influencing the language practices of individuals, and, thus, enforcing hegemonic positions. This includes, for instance, the methods of language management with which teachers address the use of home languages; a practice which begins as early as primary school. According to this, pupils are told to avoid using their home languages in school, for example, to foster mutual understanding by using one common language (German) or to advance their proficiency in German by using it instead of their home languages. Discourses on language management become internalized by pupils, and are, consequently, taken up by them throughout their school careers. Language management may occur through established prohibitions on language use; however, there are more subtle ways of achieving a change in language practices. One subtle approach is the reproduction of discourses that communicate that school is no place for home languages, or that the acquisition of other languages should be prioritized. In this way, home languages are subconsciously excluded from the school context.

A discourse on excluding home languages from schools is also reproduced by the visibility of languages in space. Space and what is portrayed in it shape the material environment of educational spaces (cf. Szabó 2015). Taking impressions of the linguistic landscape, an innovative method used in this study, is one way to approach the issue of language in space. However, research can also be done more extensively, as seen in the example of Szabó (2015), who allowed teachers to guide him through the school building while reconstructing discourses on the linguistic schoolscape, or Purkarthofer (2017) who showed how spaces and languages are perceived by producing language portraits and other drawings. Purkarthofer (2017) collected drawings by pupils in a bilingual Slovene/German school in Austria. She focused on the way pupils perceive and construct the multilingual school and their homes, reasoning that the language regimes of both places influence and relate to each other, but do not complement each other. As a consequence, Purkarthofer
suggests that the school and home should be considered as inseparable spaces.

With regard to the studies by Szabó (2015) and Purkarthofer (2017), and the overall concern of covert mechanisms of language policy, one implication for practice could be to address language awareness and include issues of space. Space appears to be particularly relevant considering that language management, language practices, and language ideologies are discursively constructed and manifested in spaces. Thus, spaces in which discourses are created need to be incorporated in the process of shifting dominant discourses.

In addition to covert mechanisms, overt mechanisms or *de jure* language policies are primarily responsible for shaping discourses. *De jure* language policies are the cornerstone of the practices in schools, and so it is necessary to examine how they are perceived, whether they are accepted as such, and, in general, address the issue of teacher policymaking in the classroom. For instance, it is necessary to address the question of how language policy documents are interpreted by educators and implemented into school practices (cf. Hult 2014, 2017). Hult (2014: 166) illustrates that language policies are developed on different scales, ranging from international organizations to regional governments to social institutions, and, finally, the individual. There is a complex system of interactions between policies, resulting in complications when it comes to implementing language policies. In his study, Hult (2017) concentrates on the educational policy for English in upper secondary level in Sweden from 2011. By applying a discourse analysis, he concludes that teachers are supposed to interpret the syllabus in terms of its application in teaching practices. In this manner, teachers become key agents in the process of interpreting, as well as, implementing the syllabus into their lessons. As a consequence, it is interesting to study the correlation between official language education policies and how participants apply them in practice. With regard to Hult (2017) and this thesis, further research could address teachers’ involvement in the creation and application of language education policies since they are agents in executing the decisions that are stated in school policies.

Thus, one implication for practice could be an approach in which educators, such as teachers, are more actively involved in the process of policy-making with regard to official documents. Teachers receive few possibilities to address the ethnolinguistic diversity of their pupils when following official guidelines. There are numerous published documents advising them on how to incorporate the linguistic diversity of their pupils (e.g. Krumm
& Reich 2013); however, it is up to individual teachers to decide to engage in using them.

In general, it can be said that raising language awareness is a key issue to further impact practices in schools regarding linguistic diversity. Raising language awareness should not only concern multilingual students, but should also involve teachers, principals, and students belonging to the majority group. Since principals and teachers are stakeholders in the educational context, they should have comprehensive knowledge of issues such as language acquisition, multilingualism, and sociolinguistics. Frequently, projects on language awareness solely include speakers of other languages than German, and focus on raising the language awareness of multilingual speakers themselves, whereas other students and teachers could benefit having their language awareness raised as well. Teachers could profit from exchanging language experiences with their pupils, learning from them, and detaching the concepts of language and multilingualism from an educational context. In addition, language awareness would support teachers’ efforts in creating language education policies. Currently, the Multilingual Group of European Literacy network (COST Action IS1401) is carrying out research concerning teachers’ knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards multilingualism. The results of this ongoing project might shed more light on the issue of how much teachers actually know about multilingualism and their attitudes towards it.

This paper argues that, in order to cope with the superdiverse multilingual reality in schools, language awareness should be raised and multilingual approaches should be included in everyday practices. Relevant literature provides examples describing multilingual practices or practices of translanguage in the classroom (e.g. Creese & Blackledge 2010a, Blackledge & Creese 2014, Creese & Martin 2003, Busch 2011, Krifka et al. 2014, García & Kleyn 2016). Translanguaging pedagogy, which refers to practices that engage students’ multilingual resources in the classroom, has recently been addressed by Martin-Beltrán (2014), for instance, who investigated translanguaging in peer learning contexts. Her study shows how translanguaging practices are used to mediate activities, solve linguistic problems, and support overall communication between students. She concludes that admitting translanguaging practices leads to more educational equality.
since, by allowing students to draw on the diverse linguistic repertoires of all of their classmates, multilingual pupils are enabled to participate in class and contribute as best as they can (Martin-Beltrán 2014: 226).

Considering Martin-Beltrán’s (2014) conclusion together with the results of this thesis, I advocate for the opening of the school space in terms of granting speakers of diverse linguistic repertoires a variety of opportunities to use their home languages. Translanguaging practices are potential ways for students to include their knowledge of languages, as well as their experiences in those languages, to enrich the whole school context. In order for this to become a reality, it appears it would be necessary to explicitly integrate the need for translanguaging practices into the syllabus.

Last but not least, the topic of assessment must be addressed. The issues of academic performance and receiving grades were raised during a group interview with pupils, in which they stressed their desire to be treated fairly with regard to their linguistic competencies (see Extract 50). Put simply, in the context of assessment, pupils with other home languages than German ask that teachers acknowledge that their proficiencies in German might not be as advanced as those of their native-German speaking peers.

The obstacle of assessment—based on the fact that tests provided solely in the majority language may result in unfair disadvantages for pupils—has recently been investigated by de Backer et al. (2017). The authors observed that monolingual education policies, and, thus, a focus on acquiring proficiency in the dominant language, are reinforced across Europe. The use of other home languages, even though numbers are steadily rising, is barely implemented in school or assessment practices. In order to ensure validity and equality, de Backer et al. (2017: 227) see the need for a shift in assessment: students should not only be assessed in the language of instruction, but should also have the possibility to draw on their complete linguistic repertoires when answering tests:

What is needed is not only a transformation from a separated to an integrated approach of learning and assessment. Another crucial element is to transform from looking at multilingualism as a deficiency, as a problem or as a handicap to considering multilingualism as diversity which can be exploited, as a resource or an asset. (de Backer et al. 2017: 227)

In practice, tests are designed for monolingual speakers, and the schools’ focus lies on teaching the academic register. One of the participating schools demonstrated their
approach to teaching multilingual pupils the academic register by offering *language-aware content lessons*. In these extracurricular classes, students who are not as proficient in standard German receive additional training in a range of subjects in order to gain an understanding of the subjects and improve their performances on exams. This is one way to tackle the issue of equality in assessment. One step further—as suggested by de Backer et al. (2017)—is a scenario in which students have the option to be assessed in the language of their choice. Presumably, in practice, multilingual assessment would require additional resources and require trials in order to prove its benefits in comparison to monolingual evaluations.

To sum up, the results of this study indicate the need for a shift in dominant discourses on languages and multilingualism. Thus, this thesis places emphasis on four central points, which are crucial in order to bring about a discursive shift. First, language policies are implemented in everyday practices and concern all participants. Prohibiting languages, for instance, is part of the language management of individual teachers or even pupils, and is carried out in diverse situations. Even though language management occurs on a more subtle level than in official bans, it is as effective as a ban since it is constructed in various discourses and reproduced by the speakers themselves. Second, the space in which discourses are manifested should be incorporated into the process of shifting dominant discourses. By placing text and languages in certain spaces, dominant discourses are enforced, and the materialization of home languages, for instance, is marginalized. Space, as such, reflects dominant discourses and acts as a mirror in reproducing the linguistic landscape. By offering space to linguistic diversity in the school and by actively encouraging its visibility, dominant monolingual discourses can be called into question. Third, it is essential to raise language awareness among all individuals in the school context, including, in particular, teachers. Projects on language awareness usually focus on speakers of other languages while excluding speakers of the majority language. It is, however, crucial to inform all stakeholders about ethnolinguistic diversity since it is a highly relevant phenomenon in today’s society and should be treated as such. Specifically, teachers regularly have to deal with multilingual pupils, so they should be made aware of issues such as multilingualism and language acquisition, while being able to dismiss potential myths. Fourth, based on the results of this thesis concerning language practices in the classroom, I advocate for more translanguaging practices and for teachers to maintain an open mind towards the
adaptation of assessment procedures. Both would appear to have beneficial effects for multilingual pupils, while, at the same time, promoting equality among all students.
8. Reflections on carrying out ethnographic research in schools

This chapter briefly summarizes my reflections and experiences on carrying out ethnographic work in schools, which may be of particular interest for future investigations of a similar kind. In the following paragraphs, the issues of access, contact, the role of the researcher, hesitancy among participants, localities, and the attitudes of participants are addressed.

Since I was neither a member of the group being studied nor had any personal relationship with the schools investigated, I had to make efforts to gain access from the very beginning. After receiving permission to carry out my research in two schools, the principals appointed so-called gatekeepers (see Chapter 5.3.1) to assist me with any concerns. Both gatekeepers provided me with information and were my primary contact persons in case of questions. In addition, they took over the responsibility of helping me find suitable classes to carry out my observations. In retrospect, this approach seems to have been unfavorable since the teachers’ choices in classes presumably differed to some extent from the choices I would have made regarding the investigated groups. Both teachers were asked to help me gain access to classes with a relatively high number of students of diverse languages. Whereas one teacher provided access to such classes, the teacher from School A vehemently advised me against looking solely at classes with considerable ethnic and linguistic diversity since they were considered to be ‘problematic’. Therefore, she permitted me access to classes with several students with different home languages, but avoided the classes with the highest numbers of multilingual students. With regard to the gatekeeper’s support in gaining access, it is also necessary to mention that it is undeniable that social connections between teachers also influenced the selection of classes. In addition, contact with certain classes was only possible when the gatekeepers were sure that the form teachers of the classes in question were open to the idea of being observed in their classes. Consequently, one way of reducing the gatekeepers’ influence in future research would be to acquire information on all classes beforehand, so that the
researcher could make suggestions concerning the selection of classes. Obviously, one can only attempt to minimize the gatekeepers’ bias in such cases.

In general, the gatekeepers pleasantly welcomed me, and both were interested in my project and eager to assist. However, after some time, I sensed that they became tired of my requests, which is understandable since teachers have many responsibilities in schools. Another difficulty between the gatekeepers and me can be seen as our lack of common ground. On the one hand, I do not have a background in pedagogy or education, and on the other hand, my research topic appeared to be quite vague to them. Moreover, shared sympathy between the people involved is something that cannot be suppressed in ethnography. Fine (1993) mentions issues such as sympathy and interpersonal relationships in ethnographic research, arguing that, “In reality, we find individuals with whom [...] we can maintain cordial, if somewhat distant, relationships when there is no tension in the system and when we are not aiming for conflicting goals” (Fine 1993: 272). Thus, it is reasonable and simply a fact that, even in research contexts, not everyone will be sympathetic to everything and everyone else, or conform to the other person’s attitudes. Fine (cf. 1993: 273) stresses that certain dislikes might be relevant methodologically, but as long as they do not interfere with the study or influence the results, this can be considered a natural fact of ethnographic studies.

Next, I will attempt to review a critical topic in ethnography, which is the role of the researcher. Early textbooks on qualitative research state that the observer should influence the context as little as possible (see Fine 1993: 281). This fly-on-the-wall attitude has long been dismissed as unrealistic and unachievable. Nevertheless, one should consider his or her role in the research process. In this project, I decided to accept the role of a researching student, and introduced myself as a university student working on her PhD project, which investigates linguistic diversity in schools in Graz. Generally, adopting a role is important to help one establish rapport with participants (cf. Marvasti 2004: 47). In this case, adopting a different role would have been impossible and inauthentic. An advantage of taking on the role of a researching student was that, after receiving permission from the principals, I had access to most environments within the schools, and was treated as a professional. Simultaneously, being perceived as a professional might have also been a disadvantage since some teachers treated me as an ‘expert’ or ‘critic’. During lessons, some directed questions related to languages or dialects to me, which resulted in my observations
becoming more participative.

In Austria, it is obligatory for university students of education to complete internships in schools, and, thus, they also conduct observations in classrooms so as to experience different teaching styles and prepare for teaching themselves. Due to a similarity in both our ages and demeanors—both interns and I were observing classes—I was often perceived as an intern by both teachers and pupils. Furthermore, some interns approached me and conversed with me quite freely. All in all, it seemed that some participants thought of me as an intern, which might be due to this role being more familiar to them, and related to my age and gender. However, one can assume that this unplanned change in perception did not significantly alter the course and/or outcome of my investigation.

In retrospect, I would say that I remained an outsider since it is extremely difficult to enter the school context as someone unaccustomed to the field. Schools are hierarchical places dominated by two opposing groups – pupils and teachers – so that entering as a third party is quite challenging. However, with regard to this study, rapport was established and it was possible to obtain sufficient data. Before beginning my observations, I introduced myself to the teachers of the classes I intended to observe, and asked for their permission to be present. In my first lessons at each school, I introduced myself in front of each class and gave the students the chance to ask me questions. Most teachers were responsive and made no objections to my observations of their lessons; however, teachers of science-related subjects often expressed confusion as to why someone interested in ethnolinguistic diversity would attend their lessons. I tried to diminish their skepticism by explaining that I attempt to gain an overview of as many different subjects and contexts as possible, including language classes, science classes, and other more practice-oriented classes. On the whole, science teachers expressed the same reluctance when they were asked to partake in interviews.

With regard to access to the localities, it is important to note that, even though I was granted access to all rooms in the school building, some areas remained restricted. For instance, it was impossible to spend much time in the teachers’ room due to my assigned role. Therefore, my presence in the staff room was limited to those occasions when I was talking with a teacher. This type of spatial restriction most likely affected the focus of my research, by causing me to look predominantly at public places in the school and to inspect the school more from the perspective of pupils. Most of the rooms dominated by pupils,
such as classrooms and bathrooms, were accessible to me. This shows that, in ethnographic research, one may be confronted with restrictions that cannot be anticipated.

Naturally, one can hardly stay in the same place for long while taking field notes without raising suspicion among participants. So, during breaks, I preferred to stroll around the school building, taking in situations and conversations, which I would later recall in my field notes. Even though field notes are essential, I became aware that focusing too intently on writing notes could potentially lead me to overlook interesting events that happened in the meantime. Instead of constantly switching between the situation I was observing and my notebook, I preferred to observe situations, take quick notes, and complete them later.

Finally, I also experienced that both teachers and principals were concerned with the idea of societal and linguistic diversity, and that some are deeply engaged with this topic. Some of the educators I spoke to are carrying out projects themselves, while others, for instance, participate in teaching specific classes or pupils. Through conversations and interviews, I received insight into the complexity of schools and the practices of teachers. Thus, at the end of this thesis, I would again like to emphasize that my focus lies on understanding and reconstructing current practices in schools with regard to the discourses that shape de facto language policies. My investigation is not about underlining individual language attitudes, the ideologies of a particular school, or any difficulties, but rather about investigating the ideologies and discourses, which are influenced by significantly wider discourses outside of the school building. In this process, schools take on the role of places in which dominant discourses are manifested and reproduced, which again needs to be acknowledged and addressed.

This chapter provided an overview of the insight I gained through research carried out via ethnographic studies in two schools. I believe that my reflections are in line with the overarching approach of this thesis, and, furthermore, have the potential to contribute to similar investigations.
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