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ARTICLE

Multilingualism Meets Multidialectism in L2 Study Abroad

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This study examines how second language (L2) learners engaged with both multilingualism and multidialectism during a short-term study abroad (SA) program in Vienna, Austria and Freiburg, Germany which featured a course on German sociolinguistics. While the multilingual turn in L2 education has challenged monolingual ideologies (May, 2013; Diao & Trentman, 2021), it often overlooks linguistic diversity within languages. Focusing on German, a pluricentric language with rich dialectal variation, this research analyzes nine students' reflections through questionnaires and diaries. Qualitative text analyses reveal that students developed critical awareness of language variation, connecting dialects to broader multilingual ecologies and deconstructing ideologies of standardization and linguistic purity. Students observed translanguaging practices, reflected on heritage languages, and contextualized language use within sociopolitical frameworks. These insights underscore the pedagogical value of integrating multidialectal and multilingual approaches in L2 education to foster critical language awareness and support diverse learner identities. The study contributes to ongoing efforts to reimagine L2 pedagogy by highlighting the need for sociolinguistic frameworks that reflect real-world linguistic complexity and challenge reductive language ideologies.

Introduction

Study abroad (SA) programs are important immersion opportunities for undergraduate second language (L2) students to build lived experiences as multilingual users of their L2 in everyday settings. The relevance of SA for areas such as L2 acquisition (McManus et al., 2021; Schenker, 2018), cultural learning (Jackson, 2018), and identity construction (Kinginger, 2013; Quan, 2019) has long been empirically established, while research strands within the multilingual turn (May, 2013) have started to interrogate the monolingual ideologies that have shaped discourses on L2 education in SA (see the contributions in Diao & Trentman, 2021). These multilingual approaches have been important in foregrounding learners' and L2 communities' multilingual repertoires as well as dismantling native-

speakerist language ideologies (Holliday, 2006) and myths of monolingualism (Gramling, 2016). At the same time, recent investigations into dialect learning among study-abroad students and adult language learners living abroad (e.g., Wirtz, 2024; Wirtz et al., 2024; Wirtz & Fischlhammer, 2024; Wirtz & Pfenninger, 2024b, 2024a) have traced a number of factors that determine L2 speakers' adoption of regional non-standard variants in the context of German. The aim of this article is to create synergies between discussions of multilingualism and multidialectism for L2 German by examining short-term SA students' observations and critical reflections of the diverse linguistic ecosystem of German during a pedagogically mediated immersion experience.

Countering Monolingualism and Monodialectism in L2 Study Abroad

This section reviews relevant research on several language ideologies that have pervasively shaped L2 education by paying particular attention to SA contexts. These include a monolingual bias that erases existing multilingual resources and realities as well as standard language ideologies, which devalue local and social varieties or dialects and their speakers. Monolingual and standard language ideologies perpetuate a monolithic view of language as a manageable, bounded, norm-based entity, which starkly contrasts with the complexities, dynamics, and continuous creative inventions that shape linguistic diversity within and across named languages.

Towards a Multilingual Framework

Despite ample explorations into the long-standing history of multilingualism as the norm of societal organization (Pavlenko, 2023), monolingual ideologies continue to frame widespread beliefs on how people and societies develop and use language(s) (Rothman, 2008). Gramling (2016) traces the emergence of the ideas of monolingualism in the European Enlightenment period, pointing out how monolingualism became the unmarked norm of being in European contexts. These monolingual ideologies more widely crystallized during the emergence of European nation states in so-called one-nation-one-language ideologies, with philosophers such as Johann Gottfried Herder propagating ideas of a nation having its own unique spirit that is expressed through its language. The paradigm of monolingual nation states inhabited by monolingual citizens has become so pervasive that it has been widely accepted as the norm of Western societal organization. Gramling argues that monolingualism's "'ideology' is precisely to become transparent and plain, unworthy of comment or critique, and thus impervious to the ascriptions of racism, nationalism, purism, and elitism often leveraged at 'beliefs about language'" (p. 18). In other words, monolingualism has become *the* seemingly neutral, natural, and default way of being and of organizing societies. As such, it has profoundly shaped language education globally, often framing linguistic diversity as a challenge rather than a resource.

In the context of L2 education, monolingual ideologies are based on beliefs that languages are discrete, bounded systems and that the ideal language learner aspires to emulate a monolingual native speaker (Trentman & Diao, 2021). This perspective promotes immersion in a single target language as the most effective learning environment, sidelining the complex multilingual realities of learners and learning contexts. A scoping review of SA research between 1995 and 2017 shows a persistent monolingual bias that overlooks the multilingual realities of SA experiences (Tullock & Ortega, 2017). Scholars have critiqued monolingual models for ignoring the sociolinguistic realities of language use wherein translanguaging and hybrid practices are common (García & Wei, 2013). When multilingual learners are expected to suppress their full linguistic repertoires, their identities and cognitive resources are marginalized. As Trentman and Diao (2021) argue, monolingual frameworks often lead to policies

that enforce exclusive use of the target language, positioning multilingualism as a problem to be managed rather than a strength to be leveraged.

In practice, language learning environments are rarely monolingual. Even in immersion contexts, learners encounter a range of linguistic varieties, including global, regional, and home languages, as well as translanguaging practices. In the context of German, multilingualism also becomes relevant in exploring different contact varieties that have shaped German dialects. Though most scholarly explorations have focused on German language contact scenarios that have emerged due to German emigration outside of contiguous German-speaking areas (see contributions in Földes, 2021), Zimmer and Simon (2021) argue for an approach that also explores language contact scenarios within German-speaking countries, such as youth language that draws heavily on English (Spitzmüller, 2007), the urban multiethnolect *Kiezdeutsch* (Wiese, 2012), Turkish German (Kallmeyer et al., 2016), Russian German (Berend & Frick, 2016), or other borderland (Gregersen & Langer, 2021) contact varieties. In short, when talking about the linguistic ecology of German, it is necessary to not only keep in mind the multiple languages that are spoken in German-speaking countries due to historical and more recent migrations, but also how the presence of these languages has influenced German itself.

In SA scenarios, L2 students are thus exposed to a complex multilingual linguistic landscape, which has only recently been addressed in SA research. Trentman and Diao's (2021) edited volume on the multilingual turn in L2 SA research marks an important shift in countering the monolingual bias in this space. Summarizing the studies in their volume, they point out that "the most successful learners were not those who found ways to resist the 'threat' posed by languages other than the target language, and particularly English, but those who figured out how to intentionally draw from their multilingual resources to support their language learning goals" (p. 7). The importance of allowing students to use all available resources, including other languages, challenges the traditional view that exposure to the target language alone is sufficient or ideal. Moving beyond monolingual frameworks requires a fundamental shift in how language competence is defined and assessed and an embrace of multilingualism as the norm rather than the exception in language education. This requires not only drawing on L2 learners' full linguistic repertoires but also contextualizing the language that students are learning within its full multilingual and multidialectal ecosystem.

Towards a Multidialectal Framework

When talking about linguistic diversity in L2 education, an aspect that is often overlooked is that of language variation *within* a language in the form of regional or social dialects. Especially in SA settings, this is relevant for languages that are characterized by different local varieties that students may encounter. Discussions on bringing in language variation into L2 Arabic (Trentman & Shiri, 2020), Spanish (Lado & Quijano, 2020), French (Chapelle, 2020; Wernicke, 2020), Chinese (Kaltenegger, 2020), or German (Ruck, 2020; Shafer, 2018) education show the value and need to expand a singular focus on standard varieties. Taking a step back, though, it is necessary to explore what ideological forces multidialectal and variationist approaches are up against in L2 education.

The standard language ideology has profoundly shaped not only lay people's views on language but also educational institutions as purveyors of the "right" way to use language. As defined by Milroy (2001), the standard language ideology is the belief in a single, correct, codified form of a language—typically associated with written, institutionalized norms—that marginalizes other forms, such as regional varieties, as incorrect or inferior. The standard language ideology thus maintains a hierarchy between standard and non-standard varieties, with the result that many educational contexts exclude

the rich spectrum of regional and colloquial forms that characterize actual language use in German-speaking communities (Elspaß, 2025; König et al., 2019; Wirtz et al., 2025).

In German language teaching, the standard language ideology manifests in the dominance of codified, written standard forms in textbooks, audio materials, and proficiency exams, often at the expense of spoken, informal, and regionally diverse varieties. What is more, the standard language ideology for German, as Ruck (2020) argues, operates on two levels: namely the hierarchies between standard and non-standard varieties, and the hierarchies between the different standard varieties of German, with Standard German from Germany often being judged as more legitimate or more correct than Austrian or Swiss Standard German (Ransmayr & de Cillia, 2019). While pluricentric critiques have led to a recognition of the legitimacy of multiple standard varieties for German among linguists (Ammon et al., 2016; Clyne, 1984), several studies of textbooks (Hägi, 2006; Meirelles & Savedra, 2022) or language teacher attitudes (Ransmayr, 2006) suggest that knowledge and critical discussions about multiple norms of German remain rare in L2 German education.

A narrow focus on standard varieties distorts learners' understanding of how German is used in everyday contexts and reinforces social hierarchies by associating standard language with educated, urban elites while marginalizing speakers of non-standard varieties (Ruck, 2020). In line with linguists who have long called for the inclusion of regional varieties into L2 German education (Baßler & Spiekermann, 2001; Spiekermann, 2007; Studer, 2002), Ruck advocates for a more inclusive and critically reflective approach to L2 German instruction that incorporates both standard and non-standard varieties, with the goal to empower learners to navigate diverse communicative contexts with greater linguistic and cultural competence (Ruck, 2020, pp. 40–41).

Recent empirical research on regional varieties in L2 German contexts has explored learners' perceptions of L1-interlocutors' use of the standard variety during SA (Ott, 2025), or migrants' uptake of regional dialects in virtual reality settings (Wirtz et al., 2024). Abrams and Schiestl (2017) reported on a 10-week pedagogical intervention in an intermediate-level L2 German class in the U.S. in which students developed an increased understanding of German language variation. Milojičić (2023) analyzed U.S. L2 German students' and teachers' co-construction and negotiation of ideologies about German standard and non-standard varieties in classroom discussions. While these newer studies have shown that incorporating language variation and sociolinguistics into the L2 language curriculum can have positive impacts in combating standard language ideologies, a disconnect remains between variationist sociolinguistics and SLA. Wirtz and Pfenninger (2023; 2024) address this critique through a series of studies that adopt variationist and complex dynamic systems approaches. Their findings reveal that L2 learners' sociolinguistic evaluations and varietal behaviors are highly individualized and often diverge from group-level generalizations. In particular, their microlongitudinal and virtual reality studies show that while some learners develop multivarietal repertoires and engage in dialect convergence, others maintain standard-centric practices, influenced by factors such as social networks, affective orientations, and perceived communicative utility. Dialect learning in L2 German is not merely a matter of exposure or proficiency but is deeply mediated by individual positionalities and ideological stances toward language variation. Wirtz and Pfenninger call for a pedagogical reorientation that moves beyond the monolithic assumptions of the standard language ideology and embraces the pluricentric and sociolinguistically rich realities of German as it is lived and spoken across diverse contexts.

Studies on dialect learning in SA in other languages also point out how dialect learning is usually related to a complex interplay of linguistic, social, and ideological factors. In Spanish-speaking contexts, a substantial body of work has shown that learners may incidentally adopt salient phonological, lexical, and morphosyntactic features (Kanwit, Geeslin, & Fafulas, 2015; Salgado-Robles & George, 2023), including the socially marked Castilian /θ/ (George, 2014; Knouse, 2012; Grammon, 2021). However, studies consistently find that feature uptake depends not only on

exposure and proficiency but also on learners' social networks, attitudes, and identities (Schoonmaker-Gates, 2020; George & Hoffman-González, 2019). More recent work foregrounds the ideological dimensions of learners' interpretations of dialectal forms: Grammon (2025) shows that SA students in Peru evaluated local Andean Spanish variants through racialized ideologies linking non-prestige forms to indigenous identities imagined as "less competent," thereby challenging assumptions that learners view native speakers' sociolinguistic practices as inherently appropriate. Similar dynamics appear in Chinese SA settings, where Diao (2017) demonstrates that learners' uptake of Shanghainese features depends heavily on personal histories and the social meanings they assign to variation. Parallel findings in Arabic SA highlight learners' growing awareness that dialects, alongside Modern Standard Arabic, are essential for everyday communication (Shiri, 2013).

While these studies offer unique insights into dialect learning, coherent pedagogical applications are still rare, particularly in the context of in L2 German education. And meanwhile, many students continue to be exposed to standard-language predominant pedagogies that result in a lack of factual linguistic knowledge about the nature of language itself.

Integrating Multilingual and Multidialectal Approaches

The review of research on multilingual and multidialectal approaches in L2 education has shown two important advancements in the field. First, and particularly in SA contexts, the multilingual turn has started to reshape pervasive ideologies of monolingualism and linguistic purity. And second, a surging interest in language variation in L2 education also shows promising developments that highlight the social hierarchies that a focus only on (dominant) standard varieties can implicitly promulgate. While both multilingual and multidialectal approaches can be explored under the larger umbrella of linguistic diversity— within and across languages—there are, to date, few discussions that aim to build synergies between these two strands of inquiry.

One of the few pedagogical innovations to mention the interplay between multidialecticism and multilingualism, the Holistic Model for Multilingualism in Education presented by Duarte and Günther-van der Meij (2018) indicates that "language awareness allows for the exploration of all existing languages and dialects in the classroom and in the surroundings and a reflection about the role of languages and linguistic diversity in society" (p. 29). Further studies by these researchers (e.g., Günther-van der Meij, Duarte, & Nap, 2020) showed promising results in the inclusion of Frisian dialect instruction in the Netherlands and the role that multilingualism plays in this endeavor. This forms a promising conceptual umbrella for understanding the relationships between multidialecticism and multilingualism insofar as they are captured in a broad approach to framing curricula. However, it remains unclear what students gain, from their own perspective, by encountering real-world multidialectal and multilingual language.

In this contribution, we aim to connect multilingualism and multidialectism by exploring L2 German students' experiences during SA. Specifically, we investigate the following research question: What connections do students make between multidialectism and multilingualism in their observations and reflections of language during their SA experience?

Methods

Participants

The study participants included nine L2 German students (3 rising sophomores, 4 rising juniors, 2 rising seniors) enrolled in an advanced (300-level) study abroad course. Five students were German

double majors, two were minors, and two did not have a concentration declared in German. Other majors included Chemistry, Pre-Med, Computer Science, Quantitative Sciences, Psychology, History, English, and Linguistics. One student did not have a declared major. Students' languages included English and advanced German (n=9), as well as additional family languages such as Russian (n=1), Serbian (n=1), and Korean (n=1), as well as competency in L2 French (n=1) and Spanish (n=1). Three female students identified as Asian or having Asian heritage, and one female student identified as Black. The remaining three male and two female students identified as white. For the analysis, participants were assigned code names that reflected the gender of their preferred pronouns.

Researcher Positionalities

The three authors of this manuscript combine an etic and emic perspective to the study's data. While the second and third author were involved in the study abroad program as instructor and student, the first author joined the project during the data organization and analysis phase. In what follows, we will highlight relevant background of the researchers' positionalities.

The first author is an L1- speaker of an Austro-Bavarian dialect and Austrian Standard German academically socialized in Austria and the United States. As a researcher in German applied linguistics with a focus on L2 learning and teaching, her multilingual and multidialectal background informs her sensitivity to language ideologies and sociolinguistic complexity. While German and English are her dominant languages of work and personal life, she has also learned Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Latin to various degrees of proficiency. Her positionality shapes the interpretation of students' experiences and the study's emphasis on challenging monolingual and standard-language assumptions.

The second author is a first-language speaker of English and second-language speaker of German with a basis in German Standard German with flavors of North-German regiolect from extensive time living and studying in Bremen and Hamburg. His research training has focused on Second Language Acquisition and German as a Second Language morphosyntax, in addition to work on minoritized populations in L2 German education. In this context, the second author was also the designer and instructor for the SA course on dialects and multilingualism. His positionality shapes the interpretation of students' experiences in that it combines the delayed analysis of the study data with his own observations in real time during the study abroad program. In addition, as the course instructor, he had access to and was assessing the students directly during the study abroad program, including the documents they produced and consented to be used for analysis in this study.

The third author is a first-language speaker of English and a second-language learner of German with study abroad experience in Vienna and Freiburg as well as experience teaching in the North Rhine region of Germany. As both a student participant in the SA course and a researcher on this project, she engaged directly with fellow student participants, a role that informs her interpretation of students' attitudes, experiences, and learning outcomes throughout the program. Her experiences navigating German as an L2 speaker in diverse regional contexts helps to shape her interest in dialectal variation and interpretation of student attitudes. In addition to German, she speaks Spanish and Vietnamese and studies linguistics. Her multilingual background and disciplinary training also contribute to the study's emphasis on multilingualism and on examining standard-language ideologies in study abroad contexts.

Study Context

Regarding the programmatic context, students took a one-credit pre-departure preparation course in the Spring semester that focused on program logistics and provided a brief introduction to German language variation in the two host cities. The study abroad program itself consisted of two four-week, four-credit courses: one in Vienna, Austria in June and one in Freiburg, Germany in July.

Although the official language of both SA program sites is German, there are several linguistic differences that characterize Vienna and Freiburg. The local dialect in Vienna is a Central Bavarian dialect, while the institutionalized standard variety is Austrian Standard German (Ammon et al., 2016). The most common languages other than German are English as a lingua franca, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, and Turkish (Stadt Wien, 2023). In Freiburg, the institutionalized standard variety is German Standard German and the local dialect, which is often referred to as *Badisch,* is a Low Alemannic dialect close to the High Alemannic dialects in Switzerland (König et al., 2019; Philipp & Bothoerl-Witz, 2013). With its proximity to France, it is fairly common to hear French in Freiburg alongside English; other commonly spoken languages in the area include Turkish, Russian, and Romanian (Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg, 2023).

German speakers in Vienna and Freiburg commonly use a colloquial variety, a so-called *Umgangssprache* that mixes local varieties with standard variants depending on situational, individual, and discursive factors (Baßler & Spiekermann, 2001). In urban centers such as Vienna, it is common that this *Umgangssprache* includes more standardized variants in everyday communication than in rural areas, where local dialects may signal an expression of local identity. Furthermore, dialect speakers often accommodate L2-German speakers by choosing a more standard-oriented variety.

The SA course during the first half of the program in Vienna focused on the representation of Austria's past in the present, while the second half taking place in Freiburg included a course on "Language in Southwest Germany," which emphasized local dialects (particularly Viennese and Badish) and multilingualism. Activities for dialect learning included readings, guest lectures, a visit to the *Badisches Wörterbuch* (Badish dictionary) research group at the University of Freiburg, interviews with Badish and other dialect speakers brought into the SA classroom for discussion and (socio-)linguistic analyses, a visit to nearby Colmar, France, where Alsatian—a dialect similar to Badish—is spoken, and group presentations of another German dialect. Activities on multilingualism included readings on language hierarchies, particularly within Switzerland, a visit to Basel, Switzerland, discussions about multilingualism and identity, and a group presentation on a topic related to multilingualism in Germany, which included topics such as linguistic accessibility to healthcare resources, multilingualism in education, and migration and refugee services.

Data Sources

This study focuses on two data sources: (1) a pre/during/post-SA questionnaire and (2) contemporaneous student diaries written in Freiburg. The three questionnaires were given to students at the start, in the middle, and at the end of the 8-week program. Students filled out the first questionnaire before the start of the program, the second at the conclusion of the first four weeks in Vienna, and the third at the conclusion of the second four weeks in Freiburg. The questionnaires asked similar questions, although the pre-SA questionnaire focused more on expectations while the during- and post-SA questionnaires were mostly reflective. The second data source comes from journal entries written by each student. Students were asked to reflect in German on their experiences in Freiburg, writing 1,000 words per diary entry. Students could write about anything they wanted but were asked to reflect on at least one language-related event they encountered outside of class.

Analysis

A qualitative text analysis (Kuckartz, 2014) was used to establish a deductive-inductive category system (p. 62). The categories used were developed from a combination of sociolinguistic research on language variation and multilingualism as well as themes that emerged from the data sources. The researchers used an iterative coding process before analyzing the resulting coded data. First, each researcher reviewed the data to determine which *a priori* categories from sociolinguistic research could be applied and what data required additional categories to accurately capture other trends that became evident. The three researchers then discussed their independently created categories through example data and came to an agreement on a final list of categories and their definitions. After the final category system was established, the researchers coded all of the questionnaire data on their own and then regrouped to discuss inter-rater agreement about the coded data, with the possibility of one statement being coded for multiple categories. Unanimous agreement was reached for all items in the data set used for this study. The category system was then applied to students' journals following the same iterative coding and resolution process. Table 1 provides the categories relevant to the research questions for this study:

Table 1
Overview of Analyzed Categories

Super-Category	Categories	Sub-Categories
Language use	Multilingualism	
	English	
	German variation	
	German standard	
	Real world vs. classroom	
	Own language use	NNS positionalities

In order to succinctly capture trends by participants over time, as well as group trends, the researchers created profile matrices (see Appendix for an overview). Each category was segmented by time (Pre-Vienna, Post-Vienna/Pre-Freiburg, During-Freiburg (Diaries), and Post-Freiburg) and participant. From these matrices, we created case summaries of each participant by category, as well as analytic thematic summaries by category of all participants at each time-point. These case and thematic summaries were used to organize and analyze (sub-)topics on multidialectism and multilingualism in SA.

Results and Discussion: Connections between Multidialectism and Multilingualism

The following section analyzes how students connected issues of dialects and language variation with multilingualism and, in doing so, implicitly deconstructed ideologies of monolingualism, standard language, and linguistic purity. We can observe two broad themes in the data: The course design seemed to encourage student reflection on German local and social varieties within the larger multilingual ecology. And second, discussions about German language variation prompted students

to reflect on their own multilingualism, thus addressing both multilingualism and multidialectism within the same learning framework.

The data analysis showed that all students made explicit connections between dialects and multilingualism in their surveys and diaries, indicating that they see linguistic diversity within and across named languages as closely related phenomena. For example, after the course, several students highlighted how variation in a named language is oftentimes closely tied to the presence of other languages in a specific space at different points of time. These findings were highly idiosyncratic and related to the course materials, individual experiences outside the classroom, their own identities as multilingual language learners, and their language education backgrounds. For example, the views of three students— Ingrid, Sandra, and Lotte—show very different approaches. Ingrid viewed contact languages as the main reason for why people use different dialects, as indicated in her post-SA questionnaire, while Sandra highlighted mainly social aspects of multilingualism in language variation. Lotte, in turn, saw multilingualism as one of several complex factors that influenced dialects:

> They use different dialects because they come from different geographic locations and have influence from differing languages. (Ingrid, Post-Freiburg)

> I believe German speakers use different dialects depending on the regions they reside in, someone who lives in a rural place without so much diversity might use different words, terms, and enunciate differently than someone who may live around speakers that speak multiple languages. (Sandra, Post-Freiburg)

> They use different dialects and accents because language inherently varies and there is no such thing as the standard. Due to contact with other languages and social and political factors, geographical variation exists all around Germany and the German speaking world. (Lotte, Post-Freiburg)

Despite emphasizing different aspects, these three students all deconstructed monolingual ideologies of linguistic purity by highlighting the translingual nature of how languages form and evolve in contact with surrounding languages.

In their diaries, students shared more in-depth observations on the intersections of multilingualism and German dialects. After the first program half in Vienna, several students commented on the prevalent use of English in youth language as a social variety of German. And while the central role of language contact in language variation and change is hardly any news in linguistics, ideologies of language purity prevail in public discourse, with people complaining either about the anglicization of German (Spitzmüller, 2007) or entertaining heated debates about whether *Kiezdeutsch*, a German urban multiethnolect with Arabic, Turkish, and other influences, indeed qualifies as a German dialect (Wiese, 2015). Not having been exposed to the negative public discourse about the prevalence of English in the German varieties of younger generations, students oftentimes reported on their observations more with curiosity than with negative judgement. Sebastian, for instance, implicitly pointed out the prevalent ideologies of linguistic purity when he reflected on the lack of discussions about multilingualism and language mixing when talking about German dialects:

> My linguistic feature happened here in a restaurant. Our waitress was not a native speaker and I noticed that she used a mixture of Russian and German. Then I thought about whether there was a dialect that arose out of the mixture of these two languages. We spent so much time focusing on dialects that are really only on the German side of language, but I

> would think that there are many other dialects that focus on other languages.[1] (Sebastian, author translation, Freiburg Diary)

Sebastian noticed a waitress whose L1 was not German using what he perceived to be a mix between Russian and German, prompting him to wonder about the existence of a Russian German dialect. While we don't know whether the waitress was a recent refugee from Ukraine who spoke Russian, or of Russian German heritage, linguists have indeed studied contact varieties among Russian German heritage speaker migrants (Berend & Frick, 2016). Even without having been exposed to this academic discourse, Sebastian deconstructed monolingual and linguistic purity ideologies surrounding the German language by pointing out the lack of discussion of contact varieties in the context of German dialects.

After having discussed societal multilingualism in German-speaking contexts in their SA course, some students started to contextualize their observations outside of the classroom with what they had learned, making connections with the systemic and political factors surrounding multilingualism and language variation. Lotte, as a linguistics major, found relative ease in tying in her observations with theoretical linguistic issues, such as the common diglossia in Swiss German that she observed during a trip to Basel:

> Regarding the linguistic feature, I actually heard a lot of Swiss German in the city, and the differences between Germany [*sic*] in Switzerland and here [Freiburg] are very clear. That's quite different from my experiences in Colmar, Freiburg and Vienna. In these places I never heard people speak in a dialect, but in Basel almost every person that I heard used dialect. This truth makes sense of course, because we read that the German in Switzerland really is a so-called diglossia. One uses the dialect in many situations and not often Standard German with one another. I found this topic super interesting.[2] (Lotte, author translation, Freiburg Diary)

Lotte noticed how German speakers in Switzerland commonly use local dialects in everyday conversation, while she had a harder time identifying dialects as such in other regions. It seems that in strongly diglossic contexts like Switzerland, where speakers use either a local dialect or Swiss Standard German, with no mixed intermediate varieties, L2 German learners can more easily identify non-standard forms. In contrast, in diaglossic regions such as Vienna and Freiburg, speakers move fluidly along a dialect–standard continuum, mixing features from both. This makes the boundary between standard and non-standard varieties less distinct and harder for learners to perceive. After this observation related to German, Lotte immediately goes on to placing German in its multilingual ecology, describing the multiple languages in the linguistic ecology in Switzerland. Even here, she ties

[1] *Mein linguistisches Merkmal wurde hier im Restaurant passiert. Unsere Kellnerin war nicht eine Muttersprachlerin und ich habe bemerkt, dass sie eine Mischung von Russisch und Deutsch verwendet hat. Dann habe ich daran gedacht, ob es vielleicht einen Dialekt gab, der aus einer mischung von diesen zwei Sprachen besteht. Wir haben so viel Zeit verwendet, über Dialekte, die sich wirklich nur auf die deutsche Seite der Sprache fokussiert haben, aber ich würde denken, dass es auch viele andere Dialekte gibt, die sich auf andere Sprachen fokussieren.* (Sebastian, original German, Freiburg diary)

[2] *Bezüglich auf die linguistischen Merkmale, habe ich eigentlich viel Schweizerdeutsch in der Stadt gehört, und die Unterschiede zwischen Deutschland in der Schweiz und hier sind sehr deutlich. Das unterscheidet sich von meinen Erfahrungen in Colmar, Freiburg und Wien. An diesen Orten habe ich nie viele Leute im Dialekt sprechen gehört, aber in Basel benutzte fast jede Person, die ich hörte, Dialekt. Diese Wahrheit macht natürlich Sinn, weil wir es gelesen haben, dass das Deutsch in der Schweiz wirklich eine sozusagen Diglossie ist. Man benutzt der Dialekt in einer Menge Situationen und nicht so oft miteinander Hochdeutsch. Ich fand dieses Thema super interessant.* (Lotte, original German, Freiburg Diary)

her observations of multilingualism in with multidialectism when specifying what variety of English she had heard.

> I also saw the multilingualism in Switzerland toady. On many signs and in informational materials, German, English, and French were displayed. I heard many of these languages and that makes sense because of the proximity of the borders of Germany and Switzerland. I am curious whether there are signs in Italian and Romanian[3] in other regions of the country. That would be really interesting, especially, for example, near the Italian border. I also found it interesting how many American people there were in Basel. I heard American English everywhere. I think that this has to do with the financial industry in Basel and because of that many people from the US come to Switzerland in order to work in this industry.[4] (Lotte, author translation, Freiburg Diary)

Lotte commented not only on multilingual signs in the linguistic landscape that feature the official languages of the region as well as English as the global lingua franca, but she also noticed American English as the most widely spoken variety in the area. In other words, while she did not comment on any specific variety of the written English, she did point out the audible regional differences that are more salient in oral language use (Milroy & Milroy, 2012). By doing so, she points to the pluricentricity of English, which has multiple standard varieties, and it was important to her to point out what variety it was since it was one with which she shared a personal connection.

Jens also reflected on multilingualism and multidialectism in his diary but placed his observations in more systemic analyses. He wrote about meeting one of his peer's German friends and shared his observations on their translanguaging practices in German and their multilingualism, which prompted him to reflect on differences in language and education politics in Europe and the U.S.

> On Sunday I also had the opportunity to meet [name]'s friends from Germany. She knows them because of her exchange program. I think they spoke differently, because we were Americans. Her German was easier and slower than most of the German I've already heard. So, I couldn't make many big linguistic conclusions. However, I did notice a few features. First, they used youth language. Many of the slang (youth) words were actually English words, so it wasn't particularly hard to understand. It was a bit funny to hear how many English words German youth use. Also, the two German schoolgirls that are studying at a Gymnasium [German middle & high school] are multilingual. The two schoolgirls that I met could speak English very well, almost completely. Besides that, they are both learning French. So their English was almost as good as mine and they could also speak French better than me. Because of that it was a bit discouraging to meet these people. I now feel embarrassed and dumb, because I speak languages poorly in comparison with them. I've noticed here in Europe how bad American language education is. Of course, language education is not so important in America, because most children already know English and

[3] Lotte's reference to *Rumänisch* (Romanian) likely refers to *Romanisch/Rätoromanisch/Bündnerromanisch* (Romansh), the smallest of the four official languages in Switzerland.

[4] *Ich habe heute auch die Multilingualismus der Schweiz gesehen. Auf vielen Schilder und Informationmateriale wurden Deutsch, Englisch, und Französisch gezeigt. Ich habe viele von jede von diesen Sprachen gehört und dies hat Sinn wegen der Nähe der Grenze Deutschlands und der Schweiz. Ich bin neugierig darauf, ob es Schilder auf Italienisch und Rumänisch in anderen Regionen des Landes gibt. Das wäre wirklich interessant, besonders in der Nähe der italienischen Grenze zum Beispiel. Ich fand es auch interessant, wie viele amerikanische Leute es in Basel gab. Ich habe überall amerikanische Englisch gehört. Ich denke, dass dies mit der Finanzindustrie in Basel zu tun hat, und deswegen kommen viele Leute aus den USA nach der Schweiz, in dieser Industrie zu arbeiten.* (Lotte, original German, Freiburg Diary)

> that is the most important language for students from other countries. However, we could still teach languages better. I think that most people that learn a language in the US couldn't actually speak it.[5] (Jens, author translation, Freiburg Diary)

Jens commented on how the Germans he interacted with accommodated their speech to be more comprehensible to L2-speakers, noticing how the prevalent use of English in youth language made their social dialect easier to understand for English speakers. He also observed how proficient the young Germans he met were in multiple languages thanks to the different roles that languages have in the European education system, which in turn made him feel insecure and frustrated with the U.S. education system that he had gone through. The fact that it is mainly young people who translanguage between English and German with a natural ease reflects the links May (2011) highlights between English and ideologies of modernity, modernization, and cosmopolitanism. Jens recognizes the value that English has in our neoliberal society (Bernstein et al., 2015), which not only permeated educational systems but also the translanguaging in everyday language practices of, in this case, young Europeans.

While Jens made connections between German language variation and multilingualism as foreign language proficiency, other students who grew up multilingually, such as Matheo, took the course themes as an impetus to reflect on language variation and multilingualism in relation to his family languages. As a Russian heritage speaker, Matheo was particularly interested in connecting with Russian speakers in Freiburg, which prompted analyses of language variation in his home language.

> The Ukrainian immigrants were there and the people from my guest house were also there. It was very interesting to see all the different cultures. There were Estonians, Spaniards, Italians, and Americans, and everyone spoke with one another. Many people spoke Russian, but most people didn't come from Russia. I learned a lot of words, and it showed me how important it is to learn a language to speak with other people. I speak Russian well, but it is what my parents and teachers taught. It is not what young people use in real life. It also showed me how a language can change in different situations. The language that I use with my parents is totally different from the language that I use with students. Because of that it is important to put yourself in different situations and speak to many people. I hope that I can do the same with German people, but I heard that it is very hard to make friends with German people. They need more time to get to know you in order to call you a friend. I am really afraid of this topic, but I think that I will try to speak to German people soon.[6] (Matheo, author translation, Freiburg Diary)

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[5] *Sonntag habe ich auch die Möglichkeit, Xs Freundinnen aus Deutschland kennenzulernen. Sie kennt ihnen wegen ihren Ausstausch Program. Ich denke, sie haben anders gesprochen, weil wir Amerikaner waren. Ihr Deutsch war einfacher und langsamer als die meisten Deutsch ich schon gehört habe. Also konnte ich nicht viele große linguistische Schlüsse machen. Jedoch habe ich ein paar Merkmale bemerkt. Erstens haben sie Jugendsprache benutzt. Viele die Jugendwörter war eigentlich englische Wörter, also war es nicht besonders schwer zu verstehen. Es war ein bisschen lustig zu hören, wie viele englische Wörter deutsche Jugende benutzen. Auch sind die deutsche Schulerinnen, die bei Gymnasium studieren, sehr mehrsprachig. Die zwei Schulerinnen, die ich kennengelernt habe, konnte Englisch sehr gut, fast vollkommen, sprechen. Außerdem lernen beide Französisch. Also waren ihre Englisch fast so gut wie Meine, und auch konnten sie Französisch besser als ich sprechen. Es war dadurch ein bisschen entmutigend, diese Menschen kennenzulernen. Ich fühle jetzt verlegen und dumm, weil ich kann Sprache im Vergleich zu ihnen schlecht sprechen. Hier in Europa habe ich bemerkt, wie schlecht amerkianische Sprachbildung ist. Natürlich ist Sprachbildung nicht so wichtig in Amerika, weil die meisten Kinder Englisch schon wissen, und das ist die wichstigste Sprache für Schuler*innen aus anderen Länder. Jedoch könnten wir noch Sprachen besser lehren. Ich denke, dass die meisten Leute, die eine Sprache in den USA lernen, könnten sie tatsächlich nicht sprechen.* (Jens, original German, Freiburg Diary)

[6] *Die Ukrainische Immigranten waren da, und die Leute von meinem Gasthaus waren auch da. Es war sehr interessant, alle verschieden Kulturen zu sehen. Es gab Estonians, Spanischen, Italienischen, und Amerikanischen Leuten, und alle haben mit einander gesprochen. Viele*

Similar to other SA students (Brown, 2021; McGregor, 2021; Quan, 2021; Trentman, 2021), Matheo used his linguistic repertoire to develop translingual relationships. This experience also prompted him to tie in course discussions on language variation to his home language, noticing how the Russian social variety used by young Ukrainian immigrants in Germany was different from the variety that he used to talk with his parents. While he was hesitant in sharing observations of German language variation in his diaries, he did take up the course themes in relation to his own family language. In other words, the course themes heightened his metalinguistic awareness of his own language practices, which in turn made him more interested in exploring similar encounters with German—this despite initial reservations due to perceived intercultural barriers.

To summarize, in the context of the SA course on language variation and multilingualism within the linguistic ecology of German in Vienna and Freiburg, all students explicitly established links between multilingualism and multidialectism. While many of these connections were related to observations that students documented on their SA sites, five of the nine students reflected on these connections on a more analytical level: Matheo, for example, observed the young Russian speakers in Germany using a different variety than his parents and teachers do, which led him to make generalizations about how different social factors influence peoples' use of different language varieties; Sandra's observations led her to hypothesize that German-speakers adapted their language to accommodate multilingual interlocutors; Jens, in turn, drew conclusions about the social functions of German youth using English in their slang, yet he also reflected on how political borders (in this case between Germany and France) had become linguistic borders. He came to this conclusion after he had been unable to detect speakers of Alsatian in Colmar, a region in which this dialect is supposedly widely used. Sebastian drew conclusions on the difficulties that multilingual immigrants had when learning a dialect of an L2, even if their first languages were rather close to the dialects, while Lotte engaged in theoretical and applied linguistic analyses that drew on her primary linguistics major, connecting language variation in German to the language ideologies that have shaped her experiences of L2 education. That is to say, while the course sharpened all students' observational skills, a slight majority of them were also able to draw analytical inferences about larger social and societal issues in the connection of multilingualism and multidialectism.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the value of integrating multidialectal and multilingual frameworks into L2 SA programs. By engaging with the sociolinguistic realities in different German-speaking regions, students developed a more nuanced understanding of language as a socially embedded, ideologically charged phenomenon. Their reflections reveal how dialectal variation and multilingualism are not separate domains, but intersecting dimensions of linguistic diversity that challenge dominant ideologies of standardization, monocentrism, monolingualism, and linguistic purity.

Rather than treating local and social varieties as peripheral or multilingualism as a complication, students came to see both as central to understanding how language functions in real-

Leute haben Russisch gesprochen, aber meistens Leuten kommen nicht aus Russland. Ich habe viele Wörter gelernt, und es zeigte mir, wie wichtig es ist um eine Sprache zu lernen, mit anderen Leuten zu reden. Ich spreche gute Russisch, aber es ist was meine Eltern und Lehrer gelehrt haben. Es ist nicht, was junge Menschen in wirkliche Leben benutzen. Es zeigte mir auch, wie eine Sprache sich in verschiedenen Situationen ändern kann. Die Sprache, die ich mit meinen Eltern benutze, ist ganz änders als die Sprache die ich mit Schülern benutze. Deswegen ist es wichtig, sich in viele Situationen stellen und mit vielen Menschen reden. Ich hoffe, dass ich die selbe mit Deutschen Leuten machen kann, aber ich habe gehört, dass es sehr schwer mit Deutschen Leuten Freunden bekommen ist. Sie brauchen viel mehr Zeit, ein Mensch kenenzulernen, um ihnen einen Freund zu nennen. Ich have viel Angst von diesen Thema, aber ich glaube, dass ich bald mit Deutschen Leuten sprechen probiere werde." (Matheo, original German, Freiburg Diary)

world contexts. Their observations ranged from noticing translanguaging practices in youth language to reflecting on their own heritage languages, thereby highlighting the importance of pedagogical interventions that foster critical language awareness. These interventions enabled students to interrogate their assumptions about language, identity, and legitimacy, and to recognize the sociopolitical forces that shape language use and language learning.

Importantly, this study underscores that students' engagements with linguistic diversity are deeply personal and context dependent. While some students drew on academic frameworks to analyze their experiences, others connected course themes to their own multilingual backgrounds or their educational socialization. This diversity of perspectives affirms the need for L2 education to move beyond one-size-fits-all models and towards pedagogies that connect with students' lived experiences.

In centering both multilingualism and multidialectism, this study advocates for a reimagining of L2 education that prepares students not only to communicate competently in their L2 by understanding how and why speakers adapt their language to achieve their communicative goals, but to also uncover systemic institutional, societal, and political forces that shape our ideologies about language(s).

By showcasing the relevance of combining multlidialectal and multilingual approaches, the findings in this paper point to a potential basis for further research into the ways in which language education can incorporate these two aspects into pedagogically appropriate ways. How these approaches can be applied to vastly different language contexts would provide further insight into to what extent findings of this type of pedagogy are broadly applicable, and what aspects must be tailored to the particularities of the linguistic context. Additionally, students' reception of such an approach is also idiosyncratic. Within this study, several individual factors influenced students' engagement, from proficiency in German, to motivation, and even resistance to linguistics. While many students showed enthusiasm for the linguistic content, others did not share this interest, which was reflected in the depth of their analyses. Thus, the absence of analytical engagement with connections between multilingualism and multidialectism in some questionnaires should not be interpreted as an inability to perform such analyses, but may simply reflect a lack of interest in doing so. Strategies for successful implementation of a combined multidialectal and multilingual approach must recognize that not all students will be as immediately open to these ideas, just as we see with teachers.

These insights also connect with some limitations of this study: The study materials did not explicitly prompt students to make connections between multilingualism and multidialectism. Rather, this theme emerged in students' responses and therefore warrants more systematic future investigation. To address the above-mentioned resistance of students to assume an analytical stance, future studies could incorporate a more in-depth qualitative component, such as student essays or interviews, in which learners can be prompted more explicitly to make such connections. Additionally, several contextual factors such as the small research participant size, the short duration of the SA program, the fact that reflective diaries were written in German, and the specific linguistic contexts in the SA sites and program mean that the results of this study cannot be generalized onto other populations or programs.

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Appendix

Excerpts from Profile Matrix for Category *Multilingualism*

Participant	Pre-Vienna	Post-Vienna, Pre-Freiburg	Freiburg Diary	Post-Freiburg	Case Summaries
Sebastian	[no data]	I almost used German entirely during my time in the city and the only time that I used English was with other students for the sake of saving time in most cases.	TB1: Seepark in Freiburg war schöner als ich vorher gedacht und erwartet habe, aber ich muss ehrlich sagen, was fehlt noch. Jedoch was Interessantes, was ich dort bemerkt habe war die unterschiedliche Sprachen, die man im Vergleich zu Wien zuhören konnte. Sprachen wie Französisch, Spanisch, und Italienisch war ganz häufig, als wir beim Wasser waren und ich hatte selten diese Sprachen in Wien gehört. Das hat mir aber ganz gut gefallen muss ich sagen, weil ich immer möchte mein Hörverständnis vieler Sprachen zu verbessern. Ich war am See mit [name] und wir haben einfach viel Zeit in der Sonne verbracht während unserer interessanten sprachlichen Beobachtungen. TB1: Dieses Eissalon hat bestimmte italienische Aspekte mit ihrem Menu und die Leute, die dort arbeiten haben alle Italienisch gesprochen. Das weiss ich nur, weil ich ein Gespräch zwischen einem Geschirrabräumer und einer Kundin belauscht hatte und dieser Junge hat nichts verstanden, weil er weder Deutsch noch Englisch konnte, als diese Kundin ihn gefragt hatte, ob sie ein Löffel bekommen könnte. Ganz interessant, weil ich nie so eine Situation geschaut habe seit ich hier in Europa angekommen bin. TB2: Nach einem kurzen Spaziergang sind wir am Kornhaus angekommen, damit wir unseren Kurs endlich beginnen konnten. Wir haben kurz eine Frau kennengelernt, die im Gebäude arbeitet und sie hat uns eine kurze Einleitung des Instituts gegeben und wer sie eigentlich sind. Sie arbeiten mit Sprache, Kultur und Geschichte auf Deutsch und Französisch. Ich habe mich dafür interessiert, weil ich noch Lust habe, irgendwann Französisch zu lernen, und sie bieten oft Sprechstunden und Kurse am Institut an, in denen man eine neue Sprache lernen könnte. Sie war echt nett und hoffe, dass ich mit ihr irgendwann nochmal reden kann, damit ich sie weiter fragen könnte, was sie hier machen und ihre Ziele davon. Es ist immer interessant mit jemandem zu reden, der sich dafür interessiert, Sprache zu unterrichten. Wir haben auch dieses Gespräch zwischen [name] und dieser Frau, beobachtet, in dem sie uns alle erzählt hat, dass sie gar nicht den regionalen Dialekt kann, obwohl sie hier seit so lange gewohnt hat. Dieses linguistische Merkmal war für mich besonders interessant, weil es zeigt, dass es noch schwierig ist, einen Dialekt zu lernen, sogar wenn der Dialekt direkt neben Dir existiert. Noch interessanter war, dass Badisch quasi eine Mischung von Deutsch und Französisch ist und diese Frau kann beide Sprachen, aber kann noch gar nicht Badisch. Also interessiere ich mich für die Entwicklung dieses Dialekts und wie es eigentlich möglich ist, ganz eigenartig in einer sprachlichen Weise zu bleiben, wenn eine Sprache auch eine "Mischung" genannt würde. TB3: Wir sind dann nach dem Shots Bar gegangen. Es war super klein und es gab so viele Leute drinnen, damit man sich wirklich nicht bewegen konnte. Aber mit dieser Erfahrung kann ich meinen sprachlichen Vergleich machen. Es ist für mich so interessant, dass so viele europäische Leute englische Lieder kennen, aber das ist nicht der Fall in den USA mit Liedern aus Europa. Sogar, wenn diese Leute nicht immer Englisch können, aber die Lieder singen sie noch und normalerweise sind diese Lieder auch alt. Also sie interessieren sich für die Kultur und die Musik ist ein Teil davon, aber man muss die Sprache ein bisschen kennen, um das zu machen. Sie können die Sprache ausborgen, ohne alles zu lernen, und das ist für mich besonders interessant. TB4: OK, jetzt kann ich ein bisschen über meine Zeit in Colmar sprechen... Der beste Teil dieser Erfahrung war, dass ich ein paar sehr kleine Erfahrungen auf Franzoesisch hatte. Natürlich kann ich Franzoesisch wirklich nicht, aber es hat Spaß gemacht, einfach "merci" und "non, merci" zu sagen. Ich habe früher diese Woche begonnen, Duolingo zu verwenden, damit ich ein paar Wörter oder Phrasen lernen konnte, und ich habe sie heute benutzt. Nach dieser Museum Erfahrung sind wir einkaufen gegangen und wir waren alle im Geschäft, nämlich North Face, und wir haben alles nur auf Französisch gekauft. Natürlich habe ich nicht alles verstanden, was sie mir gesagt haben, aber mit Kontext konnte ich einfach "no", "mercy", oder "Karte" sagen und sie haben mich verstanden. Es war lustig, weil alles auf Französisch gehlieben ist und, ohne auf Englisch zu sprechen. Es freut mich immer, wenn ich auf ein fremde Sprache sprechen kann. Er erinnert mich daran, wie viel ich diesen Prozess liebe, eine neue Sprache zu lernen und mit anderen Leuten auf diese Sprache zu reden. Als wir einkaufen gegangen sind, haben wir einfach mehr Essen gekauft und dann war der Tag schon vorbei. [name] und [name] haben Eis gekauft und sie haben eine Mischung aus Deutsch und Franzoesisch benutzt, um das Eis zu kaufen. Auch eine lustige Situation, wenn man nochmal ein "Anfänger" in einer Sprache ist. [...] Am Montag waren wir wieder im Seepark, aber dieses Mal habe ich was Neues bemerkt. [name] hat ein paar neue Freunde kennengelernt und er hat mir darüber erklärt, dass sie fast alle hier nach Freiburg aus der Ukraine sind. Dieses Merkmal ist aber nicht so überraschend, wenn man schon den jüngsten Nachrichten folgt, aber ich interessiere mich noch dafür. Es gibt ein kulturelles Merkmal davon, denn in Atlanta gibt es keine ähnliche Situationen, die ich zurzeit gesehen habe. Oder zumindest, wegen der Größe sind diese Merkmale unterschiedlich. Migranten sind hier ganz offensichtlich im Vergleich zu Atlanta oder anderen Großstädten, die ich in den USA besucht habe. Vielleicht sind sie ein großer Teil der Gemeinschaft im Vergleich zu amerikanischen Städten oder nochmal zumindest im Vergleich zu den Städten, die ich besucht habe. TB6: Mein linguistisches Merkmal wurde hier im Restaurant passiert. Unsere Kellnerin war nicht eine Muttersprachlerin und ich habe bemerkt, dass sie eine Mischung von Russisch und Deutsch verwendet hat. Dann habe ich daran gedacht, ob es vielleicht einen Dialekt gab, der aus einer mischung von diesen zwei Sprachen besteht. Wir haben so viel Zeit verwendet, über Dialekte, die sich wirklich nur auf die deutsche Seite der Sprache fokussiert haben, aber ich würde denken, dass es auch viele andere Dialekte gibt, die sich auf andere Sprachen fokussieren. Es war nur ein kleines Merkmal aber immer noch interessant daran zu denken.	Everything while getting food, going to museums/activities, essentially anything with other people in the city was entirely in German mostly just because I knew it was easier for them and a small opportunity to practice but everything social outside of the classroom was almost entirely English. Again, I found it really hard to find scenarios in which German in a more social context would be applicable in the city.	Sebastian's diary entries showcase many different insights into multilingualism, from the presence of French, Spanish, and Italian in Freiburg, to observations of multilingual encounters in his surroundings. For example, at an Italian ice cream café, he observed a workers' inability to communicate with a customoer because they did not know German nor English; or encounters with Ukrainian refugees prompted them to think about relationships of geography, migration patterns and multilingualism, or a Russian German speaking waitress prompted him to think about Russian influences on German dialects, whereas he was surprised about an L1-French German speaker not speaking the regional dialect Badisch, in his view a mix between the two languages. MS also reported on their playful attempts to start communicating in French with the help of some autodidactic learning strategies. Overall, MS sharpened their skills as an linguistic ethnographer, reflecting on linguistic and social issues through their multilingual encounters, and using their observation skills in their own first communicative attempts in French, a new language to them.
[Other research participants]	…	…	…	…	…
Thematic Summaries	3 students provided reflections, indicating that they expect to navigate a multilingual environment where dialectal variation, English–German language choice, and awareness of their own foreign linguistic identity shape their anticipated communication and intercultural engagement.	all students provided responses; consistent theme around dynamic negotiation of language choice in Vienna; students report primarily using German in daily interactions, especially with host families, in restaurants, shops, and public life; nearly all note frequent English-switching initiated by locals; many students encountered dialectal variation and noted differences between classroom German and colloquial Viennese usage; several describe multilingual environments, such as households using Spanish, German, and English; encounters with Serbian; and frequent English use among young Viennese; students also express heightened awareness of their foreign accents and occasionally feeling like outsiders, yet some frame English as socially valued; descriptions of using English in high-stakes situations;	Widespread multilingual encounters (by 9 students): Freiburg + region as highly multilingual spaces; heard French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Turkish, English, dialects; hostel + public spaces full of linguistic diversity; Colmar and Basel with visible multilingual signage; English as lingua franca (7 students): English used among international students; locals shifting to English less than in Vienna; English perceived as "cool," prestigious, widely used by youth; in Switzerland + Basel heavy English presence; dialect awareness (6 students): Badisch perceived as different/"mixed"; Swiss German diglossia; little dialect heard in Berlin; dialect recognition difficult for beginners; Elsässisch visible mainly in signage; Migration + mobility shaping linguistic landscapes(7 students): encounters with Ukrainian refugees, Russian-speaking communities, French day-tourists, Italian workers, Asian immigrants in service work; reflections on identity + language learning (8 students): admiration for multilinguals; feeling limited as learners; comparing German, Russian, English difficulty; multilingual environments motivating; awareness of American monolingualism; code-switching observations (5 students): switches among German–English; Italian, Turkish, Russian in workplaces; intra-community language mixing; multilingual service interactions.	mostly reports on own language use (German for everyday life, e.g., ordering food, shopping, navigating the city, museums, and public spaces; English for friends, emergencies, or when clarity is essential); several note that Freiburg requires more German use than Vienna, with fewer automatic English switches from locals; exposure to regional variation, including Badisch, Swiss German, and French-accented German, especially during trips to Basel and Colmar; encounters with multilingual settings , though less dominated by English compared to Vienna; students also hear Spanish, Turkish, French, and Alsatian	