

Language and Transnationalism.  
Language Discourse in Transnational Salsa Communities of Practice

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Britta Schneider

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1. Gutachterin: Prof. Dr. Marlis Hellinger
2. Gutachterin: Prof. Dr. Susanne Mühleisen

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## 1. ZOMBIES, LINGUISTICS AND SALSA

A close friend of mine recently gave birth to her second son. As he was born in Frankfurt, he is, according to his place of birth, German. Yet, it is not only the place of birth that determines identity. The cultural background of the parents is usually taken as part of a child's identity, too. And in many contemporary discourses, it is assumed that difficulties can arise if the parent's culture differs from the culture of the immediate environment. Some suggest that children may have a 'crisis of identity' or will develop 'split' identities and feel 'half this' and 'half that'. According to this view, the 'normal', monocultural identity comes into question if a child grows up with 'several cultures' at the same time. In the case of my friend's child, this perspective would lead to the assumption that the little boy should attend psychological counselling soon. While the mother is 'half' Serbo-Croatian and 'half' Hungarian, the father's parents stem from Spain and Greece.

Yet, in urban contexts in today's world, a cultural background like that of my friend's child is by no means an exception. Therapists would soon be overrun by patients if mixed heritage would necessarily lead to psychological problems. In cities like Frankfurt, London or Sydney, it has become normal that people from different backgrounds live together, interact, become friends, go the same schools and love each other. However, the categories with which culture, language and identity are described are often not able to grasp the complexities that have developed due to processes of globalisation, involving transnational media, global transport systems and migration. Categories such as *culture* or *nation*, categories that describe the world as materialising in static, bounded systems, draw an overly simple picture. Nevertheless, they are still relevant in the discourses that define social life. It would not be possible to describe the phenomenon of multicultural identity, as in the example above, without taking reference to the very same concepts that are put into question through the existence of such identities. The notion of "zombie category" (Beck 2001) illustrates this paradoxical situation. *Zombies* are creatures that are dead and alive at the same time. This is also true for many categories that were created before the effects of globalisation became part of everyday reality.

One category that is co-responsible for the construction of cultural "zombie categories" is the notion of *language*. Nation-states are usually co-defined through the languages their citizens use and membership to a culture often depends on competence in a certain language. National and ethnic groups are in many cases legitimated through the concept of a self-contained language that proves their existence. Despite this important social function of languages, an understanding of the concept of *language* as a culturally constructed category has received relatively little attention. Like *nation*, *gender* or *class*, the concept of *language*, as describing distinct structural entities, has not fallen from heaven. Languages as bounded entities, marking cultural boundaries, have developed historically and are the result of

specific discourses. However, it is only recently that the fact that *languages* are not ‘natural’ phenomena has been focused on by linguistic scholars (see e.g. Errington 2008, Gal and Irvine 1995, Makoni and Pennycook 2007, Pennycook 2004, Pratt 1987). Thus, in discourses of linguistics, the study of the discursive construction of *language* is a somewhat marginal field, while the deconstruction of cultural categories has been central in debates of other disciplines, such as cultural studies, gender studies or literary theory:

Although it is now a commonplace that social categories – including nations, ethnic groups, races, genders, classes – are in part constructed and reproduced through symbolic devices and everyday practices that create boundaries between them, this analysis is only rarely extended to language. (Gal and Irvine 1995:969)

The idea of *languages* as distinct entities is fundamentally intertwined with the idea that the world consists of different cultural “containers” (Pries 2008). Languages commonly legitimate the existence of “containers” of culture and the existence of languages is constituted through the existence of separate cultures or nations to which they ‘belong’. Thus, the concept of *language* is the result of a language ideology that is related to national epistemology. Considering the multiple ties of culture today, considering that it has become ‘normal’ that many nationalities co-exist in one place and transcend territorial, cultural and linguistic boundaries, the research project that is presented in the following asks whether the formation of *transnational* cultural phenomena brings about changes in *national* language ideology.

The study of language ideologies has mainly been discussed in the field of linguistic anthropology (see e.g. Bauman and Briggs 2000, Errington 2001b, Irvine and Gal 2000, Kroskrity 2000c, Woolard 1994). In this thesis, the key concern is a particular language ideology of European modernism and its relationship to nationalist epistemology, where language, group, space and identity are seen as congruent with each other. Among linguistic disciplines, linguistic anthropology has the longest tradition of questioning national language ideology (see Ch. 3 of this thesis), while structural linguistics especially has problematical (or rather: unproblematised) assumptions on the nature of ‘a’ language: “To speak of *the* language, without further specification, as linguists do, is tacitly to accept the *official* language of a political unit” (Bourdieu 1980 (2000):468). Language ideologies of linguistics since the 19<sup>th</sup> century often implicitly confirm the idea of the existence of culturally homogenous national groups. As a linguist, it is therefore important to ask whether transnational culture, which creates more complex relationships to culture, territory, language and identity, generates new or different language ideologies. These may, in effect, also question epistemological background assumptions of linguistics.

Language ideologies are, basically, ideas people have about linguistic items, their links and their relevance for reality and social life. Studying such ideas is of importance for several

reasons. First of all, language ideologies play an important role in everyday life, where social boundary construction often takes place on the basis of language competence. Languages have symbolic meanings and these have effects on group formation and social hierarchies. Secondly, the study of ideas about language is not only significant in studying the social, it is also important in studying language. For example, what people think about language can fundamentally shape language. Language change is not a ‘natural process’ (although there might be factors in language change that are based in language internal features, see e.g. Aitchison 2001), as languages only change in relation to the social meanings of languages (see e.g. Silverstein 1979). Thirdly, language ideologies are of wider relevance, as the generation of knowledge in general is intertwined with beliefs about language (see e.g. Bauman and Briggs 2003, Gal and Irvine 1995:993, Joseph and Taylor 1990 and Ch. 3). As this study is based on the question whether language ideologies have changed or are in the process of changing due to changed social structures – *transnational* social structures – it is the first aspect, language ideologies in social life, that is of prime attention in this thesis.

The motivation to study transnationalism and language, on the one hand, is of an intellectual nature, as transnational social structures question the ontological status of the concept of *language*. On the other hand, it is linked to ethical demands, as discrimination and exclusion are often reconstructed and made possible on the basis of linguistic differences that are taken as essential. “[T]he ethical demand to imagine *otherwise*” (Kearney 1988:364, quoted in Pennycook 2001:154) is here an inspiration to interrogate the idea that each culture is tied to one language. I want to illustrate this second point by taking reference to my own research background, which is based in sociolinguistics, language policy research and language rights discourse (see also Schneider 2005, Schneider 2010). In the discourses of these disciplines, certain essentialisms can be detected that are problematic as they are primarily based on “zombie categories”.

Before developing a critique of these categories, it is important to emphasise that discourses on language rights and language policy can be highly empowering and create an important association between academic thought and social activism. Teaching native languages to children of minority groups, for example, is an important tool in reaching equal educational outcomes and thus reaching equality of opportunity (see e.g. Cummins 1995, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1999, Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1989). Many countries refrain from native language tuition in non-dominant languages and thus reproduce structural inequalities in education systems and societies by systematically disadvantaging minority children (see e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1995b). In demanding language rights for minorities, however, the discussion is usually based on a relatively simple ‘one culture – one language’ approach: Greek children are supported in learning Greek, Turkish children should learn Turkish and Japanese children Japanese. In academic and educational discourses on language rights, the connection between a culture and its language is usually constructed as self-evident. This seems to be a useful strategy in



order to have a voice in the political arena of education in multicultural and multilingual contexts. “Strategic essentialism” (Spivak 1996 (1985)) is crucial to make demands accessible and understandable to the public, to politicians and to other policy designers; it can be important as the majority of nations are still reluctant to meet the requirements of basic language rights as demanded by UNESCO as early as 1953 (UNESCO 1953).

Yet, thinking of the little boy introduced above, it is clear that the approach can be problematic for quite practical reasons. It is not possible to say which language is the boy’s ‘native’ language and, probably, he will identify most closely with German and not with one of his parents’ languages. In which language should he receive lessons in his ‘mother tongue’? Next to practical issues, there are cases where the essentialising tendencies of arguments of language rights activists can counteract intended goals. I want to give an example from the German context. Teaching minority languages here used to be quite common in the 1980s; however, many forms of native language tuition in the different states (*Länder*) of Germany had the effect of reproducing the inferior status of migrants or *guest workers*, as they were called then (see e.g. Gogolin 1988, Menk 2000, Radtke 1998, Skutnabb-Kangas 1984). In some cities in Bavaria, for example, segregational classes for children of guest workers were implemented in which the language was used as a medium of education (Gogolin 1988). Although the native language of the children was here maintained, so that the education superficially conformed to the demands of language rights, its structural embedding resulted in institutional exclusion. It was not possible to obtain a degree in these classes so that the lower status of migrants in the job market was enforced. Furthermore, some official policies openly asserted that children of guest workers were to be taught in their native language in order to legitimise re-migration in the case of unemployment (European Council 1977, Schneider 2005).

Many German educational programmes did enhance the status of minority languages within school contexts and supported the language needs of migrants (see e.g. Gogolin and Reich 2001); yet, the socio-political and public discourse of the time constructed marginalised, folkloristic images of migrant culture and identity that made it difficult to develop a positive identification with the respective cultures (Radtke 1998). The specific construction of multiculturalism in Germany strongly essentialised ethnic difference (Römhild 2003); guest workers and their descendants were constructed as ‘foreigners’, even in the third and fourth generation. This happened not only on the level of everyday discourse but became manifest in citizenship policies, which made naturalisation of German-born children a legal demand only after 2000 (Terkessidis 2000). ‘Foreigners’ were not allowed to vote and it was not assumed that they were part of the German civil society, as they were constructed as belonging elsewhere. In this context, those who had to attend lessons in their ‘native’ languages did not necessarily perceive this as positive support of their heritage culture. In an unpublished small-scale study conducted in Frankfurt in 2004–2005, some

individuals describe their experience in native language education as a form of humiliation, an ‘othering’<sup>1</sup> of those of non-German descent (for related discussions, see Schneider 2005).

Although meeting the requirements of language rights, teaching minority languages, depending on the political and discursive environment, can function as an instrument of exclusion, an institutionalised form of the perpetuation of the image of the ‘foreigner’. The consequence of the example of German *guest worker* education leads to an understanding that linguistic essentialism, assuming that people have to “stick to who they are” (see Djité 2006), can be a form of symbolic violence. This becomes particularly problematic in an age of globalisation where new identities are formed and hybrid cultures develop. As the number of people rises who are personally acquainted with experiences of migration, the number of individuals who are of mixed cultural background rises, too. Though native language tuition serves to protect the cultural and linguistic rights of minorities, the theoretical problem continues of how to protect rights of people who do not easily fit into ethnic categories or who do not want to be associated with a certain culture.

Next to essentialist ascriptions of identity, there are other issues that make the *one culture – one language* framework problematic. Contemporary urban contexts are characterised by complex interactions between different ethnic groups and also by interactions across geographical boundaries, enabled by modern technologies, transport and back-and-forth migration (Clifford 1994:304). The notion of *transnationalism* (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc 1997, Hannerz 1996b, Pries 2001) tries to capture this quality of contemporary cultural development, where it is not possible to draw clear boundaries between cultures and places (see also 4.2. of this thesis). The question that turns up is how to overcome essentialised notions of identity without ignoring the crucial role of language. How can language and identity be conceptualised in a transnational world? How can we speak about language without assuming that there are fixed communities to which languages are ‘naturally’ tied? How can be spoken about the *zombie* category of language without giving it an ontological, ‘natural’ status?

These problems are not only of theoretical and ethical interest but also pose questions to issues of methodology. In order to understand the role of language in transnational social contexts, where it is assumed that ethnic belonging is no longer the prime determiner of social categorising, it is, firstly, necessary to study the social meanings that are now attached to linguistic features. Secondly, it is necessary to do so in transnational environments, as investigations of national or ethnic groups would easily reproduce the framework that is sought to overcome. This thesis, instead of studying speech data, analyses ideas connected to speech under the assumption that language ideologies may be part of the production of new social formations. In studying the social meanings of language, the interest is in “a set of

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of ‘othering’ was developed in the context of philosophical and post-colonial discourses and, roughly, describes the process of categorising other people as ‘different’, which forms the legitimation for their exclusion or subordination (Lacan 1991, Said 1978).

ideas or ideologies about the nature of social value and the role of language in producing that value” (Gal 1992 quoted in Irvine 2001:32). The study of these values is conducted with the help of ethnographic methodology in order to gain an ‘insider’s’ perspective into the social meanings of languages (see Ch. 5).

The aspiration to examine transnationalism and its effects on language ideology requires that communities are studied that constitute themselves in transnational cultural contexts. In the case of this study, the practice through which these communities are constituted is *Salsa* dancing. Dancing Salsa is the activity of learning and performing a Caribbean-derived dance. The study of Salsa communities as unit of analysis prevents the circular reproduction of essentialist categories such as citizenship, country of origin, or mother tongue, and allows for the application of contemporary theories of cultural practice (see Ch. 5 and e.g. Barton and Tusting 2005, Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999). To ensure their transnational positioning, the communities are studied in national contexts where the dance is not part of the traditional heritage, namely Germany and Australia. The decision to study German and Australian communities where people dance Salsa – and do not practice yoga or fold origami figures – is based on various considerations.

First of all, Salsa dancing has become a highly popular phenomenon worldwide. From Japan to Greece, from Canada to Senegal, Salsa dance clubs are nowadays found all over the world. The activity of dancing Salsa is furthermore often related to certain language practices, as Salsa music, which is listened to while dancing, is mostly sung in Spanish. In the national contexts that were observed in the context of this study, there are quite a number of people of non-Hispanic descent with a lively interest in the Spanish language, who enthusiastically identify with it. This makes Salsa communities an interesting example for studying non-essentialised forms of language identity. Additionally, Salsa brings along local ethnic mixing, as some dancers in Salsa communities relate to the dance due to their cultural heritage, while others do not.

*Salsa* means *sauce* in English, which refers to the mixed cultural origin of the music style, based in traditions of Caribbean dance culture and North American jazz (see Ch. 6) – it is transnational in origin. Salsa is rooted in and connected to Latin culture, which is also transnational, as *Latin* is a term that refers to people and culture of Latin American descent and, in its contemporary meaning, it is furthermore related to migration histories of Latin Americans and Caribbean people to the United States (Pietrobruno 2006:108). Many people only start to identify with being ‘Latin’ once they live in a country outside of Latin America (see e.g. Papadopulos 2003). Latin people or ‘Latinos’ (for a discussion of the two terms see Pietrobruno 2006:108-109) have been referred to as “delocalized<sup>2</sup> transnation” (Flores 2000). They do not form an ethnic group but, nevertheless, especially outside of the

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<sup>2</sup>Original spelling is kept in quotes.

countries of Latin America, have developed a sense of a common identity<sup>3</sup>. Thus, Salsa communities, with their transnational Latin and mixed origins, their many non-ethnic Spanish-speaking members and their ethnically hybrid constitution, form an interesting case for studying language ideologies in a transnational environment (the choice is thus also inspired by the critique of the “linguistics of community” – see 4.2. and Pratt 1987, Rampton 2000b).

The type of identity that is constructed in Salsa communities, in its scope, is obviously different from an identity type such as, for example, gender or ethnicity. However, it is exactly its precarious, temporary and also consumerist nature, which differs from ‘traditional’ conceptions of identity, that makes Salsa and its ideologies and discourses interesting for studying the development of language ideology in a capitalist culture with transnational connections. While stability and order have been tacit assumptions of studies of the social in structuralist approaches,

[r]andomness and disorder have [...] become much more important in recent social theory, where instead of trying to define the core features of any social group or institution, there is major interest in the flows of people, knowledge, texts and objects across social and geographical space, in the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, and in fragmentation, indeterminacy and ambivalence. (Rampton 2000b:11)

Despite the interest in transnational, precarious forms of culture in this thesis, an over-celebration of the transnational dimension should be avoided. After all, national discourses are still decisive factors in everyday life and determine very real boundaries and identities. Cross-national comparison, as envisaged in the present study, intrinsically allows for a visibility of national discourses and enables study of the influence of national political contexts and language policy discourses on localised transnational culture (see Hornberger 2005 on the need for cross-national comparison in language policy research). The two countries chosen, Germany and Australia, have very different histories and ideologies of citizenship and belonging, a contrast that increases the likelihood of national discourses becoming visible. Germany, with its tradition in a nation-state based ideology of belonging, contrasts with Australia as an immigrant nation, in which a tradition of acknowledging diversity prevails, at least in official terms. Differences also become evident in the different roles of the German and the English language, as English symbolises not only national belonging but also functions as a ‘global’ language.

This points to one of the crucial outcomes of the study of transnational language ideologies – the fact that different discourses, related to different geographical ‘levels’, interact in the constitution of local discourses. In order to get a deeper grasp of this

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<sup>3</sup> However, the idea of a pan-Latin identity has been fought for already in the 19th century, e.g. by Simón Bolívar (Zeuske 2008), and remains vital in contemporary politics – see e.g. UNASUR (Unión de Naciones Suramericanas), which seems to have brought the old ideal of a united South America a step forward.

argument, the theoretical background assumptions of the study have to be clarified in detail. This will happen in subsequent chapters. Before this, the following short summary of the respective chapters will give an overview of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 introduces the foundation of the theoretical approach towards language ideologies. As mentioned above, this study is related to questioning categories that are usually seen as self-evident (the *nation*, a *language*, etc.). Questioning categories that are commonly taken as ‘given’ (Pennycook 2001:7-8) is strongly inspired by Foucauldian discourse theory. A *language*, in this sense, is understood as a product of knowledge that has to be questioned, as, in the words of Michel Foucault,

[w]e must question those ready-made syntheses, those groupings that we normally accept before any examination, those links whose validity is recognized from the outset; [...]. And instead of according them unqualified, spontaneous value, we must accept, in the name of methodological vigour, that, in the first instance, they concern only a population of dispersed events. (Foucault 1972:22)

A thorough introduction of discourse theory, mainly based on Foucault, is found in Chapter 2. The discursive approach allows for a poststructuralist, non-essential view of language, culture and identity. Furthermore, the application of the theory – discourse analysis – is used as well in the analysis of historical discourse on language in nationalism (3.3.2.), as in the empirical chapters (Chs 6–10).

The theoretical assumptions of Chapter 2 form the basis of an understanding of the notion of *language ideology*, as introduced in Chapter 3. Language ideologies are understood as *discourses about language* and the Foucauldian understanding of discourse is here applied. The third chapter starts with a review of the field of language ideology and then discusses the concept of *language* and its relation to national epistemology. In order to deepen an understanding of the contingency of national language ideology, a brief historical digression illustrates the particularly influential discourse of German philology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Here, basic ideas on the ‘nature’ of language were formulated, which also shows the embeddedness of science in general, and language sciences in particular, into larger socio-political frameworks of thought (3.3.2.).

National ideologies of language in science and social life are then contrasted with more contemporary approaches to language, some of which can be called ‘transnational’ as they theoretically question the basic assumption of national language ideology (Ch. 4). After a basic grasp of the terms *transnationalism* and *cosmopolitanism*, linguists whose work deconstructs traditional assumptions regarding language and community are introduced (4.2.). The concepts developed by these scholars link to the basic research question of this thesis – What are the effects of transnational social structures on national language ideologies? If it is not national or ethnic frameworks, which discourses influence language ideologies in transnational contexts? In order to be able to analyse this, a theoretical and

methodological framework will be introduced that allows relating the different discourse topics that turn up in the empirical data to different “scales” (Blommaert 2007), to different spatio-temporal dimensions. It is not only different thematic issues that show in the data but these are related to different geographical levels. The local, the national, the global – all “scales” can affect language discourse in transnational contexts and an in-depth introduction of Blommaert’s scalar approach (4.3.) allows for an analysis of this interaction.

Chapter 5 establishes the methodological tools with which the data has been collected and gives an account of the applied qualitative methodology, which combines ethnography and discourse analysis and understands individual (micro-)discourse as connected to social (macro-)discourse (Jaworski and Coupland 2006b). Next to the introduction of ethnographic research methods, an important methodological concept is the *Community of Practice*, which is applied in the definition of the respective Salsa communities. Furthermore, linguistic methods are introduced that are employed in the analysis of discourse data from interviews.

In Chapter 6, some basic background information on Salsa is given – its history, development and main values. The chapter also introduces the appropriation of Salsa in the contexts of Sydney and Frankfurt, the basic structures of the communities and some of the general issues in the cultural activity of Salsa dancing.

In Chapters 7 to 10, discourses and language ideologies of the fieldwork in Salsa contexts are introduced. As the whole idea for this research is based on ideas that link to language policy and language ideologies of belonging, the national-comparative perspective of Australia and Germany intends to ensure a politically engaged grounding. However, the gathered data has made some amendments necessary. The Sydney Salsa communities were so complex and enlightening, and indeed interesting to compare among themselves, that two chapters contrastingly describe and analyse the discourses of these communities (Chs 7 and 8). The communities are highly illustrative of trajectories of different transnational discourses and their effects on local language ideologies. As a consequence of the results from the Sydney case, the study of a German Salsa community is reduced to one chapter (Ch. 10) and the cross-national comparison takes less space than originally planned. Nevertheless, the national level is still in focus – Chapter 9 is devoted to national discourses of Australia that have appeared in the data of the Sydney communities and the national discourses of Germany are part of Chapter 10.

Chapters 7 and 8 introduce the analysis of fieldnotes and interview data with members of Sydney’s Salsa communities. The two Communities of Practice are a fascinating example of the localisation of global flows as they are two separated communities with different values and different discourses. One community is an English-only community where almost no native speakers of Spanish can be found and where consumerist, competitive values are highly present. The other group is a mix of middle-class ‘white’ Australians and Latin Americans, who define themselves as culturally interested, performing ‘cosmopolitan’

identities (Hannerz 1990) and conceiving of multilingualism as an asset. In this group, non-native speakers of Spanish often strive for the acquisition of the language. The micro-discourses in the interviews with the members of the respective communities demonstrate the different orientations towards language and it is assumed that these discourses are related to larger macro-discourses, thus giving insights into language ideologies of a broader scale.

Thus, both communities relate to transnational scales. One community is connected to the dominance of transnational discourses of capitalism, the commodification of culture and the hegemony of English. The other community is an interesting example of influence from a transnational scale that fosters cosmopolitan values and shows a certain degree of deconstruction of the language–identity nexus. Additionally, next to the transnational scale, the national level is another crucial discourse from a broader level. Discourses from the national, Australian level are highly influential and form an important aspect in the constitution of the language ideologies of both Sydney communities. Language ideologies detected in the interviews that relate to the Australian national level proved to be so central that they are the subject of an extra chapter (Ch. 9).

The outcomes of the Sydney example will be compared with a study that has been realised in the same manner in Frankfurt/Germany, which confirms the discursive dependency of micro-discourses on, in this case, national macro-discourse of essentialism and belonging (Ch. 10). Here, essentialism that is found on the national level also figures in the language ideologies of the members of the community, but it is also linked to transnational discourses, so that the creation of multilingual cosmopolitan identity – though with stronger references to authenticity – is also vital.

Chapter 11 will return to more theoretical concerns. The chapter will first engage in a theoretical analysis of the discourses documented in the previous chapters and ask which scales come into play and interact in the local discourses of the Communities of Practice. The interaction between discourses from different scales seems to be a crucial aspect in the formation of contemporary language ideologies. Secondly, it will be asked whether empirical results show signs of new language ideologies – Are there *translingual* (Pennycook 2007) language ideologies or even language practices that deconstruct the concept of the language system? An important outcome of this analysis is the fact that different languages can express different ethnicities, but, at the same time, they can also relate to other discourses of social relevance. Multilingualism with Spanish and English, for example, is described as “cool”, while the language English is strongly intertwined with discourses of capitalism. *Languages* thus remain important analytical categories but they seem to relate to a multiplicity of social boundaries, instead of being signifiers of nation or ethnicity only.

Finally, the consequences of multiple language boundaries for language policies in a globalised world are discussed. It is understood that, in the realm of language policy, a critical approach to linguistic epistemology is crucial for strategies aiming at social equality in

contemporary societies. Thus, although many notions that seem vital in the discourse of language rights, language shift and language death are aimed to be deconstructed, this thesis nevertheless understands itself as a contribution to these fields, assuming that undertheorised and modernist concepts of language and identity are not necessarily helpful in supporting language rights of any kind. The final section will thus concentrate on language education as central aspect of the implementation of language policies. Here, the development of meta-discourses on language and culture – the creation of a *cosmopolitan* awareness – is found to be crucial in educating future generations who will have to negotiate with modernist *zombies* and transnational *Salsas* in their everyday life.



... there is no escape from ideology or discourse.  
(Pennycook 2001:88)

## 2. DISCOURSE

Language and its connections to nationalism and transnationalism is the focus of interest in this thesis. A theoretical and methodological approach is required that is able to grasp relationships between these fields of knowledge. The concept of *discourse* gives theoretical depth to the study of language ideologies, as it bases the analysis on a theory that allows recognising the connections between language ideologies, social discourse, knowledge and power. Discourse theory exposes the historical contingency of particular ‘truths’ (such as the idea of *languages*) and is the conceptual framework for approaching language ideologies. It will be introduced thoroughly, assuming that language ideologies are basically discourses about language. Additionally, discourse theory is crucial for the methodological approach that is used in analysing language ideologies in transnational Salsa communities (Chs 7–10), and in describing ideologies of language in historical discourses (3.3.2.). The application of discourse analytical approaches to spoken data will be discussed in the chapter on methodology (Ch. 5). The present chapter introduces theoretical aspects of the notion of *discourse*, focusing on discourse theory as developed by Michel Foucault.

After a brief definition of the term and its history, the epistemological foundation of *discourse* and its relations to structuralism and post-structuralism will be introduced briefly in order to get an understanding of the broader academic context and relevance of the concept. Next, a detailed insight into Foucauldian discourse theory and some of its central questions will be presented. As aspects of identity and its creation are often very prominent in debates around discourse and are also crucial in understanding the role of language ideologies in Salsa contexts, a special section is devoted to this issue. Lastly, the notions of *intertextuality* and *pretextuality* form a foundation for the methodological approach that will serve to study the discourses on language in Salsa communities.

A first definition of the term *discourse* is essential. As can be inferred from the sheer number of texts and text books on discourse (see e.g. Cameron 2001, Blommaert 2005a, Jaworski and Coupland 2006b, McHoul 2001, Mills 1997, Foucault 1972 (2001), Foucault 1970 (2000), Gee 2005, Geller 2005, Heller 2001, Jäger 2001, Keller 2005, Locke 2004, Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton 2001b, Williams 1999, and many more), it is an umbrella term for different strands of linguistic and social theory. Yet, there are some basic assumptions that are shared by all these approaches. Broadly speaking, *discourse* refers to language use above the sentence level (Cameron 2001:10).

Thus, in linguistics, the term is usually used when structures are analysed that are not within a sentence but above the sentence level (Mills 1997:135). The linguistic approach is

mainly based on concepts originally developed by philosophers of language, rather than linguists (Mey 1994:22, Mey 2001). This branch of the philosophy of language attempts to counter the approach to language that was developed by philosophers engaging in logics (ibid.). The latter approach tries to detect the truth value in sentences, while the critique, which has been established in the works of John L. Austin (Austin 1962), John Searle (Searle 1969) and Paul Grice (Grice 1975), shows that there are sentences in language that do not have a truth value as their content does not refer to anything that is either true or false. The main argument of the so-called *Speech Act Theory* is that language itself is used to act in the world, as shown by Austin in his seminal text *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Sentences that “perform a particular action in and of themselves” (Cameron 2001:69) are not describing the world, they change the world and are therefore what Austin calls “performatives” (see also Wirth 2002). A bet is a typical example of a “performative” sentence. A bet is realised through the act of saying a sentence, as in “I bet that Eintracht Frankfurt will win the next match”. The sentence cannot be ‘true’ or ‘false’ and the act of betting is constituted through the utterance itself. Thus, it can be demonstrated that language not only describes the world but is constitutive of social reality. While linguistics, in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, had mainly concentrated on structural aspects of language, the recognition that language acts are social acts formed the basis of a paradigm shift in linguistics (Mey 1994:20). That language is not only descriptive but an important part of social reality is crucial for an understanding of the term *discourse* and it was the starting point for the discipline of *pragmatics*, the study of meaning in context.

In discursive approaches in pragmatics, the main interest is in how language above the sentence level is structured, as for example in detecting adjacency pairs that occur in conversations (see e.g. Becker and Bieswanger 2006:175). Purely formal approaches to discourse have been the subject of critique as there are forms of this type of discourse analysis that attempt to “read off quite general discursive norms from imagined or invented texts, as though discourse were less a social phenomenon and more a formal system in its own right” (McHoul 2001:136). The type of discourse analysis that concentrates on the formal aspects of language at the suprasentential level is, however, crucial in analysing language use and its meaning. Knowing how language is used and structured in social contexts is vital in gaining knowledge in how the contexts themselves are structured, as most social situations depend on the usage of language. Formal discourse analysis has an interest in language itself, and is therefore called *formalism* or *structuralism* (Schiffrin 1994).

A second branch of discourse analysis is more interested in the way usage and structure of language influences the social – also called *functionalism* (ibid.). In this thesis, the emphasis is more on this second understanding, although both currents are interdependent<sup>4</sup>. For functionalism, the crucial point is the realisation that language does not only describe social

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<sup>4</sup> I will not engage further in a discussion of the main strands and historical developments of the first type of discourse analysis (see e.g. Mills 1997:135ff, Paltridge 2006:ch. 3).

reality but is a means to act in it. This constructive perspective on the functions of language has, above all, consequences for an understanding of the nature of social reality. If language constitutes social reality and not only describes it, social reality itself can be seen, at least partly, as based on language. This view on social reality has been adapted by non-linguistic sciences and the idea of the constitutive nature of language goes far beyond the level of single speech acts. In this understanding, all aspects of the social world are related to and rely on language – on *discourse* – as “discourse is beyond language in use. Discourse is language use relative to social, political and cultural formations – it is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order” (Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:3). More macro-oriented perspectives on language thus understand that discourse is “the instrument of the social construction of reality” (Van Leeuwen 1993:193, quoted in Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:28) and conceive of society in general as structured by the way people talk or write about and within society. Reality, in this perspective, is not a simple reflection of economic and political processes but “the reality of people’s circumstances is actively shaped by the ways in which they interpret and respond to [these processes]” (Rampton 2006:19).

Approaches to discourse that see it as constructive of social reality are sometimes also called ‘critical’ approaches (McHoul 2001). They often talk about discourses in singular forms (see McHoul 2001), as, for example, “the discourse of migration” or “the discourse of racism”. It is understood that these discourses, as larger bodies of texts and oral statements, made by individuals, experts or institutions, bring into being and form the very object they seem to be talking *about*. Discursive approaches on the use of language in society thus emphasise that language has “effects on thinking and expression” (Mills 1997:8), a thought that is similar to the *Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis* (see e.g. Kay and Kempton 1984:65-66, Whorf 1963) and also occurs in the discussion on the role of gender discrimination in language (Hellinger 2004). Yet, the ‘macro’ approach to discourse extends beyond the idea that language influences thought and has a rather radical perspective on the constructed nature of reality.

These points will be discussed in more detail in the following (2.2.), where the Foucauldian concept of discourse is presented. Before, a short examination of the epistemological embedding of theories of discourse gives access to the background assumptions of the theory and illustrates its own historical contingency.

## **2.1. MODERNISM, STRUCTURALISM AND POST-STRUCTURALISM – THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL GROUNDING OF DISCOURSE THEORY**

Considering why the study of discourse has become prominent in various academic disciplines in recent years, several explanations can be given. The broadening of linguistics, the role of language in contemporary capitalism and a new interest in the epistemology of the social sciences are all crucial elements in the rise of discourse studies (see Jaworski and

Coupland 2006b:3). Epistemological questions are highly relevant for the theoretical embedding of this thesis (see Ch. 1) and will therefore be pursued in this section.

Epistemology, the study of the nature of knowledge, of how to know what one can know, and the question where the categories with which we operate stem from, has been the content of philosophical debates for a long time. Broadly speaking, there are two tendencies that conceive differently the categories that describe the world. Basically, the one conceives that categories are 'givens' and the task of science is to find adequate descriptions for these categories. The second is an understanding that categories are a product of the human mind. Both tendencies have long traditions that reach back to antiquity. In relation to language, the two different epistemological approaches are often referred to as *formalism* and *functionalism* (a distinction that is also found in relation to discourse):

The formalist approach, which over the last century has staked out strong territory in the work of de Saussure, Chomsky, and the slew of formal grammars that have followed in the wake of this work, can be seen as part of an intellectual tradition that goes back through Kant, Descartes, Port Royal grammarians and ultimately to Platonic conceptualizations of ideal form. Here language exists as an abstraction outside its use; it is rational, organized and cognitive. The other tradition, which can be traced back to Bourdieu, Vološinov and Vico to Aristotelian notions of practical reason, stresses practice, use, empiricism and language as social activity; language is social, habitual, performative and variable. This tradition has had its expression in functional grammars, linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics and pragmatics. (Pennycook 2010:135)

In 20<sup>th</sup> century linguistics, the formalist approach has been predominant. This has to do with the dominance of modernist epistemology, which favours formalism and empiricism. That discourse theory has become prominent only in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has to do with the fact that social aspects of language became invisible in approaches that concentrate on structural aspects, and the focus on structures is related to modernist principles. The rise of discourse theory is linked to a questioning of such principles in post-modern thought (Behrens 2003).

Modern epistemology, obviously, has developed historically (see Bauman and Briggs 2003:ch.1) and is inclined toward the first of the two tendencies introduced above, the idea that categories are 'givens'. Glyn Williams defines the modernist perspective on the world, the human and society as follows:

Modernism involves the affirmation that the essence of being human pertains to a world governed by natural laws which are capable of discovery through reason, laws to which reason itself is submitted. It identifies the people, the nation, as a collective humankind which constitutes a social body which also functions according to natural laws. (Williams 1999: 11)

In modernist epistemology, natural laws are understood as existing outside of the human mind or of human will, as existing *a priori*. Accordingly, in the modernist study of language,

language has been predominantly conceived as an *a priori* category, as something that exists independently of human minds, although within them. “Since modern science is predicated upon the elimination of the will from any object of inquiry, human desire, action, and creation come to be excluded from the ‘scientific’ study of language” (Joseph 2001:75). In this perspective, language is considered a ‘real entity’ and an essential trait of humankind. Any approach to language that considers language to be a transcendental system that structures communication can be described as a form of modernist essentialism (Joseph 2004:84). Noam Chomsky’s theory on syntax (e.g. Chomsky 1966) is the most prominent theoretical concept that describes language as an innate, given structure in the human mind. Although there are differences in the manifold studies of modern linguistics,

what unites all linguistic essentialists is the belief that deep and true functioning of language is to be located outside the human will, usually in some version of an unconscious mind; or in ‘society’, still understood as some sort of quasi-metaphysical force emanating from groups of people and above the individual will; or in the working of semiotic systems themselves, again some kind of nebulous, metaphysical realm. (Joseph 2004: 84)

The modernist desire to find universal explanations for human behaviour (Bauman 1992 in Rampton 2006: 13), to find eternal truths, can be found in many forms in the modern study of language, where language is seen as a symbol or indicator of social or psychological reality.

Modernist perspectives on language are also found in *structuralism*. Structuralism is a key framework in understanding 20<sup>th</sup> century linguistics. Structuralism is based on the concepts of Ferdinand de Saussure (Saussure 1913 (1993)), whose ideas have to be understood as a reaction to the study of language in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where the diachronic study of written text was the prevailing activity of linguists (Joseph 2001:74). Saussure maintains that instead of studying language in a diachronic way, as in 19<sup>th</sup> century historical-comparative linguistics (Robins 1997:ch.7), language should be conceived as a synchronic system. This perspective has been one of the most basic tenets of 20<sup>th</sup> century linguistics (Becker and Bieswanger 2006: 4-6). Structuralist, synchronic linguistics takes a homogenous language system at a certain point in time as the given object of study (see e.g. Saussure 1913 (1993), Chomsky, 1965) and “henceforth designate[s] the study of language systems in and of themselves, divorced from external considerations of a historical or psychological sort, or any factor having to do with actual speech production” (Joseph 2001:74). In structuralist approaches, the systematically organised differences of a system are – at least for analysis – considered a stable network with clearly defined boundaries. The distinction between synchronic and diachronic linguistics is seen as a necessary analytical step in order to be able to study the system (see e.g. Aitchison 2001:38).

Due to the prominence of structuralism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, linguistic studies predominate that concentrate on language structures as independent of social contexts. The study of language in modernist linguistics thus privileges structural aspects of

language. In some cases, within this predominance of the structural, it is claimed that there are universal grammatical structures that organise all languages (see e.g. Chomsky 1965) – the social and historical base of language systems is made completely invisible. Language use, in these structural, modernist approaches, is seen as “little more than a product/output generated by semantic, grammatical and phonological systems, which are themselves regarded as either mental structures or as sets of social conventions” (Rampton 2006:16). In a critique of linguistic essentialism, Joseph even goes as far as claiming that the theory of universal grammar “proceeds from a rhetorical move, when grammar, which originated historically as a device for language teaching, was reconceived as actually existing in the human mind” (Joseph 2004:84).

The critique of essentialism and of structuralist methodology has led to a growing popularity of *post-structuralist* thought. The post-structuralist approach argues that any transcendental or essential object has to be regarded with suspicion. Meaning does not exist *a priori* but is constructed in interaction and through the ‘making’ of difference (which holds also true for constructions of language). Post-structuralist theory does not get rid of the idea that cultural systems rely on systematically organised differences. Thus, Saussurean structuralism is still an elementary basis for post-structural thought but post-structuralism eschews approaching systems as synchronic, static entities with clearly defined borders. Approaches to discourse are post-structuralist, as discourse is seen as constitutive of the world, while language is regarded as the prime means of the construction of social reality. The consequence for language is that it is itself regarded as a product of discourse.

Arguing that there is no fixed, synchronic system of language, and assuming that meanings, in a way, meander, is basic to Jaques Derrida’s notion of *différance*. Derrida is one of the most established thinkers of post-structuralism (Derrida 1991 (2000)). His blend *différance* is a pun in French and is created from the words *different* and *to defer*. Poststructuralist methodology avoids the analytical ground of the fixed system. The crucial question that Derrida poses is how the differences within a system come into being. The concept is complex; however, as a first approach “we will designate as *différance* the movement according to which language, or any code, any system of referral in general, is constituted ‘historically’ as a weave of differences” (Derrida 1991 (2000):90, see also Wirth 2002). Meaning is constructed through difference. At the same time, meaning is always postponed – “[w]e take or give signs. We signal. The sign, in this sense, is deferred presence” (Derrida 1991 (2000):87). One can never entirely grasp meaning, meaning always refers to other meanings, but these meanings constantly change and all meaning is thus necessarily deferred. As meaning derives from other meanings and can never be stable, there is no fixed presence outside the system of meanings that would ensure static meanings. Any ‘absolute’ meaning is always suspended. Thus, meaning is impossible to define completely, meanings ‘wander’ around and no one can ever stop the continuous flow of meanings. This leads to a

fundamental instability in textual meaning (Locke 2004:35), the analysis of which is also referred to as *deconstruction*.

There is the risk of reducing the idea of *différance* to the mere fact that meanings constantly change and only exist in relation to their constitutive outside. The philosophical implications of Derrida's theoretical conceptions go beyond that but are not introduced at this point. For approaching discourse analysis as post-structural theory and method, it is crucial to understand that although meanings are dependent on the system in which they exist, no one is ever able to grasp an absolute meaning or to understand a whole system or even a whole signifier. Post-structuralist discursive approaches maintain that it is in interaction, in discourse, that meanings come into being. Interaction may generate a system but, in a post-structuralist view, it is not an underlying, universal system that brings into being meaning and discourse (Johnstone 2008:125).

The post-structuralist move from essentialism to constructivism has become crucial for the epistemology of contemporary critical social sciences. Constructivism, the idea that social reality is partially constructed through discourse, allows conceiving of the world in different manners:

All knowledge, all objects, are constructs: criticism analyses the processes of construction and, acknowledging the artificial quality of the categories concerned, offers the possibility that we might profitably conceive the world in some alternative way. (Fowler 1981:25)

As social criticism is particularly relevant for the social sciences, early accounts of the constructed nature of social reality have appeared before the actual advent of post-structuralism. The 1966 book *The Social Construction of Reality* by sociologists Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) is a key publication. The authors maintain that concepts of society and of social roles are created in individual interaction and then become institutionalised over time. Therefore, social reality is constructed and not simply 'given'. The ideas by Berger and Luckmann are thus very close to discourse theory, although they do not make use of the term. An important question that is asked is how it is possible that objective, factual reality is based on sense that, originally, was created in an individual and subjective context (Berger and Luckmann 1987:20).

That interaction – discourse – creates 'real' reality points to the fact that constructed reality should not be mistaken for the unreal. A post-structuralist discursive perspective should not be interpreted as an understanding that all modernist and essentialist beliefs and values have become irrelevant (Rampton 2006:19). Notions such as *system*, *category* or *boundary* are not eschewed (a point that will be elaborated below, section 2.2.). On the contrary, one should be

reluctant (...) to give up entirely any notion of system and boundary, any notion of constraint (whether physical or social). At the same time, we can no longer see these as fixed, natural, essentialized or objective; rather, we want to understand them as ongoing processes of social construction occurring under specific (and discoverable) conditions (many of them of our making, all of them made sense out of in some way). (Heller 2007c:341)

In order to enlighten our understanding of these processes, “discourse analysis is one possibility and method” (ibid.). Discourse analysis and theory, as a post-structuralist framework of thought, is particularly effective in overcoming simplified notions of society and language in an age of changing frameworks that concern these two categories. The questioning of given categories and an understanding of the artificial quality of common sense ideas on language and society are crucial in a time when the role of the nation-state changes and the power of transnational and non-governmental forces rises (see e.g. Beck 1997), a process which affects epistemological principles of modernist thought. In the following, I will focus on Foucault’s work on the nature and function of discourse in society. The decision to concentrate on this author is based on his attention to the questioning of ontologies or ‘givens’.

It should not be forgotten at this point that other thinkers have developed different arguments on the basis of discourse theory. Jürgen Habermas, for example, in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas 1995), develops the concept of *communicative rationality*. His main motivation is not to deconstruct principles of society but to show that human communication has the potential for rationality. He conceives of social acts as mediated through language; however, he additionally maintains that rationality is an outcome of successful communication (see also Wirth 2002). Thus, according to Habermas, the normative base of society is in language, which allows for social interaction, and in which rationality is developed. It has been argued that Habermas’s concept remains modernist, as he bases his argumentation on the pre-assumption that the concept of *rationalism* exists, which would be questioned in post-structuralist approaches (Behrens 2003:22).

Another important theory on the construction of social reality is Pierre Bourdieu’s work, where particularly the notion of *habitus* conceptualises the social-historical foundation of socially relevant concepts:

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)

Neither the creation of the habitus of an individual, nor the development of rationality, are focused on in this thesis, and Bourdieu’s and Habermas’s concepts of discursive action will not be pursued at this point. As the main issue here is to examine contemporary language



ideologies and the potential deconstruction of categories, an embedding of the research design into Michel Foucault's concepts on discourse is constructive. Foucault has developed a most comprehensive theory on the functioning of fields of knowledge in society. The underlying question of this thesis is whether new forms of social knowledge have developed through new forms of social structure. Thus, "the epistemological scepticism of Michel Foucault", his proposition that there is a "need to always question our own and other's assumptions" (Pennycook 2007:38-39), and his focus on fields of knowledge as constructing social reality, forms the foundation for a theoretical understanding of language ideologies and the methods with which they are studied.

## **2.2. FOUCAULDIAN DISCOURSE THEORY – DISCOURSE CREATES THE THINGS IT NAMES**

Michel Foucault (1926–1984) is one of the most influential but also one of the most controversial thinker of post-structuralist discourse theory. His writings are partly very difficult to read or even obscure, his topics and theses are sometimes strikingly unusual, he "challenges many of the preconceived notions that we have about a wide range of different subjects" (Mills 1997:16); his theories changed during the years (Raab 1998:18) and do not comprise a coherent system (Mills 1997:17). Foucauldian discourse theory is post-structuralist in the sense that it questions any given category; post-structuralist principles of the constant deferral of meaning are integrated into a theory of society and power, which are both seen as constituted in and through discourse (Raab 1998:15).

A *discourse*, in the Foucauldian approach, is generally understood as an area of social knowledge and the statements that are made in and about a particular realm (McHoul 2001:139). This interest belongs to the functionalist understanding of discourse – it is not concerned with structures in language above the sentence level but is concerned with the processes that are described as "beyond language" (see above and Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:3). It is important to understand that Foucault conceives of discourses not as groups of signs that relate to content or meaning but that he considers that discourses constitute the areas of social knowledge that are their topic. This understanding of discourse relates to the 'performative' aspect of utterances as described by Austin (see above). Thus, discourses are defined as "practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1973:74, translation in Cameron 2001:15). Typical examples for discourses are found in contemporary public debates, such as the discourse on 'security', the discourse on 'racism' or the discourse on 'globalisation'. The specific comprehension of these topics comes into being through the way they are written and spoken about. There are many different discourses, they are entangled with other discourses and all discourses together, according to this perspective, are responsible for structuring society.

Foucault is not so much interested in the functioning of language in such discourses but in "the mechanics whereby one [discourse] becomes produced as the dominant discourse"

(Mills 1997:19). For the creation of discursive dominance, the production of truth plays a crucial role. The production of truth is related to the reproduction of hegemony and ideology (Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:28). The aim of an analysis of discourse is to “denaturalize ideologies that have become naturalized” and to understand that “what we assume to be background knowledge or common sense in fact are always ideological representations” (Pennycook 2001:81). Such an approach is an adequate tool in interrogating ‘naturalised’ national language ideologies, which constitute *languages* as quasi-natural entities that correspond to cultural “containers” (see Ch. 1).

The Foucauldian understanding of discourse refers not only to the symbolic sphere that determines meaning but also relates to the practical and material level, namely social practice and material artefacts. The term discourse, for Foucault, “refers to a broad conglomeration of linguistic and non-linguistic social practices and ideological assumptions that together construct [e.g.] power or racism” or other fields of knowledge (Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton 2001a:1). Thus, the interest of discourse analysis lies in the whole network of statements, objects, structures and acts that contribute to the existence of a certain field of knowledge in a given society. It is therefore not only language that is of potential interest but everything that is responsible for the production and reproduction of a certain concept or idea as true<sup>5</sup>.

A famous example for effects of discourses on the material realm is found in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1991), where the architecture of prison buildings is discussed. The desire of modern regimes to observe criminals all-encompassingly, instead of punishing them physically, is related to a specific understanding of the control of populations (see McHoul 2001:142). It is simultaneously tied to a particular understanding of power and the role of human beings in society. The discourse on the control and disciplining of populations through a state power can be detected not only in language but also, in this example, in the specific architecture of a particular type of prison building, in which the guard can see all inmates all the time but the inmates are unable to see the guard (this architectural structure is called a *Panopticum* – see Foucault 1991). Another example that shows the entanglement of the material and the immaterial is the spatial structure of a school classroom. Not only is the teacher the person who is allowed to determine the discursive structure of the lesson, the position of the teacher is also confirmed and co-constructed by the way in which chairs, tables and the blackboard are positioned. Co-constructors of discourses can be institutions, organisational structures, policies; it can be acts or things from more informal realms such as clothes (determining gender identity or job identity), ways of moving (also responsible in

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<sup>5</sup> In some newer debates, it is assumed that the notion of *practice* might replace the term *discourse*, on the basis of the argumentation that the notion of practice includes the “level of mediating social activity”, a “meso-political space of practice that lies between the local and the global” (Pennycook 2010, Schatzki 2001). Yet, in the understanding of *discourse* as it is employed here, social practice is seen as part of a discourse, as the effects of discourse on micro-levels, as well as on meso-levels, is seen as contained in the Foucauldian theory of discourse. The term *discourse* is kept, bearing in mind that strictly dichotomous understandings of micro–macro relationships (as, e.g., *discourse vs. individual*) do not make sense according to this theory.

producing certain identities) or processes of consumption. All these entities and processes create meanings and are entangled in broader webs of meaning – in discourses. Discourses thus not only construct social structures but, concomitantly, certain ways of knowing, acting and being in the world.

Although discourses in this understanding include all types of cultural artefacts, language plays a central role in their constitution. Language is the conveyor of meaning and of ideas about objects, people and things. Any given object that has no linguistic meaning may be perceptible by an individual and might also be attributed with an individual meaning but it would be impossible to observe this. Also, it has to be noted that meaning is the foundation of the construction of reality, as “[a] thing to which I allocate no meaning is not a thing to me” (Jäger 2001:42). The study of language and linguistic utterances is therefore a valid method in gaining insights into discursive constructions of reality. It is impossible to document all single items that are responsible for the creation and reproduction of discourses in a given social space. Discourse analysts usually focus on language in analysing identifiable discourses, as, for example, the discourse of sexism or the discourse of racism, including institutional language as laws or policies. Thus, although material artefacts are understood as being a vital part of discourses, “many major approaches to discourse work under the assumption that what we understand as social reality is, at least in part, produced through language and social interaction” (Jaworski and Coupland 2006a:43). Particular uses and contents of language are thus analysed as embedded in and indexical of social realities and power structures.

It is a basic tenet in Foucauldian approaches to discourse that it is impossible for us to perceive anything without an influence of the meanings that discourses allocate to things, actions and processes. There is no ‘outside’ of discourse, neither in everyday lives, nor in science. The material gold, for example, of course exists in the real world. However, the raw material gold is connected to discourses that construct wealth and material value. It is not possible to detect the ‘true’ value of gold as everything that is known about gold is related to the discourses that construct gold as a valuable commodity, which plays a crucial role in the world of finance and capitalism. The actual value of a piece of gold in a given situation can be very small, it can be indeed completely worthless, if I am not in a situation where a relevant discourse constructs a piece of metal as being equivalent to a high amount of economic or symbolic capital. There is no language-independent concreteness and reality, there is no unmediated access to reality (Bublitz 2003:28,29).

Discourses, as fields of knowledge, can also be regarded as “simplified, often unconscious and taken-for granted, theories about how the world works that we use to get on efficiently in our daily lives” (Gee 2005:71). Without such theories, reality would not make sense to us. Anything in the social world is mediated, at least partly, through discourse and there is no escape from discourses that influence our perception of reality. As an example of ‘everyday theories’ that construct the social reality, James P. Gee (2005) gives an account of a study on

working-class men in the U.S. (Strauss 1992). The example illustrates the fact that human behaviour can be understood only within a certain discourse and, here, two models of understanding the world get into conflict. The observed men, in interviews, supported on the one hand the “American discourse model of success” (Gee 2005:81), which maintains that hard work leads to financial and social accomplishment. However, these men did not actually act according to the “success model”, as another discourse affected their daily life more effectively. In the “breadwinner model”, how the researcher calls it, other values are more important than those attached to the “model of success”. Spending time with the family and being responsible for community, family and friends, is seen as more important in this discourse. The behaviour of not conforming to the “success model”, from the point of view of this model, does not make sense, but not conforming to one discourse is usually a sign of conforming to another.

It would be unusual for human beings to act without attaching sense to an action<sup>6</sup>, and humans are “*par excellence sense makers*” (Gee 2005:93). Sense can only come into being within a certain context – which is here called *discourse*. The example of the working class men in the U.S. furthermore points to the fact that some discourses are more dominant than others. In any case, without such discourse models or ‘everyday theories’, human action and reality would not make sense. It is through these theories – these discourses – that reality is categorised and constructed. And from a discursive point of view, it is not only everyday social behaviour that is understood as constructed in discourse. Research in the natural sciences is also seen as being unable to give completely ‘neutral’ descriptions of reality, as research and science are also discourses that construct the world in a particular manner.

Due to the assertion that reality is dependent on discourse, Foucault and others have often been accused of denying any reality outside social discourse. However, claiming that reality is constituted in discourse, and saying that human action takes place in discourses, does not mean to deny the existence of an outside reality. “The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:108). Saying this,

Foucault is not denying that there is a reality which pre-exists humans, nor is he denying the materiality of events and experience, as some of his critics have alleged; it is simply that the only way we have to apprehend reality is through discourse and discursive structures. (Mills 1997:54)

Social reality presents itself to the individual *through* discourse, which is why it is not possible to perceive reality without the means of language and discourse. “The real itself is never defined as such by Foucault, since for him we have access only to the discursive structures which determine our perceptions of the real” (Mills 1997:50). In discourse

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<sup>6</sup> There are some currents in art that produce artefacts that try to destroy common patterns of meaning, as for example in dadaism. Yet, even the destruction of conventional meanings cannot escape the fact that the actual products will still be assigned with meanings of some sort.

analysis, questions on being and on the characteristics of things or people are thus substituted by questions about the dynamics of constructions and differences – ontology is replaced by constructivism. Far more important than the question of a reality behind discourse is the question of the reality that is created by discourse, at least from the discourse analyst's perspective. It is in this context important to remember that discourses themselves are seen as material realities, actualities that have their own semantic and cultural dynamics and that are even described as 'things' (*Sachen*) (Bublitz 2003:6).

The construction of 'things' in discourses does not occur in isolation from each other. Discourses interact and influence each other. The term that is used to refer to the complete set of discourses at a certain point in time in a given society is the *episteme*. The episteme is "the sum total of the discursive structures which come about as a result of the interaction of the range of discourses circulating and authorised at that particular time" (Mills 1997:57). Epistemes are defining what can be said in a particular era (Foucault 1970), as, in a given epoch, there are certain characteristics or rules of how to produce knowledge. These rules are unconscious configurations of symbolic order (Bublitz 2001:27). One could say that an episteme is the overarching 'discourse' that defines which discourses exist and how they function. The episteme has also been defined as the "range of methodologies which a culture draws on as self-evident" (Mills 1997:57).

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault is concerned with the way knowledge is produced in different times and assumes that there are qualitative differences in producing knowledge and truth in different eras. For example, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the classifications of nature by Carl von Linné and the universal grammar of Port Royal<sup>7</sup> function according to similar rules, as both conceive that signs can represent reality in a total and complete way (Rothe and Nowak 2008). It is assumed that the essence of a subject can be grasped by "accumulating large amounts of data relating to the subject and organising this material into tabular form" (Mills 1997:58). Tables and charts of this representative age are qualitatively different from, for example, Darwin's evolutionary theory or Humboldt's theory of language, which again both share certain characteristics in their way of conceiving of the world. Darwin and Humboldt, according to Foucault, belong to modernity. Here, the human subject, understood as defined by a particular culture but also as defining culture, has to justify why he or she is able to represent something. No longer is the representation of knowledge through classification felt to be sufficient, as from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the human itself, as 'founder' of knowledge, comes into focus (Foucault 1970:344). The knowledge produced in the *age of representation*, where it is assumed that the whole world can be classified if only the right categories are found (see Rothe and Nowak 2008), is qualitatively different from modernity, where knowledge is seen as dependent on the human subject.

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<sup>7</sup>The *Port-Royal Grammar* is a philosophical treatise on language by Arnauld and Lancelot (see Rieux and Rollin 1975). It assumes that there are universal mental processes that guide grammar (see also Chomsky 1966).

The science of language is one of the examples that Foucault uses to illustrate changes of epistemes. Within the representational episteme, “[w]ords are still investigated on the basis of their representational values” (Foucault 1970:233). Words are seen as representing given qualities, although different languages may represent these (same) qualities in different ways. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the concern with inflectional forms in different languages and the discovery that some languages share certain inflectional forms led to a change in the whole epistemological perspective on language. It led to an understanding that there are certain structures in languages that are independent of their representational value:

[T]hrough the inflectional system, the dimension of the purely grammatical is appearing: language no longer consists only of representations and of sounds that in turn represent the representations and are ordered among them as the links of thought require; it consists also of formal elements, grouped into a system, which impose upon the sounds, syllables, and roots an organization that is not that of representation. (Foucault 1970:235)

The “organization that is not that of representation” becomes the focus of subsequent studies of the science of language, particularly in 19<sup>th</sup> century historical comparative linguistics (Robins 1997:ch.7). This epistemological change is only one example for a change of the whole episteme, from the representational episteme to the modern episteme, in which the human itself, and the structures that human beings bring along, are at the centre of interest. In the modern episteme, different types of knowledge are produced that are qualitatively different from the forms of knowledge in the representational episteme, where the human, as the founder of knowledge, had not been accounted for.

*Episteme* is thus a term that denotes the underlying assumptions that are discursively produced, but that also make possible that certain discourses come into being. The episteme is a useful concept for studying language ideologies and their potential change in a post-national era. In analysing discourses on language that belong to the national era (as in 3.3.), the epistemological conditions of nationalism have to be considered. In the empirical part of this thesis, it is an underlying background assumption that transnational social structures may bring about an epistemological change that potentially affects the concept of languages as entities.

In order to analyse epistemes, Foucault formulates the *Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1972), in which the epistemological conditions for knowledge and the formation of discourse are examined (Seier 2001:92). A particular focus here lies on the historicity of the order of discourses. This shows that the production of ahistorical, universal truths is an effect of power (Bublitz 2001:28). Discourses are thus disentitled of their naturalising and universalising truth effects by showing their contingency and historical conditionality. *Archaeology*, in this sense, does not try to identify universal structures but embeds what is done, said and thought in historical environments. To put it more simply, archaeology has also been described as a form of ethnology; yet, not of a foreign, but of the own, native

culture (see Kögler 1994:36). The underlying patterns of cultural experience and sense are scrutinised, especially the experiences and structures that are usually seen as not worth questioning because they are seen as common sense, normal and taken for granted. Not only is it thus possible to see that these structures and experiences are not ‘natural’ or ‘normal’, but are socially and historically conditioned.

For uncovering the systems that govern the production and ordering of discourses and statements of a given epoch, an archaeological analysis does not analyse the sum of all texts or statements of that epoch but detects the regularity of statements in a given field of knowledge (Bublitz 2001:30-31). This also relates to an understanding that other truths would have been possible. Suppressed truths and discourses that do not count as knowledge in a given era can be made visible if regularities of ‘legitimate’ knowledge can be uncovered. A pertinent example for this is the field of history, where feminist historians from the 1970s onwards have alluded to the fact that mainstream history, in fact, has been a history of men (Linke 1996:10). Knowledge and practices of women are usually not represented in mainstream history, in which the history of males is constructed as the history of humankind. Archaeological work on the discourses in historical sciences shows the contingency of these discourses, as it can be made visible that the construction of the history of women as either invisible or as the ‘marked’ form is the result of discursive exclusions and of certain statements being considered as true. Chapter 3.3.2. – *Archaeological Perspectives on National Language Ideology – 19<sup>th</sup> Century German Linguistics* – of this thesis develops an archaeological account of national language ideologies in order to ‘denaturalise’ the national concept of language, which has been co-constructed by German philology. It here becomes clear that the concept of *language*, as one-dimensionally related to ethnic or national groups, is socially and historically conditioned. A potential epistemological change of this concept can only be examined with a thorough understanding of the contingency of the concept itself.

An epistemological change that causes changes of national language ideologies is not only of academic interest but is also expressive of a change of power structures in society. Discourse and power are intrinsically interwoven, as discourse produces the knowledge on which the execution of power is dependent. Power, in a Foucauldian understanding, “is not that which makes the difference between those who exclusively possess and retain it, and those who do not have it and submit to it” (Foucault 1980b:98). In contrast to traditional Marxist notions of power, which, to put it simply, see power as a repressive force that is in the hands of the ruling class (Bublitz 2003:8), Foucault develops a very different concept of power that sees power as an organising means in society. Power is locally produced, in families, at the work place, in sexual relationships, at institutions and also in the individual itself; the individuals of a society take part in the production and reproduction of power, which is understood as an organising, systematic principle in the relationships between people and groups (see Rothe and Nowak 2008). Thus, power is basically a productive force (Bublitz 2003:8), “a productive network which runs through the whole social body” (Foucault

1980a:119). Subjects are constituted through power and, instead of asking why some people want to dominate, one should ask “how things work at the level of on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours, etc.” (Foucault 1980b:97).

Discourses on the usage of language can be seen as one example of these effects of power. As Umberto Eco points out, discourses on language are not only an example for power coming into effect but a standardised language system can itself be seen as a model for this concept of power:

[Foucault's] image of power closely recalls the idea of the system that linguists call *the given language*. The given language is, true, coercive (it forbids me to say 'I are him', under pain of being incomprehensible), but its coercion doesn't derive from an individual decision, or from some center that sends out rules in all directions: It is a social product, it originates as a constrictive apparatus precisely through general assent ... I'm not sure we can say that a given language is a device of power ... but it surely is a model of power. (Eco 1986:244)

In “the modern age” (Foucault 1980b), knowledge, which is developed in discourse, is a crucial element for power to function. The modern age is characterised by forms of power that are not based on brutal force and coercion but rather on the production of expert knowledge as “the citizens of modern democracies are controlled less by naked violence or the economic power of the boss and the landlord than by the pronouncements of expert discourse” (Cameron et al. 1992 (2006):132). Expert discourse, such as medical discourse, is, for example, crucial in the definition of psychological normality. The power of discourses to define and license individuals and to construct people as ‘normal’ or ‘deficient’ must not, however, be conceptualised in its constraining consequences only, as discourses “do not either represent or obfuscate truth and knowledge in the interest of pre-given powers [...], rather, they produce knowledge and truth” (Pennycook 2001:83).

Yet, the discursive production of knowledge entails processes of exclusion and inclusion that are based on power (see Seier 2001:92). These processes of exclusion and inclusion are tied to the notion of truth. The production of truth can be seen as the most powerful element in these exclusionary practices: “We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth” (Foucault 1980b:93). Social structures that ‘true’ discourses produce are not only based on official regulations or laws: “The code they come to define is not that of law but that of normalisation” (Foucault 1980b:106). Discourses regulate what is seen as ‘normal’ in a society and it is easy to grasp that these regulations are rather strict and detailed – a man wearing lipstick is enough for creating a disturbance of such norms, although there is of course no official law that forbids the wearing of lipstick by men. The normalisational effects of discourses are their actual force, a force that reaches into the smallest level of society, the individual itself.



The development of the ‘true’ language is related to the fine-tuned methods of coercion and repression that create normality. Concepts of language, as systems that have ‘rights’ and ‘wrongs’, that have a ‘true’ origin, that are intrinsic and metaphysical, have strong normalising effects. The idea of the ‘true’ (*Ur-*)language, the ‘correct’ language or the ‘universal’ grammar, is, in many cases, based on norms that are found in the middle and upper classes of a society. The idea of the ‘correct’ language is an important tool in the reproduction of power structures. Historically, “the acceptance and use by subalterns of a national language and its standardization constituted a critical component of the bourgeoisie establishing hegemony in European states” (Sonntag 2009:11). This common code is crucial in the formation of a common identity, especially if a group of people is too large to know each other, as for example in nation-states (see e.g. Anderson 1985); on the other hand, the individual reproduces power structures by recognising a certain code as ‘correct’. Even an individual who does not conform to the norms of a standardised verbal language in their verbal behaviour usually evaluates their own and others’ verbal behaviour according to the common standard of a given community (Milroy 1980, see also Linke 1996:10)<sup>8</sup>. The acceptance of a norm, even if a counter-norm is used, is an example of the “capillary functioning of power” (Foucault 1991:196), power that pervades everyone and everything, where power is not something external but something that is inherent in the identity performance and everyday life of the individual.

To summarise the above, the Foucauldian approach to discourse is the idea that there are a number of discourses in society and that these are constitutive of social reality. Discourses are intrinsically related to power as power is related to the ability to produce truth and the production of truth takes place in discourse. The power of discourse extends to the material realm, as material artefacts are embedded in and created by discourse. To say that reality takes place in discourse is not to deny that there is a reality outside of discourse. However, it is not possible to grasp reality without making reference to discourse. The production of ‘true’ discourses takes place in the interaction of discourses, and the overall structure of these discourses in a certain age is called the *episteme*. To ‘denaturalise’ discourses and the epistemes to which they belong, an *archaeological* approach can show the historical contingency of certain truths. Discourses and epistemes are related to the power to construct truth, where power is understood as a productive and regulative force that is in a dialectical relationship to knowledge, which regulates social and individual behaviour.

After this brief introduction to some of the basic tenets of *discourse*, I will now focus on the discursive construction of human positioning in society – identity. The study of identity is one of the fields in which discursive constructions and their effects are particularly important.

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<sup>8</sup> Deborah Cameron’s book *Verbal Hygiene* (Cameron 1995) is a highly insightful illustration of the normative nature of ideas about language and of the productive side of power in discourses on language.

### 2.3. IDENTITIES – PERFORMING REALITY

The study of discursive realities has often been concerned with the construction of human identities in discourse. In sociology, Erving Goffman is an early predecessor of the idea that a 'self' can only be constructed in interaction (Goffman 1959), and since then the study of identities as discursively constructed has become an important area of social research (see e.g. Althusser 1971 (2000), Benwell and Stokoe 2006, Blackledge and Pavlenko 2001, Butler 1990, Castells 2002, De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006, Gay, Evans and Redman 2000b, Gumperz 1984, Joseph 2004, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). In studying discourses in Salsa communities, the issue of identity is highly relevant, as social identity is an important marker of social boundaries. Due to its function as positioning people in social categories, identity is also influential in the constitution of different language ideologies, which show up in different groups. A basic understanding of the post-structural, discursive approach to the formation of identity is therefore necessary.

The anti-essentialist discourse on identities often takes Western gender systems as an example. Perceiving somebody as male or female is structured to a large extent by the discourses that suggest how somebody with a certain gender should look, act or speak. The existence of two, bipolar, mutually exclusive, or heterosexual genders is the outcome of historical discourses (Butler 1990). Whether there is an *a priori* gender system, whether there are any 'given' gender categories, is, in the framework of discourse theory, not only impossible to decide but not of actual interest. The interest rests in the production of separate and normative gender categories as 'true' and 'natural' through social discourse and their relation to power structure and dominance.

In analysing the production of identity categories, the notion of *performativity* is an important concept. Since the 1990s, Judith Butler has been one of the most relevant theorists of performativity and its role in the formation of subjects and identity. On the basis of Speech Act Theory (see above), several theories on identity (Althusser 1971 (2000), Hall 1994b, Hall 2000 (1996)) and Foucault's concept of discourse, Butler assumes that identities do not exist outside of discourse but come into being through their performance. It is the discourse of societies that creates positions that individuals may occupy. Following Althusser's idea of "interpellation" (*Anrufung*) (Althusser 1971 (2000)), discourse "speaks to us" and through the recognition of the subject position that discourse names us with, we become subjects<sup>9</sup>. An individual is spoken to as either 'boy' or 'girl', often even before he or she is born, or, at the latest, at the moment of their birth. The idea of what an individual is, the subject position, exists before the individual – the concepts 'boy' and 'girl' are ideas that exist in discourse and are created herein. Occupying such a subject position can be understood as 'having' an identity. Although there are differences in the variability of identities (gender identities are

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<sup>9</sup> Research on identity that is concerned with what it is that is able to recognise a subject position and how this is implemented in the individual psyche is discussed in psychoanalytical approaches to discourse (see e.g. Gay, Evans and Redman 2000a, Lacan 2000).

usually perceived to be the least variable), identities are multiple and can change. “Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us” (Hall 2000 (1996)). Simultaneously, subjects are responsible for producing discourses. Thus, subjects and discourse are in a dialectical relationship to each other (Geller 2005:28).

Discourse creates identity positions – but how do individuals become a person with a recognisable identity? A crucial point in understanding the concept of performativity is related to the question of how it is that performative speech acts have the power to create what they name. Butler maintains that it is neither power that acts, nor the subject, but that it is “reiterated acting that is power” (Butler 1993 (2000):118). The notion of *reiteration* refers to the repetition or citation of discursive gestures. A judge, for example, cites the law that she applies. It is not through her will or in her personal power that she can perform power but “it is through the citation of the law that the figure of the judge’s will is produced and that the ‘priority’ of textual authority is established” (Butler 1993 (2000):109). The concept of reiteration explains the power of performative speech acts, including in professional and institutionalised discourse. It is impossible for any subject to act without reiterating at least part of what has been said in discourse before (see also below). The subject itself is also created in such discursive chains through the interpellation of discourse.

Thus, there is no ‘I’ who stands *behind* discourse and executes its volition or will *through* discourse. On the contrary, the ‘I’ only comes into being through being called, named, interpellated, to use the Althusserian term, and this discursive construction takes place prior to the ‘I’; it is the transitive invocation of the ‘I’. (Butler 1993 (2000):109)

For an individual, the construct of what it means, for example, to be *a man* is given through discourse. And it is through the repetition or reiteration of the idea of masculinity, through discursive gestures that have been created in discourse, that a ‘man’ comes into being. Gendered behaviours are ‘used’ by individuals and “[r]epeated over time, these behaviours may be internalized as ‘me’ – that is, gender does not *feel* like a performance ... it just feels like her or his ‘natural’ way of behaving” (Cameron 2001:171).

It is, however, not the individual alone who creates an identity. In order for an identity to function, the audience of the speaking subject has to recognise the identity performed. “Identity, thus, is a two-way construction” (Paltridge 2006:39). A teacher, for example, can only be a teacher if there are pupils who recognise the person in question as a teacher. The successful performance of identity not only includes its recognition by others but also, already in its construction, incorporates the audience. *Speech Accommodation Theory* (see e.g. Giles, Coupland and Coupland 1991), right from its beginnings, has shown that the speech style somebody uses – the identity performance an individual presents – is in relation to the perception of the interlocutor’s identity. Thus, it is not only the category in which I

place *my* personal identity but also the category in which I perceive my addressee that determines my linguistic identity at a given point in time. “[W]hat I accommodate to is not another person, but *the identity I have constructed for that person*” (Joseph 2004:73, italics in original).

The constant need to reiterate and to recognise – the interactional character of identities – makes identity ultimately unstable. Reiteration can never be one hundred percent the same. The concept of the performative self therefore includes the possibility of agency and change. There is also the possibility to create new discursive identities, as the example of the *salsera* (a female Salsa dancer) shows. The concept *salsera* did not exist several decades ago; the ‘real-ness’ of the performance of being a *salsera* does not stem from some pre-given, eternal or biological qualities<sup>10</sup>.

An important point in adopting this anti-essentialist approach to identity is that discursive constructions are actually constructions of an essence (Joseph 2004:90). This relates to the discussion of the relationship between discourse and reality. The construction of an identity is a form of representation but this representation is not representing reality, it is itself real. It is not necessary to claim something to be pre-existent before representation in order to deal with it as ‘real’. Although divisions made by identity constructions are not seen as based on ‘natural’, pre-given qualities, they are – once they are established – ‘real’ mental representations. Consequently, Bourdieu argues for an elimination of the division between representation and reality altogether, here illustrated by struggles of classification concerning regional and ethnic identities:

One can understand the particular form of struggle over classification that is constituted by the struggle over the definition of ‘regional’ or ‘ethnic’ only if one transcends the opposition [...] between representation and reality, and only if one includes in reality the representation of reality, or, more precisely, the struggle over representations [...]. Struggles over ethnic or regional identity – in other words, over the properties (stigmata or emblems) linked with the *origin* through the *place* of origin and its associated durable marks, such as accent – are a particular case of the different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and, thereby, to *make and unmake groups*. (Bourdieu 1991:221 quoted in Joseph 2004:13)

This view implies that structures and systems are not considered to be ‘merely’ discursive. Employing a post-structuralist perspective on social reality does not mean to engage in a never-ending play of meanings that ramble around indiscriminately and have no social consequences. The reality of representations will also be relevant in later chapters of this thesis, where, for example, the production of *authenticity* will play an important role in

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<sup>10</sup> Obviously, gender identities differ in their depth and scope from identity constructions such as *salsera* and the role of biology in gendered identity will not be discussed here, as it is not of relevance in discourse analytic approaches, see above; especially the quote by Laclau 1985:108.

understanding particular language ideologies. Although ‘authentic’ ethnic identity is here understood as a construction, it constructs reality and is influential in the concepts, ideas, social hierarchies and lives of human beings.

The study of social reality and identities as social constructions is a way to unveil social processes and power structures and, as has been mentioned above, to “conceive of the world in an alternative way” (Fowler 1981:25). A related point is the fact that in the performance of discursive reality, there are always variations — performances are ultimately unstable, which can have subversive effects on hierarchical power structures (Bublitz 2003:15). Thus, the study of discourse is useful in the development of social critique. Within this, the notion of *interdiscursivity*, which is concerned with the relationship among utterances and texts, is an important means to gain insight into the functioning and processes of social construction.

#### **2.4. INTERDISCURSIVITY AND PRETEXTUALITY**

The analysis of discourse aims at “the description and interpretation of meaning-making and meaning-understanding in specific situations through to the critical analysis of ideology and access to meaning-systems and discourse networks” (Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:6). Not only does discourse analysis engage in the analysis of the small-scale level (“specific situations”) and of the broad, social sphere (“meaning systems”), it furthermore conceives a relationship between the ‘micro’ level and the ‘macro’ level. This has important consequences for an understanding of individual utterances. As everything that has social meaning is tied in some way to specific social discourses, utterances are related to broader webs of meaning and, as has been discussed above, the discursive context of an utterance is crucial for its meaning. This allows for the interpretation of utterances as related to social structures, which is the basis for the methodological approach of this thesis (see Ch. 5). No utterance can be made that does not in some way refer to other utterances that have been made before. This relationship is also referred to as *interdiscursivity*. Mikhail M. Bakhtin describes interdiscursivity in an often-quoted passage as follows:

[A]ny speaker is himself [sic.] a respondent to a greater or lesser degree. He is not, after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe. And he presupposes not only the existence of the language system he is using, but also the existence of preceding utterances – his own and others’ – with which his given utterance enters into one kind of relation or another (builds on them, polemicizes them, or simply presumes that they are already known to the listener). Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances. (Bakhtin 1935 (2006):101)

The notion of *interdiscursivity* describes the connections between different utterances but also the fact that individual speech always includes voices of others. Utterances that others have made before allow us to speak and these utterances of others are necessarily embedded in our own utterances. Bakhtin calls this the “dialogical overtones” (Bakhtin 1935

(2006):106) that are found in every utterance. This is true not only of academic texts or language in official realms; even in very personal spheres of life, individual choices are relatively limited. For example, in Roland Barthes's text *A Lover's Discourse* (Barthes 1990, quoted in Mills 1997:55), the author "is concerned to describe the structures within which individuals in love are at the mercy of the tropes, moods, emotions, gestures, tones of voice which the discourse of the lover lays out for them" (Mills 1997:55). Even though the individual experiences love as something most deeply personal, lovers' discourse is "also that which is most intensively discursively structured" (ibid.). Individual utterances are thus enabled but also constrained by the discourses in which they take place:

So, at any given historical conjuncture, it is only possible to write, speak, or think about a given social object (madness, for example) in specific ways and not others. 'A discourse' would then be whatever constrains – but also enables – writing, speaking, and thinking within such specific historical limits. (McHoul 2001:139, italics in original)

The relationship between individual utterances and the discursive chains in which they are embedded is important for understanding the discursive analytic approach as, because of utterances being dialogic by nature, "discourse analysis can be seen as a method for investigating the 'social voices' available to the people whose talk analysts collect" (Cameron 2001:15). The efficiency of such social voices – or discourses – is based on the iterability of statements; quotation is what ensures that discourses have effects on reality (Bublitz 2003:15). Only those statements and discourses that are repeated and commented on have longer lasting effects. Foucault thus classifies discourses according to their ability to be quoted and observes that there are discourses that "give rise to a certain number of new speech acts which take them up" (Foucault 1981 in Mills 1997:67). Commentary on a text therefore ensures that this text "keeps in circulation as legitimate knowledge" (Mills 1997:68).

The sociolinguist Jan Blommaert points out, however, that not only what is said can be of relevance in the analysis of discourses and their operation. The notion of *pretextuality* grasps that there are 'invisible contexts' that also influence the meaning of a statement. These are "contexts that influence language long before it is produced in the form of utterances. [...] People enter communication events with pretextually marked resources and capabilities: resources and capabilities that have a particular 'load'" (see Blommaert 2005a:77). The language variety spoken and the ability to use language in a certain way – the production of statements, utterances, written language, etc. – is related to the differential access that different people have to linguistic resources. Pretextual differences link particular statements to the political-economic sphere, on which access to linguistic resources depends. Blommaert discusses examples of users of African varieties of English, whose abilities do not match assumptions of speakers of more prestigious varieties of English (ibid.:78-82). The

acquisition of English in different parts of world leads to the acquisition of different linguistic and sociolinguistic resources, which are socially 'loaded'. Although this sociolinguistic insight into discourse is often forgotten, pretextual differences have to be taken into account in the analysis of discourses and statements: "A critical analysis of discourse needs to start where the conditions for discourse are being formed: in sociolinguistic systems marked by authority and indexically attributed in functions to linguistic forms" (Blommaert 2005a:96). The fact that the same statement can have different meanings and functions in different contexts is highly relevant in an age of globalisation, where, through media and migration, different discourses meet in single places. An analytical framework that considers the multiplicity of meaning in local, regional, national and global contexts is found in section 4.3, where Blommaert's *Sociolinguistics of Globalization* is introduced in more detail.

In the present chapter, it has become clear that discourse is constitutive of social reality. In the following, the focus will be on discourses that are concerned with language. Discourses on language are an important site for the analysis of the functioning of social boundaries. *Language* as bounded entity is a discursive effect and epistemologically related to the idea of a bounded culture on a bounded territory – the nation-state. This leads to an understanding that discourses on language are related to the power/knowledge nexus. How can language be spoken about in a certain epoch and how are language ideologies tied to broader webs of knowledge and power, such as nationalism, capitalism or the history of science? A thorough introduction of the notion of *language ideology* and the deepening of an understanding of the epistemological connections between particular language ideologies and particular socio-historical discourses will be subject of the following chapter.

[O]ther sciences are provided with objects of study in advance, which are then examined from different points of view. Nothing like that is the case in linguistics. [...] The object is not given in advance of the viewpoint: far from it. Rather, one might say that it is the viewpoint adopted which creates the object. Furthermore, there is nothing to tell us in advance whether one of these ways of looking at is prior or superior to any of the others. (Saussure, 1913 (1993):8)

### 3. LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

After having clarified the notion of *discourse*, I will now turn more specifically to discourses on language. Language discourse is not only of academic interest; ideas related to the usage and value of languages are often a topic of heated debate in public discourses. In contemporary Western nations, a very prominent example for this are discussions on migrant multilingualism. What is the value of migrants' multilingual resources? Is it compulsory for citizens to be able to speak the official language of a state? Different nations display different attitudes on this issue, depending not only on their ideas about language but also on their history and their respective ideologies of citizenship, community and belonging. Attitudes towards multilingualism, the role that is given to language in constructing what is perceived to be a coherent society and the study of these and related beliefs belongs to the field of *language ideology*. In this chapter, the definition, history and main strands of research on language ideologies will be introduced, while language ideologies are understood as discourses (in the Foucauldian sense) on language. Afterwards, a more detailed introduction to national language ideology and its history follows. National language ideology forms crucial background knowledge for the analysis of *transnational* language ideology and is therefore introduced thoroughly in the second part of this chapter.

Language ideologies have been defined as “shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world” (Rumsey 1990:346, see also Heath 1989, Woolard 1998, Woolard 1994). In emphasising the crucial connections between the realm of the *social* and the *linguistic*, Irvine defines language ideologies as “the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests” (Irvine 1989:255). In the study of these concepts, it has been considered that “a definition of language is always, implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world” (Williams 1977:21). Debates on migrant multilingualism are an example of this and



furthermore illustrate the connections between discourse, knowledge and power (see 2.2.). As has been argued in Chapter 2, the development of discourse and knowledge is related to power and the interests of particular people and groups. Creating knowledge, defining human beings, their qualities, characters and values, their ways of forming societies, is basic to such interests. The study of language ideologies illuminates relationships between knowledge about human beings, society, discourse and power, as language is a foundational element in communicating *in* societies and for the symbolisation *of* societies. It was Foucault himself who noted that speech is not merely “a verbalization of conflicts and systems of domination, but ... the very object of man’s conflicts” (Foucault 1972:216 in Woolard 1998:24). Thus:

[t]he topic of language ideology is a much-needed bridge between linguistic and social theory, because it relates the microculture of communicative action to political and economic considerations of power and social inequality, confronting macrosocial constraints on language behavior. (Woolard 1994:72)

Concepts of language and language use underpin not only linguistic form (as debated in e.g. Silverstein 1979). Notions of the person and the group, of religious ritual, child socialisation, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling and law, etc., are all connected to ideas people have about language (Woolard 1998:3), as none of these identities and discourses is constituted without the usage of language. At the same time, “[p]references for particular languages and language varieties are always articulated within the context of an ideology that reflects a society’s view of itself” (Romaine 2007:685). In sociolinguistics, it is a truism that there is no ‘neutral’ way of speaking, that there is no neutral language or ‘normal’ variety. And not only language itself but also concepts of language – language ideologies – are interrelated with the culture and the social power structures in which they occur. Accordingly, the field of language ideology is broad and encompasses, for example,

[b]eliefs about how ‘language’ and ‘reality’ are related, beliefs about how communication works, and beliefs about linguistic correctness, goodness and badness, articulateness and inarticulateness [...], beliefs about the role of language in a person’s identity, beliefs about how languages are learned, and beliefs about what the functions of language should be, who the authorities on language are, whether and how language should be legislated, and so on. (Johnstone 2008:66)

In Western societies, there furthermore exists a strong tradition of conceptualising language as materialising in separate, reified systems that are associated with separate cultural groups – a ‘language’, such as English, Spanish or German. As mentioned before, this phenomenon has often been described as related to the development of nationalism and colonialism (for an elaboration see e.g. Errington 2008, Hymes 1968, Rampton 2000b, Risager 2006).

Considering that ‘a language’ and a cultural group ‘naturally’ belong together is a basic tenet of national language ideology.

In this thesis, the interest of the empirical research on language ideologies in transnational Salsa Communities of Practice is to study discourses that are responsible for the constitution of language ideology in a non-national, transnational environment and that may have brought about changes to national language ideology. Due to globalisation and the transnationalisation of culture, new linguistic hierarchies and concepts of language may have developed that are different from those found in the nationalist era. It has been suggested that a key to understanding these processes is to “discover what such reorderings of repertoires actually mean, and represent to people” (Blommaert 2003:609). Studying language ideologies in Salsa Communities of Practice is an attempt to document such possible reorderings and reorganisations. For a thorough understanding of transnational language discourse, however, a grasp of *national* language ideology is vital (see 3.2.).

In a nutshell, national language ideologies conceive of the relationship of culture and language in a one-dimensional way and are indexical of an episteme (see 2.2.) that regards the world as ‘naturally’ divided into separate cultural groups on separate territories. In studying language ideology in a transnational Salsa community, in which the logic of national culture is, to a certain extent, transgressed, one aspect of interest is the role of language in the constitution of non-national, non-ethnic groups. Secondly, one might ask whether cultural patterns, networks and modes of communication in globalised late modernity (for definitions of late modernity see e.g. Giddens 1990, Rampton 2006) lead to a change or maybe even a strengthening of nationalist conceptions of language. Furthermore, ideologies of language acquisition, ideas about linguistic identity and its relation to ethnicity, class and gender, the constructions and influences of consciously modelled language policies, and the role of language in expressing cultural values such as tradition or of being ‘up-to-date’ are all of possible interest in studying language ideologies in transnational Salsa culture. Not only is it possible to ask whether there exist post-national language ideologies that index a *transnational* episteme, it is furthermore crucial to ask how other social discourses and interests – local interests, national policies, commercial powers, global networks – are co-responsible for the existence of language ideology in transnational contemporary contexts. The notion of “scale” as introduced by Blommaert (Blommaert 2007, Blommaert 2010) is constructive in interpreting these different interests and discourses and his framework of a *Sociolinguistics of Globalization* (2010) helps to analyse such discourses coherently. The framework will play a crucial role in the analysis of the empirical data and will, together with a detailed account of the research questions, be introduced at the end of the following chapter (4.3.). Yet, first of all, a detailed review of the general concepts of language ideology research is vital, which starts with an examination of the term *language ideology* itself.

### 3.1. LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY – DEFINITION, HISTORY AND KEY CONCERNS

As has been mentioned above, language ideologies can also be described as *discourses* about language. Yet, the tradition of the study of language ideologies, mainly developed in linguistic anthropology in North America, refers to these conceptions not as *discourses* but as *ideologies* (for a more detailed discussion, see Woolard 1998:5-11). Without introducing the profound and manifold discussions that exist around the term *ideology* (see Eagleton 2007 for a ‘classic’ among the large number of introductions), it is safe to say that in the overall field of social sciences there is “intense theoretical difficulty in deciding whether to draw on work which is based around the notion of ideology or work which refers to discourse” (Mills 1997:29). Concerning the relationship between ideology research and language ideology research, it has to be noticed that the point of the “study of language ideology is to examine the cultural and historical specificity of construals of language, not to distinguish ideology of language from ideology in other domains of human activity” (Woolard 1998:8). The term *ideology*, first coined by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836) and originally denoting a general “science of ideas” (see Woolard 1998:5), is very often understood in a Marxist sense. In Marxist approaches, the concept is interwoven in an overall theory of society, where the concept of “false consciousness” (see Eagleton 2007:89) plays a crucial role. False consciousness, which is, roughly speaking, created by ideology, is a distorted representation of economic relations, in which the interests of the ruling class are represented as being in the interest of all classes. The term ideology thus evokes the idea of distortion. This simultaneously implies that there are forms of knowledge that are not distortions but truths – the concept of false consciousness involves the prospect of a consciousness that is not false but true. This, however, is contrary to Foucauldian theory, in which it is conceived that “‘truth’ is constituted only within discourses that sustain and are sustained by power” (Woolard 1998:7). Truth, in this understanding, does not and cannot exist outside of power relations and, from this angle the concept of ideology does not make much sense as one could say that *all* truth is constituted by ideology. Many social theorists have therefore abandoned working with the concept of ideology in favour of the concept of discourse.

In linguistic contexts, the term *discourse* has the danger of being misunderstood as there exist different conceptions of the term. Some do not focus on the social aspects but on structural aspects above the sentence level (see Ch. 2). In language ideology research, the term *ideology* is conceptualised as an effective element in social life, not as “unidirectional social determination of thought” (Woolard 1998:11), as in some Marxist approaches. *Ideology* in language ideology research, is therefore understood as focusing on the fact that signification and thought have social roots. Thus, the term *language ideology*, how it is conceptualised and employed in linguistic anthropology, implies that ideas and discourses on language are always interwoven with questions of the social, of power and power struggle. It

is thus very close to the idea of discourse as discussed in Chapter 2. The term *language ideology* will be adopted in the remainder of this thesis, as it is the common term in the tradition to which it owes its existence.

Considering the relatively short history of the study of language ideology, its evolution has to be understood in relation to the general development of linguistics in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Theories of language as a synchronic, abstract system (see e.g. Chomsky 1966, Chomsky 1965) form a common point of reference, albeit a point of contrast, for approaches to language that emphasise the relevance of the social in the study of language. Due to the considerable success of structuralist theories concerned with grammar (see 2.1.), it was not earlier than in the 1990s that the notion of language ideology became prominent in linguistics. The reason for this “late arrival” (Kroskrity 2000b:5-7) of a concept of language as cultural construction, as Kroskrity sees it, is that, for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the speaker’s own linguistic analysis and the non-referential functions of language were neglected areas of study in linguistics (see also Kroskrity 2001:2-4). Non-referential functions of language, such as the ability to express identity or to talk about language, are not of interest in a research design that aspires to describe the totality of underlying structures of language. Non-referential functions, making cultural influences relevant for the existence and form of language systems, question the structuralist approach itself. Furthermore, the general development of post-structuralist theory has to be seen as another influential factor in the rising interest in the social as constitutive for language (see 2.1.).

Since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the concern with the social in language is found in many approaches, including, above all, sociolinguistics and pragmatics. Thus, many topics that can be understood as belonging to the realm of language ideology have overlaps with other, newer traditions. However, there are also accounts of the interest in social factors in the study of language that are older: “many of the formative movements of early linguistics – the Prague School, American and European Structuralism, Russian Formalism, and others” (Coupland and Jaworski 2004:17) consider “metalanguage” – language that serves to talk about or to organise language – as fundamental to the study of language and it is here also conceived that metalanguage is culturally and socially contingent. In semiotically oriented approaches, several authors have developed taxonomies on the different functions of language that include the metalinguistic level, such as, for example, Roman Jakobson’s taxonomy (Jakobson 1957, see also Halliday 1978 for a newer taxonomy). More recently, another socially interested strand has been developed, often called “critical linguistics”. This strand detects social ideologies in language (see Hodge and Kress 1993 (1979) for one of the fundamental texts) and its aims are related but different to language ideology research, in which explicit and implicit ideas about language, rather than social ideologies and their representation in language, are discussed. Scholars of CDA, *critical discourse analysis*, who have used this denomination since the end of the 1980s (see especially Fairclough 1989), can be considered to be part of this strand (see Ch. 4). Evidently, there are also interferences of

language ideology with discourse analysis. Another crucial development that is related to the analysis of language ideologies is *systemic functional linguistics* (SFL), as developed by Michael Halliday. In his seminal work *Language as a Social Semiotic* (Halliday 1978), Halliday maintains that “the social structure is implicated in a sociolinguistic theory” (ibid.:113) as social structure influences the status and role relationships of speakers in any given situation. The types of social activity that take place in a certain situation and thus the rhetorical channels are reflected in linguistic patterns. Therefore, “it is the social structure that generates the semiotic tensions and the rhetorical styles and genres that express them” (ibid.). The main interest of Halliday and his numerous followers is the development of a systemic functional grammar that explains grammatical phenomena through their respective functions in social interaction. The school of SFL has developed a huge body of literature and has given valuable and crucial insights into the role of social functions and social interaction in the evolution and use of grammatical patterns. It will not be introduced further at this point, as the focal interest of this thesis is not in the effects of the social on linguistic structure.

Since the 1960s, demands for an explicit concern with cultural constructs of language can be found in ethnographic approaches and interactional sociolinguistics (see Hymes 1974:33, Gumperz 1982). Although the study of speakers’ concepts has clear limitations, these are “by definition ‘real’ to members of the groups in question, [and] they can provide resources for members to deliberately change their linguistic and discourse forms” (Kroskrity 2000b:7). Thus, social discourses, next to an anthropological interest, can have an impact on structural elements and cannot be ignored in analysing language structure (see e.g. Silverstein 1979). Studying the ideological level, as, for example, evaluative schemes of speakers, is also essential in studying sociolinguistic facts. There is the

need to recognize that ‘attitudes’ include participants’ basic understanding of what the sociolinguistic system consists of [... as ...] the categories and behaviors toward which one has these attitudes cannot be assumed to have been established independently of anyone’s perception of them. (Irvine 2001:24)<sup>11</sup>

There is no single core literature of language ideology (Woolard 1998:3) and there are different ways of approaching the field. It can be particularly difficult to differentiate between metalanguage and linguistic ideology. The meta-approach seems more comprehensive; it includes, for example, notions such as language attitudes, language representation, speech style and stylisation and, also, language ideology (Coupland and Jaworski 2004:16). Language ideology, in the metalanguage approach, is more specifically defined as overt discourse about language. Yet, this definition is problematic as in language ideology research

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<sup>11</sup> It should be noted, however, that “language ideologies are [...] to be investigated independently of the distribution of observable sociolinguistic facts, not as a substitute for them” (Irvine 2001:25).

it is common to simultaneously relate the term *language ideology* to covert indexes of language ideology *in* language and to overt discourses *on* language. It is conceived that the “sitings of ideology” (Woolard 1998:9) are, on the one hand in linguistic practice and, on the other hand, in talk *about* language. There are conscious ideologies but there are also naturalised and unconscious ideologies.

One example for the simultaneously implicit and explicit nature of language ideology, as it will be employed also in this thesis, is the notion of *contextualisation cues*, as developed by John Gumperz (see e.g. Gumperz 1982). Contextualisation cues are the elements in language that guide hearers in interpreting what is said and whether a certain utterance is to be understood as, for example, ironic, serious, friendly, and so on. The study of these cues usually concentrates on “prosody, gesture/posture, gaze, backchannels, and linguistic variation (including ‘speech styles’)” (Auer 1992:24). Although the study of contextualisation cues is considered to be part of the ethnography of speaking (see Cameron 2001:ch.5), it is also possible to study language ideologies in these cues. A community’s theory of speech can not only be found in explicit statements on the nature or function of language but also in the way language is contextualised. Style or code switching, for example, can mean a shift in contextualisation. Depending on the cultural and situational context, switching from standard to dialectal varieties can mean the creation of a familiar, intimate talk; it can also have the function of framing a comical, ironic talk. The community’s ideology of language that regards certain varieties of language as connected to ‘high’ functions and others to ‘low’ functions (see Heller 2003a) is encoded in language inexplicitly. Thus, as cultural (‘ideological’) constructions of language are embedded in all levels of language, it is not possible to draw a strict dividing line between research in sociolinguistics, pragmatics or discourse analysis and the study of language ideology. Many studies of language discuss aspects of language ideology without making reference to the concept. In the remainder of this chapter, there will be a number of examples of this and in studying discourses on language in transnational contexts both implicit and explicit ideologies will be of interest.

Returning to the history of what considers itself to be *language ideology* research, a foundational publication that is often referred to is a 1979 paper by Michael Silverstein (Silverstein 1979; for a discussion on earlier accounts see Heath 1989, Kroskrity 2001:2-4), in which Benjamin Whorf’s ideas on the role of ideologies in the structure of languages are discussed. In the 1970s and 1980s, in which the discussions on agency versus structure had their peak in social theory (see Pennycook 2001:117), the influence of these debates on linguistic anthropology brought about an increased interest in speakers’ awareness of language (Kroskrity 2001:5). This led to a number of publications that are concerned with language ideology as it is conceived nowadays and whose key concerns are still crucial (see especially Gal 1989, Hill 1985, Irvine 1989, Woolard 1985; see also Kroskrity 2001:5). However, it was in the 1990s that the subject turned into a more established academic field. In 1992, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) held a first conference on the topic

(for a more detailed account of the development, see Kroskrity 2000b:4-5) and the papers from the conference were published in a special issue of the journal *Pragmatics* (Kroskrity, Woolard and Schieffelin 1992), which was later turned into a book – *language Ideologies. Practice and Theory* (Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity 1998). The introductory chapter of the book gives an essential overview of research that relates to the topic and develops a basic framework and is one key source of reference (Woolard 1998); the volume as a whole is central for the development of the field. Other meetings and another special issue of *Pragmatics* followed, which was also published as a book later on (Gal and Woolard 1995, Gal and Woolard 2001). A volume edited by Paul Kroskrity (Kroskrity 2000c) – *Regimes of Language. Ideologies, Politics, and Identities* – can be considered a second foundational text collection in language ideology research. Comparable to the 1998 text collection but with a different focus, the introductory chapter gives an overview of fundamental questions of language ideology.

Today, the field is rather elusive. As has been mentioned above, a lot of research on language is concerned implicitly with concepts of language but uses different terms for it; furthermore, there are studies in sociolinguistics and pragmatics that use the term without making reference to the scholarly framework as developed in linguistic anthropology. In subsequent chapters on different types of language ideologies (especially Chs 3 and 4), I will relate to different studies irrespective of their ‘official’ affiliation. Texts will be mentioned from the realms of ethnography of speaking, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics and linguistics anthropology without regard to whether they use the term language ideology explicitly or not. The different uses of the term, the nomination of similar phenomena with different terms and the fact that language ideology can be implicit and explicit and thus found in different layers of language (see also Woolard 1998:9), makes a review of the field a complex task. Kroskrity considers it to be useful to regard language ideology as a “cluster concept” (Kroskrity 2001:5). Kathryn Woolard, in her seminal introduction to the collection of texts from 1998 (Woolard 1998), has reviewed the field comprehensively and her chapter can still be regarded as the most detailed overview, to which the interested reader can refer for a more thorough introduction.

There are two other often-quoted books that were published in the 1990s and that refer to language ideology but do not directly originate in the tradition of linguistic anthropology. In John Joseph’s and Talbot Taylor’s edited book *Ideologies of Language* (Joseph and Taylor 1990), historical and philosophical perspectives are taken on language ideologies in linguistics, politics and constructions of identity. Jan Blommaert’s collection *Language Ideological Debates* (Blommaert 1999a) is concerned with public debates on languages in different regions of the world. Blommaert himself stresses the need to develop a “historiography of language ideologies” – the historical production and reproduction of language ideologies (Blommaert 1999b:1) – an approach that has been considered particularly promising for future research (Kroskrity 2001:14). Contemporary sources that

take up the notion of language ideology can be found especially in sociolinguistic research that is concerned with multilingualism and identity (see especially Blackledge and Pavlenko 2002, Blackledge 2006, Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004, Stevenson and Mar-Molinero 2006a); however, these sociolinguistic approaches do not spell out the theoretical backgrounds of language ideology research as explicitly as it is done in the two introductory texts by Woolard and Kroskrity, which are foundational for the following overview.

### **3.2. FIELDS OF INTEREST IN LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY RESEARCH**

In giving an account of the basic divisions of language ideology, I will draw to a large extent on the frameworks as they are introduced in the two texts by Kroskrity (2000c) and Woolard (1998). The categories that I develop here are based on Woolard's categories as explicated in her introduction to the 1998 book (Woolard 1998). In reviewing research that relates to implicit and explicit ideologies of language, she detects several types of scholarly discussions. The overview of these different categories of scholarly discussions is intended to give a general insight into the diversity of the field of language ideology. Yet, in the following, the categories as developed by Woolard have been amended slightly. As not all of these categories are relevant for the type of language ideology as it is studied in this thesis, some categories have been subordinated under other categories for the sake of accessibility and brevity. Thus, I present here four different categories of research interest in the subject of language ideology: 1) *Language ideology and its relationship to linguistic structure*, 2) *Research on ideologies of language form and language function*, 3) *Research on cultural contact and language conflict* and 4) *Language ideologies in scientific epistemology*. This overview will be followed by a more detailed insight into national language ideology. All four fields of language ideology research, as introduced in the following, will be relevant for an understanding of national language ideology. Furthermore, the introduction of the whole scope of language ideologies deepens an understanding of the relevance of the study of discourses on language in general, which is the central aim of this thesis.

#### *Language ideology and its relationship to linguistic structure*

One topic of analytical interest in the field of language ideology is the relationship between ideas and concepts of language and linguistic structure (as e.g. in Silverstein 1979). An essential moment where language ideology affects linguistic structure can be detected, for example, in language change. The rationalisation of language change that is given by speakers is usually the idea that language structure should be regular; thus, it is quite common that older structures are given up for the sake of regularity. An example for that is the loss of the final [n] in French, which started in the 9<sup>th</sup> century and ended in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Aitchison 2001:84). The change started with the loss of final [n] after the low back vowel [a], and spread through the language from vowel to vowel, until, finally, in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the change had affected all vowels. While the loss of [n], in the beginning, must have



been perceived as the irregular form, it is clear that there is a point where the new form becomes the 'normal' form. As can be documented in an "s-curve" (Aitchison 2001:83-88), the spread then proceeds faster and affects quickly word after word. Following that, all words in which [n] is still pronounced are perceived as irregular and most of them are changed as to conform to the newer form. Speakers, in a way, are "distort[ing] language in the name of making it more like itself" (Woolard 1998:12). As has been pointed out by Silverstein (Silverstein 1985), in order to understand why such changes happen, in order to explain the degree of "socially shared systematicity in empirically occurring linguistic forms" (Woolard 1998:12), speakers' ideas about the meaning, function, and value of language – and of the value of regularity – have to be taken into account.

Deborah Cameron's concept of *Verbal Hygiene* (Cameron 1995) is highly enlightening in this context. Cameron points out that normativity is an essential precondition for commentary on language, which is a fundamental aspect of language. It is impossible not to be normative with respect to language, thus "all attitudes to language and linguistic change are fundamentally ideological" (Cameron 1995:4). This perspective is essential in the critique of the dichotomy of prescriptivism and descriptivism, which is central to many strands of linguistics. The descriptivist approach is ideological in the sense that it assumes languages to be natural phenomena that should be left untouched by human intervention – by prescriptivism. However, descriptive rules are necessarily normative and thus ideological, too, as Cameron (Cameron 1995:6) argues:

'Descriptive rules' are formulae which capture the patterned regularities in language. That such regularities exist is not in doubt, nor is the fact that many are below the level of speaker's consciousness. Yet this is hardly a warrant for claiming that the same rules the linguist formulates are either 'in the language' (as a structural linguist might assume) or 'in the speaker' (as a post-Chomskyan mentalist might claim). Language-using is a social practice: the human capacity for acquiring and using language is necessarily actualized within social relationships. Thus the sort of behavioural regularity captured in a rule must arguably arise in the first place from speaker's apprehending and following certain norms.

Attention to norms can be considered a social phenomenon, and, in this sense, ideology affects structure. From the point of view of language ideology research, the prescriptivism/descriptivism distinction is thus not clear-cut and linguistics is seen as embedded in wider social discourse, itself producing particular language ideologies.

In sociolinguistics, the role of ideology in influencing structural elements has been a matter of critical debate, too, as William Labov considered only language change "from above" (implemented officially, e.g. with the help of language policies or institutional regulations) as ideological, and discounted this influence as irrelevant (Labov 1979:329). However, Labov himself, in his famous study in New York City department stores, relates to measures of "linguistic insecurity" (Labov 1997 (1972):175) in describing the behaviour of

shop assistants. Even if it is only the frequency of usage of particular standard or non-standard forms that is described here, it has often been documented that stylistic variation can be the source of change of (structural) norms of use (Holmes 2008:213). Silverstein considers the labelling of verbal behaviour as “insecure” as “ideological allegiance to the standard register” (see Woolard 1998:13, Silverstein 1998), a language ideology that considers ways of talking to belong to a hierarchical structure, where standard forms are seen as ‘normal’ forms. This ideology of a scale of correctness is responsible for the reproduction of certain forms of pronunciation, but also of structural elements.

As in other discussions, the debate on the role of ideology in sociolinguistic research seems to be based on different approaches to the term *ideology*, where some regard ideologies as conscious discourse only and others define unconscious practices as ideological as well. If the linguistic anthropological perspective on ideology is adopted, which considers unconscious behaviour as ideological, too, it is appropriate to conceive of sociolinguistic systems as ideologically mediated (see also Irvine 2001:24). Silverstein, therefore, demands the inclusion of the ideological level for all types of linguistic research, as

the total linguistic fact, the datum for a science of language, is irreducibly dialectic in nature. It is an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms, contextualized to situations of interested human use and mediated by the fact of cultural ideology. (Silverstein 1985:220)

In research on language ideologies in transnational culture, the main focus will not be on the influence of language ideology on linguistic structure but it is nevertheless important to keep in mind that the perspective on language structure as fundamentally constituted by social factors is shared as a background assumption in this thesis (for another perspective on the development of grammar through social interaction, see Hopper 1988).

#### *Research on ideologies of language form and language function*

It is a commonplace that certain language varieties are regarded as ‘better’, others as ‘ugly’, some as ‘more elegant’ and others as ‘uneducated’. This type of language ideology is not only influential with regard to language structure but is of interest in itself and the subject of study in sociolinguistics as well as in sociology, educational studies and anthropology. There are, for example, studies that are concerned with folk beliefs on inherent power, beauty or expressiveness of a language, notions of what is pleasing or correct – or the opposite (see Woolard 1998:21, Kroskrity 2000b:8). Very often, positive evaluations are made about standard languages. The prevalence of uncritical, naturalised attitudes towards standard language, also in academia, can be astonishing. Linguistic forms are often ideologised as “implicating a distinctive kind of people” (Woolard 1998:18), which then leads to the *meconnaissance*, or misrecognition (Bourdieu 1980 (2005)), of conceiving of linguistic form as indicative of social, political, intellectual or moral character. All notions and attitudes

about inherent qualities of languages are thus unavoidably tied to social or political interests, which is also why the distinction between a neutral analysis and a critical analysis of these conceptions is more scalar than dichotomous (Kroskrity 2000b:6). It is thus virtually impossible to speak about language ideologies in language form without considering relations of power. This becomes obvious in discussing the standardisation of language but also with regard to other issues, such as the relationship between gender and the usage and uptake of particular language forms (see, for example, Gal 1991 on the meaning of silence in relation to language, power and gender). The point will also be illustrated clearly in the chapters of this thesis concerned with empirical data, where social discourses are shown to be clearly linked to ideologies of language.

Next to rather simple folk ideologies on language form, there are many tacit ideologies on the nature and functioning of language. Usually, these more hidden ideologies are, by the members of a given speech community, not only assumed for the own language but are taken for granted for language in general. Yet, these ideas are culturally contingent and the ethnography of speaking is an important tool for analysing such concepts (Woolard 1998:15, see also Ch. 5). European language ideology, for example, usually regards referential functions of language as essential and has a tendency to conceive the referential as the only function of language (Woolard 1998:13). This is also relevant for the conception of the relationship of reality, truth and language and the ability of language to map reality. The debate on how to create a 'rational' language that speaks truth has a long history in European philosophy. Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs (2000), for example, have discussed John Locke's project of a language of rational and empirical science, an idea that is present in European language culture today (see below in *Language ideologies in scientific epistemology* for more).

In other cultures, different relationships between language and reality are conceived, an extreme case being the example given by Don Kulick who studied a New Guinea village where language is regarded as a tool to distort reality (Kulick 1992 quoted in Cameron 2001:84). Different cultures also show different theories on how languages are acquired. A famous example is the Kaluli culture, in which it is considered inappropriate to talk to infants who are unable to speak (see Ochs and Schieffelin 1984). Verbal behaviour towards newborns seems to be related to whether an infant is regarded as a persona; key ideas about personhood are thus simultaneously related to ideologies of language acquisition.

Yet, it is not only ideas about the status and nature of persons but also ideas about groups that are mediated and co-constructed through concepts of language. As has been mentioned, in the Western world, the connection between a language and a cultural group is seen as quasi 'natural' and belonging to a group is usually indexed by the usage of the language 'of that group. Not only are languages conceived as bounded systems if they are seen as indexes for groups (but see more below and in 3.2.), the already mentioned topic of language standardisation is also closely connected to the construction of groups and of languages as

entities (for an overview see Romaine 2007; for a historical approach see Bourdieu 1980 (2005)). As has been discussed widely in sociolinguistics, standard languages of particular societies have a sociological, rather than a linguistic, reality (see e.g. Gal 2006, Gumperz 2001 (1968), Le Page 1988, Rampton 2000b, Romaine 2007, Urla 1993, Woolard 1998:21). Rosina Lippi-Green (1997) discusses standard language ideology as a “linguistic mystification undertaken by dominant institutions designed to simultaneously valorize the standard language and other aspects of ‘mainstream culture’ while devaluing the nonstandard” (quoted in Kroskrity 2001:6). The existence of a language standard has furthermore implications for ideologies of literacy. Although linguists usually regard speech to be the more ‘natural’ language that is prior to literacy, especially since the impact of Saussurean structuralism (see Saussure 1913 (1993), but also Derrida 1974), literacy has important functions as a mechanism of social control in modern, institutionalised nation-states (Woolard 1998:23). Finally, the culture of standardised, written language has wide-ranging effects on conceptions of language in linguistics and, also, in everyday life (Errington 2008:9-12), which is also of interest for scholars of language ideology.

Obviously, the list of this type of ideologies of language is long. Members of groups show different levels of awareness of local language ideologies and it has been demonstrated above that explicit and implicit levels of language ideologies are interrelated. Kroskrity has suggested that there is a correlational relationship between “high levels of discursive consciousness and active contestation of ideologies” (Kroskrity 2000b:19) and, at the same time, a correlation of “practical consciousness with relatively unchallenged, highly naturalized, and definitely dominant ideologies” (Kroskrity 2001:10)<sup>12</sup>. In studying transnational language ideology, this second perspective on language ideology will be relevant, as the symbolic functions of languages in the different communities will be one of the main interests. Which language is seen as important in which context, which quality is expressed with a particular language form and which identities are thus expressed? Are the categories of ‘native language identity’ and of ‘language’ itself deconstructed through non-native multilingual language use? To which other discourses on community, on identity and on general human values are transnational language ideologies related? (For a more detailed discussion of the research questions, see 4.3.)

However, the research interest of the empirical study is also strongly informed by studies that have been conducted within the third type of ideology research, which is interested in language ideology in situations of cultural contact.

### *Research on cultural contact and language conflict*

Studying cultural contact in multilingual societies has a strong tradition, particularly in sociolinguistics, and

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<sup>12</sup> This correlational relationship also can be assumed for situations in which languages and ideologies get into contact, discussed in *Research on cultural contact and language conflict* (see below).

[t]he traditional topics of sociolinguistic inquiry in these settings have been language maintenance and shift, contact-induced linguistic change, the linkage of language to ethnicity and nationalism, language attitudes, and language planning and development. (Woolard 1998:16)

Contemporary approaches to language ideology in situations of cultural contact also include research on second language learning and identity or on language learning and desire (see e.g. Block 2007, Pavlenko, et al. 2001, Takahashi 2006).

Overlaps with language ideology research that deals with cultural constructs of language in a particular society (as above) are obvious, as many, if not most, cultural constructs and the awareness of certain ideologies – in some cases also the motivation to change elements of a language – are based on cultural contact. Linguistic purism, the aim to keep a language free from foreign influence, is an example that shows how cultural constructs of language are linked to the desire to form boundaries to other languages and cultures. A purist ideology can only develop if there is contact to others from whom a group feels the need to differentiate. Similar to what research on ethnicity has shown – ethnic awareness and ethnic boundaries can only exist if there is contact with other ethnic groups (Barth 1969) – language ideologies of purism are a form of creating and reproducing symbolic boundaries between groups that are in contact. Certain linguistic elements are regarded as foreign and therefore are a ‘threat’ to the own culture and language.

Research and interest in this area often stems from societies that are officially multilingual and multiethnic, as the perception of many countries is that they are monolingual – although monolingualism in entities as big as a state is the historical result of standardisation and the erasure of linguistic variation (see above and Bourdieu 1980 (2000), Irvine and Gal 2000). It is an ‘ideological’ decision to differentiate between types of language ideology that are based on differentiation within one culture (as in *Research on ideologies of language form and language function*) and language ideologies that relate to differentiation between two cultures (as in *Research on cultural contact and language conflict*). As both differentiation within one culture and between two cultures rely on discursive constructions of peoples as national or ethnic groups, this distinction is based on the tradition to perceive internal differences to be different from differences between ethnic groups. Actually, the standardisation of a language is as much concerned with linguistic difference, as is linguistic purism. However, the tradition of conceptualising people as belonging to ethnic or national groups and of taking this as a prime marker of identity is so dominant that it is usually taken as given. Thus, many studies take this distinction between internal and external difference as self-evident, and it is therefore also used in this text. It has to be emphasised that linguistic boundaries are here understood as the result of cultural processes and social struggles and, secondly, that ethnic and linguistic boundaries are in a dialectical relationship to each other (for excellent analyses of the construction of linguistic boundaries, see Irvine and Gal 2000, Gal and Irvine 1995). On the other hand, although I describe ethnic and linguistic boundaries

as discursive constructs, it is vital to understand that such boundaries have real effects and are in this sense very real to people in everyday life.

One area of research within this frame that shows the problematic distinction between internal and external difference is the field of pidgin and creole studies (for an overview see Holm 2004). The concept of the *creole continuum* shows how difficult it can be to say whether certain linguistic forms belong to either one or the other 'language' (Sebba 1997:210-225). In Jamaica, for example, there is a high range of variability between 'broad' creole and Standard English (with a Jamaican accent), so that the varieties in the 'middle' present a conceptual difficulty. If they are regarded as belonging to English, they are seen as dialectal varieties of the English language, a case of internal variety. If they are regarded as variations of Jamaican creole, the same linguistic forms can be categorised as belonging to a different language. Consequently, depending on his or her particular language ideology, a researcher could regard, for example, public debates on the variations between the Jamaican creole and English as instances of a struggle on the definition and variability of (one) language form, or one could conceptualise such conflicts as being a case of cultural conflict between two languages. Similar examples exist from traditional sociolinguistic research, where the case of the dialect continuum has been discussed widely (Becker and Bieswanger 2006:186). The west Germanic dialect continuum and the Romance dialect continuum are well-known examples for the fact that non-linguistic criteria are crucial for the construction of certain forms of speech as belonging to different 'languages'. On the other hand, it is certainly no accident that a scholarly understanding of 'languages' as cultural constructs, based on constructions of ethnic identity, has evolved in a context where pidgin and creole languages are spoken (the seminal study of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985 represents an impressive and early case).

Examples from research that relates to language ideologies in situations of contact between different cultural groups, where the existence of these groups is usually (and, for analytical reasons, logically) not questioned, is the study of language attitudes (see Fasold 1984, Garrett 2005, Thomas 1999). Attitudes towards certain languages have been shown to be attitudes towards the speakers of these languages. Similarly, language switching between different varieties or dialects towards which certain attitudes exist can, for example, function as index for scales of formality or solidarity (Holmes 2008:ch.15) so that the ideological aspect of the role of language in everyday life is clear in this context, too. Studies on bilingualism, particularly on code-switching (Heller 1988, Lüdi 2004, Myers-Scotton 1993) and language (or code) mixing (for a definition of the distinction, see Auer 1999) are thus also related to language ideology research. One example for this is the often-observed perception of the alternation between codes being deficient or 'grammarless' (Woolard 1998:17). This perception is obviously based on the construction of languages as separate entities, where the crossing of boundaries is seen as a sign of deficiency.

This relates to a relatively new area of research, which has been coined *language crossing* (Rampton 1995a, Rampton 1995b, Rampton 2006). It introduces the “use of a language or variety that, in one way or another, feels anomalously ‘other’” (Rampton 2000a:55) – especially ‘other’ in the ethnic sense – and sheds light on the deeply rooted ideological connection between language and ethnic identity. It is thus simultaneously concerned with ideologies of language. Language crossing is an example of practices that directly put into question national categories of language and culture (language crossing will be introduced in more detail in Chapter 4 and is clearly an area of interest in this thesis).

Finally, another important area of research that relates to language ideologies in situations of contact and conflict is the realm of language policy and language rights (see e.g. Fettes 1997, Mar-Molinero 2006, May 2001, Ricento 2006). Since the 1960s, language policy research has been predominantly concerned with the creation, standardisation or establishment of a national language. Newer research in language policy contexts is more often concerned with the issue of language rights, which also shows a change of language ideologies in language policy research itself. Language rights research emphasises the right to maintain a cultural and linguistic identity, especially a minority identity (see e.g. Coulmas 1998, de Varennes 1996, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1999, Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1995a). Ideologies of language are important for this type of research, as perspectives on minority languages as being of less worth are widespread. On the other hand, ideologies of language that figure in this type of research are also of analytical interest, as pseudo-biological or over-deterministic assumptions regarding the status of minority languages in the face of a dominant language have been a matter of critique (Blommaert 2005b, Pennycook 2004, Schneider 2010).

It is especially in the area of *Research on cultural contact and language conflict* where it becomes clear that language ideologies are always “multiple” (Kroskrity 2000b:12-18, Kroskrity 2001:7-10). Because of the plurality of social divisions in societies (class, gender, generations, elites ...), language ideologies are never evenly distributed in one polity but have different – multiple – effects. There are always disjunctures, contestations, contradictions and clashes of ideologies within and across social groups and societies, which has to be kept in mind while conducting the type of research as envisaged in this thesis.

It should have become clear that this strand of research on language ideologies is most relevant for the study of language ideologies in transnational Salsa Communities of Practice, which is interested in the contact of people and languages of different backgrounds.

#### *Language ideologies in scientific epistemology*

Finally, an explicit focus on ideologies of language can be found in research on scientific ideologies. This strand is interrelated to language philosophy, where general questions on the relationship between language, truth and reality are discussed (e.g. in Joseph and Taylor 1990). Language ideologies can, however, be observed in any type of science. In Kroskrity’s

volume on language ideologies, there are several chapters that are concerned with the effect of ideologies of language on the production of knowledge in various scholarly spheres.

One illustrative example of a discussion of language ideology in science is Silverstein's critique (Silverstein 2000) of Benedict Anderson's account of *imagined communities* (Anderson 1985), which shows that the sociologist tacitly works with European and Euro-American linguistic nationalist ideologies. Anderson, in assuming that the creation of imagined national communities relies on print media in a capitalist world, does not discuss the fact that standard languages are actually a precondition for spreading the printed word. "Missing from Anderson's perspective [...] is the insight that homogenous language is as much imagined as is community" (Irvine and Gal 2000:76, see also 3.3.).

Next to linguistics, philosophy and sociology, language ideologies are found in all areas of the social sciences and humanities – the saying "a definition of language is always [...] a definition of human beings in the world" (Williams 1977:21) also seems to work the other way around<sup>13</sup>. Kroskrity has studied the role of language ideology in cultural anthropology (Kroskrity 2000a), while Bauman and Briggs have written extensively not only on language ideologies in linguistics but also on ideologies of language in philosophy and its history (see also section on *Cultural constructs*). For example, the highly influential works by John Locke are concerned with the creation of a language that serves the needs of the empirical sciences, as Locke conceives that a 'pure' language is necessary in order to create neutral, universal knowledge in modernity (see Bauman and Briggs 2000, Bauman and Briggs 2003). The idea of this assumedly 'rational', context-free language, however, naturalises privileged positions of speakers of a particular kind of language – male, white, upper/middle class speakers, whose language is taken as norm – and thus legitimises social inequality.

A main aim of research on language ideology with regard to the science of language is the "attempt to denaturalize our own intellectual tradition's compartmentalization and reification of communicative social practice" (Woolard 1998:9). As has already been demonstrated in various examples above, constructions and theories of language in linguistics can be regarded as being connected to social and also to other scientific discourses that have an influence on these conceptualisations. This leads to an understanding that linguistic knowledge is not universal but co-constructed through social discourse, culture and language ideology, too.

There are a number of texts that challenge the foundations of linguistics as they have been developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is here especially structuralism and generative linguistics that are the objects of debate (see e.g. Pratt 1987, Cameron 1990, Harris 1990, Bauman and Briggs 2003). These discussions have been touched upon in the previous sections and also in Chapter 2; they circle around the postulation of structures that underlie communication. The understanding of language as cultural interactional behaviour and the

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<sup>13</sup> It would be fascinating to discuss these issues in relation to the natural sciences but this goes beyond the scope of this chapter.



critique of the idea of verbal communication as relying on an *a priori* code are basic to many analyses of language ideologies of linguistics.

Judith Irvine and Susan Gal relate this critique to their linguistic anthropological research in areas in which the *one language – one culture* principle cannot be observed empirically (Gal and Irvine 1995, Irvine and Gal 2000). The work of Irvine and Gal is an especially important reference for the deconstruction of language ideologies in linguistics. Their research in multilingual speech communities shows that linguistics can be ideological not only in an epistemological sense but can have strong political implications, too. It is basic to many structuralist approaches to language that language is seen as unaffected by human will (see above and also Cameron 1990). The existence of different languages is usually perceived to be an asocial process. Different language systems are then approached like quasi-biological categories. However, Gal and Irvine (e.g. Gal and Irvine 1995) show the inadequacy of this view. Gal and Irvine have studied regions in which the connection between one culture and one language is not the same as in national contexts. Their studies demonstrate that boundaries between languages are the result of social differentiation and not of biological processes, an idea that was reified chiefly in nationalist 19<sup>th</sup> century linguistics (Errington 2008:ch. 3 and 4, see also 3.3.2.), but is often tacitly reproduced in contemporary approaches to language (see e.g. Cameron 1995:ch.1). The two scholars detect three processes that are crucial in the development of linguistic categories, which are *iconisation* (linguistic features become an icon of a group), *fractal recursivity* (“the same oppositions that distinguish given groups from one another on larger scales can also be found within those groups” (Andronis 2004:264)) and *erasure* (some linguistic differences within a group are considered inconsequential and thus become invisible) (for a more detailed introduction to these terms, see Irvine and Gal 2000).

One example where linguistic difference does not represent ethnic difference is the Wolof in Senegal (Gal and Irvine 1995:975ff.). Linguistic differences in this context represent social rank, rather than ethnicity; linguistic relationships are bound up with political and religious affiliation. Similarly, according to Gal and Irvine (Gal and Irvine 1995:983), in Macedonia, language differences do not so much indicate ethnic affiliation but rather religious belonging and class relationships. Greek, for example, relates to the belonging to an urban merchant class, whereas the usage of Bulgarian symbolises membership of a Christian, non-orthodox lower class. Although these categorisations are never absolute, they show that language entities can be regarded as being related to social negotiations and power struggle. In the construction of ethnic and national categories, class differences and non-ethnic power struggles are invisibilised, a process of “erasure” (Irvine and Gal 2000) that functions equivalent with regard to groups and to languages. In the study of language ideology in transnationalism, it is particularly an attention to the formerly ‘erased’ non-national, non-ethnic affiliations and the influence of other types of categories and discourses that will be shown to be relevant.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and also in much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, knowledge generated by linguists not only, in one way or another, related to nationalism but often served as explanation for European superiority, as patterns like in Senegal or Macedonia were described as un-European, unorderedly, chaotic and of less value. Linguistic heterogeneity was seen as an index of untrustworthiness; language and political identity in this context became regarded as alterable and therefore shallow<sup>14</sup> (Gal and Irvine 1995:982). In legitimising colonial aspirations, concepts that were based on linguistics played a prominent role in the creation of a human hierarchy where, next to other factors, clearly demarcated linguistic and ethnic boundaries were seen as indexing the upper end of a scale of civilisation (see Errington 2008). In light of the dominance of the nationalist concept of linguistic differentiation, which served (even if often unwillingly) political interests, questions about the development of linguistic differentiation became irrelevant in the majority of linguistic studies. The ways in which boundaries between languages are constructed have been under-researched until today, as well as the social processes by which linguistic units become linked to social units (see also Gal and Irvine 1995:970, Gal and Woolard 1995, Irvine and Gal 2000, Rampton 2000b). As Gal and Irvine argue, these constructions and social processes “cannot be understood without a study of the ideas about social and linguistic difference held by socially-positioned speakers” (Gal and Irvine 1995:970). The ethnographic study of language ideology in transnational Salsa contexts is an example of a study that maps such ideas.

The inability of many linguists of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century to understand that languages are not necessarily linked to ethnic groups (Gal and Irvine 1995:978) has often rendered invisible that there are more complex and intertwined relationships between social and linguistic categories. This can be labelled as a case of *methodological nationalism*. The term *methodological nationalism* (Wimmer and Schiller 2002) is constructive in analysing the influence of the social realm on science, as it captures the fact that the national framework has been an unquestioned pre-assumption of many studies in the social sciences in general (the debate on methodological nationalism is widespread in German sociology; see e.g. Beck 2002b). Methodological nationalism is the “assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world” (Wimmer and Schiller 2002:301). The incapability to become aware of the influence of social interests in the construction of language as an entity, related to national entities, is what Wimmer and Glick-Schiller call a “blind spot” (ibid.:303). It is related to the fact that “[t]he epistemic structures and programmes of mainstream social sciences have been closely attached to, and shaped by, the experience of modern nation-state formation” (303)<sup>15</sup>. Methodological nationalism in

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<sup>14</sup> Similar concepts still figure prominently in political discourses today. An example of this is German discourses on the integration of migrants where, on the one hand, for citizens of some states, double citizenship is prohibited, and, on the other hand, maintenance of languages of some migrant communities is perceived as a threat (Stevenson and Schanze 2009).

<sup>15</sup> However, consider the critique that, at the same time, “[m]ethodological nationalism’ is an approach that naturalises or rationalises the existence of the nation-state” (Fine 2007:10) and that sociology “contains within it

linguistics can be taken as an example of how a certain episteme (see 2.2.) structures academic discourse and is thus responsible for the creation of a certain type of knowledge. Obviously, the formation of this knowledge is related to hierarchical power structures, in this case, the rise of the bourgeoisie in nation-states, who made their language the norm for all other forms of verbal communication (see also Bourdieu 1980 (2005)). In order to avoid methodological nationalism, there is the “need for analytical tools that are not colored by the evidence that the world is divided up into nations” (Wimmer and Schiller 2002:325). A historical perspective is thus necessary in order to deconstruct naturalised epistemologies; this theoretical critique is furthermore constructive for the adoption of particular methods, as, for example, in applying a Communities of Practice approach (see 5.2.), instead of assuming ethnic/national communities as a starting point.

In the chapters of this thesis concerned with the empirical research, it will be illustrated that the intersectional complexities of multilingualism that intertwine ethnicity and class have become more visible in language relationships in transnational contexts. This view has not only been permitted by newly developed cultural practices but also by a changed perception of language behaviour due to discourses of globalisation (see also Williams 1966:ch.1). However, before I turn to contemporary language ideologies in transnational contexts, a historical perspective on national language ideology will serve to deconstruct and avoid methodological nationalism. The basic tenets of nationalism will be introduced and the relationship between discourses of linguistics and of nationalism will be discussed (3.3., 3.3.1.). Afterwards, the historical development of national language ideology will be illustrated with a concentration on three particularly prominent scholars of 19<sup>th</sup> century linguistics discourse (3.3.2.). These sections demonstrate that national language ideology is not a ‘natural’ state of affairs but the result of a certain historical, socio-political development. This historical focus firstly clarifies the notion of *national language ideology* and it secondly avoids the trap of methodological nationalism (e.g. in assuming that languages are ‘given’) by introducing a brief “archaeology” (see 2.2.) of national language discourse. Whether or not nationalist conceptions of language are actually questioned by language ideologies in transnational cultures will have to be scrutinised in the empirical analysis in the chapters thereafter. Although speakers’ language ideologies in transnational Salsa culture may not necessarily include deconstructivist approaches to language, it is crucial to consider the historically-contingent dimension of any analysis of language.

Concluding this review of the field of language ideology, it is important to remark that research on language ideology has a strong tradition of demonstrating how social inequality is legitimised and reproduced through concepts of language. Although the field remains relatively marginalised and is still pretty small, there are indications that the study of culturally contingent concepts of language will expand in the future as there is a growing

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an opposition to methodological nationalism” (ibid. 13). The same is true for the history of linguistics, which also contains this opposition (see e.g. Hugo Schuchardt, in 3.3.2.).

awareness that the study of language always has to involve the cultural background of the speakers and, also, of the researchers (see e.g. Irvine 2001, Kroskrity 2001, see also the discussion on linguistic ethnography in Rampton, et al. 2004). It can be assumed that this is also related to the fact that discourses of transnationalism – which question essentialised concepts of culture (see 4.1.) – and of post-structuralism – which question essentialised concepts in general (see 2.1.) – have brought to the fore that linguistics has to work on tacitly embedded essentialist conceptions of language in its own field.

As Kroskrity (2001:14-16) has pointed out, there are two research trends of language ideology that are promising for future research. These are, on the one hand, the historiography of language ideologies (see also Blommaert 1999a); on the other hand, it is the language ideological production of social identities. Jan Blommaert furthermore points out that the study of language ideologies is vital in understanding the reorganisation of local sociolinguistics stratifications due to globalisation (Blommaert 2003:609). These aspects will be touched upon in the theoretical as well as in the empirical parts of this thesis and the following historical perspective on the relationship between languages and nations will serve as a “historiography” of linguistic nationalism.

### **3.3. NATIONALISM AND LANGUAGE AS DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCT**

In order to study transnational culture and potentially new discourses on language, a thorough understanding of a national perspective on language is necessary. This section elaborates on the existence of the concept of ‘language’ as a separate entity that is related to one ethnic or national group – as, for example, in *English*, *German* or *Spanish*. In the context of this thesis, it is conceived that nationalism is one of the most crucial aspects in the analysis of language as discursive construct. Although the debates surrounding this topic have mainly focused on the relevance of colonialism for the concept of language (see e.g. Errington 2001a, Errington 2008, Makoni and Pennycook 2007, Pennycook 1998, Pennycook 2004), the importance of nationalist ideology must not be underestimated<sup>16</sup>. It has been claimed that “the nation-state ideology of language [...] constructed the unit of language through the formation of the nation-state” (Muehlmann and Duchêne 2007:105). Joseph Errington therefore includes two chapters on nationalist imaginations and their relevance for constructions of language in his recent book (Errington 2008:ch. 3 and 4). *Language*, as separate entity, has also been referred to as “language in its differential sense” (Bauman 1999, also used in Risager 2006:3, opposed to “language in its generic sense”) and is sometimes written as *Language* with a capital *L* (Blommaert 2003, Pennycook 2004).

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<sup>16</sup> The perception of a crucial relevance of nationalism for the study of languages might be influenced by the German background of the author – in German history, nationalism plays a more important role than colonialism. This illustrates the social and historical embeddedness of scientific discourse, as authors concerned with colonial aspects of language stem from countries that either have been vital actors in colonial history or have been affected by European colonialism.

Although the concept of *Language*, from a lay perspective, might seem simple and straightforward, there have been manifold discussions about its ontology:

To talk about 'languages' is to assume that there are self-contained sets of syntactic rules and words which exist before and outside of talk, which groups of people share completely, and which everyone in a group accesses and uses in the same way as they talk. But languages in this sense are found only in dictionaries and grammar books, and then incompletely. It could be, in fact, that we think of languages as autonomous and shared precisely because we are used to grammars and dictionaries, because the experiences with language we are most self-conscious about (school experiences, for example) tend to involve the standardized written varieties that are codified in grammars and dictionaries. (Johnstone 2008:43-44)

The questioning of language as a fixed system is a foundational critique that has been developed in early sociolinguistics (Labov 1963, Hymes 1968). The actual variation within languages shows that the assumption of self-contained sets of lexical, morphological and syntactic rules is largely theoretical and the notion of a language that straightforwardly relates to an ethnic or national group is a culturally contingent construct, a particular form of language ideology.

If the notion of language is a discursive construct and if it is assumed that discourse, knowledge and power are related to each other (see Ch. 2), it can be asked whose interests are served by the notion of *language*. In sociolinguistics, it is a truism that standard languages are varieties that serve the interests of middle class speakers of particular nation-states. It is their way of speaking that is used as model for all speakers – it is “a dialect with a navy and an army” (Weinreich 1945; for a discussion see also Lippi-Green 1997, Romaine 2007). Bourdieu’s prominent analysis of the development of the standard language in France (Bourdieu 1980 (2000)) illustrates the effects of a certain way of speaking becoming a normative model for a whole society. The development of standard languages is related to political structures and administrative institutions and it has consequences for the hierarchisation of other language varieties as ‘sub’-languages or dialects of the standard (see also above). Furthermore, the standardisation of language has important social consequences as the acquisition of this language is a crucial asset in gaining access to certain positions in administration and politics, and in the job market (Bourdieu 1980 (2005):51ff.). The development of the nation-state is crucial for an understanding of the relationship between the concept of the standard language and discursive and political power structures. It has to be remembered at this point that, from a Foucauldian perspective, power is not only constraining but is basically a productive force, “a productive network which runs through the whole social body” (Foucault 1980a:119). Subjects are understood as constituted through power (see 2.2.) and languages can be regarded as subjects that are constituted through this form of power, which are performed through social discourses:

The concept of ‘a language’ – at least in the sense which appears so banally obvious to ‘us’ – may itself be an invented permanency, developed during the age of the nation-state. If this is the case, then language does not create nationalism, so much as nationalism creates language. (Billig 1995)

In this understanding, a standard language comes into being because of discourses in which it is described and used. In more Foucauldian words, one could say that disciplining of language generates language (compare Geller 2005:34). Interestingly, the discipline of linguistics has played a central role in the constitution of the particular subject of language; thus, the science of language is also embedded in and reciprocally related to nationalist discourse. A historical view on linguistics as a discipline will illustrate this connection below (see 3.3.2.). A discursive understanding of language does not mean to deny the existence of languages and it

does not mean refuting the essence of syntax or the manner in which language is structured so that the possibilities of meaning are developed. What it does mean is paying attention to the manner in which the infinite possibilities of language are transposed into meaning as the effect of discourse [...]. (Williams 1999:5)

Instead of studying structures and instead of discussing, for example, whether they may be located in the individual or in the speech community, considering language as cultural construct makes it possible to ask: How did the notion of language as discrete entity and as emblematic of self and community spread? (Geertz 1973a, quoted in Woolard 1998). How do linguistic features become signs for social groups and which features are made salient? What is the ideology that mediates between the sign and its social meaning? (Rampton 2000b, Woolard 1998). On the other hand, what is the role of language in producing social value and hierarchical structures? (Gal 1992 in Irvine 2001). I can only touch upon these questions, but they have to be regarded as crucial for the concept of language as it is used in the study of language ideologies in transnational culture. In this context, as has been introduced in Chapter 1, the question arises whether transnationalism evokes different language ideologies than nationalism and which discourses – instead of national discourses – influence language ideology in a transnational context. These can be regarded as the main research questions, which will be introduced in Chapter 4. Before this, the connections between *language* and *nation* and the role of linguistics in the construction of this connection will be introduced in more detail.

### **3.3.1. IDEOLOGIES OF NATIONALISM, IDEOLOGIES OF LANGUAGE, IDEOLOGIES OF LINGUISTICS**

The notion of nationalism has been discussed and analysed widely, especially in the social sciences (for historical, linguistic and sociological analyses, see e.g. Anderson 1985, Billig 1995, Blommaert and Verschueren 1998, Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 1989). Regarding its

effects on the conceptualisation of community and society, it is undoubtedly one of the most significant and productive ideas in Western modernity. Broadly speaking, one can say that the term *nation* describes a group of human individuals that is imagined as of the same ancestry. While everyday language often equates the terms *state* and *nation*, the scientific approach conceives that nations, like ethnic groups, have an assumed common descent, but a more “conscious wish for self-control” than ethnic groups (Edwards 1985:13)<sup>17</sup>. Nations do not necessarily rule a country or have an administrative body – the Kurds are often considered an example for a nation without a state. The belief in homogeneity and in common cultural descent is usually very strong in ethnic identities, and it seems to be even stronger in nations; nations are often bigger and are claimed to be more self-aware of forming a group. In the remainder of this thesis, national and ethnic group identity will be used interchangeably as the difference between the two terms is more of a gradient nature and, in many cases, what is said is true for both, ethnicities and nations.

An important effect of the discursive construction of *nation* seems to be the erasure of class difference, as people within a nation feel to be culturally ‘the same’, irrespective of their economic status (Irvine and Gal 2000). The term *nation-state*, in this understanding, denotes a state that is inhabited or ruled by one nation. One of the most influential works regarding the relevance and development of nationalism is Benedict Anderson’s seminal text *Imagined Communities* (Anderson 1985), in which the concept and its effects are analysed. In public discourse, nations are considered to be quasi-natural entities; yet, Anderson explicates how the idea of groups of the size of a nation developed. It is here particularly noticeable that individuals typically identify strongly with a group that is imagined; it is not a group that any individual could literally experience as in, for example, smaller face-to face communities. Nevertheless, history has shown that many people are willing to die for this very idea (Anderson 1985:ch.1). For the development of the concept and the implementation of the idea of the nation, languages are fundamental. As analysed by Anderson, the creation of ethnic/national identity and the construction of a national community is dependent on mass media (in his example, especially newspapers), thus on language. Although Anderson has an oversimplified concept of language, as he tacitly assumes national languages to be given (see also the critique by Silverstein 2000, mentioned in 3.2.), he emphasises the crucial roles of print capitalism, newspapers and novels and their contribution to the functioning of the idea that in one territory, there is one group with one culture and one language. It is only through language and certain types of media that the concept can be transposed (Anderson 1985:ch.4).

The connection between language and nation became naturalised in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century discourse (Herder 1772, Humboldt 1903ff), which is seen as the starting point of *linguistic nationalism*. Language, in its symbolic function, but also in its communicative function, has

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<sup>17</sup> This definition is of course debatable, as the wish for self-control also depends on opportunity – an opportunity that minority groups may not have.

been essential for nationalism right from the start and continues to be relevant for present-day debates on belonging:

The idea that collective identities and languages are connected in an essentialist way has been a key concept of European modernity; it underlies the formation of the European nation states and it continues to be deeply rooted in our language ideologies. According to this idea, each collectivity (particularly a nation, or a Volk) expresses its own individual character through and in its language. The term 'essentialist' is justified here since it is assumed that there is a 'natural' link between a nation and 'its' language. (Auer 2007:2)

Linguistic nationalism not only results in the idea that states should ideally be monolingual (see also Blommaert and Verschueren 1998); it has consequences for the use and for the structure of language, which is seen as ideally regular. Thus, *language* and *nation* are dialectically related as both depend on each other. As introduced in Chapter 1, the concept is furthermore epistemologically relevant for linguistics, where the standardised language of a nation is often regarded as the 'normal' object of study: "To speak of *the* language, without further specification, as linguists do, is tacitly to accept the *official* language of a political unit" (Bourdieu 1980 (2000):468, see Ch. 1).

The construction of linguistics as a discipline is a good example for illustrating the link between social and academic discourse. The development of linguistics as an independent academic subject in the 19<sup>th</sup> century has obvious relationships to the heyday of nationalism during that time, as during the construction and rising power of nation-states, language structures and their histories and relationships served as important evidence for the legitimacy of the existence of nation-states (Robins 1997:ch.4).

Consolidating a uniform citizenry involved formulating and disseminating a uniform culture that was transmitted through a single language. Language emerges as a specific object within the discursive formation that links nation and state, involving the institutional structure that can legitimise or de-legitimise discourses, and that has the right to speak about specific issues, and the role of language in such 'speaking'. The issue of what is, and is not, a language is a political issue that constructs speakers and non-speakers as political subjects. It pertains directly to the setting of boundaries. Historically states standardised their state language, thereby consolidating their specificity while elaborating differences between languages. (Williams 2010:4)

It does not come as a surprise that administrative bodies of nation-states financed and supported the creation of academic institutes that documented the autonomy and maturity of the language of a state. Thus, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nationalism also has had influences on the science of language. For example, it is particularly obvious that political concepts inform linguistic epistemology in the realm of language planning and language policy. Language planning activities are closely related to the construction of national groups and their aspiration of exercising power within and outside their territorial borders. Language



planning in the 1960s intended to create national unity and homogeneity in decolonised states (see Ferguson 1968 and 3.2.). In the field of syntax, standard languages of nations were regarded as the entities in which the language systems of linguistically homogenous groups should ideally be studied (Chomsky 1965; for a critique, see sections 3.1. and 3.2.).

It is indeed very difficult to imagine a language that is not connected to a certain group. This is not only remarkable on an academic level but there are wide-ranging effects of this concept of language in real life. Conceptualising language as bounded entity or even ‘organ’, as common in 19<sup>th</sup> century linguistics (see below), impacts on the life of individuals and is closely connected to political forces and the ruling of people. “The belief that distinctly identifiable languages can and should be isolated, named, and counted enters not only into minority and majority nationalism but into various strategies of social domination” (Woolard 1998:17). Language testing regimes for migrants are one contemporary example of this type of domination (Slade and Möllering 2010) but the very idea of the existence of different states to which individuals belong and in which they have certain rights (or have none) is also intrinsically related to the concept of language.

A distinct language has usually been taken to be an indicator for the entitlement of groups to form a separate nation, and, in current discourses on language and integration, the ability to speak a certain language “plays a key role in the processes whereby social actors are granted legitimate membership as nationals, i.e. are treated as ‘truly’ French, Spaniards, Catalans or Danes” (Pujolar 2007:79). In this context, one should not forget that nations are not *only* imagined communities but very real institutions with wide-ranging juridical and political powers and a large administrative and military apparatus that ensures the monopoly on physical force (see also Piller 2001b:259). In a more literary manner, one could say that a language is not only a dialect with an army and a navy but has very real armies and navies as powerful siblings.

If language, and not only ideas about language, is understood as intertwined with the discursive level, the idea of ‘autonomous’ linguistics<sup>18</sup> has to be questioned and the functions of standard languages have to be observed thoroughly and critically with regard to their social effects. Linguistic structures themselves, to a certain extent, reflect the histories of power struggles and social life. *Langue* is not only influenced by *parole* but by ideological discourses. The role of the discipline of linguistics in the creation of this very powerful discourse has often stayed invisible and thus appears to be the politically neutral study of linguistic structures and elements. Yet, as has been discussed in Chapter 2, one of the most crucial insights of Foucauldian discourse theory is that scientific discourses do not produce neutral, value-free knowledge but are intertwined with other discourses and exist in the episteme in which they are produced. And not only does political discourse influence science,

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<sup>18</sup> The study of language as synchronic system has been described as ‘orthodox’, ‘traditional’, ‘autonomous’, ‘modern’ or ‘modernist’ linguistics. All these terms relate to the study of language systems in its own right, “irrespective of its antecedents and irrespective of its relationship to other such systems” (Harris 1990:19). The different terms are here used interchangeably.

in reverse, “[d]isciplinary knowledge has played an important public role in the political construction of both modernity and its others and recognition of this adds impetus to the reassessment of inherent concepts and methods within linguistics” (Rampton 2000b:11). As linguistics as an academic discipline was developed during the era of the rising power of nation-states, it is not an accident that “[m]odern linguistics itself has been framed and constrained by the one language/one people assumption” (Woolard 1998:17, see also Le Page 1988).

It could be thus claimed that linguistics is part of the discourse of power that actually performs – brings into being – the subject of language (see also Pennycook 2004). Linguistics has played an important part in “the formation of a unitary language with a set of norms” (Woolard 1994:69). It is therefore vital to gain an insight into the historical development of thoughts of linguistics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where the discipline had its beginnings. In line with Foucauldian terminology, I call this historical view on the development of linguistics an *archaeological* perspective (see 2.2).

### **3.3.2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON NATIONAL LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY – 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY GERMAN LINGUISTICS**

In order to understand the historical contingency of national language discourse, it is, first of all, productive to have a look at pre-national language discourse. Although it is difficult to evaluate the meaning of terms (such as, e.g., *language*) as they were used several hundred years ago, it is appropriate to say that in Europe in pre-national times, it was mainly Latin which was considered to be a language (Arens 1969:56). Despite (or maybe because?) Latin, by then, was a ‘dead’ language that was no longer spoken but, except for church services, only used in written form, Latin was the only prestigious form of written communication<sup>19</sup>. It is vital to note in this context that super-regional community building in pre-national times was primarily based on the structures of the church, which used Latin as a medium of communication. The prestige of Latin, which it still carries today, stems from the exclusive role it had as language of the Roman Empire, and later as language of the Christian religion. It is thus not really surprising that, in most European contexts, Latin was the only language that was written and that it was mainly with regard to Latin that texts on ‘grammar’ (*grammatica*) were produced. Thoughts and texts on the issue of language were typically about the structures and levels of written Latin (Arens 1969:ch.1 and 2).

Due to the influence of Christianity, the biblical story of Babel did not add to the prestige and value of the existence of a plurality of languages. In the story of Babel, all people speak only one language until God divides humankind linguistically as punishment for their sins. According to this story, different languages thus only come into existence because of the inappropriate behaviour of humans. Yet, interestingly, the difference between these

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<sup>19</sup>Next to Latin, Biblical Hebrew also carried prestige and was often regarded as the language of God. Yet, Biblical Hebrew was also a ‘dead’ language and has less relevance as medium of communication in Christian spheres of Europe.

languages is not based on cultural difference, as a nationalist language ideology would assume, but it is the different occupational groups of the builders of the Tower of Babel that now speak different languages (see Arens 1969:57).

Dante's (1256-1321) seminal text on the value of 'vulgar' language is usually considered to be the first treatise on languages other than Latin as having equal, or even more, value than the 'dead' language of church authorities. The text itself, *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (Dante Alighieri 1305 (2010)), describes the oral languages as the more 'noble' (elegant and appropriate) language. However, Dante's concept is not embedded in a nationalist episteme, as he does not divide the 'vulgar language' according to different ethnic groups but describes a broad dichotomy of Latin versus 'vulgar' language. According to Dante, vulgar language is used all over the world and merely has different pronunciations and words:

Of these two [languages] the more noble one is the language of the people, because it is this language that was used first by humankind, and secondly, because the whole world uses it, even if it has been divided into distinct pronunciations and words ... (Dante Alighieri 1305 (2010):ch.1, quoted in Arens 1969:55, own translation)

The dichotomy between Latin and 'vulgar' language can be understood as a class-based division. The main symbolic value of the two categories is not based on belonging to different ethnicities or nations but on the distinction between Latin and 'vulgar', between the language of the religious and administrative leaders and the language of the common people. Although it is mentioned that there are differences within 'vulgar' language, which have developed historically, the 'vulgar' language is nevertheless described as *one* language. Later in the text, Dante relates the differences within the 'vulgar' language to geographical space; however, this division is not made with reference to different cultural groups but to very wide territorial regions. One area reaches, for example, from what is today Hungary to what is today France. Regional commonality is constructed on the basis of the observation that for *yes*, the same word – *io* or derivations thereof – is used (Dante Alighieri 1305 (2010):ch.8, quoted in Arens 1969:58). On the other hand, he also mentions smaller categories of space, such as cities, as entities where a particular type of 'vulgar' language is spoken (*ibid.*:59). His observation is very much linked to the administrative structure of the era, where no national structures existed but particular laws related to either the space of a city or the whole Christian world. The discursive construction of language is, as in the story of the Tower of Babel, not based on the idea that different cultures have different languages. The construction relates primarily to a class distinction and, secondly, to administrative structures.

The construction of languages as divided according to class or occupation is found in several sources of the pre-national era (roughly, before the 18<sup>th</sup> century). The interest in the languages of the common people increased during the following centuries, also due to colonialism. More and more grammars of 'vulgar' languages appeared; however, they were all

modelled according to the structure of Latin and the study of languages was seen as part of the study of (mainly foreign) cultures. The authors of these grammars were not trained language scientists, as professional philologists only studied Latin, Hebrew or Old Greek (Arens 1969:63-64). From today's perspective, many texts on language from the time cannot be considered to be scientific and they often had religious aims. Yet, it is highly interesting to study early texts on language and to analyse their discursive constructions. One example is the Swiss scholar Bibliander (1504-1564), whose text *About the Common Nature of all Languages and Letters* (originally in Latin) gives six different possible reasons why languages have diversified since Babel: 1) due to the amalgamation of different human beings, 2) a change in governance, which usually tries to homogenise the population, 3) education, 4) different speech forms of different occupational groups, 5) carelessness, and 6) the invention of secret languages (Bibiliander 1548, quoted in Arens 1969:71, own translation). Accordingly, this pre-national author seems to have a very wide perspective on the causes for linguistic diversity and some of these arguments, such as different educational levels or different occupations, only re-appear as dominant in discourses on language several hundred years later (such as e.g. in sociolinguistics). It is very interesting to note here that in 2), the argument that later turns up in discourses of linguistic nationalism – one language is spoken in one political territory – appears, but in a non-naturalised version. People in one territory do not speak the same because it is 'natural' for them to do so (as it is argued for nations, see below), but because there is a political will to homogenise the population in order to govern them. As argument 2) in this taxonomy shows, the link between a homogenous language and political power was evident to Bibliander. There are some other examples for the awareness of the power of language in pre-national political structures. A very famous account of this can also be found in what is sometimes conceived to be the first grammar of a language that is not Latin. This is a grammar of Spanish from 1492, which states in its foreword that language has always been a companion to the creation of empires, "que siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio" (Nebrija 2009 (1492)), and the text furthermore states that the grammar has been written to support the colonial conquest of Queen Isabella in the Americas in helping colonial subjects to learn Spanish.

Since the outset of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, the nationalist discourse on language naturalised the language–nation/culture link to such an extent that other causes for linguistic diversity became almost invisible and linguistic homogeneity was related to arguments based on nature, rather than political power. The reasons for that are multiple and complex; yet, two discourses stand out as particularly influential and will be illustrated briefly in the remainder of this chapter. The first one is the establishment of national structures in European contexts; the second one is the rising influence of the empirical, natural sciences on all other forms of science.

As has been mentioned above, the political structure of the nation has been the dominant form of governance for the last 200 years (Anderson 1985) and the idea of the nation implies

that the citizens of a nation are considered to be biologically related and somehow of the 'same nature'. The language used by these citizens has often been regarded as a proof for the existence of this quasi-biological entity, which is why the study of languages became very prominent. Another, related reason for an increasing interest in language is seen in the development of public discourse in nations: "In the late eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries in Western Europe, language became the object of civil concern as new notions of public discourse and forms of participation (and exclusion) were formulated by new entrants in the public sphere" (Woolard 1998:24). Additionally, remembering what has been said in section 2.2. on the *Episteme*, from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, a change in the general production of knowledge can be observed. While in the "age of representation", things were classified and described, it was the human itself, as 'founder' of knowledge, which had come into focus since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Foucault 1970:344). The language of the human being, particularly inflectional structures (see 2.2.), became of interest. The fact that the human had come into focus – that the *Episteme* had changed – is related to the development of bourgeoisie classes in nation-states, which strengthened the status of the individual.

Yet, the interest in language was not the same all over Europe. The development of linguistics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was "almost the preserve of German scholarship" (Robins 1997:197). Again, the reasons for that are multiplex, but it is safe to say that Germany at the time suffered under a lack of national self-confidence. First of all, Germany by then was comprised of many little states and had no comprehensive political structure. There was neither political unity, nor did the population adhere to one common religious ideology, as the different states followed either Protestantism or Catholicism. The political and religious diversity added to the desire to create unity on the basis of a common language (see also Barbour and Carmichael 2000). Secondly, Germans often regarded France as politically dominant but also as culturally superior and the German aristocracy usually spoke French. Accordingly, the 1800s were perceived as a time of cultural crisis (Errington 2001a:75, see also Elias 1997:introduction). In this context, the German language was particularly important for legitimating 'Germanness'. Thirdly, in comparison to France, Spain or Great Britain, who had accumulated a lot of economic wealth and political power due the exploitation of their colonies, Germany's success as a colonial nation was rather mediocre (Conrad 2008). As noted above, contemporary linguistics so far have attributed the discursive construction of language mainly to European colonialism (see e.g. Errington 2001a, Makoni and Pennycook 2007), as the construction of languages as biological entities was a foundational element in the 'othering' (see Ch. 1, footnote 1) of non-European regions of the world. The perceived 'simplicity' of 'primitive' languages was partly responsible for the legitimisation of colonising non-European peoples and was a central element in the construction of the dichotomy of 'Europe vs. other' (see Irvine and Gal 2000:73). However,

the German discourse on language also played an important part in the general construction of languages as bounded entities. Considering the lack of colonial power of Germany,

it is interesting that German-speaking intellectuals were just those Europeans who were developing dominant ideas about language, history, and identity which served their nation-building project at home, rather than a project of colonial power abroad. It is worth emphasising, then, that a European science of language helped to legislate national difference in Europe as well as human inequality in an imperial world. (Errington 2008:15)

The list of German scholars who developed dominant ideas and linguistic methodology in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is long and cannot be introduced in detail at this point (see e.g. Arens 1969, Barbour and Carmichael 2000, Janda and Joseph 2004, Robins 1997). The discourse is generally referred to as *historical-comparative linguistics* and had several different but related aims. The method of historical-comparative linguistics relies on the understanding that systematic comparison of phonetic, syntactic and lexical forms of different languages allows for the conclusion that languages can be related or can have a common ‘ancestor’ language (see also Aitchison 2001, Irvine 1995). The method was developed after Sir William Jones (1746 –1794) had demonstrated that Sanskrit is historically related to European languages (especially Latin and Old Greek), as there are structural similarities between these languages. General assumptions of the early comparativists were that language change is a decay from an earlier, ‘purer’ form and that related languages make possible the reconstruction of earlier *Ur*-(root) languages. Grimm’s law, which shows systematic consonant shifts from (an assumed) Proto-Indo-European language over Greek and Latin to today’s Germanic languages, is a well-known example for early historical linguistics (see e.g. Aitchison 2001:184). Most famous representatives of early historical-comparative linguists are Franz Bopp (1791-1867), Rasmus Rask (1787-1832), Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) and Friedrich Diez (1794-1876) (see Arens 1969:part 2, Robins 1997:ch.7).

The national idea not only had brought about an interest in language in general but also had epistemological influence on linguistics right from its beginnings. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) can be called one of the founding figures of nationalist linguistics. His most important thought is the idea that a nation is a ‘natural’ entity. According to this view, a state is based on the existence of a nation (*Volk*), not the other way around (as it is conceived in the texts of Bibliander, see above). Strongly influenced by German Romanticism, which followed anti-rationalist ideas in the desire to distinguish from French rationalism, he sees language not as logical system but as emergence of a “national character” or “spirit” (Arens 1969:121). Therefore, he proclaims a ‘natural’ relationship between a language and a *Volk*. The former is the physical appearance of the spirit of the nation – the spirit of a nation is expressed in the sounds and structures of the language. The following example from his

*Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (Treatise on the Origin of language) (Herder 1772) gives an impression of the Romantic style of Herder's texts:

The oldest oriental languages are full of exclamations, for which we, the peoples who have developed later, often have nothing but gaps or blunt and deaf misunderstanding. Like savages on graves, in their elegies resonate those cries and sounds of grief, an interjection of the language of nature, ...<sup>20</sup>

The quote shows the romantic language that is used; furthermore, the languages of some people, especially 'oriental' people, are considered to be influenced by nature, while people who developed later are unable to understand these languages. According to Herder, language originates in nature and the natural environment is responsible for the structure of a language; languages have different stages, from birth and maturity to death (Errington 2008:75). A language thus becomes the expression of the level of civilization of a group; nevertheless, older stages of languages are considered to be more perfect (especially Sanskrit is seen as a very elaborate and elegant language). On the one hand, power hierarchies are legitimated on the basis of the maturity of the own culture. Germans, for example, in the context of linguistic texts of the brothers Schlegel (see below), appear as one of the *Stammvölker*, 'root tribes', who survived the biblical flood (Errington 2008:77) and the age of their language is taken as evidence for the truth of this claim. Simultaneously, it is argued that the German language and culture is in a more advanced state than the cultures of primitive peoples. The paradoxical argumentation that languages of 'newer' nations are more developed while (some) older languages are at the same time described as more perfect seems to be a sign of a conflictive discourse, based on conflicts between Romanticism, where the 'natural' is seen as perfect, and discourses of 'civilisation', which highlight evolutionary developments of cultures (see Elias 1997).

In the years thereafter, differences in languages are commonly conceived as dependent on the differences of different nations, *Völker*, and other causes for linguistic differentiation become mostly invisible<sup>21</sup>. The relevance of language for the political cause of the nation can also be found in the texts by the brothers Schlegel, Friedrich (1772-1829) and August Wilhelm (1767-1845). Both were dedicated Romanticists and philologists and supported the idea of the relationship between natural history and language (Errington 2008:74). In terms of political ideology, they opposed the usage of the French language (common among the German aristocracy), with the argument that the loss of contact to the people (*Volk*) could lead to a loss of political autonomy. The people were seen as the basis for the nation;

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<sup>20</sup> Own translation, text in original version: "Die ältesten morgenländischen Sprachen sind voll von Ausrufen, für die wir später gebildeten Völker oft nichts als Lücken oder stumpfen, tauben Mißverstand haben. In ihren Elegien tönen, wie bei den Wilden auf ihren Gräbern, jene Heul- und Klage-töne, eine fortgehende Interjektion der Natursprache; ..."

<sup>21</sup> An exception are studies in dialectology, which had a certain prominence in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see, for example, texts by scholars of Roman languages, e.g. Schuchardt (1842-1927) or Graziadio Isaia Ascoli (1829-1902); see Arens 1969). However, nationalist epistemology is here transposed to a smaller level and not really put into question.

therefore, it was *their* language, and not the language habits of the ruling class, which was seen as vital for these political aspirations. Political autonomy of the conflict-ridden, diversified German states, which suffered under a cultural inferiority complex in relation to France (see also Elias 1997), seemed only possible through linguistic autonomy.

Another leading figure in 19<sup>th</sup> century discourse on language is Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). Not only did he work as a language scholar, he furthermore is famous for his activities as philosopher, politician and as reformer of the educational system of Prussia. Particularly well-known is his theory on the difference between *energia* and *ergon* (*Werk*), where he distinguishes between language as a form of creative ability or ‘energy’ of humans and language as it appears in grammar and dictionary books (Humboldt 1903ff:Vol.7, 45ff., quoted in Arens 1969:206). The idea of language as *energia* is, essentially, a starting point for a “pragmatic grounding of language” (Nerlich and Clarke 1997:14) and to a certain extent puts into question the existence of bounded language systems. However, it is clear from Humboldt’s writings that although he included human agency in his conception of language, he conceived the nation as the foundational and ‘natural’ agent in the creation of different languages. *Energia* is the creativity and capacity of a national group, not of an individual or of some other social formation. Humboldt describes languages as “organs”, which are the evidence for the existence of a nation. It is constructive to note that, at the time (1806), Prussia, where Humboldt was a statesman, had lost half of its territory to the French troops of Napoleon; thus, language supported the legitimacy of the diminished state. Furthermore, Humboldt participated in developing the so-called “Prussian Reforms”, in which a modern nation-state was developed, with state education and a system of civil servants. Obviously, there was also a practical need for a common, standardised language.

According to Humboldt, languages are not only organic evidence of nations but every language provides a different ‘world-view’ (a concept similar to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis; see Werner 2001). This is related to the fact that language is seen as *energia*. This concept of *energia*, in turn, reflects the understanding of Foucault that, in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the interest in the human being increased, as ‘founded founder’, which made knowledge dependent on the characteristics of humans (see above and 2.2.). The concept results in a partly non-referential understanding of language and leads to the conceptualisation of national character as expressed in languages:

It is not that there is here a world and there a language that represents it – they are each constitutive of each other and this through the activity of the subject. This is the reason why, according to Humboldt, every language provides a different world-view or conception of the world. (Nerlich and Clarke 1997:7)

A language thus expresses the psyche of the nation and even *is* the nation: “At its heart, language, in its unity with the thoughts through which it becomes possible, is the nation



itself, actually the nation” (Humboldt 1963:26)<sup>22</sup>. Additionally, it is argued that structures of languages relate to different levels of civilization. While Humboldt sees language in the general sense to be expressive of humankind, he conceives of different types of language: isolating, agglutinating and synthetic (Humboldt 1963, see Nerlich and Clarke 1997:8). Synthetic languages, which have many word-internal inflections, are seen as superior, an argument that is still heard today in lay discourse on language. That Indo-European languages derive from synthetic languages is seen as indexing the civilisational superiority of European nations (Errington 2008:76).

The concept of language as a system that is intrinsically related to the existence of a nation remains vital in all linguistic studies throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the objectification of language – the perception that languages are natural objects or organs – became stronger within the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the first years of linguistics as an academic discipline had been devoted to historical comparison of language structures, the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought a desire of linguists to turn their discipline into a natural science. The natural sciences were seen as the more reliable and prestigious form of science and in order for linguistics to be a natural science, language had to be constructed as a product of nature. August Schleicher (1821–1868) was an influential figure in this respect. He took up Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution and conceptualised national languages as natural organisms, which were to be studied like biological species. In this view, language was seen as completely unaffected by human will, as “languages are organisms of nature” (Schleicher 1869:20-21). Accordingly, linguistics could claim to be a natural science and study language change in the same vein as the evolution of birds (see also Errington 2008:81). Most famous is Schleicher’s conception of the family tree of languages, which reproduced Darwin’s model of evolutionary theory and projected it onto language. The family tree of languages is still found in any introductory text-book to linguistics and represents the ‘family’ relations of languages, although it has been critiqued for its linear, naturalised and also hierarchical view on languages (see e.g. Irvine 1995). Schleicher conceived of languages as organisms that are born and that die; sound changes, according to him, occur on the basis of laws of nature. Speakers of languages, in this concept, have no influence on them, as languages function comparably to the bloodstream in the body. Thus, in the desire to become as reliable as the natural sciences and in adapting the methods of natural sciences, the national language concept became more and more reified.

The naturalised perspective on language was not uncontested during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the neo-grammarians, founded by Hermann Osthoff (1847–1909) and Karl Brugmann (1849–1919), opposed the idea of languages as organs and also denied that language change means decay, but nevertheless they demanded the strict adherence to methods of the natural sciences. According to their central text (Osthoff and Brugmann

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<sup>22</sup> Own translation, text in original version: “Im Grunde ist die Sprache, [...] in ihrer Einerleiheit mit dem durch sie erst möglichen Denken, die Nation selbst, und recht eigentlich die Nation”.

1878), change of sounds happens “mechanically” and is always identical within one language as it is a natural process and therefore does not allow for exceptions. Of course, the neo-grammarians are never able to prove their claims about mechanical, exception-less change of sounds, but the example shows that the discourse of the natural sciences was rather dominant in the “order of discourse” of the time (see Ch. 2). The science of linguistics had to adopt certain methods in order to be taken seriously as a discipline of science. Yet, neo-grammarians did not remain uncontested and one of their most dedicated challengers was Hugo Schuchardt (1842-1927), a scholar of Romance languages and creole languages. He maintained that language is the product of speaking subjects; language change is thus the outcome of sociological aspects (Schuchardt 1885:28ff., quoted in Arens 1969). Schuchardt describes language change as a partly conscious result, as it is dependent on fashion and on the influence of prominent or dominant speakers. Considering his early involvement with pidgin and creole languages, it is not surprising that Schuchardt also questioned the existence of exact language borders and conceived that the terms *language* and *dialect* are relative. In this sense, Schuchardt is truly ahead of his time and can serve as an important inspiration for contemporary scholars of language ideology. Yet, due to the seminal success of Saussure’s theories on language as synchronic system, which appeared around the same time as Schuchardt’s later texts, Schuchardt remained relatively marginal.

Without going into the details of Saussure’s work (see e.g. Joseph 2001) and without illustrating the development of linguistics and linguistic language ideology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this brief overview of the influence of nationalism and the empirical sciences on 19<sup>th</sup> century German linguistics has shown that the epistemological base of modern linguistics is historically contingent and framed in other discourses. It has therefore been claimed that terms like *language*, *multilingualism* or *bilingualism* are concepts

which make[s] sense only within the discursive regime of the nation-state, with its homogenization and equation of language, culture, nation, territory and state. Now that we are asking questions about that regime, now that we are imagining other, more complicated and fluid ways of imagining ourselves, we are questioning the concept, and therefore also how best to understand the phenomena we associate with it. (Heller 2007c:341)

The aim to study language ideologies in a transnational age is precisely interested in these “complicated and fluid ways of imagining ourselves”, for which reified concepts, such as the nationalist image of language, nevertheless remain central. Yet, before I introduce the data and methods chosen in order to find out more about contemporary concepts of language and their epistemological framing, the work of other scholars who have been active in questioning traditional discursive regimes of language and society will be presented.

Imagine, then, a linguistics that decentred community, that placed at its centre the operation of language *across* lines of social differentiation, a linguistics that focused on modes and zones of contact between dominant and dominated groups, between persons of different and multiple identities, speakers of different languages, that focused on how such speakers constitute each other relationally and in difference, how they enact differences in language. (Pratt 1987)

#### 4. TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

As has been shown in the previous chapter, reified, naturalised concepts of language are not uncontested and never have been. Yet, it is since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the critique of language as systemic entity or ‘organ’ has become more visible. This is partly due to developments within scientific discourse and the rise of post-structuralist ideas (see Ch. 2). On the other hand, as has also been introduced in Chapter 2, this can be attributed to changes in the social structure in Western societies, which are commonly subsumed under the term *globalisation*:

Globalization results in increased cultural contact and conflict, increased linguistic diversity and tension, resulting in quotidian and formal public challenges to inherited western assumptions about linguistic uniformity, cultural homogeneity, and national membership. (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:201)

The discourses and debates that surround the notion of globalisation are manifold and diverse. Globalisation has been described as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 1990:15; for more, see e.g. Appadurai 1996, Beck 1997, Bhabha 1994, Castells 2002, Fairclough 2006, Hall 1994a, Papastergiadis 2000, Pennycook 2007, Pries 2001, Robertson 1992). I will not introduce the debate whether globalisation represents an old or a new phenomenon (see e.g. Pennycook 2003, Pennycook 2006). What I aspire to in this chapter is to present concepts that relate, in one way or another, to different effects of globalisation, from the social sciences and from linguistics. These can be regarded as relevant for the topic of present analysis: language ideologies in a context that is not characterised by national or ethnic culture but by cultural activities, including language use, that stem from ‘somewhere else’. Dancing Salsa, listening to music

with Spanish lyrics and speaking Spanish is not something that is considered to be a traditional activity in Australia or Germany. Nevertheless, cultural flows have made music, dance and practices travel, so that in Sydney and Frankfurt, dancing Salsa today is actually more popular than *bush dance* or *polka*.

First of all, I will introduce two terms that relate to globalisation and focus on specific social effects of globalisation. The notion of *transnationalism* is a term that stems from cultural anthropological and sociological debates and concentrates on social changes, originally those changes that are an effect of migration. As the term not only describes changes to the social structure of societies but furthermore engages in questioning traditional epistemologies, it is a useful term in the context of this study. Additionally, I will introduce the term *cosmopolitanism*, another concept that has been developed in the realm of globalisation studies. It describes new positions and identities in a global world. The concept will prove to be important in understanding language ideologies in Salsa Communities of Practice, where the construction of cosmopolitan forms of identity plays a vital role. After the introduction of two concepts that relate to the social world and to deconstructive concepts of the social (4.1.), I will continue by discussing theories of linguists who also engage in deconstructing traditional epistemology – in this case, nationalist language ideology (4.2.). In the context of this thesis, I call the ideas of these scholars *transnational*. In order to fully understand this argument, however, the notion of *transnationalism* has to be introduced thoroughly (see below). Subsequently, the concepts of Blommaert's *Sociolinguistics of Globalization* (see 4.3.) are presented, which will serve as an essential framework in the empirical analysis of transnational language ideology in contemporary Salsa Communities of Practice.

#### **4.1. TRANSNATIONALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM**

Sociological and cultural anthropological debates have been highly influential in the construction of concepts of society, especially in the last century. Sociological concepts of society also have been constitutive for sociolinguistics; however, there has been the critique that the concepts of society on which traditional sociolinguistics is based are under-theorised and oversimplified, as they often remain stuck in a structuralist understanding of society that ignores agency and has circular modes of argumentation (someone belongs to a community because of his/her way of talking and this way of talking is proof of belonging) (see especially Cameron 1990, Williams 1992). As sociology and cultural anthropology continue to construct important and influential concepts of society, it can be very inspiring to have a look at newer sociological/anthropological theories in order to develop new understandings of language, too.

One discourse of sociology and cultural anthropology that has gained a lot of prominence during the last two decades is concerned with issues of migration and cultural contact. It is in this discourse that the concept of *transnationalism* become central (see e.g. Glick Schiller,

Basch and Blanc 1997)<sup>23</sup>. The phenomenon of migration, for a long time, was conceived as a uni-directional process, where the move from one country to another ends in either the integration into a host society or in the re-migration to the country of origin. Similar to language ideology that constructs a congruence of language and culture, many sociological concepts assume a congruence of territorial space and cultural space. Societies are conceptualised as “containers” (Pries 1997) and migrants are seen as moving from one “container” to the next, while settledness is conceived as the ideal norm. This perception changed with the realisation that many migrants actually do not completely culturally assimilate into their host society; neither do they maintain their ‘authentic’ culture of origin. Instead, they sustain “simultaneous multi-sited social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc 1997:121). Some people migrate back and forth between two countries and do not intend to settle in one country completely (for an example see e.g. Pries 2008:51-59), a phenomenon that has been called bidirectional migration. The realisation that migration does not necessarily end in integrating and settling in an already ‘given’ culture also put into question the theoretical framing of these apparently ‘given’ cultures, as the deep-rooted modernist idea that there is an intrinsic connection between a culture and the territory it occupies became distorted. The term *transnationalism* captures these developments, in contrast to the more general notion of *globalisation*. *Transnationalism* places an emphasis on the nation *and* on the ‘in-between’, so that it is “often a more adequate label for phenomena which can be of quite variable scale and distribution” (Hannerz 1996b:6), whereas *globalisation* might be misconstrued as a single process<sup>24</sup>.

Although transnational ties are not a new phenomenon, the era of nationalism had a deep impact on the invisibility of transnational connections in the social sciences – which resulted in *methodological nationalism* (see Ch. 3 and Wimmer and Schiller 2002). While the transnational nature of, for example, Jewish communities<sup>25</sup>, was acknowledged rather early, other such relationships have been a ‘blind spot’ of social theory. Since the 1990s, the interest in migration is no longer reduced to the integrative abilities of migrants, but it is conceived that new forms of culture emerge. The state of ‘in-between’ is now conceptualised as a possible condition of life. In this respect, the usage of the prefix ‘trans-’ is important. It implies an intrinsic critique to notions such as *multiculturalism*, which do not necessarily question the existence of static cultural entities. ‘Trans’ relates to concepts, people or products ‘in-between’, ‘third’ spaces or ‘hybrid’ forms of reality and identity (Bhabha 1994,

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<sup>23</sup> The term *transnationalism* is also found in postcolonial discourse, where epistemological questioning of given categories partly took place earlier (Bhabha 1994, Gilroy 1987, Said 1978). In this section, however, I will concentrate on the notion as developed in cultural anthropology and sociology.

<sup>24</sup> In the following, *globalisation* is sometimes used with reference to a time-frame, namely the era of globalisation, or in relation to space.

<sup>25</sup> The word *diaspora* is usually used to describe Jewish and other transnational communities that have a ‘homeland’ where the diaspora wants to return to – even if it is only symbolic. Clifford opts for calling transnational communities who do not have a vision of return also *diasporas* (Clifford 1994, see also Gilroy 1993). Because of its specific socio-historical connotations, however, I do not use the term here.

Ong; 1999:4, for a discussion on theoretical backgrounds of ‘trans’-gressive theories, see Pennycook 2007:36-40). The focus on the state of ‘in-between’ furthermore led to the realisation that all cultures are, in effect, the result of mixing and borrowing. Today, notions that make use of the prefix ‘trans’

refer not merely to the spread of particular forms of culture across boundaries, nor only to the existence of supercultural commonalities (cultural forms that transcend locality). They draw our attention instead to the constant processes of borrowing, bending and blending of cultures, to the communicative practices of people interacting across different linguistic and communicative codes, borrowing, bending and blending languages into new modes of expression. (Pennycook 2007:47)

Communities or identities that do not relate to one place only have been sometimes described as “new transnational reality” (Pries 1997:33), although it has to be questioned whether this transnational reality is new or not if all cultures are understood as in a constant process of blending. In any case, since the 1970s, several factors added to the intensity and presence of transnational forms of cultural and social life. The main ones are the increase of flows of migration, global economic processes of restructuring, the distribution of communication and information networks, the improvement of infrastructure and the evolution of transnational media (Appadurai 1998, Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc 1997, Ong 1999). In the case of Salsa, because of transnational migration, tourism and transnational media, a cultural product – Salsa music and Salsa dance – has travelled through time and space and has thus entered the cultural environment of spaces where these products were formerly unknown. Similarly to communities of transmigrants, Communities of Practice that have emerged on the basis of non-traditional cultural activities such as Salsa have “forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space” (Clifford 1994:308).

As many participants in these communities have no personal experience with transnational dislocation and do not belong to communities of transmigrants, it is especially the status of transnational forms of discourse that have to be examined in this context. What comes to mind here is Arjun Appadurai’s emphasis on the role of imagination in transnational cultural processes. Particularly influential is Appadurai’s notion of *scapes*, which captures forms of culture that are transnational and cross national cultures. Examples for “scapes” are *ethnoscapes*, *mediascapes*, *technoscapes*, *finanscapes* and *ideoscapes* (ethnicities, media, technologies, financial practices and ideas that run diametrically to national boundaries; see Appadurai 1996). Next to his theories on transnational *scapes* of culture, Appadurai has considered the development of community and identity in a globalised world. His notion of community is based on Anderson’s *imagined community* (see 3.3.1.) but, according to Appadurai, communities can not only relate to national spheres. Furthermore, the ‘imagined’ level has become more relevant in transnational spheres: “the

imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense of both labor and culturally organized practice), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility” (Appadurai 1996:31). Imaginations, made possible through the media, have led to the existence of a higher number and variety of imaginable lives and Appadurai maintains that the de-territorialisation of culture is in a correlational relationship to the significance of imagination and fantasy in everyday-life (Appadurai 1998:21,22). The possibility to imagine ‘other’ lives is also a highly important explanative factor for the success of Salsa. On the other hand, it is particularly interesting in this context that the de-territorialisation of culture through Salsa dancing in Australia and Germany simultaneously generates a re-traditionalisation of gender identity and the experience of face-to-face and body-to-body contact (see Ch. 7).

Despite the vital role of imagination, it is also important to note that transnational communities, products and discourses should not be understood as solely dislocated and in-between; they exist in real locations but not in the same way as it is conceived in a national paradigm. Transnational networks, among them tourists, business people, artists and, obviously, migrants, create de-territorialised social spaces in their daily life; yet, the national context in which this takes place remains crucial. It is within specific localities that new social spaces are produced:

[T]ransnational practices cannot be construed as if they were free from the constraints and opportunities that contextuality imposes. [...] Translocal relations are constituted within historically and geographically specific points of origin and migration established by transmigrants. Such relations are dynamic, mutable, and dialectical. They form a triadic connection that links transmigrants, the localities to which they migrate, and their locality of origin. (Smith and Guarzino 1998:11/13)

For the context of this study, the transnational space is not only relevant for transmigrants but for any member of a Salsa Community of Practice, as the practice (see Ch. 5 and e.g. Pennycook 2010 for a discussion of the term *practice*) of Salsa dancing has a transnational dimension also for members of the majority society. At the same time, dancing Salsa is not the same in Australia as in Germany; to be ‘Latin’ is not an essence that is merely defined by the origin of Latin culture but is contingently reconstructed in specific locations (see also Römheld 2003). While the same locality can produce different types of Communities of Practice based on Salsa – as will be shown for Sydney – the national discourses that exist within the respective localities are also vital for the constitution of different communities and their discourses (see Chs 8–11). It is the local, the national *and* the global level simultaneously that produce transnational discourses and bring into being specific language ideologies and both the local and the national level are responsible for producing transnational realities (consider also the notion of “glocalization”, see Robertson 1998). Of course, the interest in transnational forms of culture, which question static categories of

community, has to be taken into account methodologically. An ethnographic approach, as it is applied in this study, is able to map transnational trajectories and their effects on the local level, while Communities of Practice are an adequate starting point for research that aspires to overcome nationalist concepts of community (for a discussion see Ch. 5). Furthermore, Blommaert's notion of the *sociolinguistic scale* is constructive in analysing the interaction between the different levels – local, national, transnational – which bring into being local language ideologies (see ch 4.3.).

Yet, before I turn to methodological questions, the theoretical notions on which the empirical analysis is based have to be clarified. The second relevant concept concerned with issues of globalisation and transnationalism that serves to analyse discourses on language in transnational communities is *cosmopolitanism*. The term *cosmopolitanism* is part of an everyday vocabulary, where it denotes “familiar and at ease in many different countries and cultures” (New Oxford American Dictionary 2009). In philosophical discussions, cosmopolitanism refers to an ideology that conceives of all human beings as belonging to one community, with a shared morality and mutual respect (see e.g. Appiah 2006). The philosophical debate on cosmopolitanism dates back to thinkers of ancient Greece, where the etymological origin of the word lies, denoting ‘citizen of the world’. Within European modernity, the concept is closely related to humanism and the development of a universalist perspective on humankind, the international rights paradigm and a framework of universal human rights, with all their promises and pitfalls (see e.g. Fine 2007:ix-xvii). Cosmopolitanism is also an important term in contemporary philosophical debates, as there is the perceived need to develop new frameworks of inclusion in globalised societies (e.g. in Appiah 2006, Derrida 2001). Paul Gilroy in this context concentrates on the problematic construction of different races and argues that the deconstruction of racist and nationalist ideology can lead to compassion and humanisation (Gilroy 2005): the “methodological cultivation of a degree of estrangement from one’s own culture and history [...] might qualify as essential to a cosmopolitan commitment” (ibid.:67; this argument is also central in Hannerz’s account of cosmopolitanism, see below). The discussion on the need for super-national forms of justice and rights is also linked to the debate on *methodological nationalism* (Beck 2002b, Wimmer and Schiller 2002). The German sociologist Ulrich Beck opts for *methodological cosmopolitanism* in the social sciences, which takes the world, and not the nation-state, as its primary unit of analysis (Beck 2006b; for a critique see Ch. 3, footnote 6).

In the context of this thesis, the philosophical debates around the term play only a marginal role, while the cultural anthropological concept of the *cosmopolitan* comes into focus. The concept of cosmopolitanism as developed by Ulf Hannerz is here a key model (Hannerz 1996a) and as it is particularly illuminating in the context of Salsa Communities of Practice, I will introduce this concept in detail. Hannerz’s *cosmopolitanism* is directed not at philosophical questions or the development of universalistic rights schemes but describes



particular attitudes of individuals towards their own and towards other cultures. According to Hannerz, cosmopolitanism is

first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It entails an intellectual and esthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. To become acquainted with more cultures is to turn into an *aficionado*, to view them as artworks. (Hannerz 1996a:103)

Thus, one could describe a cosmopolitan person in Hannerz's sense as someone who is willing to get to know other cultures and who wants to achieve competence in the semiotic systems of another culture. The distinction between people who are interested in acquiring cultural competence and those who are not is highly relevant in this context. Tourists, for example, are not considered cosmopolitan as they usually do not wish to become acquainted with alien systems of meaning. Business travellers are also not typical representatives of cosmopolitanism, as they have not left home because of their will to do so; similarly, exiles and labour migrants are typically not cosmopolitan as Hannerz assumes that the quality of cosmopolitanism evolves on the knowledge of and engagement with unknown systems of meaning on the basis of interest, rather than need. It is the wish "to make contact with other rounds of life, and gradually incorporate this experience in one's personal experience" (Hannerz 1996a:108) that defines the cosmopolitan style of life. Therefore, expatriates and intellectuals are seen as characteristic representatives of cosmopolitanism, as it is more likely for them to develop what Hannerz calls "transnational forms of culture" in their contact with other cultures.

The effects of a cosmopolitan engagement with alien systems of meaning is, first of all, that "[o]ne's understandings have expanded, a little more of the world is somehow under control" (Hannerz 1996a:103). Next to this, an increase of an understanding of foreign cultures results in a changed relationship to the own culture of origin. For the cosmopolitan, contact and cultural competence in a different culture "implies personal autonomy *vis-à-vis* the culture where he [sic.] originated. He has his obvious competence with regard to it, but he can choose to disengage from it" (Hannerz 1996a:104). Thus, the cosmopolitan develops a form of cultural meta-knowledge, which enables her or him to relativise systems of meaning of origin. The development of meta-knowledge and the ability to construct a non-naturalised relationship to the culture of origin is crucial for Hannerz's concept of cosmopolitanism and also for his argument that "intellectuals have a particular predilection toward making themselves at home in other cultures" (Hannerz 1996a:107). According to this view, their daily engagement with an abstract perspective on meaning systems makes intellectuals more likely to become cosmopolitan. It has to be noted, however, that the definition of "intellectuals" remains vague and that the whole concept implies a rather static perception of 'cultures' as complete entities and fixed systems of meaning. Nevertheless, Hannerz's

cosmopolitanism is adequate in the description of cultural concepts of interviewees in the study of language ideologies of members of transnational Salsa communities.

The construction of cosmopolitan forms of identity is dependent on the construction of an 'other', which is, in this case, the local. The local is the person who remains tied and determined by the culture of origin and who has not made the step towards relativising the own culture as one among many. In contrast to locals, cosmopolitans "have been irreversibly affected by the experience of the alien and the distant, cosmopolitans may not view either the seasons of the year or the minor rituals of everyday life as absolutely natural, obvious, and necessary" (Hannerz 1996a:110). Yet, not all transnational cultures are necessarily characterised by experiences with the alien and thus differ in their degree of cosmopolitanism. Due to socio-historical and economic reasons, many transnational cultures are 'extensions' of cultures of Europe and North America. The history of colonialism is one reason why cultures of Europe have got into contact with cultures in other regions of the world, but political dominance and the economic exploitation of the 'other' often resulted in feelings of cultural superiority on the European side. In this situation, the development of transnational structures usually has not led to an engagement with the 'other'. Today, economic power predominates in the construction of cultural superiority, where North American and European multinational companies and banks determine economic structures in many places all over the world (see e.g. Klein 2001). Regularly, European and North American employees are sent abroad; thus, in many urban areas, cultural enclaves of Western communities have developed. "It is a consequence of this that western Europeans and North Americans can encapsulate themselves culturally, and basically remain metropolitan locals instead of becoming cosmopolitans" (Hannerz 1996a:107). A "metropolitan local", although living abroad and having daily contact with other cultures, is not engaged in acquiring local cultural competence and is attached to meaning systems from home. The cosmopolitan, on the other hand, does not want to become a genuine member of 'other' local populations: "It is not a way of becoming local, but rather of simulating local knowledge" (Hannerz 1996a:109).

The main point in becoming cosmopolitan is to develop the ability to engage in meta-communication, which contrasts with forms of common-sense knowledge of locals. Meta-cultural competence and knowledge is increasingly vital, also on a globalised job-market, as this form of knowledge can be 'taken along' and is not devalued in different cultural contexts. Therefore, Hannerz conceives of cosmopolitans as "the new class', people with credentials, decontextualized cultural capital" (Hannerz 1996a:109). He also ascribes an important role to cosmopolitans in the development of an overall "world culture", which would be impossible without cosmopolitans:

To repeat, there is now one world culture; all the variously distributed structures of meaning and expression are becoming interrelated, somehow,

somewhere. And people like the cosmopolitans have a special part in bringing about a degree of coherence; if there were only locals, world culture would be no more than the sum of its separate parts. (Hannerz 1996a:111)

The picture of the interrelated and variously distributed structures of meaning relates closely to Blommaert's concepts for a *Sociolinguistics of Globalization* (see below), which also aim at describing culturally mediated structures of meaning that have come into contact but also into conflict due to processes of transnationalisation<sup>26</sup>. Cosmopolitans, so to speak, develop an order of indexicality, a system of meaning that transcends local systems of meaning. Yet, in order to do so, the cosmopolitan is dependent on the existence of precisely these local structures. Acquiring local forms of knowledge is a precondition to become cosmopolitan; thus, "there can be no cosmopolitans without locals" (Hannerz 1996a:111). As has been indicated above, this concept of cosmopolitanism therefore relies on the existence of cultural essentialisms. A "purely cosmopolitan attitude may be to let separate things be separate" (Hannerz 1996a:111) and not to work as a 'cultural broker' between two cultures (this observation links to the notion of *metroethnicity*, as introduced in 4.2.).

It will be shown in the empirical part of this thesis that the concept of cosmopolitanism, as Hannerz conceives it, is particularly useful in the analysis of culture and language ideology in the context of Salsa Communities of Practice and, interestingly, the term *cosmopolitanism* also appears to be central in the data itself. It should not be forgotten, however, that Hannerz's cosmopolitanism has been developed two decades ago and is not necessarily constructive in other cultural contexts. On the one hand, the distinction between 'local' and 'cosmopolitan' becomes increasingly problematic as cultural diversity increases locally. Hannerz, already in 1996, asked himself whether one can become cosmopolitan by staying at home (Hannerz 1996a:111). Additionally, the framework assumes static and holistic categories of culture. Another critical point in Hannerz's concept is the class divisions he makes, in assuming that 'intellectuals' are typical cosmopolitans, while he devalues the cultural competence of, for example, labour migrants. Thus, Hannerz has been criticised for his elitist view on cosmopolitans (Römhild 2007). Indeed, it has been noted that: "... dispersed populations of migrant workers, emigrants, and exiles take on new roles as cross-cultural interpreters and analysts" (Lipsitz 1994:5). On the other hand, to speak of an "inversion" and to say that labour or illegal migrants from colonised countries nowadays function as "experts about displacement and the qualities needed to combat it" (Lipsitz 1994:19) could be regarded as cynical, as, in many contexts, migrants (particular from lower classes) serve as cheap labour and are not typically regarded as public experts in politics and culture. Hannerz's concept of cosmopolitanism certainly does not describe an ideal state and, from a theoretical point of view, seems to be outdated and even problematic for its class bias

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<sup>26</sup> *Transnationalisation* and *transnationalism* both refer to forms of culture that exist beyond the nation-state. The former emphasises the process of cultures getting into contact, while the latter is more concerned with the actual existence of transnational structures.

and essentialisms. Yet, it cannot be ignored that empirical data are neither free from problematic, class-biased and essentialist assumptions.

Summarising this section, both discussions, on *transnationalism* and on *cosmopolitanism*, circle around the realisation that ethnic or national frames of reference are no longer or have never been sufficient for a thorough understanding of social processes and cultural meaning systems. Language is an essential tool in the creation of such meaning systems but, as discussed above, due to the disciplinary structure of linguistics (see Ch. 3), the discussion on the transnationalisation of meaning systems (in this case, languages) has entered the field relatively late. Nevertheless, the problematisation of the “language-culture-nation ideological nexus” (Heller 2007a:7) has become vital, especially in sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and related disciplines. Those linguists who problematise the concept of language as synchronic structure, who overcome the limitation of language as a system that relates to one community, and who do not take the ‘native’ (national/ethnic) language as an *a priori* indicator of identity, are here called ‘transnational’ as they adhere to a language ideology that is not confined by methodological nationalism.

#### **4.2. TRANSNATIONAL LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY IN LINGUISTICS**

Already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some linguists were aware that the concept of language is culturally contingent. As has been introduced in section 3.3.2., Hugo Schuchardt, for example, wrote in 1885 that the terms *language* and *dialect* are relative and determined by social factors (Schuchardt 1885). Yet, this perspective did not dominate the discourse of linguistics either in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nor in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contemporary scholars who deconstruct the idea of language as system have become more prominent within the last two decades (e.g. in Auer 1999, Bauman and Briggs 2003, Blommaert 2003, Cameron 1995, Gal and Irvine 1995, Heller 2007a, Irvine 2001, Makoni and Pennycook 2007, Pennycook 2004, Rampton 2000b, Silverstein 2000, see also literature on pidgin and creole languages), although earlier thinkers made similar assertions by which these are strongly influenced. In the following, I will concentrate on concepts of linguists who aimed at deconstructing the “language-culture-nation ideological nexus”. As they deconstruct the main tenet of national language ideology, I refer to their language ideology as *transnational* language ideology. Although all of the introduced scholars, next to their deconstructive perspectives, have made other important and exciting contributions to the field, I here focus on this one topic as it has been the inspiration for the conceptualisation of this thesis. If a language is no longer an indicator of national or ethnic belonging, if people identify with a language that is not ‘their’ language, how can the relationship of language and the social world be framed? Are languages deconstructed if ethnic categories are deconstructed? And which discourses determine the usage of a certain language if it is not national discourses?

Firstly, I introduce some of the earlier thinkers who discussed the idea of the deconstruction of language from the 1960s to the 1980s, focusing on two texts by Dell Hymes

and John Gumperz, before I go on to illustrate the main aspects of this discourse as discussed in the last 10 to 15 years. The general overview of contemporary ‘transnational’ linguistics serves as another part of the theoretical grounding of this thesis, similar to Chapter 3, and also links the theoretical part to the first aspect of the research question (see 4.3.): Do language ideologies in a transnational culture show signs of the deconstruction of language categories? What does language discourse in a transnational context tell us about the contemporary relevance of the notion of language and its relation to community?

In this overview of contemporary ‘transnational’ scholars, I do not claim to be comprehensive in naming every scholar who adheres to the deconstruction of language; rather, I will outline some of the main and most influential ideas (for a more detailed and elaborate discussion on the notion of the “speech community”, which relates to the questions here, see Rampton 2000b), also ideas that have served as important inspiration for this thesis. In the last section of this chapter, in 4.3., I focus on the framework of a *sociolinguistics of globalization* developed by Jan Blommaert, which already has been mentioned above. Blommaert’s framework not only concentrates on the deconstruction of language systems, but makes suggestions of how to analyse language and language discourse in a transnational world. It will serve as a guiding principle through the analysis of empirical data on transnational language ideologies. This links to the second aspect of the research question: Which discourses and *orders of indexicality* (see 4.3.) are influential in the constitution of transnational language ideologies? To which *scales* (see 4.3.) do these orders and discourses relate? These questions will be considered in the respective empirical chapters and then discussed thoroughly in the final chapter (Ch. 11).

One name that cannot be unmentioned in a historical account of ‘transnationalist’ thinkers of language is Dell Hymes. As a linguistic anthropologist, he is most closely associated with the conception of the *ethnography of speaking* (Hymes 1962). The ethnography of speaking applies ethnographic methods to the patterns of communication of a group (Cameron 2001:ch.5) and Hymes has focused on the idea that values and forms of communication – language and language ideology – are culturally contingent. In this context, he also discusses the problem of defining the notion of ‘group’, which has to be the basis for the study of culturally contingent ways of speaking and of language ideologies. Accordingly, one of his texts is called *Linguistic Problems in Defining the Concept of ‘Tribe’* (Hymes 1968). He here assumes a relationship between social units and language units but this relationship is not conceived as ‘natural’. It comes into being through communication and is not given *a priori*. The text presents an elaborate critique of perspectives on language in linguistics as well as in anthropology. These frequently do not question the language–group relationship, while Hymes maintains that “[o]ne must ask, not about genetic relationships among languages and objective linguistic demarcation of dialects [as in traditional strands of linguistics, see Ch.3], but about communicative relationships among persons and groups” (Hymes 1968:23). Hymes is rather rigorous when he states:

Most usual anthropological statements about language are an inferior sort of fairy tale, spun from an unexamined assumption of the sort I have called 'Herderian'. We need to build a theory of language that starts from what we can see to be actually the case in the world, man's polymorphous (and to the ethnologist perhaps perverse) capacity to communicate in codes other than language, to use more languages than one, to make shifting choices as to codes and communication over time. (Hymes 1968:42)

The result of this rigorous critique is not only a questioning of an intrinsic connection between a language and 'its' group and a questioning of the "concept of the tribe" but also a questioning of the concept of language: "Let us cease to think of languages as if they should reflect some primitively given demarcation of the world, and learn to think about them instead as instruments of human action" (Hymes 1968:44).

Another name that is important for the deconstructivist approach is John Gumperz. John Gumperz worked together with Hymes (see e.g. Gumperz and Hymes 1964) and is well-known for the development of *interactional sociolinguistics*, where he studies the differences of interaction patterns in different cultural groups, which can, in intercultural communication, lead to misunderstanding and thus enforce cultural stereotyping (see e.g. in Gumperz 1984). Similar to Dell Hymes, Gumperz questions the concept of language early, most notably in his 1968 text *The Speech Community* (Gumperz 2001 (1968)). Gumperz has a very broad definition of the speech community and includes here not only ethnic or national groups but also, for example, occupational groups (Gumperz 2001 (1968):43). Thus, the concept of the Community of Practice (see Ch. 5), in an indirect manner, is already present. The basis of a language, according to Gumperz, is not the 'spirit of a nation' or anything alike (see Ch. 3), but the notion of language is the result of social norms: "Regardless of the linguistic differences among them [dialects, languages], the speech varieties employed within a speech community form a system because they are related to a shared set of social norms" (Gumperz 2001 (1968):44). In reviewing the discourse of linguistics from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Gumperz differentiates between those scholars who study speech communities and those who study language/text. While the former "regard themselves primarily as students of behavior, interested in linguistic phenomena for their broader sociohistorical significance", the latter "tend to treat languages as independent wholes that branch off from uniform protolanguages in accordance with regular sound laws" (Gumperz 2001 (1968):46) and Gumperz claims the first version of the study of language to be more realistic and relevant. Already at this early stage, before the actual existence of urban areas of "superdiversity" (Blommaert 2010) that have come into being through global migration processes, Gumperz realised that space is not necessarily a determining factor in language use but that "actual residence patterns are less important as determinants of distribution [of varieties] than social interaction patterns and usage" (Gumperz 2001 (1968):48). The reason for the existence of language boundaries is thus seen as based in

social interaction patterns, which, in turn, rely on the (class-related) social structures of societies:

In highly stratified societies speakers of minority languages or dialects typically live side by side, trading, exchanging services, and often maintaining regular social contact as employer or employee or master and servant. Yet, despite this contact, they tend to preserve their own languages, suggesting the existence of social norms that set limits to freedom of intercommunication [...] Linguistically distinct special parlances [...] appear most fully developed in highly stratified societies, where the division of labor is maintained by rigidly defined barriers of ascribed status. (Gumperz 2001 (1968):51)

Thus, it can be maintained that the idea that a language is not a 'natural' organ and that its existence is dependent on social structure, which is not only determined by national groups but also by class struggle, is not new and has been present in sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological discourse for at least 40 years. This knowledge has been applied also in subsequent studies of language. Without going into detail, one can say that interactional sociolinguists as well as ethnomethodologists (see e.g. Garfinkel 1967) have been aware that language boundaries are the result of social interaction. At the same time, sociolinguistic studies on multilingualism had a different focus but made their own contributions to the de-normalisation of the *one language – one nation* nexus:

[T]he vast literatures on multilingualism have long ago called into question the nationalist obsession with a language and a people. Researchers surveying Europe (Fishman 1978) and North America (Ferguson and Heath 1981) have shown that linguistic multiplicity within groups, and, more particularly, within those large-scale entities we call nations or states, is the normal order of things. (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:205)

Although the study of multilingualism nowadays has a special focus on industrialised, Western countries with a high number of migrants, it does not come as a surprise that another important early work on the deconstruction of language was conducted in a former colony of a European state. In colonial contexts, the myth of national homogeneity and everlasting settlement has never been a very persuasive concept, thus students of creole and pidgin languages have long been aware of the problematic foundation of the notion of language (see e.g. Sebba 1997:210-225, see also 3.2.). The book *Acts of Identity. Creole-based Approaches to Language and Ethnicity* (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985) brought this awareness to a broader sociolinguistic audience (Walters 1987:571). In this seminal study, the scholars have studied the language situation in Belize, formerly British Honduras, a former British colony. During the time of their study, which started in the 1950s and lasted for 30 (!) years, the linguists observed the development of group identification with what is today called *Belizean Creole*. Not only did the ethnic identity of *Kriol* come into being, furthermore, the language spoken by *Kriol* people came into existence (also called *Kriol* or *Belizean Creole English*). It is not that this creole language was not used beforehand, but the naming and

reification of the language took place more or less simultaneously with the development of the ethnic category (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985:ch.5 and 6). The process of the development towards a linguistic category, such as a language, is described with the term “focusing”, which is contrasted by “diffusion”. While the former roughly means the process of linguistic patterns becoming more alike within a group, the latter means the opposite. The crucial factor, according to Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, is that the processes of focusing and diffusion depend on an act of “projection” of the individual speaker. The speaker, when using certain linguistic patterns, has a social stereotype in mind that is associated with these patterns and thus “projects” the idea of ‘groupness’ into speech: “the speaker projects an inner universe, there is no system to internalise other than that which he himself [sic.] has created” (Tabouret-Keller 1997:324). In this understanding, groups exist in the minds of speakers and have a mainly cognitive dimension:

[T]he individual creates for himself [sic.] the patterns of his linguistic behaviour so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified, or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished. (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985:181)

The cognitive category of ‘group’ is associated with the usage of particular linguistic forms and structures. These become more stable through the process of focusing, through the identification of individuals with the social stereotype that exists in their minds. Again, this concept of language de-naturalises the national idea of language and has been groundbreaking in its theoretical consequence, which conceives of groups and of languages as cognitive phenomena. The study can be regarded as having a transnational dimension, as it does not see language to be an outcome of the ‘nature’ of nations but understands groups and their language use as the result of socio-cognitive processes. While Hymes and Gumperz focus on processes of social interaction, including class interaction, as constitutive for language, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller concentrate more on the cognitive processes of the individual, but both approaches are not in contrast and can actually fertilise each other. In the study of transnational language ideology in Salsa contexts, it is important to keep in mind that the identification with a language, be it native or non-native, is also based on cognitive realities and not on ‘objective’ criteria. Some dancers of Salsa, for example, identify with the language Spanish and it is their idea of the group of Spanish-speakers that is here projected into their language use. The empirical analysis in subsequent chapters will not focus on this cognitive dimension but it is nevertheless foundational for the study to assume that groups and ‘their’ languages are constituted in discourse and are ‘real’ in the minds of speakers. Cognitive realities are seen as the outcome of discourses that have come into being through social interaction – and it is these discourses and the relationships among them that form the main interest of this thesis (for a discussion of the relationship between discourse and consciousness, see Rampton 1995a:304-307).



During the 1980s, the notion of language was scrutinised mainly in the field of linguistic anthropology, where language ideologies became one focus of interest (see Ch. 3). It was then a major appreciation that not only the language of one group should be studied but that it is precisely the contact between groups that is of vital interest in understanding how social and linguistic categories come into being. One scholar who has studied cultural “contact zones” since the 1980s is Mary Louise Pratt. It is her text *Linguistic Utopias* (Pratt 1987) that is still central for the debate in contemporary texts (see e.g. Rampton 2000b). Pratt here criticises the “linguistics of community”, which is based on the idea of the nation in Anderson’s sense (see Anderson 1985 and Ch. 3). As has been discussed also by others (see above and Ch. 3), she maintains that the idea of the nation is constitutive for the conceptualisations of traditional linguistics: “This prototype of the modern nation as imagined community is, I would like to suggest, mirrored in linguistics’ imagined object of study, the speech community” (Pratt 1987:50). The speech community, as linguists imagine it, is a “linguistic utopia”; thus, it is a concept that does not exist in real life but only in the minds of language scholars.

The linguistic utopia, it seems, is not just any fraternity. As imagined by formal grammar and systematics, it seems often to be a fraternity of academics and bureaucrats, or perhaps talking machines speaking either the true–false discourse of science or the language of administrative rationale. (Pratt 1987:54)

While sociolinguists have often criticised “the homogenising and normalising tendencies of formal grammar and discourse analysis and have placed the social variability of language at the centre of their agenda” (Pratt 1987:55), many have not left behind the linguistics of community and still regard an ethnic or class-based community as their ‘normal’ object of study. Thus, despite the sociolinguist’s interest in language variation, in traditional sociolinguistics, variation is seen as the result of difference of communities and not as the result of struggle and interaction (see also Rampton 2000b). “Social difference is seen as constituted by distance and separation rather than by ongoing contact and structured relations in a shared social space. Language is seen as a nexus of social identity but not as site of social struggle” (Pratt 1987:56). The argumentation here reminds us of Frederik Barth’s discussion in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference*. (Barth 1969), who similarly maintains that ethnic boundaries exist because of contact and not despite contact. In her demand for a linguistics of contact, Pratt imagines a linguistics “that placed at its centre the operation of language *across* lines of social differentiation” (Pratt 1987:60), where language is not seen as unified but as a “site of social reproduction and struggle” (Pratt 1987:62). The study of Communities of Practice that engage in Salsa dancing is also inspired by these considerations. Although the research design relies on a community, it is here communities that are constituted through a common practice (see also

the discussion in Ch.5). It is not communities that are assumed *a priori*, on the basis of ethnicity or class belonging. In these communities, internal categories of social differentiation, such as ethnic boundaries, class lines and imaginations of time-frames ('up-to-date' vs 'traditional'), play a vital role in the desire to use and learn language and in the construction of symbolic meanings of language (see Chs 8–11). Furthermore, the Sydney case, where two communities are examined in detail, shows that the construction of particular language ideologies within each of these communities is also influenced by the relationships the communities have to each other (see especially Ch.8). Indeed, the variation of language ideologies is here the result of interaction and struggle and not of distance and separation.

From the 1990s onwards, many volumes appeared that brought new inspirations to the study of language, as for example Deborah Cameron's *Verbal Hygiene* (Cameron 1995), which studies popular cultures of language (for example, prescriptivism (see 3.2.) or editing) and shows that any comment on language, and also comments of professional linguists, involves normative aspects. The idea that regulative forces are constitutive for any perspective on language brings new insights for the concept of language, as normativity (and thus structure and regularity) is linked to and embedded in other cultural concepts.

In 1995, Ben Rampton published his renowned book *Crossing: Language and Ethnicity among Adolescents* (Rampton 1995a). Inspired by a study of Roger Hewitt (Hewitt 1986), who had studied usage of 'black' vernacular by 'white' teenagers, Rampton conducted an ethnographic research project in which he studied the language use of adolescents in British schools with the help of radio-microphones. The main focus of the study lies in the use of a language that is not regarded as 'belonging' to the speaker:

Crossing [...] focuses on code alternation by people who are not accepted members of the group associated with the second language they employ. It is concerned with switching into languages that are not generally thought to belong to you. This kind of switching, in which there is a distinct sense of movement across social and ethnic boundaries, raises issues of social legitimacy that participants need to negotiate, and that analysts could usefully devote more attention to. (Rampton 1995a:280)

In the study, teenagers of different ethnic descent (mainly Anglo, Asian and West Indian) use (Caribbean-derived) Creole, Panjabi and Stylised Asian English, where the semantic-referential competence of the 'crossers' – those speakers who have no native competence of the respective languages – is very limited and often confined to greeting formulae or terms of insult or enthusiasm. The use of crossing in the case of Rampton's study produces "liminal moments and activities, when the ordered flow of habitual social life [is] loosened and when normal social relations [can] not be taken for granted" (Rampton 1995a:281). Furthermore, different languages are used for different purposes and have different symbolic meanings. Crossing into creole, for example, is usually associated with youth culture and joking, while

Stylised Asian English is rather related to ethnic and generational stereotypes (see also Rampton 1995b). The observation shows that languages have wider social meanings and that “social knowledge about ethnicity is actively processed in informal interaction” (Rampton 1995a:283). Crossing is fairly common (Rampton 1995a:280-289, see also for a discussion on the difference between code-switching and crossing) and deconstructs traditional nationalist language ideologies in practice, as identities are performed that do not fit into a national paradigm. Crossing has various functions and, in Rampton’s study, it is above all the production of liminality and the creation of solidarity among relatively marginal groups. Rampton thus relates his observation to larger-scale sociological theories on resistance and ethnicity in contemporary Britain (e.g. Hall 1988, Gilroy 1987, quoted in Rampton 1995a:7-12, 297).

Rampton’s seminal study on crossing is an important inspiration for the present study, as the use of an ‘out-group’ language is also one central aspect in the study of Salsa Communities of Practice. As will be discussed in Chapters 8 and 10, crossing into Spanish by native English and German speakers is common in particular Salsa communities. Although there are differences between Rampton’s account of crossing and the one presented here, it is crucial for both that the use of a particular language has a “wider social meaning” (Rampton 1995a:283). For example, the social meanings of English and Spanish in the context of Salsa Communities of Practice are based on social knowledge on ethnicity but are also tied to other discourses, such as, for example class, capitalism, left-wing discourse, being ‘up-to-date’, being professional, etc. The documentation and analysis of this form of “social knowledge” is the prime aim of this thesis, which is different from Rampton’s approach, in which he also offers a fine-grained analysis of conversational language (but see Rampton 1995:ch.12, in which *Crossing, Discourse and Ideology* are discussed). Focussing on the level of social knowledge and not on language in interaction, as it is done in this thesis, is relevant, as the main interest is here not in language use but in the symbolic meanings of language, where these are understood as

symbolic creations concerned with the construction of ‘self’ and ‘other’ within a broader political economic and historical context [... which can also provide fresh evidence ...] how speakers respond symbolically to relations of domination between groups within the state, and how they understand their historic position and identity within a capitalist world system. (Gal 1988:247, quoted in Rampton 1995a:303)

The transnational dimension of the work of Rampton is obvious, as the interactional patterns he studies are produced by a ‘transnational’ cohort of informants. The practice of crossing practically deconstructs the notion of language in “challenging ethnic absolutism” (Rampton 1995a:317), in denaturalising the link of language and ethnic identity (for other examples for this, see also Rampton 2011), and in combining several languages in a context where these all have particular symbolic meanings but relate to one locality. A focus on crossing also brings

to light the important critique regarding the concept of the ‘native speaker’, a concept that is intrinsically tied to the notion of *language*, as the native speaker is seen as the ideal user of a language (for further discussion see Rampton 1995a:336-344, Rampton 1996).

Rampton not only questions the notion of the ‘native speaker’ but also engages in the discussion on the concept of the ‘speech community’ (see especially Rampton 2000b). As a language and ‘its’ speech community are dialectically interrelated, the deconstruction of the two terms is linked. The historical concept, a speech community as “an empirically identifiable ‘real’ thing” (Harris and Rampton 2000:8), is seen as inapplicable in contemporary linguistic analysis. The term is nevertheless seen as relevant for two different directions of research:

In one direction, the concept translates into an intensive focus on the lived texture of situated experience in ‘communities of practice’ – community here being face-to-face interaction in well-established settings and social relationships like workshops, classrooms, marriages etc (cf e.g. Eckert and McGonnell-Ginet 1992). In the other direction, following scholars such as Anderson (1983), ‘community’ is analysed as itself a totalising concept, an ideological sign that is used to constitute groups and to link languages with peoples (Gal and Irvine 1995). (Harris and Rampton 2000:8)

Both directions are potentially relevant in the study of language ideologies in Salsa Communities of Practice. While the respective communities are themselves regarded as the locus in which ideologies come into being, it is also possible to ask whether the discourses that are detected in the Communities of Practice relate to the production of a community (as a semiotic sign), as, for example, a ‘global’ imagined community of Salsa dancers. As Rampton notes, the broad scale analysis of community, the understanding of community as a semiotic sign, is relevant for a construction of ‘us/them’ and such semiotic signs can be “objects of desire, fashion accoutrements and/or marketised life-style options, with ‘authenticity’ becoming as much an issue of commodity branding as a matter of ethnic roots” (Rampton 2000b:10). Obviously, considering the high number of ‘non-native’ Salsa dancers and Spanish-users in the observed contexts, negotiations of authenticity and the role of language in the creation of authenticity is particularly vital in the analysis of the discourses on language in transnational contexts.

The epistemological questioning of language as a system is a logical consequence of the deconstruction of the notion of speech community. Thus, Rampton describes his ontological concept regarding the nature of language as follows:

a) there are conventional interactional structures, b) the labeling and reification of these conventions is part of western cultures and serves dominant interests, c) the way these reifications are related to individuals and groups tells us something about power structures and social changes. (Rampton 2006:390)

Clearly, this concept reflects what I call a ‘transnational’ perspective on language as it considers languages to be the outcome of contingent cultural assumptions and discourses and not of either ‘nature’ or as a result of the interaction within homogenous speech communities. Rampton furthermore relates his deconstructivist view on language with contemporary discourses on the commodification of the English language. He regards the fact that the dominant view on language conceives of language as “(a) an isolable structural entity that is much more aligned with the universals of mind than anchored in the specifics of culture, but is nevertheless (b) guaranteed authentic only in and by ‘native speakers’” as linked to “the post-war British and American commodification and export of English” (Rampton 2000b:11). The discourse on English as a global language is thus not only seen as related to imperialism (Phillipson 1992) and colonialism (Pennycook 1998) but, in its power to dominate the worldwide view on the nature of language through the production and sale of resources that promote and support the learning of English, has also shaped the idea of language itself.

The effects of globalisation on the commodification of language are also a main interest of Monica Heller. Heller’s work is concerned with the construction of social inequality in a world characterised by globalised, new capitalism. Most prominent is her monograph *Linguistic Minorities and Modernity*, which was published in 1999 (Heller 1999) and, in a re-edited version, in 2007 (Heller 2007b). The changing role of linguistic resources through the rising power of multinational corporations is here considered, which diminishes the role of the nation-state. As languages become commodities on a worldwide market that requires a diversity of linguistic resources, (certain) linguistic minorities can renegotiate their linguistic competence as marketable linguistic capital. Language competence can become a valuable resource on the globalised job market, including in call-centres and in tourism (Heller 2003b, Heller and Labrie 2003, Heller 2005, Heller 2010). A related debate is *discourses of endangerment* (Heller and Duchêne 2007a) – discourses that are concerned with the ‘death’ of languages – which often fetishise “the cognitive-intellectual side of language while erasing its social meaning and political-economic embeddedness for its speakers” (Kroskrity 2009:516). The limited view on languages in many *discourses of endangerment* is usually based on linguistic nationalism, which regards languages to be given and thus reproduces the epistemologies it attempts to overcome (see also Schneider 2005, Schneider 2010). As a consequence of her observations on discourse and ideology in post-national capitalism, Heller also raises doubts concerning the theoretical underpinnings of the notion of *language*. She illustrates these doubts in relation to the education of underprivileged minority students, where she argues that

the ‘problem’ may not be language at all, but that language instead may be serving as a terrain for the construction of boundaries and relations of power in ways that are legitimate within dominant discursive regimes. That constructing language as the problem may serve to mask the construction and

reproduction of relations of difference and inequality (since, ostensibly, language can be learned and is therefore not inherently exclusionary). That learning (and abandoning) languages may be a matter of social positioning, with all the risks and dangers (and thrills and opportunities) that entails. That operating with the idea of language as bounded in the first place may be primarily a matter of reproducing specific discursive regimes. (Heller 2007c:345)

The work of Monica Heller has clear links to the observations in *Salsa Communities of Practice*, where it is a pluralist international elite that seems to profit from linguistic skills (see also Pujolar 2007), although the acquisition of Spanish in Salsa contexts is not primarily made for economic or instrumental reasons but seems to be grounded in the general desire to perform an elitist identity (see also Chs 9 and 11).

The performativity of identity and of language is also of major concern for Alastair Pennycook. His name is closely associated with the contemporary deconstruction of the concept of language (see e.g. Makoni and Pennycook 2007, Pennycook 2003, Pennycook 2004) and with the conception of what I here call a ‘transnational’ linguistics. Pennycook opts for the broader label of ‘language studies’ instead of ‘linguistics’ in this context (Pennycook 2004, Pennycook 2010). In Pennycook’s writings, a profound interest in English and its relation to colonialism (Pennycook 1998) brings to the fore that languages are discursive constructs. According to Pennycook, the discursive construct of language comes into being through discourse itself: “languages are not so much entities that pre-exist our linguistic performances as the sedimented products of repeated acts of identity” (Pennycook 2007:13), which means that it is the constant repetition of language form in interaction that brings into being what is commonly understood as language (see also the related argument in Hopper 1988). Furthermore, “[l]anguages, as described by linguistics and applied linguistics, are inventions of the disciplines that make them” (Pennycook 2010:129), which has been illustrated in section 3.3.2.

Important and reoccurring themes in his writings are language in hip hop music, transcultural flows of language (Pennycook 2001, Pennycook 2003, Pennycook 2007) and the role of English as a global language. Similar to Heller’s writings, romanticist views on language rights and language ecology are criticised (Pennycook 2004). The main argument is here that the enumeration of languages and the desire to ‘protect’ languages does not overcome the epistemological framework of linguistic nationalism. Although it is conceived that “[i]t may well be the case that linguistic diversity is crucial to humanity” (Pennycook 2010:130), it is maintained that the number of language entities may not be the most important measure. Rather, “we might want to take *semiodiversity* as seriously as *glossodiversity*; the possibility of a multiplicity of meanings within a language as seriously as a multiplicity of languages” (Pennycook 2010:130, emphasis in original; see also Pennycook 2004). The book *Global Englishes and Transcultural Flows* (Pennycook 2007) is mainly concerned with the worldwide spread of English and language mixing in hip hop music,

where “transgressive theories”, performance and performativity, popular culture, constructions of authenticity, the use of mixed codes and “transidiomatic” practices are discussed. This is finally related to the question of how to apply these new insights in education and in the teaching of language (not *Language*).

Pennycook’s writings form a general inspiration for the research background and design of this thesis, which aims to combine the more theoretical considerations on transnationalism and deconstruction with empirical observation. The notion of “transidiomatic practices” (inspired by Jacquemet 2005) is of particular interest in the context of this study, as the theoretical tenets of transnationalism (see above) are here transferred to the concept of language. While Marco Jacquemet defines such practices as “the communicative practices of transnational groups that interact using different languages and communicative codes simultaneously” (Jacquemet 2005:265, quoted in Pennycook 2007:47), Pennycook goes one step further in claiming that also, in relation to language, “there has always been transculturation, and that it is the massive weight of the fixed concept of culture that has made it invisible” (Pennycook 2007:47). Whether fixed concepts of culture and language are destabilised in the context of Salsa Communities of Practice will have to be scrutinised in the final analysis of the data (Ch. 11).

A more precise description of language use in a transnational context than the slightly vague “transidiomatic practices” (Jacquemet 2005) is the newer concept of *metrolingualism*. This notion draws on John Maher’s concept of *metroethnicity* (Maher 2005), which has been developed on the basis of a study in a Japanese urban setting, where “[c]ultural essentialism and ethnic orthodoxy are out” (Maher 2005:83). The concept attempts to capture an attitude towards ethnicity of people who have a minimised commitment to (‘original’) ethnicity, “whilst at the same time recognizing ethnic affiliation as something that can be usefully deployed: fashion, music, lifestyle, and so on” (Maher 2005:84). Ethnicity is not seen as dissolving, however, as in urban contexts people become engaged in practices of ethnicity that are not necessarily of their ‘own’ ethnicity (as is very common in Salsa) and people who have an ‘original’ background in a certain ethnicity can “take it or leave it” (Maher 2005:86). The important issue is not the claim to authenticity but the play with “‘difference’ for cultural and aesthetic effects” (Maher 2005:88). Pennycook and Otsuji (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009) transfer this notion of metroethnicity to the realm of language:

Metrolingualism describes the ways in which people of different and mixed backgrounds use, play with and negotiate identities through language; it does not assume connections between language, culture, ethnicity, nationality and geography, but rather seeks to explore the contingencies of these categories; its focus is not on language systems but on languages as emergent from contexts of interaction. (Pennycook 2010:85)

An important benefit of the notion of metrolingualism is that it shows that the processes of blending and mixing depend on the existence of fixed categories. Whilst theories with the

'trans'-prefix often celebrate hybridity, flows and fluidity, metrolingualism emphasises that any form of multiplicity can "contain complex and apparently contradictory processes" (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009:5) in relation to fluidity and fixity. The apparent contradiction of metrolingual activity is that concepts of ethnicity and of language are not given up but it is acknowledged that "... one of the driving forces to be different and multiple and dynamic is the *interaction* between fixed and fluid cultural identities" (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009:4, own emphasis). This observation will be highly relevant for the analysis of language ideologies in transnational Salsa culture, where it often seems that people appeal to a construct of rather static and fixed concepts of 'authentic' culture and language. So, in criticising an 'over' celebration of the hybrid, the mixed and the 'trans', it is important to see that

[w]hat often seems to be overlooked in discussions of local, global and hybrid relations is the way in which the local may involve not only the take up of the global, or a localised form of cosmopolitanism, but also may equally be about the take up of local forms of static and monolithic identity and culture. (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009:4-5)

The engagement with the deconstruction of language and the relationship between fluidity and fixity has far-reaching effects for Pennycook's conceptualisation of language in use. One important topic is here the question of how regularity – structure – comes into being if there has always been transculturation. Rather than asking how difference comes into being, the author asks how regularity is achieved (Pennycook 2010:ch.3). He here draws, on the one hand, on the theory of "emergent grammar" of Hopper, who assumes that grammatical regularity is an outcome, not a precondition, of interaction (Hopper 1988); on the other hand, he is concerned with the concepts of Derrida and Deleuze on iteration and repetition in the accomplishment of the functioning of language and discourse (Deleuze 2004, Derrida 1982). While modernist thinking has construed systematicity as the normal state of affairs, which can also be observed in the logics of structuralism, the relevance of repetition comes into focus when systematicity is questioned as an underlying condition of communication. It is because of repetition (which is roughly the same as iteration) that a language act can become effective; if nothing is repeated from what has been said before, no one would be able to understand an utterance (see also the related concept of interdiscursivity, 2.4.). Yet, repetition does not mean to do the same but "to say the same thing again, whether as an everyday language act or as an intentional act of mimesis, is to invoke difference through sameness", "to do something again may be to do something different" (Pennycook 2010:45/137). Repetition can create the illusion of systematicity, while repetition is also producing difference in producing a statement in a different locality, which unavoidably creates new meanings. At the same time, the meaning of the repetition of discourse not only is different in different localities; it is also the localities themselves that are produced by



discursive repetitions (Pennycook 2010:ch.5). The discussion of locality is central in Pennycook's most recent book *Language as a Local Practice*, where he argues that language and locality are mutually interdependent: "language practices [...] are always local and thus always occur in a particular place. And place, or locality, is far from a neutral backdrop against which social processes are enacted: space is an interactive and mediating element that is part of the social" (Pennycook 2010:140).

It has to be acknowledged that it is also a particular locality that is constructed through Salsa Communities of Practice, and that the local situatedness of the communities is constitutive for the meanings produced. In these localities, a particular form of repetition can be observed, as the usage of Spanish and the performance of Salsa dance in the communities is the repetition of language and dance acts that are traditionally related to a different spatial locality. Difference is produced by repetition in a different locality and the quality of this locality is at the same time produced through these repetitions. The repetition of Spanish language acts creates difference in the local contexts of the communities, which is, however – coming back to the paradoxical relationship of fluidity and fixity in metrolingualism – only possible in a rather static framework of a concept of societies as grounded in national territorial space, where languages are seen as 'normally' belonging to one particular space. A 'cosmopolitan' use of language necessitates a 'localised' idea of *language* (see above and see discussions in Chs 8 and 10). The consideration of space will also play a role in the analysis of discourse in the empirical part of this thesis, although the focus will be on the scope of meanings and discourses (local, national, transnational, see 4.3.) and not on the actual production of locality.

Without going into the further detail of Pennycook's argumentation, it is safe to say that his writings have been a source of inspiration in the discipline in combining concepts of linguistics and applied linguistics with theoretical notions from the realm of philosophy, postcolonialism and sociology. It is especially his critical focus on seemingly 'given' concepts in the epistemological questioning of language use in globalisation and the demand for new educational concepts that has made his work not only theoretically inspiring but also politically engaged.

There are, of course, many other linguists who have made important contributions to the field but for practical reasons I will limit the overview on transnational language ideology in contemporary discourses of linguistics to the presented concepts, which are seen as most central for the following empirical observation (for further contributions that are concerned with language use in a global age, see, for example, Androutsopoulos 2007, Auer 1999, Bauman and Briggs 2003, Blackledge and Pavlenko 2002, Block 2006, Cameron 2000, Djité 2006, Erfurt 2005, Farrell 2008, Jaworski and Thurlow 2004, Mar-Molinero 2004, Pavlenko, et al. 2001, Piller and Takahashi 2010, Piller in press, Risager 2006, Stevenson and Mar-Molinero 2006b, Takahashi 2006, Williams 2010).

Some of the above concepts, such as crossing, commodification or metrolingualism not only deconstruct conventional views on language but also create new labels for language use in contemporary settings. I will now present a closer look at another set of new labels and concepts, which seems to be particularly apt to apply to the analysis of language ideology in transnational Salsa Communities of Practice. As has been mentioned, the main focus of this thesis is not on the analysis of interactional data but on the influence of broader level discourses (see Ch. 2) on ideologies of language. The interest is in the wider social concepts such as, for example, commodification, authenticity or cosmopolitanism and how they influence or maybe even deconstruct concepts of language in a transnational culture. Thus, the method to analyse this cannot rely on traditional sociolinguistic methodology that typically focuses on interactional data. Before I turn to the introduction of the actual methods applied in the empirical fieldwork in Chapter 5, I will now introduce Blommaert's concepts for a *Sociolinguistics of Globalization*, which presents a particularly helpful theoretical toolkit to grasp the complexities of discourses on language in a transnational age.

#### **4.3. ORDERS OF INDEXICALITY, SOCIOLINGUISTIC SCALES AND POLYCENTRICITY**

As has been demonstrated, in the analysis of language, it can be problematic to start with the assumption that there are 'given' languages that are tied to prior identities and static communities. However, it has also been discussed that it does not make much sense to conclude from this that traditional ideas on language, identity and community are without effect. National identity, although it cannot be assumed to be a natural given and although it is problematic as a basis for scientific analysis, is still highly influential in the construction of language and of imagined communities, and of course, in the power struggles that come along with these issues. At the same time, national categories are not the only important elements in what people think about language and how they act with language. In order to document the interrelationships of discourses, constructions and values that are of relevance in contemporary language culture, the theories of sociolinguistics in an age of globalisation by Jan Blommaert are constructive and will be taken as theoretical framework in the analysis of language discourse in transnational Salsa Communities of Practice (Blommaert 2003, Blommaert 2005a, Blommaert 2007, Blommaert 2010). Blommaert has worked extensively on issues revolving around language ideology (Blommaert 1999a, Blommaert and Verschueren 1998), discourse (Blommaert 2005a) and language rights (e.g. Blommaert 2005b). In his more recent publications, he strongly focuses on the need to develop new conceptual tools for a sociolinguistics of contemporary, globalised society. One useful concept is, for example, the notion of *truncated repertoires* (Blommaert 2010:103-106), which captures linguistic competence without falling into the trap of assuming language competence to rely on 'complete' knowledge of particular languages. In a world characterised by transnational ties, most people have knowledge of many languages, although this does not

necessarily mean that they know a language ‘completely’. Knowledge of greeting formulae or of emotional expressions is also linguistic knowledge – although this knowledge has been ignored in traditional perspectives on language, where it was the native speaker in a homogenous speech community who was assumed to be the ideal source of information. People have truncated repertoires of language; not only do they know bits and pieces of many languages, they also have different degrees of knowledge in relation to oral or written, formal or vernacular competence. The writer of this thesis, for example, has a much higher competence in written, formal English than in spoken, colloquial English, while the competence in written, formal German, despite being the ‘native’ language, has decreased over the years through the production and reading of almost only English texts. The notion of “truncated repertoires” thus presents a possibility to describe the multilingual abilities of people and at the same time deconstructs the simplified and naturalised concept of ‘native’ competence as the only ‘real’ language competence. However, the aim of this thesis will not be to document the actual language competence of speakers. In the following, I will therefore introduce in more detail three central concepts with which Blommaert maps the complexities and interrelations of language, discourse and ideology in an age of transnationalism: *sociolinguistic scales*, *orders of indexicality* and *polycentricity*.

### *Sociolinguistic scales*

First of all, it is important to remember that the conceptual relationship between language and space has been crucially challenged through processes of globalisation (see also Pennycook 2010). The notion of *sociolinguistic scale* is an attempt to overcome static notions of space and culture, which assume a straightforward connection between a territory and the language that is spoken in it. As has become clear in the context of the so-called ‘spatial turn’ (Döring and Thielmann 2008, Lenz 2010:ch.2), space is a culturally constructed category that is actively created and not an empty vessel in which culture takes place – “it is good to remember that [global cultural] flows do not develop in empty spaces, they are movements across spaces filled with all kinds of attributes and features, both materially and symbolically” (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:202). Imaginations of space depend on economic, political and cultural conceptions; how space is conceptualised is not merely based on physical, ‘neutral’ circumstances. The territories of nations, for example, are interrelated with the political and cultural ideologies of a certain historical era. Yet, much smaller spaces like cities, quarters or corners of streets are also subject to cultural constructions and evaluations (see also Pennycook 2010:ch.4). At the same time, geographical space must not be underestimated in an understanding of other key categories of culture. The concept of language, for example, is dialectically interwoven with spatial concepts. Languages are tacitly understood as tied to certain geographical spaces; simultaneously, the order of geographical space is dependent on patterns of linguistic difference. The German word *Sprachraum* (‘language area’) captures this important

relationship between language and space. The idea of language as system and the idea of space as vessel are thus indirectly related to each other (for early critical thoughts on the relationship between language and space, see 4.2. and Gumperz 2001 (1968):48). Although language and space are conceptually related concepts, they do not determine each other in any simple fashion. Looking at contemporary urban spaces in which linguistic diversity or even *super-diversity* (Blommaert 2010:6) – the presence of people of highly diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, for example, in one urban district – is the norm rather than an exception, we know that in contemporary society, territorial space is not necessarily a decisive factor in linguistic behaviour.

Blommaert's use of the term *scale* is an attempt to conceptualise the relationship between culture, space and language in a more complex way. The notion of scale derives from Wallerstein's world-systems analysis (WSA) (Wallerstein 1983, Wallerstein 2000), which maintains that the capitalist system has produced a worldwide order of centre and periphery, where, in a nutshell, poorer regions of the world are considered as peripheral and wealthier regions as central. The perception of the existence of a centre and a periphery is extended from the economic domain to other domains of culture, including language. Nigerian English, for example, is taken to be more peripheral than US American English (see also Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:202). However, as the world does not only consist of a dichotomy of centre versus periphery, the notion of scale is introduced as a vertical metaphor to relate to different levels of (imagined) space. Scales are "levels' or 'dimensions' (Lefebvre 2003:136-150) at which particular forms of normativity, patterns of language use and expectations are thereof organized" (Blommaert 2010:36).

There are local (micro) scales and global (macro) scales and intermediary scales (for example, the state level) and "[e]very human interaction develops situationally, at a microscopic scale of social structure. Yet, it is always embedded in larger patterns – linguistic, social, cultural, historical – and draws meaning from these larger patterns" (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:204). Higher-level scales contrast with lower-level scales and higher-level scales typically have a wider reach and are perceived to be more 'central' than lower-level scales. In looking closely at processes of globalisation, it can be observed that "spaces are ordered and organized in relation to one another, stratified and layered, with processes belonging to one scale entering processes at another scale" (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:203). Social events and processes of globalisation move and develop on a continuum of layered scales.

In the analysis of language ideology in a transnational age, the different scales have to be accounted for, as the local, the regional, the national and the global scale can have effects on discourses about language. If, for example, interaction takes place in a certain language variety, then this is considered a higher-level (e.g. regional or national) influence on an otherwise strictly situational event (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:204). The notion of *pretextuality*, that has been introduced in section 2.4., is relevant in this context, as

it hints to the ‘invisible contexts’ that influence the meaning of a statement. Higher-level scales are “contexts that influence language long before it is produced in the form of utterances” (Blommaert 2005a:77). The usage of Spanish in Sydney’s or Frankfurt’s Salsa contexts, for example, is an effect of a higher-level scale on a particular situation, where the transnational scale interacts with the local scale of community norms. Overall, a crucial point in understanding transnational language ideology and other processes of cultural transnationalisation is the fact that different, local, regional, national and global scales are interrelated:

Though the various scales operate with some degree of autonomy and according to rules largely internal to them, the different scales are interlocked. State-level activities, for instance, such as policies in education, are responsive both to influences from higher-level, transnational scales (consider the growing concern with English in almost every education system in the world) as well as from lower-level, intra-national scales (the national and regional political dynamics, minority issues ...). Hierarchical relations between scales are unpredictable: when there is a conflict between local and transnational (globalization) pressures on a government, for instance, it is by no means sure that the transnational influences will prevail. But the point is: scales are not neutral items, they attribute meaning, value, structure and characteristics to the processes that they are part of. (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:202)

So, the notion of scale is a vertical metaphor of space that not only captures that there is a relationship between language norms and concepts of space but that also maps social hierarchies and the different weight of different discourses in a hierarchical and spatial pattern. And, as indicated in the quote above, the spatial hierarchy of the local, national and global dimension does not necessarily mean that the global scale is the most powerful and influential scale in a given situation.

Another important feature of scales is that they relate to time. “Every social event develops simultaneously in space and time” (Blommaert 2010:34) and, therefore, space and time have to be seen as locked together. So, firstly, a scale is not only a spatial concept but a spatiotemporal category, which underlines that scales are of a historical dimension. Different scales are not eternal entities but develop in interaction with other scales. Secondly, scales differ in their temporal scope — they can be more enduring but they can also be less fixed. The national scale, for example, is rather enduring, while lower scales can be more temporary (as, for example, Salsa Communities of Practice). The wider scope of higher-level scales and their usually longer-lasting character means that higher scales are often perceived as more timeless and more universal (Blommaert 2010:34-35). Yet, as the higher scale of the global is not necessarily the most influential, it can also happen that the intermediary scale of the national level is attributed with the quality of timelessness or universality. An example for this are language-testing regimes in contemporary Western societies, where the logic of the national scale remains crucially dominant. The acquisition of German by migrants who want

to be naturalised as Germans in Germany, for example, is considered to be self-evidently ‘normal’ in public discourses of Germany, although one could argue that in globalised societies the acquisition of English might be more useful. A lot of interaction in business and science in Germany does not take place in German but in English (or, indeed, other languages) so the newly introduced testing regime can be understood as dominance (and perceived threat) of the national level that faces a transnational level, in which the German language does not play a key role. The “sociolinguistic economy” (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:201) of a place has changed and the spatiotemporal scale of the nation tries to regain linguistic territory through a particular national language policy.

Each particular situation thus represents a nexus of different scales. As can be seen from the example of the German language-testing regime, the weight or power of different discourses in a given situation depends not only on the scope of the scale but also on different patterns of normativity that exist within each scale. Blommaert calls these normative patterns *orders of indexicality*.

### *Orders of indexicality*

Very briefly, orders of indexicality can be described as “sets of norms and expectations about communicative behaviour” (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:203). The term is thus closely linked to what has been defined as *discourse* in Chapter 2 but rather focusses on discourses that construct the value and metapragmatic meaning of language use.

An “indexical order” (see e.g. Blommaert 2005a:73-74, Silverstein 2003) organises how linguistic forms (e.g. accents, dialects, registers, etc.) index social roles or social identity (for a definition of the term *index*, see Peirce 1902 (1931–1958)). Next to their referential function, linguistic forms have a non-referential function that can index a position in the social world. For example, in English, certain features are associated with the social roles of women. Hedging, tag questions and a rising tone are frequent examples of this potential power of language to index gender and social order (for an introduction to language and gender, see Holmes 2001:ch.12, see also Hellinger 2001-2003 for perspectives on gender in different languages). Similarly, the usage of certain registers has not only instrumental functions but also expresses social identity. Academic registers are used to make reference to academic contents but are also expressive of the identity of the user of this register. Thus, “indexical order is the metapragmatic organizing principle behind what is widely understood as the ‘pragmatics’ of language” (Blommaert 2010:37). The indexical order produces social categories (and is in this sense very close to the term ‘discourse’ as introduced in Ch. 2).

Yet, within a group or (imagined or face-to face) community, there can be different indexical orders and they are in a hierarchical relationship to each other. In Chapter 2, an example was introduced in which working class men did not adhere to the “American Discourse model of success” (Gee 2005:81), but spent more time with community, family and friends, as the so-called “breadwinner model” affected their behaviour. The indexical

behaviour of performing a certain type of identity as supportive father and friend was more important for these men than their vocational success. However, in the wider context of the American society, the “model of success” has a wider scope, is more influential and generally considered the more ‘normal’ lifestyle. Another example is the hierarchy of the indexical orders of linguistic norms. The order of indexicalities in Western societies places the usage of standardised written language varieties and particularly of national standard language at the top of a hierarchical order while non-standard languages (dialects, sociolects) are considered deviations from a presumed norm. Thus, within a society, there are different indexical orders and these orders are themselves ordered in a hierarchical fashion. Here, “we see that ordered indexicalities operate within large stratified complexes in which some forms of semiosis are systematically perceived as valuable, others as less valuable and some are not taken into account at all” (Blommaert 2010:38). Furthermore, this shows that micro-processes are directly connected to the wider sociocultural, political, and historical space of different scales.

In a globalised world, very different orders of indexicality come into contact. It is thus important to note that a semiotic sign, such as, for example, an accent, can have different meanings in different indexical orders and different orders of indexicality. In its use, it usually relates to its immediate surroundings, as well as to various “superaddressees” (Bakhtin 1986, in Blommaert 2005a:73), such as ‘society’, ‘truth’, ‘correctness’, morality, science, and so on. In relation to globalisation, the potential multiplicity of semiotic meanings increases as it can be observed that there is a “horizontal coexistence of a number of symbolic systems” (Lipsitz 1994:17). As many people have daily access to different symbolic systems, including different indexical orders and different orders of indexicality (e.g. in mass media or ‘superdiverse’ neighbourhoods and classrooms), semiotic systems from many different scales can have an influence on linguistic behaviour on the local micro-scale. The functions of semiotic signs (linguistic varieties, accents, particular linguistic features, etc.) cannot be presupposed but have to be interpreted in a way that relates to one particular order of indexicality, which is, however, not necessarily the same for all participants in an interaction so that misinterpretation can occur. For example, functions that are locally valid may be projected onto ways of speaking of people who are involved in transnational flows. Blommaert introduces the example of asylum seekers in Belgium, where Belgian officials have to evaluate the truthfulness of personal accounts. The officials often misinterpret language use and narrative style, which is different from their expectation because it relates to different orders of indexicality, as a sign for the account being illegitimate (Blommaert 2005a:72). Another very notable (and disturbing) example is that of an asylum seeker from Rwanda to the UK, whose “truncated linguistic repertoire” (Blommaert 2010:103-106), which developed through his family’s involvement with political activities in an era of civil war and his own tragic life story as a child, does not fit into the expectations of employees of the UK’s Home Office. The Home Office assumes influence from a national scale and projects a national framework onto a life story that was influenced from

transnational scales. It thus dismisses the asylum seeker's case as non-credible as the applicant cannot show 'sufficient' competence in the national languages of Rwanda (Blommaert 2010:154-171). Thus, the point is that "[w]henver discourses travel across the globe, what is carried with them is their shape, but their value, meaning, or function do not often travel along." (Blommaert 2005a:72).

Overall, there is a similarity between theories of discourse as introduced in Chapter 2 and the concept of orders of indexicality. The focus on orders of indexicality, however, is valuable as it concentrates on the fact that the same sign can have different functions in different scales, which is an important aspect in the analysis of discourse in transnational culture. This aspect also relates closely to the final conceptual tool that Blommaert introduces in his *Sociolinguistics of Globalization*.

### *Polycentricity*

The same linguistic form does not necessarily have the same function in different orders of indexicality and the question remains where the power comes from that attributes meanings to forms. The already mentioned notion of the "superaddressee" (see in *Orders of indexicality* and in Bakhtin 1986) comes into focus at this point. It is suggested that "authority emanates from real or perceived 'centres', to which people orient when they produce an indexical trajectory" (Blommaert 2010:39) and the notion of "superaddressee" refers to such centres. A 'centre' can have a small reach, as, for example, the 'hippest' girl in a school class. Other pupils within the class may orient their behaviour towards the authority and evaluation of this girl. Some centres have a middle reach, as Communities of Practice, which may, for example, produce the norm that learning and speaking Spanish is a valuable activity. The widest reach is produced by centres that represent more abstract entities, such as the nation-state, truth or religion. In our everyday behaviour, "we often project the presence of an evaluating authority through our immediate addressees" (Blommaert 2010:39)<sup>27</sup>. The effect of such 'centres' in micro-interaction is, on the one hand, on the topics that can be spoken about; on the other hand, it is also on the way language is used – "topics, styles and identities belong to specific places and are excluded from other places" (Blommaert 2010:39).

It is quite clear, however, that a given interaction is not necessarily dominated by one "superaddressee" only. Various centres or authorities are present for interacting speakers and people often try to conform to several centres at the same time (e.g. the hippest girl in class and the teacher; scientific credibility and critical morality, etc.). Several orders of indexicality may come into play in one particular situation. The fact that speakers have to orient towards different centres or orders at the same time is defined as polycentricity. Behaviour that is

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<sup>27</sup> There is a certain similarity between the concept of the 'centre' to which people orient and the theory developed by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller. It maintains that people project their idea of 'groupness' into their linguistic behaviour, which results in either *convergence* or *divergence* of linguistic patterns (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). Also, Goffman's notion of "framing" is related (Goffman 2001a).



unexpected to a hearer can be the effect of a centre that is unknown to the hearer. The notions of *covert* and *overt* prestige are illustrative of linguistic behaviour that can either orient towards official, often national standards (*overt prestige*) or to norms of sub-cultures or minority communities (*covert prestige*, see Labov 2006). Thus, "... adopting a polycentric image of society shows a more complex and more nuanced picture in which a reaction *against* something is also a marker of *adherence* to something else" (Blommaert 2005a:78, emphasis in original).

Finally, it has to be acknowledged that not all centres have the same authority. While the hippest girl in class may be an authority for a certain period of time for the other pupils in her class, a 'centre' like a national state apparatus has far more and far longer authority. "Certain voices [...] *systemically* prevail over others, because the impact of certain centres of authority is bigger than that of others" (Blommaert 2010:41, emphasis in original). To analyse which centres are influential and dominant in the discourses on language in transnational culture is an important aim of this thesis, as it is not only of analytical interest but furthermore links theory to more applied issues in showing which authority and which power struggles have to be considered in the analysis of contemporary discourse on language. This analysis and the comparison of different 'voices' and their authority in the constitution of local language ideologies will be found in each of the empirical chapters and also in Chapter 11.1., where the focus lies particularly on the relevance of different *scales*, their interaction and the processes that make certain 'truths' (see 2.2.) dominant, invisible or contested.

There is a certain degree of overlapping between the concepts of polycentricity, orders of indexicality and sociolinguistic scales, as all three describe the fact that a linguistic form acquires meaning in a micro-situation but at the same time relates to more macro-levels of society. While the notion of scale emphasises that images and effects of space crucially influence meaning, orders of indexicality describe the meta-pragmatics of linguistic form and function. Polycentricity highlights the fact that several types of authority can come into play in one interaction (but polycentricity is also implied in the concept of interacting scales). What counts is that

[s]ociolinguistics in the age of globalization needs to look way beyond the speech community, to sociolinguistic systems and how they connect and relate to one another. Big things matter if we want to understand the small things of discourse. (Blommaert 2010:41)

This assumption can be clearly linked to the aims of this research project, which is to map different discourses that are influential in the constitution of orders of indexicalities and language ideology and in a transnational age. Therefore, the discourses that are of relevance will be described in detail in the chapters that are concerned with the analysis of empirical data (Chs 7–10). This analysis is guided by the following research questions, which will be discussed thoroughly at the end of the thesis (Ch. 11):

- Which discourses are influential in the constitution of language ideologies in Salsa Communities of Practice? To which scales do they relate and which orders of indexicality do they construct?
- What is the role of the notion of *Language* in language discourse in a transnational context?

These questions will be discussed in detail, on the basis of the empirical data that will be scrutinised in the following chapters. Chapter 11 also entails a short discussion on the consequences of this analysis for language policies in the discourse on integration and citizenship and in language education, connecting the research questions to the initial motivation to write this thesis (see Ch. 1). Before the empirical data is presented and analysed in Chapter 7 to 10, the methodological steps that were chosen in order to gain access to knowledge and discourses of the life-worlds of Salsa dancers are introduced in the following chapter.

Once the attempt to use language as demarcation in an *a priori* way is abandoned, the really interesting problems appear. One is faced with basic research into the very nature of the relationship in question. (Hymes 1968:43)

## **5. COMBINING ETHNOGRAPHY AND LINGUISTICS IN THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES**

The method to analyse discourses that are concerned with or influence language ideology cannot rely on traditional sociolinguistic methodology as this typically focuses on interactional data. An ethnographic approach to the field has been chosen, which includes not only the collection of data but also means that, for a certain period, the researcher remains in the environment, which is also called “fieldwork”. Overall, it can be argued that the present study is a *linguistic ethnography*, as it combines methods from ethnography and from linguistics. The theoretical and methodological concepts and thoughts of the main actors of the field of linguistic ethnography (for an overview, see Creese 2008, Rampton, et al. 2004) are crucially influential for the research design of this thesis. One focus of linguistic ethnography is the attempt to link linguistic detail with wider social discourse<sup>28</sup>. The approach of linguistic ethnography is ideal in studying the questions that have been developed above (see part. 4.3.). One aspect that has been focused here was the construction of languages, which is considered to be related to national discourse, and whether and how these constructions are influenced by other, transnational discourses. This is intended to be documented with the help of the methodology presented in this chapter, which captures the links between details from speech and local ideas with wider, social discourse. Another aim of the thesis is an analysis of scales. As has been introduced in section 4.3., in different sociolinguistic scales, different norms operate and smaller scales are usually influenced by wider scales, as scales are in a hierarchical relationship. If, for example, it is only English that is spoken in an Australian Community of Practice and if this is related to the perception that competition and accumulation of economic wealth are the main issue in the promotion of Salsa dance, then it is possible to interpret a local monolingual ideology not only as national language ideology but as also linked to a capitalist discourse that has a transnational reach. The methodological approach of linguistic ethnography is therefore an ideal choice in the attempt to map discourses and orders of indexicality in a globally connected world.

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<sup>28</sup>The theoretical background to linguistic ethnography will be introduced in more detail in chapter 5.4.2.

In the following, there are several methodological issues that have to be discussed in detail. After a brief overview over the stages of the research process, the combination of methodologies and the different steps of the study, including their theoretical grounding, will be introduced in detail

### **5.1. STUDYING LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY IN SALSA COMMUNITIES – THE MAIN STEPS OF RESEARCH**

A first step in a qualitative research process is the sampling – the choice for a particular environment or particular informants. The sampling of this study is guided by a theoretical interest in transnationalism. Thus, in order to overcome a nationalist framing, the fieldwork has been conducted in communities that are not constituted by ethnic descent but by an activity: Salsa dancing. This activity is based in a transnational Latin American geographical space and its historic origin cannot be ascribed to one single country (see Ch. 6); additionally, in the fieldwork sites – Germany and Australia – the activity has a transnational dimension. The application of the concept of the *Community of Practice* is particularly apt in this context, as these communities by definition come into being on the basis of a “common endeavour” or shared activity (see 5.2. on Communities of Practice).

A cross-national comparative approach, which compares Salsa communities in Germany and Australia, has been chosen in order to be able to analyse the influence of national discourse on the constitution of the respective discourses. Germany can be considered a relatively traditional nation-state, where the ideology of belonging is still highly influenced by the idea of ethnic descent, while Australia is an example of a country of immigration. It can thus be assumed that the national discourses on language, identity and belonging are relatively different. As the whole idea for this research is based on issues that tie to language policy and language ideologies of belonging and ‘integration’ (see Ch. 1), the comparative perspective is intended to ensure the political perspective of the thesis, although the gathered data have made some amendments necessary. The cross-national comparative approach was developed before gathering data, and it was only during the research process that different communities of Salsa within the different cities were detected. The developmental histories of these communities were documented, which interestingly relate to global trajectories. In the transnational Salsa world, there are very different discourses that attach different meanings to the dance. The different styles of the dance take place in different settings and are also tied to different language ideologies. These different discourses are connected to the history of dance culture in the different parts of the Americas and elsewhere (see also Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1 and 2). At the same time, the appropriation of Salsa in different contexts always brings along new and localised meanings. In the city of Sydney, the different types of Salsa are particularly illustrative of differences of the appropriation of global culture. The different sites where the different discourses and different dance styles are practiced proved to be a very lucky case as they are a vivid example for how a cultural practice can gain

different meanings across the globe, but also within one city. The quantitative focus in the empirical analysis therefore lies on the Sydney case (Chs 7–9), while the data from a German Salsa community is now summarised in one chapter (Ch. 10). The differences and similarities of both national contexts will be part of the final discussion in Chapter 11.

The actual study of the discourses of the communities has been achieved through fieldwork (participant observation, see 5.3.1. on ethnography), which has been supplemented by interviews with active members of the communities. I took part in six dance courses (four in Frankfurt, two in Sydney) and attended Salsa events regularly. In total, I have followed and attended Salsa venues for over three years, since 2006, as well in Frankfurt, as in Sydney. Venues where Salsa parties take place were visited regularly, mainly on weekends. In classes, participants were informed that I not only attended the course in order to learn Salsa but also to observe the context for scientific reasons. Some non-participant observation of dance classes has been conducted in more advanced dance classes, for which my own dancing abilities were not sufficient. The main fieldwork period in Sydney was from August 2007 to November 2007. Here, every week, dance classes have been attended and at least one Salsa party in different venues. Three times, I also spent several hours in one dance school, where the setting was observed, and I talked with people who either worked in the school or spend free time there. Additionally, for over two years, I have followed the activities of an online community (<http://www.meetup.com/sydney-Salsa>), which is loosely connected to one of the Communities of Practice I observed<sup>29</sup>. Due to a necessary limitation of data for practical reasons, I have not conducted a systematic analysis of the newsletters and the events organised by this group. However, the information I gained through this observation serves as an additional resource for contextual knowledge.

After a first access to the field had been gained, I started to conduct 20 interviews with members of the respective dance scenes – dance studio owners, dance teachers and people who go dancing on a regular basis (16 in Sydney, 4 in Frankfurt, see 5.3.2. on interviews). All interviewees were aware that the talks served the purpose of scientific analysis; they knew that they were recorded and were informed beforehand that the contents of the interviews may be published. The interviews show local voices, experiences, discourses and intertextual chains influential in and related to the constitution of language ideologies (gender, ethnicity, nationalism, capitalism, authenticity, etc.), which are difficult to document with ethnographic observation alone. Furthermore, web pages, flyers and posters of different Salsa schools and Salsa parties and the visual messages conveyed through images were analysed, but of course also the language use on these media.

Observational impressions, field notes and interview transcripts have been analysed with the question in mind of what people say about language, what the role is of different languages and how these observations link to other, broader fields of social knowledge. In

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<sup>29</sup> Since the time I have conducted my main fieldwork in 2007, this group has become an own community with an own dance school.

order to gain a systematic overview over the contents of the data, the sociological method of the *grounded theory* has been applied (see Strauss and Corbin 1990 and 5.4.1.) as a first analytical step. It is a method that helps to categorise the content and to develop theoretical questions on the basis of the categories that show up in the data. The categories that have been found serve as a structural framework, also for the chapters in which the empirical data is presented.

After the broad categorisation of the data, a more fine-grained study of the contents follows. This more detailed analysis is based primarily on the examination of interview data, under the theoretical assumptions that have been introduced in Chapter 2. Discourse theory assumes that “what we understand as social reality is, at least in part, produced through language and social interaction” (Jaworski and Coupland 2006a:43). Considering the interdiscursive nature of any statement (2.4.), it is understood that the statements made in interviews relate to other statements that have been made before. “[A]t any given historical conjuncture, it is only possible to write, speak, or think about a given social object (madness, for example) in specific ways and not others” (McHoul 2001:139). Accordingly, the uses and contents of language of interviews are analysed as embedded in and indexical of social realities and power structures. The actual interpretation of interview passages combines the discursive analytic approaches of linguistic ethnography and Blommaert’s scales and orders approach for a *sociolinguistics of globalization* (see 4.3.). The chapters that introduce Salsa communities (Chs 7,8 and 10) start with a general overview over each of the communities on the basis of observational data. This is followed by an analysis of interview passages, which are sorted according to the categories that were developed on the basis of the interview data with the help of grounded theory. The analysis of these categories also focuses on the theoretical questions that have been developed in Chapter 4: How important is the notion of language? Which discourses and orders of indexicality are influential in the constitution of language ideologies? To which scales do these orders and discourses relate? Thus, a particular focus is on the links of discourses and how, for example, discourses from different scales can reinforce or weaken each other.

This fine-grained analysis of interview data combines a content analysis with tools from linguistics. These tools are taken from the eclectic approach of linguistic ethnography, which makes use of “a number of research literatures from conversational analysis (CA), post-structuralism, urban sociology and US linguistic anthropology” (Creese 2008:235). The specific tools are introduced in section 5.4.3., on the linguistic features of particular interest in interviews.

In the following, each methodological step is introduced again and in more detail, including discussions on the theoretical grounding of the different methodological choices and some critical debates of the methodological discourses themselves.

## 5.2. THE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE APPROACH

As has been argued above, the concentration on transnationalism brings along a particular interest in an environment that is not defined by ethnic descent. This type of research aims at overcoming 'given' categories such as citizenship or nationality, so the choice to study communities constituted by Salsa is based on these reasons. To use the framework of the *Community of Practice* appears here to be particularly attractive. Within sociolinguistic approaches, the concept of the *Community of Practice* (CoP) has become quite popular in recent years. It allows overcoming essentialist theories of belonging, as they are usually found in studies that take ethnic or national identity as an unproblematised starting point. "The move to 'communities of practice' as a key unit of analysis aligns with late modern uncertainty about grand theoretical totalisations (Bauman 1992a, in Rampton 2000b:8).

The term derives from educational studies and was originally used to describe learning through participation (Lave and Wenger 1991). Sociolinguists Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet have defined a Community of Practice as

an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagements in some common endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavour. (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1998:490)

In sociolinguistics, the term gained popularity first of all in studies on gender and language (Raith 2004:155, see Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999). It has also been used to document and analyse language practices of unions, trades, boards of directors, marriages, bowling teams or classrooms (see Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992, Lave and Wenger 1991). There have been various attempts to clarify the concept and the differences to other, related concepts – in particular, "social identity", "speech community" and "social networks" (see Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999, Meyerhoff 2003, see also Rampton 2000b for an excellent theoretical overview). Three basic features define a Community of Practice. The most crucial feature is that there is a joint enterprise (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999:175, Meyerhoff 2003:6) in which members participate. In the case of the study that is introduced here, this enterprise is, obviously, Salsa dancing. Next to that, mutual engagement, which means regular interaction, and the development of a shared repertoire are seen as the defining dimensions of a CoP (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999:175).

One popular predecessor of the term Community of Practice is the term *speech community*, which basically denotes a group of people that uses the same language. There are various issues that make it a problematic framework for studying language ideology in transnational contexts. Firstly, it is not possible to document the usage of a common language without some other point of reference with regard to its speakers. The starting point for research on a speech community is usually based on spatial concepts: "[m]embership in a speech community can be defined on externally salient criteria such as whether or not one

lives in a particular region or town” (Meyerhoff 2003:6). Obviously, spatial criteria are highly complex and diverse in globalised societies where territory is not necessarily an indicator for language use. In relation to spatially defined groups, such as ethnic and national groups, many sociolinguistic studies of the past have assumed membership *a priori*; and membership in such groups has been, typically, validated through language use. The language spoken in the group is typically also assumed *a priori*, thus, the argument becomes circular (Cameron 1990, Mendoza-Denton 2004:477). The Communities of Practice approach focuses on what members *do*, rather than assuming that people are members in certain groups due to their cultural heritage. Studying a Community of Practice thus means to study the “constitution and inter-articulation of multiple memberships and identities in social practice” (Rampton 2000b:7).

Secondly, the term *speech community* is related to a tradition in sociolinguistics that aims at enhancing the status of any language, regardless of the status of the speakers and here, “speech community” typically became “the conceptual frame in which modernity’s ‘others’ were studied” (Rampton 2000b:6). In attempting to support these ‘others’ (minorities, vernacular speakers, etc.), “sociolinguistics participated in a current of romanticism” (ibid.) by demonstrating that these ‘other’ languages and cultures show systematic structures, equal to standardised (and in this sense ‘modern’) languages. Structure and coherence were “highly prized attributes” and served to defend vernacular languages against standardised languages, whose development depends on the creation of modernist institutions like the nation-state (see 3.2.). Yet, normative ideologies of regularity and coherence are a “cornerstone of modernist values themselves” (ibid., consider also Cameron 1995 who elaborates thoroughly on normativity with regard to language). One may say that the episteme of modern nationalism was thus projected onto minorities. As has been introduced in section 4.2., Mary-Louise Pratt calls this the “linguistics of community” and argues that

when social division and hierarchy [were] studied, the linguist’s choice [was] often to imagine separate speech communities with their own boundaries, sovereignty, fraternity and authenticity,... giv[ing] rise to a linguistics that seeks to capture identity, but not the relationality of social differentiation, [looking within but not across] lines of social differentiation, of class, race, gender, age. (Pratt 1987:56, 59, 61, quoted in Rampton 2000b:6)

The pitfalls of objective external criteria, such as location of the speaker, and the reliance on verbal systematicity within imagined “container models” of culture (Pries 2001) can be circumvented in the Communities of Practice approach, as “[b]y definition, participants in a CoP are engaged in the satisfaction of some jointly negotiated enterprise” (Meyerhoff 2003:6) and are not defined by culture or location:

[R]ather than being seen as identities separated and largely determined by biological or cultural inheritance, ‘ethnics’ and ‘mainstreamers’, men and



women, are much more likely to be viewed as co-participants in discourses of power that position them differently within partly shared environments where constraints and possibilities are unequally distributed. (Rampton 2000b:9)

The enterprise can be related to ethnic identity but, more often than not, the Communities of Practice approach has been applied to study group formations that are connected to institutional spaces or work places. An example is Castellano's study of different age cohorts of female workers in one work place (Castellano 1996), where different discourse repertoires created mutual misunderstanding. Another is the famous *Jocks and Burnouts* study, concerned with socially diverse groups of high school pupils (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992) where "innovative" or "conservative" language use relate to larger sociological and sociolinguistic patterns. Studies applying a CoP approach are able to show the creation of a shared repertoire that develops on the basis of shared practice. The approach is highly relevant for the study of language and language innovation and its relation to social micro and macro structure. In the study presented here, it is not, however, language styles or discourse repertoires of a Community of Practice that are at the centre of interest but ideologies of language of different CoPs. The shared repertoire (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999:175) that will be spoken about is not a repertoire of linguistic items but a repertoire of beliefs and concepts concerned with language.

One could argue that the desire to use a community as a starting point is problematic already, as it means to adhere to a notion that presumes the existence of a rather static category, as is a 'community'. Postmodern epistemology is very critical regarding bounded notions like 'community' or 'group' in general. According to Bourdieu, society does not consist of groups but the "social space is constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation" (Bourdieu, 1985:195 in Irvine 2001:23) and therefore it is "a space of relationships, not of groups" (Irvine 2001:23). However, even if it is assumed that people live in multiple networks, have multiple identities and have diverse arrays of relationships of difference, for analytical reasons it makes sense to approach certain formations as communities. In this understanding, it is irrelevant whether or not individuals consciously describe themselves as members of a particular community, as it is their actual practice that defines membership. Thus, communities based on a common practice are analytically valid and the ethnographic study of such communities is able to map the values attached to styles or ideologies by members themselves and also to see how they functionally relate to broader level social discourses (see e.g. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992). While one has to stress that indeed, language, ethnicity and cultural heritage, next to gender, remain most vital concepts for identification, the CoP approach allows for focusing on activities and practices that indicate that speakers belong to a certain group in a given context. Such practices include not only verbal but furthermore structural, interactional and discursive patterns. It has been argued that "such studies document humans as highly contextualised social actors, as it can be observed that they at the same time are embedded in a world of abstract,

generalised relationships as well as in intensive face-to-face social relationships”<sup>30</sup> (Beck 2006a:24). This aim also applies to the present study, where language ideology on a local scale level and their relation to broader discourses are analysed.

The rising popularity of the CoP approach has to be seen in the context of poststructuralism, with its deconstructivist tendencies, and, also, globalisation. As Gumperz has commented, globalisation makes it important not to presuppose membership (see also Coupland and Jaworski 2004:20) as “cultural differences are becoming increasingly functional and less structural” (Gumperz 1996:401). Yet, already in the 1960s, Dell Hymes noted that “[i]n order to determine communicative relationships among persons and groups, one must begin with persons and groups, the codes they share, and the purposes to which the codes are put” (Hymes 1968:37). The idea of approaching language via groups and their activities in order to analyse what they do with language – rather than assuming that there are languages that are used by people – is not new (see Ch. 4). However, the everyday experience of migration and multiculturalism has led to a more common recognition of the constructed nature of cultural identity. The CoP framework overcomes the problem of presupposed membership as it involves the study of “the ways in which becoming a member of a CoP interacts with the process of gaining control of the discourse appropriate to it” (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999:174). Over time, a CoP develops a shared repertoire, which may include terminology, linguistic routines, pictures, meals, gestures – language ideologies – and so on<sup>31</sup>. The analyst no longer assumes identities and languages as pre-given facts (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999:175).

In this context, it is fruitful to have a look at the term *practice* (see also below, 5.3.1., on ethnography). As in the concept of the Community of *Practice*, “social scientists have increasingly started to employ the term practices, rather than the more abstract concepts of systems, structures or discourses, to describe the ways in which human activity is organized around shared practical understanding” (Pennycook 2010:22). The notion of discourse is kept in this study, as it is used in a way that includes the idea of practice (see Ch. 2, footnote 5). It is vital to note that a theory of practice is always grounded in a critique of abstract models, rules and representations, which have been “historically overprivileged in social science and which are blind to their own embedding” (Rampton 2000b:7). The CoP concept is an attempt to incorporate this theoretical critique into the application of methods.

As in any approach, there are, of course, potential problems. One weakness of qualitative research is the problem of justifying the selection of materials and the selection of the respective communities, the so-called “sampling” (see also Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:30). Why Salsa – not yoga, tai chi or origami? One aspect that makes Salsa an

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<sup>30</sup> “... dass solche Studien Menschen als hochgradig kontextualisierte soziale Akteure erfassten, indem zugleich beobachtbar sei, dass sie in einer Welt abstrakter, generalisierter Beziehungen lebten wie eingebettet in intensive-angesichtige Sozialbeziehungen.” (own translation).

<sup>31</sup> In this sense, one might postulate that cultural identities are the historical outcomes of something that once was something like a Community of Practice and has then developed into an “imagined community” (Anderson 1985). The development of a *language* can then be seen as the result of the development of a “shared repertoire”.

interesting field for the study of language ideology is that the music always involves language through the medium of the lyrics, in contrast to other globalised leisure activities. Still, the issue remains a vulnerable point as in qualitative research, one always could have decided otherwise. Personal history and interest unavoidably form part of the research design and process. It is therefore important to make the research design as transparent as possible and, again, to take a reflexive stance towards the role as researcher.

Another potential point of trouble in qualitative methods and the choice of the CoP approach is that one can only generalise about processes, not about distribution. In studying a group as small as a Community of Practice, it is very difficult to produce statements about general developments of social discourse. This can form “... a significant problem for research projects which assert that there are broad social changes in discourse formations within a community” as there is the danger of “a potential mismatch between the analytic method and the interpretation of the data in distributional terms” (Jaworski and Coupland 2006b:30). It is possible to maintain that there are CoPs, like Salsa communities, and one can say that they have transnational ties; it is possible to document discourses that exist in these communities. It is also possible to detect connections between these discourses and other, broader level social discourses as any statement is heteroglossic and related to other statements that have been made before, “[a]ny utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances” (Bakhtin 1935 (2006):101, see 2.4.). It is because of this that the methods of discourse analysis are applied (see also Ch. 2 and 5.4.), which are engaged in the attempt of “tracing the systemic (archival) properties of piecemeal and local affairs” (McHoul 2001:141). This is also the aim of the study of discourses in transnational CoPs presented here. However, it is not possible to predict the impact of these discourses, to say something about their distribution or whether they will become normalised and part of mainstream discourse in the future<sup>32</sup>.

In the study on transnational Salsa culture, the CoP approach has been applied in the following way: Firstly, the question of practice – the joint enterprise (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999:175) – is determined by the activity of Salsa dancing. It has to be stressed that the choice is based on the understanding that, in applying the CoP approach, one has to “avoid situations where the closest we can get to defining a shared enterprise is to say that speakers are engaged in ‘constituting a social category’” (Meyerhoff 2003:4). Spanish-speaking migrants or holders of Latin American passports would not have satisfied this demand. At first sight, it may seem confusing to use a dance as a starting point for a study on language as Salsa dancing is not necessarily related to language use or particular language ideologies but living within certain territorial boundaries or having access to particular citizenship rights is

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<sup>32</sup> With respect to interdiscursive chains, researchers have to be aware that expert knowledge, as produced in scientific texts, may become part of future chains and actually enforce certain tendencies in social discourse. Ethical considerations are therefore highly important particularly in projects that are concerned with issues on multilingualism and inequality.

neither. Thus, the aim of studying a non-national group and to overcome national epistemology is fulfilled through this criterion.

Secondly, one aspect where the study of language ideologies in Salsa CoPs clearly differs from other studies so far conducted in sociolinguistics is that it is not shared repertoires of language use, linguistic styles or discourse repertoires that are studied but language ideologies. This has to do with the fact that this study is on what people *think* about language, the concepts they have of language and language learning and how this connects to linguistic, cultural, social and political ideologies. In order to study the “sociolinguistic stratigraphy” in times of globalisation, the key to understanding these processes is to “discover what such reorderings of repertoires actually mean, and represent to people” (Blommaert 2003:609); therefore, the shared repertoire is here the meanings (discourses) and not the use of language. In contrast to studies that focus on the development of repertoires or the acquisition of repertoires, it is furthermore difficult to give precise statements about the developmental trajectories of language ideologies, as they are complexly related to a web of other discourses. Therefore, I do not attempt to map the historical development of ideologies within and across communities. I use the CoP framework in order to document local ideologies and their relation to and embeddedness in other discourses. Local ideologies are taken as exemplary for studying the role of language and multilingualism in a transnational context, without claiming that these ideologies will necessarily be of wider impact in the future or for whole societies.

Thirdly, the feature of regular activity, mutual engagement, in the context of the present study, is that an informant engages in Salsa dancing regularly, at least once a week. All interviewees of the study were subject to this criterion. Before the interview process will be described in more detail, however, I will introduce the overall disciplinary framing of the fieldwork: ethnography.

### **5.3. THE STEPS OF FIELDWORK**

#### **5.3.1. ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY**

As this study does not analyse the language use of members of transnational communities but the discourses that exist on and around language and the socio-political discourses that are related to this, a particular methodological choice had to be made. To find out what repertoires actually mean and represent to people, and how this connects to the discourses, orders and scales they live in, requires a qualitative, ethnographic approach to the topic.

A second reason for the methodological choice is a moral unrest that I developed when writing about language rights issues in education (see Ch. 1 and Schneider 2005). In assuming the need for native language tuition in national education systems, the example of the children of *guest workers* in Germany gave rise to a questioning of the idea that language and ethnic identity are necessarily linked (see also Schneider 2010). During the 1980s and

1990s, children of *guest workers* were to attend native language classes, if available, but some perceived it as humiliation and a form of exclusion (see also do Mar Castro Varela 2005, Menk 2000, Radtke 1998). This is not only theoretically interesting but brings along ethical demands. Ethnographic and qualitative approaches allow for the inclusion of the “voice” (Blommaert 2005a:ch.4) of those affected by the contents of research and policies.

Ethnography is a method that has been developed to provide the cultural context for understanding situated behaviour and aims at getting access to insiders’ views on a particular culture (see e.g. Geertz 1973b, Gobo 2008). It is the goal of ethnography to provide an “emic” perspective, rather than an “etic” one<sup>33</sup>, which means to try to understand the cultural logics of a certain group of people from their own perspective. Ethnography is therefore an adequate option to understand language ideologies in a situated environment such as Salsa Communities of Practice. Although ethnography involves long-term study and a large amount of unsystematic data, the study of language ideologies in a transnational world should not be restricted to the study of official documents of governmental and non-governmental authorities. Although these texts are a highly relevant source,

[t]he lack of ethnography often limits analysts to close readings of relevant texts [i.e. policy documents] rather than a contrastive comparison of ‘official ideologies’ and actual practices and precludes the reading of language ideologies ‘of practice’. (Kroskrity 2009:515)

For the ethnographer, one tool to gain access to actual practices is observation. Observation can be regarded as the “primary source of information” (Gobo 2008:5) of ethnography. A particular form of observation that is used in ethnography is *participant observation*. This means to become a ‘member’ of a community for a certain period of time. In other words,

it is the systematic study of ordinary activities in the settings in which they occur. Its primary goal is to understand these activities and what they mean to those who engage in them. To gain this understanding, field researchers collect data by interacting with, listening to, and observing people during the course of their daily lives. (Bailey 2007:1)

It is crucial to note that a participant observer is of course different from a normal member, as he or she is not attempting to become a fully-fledged member of a group and also has a different interest in the community in comparison to a normal member. The effect of participant observation is that through the experience of an ‘as if’ member, the researcher can gain insights into the community that would have otherwise been impossible to obtain. After having attended sites of observation, the researcher documents the experiences and observations in field notes. These field notes are crucial data and are an important element of the research process (see also Halbmayr 2009). Yet, these notes are of course themselves

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<sup>33</sup> The terms “etic” and “emic” have been developed in analogy with *phonetic* and *phonemic* perspectives on sounds in a given language (Pike 1954).

interpretations and obviously have to be approached as cultural constructions (Geertz 1983:22-23).

An advantage of participant observation is that it allows observing everyday experience and small-scale details of normalised routines, which are often unconscious and therefore would not be mentioned in quantitative interviews or questionnaires, and link these to cultural contexts and anthropological theory. Ideally, the experience of being a quasi-member should lead to what is called a “thick description” (Geertz 1973b): a constant combination of descriptive details, contextual observation and theorising on broader level cultural structures. Thus, the method is ideal in the given study, as it aims to link the language ideologies of a situated environment with discourses of a wider level. In the empirical chapters that are to follow, small-scale details of observation and interviews will, accordingly, be linked to questions of a broader social and theoretical reach.

A “thick description” is the aim of ethnographic research, and yet how can the empirical validity of such a description be ensured? Post-modern approaches to data, such as contemporary ethnography, have been accused of discarding methodology and scientific method and thus also with the possibility of ensuring empirical validity. Approaches that look at piecemeal affairs such as cultural practices and local discourses cannot (and do not intend to) be universal or make general statements about the nature of humankind. Nevertheless, empirical analysis in ethnographic and other qualitative, non-positivistic methods can (and should) be highly careful, sceptical and systematic. Due to their situated nature, outcomes of ethnographies are historically and culturally contingent and not universal (Rampton 2006:36). Because of this contingency, the cultural background of the researcher is a crucial part of the analysis and a high degree of reflexivity on the part of the researcher is vital.

In the case of the present study, through the experience of learning to dance Salsa, I have gained an insight into the steps, the pleasure of dancing and into the rituals that take place in Salsa venues, the meanings attached to particular behaviours, the different dance styles, the clothes, the music; in short, the cultural practice. Reflecting on my own relationship to this field, it is first of all my perspective on gender roles that are performed in Salsa contexts that has to be mentioned. These struck me as unusual and extreme, as they are rather traditional. This led to conflicts between my role as researcher and participant observant and my ‘normal’ identity construction. The identity of the Salsa dancer involves, obviously, the need to perform the dance, in my case, the female part, which includes the need to subordinate oneself under male lead. Becoming a Salsa dancer is a bodily experience that can be quite disturbing, as habitual patterns of movement are deeply connected to constructions of personal identity (consider the notion of “hexis”, see Bourdieu 1979, Bourdieu 1997, Pietrobruno 2006:ch.4). A chapter on the role of gender in Salsa dancing has therefore been included, as gender constructions in this context are a key to understanding the popularity of the dance (see 6.6.). Furthermore, my own cultural background as a German also influences

the interpretation of data, which will be taken into account particularly in the analysis of national discourses in Chapters 10 and 11.

Reflecting on the complex role of the researcher in the process of observation, the problematic tension concerning the degree of *involvement and detachment* (Elias 1983 (2003)) has been discussed widely in social analysis (see e.g. Schütz 1953). This tension becomes particularly critical in relation to participant observation, where the boundaries between observation and participation can become fluid and where the researcher develops personal relationships with the informants. Although it can be difficult for a researcher to draw conscious boundaries between observing and participation, anthropologists have argued that “[t]he actor who acts/participates is [...] temporally and cognitively different from the actor who observes” (Gobo 2008:6). Thus, being an insider and an outsider at the same time is a normal part of the researcher’s role.

As in any discipline, in ethnography there are different theoretical background assumptions that lead to different ways of conceiving data and methods. Contemporary approaches to ethnography criticise holistic conceptualisations of culture that regard these as bounded entities (Pietrobruno 2006:12) and usually do not define culture as reflections of societies as wholes (Appadurai 1996:12; for a concise history and overview of ethnographic approaches see Gobo 2008:ch.3 and 4). In cultural anthropology, this non-holistic approach has also been termed “practice approach” (compare above and Pennycook 2010, see also Bourdieu 1977, Pietrobruno 2006:13) and links the existence of practices and meanings (discourses) to discussions on structure and agency and asymmetrical power relations. Similarly, I do not claim to give an insight into the *whole* of Salsa culture; rather, certain discourses that exist within a given and local context are portrayed. These are taken as one example for transformations of culture through transnationalisation. The analysis also attempts to be sensitive towards asymmetrical power relationships in these transnational discourses and communities, which links to capitalism and the commodification of culture in an age of globalisation.

In contrast to traditional anthropological fieldwork, where the researcher stays in the field for several months or even years in order to conduct participant observation, I have not remained in the field for long consecutive periods of time. The nature of contemporary culture makes traditional fieldwork difficult, as “post-traditional communities” (Pfadenhauer 2005) such as Salsa communities do not exist all the time in one particular place. Rather, Salsa communities are of a quite fluid nature, as they only come into being at certain times in certain places – when Salsa dancers meet in schools and other venues. Although these communities are very different from local ethnic communities, it nevertheless makes sense to choose certain locations, in this case two cities, in order to gain access to these more temporary, more fluid, local communities and discourses. The study presented here does not give an anthropological insight into the lives of members of a culture but makes use of ethnographic fieldwork and qualitative methods in order to document a local context and the

voices and discourses within. After all, the underlying aim of the study is of a more theoretical nature – what happens to language ideologies in transnational culture – than of descriptive interest, although the one can never go without the other.

Documenting local contexts may seem contrary to the intention of documenting the transnational, which seems to aspire to a much more wide-ranging perspective on culture than to document a very particular community. However, as George Marcus (Marcus 1998:80-81) has observed, the world system is not a holistic frame of study but has to be approached “... in a piecemeal way, integral to and embedded in discontinuous, multi-sited objects of study”. The discussion on the multiple nature of the world system relates to the discussion on “glocalization” (Robertson 1998), which maintains that the global is always and necessarily located in the local (on globalisation, see 4.1.). Thus, there is an intrinsic relationship between the local and the global. For ethnographic approaches, which cannot but study local contexts, this means that the local is the place to study the global (see Marcus 1998). The focus of my analysis will rely on an interpretation of local discourses. Yet, considering the notion of intertextuality (see 2.4.), the discursive approach in the analysis of interviews, in relating what is said in one context to other contexts, is the method chosen to make visible that the global comes into being on the local level (see also Pennycook 2010:ch.5). It is a vivid illustration of the local nature of the global that, in the given study, different types of transnational Salsa were detected in one city (in Sydney), which have different discourses on language and culture.

During the ethnographic fieldwork and my activities as a participant observant, I was, above all, interested in the role of language in the communities, whether the Spanish language plays a role in the constitution of the communities and whether ethnic and linguistic boundaries are transgressed or supported by language ideologies in these transnational contexts. This related to observations on the role of the oppositions and boundaries that are created by the means of symbolic functions of language. Also, I have looked at other features (multilingualism, gender, class, ethnicity, national discourses), which can play a role in these boundary constructions. In other words, I wanted to know “how boundaries happen: how people and practices get included and excluded, and what happens to them and to the categories as a result” (Heller 2007a:342). The embeddedness in the cultural environment has given rise to contextual knowledge, so that I also have gained a lot of other information, for example on visual codes or codes of bodily behaviour. As the interest in this research, however, is primarily of a discursive nature in documenting language ideology, ethnographic observation has been supplemented by interviews.

### **5.3.2. ETHNOGRAPHIC AND EXPERT INTERVIEWS**

Ethnography focuses on observation as principal source of knowledge (Gobo 2008:190) and usually uses the “ethnographic interview” as complement to observation. In a traditional ethnographic interview, interviewer and interviewee have known each other for a while and



the interview serves the purpose of understanding events that the interviewer could not grasp by observation alone. According to Sherman Heyl (2001), the ethnographic interview is a) mainly characterised by the relatively intimate relationship that the interviewer has gained with the interviewee through participant observation and b) by the topic, which is directly related to previous observation.

In the study presented here, the interviews conducted were only partly ethnographic, as there were different degrees of intimacy with different interviewees. In the beginning, the interviews were of a more ethnographic nature – I interviewed people that I had known quite a while and that I had spoken to before, in some cases, developing friendships – and I spoke with these individuals also about my own experiences and tried to understand what I had seen and experienced.

After a while, in order to advance the research process, discursive interviews (Gobo 2008:191) were carried out. Discursive interviews are also called “survey interviews” (Sherman Heyl 2001:369). In such interviews, also people who have not been known in advance are interviewed, additionally the interviewer does not only ask about things that have been observed before. Depending on the definition, one could also argue that the chosen interview method was that of “expert interviewing” (Bogner, Littig and Menz 2005), as the interviews were realised with experts of the field; their knowledge was used as a way of gaining understanding of the processes and epistemologies of the cultural context (for an introduction to expert interviewing, see Bogner and Menz 2005). As my resources as a single researcher were limited, the development of intimate relationships in a field that is very large, very diverse and only temporarily available is time-consuming. After having gained sufficient appropriate contextual knowledge of the field, interviews were conducted with people that I had never met before but that had been introduced to me through people that I knew. The interviews with these individuals can, therefore, not be called “ethnographic” but are “expert interviews”. As Pfadenhauer has argued, “the special feature of the expert interview is, in fact, that in this case the researcher and the interviewee are ideally conducting an interview at the ‘same eye-level’” (Pfadenhauer 2005:22), for which a “high degree of relevant thematic competence” (ibid.) is needed. This competence had been achieved through observation, participation and ethnographic interviews.

The choice of this interview method was not only based on pragmatic decisions but also on the topic of the research. The focus of this research is on something that is only partly observable, as ideologies take place both in practice and on a verbal level. Thus, interviews were not only about things that had been observed (as is actually envisaged in an ethnographic interview). Although it is possible to gain data on language ideologies through observation – for example, in analysing the fact that, in some dance schools, native Spanish-speakers are employed and in others not – much of the interest was of a discursive nature, as more abstract phenomena and beliefs were studied. The intimacy of the relationship between interviewer and interviewee plays here a more marginal role. Hence, it made sense to

conduct expert interviews (Gobo 2008:190-191). Experts in my case were active members of the respective Communities of Practice, either dance school owners or dance teachers but also some lay dancers who regularly attended dance classes and dance events (at least once a week).

As is practicable in conducting expert interviews, a semi-structured interview method was applied (Flick 2004:ch.3). Here, a rather informal conversation is produced, however, it is based on some pre-formulated topics. These topics were of concern in all interviews. In the 20 interviews conducted in Sydney and Frankfurt, the pre-formulated topics were the following:

- Personal history in relation to Salsa
- Beliefs on the reasons for the success of Salsa as a global phenomenon
- The role of the Spanish language (personal/for the community)
- The role of native Spanish-speakers

The first topic was intended to make the interviewee feel comfortable with the situation in talking about something personal. In most interviews, interviewees talked easily and enthusiastically for long periods of time so that it was very beneficial but also enjoyable to conduct the interviews. The second topic was intended to get a better grasp of the cultural context, as understanding how the dance has developed into a globally-successful phenomenon means to understand the underlying motives of producing this culture and of participating in it. At the same time, this question gave rise to a lot of information about the local development of the respective communities. Topic three and four related more directly to the envisaged goal of understanding the local language ideologies of members of the communities. Asking for the role of the Spanish language relates to the personal ability of the interviewee in speaking Spanish and whether it is crucial and, if so, why. The role of native Spanish-speakers related to the membership of ethnic Latin Americans in the communities and the relevance of their presence.

The topic of ethnic mixing and multiculturalism in Salsa settings that arose in most interviews due to the transnational nature of the field and due to the question on the role of native Spanish-speakers not only led to questions on the role of languages but also, firstly, on social discourses about ethnicity, integration and language and, secondly, on the role of governmental policies. From the last question, therefore, the final topic developed:

- The perception of Australia/Germany as a multilingual/multicultural country

Although not planned beforehand, this topic was very vital and important in most interviews and was developed during the interviews. Additionally, the research interest of the interviewer is also related to questions of language policy and ideologies of language and

belonging, which certainly had an influence on the quantity of statements on this topic. Yet, as has been discussed, the prime intention of this thesis is not to give a full-fledged ethnography of a certain community. It is therefore legitimate to use data that is not directly based on ethnographic observation in order to make visible links between everyday transnational culture and top-down discourses. The link and relationship between different scales and the connection between different orders of indexicality becomes particularly visible in the discussion of topics of social and national relevance.

The interviews figure prominently in this work and form the main corpus of data. In contrast to traditional ethnographies, this thesis relies more heavily on the data gained from interviews and uses observational material as a supplement. It is therefore particularly important to keep in mind, in analysing the data of interviews, that the reports of participants are social constructs (Heller 2001:260). An interview “is not simply ‘data’ but also ‘discourse’” (Cameron 2001:172). Triangulation of the interview data with field notes and observational data is here crucial (see Heller 2001:260). The triangulation of interview data with other material will be realised in Chapters 7-10. The choice of linguistic methods of discourse analysis in order to analyse single stretches of interviews furthermore ensures that interview contents are not taken as simple ‘truths’ but creates adequate distance to the produced utterances. I will go into the details of this aspect of analysis in sections 5.4.2. and 5.4.3. Before single stretches of talk were analysed, however, the interview data, together with the field notes, had to be sorted and systematised.

## **5.4. THE STEPS OF ANALYSIS**

### **5.4.1. GROUNDED THEORY – DEVELOPING CODES AND CATEGORIES**

An effective method for sorting qualitative material is *grounded theory*. Grounded theory is the development of a theory on the basis of systematically organised qualitative research data. Grounded theory attempts to “bridge the gap between theory and empirical research” (Gobo 2008:41). Data is transformed into “codes” in order to develop concepts and categories that can serve for building theory; this means that data with similar or related content is sorted into content-based categories. The aim is to develop more abstract categories on which a theoretical approach is based. These categories are often in a relationship to one another and these relationships can serve for developing theory. Using grounded theory is thus not an attempt to be descriptively precise but is “an act of conceptual abstraction” (Holton 2007: 272).

The first step, the coding process, means that data is “split up” (Beckerle 2009:53). The researcher looks for similarities and differences, makes associations and thus sorts the data. Each relevant passage is associated with a certain name or keyword (Strauss and Corbin 1990:62). “Codes” are, so to speak, names or titles that are given to certain events or stretches of talk and the “name that you choose is usually the one that seems most logically

related to the data it represents” (Strauss and Corbin 1990:67)<sup>34</sup>. Codes are then associated with other codes and so-called “concepts” are developed. Concepts are grouped together in categories. Boundaries between codes, concepts and categories are of a fluid nature; a code refers to the smaller, descriptive level, concepts are collections of codes with similar content and a category is the development of a higher level hyperonym that represents a more abstract perspective on the data. Yet, it can be difficult to differentiate the three (see Berg and Milmeister 2007:187).

As is true for the data itself, codes and categories are, obviously, social constructs and, in this case, the individuality of the process means that no two observers end up with the same categories (see Glaser and Strauss 2005:109). The type of abstraction in grounded theory is therefore very different from hypotheses that are developed in other fields of research, where, typically, assumptions and hypotheses are applied to phenomena. The development of codes and categories is a very useful step in the analysis of data; codes and categories above all serve to make data accessible. Categories help to reflect and question what has been observed and they also can make visible connections between different phenomena. This also applies to research on language ideologies in Salsa CoPs. Categories, although not ‘objective’ in the traditional sense, are relevant theoretical abstractions (see Glaser and Strauss 2005:33) and “enable an understanding of theories of social action and their structural constraints” (ibid.: 41).

As many followers of grounded theory consider it crucial that codes and categories arise from the data, “rather than applying concepts from earlier work to data” (Charmaz and Mitchell 2001:165), this issue needs to be discussed in the context of the present project, as certain assumptions from theory and other work have been applied – for example, the idea that national discourses and language policies may play a role in the constitution of language ideology on the local scale. It is often problematic to assume that the data stems from the ‘ground’ – the empirical field – alone. The point has been the subject of a heated debate for many years (for a discussion see Kelle 2005). In the Salsa case, by choosing the particular community and due to theoretical background assumptions and hypotheses – such as transnationalisation has effects, language policies have effects, language and identity are in a relation – it was unavoidable that background knowledge is also part of the data. Background assumptions have to be made as transparent as possible, which has been the subject of previous sections (see Chs 2 and 3 and this chapter). As has been elaborated in section 5.3.2. on the interview process, the topics that I chose for interviews have not evolved on the grounds of the empirical field alone. Yet, in the coding of the interviews, I made no distinction between topics that I had brought up and topics that were brought up by

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<sup>34</sup> Originally, grounded theory differentiates between *open* coding, *axial* coding, and *selective* coding (see Strauss and Corbin 1990). As I do not make use of these distinctions, they will not be introduced. Furthermore, I have not used the methodology of theory generation as it has been developed by Glaser and Strauss (see Glaser and Strauss 2005) as my aim was not to develop a theory on the behaviour of people who dance Salsa but to document and analyse the language ideologies that can be found in this context. Therefore, I will not introduce the methodological step of generating theories from categories (see ibid.).

interviewees, as this is often impossible to decide. The interest in language in my research is based on the observation that people in Salsa communities often learn Spanish. This is why the community was chosen. Therefore, the issue of language is grounded in the empirical data through observation. Yet, in interviews, the topic was also focused on by the interviewer. This, then, cannot be called completely 'grounded' as a concept has been applied to the interview (although the topic indeed arose 'naturally' during most interviews; see also Ch. 9). It has to be emphasised that the topic of language, language learning, the role of Spanish, and also the role of multicultural and multilingual national policies would probably have figured less prominently in other approaches to the same field by other researchers with different interests. In this respect, it is here not claimed that a *grounded theory* is developed, but I make use of elements of the methods in order to systematise and analyse material, which is partly based on the field and partly based on pre-configured assumptions. Thus, this work does not follow a 'pure' grounded theory approach but has used the method of developing codes and categories in order to structure the data and to develop new questions. Unexpected topics of relevance have become visible through this type of categorising. I will go into detail in the respective chapters.

As a final remark on the demand of grounded theory to restrict oneself to 'grounded' data, it has to be noted that the application of discourse theory makes the discussion on the definite origin of the content of an utterance less relevant. Discourses in academia, discourses in mainstream society and discourses of Salsa dancers are all linked in complex interdiscursive chains. People relate to discourses of globalisation and discourses on multilingualism, also if they are not part of the academic world. Through various media, researchers, such as myself, are related to the same discourses as their informants. From this perspective, it would not make much sense to strictly divide discourses from informants and discourses that have influenced the approach of this research. Also, one might consider the notion of "entextualisation" in this context (Bauman and Briggs 1990, quoted in Blommaert 2005a:47). Although data may seem 'real' and first-hand, in quoting voices of others in academic texts, the original statement is "entextualised", it is decontextualised and recontextualised and this replication is fitted into a new context so that it becomes part of a different meta-discourse. "Needless to say, the replication involves a whole set of transformations and is thus not a mere 'copy' of the original" (Blommaert 2005a). An obsession with categories and codes stemming from replications of empirical materials only, completely unaffected by prior concepts, seems unrealistic and also irrelevant, as the replication, the act of entextualisation, already involves unspoken prior assumptions and the application of academic discourse conventions.

To categorise material is an important step of analysis; yet, as my data, next to observational experience, is predominantly of a discursive nature (ethnographic and expert interviews), linguistic methods for analysing single stretches of interviews are crucial

methods for getting an in-depth grasp of the data. This interpretation of data is deeply influenced by linguistic ethnography.

#### **5.4.2. LINGUISTIC ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES**

Linguistic ethnography brings together ethnographic and linguistic methods and thus “attempts to combine close detail of local action and interaction as embedded in a wider social world” (Creese 2008:233). As this is envisaged in this thesis, in looking at the relationships between discourses from different scales, the methods of linguistic ethnography are ideal in an interpretation of field and interview data. Linguistic ethnography has been developed in the UK since 2001, where the UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum was set up, which organises a mailing list and an annual conference that brings together researchers from the UK and elsewhere (see <http://www.ling-ethnog.org.uk>). The approach links ethnographic insights, which focus on broader social issues, with analytical tools provided by different strands of linguistics. It is argued that both ethnography and linguistics can benefit from each other, as ethnography can benefit from the analytical preciseness of linguistics and linguistics can benefit from the “reflexive sensitivity required in ethnography” (Creese 2008:232):

Ethnography provides linguistics with a close reading of context not necessarily represented in some kind of interactional analysis, while linguistics provides an authoritative analysis of language use not typically available through participant observation and the taking of fieldnotes. (Creese 2008:232)

One of the most influential linguistic ethnographers is Ben Rampton and his studies on language crossing are exemplary for the approach (see also 4.2.). In Rampton’s seminal study on the language use of adolescents in British schools, he uses interactional data from classrooms. Here, authorised and unauthorised interactions recorded during school lessons, but also conversations during leisure times, are analysed in relationship to the development of discourses on ethnic diversity and ‘new ethnicities’ in the UK (Rampton 1995a). Rampton thus detects forms of interethnic solidarity among adolescents through the use of crossing strategies, but he is also able to show that wider level social discourses on racism, ethnicity and ethnic belonging in the UK inform the categories that are necessary to understand and interpret the speech of the pupils. For example, the usage of SAE (Stylised Asian English, a form of ‘mock’ English with Asian accent) is typically used to index a persona that is linked to the British history of immigration, where first generation migrants from India and Pakistan had a rather subordinated position in society (see e.g. Rampton 1995b).

In the present research project on language ideologies in transnational Salsa culture, the main focus is not on the analysis of linguistic detail. Micro-level interactional phenomena will be analysed but the aim here is to illustrate local discourses – language ideologies – and it is

not the linguistic features themselves that are of interest. Linguistic features that occur in interviews will be interpreted if they are seen as relevant for an understanding of the approaches people take towards issues of language and society. The interpretation does not ask about effects of discourses on language but asks about the content of discourses and how they are related to other discourses. Remembering what has been discussed in Chapter 2, the interest of an analysis of discourse in this thesis is not so much in the linguistic but in the social. A statement that is made only has a force because of its embeddedness in a discourse and is thus “a sociohistorical function rather than a strictly linguistic one” (McHoul 2001:140). The analysis of utterances as statements in discourses thus allows working from the empirical level (statement) to the systemic level (discourse) (ibid.).

Yet, in the interpretation of discursive statements, linguistic detail may be relevant; for example, if someone expresses Australian identity through the usage of *high rise terminals* (see 5.4.3.) or expresses distance through hesitation markers. Thus, in the content analysis of interviews, interactional, small-scale detail will be considered if perceived as relevant for the content analysis. Very important in this respect is that working with interview data is different from using ‘natural’ interactional data and therefore the method used in my study is not directly comparable to the interest of studies that are typically associated with linguistic ethnography, which usually study ‘naturally’ occurring conversations. However, the epistemological background assumptions of linguistic ethnography, its post-structuralist and social foundation and its eclectic approach are shared in the interpretation of this empirical study.

The approach of linguistic ethnography does not only guide the interpretation of linguistic details of interviews but is also influential in the interpretation of the categories that have been developed on the basis of grounded theory, which are also seen as embedded in the wider social world. In their interpretation, these categories will be related to social discourses and also to theoretical literature that is concerned with these discourses. If, for example, the issue of authenticity, which is one of the categories (see 6.5.), is discussed in an interview (expressed, for example, through crossing to Spanish, which is analysed with linguistic tools), or seems to play a role in something that has been observed, this finding may be related to existing research and theory. This ‘linking’ is against the principles of ‘pure’ grounded theory but, as has been elaborated above, it is not the aim here to develop a comprehensive theory based on empirical data. The literature that has been used as an inspiration for the general interpretation of discursive fragments is predominantly literature from sociolinguistics and sociology, concerned with globalisation, transnationalism, migration, multilingualism and language policies. This step of ‘linking’ is typical for the work of linguistic ethnography. Ben Rampton, for example, in discussing his methodological approach, explains:

Rather than focusing on contextual correlations within the dataset, or trying to isolate the constitutive ingredients in a set of practices, [...] general

interpretations pull different practices together by going outside the data to conceptual frameworks produced elsewhere. (Rampton 2006:404)

In legitimating this “going outside the data”, Rampton argues that language is not only content but also has symbolic value and can therefore be interpreted in the same way as other cultural items:

[R]eckon with the ways in which language can be used to extend ethnic co-membership across the lines of ethnic-genetic descent in close friendships, as well as the ways in which ethnic forms, products and symbols are marketised, disseminated and appropriated as desirable commodities, life-style options and aesthetic objects. (Rampton 2006:17)

In the empirical chapters on the respective Communities of Practice, interview data will be analysed, after an embedding of the data into the cultural context that has been documented with the help of ethnographic observation. Contents of the interviews will be linked to discourses from scales on the local, national and transnational level. As has been discussed, it is considered that it is not only the explicit content of interview passages that is possibly relevant for the analysis but also the small-scale details of talk. According to the principles of linguistic ethnography, the insights into these smaller details are produced with tools that have been developed in different strands of linguistics: critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis, the ethnography of speaking and interactional sociolinguistics. As these different strands inform the interpretation of the interview data, they will be introduced briefly in the remainder of this section.

Scholars working in the *Critical discourse analysis* (CDA) paradigm are most influential in the application of discourse theory, as discussed in Chapter 2. There are different currents of CDA and the details concerning the differences in terms of theory and method will not be discussed at this point (see e.g. Fairclough 2003, Jäger 1993, van Dijk 1993, Wodak 2001, and see Pennycook 2001:79 for an overview). What is common to all critical approaches to linguistic analyses of discourse is that they assume that there are “hidden agendas” (Cameron 2001:123) in text and talk, as ideologies are influential in the constitution of language and its contents. The aim of analysing language is then to uncover logics, categories and meanings with which people convey their thoughts and in which people act. According to discourse theory, categories, ways of conceiving the world, are not individual but the result of social discourse. In analysing language and underlying logics, adherents of CDA assume that it is possible to “denaturalize common sense notions” (Pennycook 2001:81). So,

[t]he goal of discourse analysis is to render even Discourses with which we are familiar ‘strange’, so that even if we ourselves as members of these Discourses can see consciously (maybe for the first time) how much effort goes into making them work and, indeed, seem normal, even ‘right’ to their members. (Gee 2005:102)



CDA scholars are often openly committed to liberal or left wing political agendas and pursue critique of public discourses in line with this commitment, usually in written text. Critical Discourse Analysts look at language use, for example the use of passive constructions that can hide the agent of a political act. A very influential work of CDA is Norman Fairclough's study on the "conversationalisation" of institutional discourse (Fairclough 1992). The study shows how features from personal communicational genres are appropriated in more formal domains, especially in customer relationship management. Individualised, quasi-personal modes of talking are used to accomplish institutional goals (usually, to sell something). This change of the usage of linguistic features in formal genres can be interpreted as relating to social change in societies, in which discourses of equality and solidarity are highly valued. Informal formulae are in line with discourses of equality, while at the same time this personalised language use mystifies the hierarchical nature of human relationships in capitalist societies (Cameron 2001:133). In linking linguistic detail with wider social discourse, linguistic ethnography and CDA show stark similarities; however, CDA does not engage in the interpretation of ethnographic data. The CDA tradition is nevertheless influential in the interpretation of interview data in this study.

Similar to critical discourse analysis, *conversation analysis* (CA) is concerned with detecting structures in talk. Yet, the difference between CDA and CA is that CA studies patterns in naturally occurring interaction (while CDA often studies written text) and that it does not link data to broader social discourse. Sequential patterns in conversations, adjacency pairs and turn-taking belong to the traditional interests of conversation analysis and it is usually conceived that power happens in everyday talk and conversations, which can be analysed through the analysis of conversational patterns (see e.g. Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998, see Sacks 1966 (2006) for a classic and very influential text). The approach is very data centred and, in this sense, conversation analysis follows a similar ideology as grounded theory, the idea that the analysis of data should be strictly restricted to what is *in* the data, while the researcher should refrain from making unwarranted interpretations on the basis of data. The approach is not adhered to in my work, and it is not as relevant, as interviews are not conversations of everyday life in which social power structures can be conveyed, as is the case in, for example, employer–employee conversation. Nevertheless, the concentration on small detail and structuring can be relevant in any talk and therefore also in interviews.

*Ethnography of speaking* is related to 'normal' ethnography but has a focus on speech acts and speech events. The relation between the wider culture and the speech event is analysed and participant observation is part of the methodology (Duranti 1997). In contrast to ethnography, language itself is not only seen as an instrument for conveying information but becomes part of research interest (see Cameron 2001:ch.5 for examples). The notion of *speech event* figures prominently in the ethnography of speaking (Hymes 1974), which is an event of social significance in a given culture that is constituted by speech; for example, a job interview, a lecture, and of course also a research interview.

An even more fine-grained but related approach to language can be found in *interactional sociolinguistics*, where the ‘small stuff’ of language is analysed – intonation patterns, contextualisation cues, non-verbal and non-referential elements of language (see Cameron 2001:ch.8). The background assumption of interactional sociolinguistics is that

when people speak, they inevitably convey much more than their words and sentences articulate ‘literally’, and a great deal gets expressed much more indirectly, with different aspects of the communicative stream drawing on a wide range of unstated assumptions that often vary in apparentness to their interlocutors – assumptions about activities, manners, relationships, people, places, the past, the future, etc. [...] These unstated assumptions are developed through social experience, and to the extent that they provide a baseline for the explicit part of an utterance to make sense – and to the extent that they are unquestioned by the recipients – they can be analysed as tiny pieces of taken-for-granted social structure. (Rampton 2006:25-26)

In contrast to conversation analysis, followers of interactional sociolinguistics conceive it as appropriate to make assumptions on the basis of data, even if something has not been stated explicitly. Many studies in interactional sociolinguistics are concerned with the study of ethnic or cultural difference and also inter-cultural miscommunication (see e.g. Gumperz 1982). This concern with cultural difference in talk is not shared in my study. First of all, Salsa CoPs are not ethnic groups; secondly, the interest here is not in how the groups actually talk or organise talk but it is in their language ideologies. Yet, the tradition of interactional sociolinguistics is highly relevant for the methodological approach taken here, as it is also assumed that local language ideologies, which may be influenced by national or transnational discourse, are pieces of “taken-for-granted social structure” that can be detected in speech.

Considering the eclecticism of the methodological approach, a few critical comments on the transcription conventions have to be made. In studies that focus on the content of interviews, it is usually a “broad” transcription that is adequate (see Roberts 2009 for a more detailed definition). In broad transcriptions, no attention is given to the small-scale detail, as, for example, pauses or intonation. Broad transcriptions therefore the run danger of implying that language is seen as mere medium, while other functions can easily be ignored. Stretches of talk are then seen as “pieces of information, and this, in turn, assumes that language is used to express ideas” (Ochs 2006 (1979):167). The decision for how to transcribe is actually a theoretical one, as it entails theoretical assumptions on the nature of talk and what is relevant in social interaction, which is why Elinor Ochs says that there is a “politics of transcription” (Ochs 2006 (1979)). In the context of this thesis, all interviews have been transcribed in a broad manner. As the interest is not in the sequencing of the interviews, some parts, in which non-relevant issues appeared which do not relate to the topic at all, have not been transcribed but merely noted. The passages that have been chosen for closer analysis were then transcribed in a narrow way, in order to make the non-referential details visible and accessible to analysis (see appendix for transcription conventions).

In the following section, I will list the linguistic details that are potentially relevant for the analysis of interview data in the context of the methodology applied. This list represents a mix of tools that originally stem from the methodological approaches introduced above.

### **5.4.3. ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES IN INTERVIEWS**

An interview is a particular type of speech event and there are various issues that have to be taken into consideration in analysing contents of interviews. Above all, as has been mentioned above, it is important not to take the content of interviews as simple ‘truths’. Interviews are also *discourse* (Cameron 2001:172). In any introductory class to linguistics, it is taught that “language is social action”. The same holds true, of course, for language in interviews.

First of all, this can be observed in relation to issues of identity. The interview is a social act and co-constructs the identities of interview participants: “in an interview [...], people not only speak about their identity, they also DO identity” (Cameron 2001). Additionally, the interview also co-constructs the identity of its participants. By being interviewed, members of the field feel acknowledged as experts of the field. The roles of interviewee and interviewer are relatively pre-determined, which is why an analysis of sequences and structures of the conversation in line with the methods of conversation analysis is not of prime interest (see above and e.g. Cameron 2001:ch.7). In the analysis of stretches of talk, however, the identity of the interviewer will play a role and this can be detected in language use. The methodological toolkit of interactional sociolinguistics comes into play (see below).

It can also be important to consider the contents of the interviewer’s statements or questions in the context of a given part of an interview, as, in semi-structured interviews, not everything that is said by the interviewer has been planned before. Also, the personal identity of the interviewer – as belonging to a rather high-status social institution (university), as participant observant, using a certain language variety and having a particular gender and ethnic background – has to be taken into consideration. Secondly, the act of interviewing partly changes the field from a leisure activity to a subject of scientific investigation. Furthermore, the conversations held in interviews may have effects on future action of interviewees and thus can also change the field itself.

What is the function of language in the speech event of the interview? The interview follows a rather straightforward ‘language transmits thought’ ideology (“speech as telementational process” (Harris 1990:26)). However, next to transmitting contents and the construction of identity, the following issues can be potentially relevant for the analysis of talk in interview (the following list is based on Cameron 2001:ch.10):

- *Politeness* can play a crucial role in the construction of particular utterances. Saving the other’s “face” (Brown and Levinson 1987) is particularly important on both sides of the interview. The request of conducting an interview is a relatively

big imposition and this can influence language, content and questions. Questions might be posed in a very indirect manner, which can influence the answers. At the same time, the interviewee is constantly aware that the talk is not just ordinary talk but that the interviewer wants to 'have' something (content) and will typically produce what is expected. This may not necessarily be the same than would be produced in other contexts. On the other hand, as interviewing is an asymmetrical power situation, interviewees may also resist the way they are positioned by the researcher.

- *Creating distance* to the content of interviews can mark a social position. This can happen, for example, through explicit awareness ("I know this sounds stereotypical but ...") or also through long pauses or a problematisation of the question ("What do you mean?"). Distancing to particular contents can show that the speaker does not want to be associated with these contents, which can be typically observed in relation to social taboos, e.g. racism.
- *Strategies of credibility* are used in order to make a story more convincing. It has been observed, for example, that talk about paranormal experience is often embedded in talk about very banal, everyday events (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998:195, quoted in Cameron 2001:152). In the interviews with members of Salsa CoPs, strategies of credibility can be, for example, to tell anecdotes about experiences made with dancing before an evaluation of other dancers or dance styles is made.
- Furthermore, talk has also *aesthetic elements* to it. Pauses are often used to create suspense and make a narrative more interesting. Repetitions can enforce the content of what is said. Alliteration is furthermore an often-used means to emphasise an utterance, to make it more lively, but also more easy to follow.
- Some parts of talk can also be *non-referential* but serve to illustrate the position of the speaker. An example for that are summaries of narrations as they are typically given at their beginning; they frame the utterance, make clear that a story is to follow and say how it is supposed to be taken (Labov and Waletzky 1967, quoted in Cameron 2001:153).
- As has been emphasised by interactional sociolinguistics, little details can be highly relevant. Next to pauses in interviews, *stress and intonation patterns* can give important insights into the meanings produced. They can indicate, for example, that the speaker assumes that the hearer is familiar with certain knowledge, as happens regularly with *high rise terminals* (HRT), the rise of tone at the end of an utterance in interviews. HRTs are particularly common in Australian English (Guy and Vonwiller 1989) so that not only common ground but also identity can be related to the usage of this specific intonation patterns.

- This relates to the usage of *language varieties and particular pronunciations* in interviews. In my interviews, the production of Spanish pronunciation or “mock Spanish” (Hill 2001) can indicate credibility, authenticity but also can function as distancing strategy.
- *Formulaic prefaces* (“to tell the truth”, “Well ...”, “Oh ...”) that have no or little referential content can be relevant in positioning the speaker. “Well”, for example, often indicates that the interviewee does not entirely agree with the question (Cameron 2001:156), whereas “Oh” can express surprise. With these small bits of talk, identity but also position towards certain contents can be articulated.
- The *usage of reported speech* occurs regularly in interviews. Interviewees can quote other people and they can either quote or ‘mock-quote’ (if they quote others although they do not use the exact wording or exaggerate). This form of quotation usually makes the content more credible and also more lively. Secondly, there is self-quotation, which is the quoting of something that has been said, or has been thought, by the speaker before. This strategy has been described as an intensification of the affective force (Relaño-Pastor and De Fina 2005:46).
- There can be *contradictions in discourse*. This often hints to competing discourses that exist simultaneously in one context. Contradictions can therefore be particularly interesting in order to detect social tensions and have been one research focus in CDA: “texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance” (Wodak 2006:4).

Summarising this methodological chapter, the approach to data in this study is eclectic and mixes ethnography, sociology and linguistics. The choice of methodology is guided by the theoretical interest of the study, the question of whether and how local language ideologies are influenced by other discourses. The ethnographic approach ensures sensitivity to the cultural and local context and an understanding of language ideology from ‘within’. Categorising data according to the method of grounded theory makes possible a more systematic view on the data, which, due to the ethnographic, open approach, has the danger of leaving a large amount of unstructured and inaccessible information. Finally, the application of linguistic methods for analysing discourse allows access to interview data and field notes beyond the content level through the analytical preciseness of linguistic methodology. Linguistic ethnography can make analytical claims on the documentation of links between the small-scale level of individual discourse and broader discourses that exist on a societal level, be it on a local, national or transnational scale. In a nutshell, in the chapters that are to follow, the methods introduced will provide insights to local language ideologies and their connections to the wider social world. This allows for the documentation of the relationship between transnational discourse and local language ideology.

Furthermore, possible tensions or effects resulting from nationalist language ideology and other types of discourse on language, existing on different scales and influenced by different orders of indexicality, can be documented. Analytic validity of a discussion of the research questions is thus ensured through the combination of the methodologies presented above.

Before an in-depth introduction of the empirical data, the following chapter will provide historical and cultural background information on the cultural practice through which Salsa Communities of Practice are constituted. Understanding historical origins of Salsa is vital in understanding contemporary Salsa communities and the transnational trajectories of their discourses.

## **6. SALSA: TRANSNATIONAL BEGINNINGS, GLOBAL SPREADS. HISTORICAL AND ETHNOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS TO CONTEMPORARY SALSA SCENES**

Studying Salsa Communities of Practice is a decision that is based on several moral and theoretical presumptions. As has been mentioned in Chapter 5, Salsa communities are appealing as objects of research as the study does not run the risk of reproducing ethnic essentialism. Additionally, it is not directly linked to discourses of 'othering' that construct members of non-dominant groups as victims. The study of Salsa communities therefore differs from many traditional sociolinguistic studies that typically are engaged in studying language use of marginalised groups of society (Rampton 2000b). Neither in Germany or in Australia is Salsa dancing linked to a status of marginalisation<sup>35</sup>. Approaching members of minority groups as subordinated may have strengthening effects in many cases; at the same time, through producing printed words, there is the danger of actually establishing the marginalised status and thus of reifying the categories that are actually fought against (consider Laclau and Mouffe 1985). In studying commercialised culture, such as Salsa contexts in Western cities, perspectives on newer constructions of identity, and not only of ethnic identity, can take into account that people are not mere victims of dominant discourses. Overcoming unattractive constructions of 'the other', as they exist in many public discourses, may furthermore inspire the development of contemporary language policies.

A second inference influencing the decision to study commercialised cultural contexts, such as Salsa communities, is inspired by cultural studies. Cultural studies (see e.g. Hall 1992, Rampton 1997, Williams 1966) have focused on cultural practices that are not necessarily tied to ethnicity and have emphasised the need for looking into the practices of everyday life. Salsa dancing is here considered as such a practice. In everyday life of contemporary societies, cultural practices based on music, connected to commercialism, the production of lifestyle and mass media are at least as common as traditional activities that intend to reproduce traditional social orders such as ethnic or national identity. Everyday cultural practices always involve struggle over meaning. And, as any human behaviour, cultural practices and the struggles that come along with them are confronted with dominant, hegemonic ideologies. In a capitalist world, dominant ideologies are usually concerned with the reproduction of class differences<sup>36</sup>. Cultural practices that relate to commercialism necessarily link to capitalism and class-based power differentials and discourses that reproduce this. This is not to say that discourses on ethnicity and on lifestyles are equally powerful; identities that are voluntarily chosen in leisure contexts are certainly not of the same quality as are ethnic/national or gender identities. Yet, leisure culture related to music,

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<sup>35</sup> However, Salsa dancing can enforce a view on non-Western culture as folkloristic supplement to mainstream, 'normal' culture. Still, this is different from regarding minority culture as being in need of support from people in 'advanced' positions.

<sup>36</sup> The discussion on the existence of different classes and how they are to be defined in a postmodern age is not presented here. It is safe to say that, on the basis of access to symbolic and material resources, people's access to power is different and maybe even more so in a transnational age (see e.g. Berger and Weiß 2008, Sennett 2006).

like the activity of dancing Salsa, is an essential part of everyday discourse and influences the way people locate themselves – and thus also the way people use and conceptualise language. The study of communities based on commercial music culture should therefore not be understood as a random and exotic choice but as anchored in the development of contemporary capitalist culture.

With their long history of cultural mixing, popular music and dance styles are not only inspiring examples for the study of commercial culture but also for studying the transnational relations between culture and space:

Like other forms of contemporary mass communication, popular music simultaneously undermines and reinforces our sense of place. Music that originally emerged from concrete historical experiences in places with clearly identifiable geographic boundaries now circulates as an interchangeable commodity marketed to consumers all over the globe. (Lipsitz 1994:4)

At the same time, the example of Salsa shows that transnational connections between different localities are by no means new. It is particularly in post-colonial environments, in the context of a history of capitalist exploitation (as for example in Cuba, which is an important context for Salsa music), where it becomes obvious that the relationship between location and culture does not necessarily fit into the nationalist paradigm and that different scales (see 4.3.) of culture have been interacting for a long time. As has been mentioned previously, for a study of transnational scales and their effects on language ideology, Salsa is particularly apt because language is part of the cultural practice through the lyrics of the songs.

In contemporary Western urban contexts, Salsa is a type of music and dance enjoyed by people from many different backgrounds in many different styles and fashions. Images that come along with Salsa can be quite different; very common, however, are connections with touristy images of fun, sunshine, liveliness and holiday. Salsa is usually seen as related to the Spanish-speaking world, also in Salsa contexts that are rather different from the places where Salsa is danced as part of the traditional culture. Yet, many Salsa ‘aficionados’, even professional dancers, often have no accurate knowledge of the origins of Salsa. The dance is sometimes related to Spain (where it does not originate) or to Cuba (where most of its predecessors stem from but this is only half the story), while some simply call it a ‘Latin’ dance. For the study of contemporary Salsa culture and discourse, it is vital to gain a brief insight into the history and development of the dance<sup>37</sup>.

Historical background knowledge to Salsa dance and a short analysis of contemporary, transnational Salsa culture is necessary to interpret local Salsa discourses all over the world. Next to giving crucial background knowledge and an account of a history that has always

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<sup>37</sup> The history of the music is obviously related to the history of the dance but in contemporary transnational contexts both often develop separately; the cultural history of Salsa music will not be introduced in detail at this point (see e.g. Waxer 2002b) but will be mentioned if relevant.



been transnational, the history of Salsa dance also explains some of today's divisions within Salsa scenes in Sydney or Frankfurt. It is important to note that, although many people are not aware of the history of Salsa, "[t]he cross-cultural communication carried on within today's contemporary popular music retains residual contradictions of centuries of colonialism, class domination, and racism" (Lipsitz 1994:5). This holds true also for Salsa. Borders and divisions in the Salsa world that exist today, and that relate to symbolic meanings of languages, are often intricately connected to long histories of domination, exploitation and age-old power struggles.

After a historical account, I will shortly discuss some issues on identity, imagination and ethnicity that have to be considered in the analysis of contemporary Salsa contexts in non-Latin environments, before I introduce general ethnographic insights into local Salsa scenes in Frankfurt and Sydney, which serve as a first step in understanding the respective discourses in Salsa Communities of Practice. Afterwards, the respective CoPs are introduced, followed by an introduction to the analytical categories that have been developed. Finally, one section is devoted to the issue of gender in Salsa environments.

### **6.1. A SHORT HISTORY OF SALSA**

Salsa is based on a number of African and European dances that, since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were fused in colonial Caribbean contexts, particularly in Cuba. Without the slave trade and colonial exploitation of Africans in the Americas, Salsa as it exists today would not have developed. It was mainly from the African *rumba* and the French-based *Contredanse* that the *danzon*<sup>38</sup> was created. The *danzon* is one of the more famous forerunners of Salsa, next to the even more popular *son*. The *son* is also a fusion of European and African dance and music styles. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *mambo*, the *chachachá* and elements from *rock'n'roll* were influential in the creation of contemporary styles of Salsa. Thus, Salsa is actually transnational right from its beginnings as the fusion of Afro-Cuban culture with European practices has been a defining element, also of all its ancestors. This fusion has been going on for over 200 years (Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1). In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the creation of a transnational space across the Caribbean was created primarily by sailors who "served as an informal but vital link in the diffusion of [...] Salsa recordings" (Waxer 2002b:13, see also Waxer 2002a).

For the birth of contemporary Salsa, two historical events have to be regarded as crucial. One is the Jones Act of 1917, which granted US citizenship to Puerto Ricans whose island had been invaded by the US in 1898 (Picó 1986). This caused the migration of a large number of Puerto Ricans to New York, who brought along Caribbean dance and music. The second event is the Cuban Revolution in 1959 (Perez-Stable 1998). The isolation of communist Cuba, which so far had been dominant in the production of music, and the Puerto Rican population

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<sup>38</sup> Many consider the music of the famous *Buena Vista Social Club* to be a version of the *Danzon*.

in the US “would eventually provide a creative space for Latinos [sic] within the United States to develop U.S.-based dance” (Pietrobruno 2006:49). It is in this space that Salsa has been developed. Salsa appeared in the mid 1960s in New York and not only fused European and African elements but actually can be considered a blending of Cuban dance/music with jazz styles, as Hispanics and Afro-Americans came together in New York music clubs and dance halls (see also Waxer 2002b:4). The mixing of Hispanic and Afro-American culture was not a new phenomenon at the time, as already the *mambo* in the 1950s had attracted a very diverse audience, which illustrates the avant-garde status of popular music in relation to the crossing of ethnic boundaries:

The audience [at *Mambo* night clubs] was never exclusively Latin. A pattern soon established itself. On Wednesday nights when ‘Killer Joe’ Piro gave dance lessons, the crowd was Jewish and Italian. Friday was for Puerto Ricans, Saturday for Hispanics of all origins ... and Sunday ... was for American blacks. (Paolo Torres, quoted in Pietrobruno 2006:48)

The appearance of what is called Salsa in the 1960s is, however, not only based on innovations due to cultural contact but is also linked to a political movement. Hispanics in the US, inspired by the Black Panthers (Ogbar 2004), were engaged in advocating Latino/a pride in order to fight racism in the US society and to foster cultural consciousness of Latin Americans (Manuel 1995:73). “Born as an expression of Puerto Rican self-awareness and New York Latino [sic] pride” (Pietrobruno 2006:54), Salsa had a strong political message in the beginning. Violence on the streets, ghetto life, experiences of inequality, American imperialism and memories of a lost home are thus topics of many of the early Salsa tracks (see also Waxer 2002b:4):

From the 1970s on Salsa became a revolutionary music in New York, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Colombia and many Latin cities, reaching the peak of its social change manifesto in 1978, with Rubén Blades and Willie Colón’s best-selling Salsa album *Siembra*. (Berríos-Miranda 2002:24)

This album can be considered a focal point for the whole Salsa movement and many of its lyrics are decidedly political in content. For example, the song *La chica de plástica* by Rubén Blades and Willie Colón criticises middle class lifestyle that is concerned with material values only. To give an impression of the contents of these songs, a section of the song is introduced here. A rather lengthy part is introduced to give an idea of the explicitness of the contents. Later, in the analysis of language ideologies in Salsa communities, the political history of Salsa will play a role, too.

*La chica de plástica*  
Rubén Blades and Willie Colón

*Ella era una chica plástica de esas que veo por ahí*  
She was one of those plastic girls that I see around here

*De esas que cuando se agitan sudan chanel number three*  
One of those who sweat Chanel number three when they move

*Que sueñan casarse con un doctor*  
Who dream of getting married to a doctor

*Pues el puede mantenerlas mejor*  
Because he can satisfy them better

*No le hablan a nadie si no es su igual*  
They don't speak to anyone who isn't their equal

*A menos que sea un fulano de tal*  
Unless it's one of those blokes

*Son lindas delgadas de buen vestir*  
They are pretty, skinny and beautifully dressed

*De mirada esquiva y falso reír*  
With reserved looks and false smiles

[...]

*Oye latino oye hermano oye amigo*  
Listen Latino, listen brother, listen friend

*Nunca vendas tu destino por el oro ni la comodidad*  
Never sell your destiny for money or for convenience

*Nunca descanses pues nos falta andar bastante*  
Never rest because we still have quite a way to go

*Vamos todos adelante para juntos terminar*  
Let's all move forward so that we can finish together

*Con la ignorancia que nos trae sugestionados*  
With the ignorance that makes us believe

*Con modelos importados que no son la solución*  
With imported models that are not the solution

The song, understood in the context of a Latin diaspora in New York, accuses US American middle class values of focusing on material success only, which is rejected by the singer. Also, the song appeals to the Latin community (which is constructed as male only), who is asked to strive for non-materialistic values. The binary discursive construction of North Americans as materialistic, who are contrasted to the inhabitants of South America, who, instead, value their community and 'el corazón' (the heart), has been a central topic in Latin American

literary discourses since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where the modernist text *Ariel* takes a prominent place (Rodó 1900, Rodríguez Monegal 1980). The concept became influential in the formation of Latin American identity and the song *Una chica de plástica* makes intertextual references to the theme. A binary opposition of US Americans (*gringos*) as capitalist and Latin Americans as adhering to ‘true’ or decidedly left-wing values is still highly salient in contemporary Latin American political discourse today.

There are heated debates on the first use of the word *Salsa* and where Salsa originally stems from (see different opinions e.g. in Aparicio 1998, Pietrobruno 2006 and in the large number of Internet resources on the topic). Some say that Venezuela is the birthplace of Salsa as the term was spread after the release of the record *Llegó la Salsa* by Frederico y su combo latino in Caracas in 1964 (Waxer 2002a:219). Yet, despite these arguments, the vibrant music scene of New York, where diverse music and styles came together, and the special circumstances of the Puerto Rican diaspora in New York, are decisive elements in the creation of Salsa. Musicians of Venezuela and Colombia are very important in the development of this transnational music culture, too, and the countries belong to the space where Salsa originates (Waxer 2002a). Due to its transnational and intrinsically hybrid nature, it does, however, not really make sense to discuss the ‘real’ origin of Salsa. It is crucial to understand that it is in a transnational space that Salsa has been developed and still exists, irrespective of the geographical location where it is produced and performed. “Although the Puerto Rico–New York–Cuba nexus remains a central axis for the creation and commercial production of Salsa” (Waxer 2002b:6), Salsa presents a vital case of the “translocation” of culture, the emergence of a community from among different localities of production and reception (Santos Febres 1997, quoted in Waxer 2002b:5). This makes the analysis of discourses of Salsa and their relations of transnational, national and local scales a complex issue.

In global contexts, Salsa often symbolises (pan-Latin) ethnic identity (see below). Yet, in many Latin American contexts, it has class connotations and is considered to be of working class origin (Aparicio 1998; this is also reported in my interviews). This lower-class status is linked to the racial background of Salsa. The origins of Cuban music and dance are inherently related to African cultures that were brought to the Caribbean in the slave trade (Alén 1984). Rhythms of Cuban music and also many dance moves that are taught in Salsa classes today can be traced back to African traditions (Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1). As racism against African-derived cultures and people persists, the African elements of Salsa add to its lower status in many Latin American countries, where European derived music styles have a higher prestige. A lot of younger Latin Americans in Latin America prefer rock and pop music as Salsa links not only to the traditional culture of their parents but also to lower class status (of course, there are places where Salsa is part of the local youth culture, as for example, the Colombian city Calí). The symbolisation of Salsa as being tied to lower class culture brought about a politicisation of the music in the 1970s in Venezuela, where middle class intellectuals adopted

Salsa as a symbol of the authentic culture of the people and a means to promote a pan-Latin identity throughout America (Waxer 2002a:226). In Cuba, the communist government, in an attempt to overcome racist attitudes, officially celebrated African presence in Cuban culture (Daniel 2005:47) and although the attempts were not entirely successful (Pietrobruno 2006:34), this also advanced the politicisation of Salsa.

Today, the political background of Salsa and also Salsa's African roots are almost completely invisible in the commercialised varieties of Salsa music, which have become popular since the 1980s. This type of Salsa is also called *Salsa Romántica*.

The Salsa that has been popular since the late 1970s differs significantly from the music that reigned during the explosive years of the 1960s and 1970s. Concern with the working-class conditions of barrio life and the issue of Latin solidarity, related to Fania<sup>39</sup>-produced Salsa, has been replaced by sentimental love lyrics. Salsa has lost its political edge. (Pietrobruno 2006:56)

This loss of political connotations of Salsa has mainly to do with the commercialisation of the music and dance, where the 1980s in the US brought about a change of the socio-political context. The issues that had moved Latinos and Latinas in the 1970s were no longer as prevalent and were now associated with an older generation. So not only did the political contents of Salsa songs disappear during the 1980s, the whole Salsa movement waned during that time.

In the 1990s, a renewed success of Salsa is linked to the recognition that people of Latin descent had developed substantial buying powers on the US market. Before that, this part of the population had been considered as too poor to make an effort to target them with advertising (Farley 1999). The growing number and buying power of US Latinas and Latinos (Waxer 2002b:9) led to a rise of advertising in Spanish and thus the number of radio channels in Spanish grew – and with it the opportunity to produce and sell Latin-based music in Spanish. Despite its political history, the new context in which 1990s productions were embedded had moved away from Latin culture signifying barrio life; Salsa was now promoted as romantic but lively dance music for a mainly Latin audience.

As Frances Aparicio has noted, this creation of a more commercialised version of Salsa music meant not only a loss of political meaning but was also a move away from the very masculine discourses of more traditional Salsa, in which *machismo* models produced highly passive images of women (Aparicio 2002). Newer types of Salsa music, in contrast, open up cultural space for women musicians and all-women bands. Thus, the more commercialised versions of Salsa from the 1990s are less oppressive in terms of gender discrimination and traditionally gendered identity. Furthermore, newer Salsa in the US has developed into a hybrid genre and is often interwoven with reggaetón, hip hop, R'n'B, dance and house music and thus “allows young Latino/as to reaffirm their own national identities and

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<sup>39</sup> *Fania*, a New York City-based music label, was the most famed producer of Salsa music in the 1970s.

simultaneously to move across cultural, racial, musical, and linguistic boundaries” (Aparicio 2002:143). However, the commercialisation of Salsa at the same time led to an almost complete erasure of the visibility of Salsa’s African heritage.

Since the 1990s, Salsa has become famous among American white middle classes and this success influenced the distribution of Salsa to a worldwide audience (including Latin American contexts where Salsa formerly had signified a music for the poor and coloured). In many places all around the world, Salsa is now understood to be a Latin-derived music and dance that is performed predominantly in Spanish, whose audience is either Latin Americans, their descendants, or white people with an interest in Latin music. In Western countries, Salsa, in comparison to hip hop, rock or pop, has not completely melted into the mainstream music market. It is still linked to an ‘ethnic’ (Latin) background but has found a niche within Western white mainstream music culture. This is also true for Salsa Communities of Practice in Germany and Australia<sup>40</sup>. Within these communities, different degrees of awareness of the roots of Salsa can be found. This historical awareness is linked to particular constructions of language identity and language ideologies and will be analysed in the following chapters. Before going into ethnographic details of local Salsa communities, some more general aspects of contemporary Salsa will be introduced, which aim at explaining the enormous success of Salsa as a contemporary urban phenomenon and the role of ethnic identity and imagination in the constitution of today’s transnational Salsa contexts.

## **6.2. GLOBAL STYLES OF SALSA BETWEEN IMAGINATION AND PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE**

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Salsa has become a truly global phenomenon, “with audiences and practitioners ranging from Tokyo to Dakar” (Waxer 2002b:3). Salsa is not only distributed all over the world but adopted, adapted, appropriated and enjoyed by people of very diverse backgrounds in the respective local spaces where Salsa is performed. Yet, it has been pointed out before that in different local spaces the dance can convey different meanings and is linked to different ideologies and identities.

The interconnections between the local and the global have been discussed widely in research on globalisation (see also Ch. 4) and the different but historically related meanings of Salsa in different localities are an illustrative example of this connection. While some scholars have mainly emphasised that globalisation may lead to cultural homogenisation (see e.g. Phillipson 1992, Ritzer 1993), the concept of “glocalisation” (Robertson 1992) captures the fact that the global is contained within the local; the global and the local are not opposed to each other but are interrelated. The global can only come into being on a local level and the local is constituted within a global framework (see also above and Pennycook 2010:ch.5). The nature of this connection produces new and different types of heterogeneity, as can also be

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<sup>40</sup> Note that the communities I studied are based on Salsa *dancing* and not on Salsa music (production and/or reception). As has been mentioned, Communities of Practice based on Salsa music, and the accompanying discourses, are of a very different nature and do not necessarily relate to dance communities.

inferred from my study. Thus, while there are indeed strong tendencies to standardisation and homogenisation in relation to certain cultural elements, an increased level of heterogeneity can also be the result of globalisation. Furthermore, the example of the globalisation of Salsa shows that “[t]he new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center–periphery models” (Appadurai 1996:296). Salsa has spread throughout the world although it does not originate in the cultural and economic ‘centre’ of the world.

Non-members with national ‘lenses’ approaching local Salsa communities outside of Latin America often assume that these are spaces where people of Latin American descent reproduce their culture of origin. Yet, many Latin Americans become passionate about Salsa only when they are in exile. Often, a ‘Latin’ identity is only developed outside the country of origin, where the cultural background is overemphasised. Additionally, around the world, many Latin American migrants, and not only those of working class background, share similar experiences. Already in the 1970s, Salsa became symbolic of a transnational Latin diaspora (Waxer 2002b:4). ‘At home’, in many Latin American countries, divisions between different nations are strongly emphasised; a ‘Latin’ identity is usually not part of an everyday identity repertoire. However, in migrant contexts, the common history and language, related cultural features and the experiences of being approached as ‘Latin’ or ‘Latino’ and ‘Latina’<sup>41</sup> by others (irrespective of whether this implies racist attitudes or not) cause many Latin Americans to adopt a pan-Latin consciousness that did not exist before. Interest in Salsa is very often closely related to this development of a ‘Latin’ identity, where many would have listened to rock or pop music before their migration, which has also been confirmed in the Sydney and the Frankfurt case (for similar observations, see Aparicio and Jáquez 2003 for the US, Papadopulos 2003 for Germany, Pietrobruno 2006 for Canada, Román-Velázquez 2002 for the UK). It is common but nevertheless wrong to approach people of Latin American descent as necessarily legitimate and authentic Salsa dancers. Similar to what has been observed, for example, in Toronto (Pietrobruno 2006), it can be difficult to draw a line between ‘real’ Latino/as and ‘others’ in Salsa Communities of Practice in Sydney and Frankfurt. Often, ethnic difference is constructed on the basis of the heritage of parents or grandparents. On the other hand, ‘real’ Cuban dance teachers, for example, are mostly not actually trained as Salsa teachers but have been educated as ballet dancers in Cuba. As their expertise in European dance is not appreciated in Europe or Australia, however, they are more successful in selling what a racialised market expects from non-white people of

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<sup>41</sup> The terms *Latin* and *Latino/a* are used interchangeably in the remainder of this thesis. They refer to people of Latin American descent, irrespective of their national origin. It has to be noted that, in this understanding, the terms relate not only to pan-American discourses of Latin America but also to the history of the US, where Latin Americans of annexed regions and of migrant origin have a prominent place in political discourse. The usage of the terms in global contexts outside of Latin America is connected to that history. In different contexts, however, the terms can mean different things and they have to be approached with caution, as it is sometimes considered a pejorative term for lower-class US Americans with Latin American heritage. The term *Hispanic* is also used in US contexts but emphasises the Spanish rather than the indigenous heritage and is therefore considered less political than *Latino/a* (Pietrobruno 2006:108). It will not be used here.

Caribbean descent. Other 'Latin' teachers often learn Salsa wherever their migration history has brought them. However, it must not be forgotten that some people of Latin descent do dance Salsa as part of their ethnic heritage or have learned it in the country of origin as children.

Members of ethnic, pan-Latin communities who perform Salsa as part of their heritage create an imagined cultural nostalgia, which in many cases related to experiences of exclusion and racism in the respective 'host' countries (Pietrobruno 2006:80-81). As introduced above (4.1. on transnationalism), Arjun Appadurai maintains that the deterritorialisation of culture is in a proportional relationship to the significance of imagination and fantasy in everyday life (Appadurai 1998:18,19). Different and much more diverse imaginations are made possible through transnational media and give rise to a higher number and variety of imaginable life concepts. The possibility to imagine an 'other' life is also an explanative factor for the success of Salsa. In the case of 'ethnic' Latins who adopt or foster Salsa culture outside of Latin America as a symbol of 'Latin' culture, this is often an imagination of a past that never existed. Appadurai calls this "nostalgia without memory" and, according to him, this is "a product of global cultural flows" that occurs "especially in the area of entertainment and leisure" (Appadurai 1996:30). This form of self-exotisation compensates for the loss of a former identity but is also constructive in making economic profit from an 'other' heritage.

People of European descent<sup>42</sup>, who, among Latin Americans, are the subject of my study, usually relate to a different type of imaginative space. This is also a kind of nostalgia, although it does not create an imagined collective past<sup>43</sup>. For these "new audiences, Salsa is also a gateway to the cultural Other, a fascinating and often exotic world where new selves find liberation from cultural strictures" (Waxer 2002b:3). Non-Latin individuals become part of a 'Latin' cultural space through the activity of Salsa dancing, which is often described as a highly positive experience (see the following chapters). Imaginations of Latin culture are here usually connected to emotional warmth, sunshine, happiness and integrity.

Yet, against the background of my own empirical observations in Salsa contexts, I assume that it is not only the imaginative sphere of an 'exoticised other' that is responsible for the dance's popularity but also the very real, physical experience that is made through Salsa dancing. The success of Salsa is connected to the actual presence of bodies and face-to-face communication, which are vital aspects of Salsa events. Tangible human bodies, traditional gender roles (6.6.) and the relatively fixed rules of the dance steps, which are necessitated by the fact that the dance is practiced as a couple (see 6.3.), contrast with the performance of an 'other' identity in an imagined space of longing. It seems to be a paradox that imaginative

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<sup>42</sup> Salsa is also popular in non-Western contexts, as for example in Japan (Hosokawa 2002) or Senegal (Stewart 2000). As my research is limited to Western contexts, I will not be able to say how audiences in Africa or Asia construct Salsa as part of their life-world.

<sup>43</sup> There are, however, elements of the imagination of an idealised past also within 'white' Salsa contexts, but these do not relate to an 'ethnic' past but more to a traditional performance of gender roles. This will be discussed in chapter 6.6.



spheres and the corporeal, physical experience are actually both crucial factors in the success of Salsa with people of Western cultures. However, the attractiveness of the physical side of Salsa, the corporeal and face-to-face contact, fixed rules and roles, might be interpreted as a counter-culture to the virtual and fluid forms of relationships as they exist in contemporary social, virtual networks as for example in *Facebook* or *Myspace*, which have become so popular in recent years. It has been noted elsewhere (Pietrobruno 2006:19) that the “wish to return to a past imagined as more ordered might also underlie Salsa’s global appeal”. This form of cultural nostalgia will be discussed in the analysis of my empirical data and obviously also applies to the traditional nature of gender roles in Salsa (6.6.).

While the physical attraction of the dance is the part of all forms of Salsa, the types and degrees of imagination and nostalgia differ in local communities worldwide. They depend on the history of Salsa in the given locality and link to different styles of Salsa dancing that are related to different geographical origins. Many styles have official names and the most common ones are called *Ballroom*, *Cuban*, *Colombian*, *New York*, *Puerto Rican* and *Los Angeles (L.A.) Style* (Pietrobruno 2006:64). I will not introduce the characteristics of each style at this point, as not all of these styles are danced in the places where I have conducted research. The different styles have different histories and convey different ideologies of culture and also of language. The tensions between different styles can be quite strong and “[s]tyle [...] becomes intrinsically bound up with larger social values, beliefs, and practices” (Waxer 2002b:6). Dance styles, in this respect, share a lot with language styles, as they are both embedded in holistic concepts of life or *discourses* (see Ch. 2). While, for some styles, the issue of cultural authenticity is very central and passionately debated (especially Cuban, Colombian and Puerto Rican), for others, commercial success, cultural innovation and perfection are more important (Ballroom, New York and L.A. Style). Again, different styles have different histories, and the latter styles are more strongly influenced by European, competitive show dance culture (Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1).

The fact that not all styles are danced in each location is related to local histories, where particular individuals have been responsible for the distribution of Salsa. At the same time, it is also broader discourses that influence the success and possibilities for the distribution of different styles. Thus, it is also national discourses that are co-responsible for the existence of different Salsa styles in different locations. For example, migration policies of different countries lead to the presence of different cultural groups within one city. Furthermore, it can be assumed that national discourses that emphasise ethnic authenticity will influence an interest in ‘authentic’ Latin Salsa (e.g. Cuban or Colombian); discourses with a focus on competition might foster an interest in more competitive styles of Salsa (L.A., New York). These topics will be debated in the following chapters and at the same time remind that communities do not exist in a void but are the outcomes of relationships and of contact (see sections 4.2., 5.2. and Pratt 1987).

In the following section, I give a brief overview of Salsa as it is relocated in Sydney, Australia, and Frankfurt, Germany, to give an account of what Salsa dancing actually looks like and what it involves in the contexts that I have observed. The fact that the above-mentioned differences and oppositions reoccur in the respective CoPs and result in different language ideologies will be analysed in detail in the following chapters.

### **6.3. ETHNOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS TO SALSA IN SYDNEY AND FRANKFURT**

Both contexts, Sydney and Frankfurt, are examples of the worldwide re-localisations of Salsa. Yet, as already noted (5.2.), the divisions and communities that have been found in Sydney are an illustrative case of the appropriation and commodification of globalised forms of culture. Thus, I have a particular focus on the communities of Sydney and include three chapters on the Australian context (Chs 7, 8 and 9). Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the perspective from which I write is that of a German, usually living in Germany. Therefore, the insights I had into Salsa in Sydney are necessarily informed and also influenced by the Frankfurt perspective. I will introduce Frankfurt's Salsa scene more fully in Chapter 10.

First of all, I give an introduction to what the Salsa experience looks like for someone approaching the field for the first time. There are various issues that most Salsa venues in urban Western contexts seem to have in common. It is in this section that I start to introduce ethnographic data on the basis of observation and discursive data from interviews. Following that, I briefly introduce the Communities of Practice of Sydney (6.4.) that have been identified during research. The divisions of these CoPs are also found in Frankfurt, but, as Frankfurt is a lot smaller, they here have not caused the existence of separate communities. They still inform the Frankfurt case, as they are part of tensions and conflicting discourses within the Frankfurt CoP (see Ch.10). Afterwards (6.5.), I give an overview of the categories that have been developed on the basis of the methods of the grounded theory in order to present the respective discourses in a more systematic fashion. As it has turned out, gender is a crucial category in an understanding of Salsa as a global phenomenon. This does not differ too much in the respective communities so that it does not have to be discussed in each chapter. Therefore, one section (6.6.) of this chapter is devoted to gender in order to give adequate background knowledge of the cultural setting, which is vital for analysing language ideologies and their development in transnational contexts.

To give the Salsa newcomer an idea of Salsa in non-Latin American contexts, I will now introduce some general aspects of Western urban Salsa culture as I have experienced it in Sydney and Frankfurt. Most Salsa dancers in these contexts have learned Salsa in dance schools, at dance parties and some have acquired dancing techniques in Latin American countries, either because they have such a background or because they have travelled there (for a discussion of the distinction between 'real' Latino and Latinas and others, see 6.2.). Although many people make their first contact with Salsa at a Salsa party where friends have brought them along or where they ended up accidentally, most dancers on the dance floors at

Salsa parties have learned Salsa in a Salsa class. There is a high number of Salsa classes in a lot of Western cities and most of the other 'normal' dance schools also offer classes in Salsa. It is very difficult to give a precise number of Salsa classes for a single location, as it happens regularly that less successful schools close, that schools move or are located within another school or fuse with other schools. In Frankfurt, there are two schools devoted to Salsa only and about ten schools that also offer Salsa classes. In Sydney and the suburban area, it is virtually impossible to give an exact number of the schools. The city is very spread out and also quite segregated. Within inner city reach, there are at least ten Salsa schools (see also <http://www.sydneySalsa.com.au/> for regular updates), but there are many more in the suburban regions and not all of them have web pages and advertise only on the streets with posters and flyers.

Dance classes in dance schools differ in their approach, in the style they teach and also in the emphasis they give to either technique of steps or body movement. However, in its overall structure, a dance class in a Salsa school is not different from other dance classes. Sydney classes generally differ from Frankfurt classes in that in German schools people dance with one partner and do not change the partner during one class or course. If somebody comes to class without a partner, a German school organises somebody who already has attended other courses and who serves as partner and can attend the class for free. In Sydney, partners change many times in one session; basically, every few minutes there is a partner change and if there are more women or more men, some people will have to dance by themselves for short periods, until the next partner change takes place. Sometimes, people without a partner can also dance with a dance teacher. In both cities, there are usually two dance teachers in each class, a female and male teacher. Although most outsiders assume that there is a much higher number of women who are eager to learn Salsa, my observations can not confirm this and the number of women and men seems to be roughly equal.

Next to dance schools, there are, in Sydney and in Frankfurt, venues that offer Salsa 'nights', Salsa parties. Most Salsa nights begin with an introductory class that is offered before the actual party starts. These courses are usually beginners' courses that allow beginners to participate in the dance party later on. Some of these 'drop in' classes are also intermediate classes and are more similar to dance classes of dance schools and have regular attendees. In the cities of Sydney and Frankfurt, there are no party venues that are only devoted to Salsa. Mostly, it is 'normal' clubs with a Salsa night; there are, however, Latin bars or clubs that play a lot of Salsa but also other Latin music. Altogether, one can say that people living in an industrialised country in a major city who have an interest in Salsa dancing will easily locate either a party venue or a Salsa school if they want to learn and experience Salsa.

Bars at Salsa parties sell drinks associated with Latin culture, such as Mojito, Cuba Libre, Corona or also Caipirinha (which is Brazilian but nevertheless perceived as 'Latin' by many Salsa dancers), but also other drinks that are common in the respective localities. Especially in Sydney, it is, however, very rare to see people who are intoxicated at Salsa parties and

many do not drink alcohol at all but drink only water. It has to be noted that dancing the whole night is quite exhausting and in some contexts is more like a sports activity, which is one reason for the relatively low appeal of alcohol. A lot of Salsa parties in the context of Sydney are therefore sober events that attract people who have a healthy and active, sports-related lifestyle (which is a frequent lifestyle in the central part of the city). Nevertheless, despite the tendency of Salsa events being sober and ‘clean’, it is especially female dancers who perform a rather sexualised identity, which is expressed particularly in terms of their clothes and movements (see also 6.6.).

Non-professional Salsa dancers I have spoken to do not know about the history of Salsa dancing and many are not aware that there are different styles of Salsa and may not be aware what the style is called they themselves dance. Some dance schools offer classes in different styles so that their dance pupils will know that there are differences in style. Dance partners who dance different styles are usually still able to dance with each other, as many turns and steps are similar or the same, but if the partner dances a different style, more advanced dancers will notice immediately, even if unaware where the differences arise from. This leads to comments like:

“It’s more, it’s more (slow) (1) like the wrong Salsa.”<sup>44</sup> (N<sup>45</sup> 8).

This quote by a Colombian salsera indicates that she noticed a difference in style but she is not actually conscious that the styles in Sydney are different to those practiced in her home country. Although she is able to dance with people who dance a different style, she is neither aware of the different styles, nor does she enjoy dancing with somebody who dances a different style. These differences and the evaluative stance that dancers take towards other styles play a role in the constitution of the different communities and will be discussed in more detail later on. Often, however, dancers of different styles do not actually mix.

Irrespective of the style differences, what all Salsa parties have in common is the obvious fact that there is a dance floor. The dance is the main activity and the main reason for most people to attend. Most of the time, Salsa is danced as a heterosexual couple dance, where a man and a woman dance together. Sometimes, one can see two women dancing with each other, where one woman performs the steps of the man. Sometimes, groups of women perform a group dance together; predominantly, these are Latin American women. In some venues, one can also see people dancing a *Rueda*, which is a group of couples, dancing in a circle, with one person calling which steps to dance. Non-couple dance, however, is an exception; the usual pattern is that a man and a woman dance together. The man has to lead, which means that the man decides which steps and which turns are danced. This is mostly

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<sup>44</sup> See appendix for transcription conventions. In general, I do not correct grammatical errors of interviewees — most stem from interferences with the respective native language.

<sup>45</sup> In introducing interview quotes, I use capitals as abbreviations for names in order to anonymise the identity of interviewees. The numbers following the capital letters indicate the paragraph of the transcribed interview.

indicated by hand and arm moves and the woman has to follow the man's lead. The steps and turns are pre-given and usually have been learned in classes so that both man and woman know how to do the moves. It is possible for a woman to dance steps and turns that she has not learnt in a school or elsewhere if the man is a good dancer and knows how to lead her and if she is able to keep within the rhythm. In certain respects, the dance is thus easier for a woman as she does not have to plan and take decisions and, also, she does not necessarily have to know all steps consciously in order to be able to dance them.

Many heterosexual couples attend Salsa parties together; yet, there are also groups of friends and some dancers come by themselves. There are usually a lot of people standing on the side of the dance floor, watching the dancing activity of the other dancers. Standing next to the dance floor also indicates interest in dancing. Usually, men approach the women who stand next to the dance floor and then ask if they want to dance. It can also happen that a woman asks a man but this is very rare and usually only happens if a woman is an advanced dancer and wants to dance with another highly skilful dancer. To ask for a dance does not necessarily imply that the man is sexually interested in the woman. It happens often that two people dance, hardly speak with each other, and then, after the song is over, do not get into contact again. Many times, however, they do have a chat while dancing, but still, this does not essentially indicate that there is sexual interest involved. Therefore, it is very easy to meet people in Salsa venues and, also, to get to know people of the opposite gender without having the pressure to approach someone *only* in order to say that one is interested (erotically) in the person. On the other hand, those who are approached by others, usually women, do not have a social obligation to respond or speaking to those who are interested in them. They can deny a dance or they can go away after having danced.

The whole structure of the events thus makes it first of all very easy to meet people and, of course, also to meet people of the opposite gender. In contrast to other venues, it is completely normal and part of the procedure that men approach women and that they dance together. At my first visit to a Salsa event, I was struck by the frequent interaction between people who did not know each other beforehand and, also, by the inclusiveness. People of different age groups and different ethnic and cultural backgrounds participate in most of the events. Many people go to Salsa parties because they want to dance, while some go there because they want to dance *and* want to get to know either a woman or a man. It is, in any case, a lot easier than in many other social contexts to approach and get to know people in Salsa contexts. Due to the nature of the events, I was not able to inform all attendees of the events I observed about my aims as a researcher. As there are many people in a Salsa venue and as it is very loud, I only told people who shared a dance with me about my background and interest.

Basically, one can say that Salsa events are characterised by a certain degree of simplicity. This is simplicity in terms of getting to know people and also simplicity in terms of knowing what to do – standing next to the dance floor, men ask women to dance, they dance and can

either have a drink afterwards or dance again or leave each other. Salsa dance events are thus highly structured cultural events, as the behaviour is mostly pre-defined. This simplicity is without doubt one of the reasons for Salsa's global appeal. The success of Salsa might also be related to work culture in late modernity, where a large number of people have to leave their home community to work in a place where they have the need to meet and get to know other people.

The music and the songs that are listened to in Salsa contexts are predominantly in Spanish<sup>46</sup>. The songs mostly stem from the transnational Latin space that has been introduced above. Many of the parties are advertised as *fiestas* (Spanish for 'party') or party flyers and posters include sentences like *una noche de Salsa* ('a night of Salsa'). As it turned out from my research, however, the number of Spanish-speakers and the role of the Spanish language can differ highly in different communities, which are associated with different *scales*, places, dance schools and different dance styles.

#### **6.4. THE SALSA COMMUNITIES OF SYDNEY**

As has been elaborated above, the case of Sydney is particularly illuminating as an example for transnational discourses and *scales* and their effects on local spheres; it is therefore introduced in more detail than the Frankfurt case.

The communities that have been detected in Sydney each represent a category in a *grounded theory* understanding (see 5.4.1.). In order to get a preliminary understanding of the context, I will briefly introduce these three communities. What can be said, from observations in 2007, is that the different spheres of Salsa in Sydney are quite segregated: one is based on *L.A. Style Salsa*, one on *Cuban Salsa* and one is not actually a Community of Practice based on Salsa but is ethnic Colombians who mostly dance *Colombian Style Salsa*. Each community has different values and lifestyles and the two CoPs will be introduced in more detail in the respective chapters. The communities represent categories in the sense of grounded theory, but, simultaneously, they are social communities. In the following, I will call them 'communities', 'Communities of Practice' or 'CoPs'.

It has become clear that places where Salsa is danced produce cultural spaces or "scapes" (Appadurai 1998) that cross national frameworks of conceptualising the world. On the global level, Salsa represents an "imagined community" (Anderson 1985), which comes into being in particular local Communities of Practice. The global (and obviously diverse) Salsa community crosses national spaces. Next to global and local discourses, the respective national imagined communities, in which the CoPs are located, can have a strong influence on the constitution of the communities, their values and language ideologies. A visual image of the 'location' of a particular Salsa CoP in Sydney thus looks as follows:

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<sup>46</sup> I have never heard any other language but Spanish during my field visits but people reported to me that there are songs that are not in Spanish. Some Spanish (language) songs, however, have English words in them. (For analyses of Salsa lyrics, see e.g. Aparicio 1998, Hosokawa 2002.)

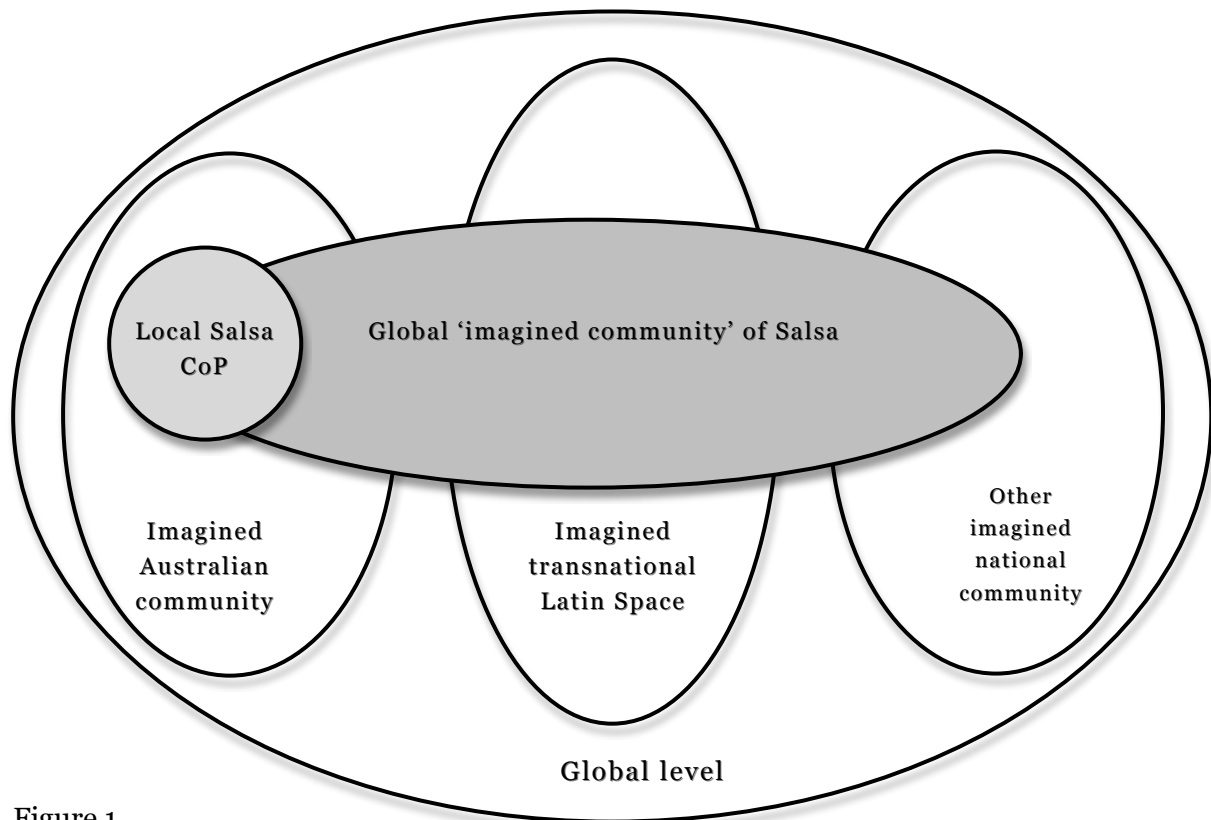


Figure 1

The first of these globally-embedded communities that I have detected during research in Sydney is based on L.A. Style Salsa. L.A. Style is the most popular style of Salsa in Sydney. It is predominantly danced in the Central Business District of the city and is here considered the ‘normal’ style of Salsa dancing. Note that this is very different in other places. In Frankfurt, for example, no classes for L.A. Style Salsa exist. L.A. Style Salsa, as the name suggests, has been developed in the US. L.A. Style is strongly influenced by European ballroom dance and has elaborate complicated moves and turns and is comparatively technical (Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1). In L.A. Style contexts, there are worldwide competitions and congresses. Each year, a ‘world champion’ is announced. Thus, it is a competitive style of dancing, with a strong focus on showy elements. The community that is active in L.A. Style dancing is big in Sydney and also diverse. The particular Community of Practice that I will introduce in Chapter 7 is related to one dance school, which is located in an inner city suburb and organises dance classes and dance events in the Central Business District of Sydney. There are also other dancers of L.A. Style in Sydney who do not belong to the community that will be introduced and, of course, the ideologies and discourses that I introduce from this community are not representative for L.A. Style in other places in the world.

Secondly, there is Cuban Style Salsa. Cuban Style Salsa is less prominent and quite hard to detect in Sydney. As the name implies, the dance is common in Cuba, where it is also called *casino*. The steps of this dance are also rather elaborate and there are also obvious influences

from European ballroom traditions. Yet, the dance is freer, has more circular movements and allows for more variation than does L.A. Style. Dance teachers are eager to explain that each person has their own way of dancing and that the important point is to ‘dance with the music’ and ‘feel the music’, rather than to only reproduce pre-given steps and techniques. Nevertheless, the movements can be complicated and especially the woman has to engage in very quick and intricate arm- and footwork. Although there are shows of Cuban Style, it is mostly danced at parties and the aim of learning Cuban Style is rather to enjoy dancing than to become a show dancer. The Community of Practice that I describe below is related to one dance school that teaches Cuban Style in Sydney. As Cuban Style Salsa in Sydney is less popular than L.A. Style Salsa in Sydney, there are only two places where it can be learned, although there are some places where Cuban Style Salsa is danced and in some venues it also mixes with dancers of Colombian Style.

Dancers of Colombian Style Salsa do not represent a Community of Practice in the actual sense. As has been discussed in section 5.2., a Community of Practice is constituted by a particular practice in which members of the community engage. What unites the third division that I have detected in the Sydney context, however, is not that they all engage in a particular style of Salsa dancing (although my interviewees all do) but they are defined and define themselves by their ethnic membership. The third community is thus not a Community of Practice but is a fraction of an ethnic (pan-Latin) community, which considers Salsa to be part of their ethnic heritage (see 6.2. for a discussion of the constitution of such communities in diasporic contexts). Nevertheless, for the sake of simplicity, I will call this community also ‘community’ in the following. The reader has to bear in mind that this community is qualitatively different from the other two. The style of dancing that is danced in this community is mostly Colombian Style Salsa<sup>47</sup>. The general notion of Colombian Style relates to a dance practice that is characterised by its relative simplicity (Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1). There are only a few different turns and the dancers’ bodies touch each other more or less from top to toe. The movements can be very fast and the couple also turns around each other but the steps and turns are relatively simple. There are no congresses or shows of this style in Sydney. In contrast to L.A. Style, Colombian Style Salsa is not a show dance but a more a folkloristic cultural practice that is based in the everyday culture of Colombia and the adjoining countries. Colombian Style Salsa was not taught in dance schools in Sydney in 2007 (one dance school, however, started a class in 2010).

According to my interviewees, Colombian Style Salsa used to be practiced in the centre of the city of Sydney and was part of the dance repertoire of the clubs that now are dominated by L.A. Style Salsa. Three interviewees mentioned that this has to do with the fact that some migration hostels – places where migrants could live and received support for their new life

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<sup>47</sup> There are, in Colombia, different styles of dancing and one is particularly connected to the city of Cali (see e.g. [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) for an impression of this style). This style of Cali, however, is not what is usually danced in Australia and what is generally referred to as *Colombian Style*.



in Australia during their first months in the country (see also Ch. 9) – were located in central parts of the city during the 1980s so that young Latin American migrants (also after their stay in the hostels) would spend their night in local bars or nightclubs in the centre of the city. Nowadays, Latin American ethnicity is mainly associated with the suburb of Fairfield, which is located a 50 minute train ride from the centre. The main Salsa dance ‘hub’ in Fairfield is, however, not a Latin American Salsa bar but is located in the rooms of an Italian football club (Marconi’s, see [www.clubmarconi.com.au/](http://www.clubmarconi.com.au/)). The Salsa nights here attract Latin Americans from all nationalities. Dancers from my sample who belong to this cohort maintain that the popularity of Salsa is a “good thing” (D 54) and that they are happy that their culture is so well-received. The reason for the popularity is seen as based in the fact that the Latin culture is so “bouncy” (L 23). There is no general interest in the Salsa dancing activities of the majority society but also no reluctance of the commercialisation of the dance (which is interesting, given the neglect of ethnic Latin Americans in the dominant L.A. Style CoP; see Ch. 7) . Except for the presence of the different Salsa-dancing communities at the Latin Fiesta, a government-initiated cultural event that takes place once a year in the centre of the city (see Ch. 9), there are no contacts between the Salsa dancers of the ethnic Colombian community and the other Salsa CoPs, which is partly due to the spatial distance between the localities where the different types of Salsa are danced.

The existence of a Latin American community in Sydney is closely related to Australian migration policy, which fostered migration from certain countries at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s in order to enlarge the work force of the country (see also Ch. 9). Although the construction of a pan-Latin identity exists, interviewees report that there are strong oppositions between Latin Americans of different nationalities. Each nationality has its own community club (see e.g. [www.latinos.com.au](http://www.latinos.com.au)) and there are several Spanish newspapers, which attract different communities. The communities themselves seemed to be more popular during the 1980s, the time when the first generation of migrants entered the country. According to interviewee’s reports, the ethnic community culture appeals less to the second generation, who mix with other ethnicities. Nevertheless, the communities’ celebrations, especially the celebrations of national holidays of the respective communities, are still very popular. The activity of Salsa dancing is mostly important for members of the Colombian community, while the Spanish language is seen as part of the ethnic heritage of all Spanish-speaking communities. Yet, interviewees mention that it is difficult for the second and third generation to maintain the language, due to ethnic mixing and because the maintenance of ethnic heritage is no longer as celebrated as it was during the 1980s.

Generally, the Salsa communities of Sydney are relatively segregated. Dancers of L.A. Style Salsa go to their own places, and the same is true for the other two communities. Yet, dancers of Cuban Style do mix with dancers of Colombian Style in certain party venues, albeit usually not in dance schools. There are also places where only Colombian Style is danced (especially Marconi’s) but some dancers of Colombian Style go to certain inner city venues and mix with

other dancers (mainly of Cuban Style). The degree of mixing of different dance styles indexes different values and ideologies within this cultural formation. This has not only to do with the histories of the styles but is strongly influenced by the Australian context. So, next to issues like segregation, mixing, ideologies about competitive culture and the construction of authenticity, the study introduced here also demonstrates the importance of national discourses in transnational settings. The different topics and issues that play a role in the constitution of the communities and in their language ideologies – the categories that have manifested themselves during the research process – are introduced in the following.

## **6.5. CATEGORIES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF LOCAL SALSA COMMUNITIES**

As has been discussed in section 5.4.1., the method of developing categories in order to gain a more abstract perspective on empirical data derives from the sociological tradition of grounded theory. The ultimate aim is to grasp and map relationships between different phenomena and thus to be able to gain theoretical insights into data that was gained from observation, participation and interviewing. In the following, I will introduce the categories that have come up during my research briefly.

In each of the communities, the categories figure differently. The categories have been developed through a systematic analysis of interviews and field notes. Passages with similar or related content have been put into one category. Each category has been subdivided into further concepts and each concept consists of the respective *codes*, which are the titles given to single interview passages or field note passages. I will not introduce concepts and codes systematically at this point, as those that are relevant for the argument will be introduced and discussed in detail in the following chapters. However, in order to gain an overview and understanding of the research design, I introduce the categories that have been developed during my research and analysis. The categories do not necessarily have to do with language at first sight; yet, the strength of the ethnographical approach is the embedding of language and language ideology in a more holistic perspective on culture. This deepens the comprehension that language cannot be divided from other cultural spheres and that an understanding of (L)language and what it means for the people who use it (and who are responsible for its change and variation) has to incorporate an analysis of the cultural and discursive context. The categories that have turned out to be relevant for the description and analysis of language ideologies in Salsa Communities of Practice are of very different types and have been named: *Reasons for the Global Success of Salsa*, *Gender*, *Commercialism*, *Cosmopolitanism*, *Ideologies of Authenticity*, *The Spanish Language*, *Ideologies of Language Learning* and *National Language Discourse*. It has to be mentioned that these categories are not analytical categories that describe different language ideologies but are descriptive categories that broadly summarise what was spoken about in interviews and field notes. The categories systematise the data and make it more accessible but are not to be understood as analytical outcomes of the research. Although the categories were only the first

step in the analysis of discursive data, and do not necessarily all play a role in each chapter or in the final analysis, I nevertheless introduce them here to make the research design transparent and the discussions in the following chapters (Chs 7–10) more accessible. Analytical outcomes will be introduced in these chapters, where the different categories and their relevance in each community will guide the discussion of the difference in discourse and language ideology of the communities. A final, analytical discussion of the results is found in Chapter 11.

a) *Reasons for the Global Success of Salsa*

As has been introduced in Chapter 5, ethnographic and expert interviews included a section on the development of Salsa as a global phenomenon and the reasons for this success. The different reasons that were given display the attitudes of the interviewees towards the practice of Salsa dancing and their perception of Salsa culture. The category forms a starting point for the researcher and the reader alike to understand why a dance practice from a transnational Caribbean space has become globally popular. As the estimation of the global success of Salsa is different in the different communities, this category will be discussed separately in the respective chapters that introduce each of the communities.

b) *Gender*

In discussing the global success of Salsa, gender constructions play a crucial role. An insight into the performance and imagination of particular and very traditional concepts of heterosexual gender identities is vital for understanding the structure and popularity of Salsa events. These gender constructions do not necessarily differ in each community and will therefore be discussed in a separate section (see 6.6.)

c) *Commercialism*

During the research process, it turned out that commercialisation is vital in understanding the development of Salsa as a global cultural practice. Without the commercialisation of Salsa music and dance, it would never have left the places where it is danced as part of everyday culture, or one may even say that it would have never become part of Latin American culture itself. The commercialist spread of Salsa is an important topic in the analysis of the success of Salsa worldwide but also in an understanding of the values and ideologies that are found in the communities. Yet, there are very diverse attitudes towards commercialisation and cultures of competition in the different communities and the commercialisation of Salsa is, interestingly, furthermore related to the refusal of Latin American culture, language and ethnicity in one of the communities.

d) *Cosmopolitanism*

*Cosmopolitanism* refers to a concept that has been mainly discussed in cultural anthropology (see 4.1.), political discourse and philosophy. The cultural anthropological view, which is focused on in this thesis, also emphasises an engagement with cultural

diversity. Yet, the category of *cosmopolitanism* as found in my data embraces two different types of cosmopolitanism, which are, thus, two different concepts within this category. The first type is characterised by the engagement with cultural diversity, while the second type of cosmopolitanism could also be described as ‘cultural universalism’. It does not necessarily include the idea that different cultures interact and different values are negotiated but is simply the fact that people from different countries participate, while the values and lifestyles are described as universal and ‘the same’. The two different concepts of cosmopolitanism each relate to one of the two inner city communities (L.A. Style and Cuban Style), while the concept does not play an important role in Colombian Style Salsa.

#### d) *Ideologies of Authenticity*

In times of cultural globalisation, a definition of *authenticity* is a bold venture. If something is considered ‘authentic’, it means that it is taken as genuine or original. Applying a deconstructivist perspective, however, it has to be assumed that nothing is genuinely authentic, as anything in a culture is, at least partly, discursively constructed (see also Chapter 2). It should be clear that the term *authenticity* in this thesis is always used in a constructivist understanding, which means that the author assumes that there is no ‘truly’ authentic culture and is highly critical of cultural essentialisms. This does not, of course, imply that the term and its content is irrelevant in empirical research. Constructions of authenticity are vital in constructions of value and even if the notion is eschewed on theoretical grounds, it has to be admitted that discourses of, for example, historical originality or cultural genuineness are vital and play an important role in boundary constructions on various levels. Ideas of ‘authentic’ culture, ‘authentic’ language use and ‘authentic’ ethnic belonging structure many of our everyday values and are important for an understanding of the creation of divisions and of language ideology in globalised Salsa culture.

#### e) *The Spanish Language*

The role of Spanish in transnational Salsa communities is one focal point of this research project. The observation of Salsa contexts has shown that Spanish is omnipresent in Salsa schools and venues. Yet, the role of Spanish in identity construction, boundary marking and the construction of authenticity can be very different in different communities. Thus, the category *The Spanish language* is subdivided according to the three communities that were detected in Sydney, as each community has a different language ideology regarding the role of Spanish. These different ideologies are closely linked to the categories of *Commercialism*, *Authenticity* and *Cosmopolitanism*.

#### f) *Ideologies of Language Learning*

As the interviews were partly concerned with the issue of language and language learning, some interviewees uttered certain claims regarding the reasons of success or failure of language learning. These ideologies of language learning form a category in itself,

although they will figure only marginally in the discussion of language ideologies in Salsa communities. Some of these ideologies of language learning relate to the category of *National Language Discourse*, as the low numbers of proficient second language speakers in Australia and opinions regarding the language competence of migrants in Australia and in Germany was an issue in this category.

*g) National Language Discourse*

Language ideologies that relate to the national level play a far bigger role in the interviews than had been anticipated. In observing Salsa contexts in Sydney, it was first of all the comparative perspective due to the German background of the researcher that highlighted the low number of Spanish speakers, particularly in one of the communities. This observation and also the questions in interviews that asked for the role of Latin Americans and of the Spanish language resulted in a very high number of interview passages that relate to language discourse and language ideologies, as they exist on the national level. In relation to Australia, the category is subdivided into different topics – language ideologies in the mainstream culture of Australia, language learning of migrants, multilingualism in Australia – and also encompasses different types of ideologies, as, for example, strong monolingual ideologies and certain forms of multilingual ideology. Interestingly, the different communities of Sydney do not display different conceptions of discourse on language in Australia but report on or show similar ideologies with regard to the national level. The same can be said for the German context, where language ideology on the local level strongly mirrors national language discourse. The issue of national language discourse is vital for a theoretical discussion of the role of transnational language ideology as found in local Salsa contexts, as it relates these local ideologies to a wider perspective. A discussion of the interaction between different *sociolinguistic scales* (see 4.3.) is particularly important in this context. The findings are also relevant to questions of language policy discourse, to which the thesis is linked. The category will therefore build the foundation of a separate chapter for the Australian case and will be vital in the German example.

The category of *Gender* is not directly related to the ideologies of language that I envisage to analyse in the respective chapters that are to follow. Although some studies show a clear correlation between gender and language learning or language maintenance (see e.g. Pauwels 1997, Piller and Takahashi 2010), this study could not detect such a systematic relationship. It was rather other issues that caused differences in language ideologies and motivation; for example, language learning or maintenance. The category of *Gender* is nevertheless crucial for understanding Salsa events in the contexts that I have observed. The following section introduces these gender constructions and performances and analyses how they relate to the success of Salsa. These constructions are not necessarily different in the different countries or communities but, for understanding Salsa as an outsider, it is important to get a grasp of gender constructions in this cultural context. Furthermore, it is enlightening to observe that

gender seems to play a decisive role in the constitution and development of Salsa Communities of Practice in the first place, as the attraction of performing traditional gender identities seems to be partly responsible for the popularity of the transnational communities.

#### **6.6. 'IN SALSA, IT'S OKAY TO BE A WOMAN'. GENDER ROLES AND THE GLOBAL SUCCESS OF SALSA**

Gender is a key aspect in the global success of Salsa. The body of literature on gender and on gender and language is manifold and diverse and will not be introduced at this point (for discussions on language and gender, see Hellinger 2001–2003, Motschenbacher 2006; for a discussion of gender, language, transnationalism and issues of power and inequality, see Piller and Takahashi 2010). As has been introduced in section 2.3., perceiving somebody as male or female is structured to a large extent by the discourses that suggest how somebody with a certain gender should look like, act or speak. According to discursive approaches to gender, the existence of two, bipolar, mutually exclusive, or heterosexual genders is the outcome of historical discourses (Butler 1990). Although biological differences may exist between people of different genders, our own discursive, social and historical embeddedness makes it, according to a discursive approach, impossible to differentiate between what is pre-given biologically and what is constituted through social discourse. Yet, gender constructions are not culturally universal:

gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained. (Butler 1990:3)

The intersection of gender and ethnicity is important in an analysis of gender identity in Salsa environments. It is a particular gender identity that is performed and displayed in Salsa contexts, which relates to gender as it is constructed on the Latin American continent. However, gender identities in Salsa contexts in Sydney or Frankfurt are rather a construction of Latin American gender identity that is created in the interaction between Latin and non-Latin people in the particular locations, influenced by global imaginations and local discourses about the nature of gender in Latin America. This construction has effects on 'Western' dancers and their gender performance, while Latin Americans either reproduce gender constructions of Latin American discourses or also partly appropriate Western images for their own desires and needs. Thus, Salsa dance in Frankfurt or Sydney shows less body contact; Latin American men do not hold the woman as close as, for example, in Caracas, as this would most likely disturb Western standards. On the other hand, gestures, language, clothing or the use of romantic discourse typically associated with the 'Latin lover' can be used purposefully in Western contexts in order to attract the opposite gender, while it has to

be assumed that productions of masculinity and femininity function differently in 'native' contexts.

As has been noted above, the roles of men and women are very clearly delineated in Salsa: the male dancer leads and the female follows (see also Pietrobruno 2006:19). Thus, "Salsa unabashedly embodies gender hierarchies that characterize the traditional roles of men and women in pre-feminist times" (ibid.). The experience of these gender hierarchies can be disturbing for Salsa newcomers, as these hierarchies might conflict with their usual identity. As the identity of the researcher has to be considered in an ethnographic research project (see 5.3.1.), a reflection of my own identity is unavoidable in order to display the perspective from which these gender constructions have been observed in this study. My 'normal' everyday identity is that of a female, white German. The ideals of feminism and emancipation are highly influential in my professional identity and also crucial for my personal identity. This implies that I consider submissive female identities as a consequence of social structures of inequality. Therefore, the traditional gender identities that I have observed and experienced during my field visits to Salsa venues contrast strongly with my identity construction and perception as that of an emancipated women.

My first visit to a Salsa party in Germany thus was a conflictive experience. I was told by my first dance partner that

"You know, in Salsa, you have to leave emancipation at home." (C 1)<sup>48</sup>

Not only did I learn that the male dancer leads, I also could observe and experience that women usually wait until they are chosen by a man who wants to dance with them. Next to that, the clothing of many participants of Salsa parties strongly emphasises the different roles of women and men. Men usually wear their normal clothes, whereas some women dress up displaying a particular female 'sexy' identity, meaning that they wear very short skirts, shoes with high heels and tight shirts, some wear only bikini tops. It is by no means all women who dress like this, although the number of women who wear a dress that emphasises this particular version of femininity is very high. So there is, on the one hand, a display of heterosexual lifestyles with women and men dancing together; on the other hand, a performance of male dominance can be observed in the patterns of dance and in choosing a partner, where the female dancer is attributed a very passive role<sup>49</sup>. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on displaying sexual attractiveness of the female dancer. This sexual attractiveness is not only indexed by the clothing but also by the moves of the dance. Dance steps of women very often imply a focus on a swinging movement of the hips; some turns consist of the man presenting the woman like an object to potential spectators of the dance. Certain arm moves of the female dancer are associated with a very sexualised construction of

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<sup>48</sup> "Also, beim Salsa musst du die Emanzipation zu Hause lassen."

<sup>49</sup> It has to be noted that this female passive role in the dance is not a unique characteristic of Salsa but found in most Western and Latin American couple dances.

female identity, such as sweeping the hair seductively from behind the neck towards the front of the face. Some turns end with the woman stroking the chest of the man with both hands from the top to the bellybutton area. Later on, I learned that there are special courses for women where they learn how to move like a 'real' Latina, including the arm and hip movement (these courses are called 'Ladies' Styling' and are particularly prominent in German Salsa schools).

It was particularly the performances of this type of movement with which I felt uncomfortable and also, indeed, ridiculous. Furthermore, I felt the performance of masculinity in Salsa classes to be discriminatory and I had problems to subordinate my movements to the movements of a male dancer, whose position was described as superior by the dance teachers. For some of my dance partners, this had an effect on their behaviour, demanding leadership and interpreting wrong moves generally as being caused by the female dancer, irrespective of their own dance abilities. Salsa dancing, in this respect, was for me an experience of giving in to the demands of the dance structure, although it meant submission and handing over power over my own body to someone else. Furthermore, I disliked the gaze on my own moving body being interpreted as an open display of female sexuality. Thus, in the beginning, I had difficulties in finding pleasure in the activity of Salsa dancing as the female identity performed there conflicted strongly with my personal identity. Yet, people in Salsa venues obviously enjoy this type of identity performance and, of course, there are varying degrees of the display of this very sexualised female identity. In many dance classes, the performance of exaggerated male and female identities is actually encouraged. Thus, I learned in a Sydney L.A. Style class:

“Ladies! The man is the centre of your universe! You always follow him with your eyes and you turn around him!” (V 3)

Thus, the construction of two highly differentiated gender images is actually part of the marketing strategy of Salsa schools and I heard many similar statements in different Salsa classes. Owners of dance schools and dance teachers are aware that participants in dance classes enjoy the performance of these particularly gendered identities. This gender dichotomy is a local construction that is related to stereotypes Western people have of Latin American gender structures; yet, it is also an effect of the structure of the dance.

It took me very long to understand what it is that attracts especially women in learning to perform a sexualised, passive and submissive identity. This increasing understanding had, first of all, to do with understanding more about the dance structure. It is obvious that it is not actually possible that both people of a couple decide which steps and turns to dance. One person has to decide, otherwise, dancing as a couple is technically impossible and it is traditionally the man who is the leader of the dance, although highly qualified dancers actually report that they sometimes switch in the middle of a song to have a change.



Additionally, as explained above (6.3.), the whole couple arrangement makes Salsa events a highly structured social activity and people not only go there because they like to perform male and female identities but also because it facilitates meeting people due to the fact that the dance is usually performed as a couple; furthermore there are rules given of how to approach people. As the whole gender framework in Salsa was a very emotional, initially rather negative experience for me, and as it seemed to me to be a crucial aspect of Salsa culture, I also started to talk about the issue with my interviewees. Some of my interviewees actually disagreed with the theory that the success of Salsa is related to the appeal to traditional gender identity and argued that this has only to do with the ease with which people can meet each other in Salsa venues. Yet, it has to be noted that many interview quotes relating to this argument are revealing in terms of an even stronger reification of gender identity:

“I think it’s, it sounds to me,  
the attraction of (1) meeting people in general. (2) uhm.  
A man approaches a woman.  
The woman responds.  
They dance together.  
They are very happy.  
And after that something may happen, may not happen. (1)  
It’s not different from any other social interaction.” (B 39)

“Meeting people” is here conceptualised as “a man approaches a woman and the woman responds”. Again, there is a strong hierarchy involved here, with the idea that “meeting people” means that men become active whereas women wait to be approached and that this is “not different from any other social interaction”. This interviewee thus not only perceives gender roles that conceive of the woman as passive to be something that is created in Salsa, but projects this image also to an everyday context.

However, most interviewees agreed with the idea that gender roles in Salsa are a vital aspect of the success in Salsa. Interestingly, there is often a need to legitimise these traditional gender roles, but most interviewees differentiate between gender roles in Salsa and in everyday life:

“Personally, I think it’s re-centering masculinity and femininity,  
(2) and, and, (1) guys lead totally, but, uhm, (1)  
it’s not (.) politically correct,  
it’s very (0.5) uhm (2) very (.) sort of (.)  
it’s actually, guys lead and in a very masculine, maybe old-fashioned kind of way,  
anyway, the girls have a release to be, to be more feminine,  
and it’s encouraged to actually be more masculine and to be more feminine.  
And I think that’s appropriate because I think that in our day-to-day life, in a cultural  
way, it’s not that (.) at all.  
I think it’s good in a way that we all lead now. I think that’s fine in the workplace.  
But when it comes to Salsa, I think it is encouraged so ladies can let their hair down  
and and and (.)

can actually go back being young girls again and guys can be guys.  
It's like a little fantasy." (K 10-11)

This interviewee here first makes a statement ("it is re-centering") but then hesitates, as can be inferred from the high number of pauses in his utterance. He is aware that it is not "politically correct" to talk about naturalised gender identity but once he has made clear that he knows that, he explains how much people like to perform dichotomous gender identity in Salsa. It is interesting that, in the end of the quote, it is maintained that "girls" (a typical trivialisation of women in Salsa contexts, next to the frequent term "ladies") "can actually go back". It is not completely clear in this quote whether this "going back" in time relates to the life span of the respective women or whether he means that women can go back in time and perform an identity that is associated with the past. The latter interpretation seems appropriate and, actually, the performance of an identity that is related to an earlier period in history is frequent in the interviews. Again, it is not only men who describe the adoption of these traditional roles of a bygone past as a very positive experience:

"You really find that place inside of yourself – as a woman! (.)  
And even guys, you know, they think 'I'm leading'. (1)  
And they are getting really confident as a man  
and I think that's extremely important because the traditional role you could play, (1)  
you know, (.)  
between women and men in society has flown out the window.  
So this is maybe one of those things where it's maybe kind of (the?) original root.  
And in Salsa, it's okay to be a woman." (V 43)

So the nostalgia that is produced is not, as in the case of Latin Americans in diasporic contexts, related to an imagined ethnic identity but an imagined gender identity of earlier times. At the same time, this has also effects on the perception of Latin American cultures, which are in some contexts described as 'backwards' by Western dancers (see especially Ch. 7). Through the traditional gender dichotomy, which becomes linked to Latin America through Salsa, the stereotype of Latin American culture being 'less developed' is actually enforced. A lot of Latin Americans resist these images by either not participating in these contexts (again, see Ch. 7) or, especially in US American contexts, also in creating new styles, which involve, for example, non-couple performances and sports dresses (see e.g. reggaetón dance, a hybrid of hip hop and Latin styles, where movements of women are even more sexualised but women are here independent of movements from men).

It was not until I became a more confident dancer that I could experience some of the enjoyable aspects of this traditional image of femininity. Feeling feminine is something that is, in many Western contexts, related to an image of weakness, as feminine identity, and particularly sexualised constructions of female identity, are related to women who are un-emancipated, which is avoided especially by professional women in Western culture. Yet, performance and adoption of femininity does not necessarily have to be interpreted as a

display of submission to male suppressors. Femininity and sensuality can also relate to an image of female strength, an aspect that was emphasised by some currents of feminism in the 1970s and 1980s (see e.g. Fouque 2004, for a critique Schrupp 1997) – although this has to be approached with caution, as it is difficult to construct female strength without considering the male gaze to which this construction of strength is often related. Interestingly, the image of Latin American women in Western culture, stereotypically conceived as ‘sexy’ and lively, seems to portray this construction of a very female but nevertheless strong persona – in contrast, for example, to (Western) images of Muslim women. “Going back” to traditional gender roles in Salsa is an imagined nostalgia that involves a “going back” to a past that never existed, as the gender roles in Salsa are not traditional Australian or German roles of gender but imagined constructions of Latin American gender roles. As can be seen in the following quote, Latin Americans in Australia are aware of these images:

“So I think for the most people who is learning Spanish, (.)  
because that, that attracts, (2)  
of that myth, the Latin lover.  
It has to do with that myth.” (N 24)

According to this Colombian interviewee, non-Latin people are so keen on the images of ‘Latin lovers’ that they even start to learn Spanish (for a discussion on language learning and desire, see Takahashi 2006) but this interviewee is critical of these images and calls them a “myth”. Indeed, this shows that “gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities” (Butler 1990:3), as the ‘Latin lover’ is a gender identity that is intrinsically linked to ethnicity.

It is very common that non-Latins interpret Salsa identity as a pure display of sexuality, which is one of the reasons why I felt very uncomfortable with Salsa dancing in the beginning. This construction of exotic sexuality in Salsa can be related to the colonial history of the Caribbean, where slaves were constructed as primitive colonial subjects and their dance culture as an uncivilised presentation of sexuality (Pietrobruno 2006:77-78). The perception of folk dances of non-European and particularly African-derived dance forms as being of a merely sexual nature is connected to the European philosophical tradition of separating the body and the mind (Rampton 2011), while some African cultures have different constructions of the connection between bodily sensuality, sexuality and spirituality (Pietrobruno 2006:78). Reducing Salsa, which has influences from African cultures, to a mere display of sexuality and understanding Latin American female identity as based on such a display runs the danger of being a discriminatory and unjust interpretation. Not only a historical perspective sheds a critical light on Western imaginations of female sexual, submissive identity; contemporary globalised, commercial Salsa has furthermore a different gender ideology than Latin popular culture in Latin America:

Also significant is the way in which Salsa's global diffusion has masked a gender ideology that constructs Latin popular culture in terms of male superiority. Women have long been present as dancers and listeners in Salsa's transnational diffusion, and during the late 1980s and 1990s, women in several countries (including the United States, Cuba, Colombia, Canada, Japan, and Denmark) have made important contributions as Salsa and Latin jazz musicians. Yet, the images promoted by the music industry continue to highlight men over women. (Waxer 2002b:14)

It remains to be answered why sexualised identity is not only strongly fostered by mass media productions but also enjoyed by individuals in their leisure time. Next to the influence of commodified perspectives on human beings – the creation of 'human capital' in late modernity (see Williams 2010:ch.1) – one answer to this might lie in the insecurities that are created by the globalisation of culture:

[D]ancers can corporally experience (and find pleasure in) masculine dominance and female submission. The highly fluid nature of global change in the contemporary phase of globalization since the twentieth century has, according to Roland Robertson, nourished the nostalgic tendency for more certain and stable forms of 'world order' (Robertson 1992:162). This desire for security [...] can lead to a rise in nationalist sentiments to counter what may be perceived as the 'chaos' of transnational fusions and mixtures. This longing for stability in the global arena can also find expression in micropractices of leisure and entertainment such as Salsa dance. (Pietrobruno 2006:20)

Next to the structured pattern of Salsa events, which is based on traditional gender identity, and which enables getting into contact easily, 're-gaining' stable ground through fixed and traditional heterosexual gender identity seems to be one explanation for the success of Salsa in Western urban leisure culture.

Another interpretation may lie in the fact that emancipation of women has, in many cases, led to women being financially independent and making careers; however, statistically, it is still women who carry the main responsibilities in taking care of housework and child care (see e.g. Hochschild 1989), while many men continue to concentrate primarily on their wage labour. The nostalgia for pre-feminist gender relationships of women, the desire to dance with 'a leader', may also imply a desire for a male partner who takes responsibility not only for himself – even though it might be a nostalgia for a 'past that never existed' in assuming that pre-feminist gender relationships entailed a more just distribution of labour in private and public settings.

Next to the above given speculations on the enormous popularity of traditional gender identities, it has to be noted that, without going into a further discussion, their success can also be linked to structures of exploitation in late capitalism, where sexuality and youth have a strong currency and where women use their sexuality to get what they are denied in a still sexist society. Whether the development of transnational spaces typically involves an appeal to essentialist categories on one level while other categories are dissolved, as it happens in

Salsa communities – ethnic boundaries seem to dissolve while gender identity becomes even more solidified – cannot be answered but may inspire future thought and research. Arjun Appadurai’s concept of “nostalgia” is certainly enlightening in this context and can be applied to gender constructions in Salsa, too.

After having given a first insight into the issues that are generally relevant in the analysis of Salsa as it is relocated in Sydney and Frankfurt – the overall structure of events, the themes that arise in the discursive realm and the role of gender – the following chapters will introduce and discuss the respective Communities of Practice, their specifics, their differences, relationships and their ideologies of language.

## 7. L.A. STYLE SALSA – PROFESSIONALISATION AND EVOLUTIONIST MONOLINGUALISM

I sit on a bench at Darling Harbour and wait for my interview partner. It is already dark; we have an appointment at nine o'clock. Darling Harbour at night impresses me with all its lights that mirror in the water, with its many bars and restaurants and hotels. At the same time, I find it a very 'Disneyland'-like place. It is made for people to come to spend the night – and their money. The bar in which the Salsa party takes place, where I will conduct my interview, is also very posh and bling-bling. It is certainly not a place where I would normally go to and it is very different from the places I have attended in Germany, with all its glitter, its bouncers, the red carpet and the ladies and men who look as if they would go to a prom. I am definitely under-dressed for the party later on. When my interview partner arrives, I am astonished by his white suit and business-like attitude.

(Field note passage, 14.09.2007)

The Community of Practice that I introduce in more detail first is based on L.A. Style Salsa. As has been mentioned (6.3.), L.A. Style is the most popular style of Salsa in Sydney. L.A. Style has been developed in the transnational Latin context of Los Angeles, U.S.A. (Pietrobruno 2006:66). It is based on Puerto Rican Salsa, swing and ballroom dances and has showy moves and cabaret gestures. The influence of ballroom dance is very obvious and characteristic of this style; which at the same time makes it more accessible to a Western public, where ballroom dance has a long tradition. The steps and turns of L.A. Style are relatively elaborate, complicated and technical. The style has a strong performance aspect, whereas other styles are usually not performed in front of an audience. This is another factor making L.A. style less an expression of popular culture and aligning it with European 'high culture' and elite traditions of dance.

L.A. Style is usually danced *on one*, which means that the basic step starts on the first beat of the rhythm. However, some dancers in Sydney also dance L.A. Style *on two*, they dance the first step on the second beat. Dancing *on one* or *on two* does not generally indicate a particular ideology or attitude but is subject to change due to local fashion and the desire to modify the dance from time to time. More expressive as a marker of distinction is that L.A. Style is danced *on the line*, which means that the couple dances on an imaginative line; both dance partners always end up on this line, also after they change their position in relation to each other. *Dancing on the line* adds to the comparatively technical impression of this style of Salsa. While other Salsa styles are characterised by far more body contact, the bodies of couples dancing L.A. Style are usually kept at a distance, only their arms and hands get into contact. L.A. Style Salsa is an illustrative example how discourses guide human behaviour not only in the verbal realm (see also 2.2.). In the case of Salsa, body movements and general

attitudes are indexically linked to each other. The relatively technical and ‘clean’ choreography of L.A. Style Salsa is connected to other modes of cultural expression; for example, the ‘professional’ character of the dance links to the commodification of Salsa, which is a central issue in this community. Thus, a rather professional, technical attitude can also be found in the verbal discourses of dancers of this style. This point will be elaborated below in this chapter.

In the following, I will first introduce ethnographic observations about the CoP. Secondly, I give a detailed, in-depth analysis of discourses revolving around the content-related categories that were introduced above (6.5.). I finally relate these discourses to ideologies of language of the community. In the final analysis, it will be asked whether the discourses introduced here show signs of the deconstruction of the notion of language and to which scales (see 4.3.) the discourses belong that are influential in the language ideologies found in the community.

### **7.1. L.A. STYLE SALSA IN SYDNEY**

The community that I focus on here is related to one of the biggest Salsa dance schools in Sydney<sup>50</sup>. I call this community the ‘L.A. Style community’; yet, there are other dancers of L.A. Style in Sydney who do not belong to this community. It has to be emphasised that the introduced patterns, observations and discourses are by no means universal or in any way representative for L.A. Style in general. The development of L.A. Style in Sydney is a very local affair and depends on the individuals who happened to come to Sydney to teach Salsa and on the individuals who took up this style and made it accessible to a wider public in the context of this particular dance school.

In the following, I will first briefly discuss the relations of this community to other Salsa communities, as it is conceived that the existence of different groups is not the result of separation and difference but a consequence of relationality (see Chapter 4.2. and Pratt 1987:59). The community’s discourses are related to other discourses and are not an effect of essentialist traits of the people who are members of the community. Each community comes into being as a ‘knot’ in a complex arrangement of transnational, national and local discourses and, like any other transnational community, the L.A. Style community is characterised by a complex layering of such local, national and global connections. The community is of course related to broader spheres of the Australian society, such as the work-sphere (being a leisure activity), the city (where it is geographically located) or the nation (to which it belongs on a more imaginative level but which has a strong influence on its discourses, see Ch. 9). The connection to these broader discourses is not discussed at this point, as I here concentrate on the community’s relation to other communities based on Salsa.

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<sup>50</sup> For the privacy of my informants, I do not name the dance school, as the interviewees in some cases could easily be identified.

On the local level, the introduced community is related to other Salsa Communities of Practice in Sydney and, simultaneously, L.A. Style Salsa belongs to the global community – or “scape” (see 4.1. and Appadurai 1998) – of Salsa dancers; more specifically, it connects to the global community of L.A. Style dancers. Professional and semi-professional dancers are very conscious of the global dimension of L.A. Style and it is for them more crucial than for other local communities. The global community of L.A. Style dancers comes together in large congresses, where new turn patterns and moves are introduced and where the celebrities of the community present their skills. Global competitions are another important cultural practice of the community. As it happened, the world champion of L.A. Style in 2007, the time when I conducted the main field research, came from Sydney. Dancers who take part in these global competitions are professional dancers who make a living mainly from show dance. Members of the local Sydney L.A. community that I introduce here were very proud of ‘their’ world champion, although the majority of dancers of L.A. Style in Sydney are not professional and act only on a local level. Their Salsa dancing activity does not take place in a transnational network but in local environments such as parties and dance schools. The activities and discourses of the Community of Practice that I introduce are therefore not transnational in the sense that they stretch across geographical borders. Salsa dancing for most participants takes place in very tangible locations; however, the fact that Salsa does not originate in Sydney but is adopted by local populations and the fact that it is connected to professional transnational networks makes it nevertheless a transnational activity.

The distinctions and boundaries to other local communities depend on differences in cultural and linguistic ideologies, which are the main focus of my research and which are introduced in the remainder of this chapter. Yet, one must not forget that dance schools, which necessarily reproduce certain ideologies, have the need to position themselves in the local market economy. All schools in Sydney compete against each other in order to access a high number of students, as the dance teachers and dance school owners live mainly from the course fees of the students. So not only do different dance schools promote different dance styles and different cultural and linguistic ideologies, they furthermore have to ensure financial profitability. It has to be noted that lay dancers in the L.A. community are not necessarily aware of the connections to (but also tensions with) other local communities. Non-professional dancers often do not approach a particular school because they want to learn a particular style but the decision to participate in a certain class usually depends on the social networks that people are in before they actually enter a Salsa community. It is noted repeatedly in my interviews that different styles attract different people but this does not necessarily imply a general consciousness of the ideological distinction of different styles. Studying the differences of higher-level social networks to which people belong before they enter Salsa CoPs would be enlightening, for example, through quantitative analyses of socio-economic features of members of different Salsa communities – but this goes beyond the scope of this research project.



Interestingly, many lay dancers of L.A. Style in Sydney do not know that other styles of Salsa exist, whereas dancers of other styles are very aware of this. This proves that L.A. style is the most dominant or 'unmarked' style in the city centre and it is possible for dancers of L.A. Style to go to places where no other style is danced. Dancers of other styles comment frequently on the differences between the styles while dancers of L.A. Style often do not mention other styles at all or present them as 'out of date' styles. This construction of L.A. as norm and as being 'up to date' is important for understanding the discourses within the community and also connects to a particular language ideology, which will be discussed in more detail below.

When I came to Sydney for the first time, I was not aware of the style differences and their potential consequences. Although I knew that there were different styles of Salsa, I did not know that these styles relate to very different 'cultures' or communities of Salsa, as this is not marked so clearly in Frankfurt. In the following, it should be kept in mind that the perspective from which the L.A. Style CoP is considered is strongly influenced by previous experiences made in Germany. These will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 10. It is particularly the observation that Frankfurt Salsa dancers are generally very enthusiastic about the Spanish language (which formed a prime motivation to write this thesis) that is a marked difference from the behaviour observed in the L.A. Style CoP. This should by no means evoke the idea that Spanish learning by Salsa dancers is a 'normal' affair while other behaviours are somehow deviant. Nevertheless, the puzzlement that I felt when I first entered the scene had an influence on my observations and traces of this are therefore also found in some of the following descriptions.

As the L.A. CoP is the biggest and most visible community in Sydney, it is also the one that is most easily found on the Internet. Thus, it was this community with which I made my first contacts before coming to Sydney. Already then, from the superficial insights from web pages, I could gather that this type of Salsa seemed to be different than what I had seen in Frankfurt. The imagery of the websites and of the posters that advertise parties of this community – my very first contacts with Sydney's L.A. Style Salsa – gave a very different impression to what I had seen of Salsa in the German context. Images that stereotypically express 'Latinness' are largely absent in most of the visual productions in the Sydney context.

Due to its predominant presence on the Internet, the first Salsa course I attended in Australia also belonged to this environment. On its website, the school refrains from images such as palm trees, palm leaves, sunsets, people with 'exotic' hairstyles, darker skin tones or flags from Latin American nations – images that are typically associated with Latin culture in many German but also other European contexts. During the time of my field research, the website of the school displayed an abstract symbol representing fire and a couple that dances, embedded in a landscape of colours that change according to the seasons, which (except for the symbolic use of fire, which may be interpreted as relating to Latin culture in a very general, stereotypical sense) did not relate to the cultural background of Salsa. Rather, the

visual style of the school strongly reminds of other popular mainstream music productions. In terms of the clothing of women, as seen on the page, and the selection of colours, it is especially contemporary R'n'B productions that share similar looks (e.g. Destiny's Child, Rihanna and the like).

Posters regarding Salsa nights of L.A. Style are found everywhere in the centre of town; the parties are major events which take place in elaborate and expensive venues in the Central Business District of Sydney. The entrance fees for these parties are quite high – they are between A\$15 and A\$30 - and the clothing is very elaborate. The majority of members in this context are white and Asian Australians; most interviewees and other members work in some kind of office, in banks, insurance companies or advertising agencies. The general public here can be described as white-collar educated middle class. In general, L.A. Style Salsa parties are characterised by expensive, stylish looks. As is common also in other party venues in Australia, many men wear suits and women usually wear evening gowns, glittery jewellery and a lot of make up. Thus, it is more influenced by Australian standards than by Latin American ones. The clothing at parties made this style less accessible to me, as I did not possess this type of outfit, which affected my ability to become a fully-fledged member of these party events. It was easily recognisable that I was an outsider to this community. Nevertheless, attending these parties was not a negative experience as the Australian public sphere generally has a very friendly and welcoming attitude. Although I felt like an outsider here, I was asked to dance and included in talks.

The dance classes of the school that I here introduce in more detail, in contrast, do not share a glamorous look. They take place in a community gym in a residential area next to the Central Business District. The class that I took part in was an eight-weeks beginners' class and approximately 40 people attended. The dance teachers of my class, a man and a woman, were both 'white'<sup>51</sup> Australians. As has been mentioned above, during the class, partners change every few minutes. The basic Salsa step (which is the same in all styles) is taught and subsequently, during the course, some of the most important steps and turns are introduced. After a presentation of the moves by the dance teacher couple, the complete group practices the steps together and, after that, music accompanies a sequence in which the steps are practiced with different dance partners. The music that was played in my course always had Spanish lyrics, while everything the dance teachers said was in English. Each session ends with a short phase of the length of one song where couples can dance freely and also choose their partner. Here, it is not necessarily the man who approaches a woman (compare sections 6.3. and 6.6.) but many people have come to the course as a couple in the first place and can now, finally, dance with each other.

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<sup>51</sup> Note that the term 'white' is not meant in an essentialist way. Being 'white' is a cultural construction that, in the Australian case, relates to people of Anglo descent as well as to people stemming from other European regions. Irrespective of their actual descent, people with white skin types are, at first sight, often considered to belong to the mainstream population of Australia.

I perceived the way that dance steps are taught to be very technical. It is explained only once where the left foot goes and where the right foot goes. During the practice phase, the teachers keep on dancing themselves and usually do not make the effort to explain the steps individually. I found this style of teaching very hard to follow, as it suggests that dancing is the ability to learn certain foot patterns by heart. The relationship between the rhythm of the music and the steps of the dance was never made explicit and many of my male dance partners did learn to follow the left–right techniques of the steps and did not dance them in alignment with the rhythm of the music. Thus, I did not feel the experience of dancing as very enjoyable during this class. This was different at the dance parties that I attended. Here, the men who asked me to dance were more advanced dancers and thus able to lead me according to the rhythm of the music. The class gave me rather the impression of learning a sports activity – similar to a gym class, where certain sequences of movements are taught – and, together with the gender stereotypes that are strongly fostered, I did not become very enthusiastic about Salsa in this class. Not only did I have problems to identify with the gender constructions that are appealed to, I also did not get into this way of teaching a dance and into the whole atmosphere.

Additionally, I was rather frustrated that the issue of learning and speaking Spanish, which had made Salsa an attractive research choice in order to study language ideology in transnational culture, here seemed to be completely absent as neither native nor non-native speakers of Spanish attended any of the classes or parties I went to. Due to my previous experiences in Germany, I had expected Spanish-speakers also here, and thus, this absence became a topic in interviews with informants from the L.A. CoP. This absence seems to be related to the history of L.A. Style in Sydney, in which the commercialisation of this cultural practice (for a clarification of the notion of *practice*, see e.g. 5.2.) is a major factor. Interestingly, the commercialisation of Salsa here does not rely on the commodification of cultural authenticity, as is the case in many other Salsa contexts; thus, ‘nativeness’ is not as much an issue. This has consequences for attitudes towards using, learning and speaking Spanish.

In the following, I will describe in detail the discourses on the commercialisation of L.A. Salsa, which are related to a particular discourse on a ‘cultural evolution’ towards mainstream society. This idea of a ‘cultural evolution’ has effects on particular concepts of authenticity and of cosmopolitanism as they are constructed in this community and the whole complex of discourses is seen as the basis for the community’s ideologies of language. From the perspective I gained through the field experience, it seems that the underlying cultural ideologies are most vital in understanding language ideologies. Ideologies (discourses) on language and on culture are obviously in a dialectical relationship, and for the purpose of my research interest, it is reasonable to devote considerable space to a discussion of the cultural values that exist within each community. Ideologies related to language

directly will be introduced after this thorough presentation of values and discourses related to more general, cultural issues.

## **7.2. 'YOU NEED A GOOD PRODUCT' – COMMERCIAL SUCCESS OF L.A. STYLE IN SYDNEY**

Commercial success is a vital aspect in the distribution of any music and dance culture. Without commercialisation, cultural commodities are unlikely to travel from one place to another and, as Lipsitz has pointed out, “commercial culture can provide an effective means of receiving and sending messages in unexpected ways” (Lipsitz 1994:13). In the L.A. Style community, the aspect of commercial marketing in bringing Salsa to the public plays a particularly central role (see below).

Yet, there are also other aspects that are mentioned, such as the bodily experience that is made while dancing (see also 6.3.), as well as the ease with which people get to know each other in Salsa, as argues this DJ who works at L.A. Style parties:

“It is such a nice way of meeting people. So that’s the reason why I stuck with it.” (J 7)

This characteristic has been introduced above (6.3.) and relates to this as well as to other Salsa communities. Next to the bodily experience, the peaceful and healthy nature of Salsa events is seen as a vital aspect for its success, as in the following quote by a lay dancer:

“There are no fights, it is a really harmonious environment.” (V 15)

The aspects of ‘harmony’ and lack of aggression might be understood in relation to Australian discourses on alcohol in public environments. There is an anti-alcohol discourse, initiated by the Australian Government in order to oppose high degrees of intoxication in public spheres. Whether this discourse is based on verified high degrees of alcoholism and alcohol-related social conflicts in night-time leisure activities or on the government’s desire to ban alcohol (and maybe to profit from high tax on alcohol and bar licensing?) is hard to tell for an outsider; in any case, there are many campaigns against the abuse of alcohol on television, radio and in the printed media. Alcohol is usually prohibited at public festivals, such as the New Year’s Eve celebrations, the Sydney Festival or the Latin Fiesta in Darling Harbour (which is a governmental event that promotes Latin culture, see Ch. 9). In contrast, drinking culture is central in many private and public contexts of Australia. An example for this is Christmas celebrations, which have the consumption of alcohol as an important element, even in family environments<sup>52</sup>. Physical aggression as a result of intoxication is a common topic of newspaper articles and seems to index lower social strata. The low number of intoxicated people in the L.A. Style CoP is mentioned as a source of Salsa’s appeal and the

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<sup>52</sup> This is a personal observation and contrasts with German traditions, no quantitative data on this has been collected.

construction of discourses of ‘harmony’ might be related to a desire to differentiate from certain social cohorts. A L.A. Style dance teacher comments on this:

“The other thing is that (1)<sup>53</sup>  
you noticed that in that in the Sydney Salsa scene (.) uhm (1)  
if you go out to a night club, people are just focusing on the dance, the dance moves,  
they, they not, they literally do not get drunk or (1) anything else.  
It’s not like everywhere else where you get absolutely drunk and it’s a negative thing.”  
(K 18)

The aspect of the sober nature of Salsa parties is only mentioned in L.A. Style contexts and links this community to a particular lifestyle that is highly visible in Sydney’s central city venues. Here, ‘working hard’, practising sports, being a member of a gym, often also using lunch breaks for sport activities, and leading a ‘sober’ and materialistically productive life, seems to represent a very dominant way of life for the middle class strata of Sydney. Without going into a detailed cultural interpretation of the importance of bodily fitness and health – which, however, may profit from an analysis using Foucault’s notion of *gouvernementalité* (Foucault 1978 (2000), the ability to control the own body in alignment with capitalist interests – it is safe to say that L.A. Style Salsa is connected to this lifestyle and belongs to this discourse (see Ch. 2). Not only do many of the dancers drink only water during Salsa events, it is also mentioned that dancing itself is

“a good workout.” (JL 21)

Within this discourse, commercial success is highly valued and the ability to discipline one’s own body might be interpreted as a material manifestation of this form of success. Interestingly, as can be inferred from the interviews, commercial interests are not, as in many other contexts (see e.g. Ch. 8), legitimated through other interests but are straightforwardly expressed as the underlying reason for motivation and achievement. The owner of the dance school thus suggests that commercial interests are actually the cause for the continuing global success of the dance. The following passage is an answer to the question why this informant thinks that Salsa is popular worldwide:

“So there is now a huge amount of money invested in it, a lot of profit by the record company,  
uhm, so it is a (substantial?) because there is so much money involved, so much money (2.5)  
in Europe and in the United States and in South America,  
so there is lots of money involved.  
So uhm, so just the amount (.)  
and that’s why, you know, it keeps going.” (B 13)

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<sup>53</sup> See Appendix for transcription conventions.

This informant perceives the investment of money to be the main reason for the global distribution and appeal of Salsa. Consequently, in explaining to me how Salsa came to Sydney, my interview partners evaluate the commercial interests of the founders of the dance school very positively, as for example, the following quote by a dance teacher of the school indicates:

“They are very business-minded.  
[A] is an engineer and [B] is actually a doctor,  
how they started their business (.),  
it was quite exciting.” (VI 13)

While I, during the interview, thought that the starting sequence of this passage meant the beginning of a point of critique (“They are very business-minded”), the fourth line of the passage shows that the interviewee here expresses a positive attitude towards this business mentality (“it was quite exciting”). Concepts and terminology from business and marketing are frequently recontextualised in the discourses of my interview partners from this CoP and carry a positive value. Answering my question about why Salsa became famous in Sydney, the dance school owner answers:

“Well, I think, any kind of dancing is attractive.  
To a lot of people. (1)  
Many venues opened, many dance schools. (2)  
You need the packages. You need a good product. (1)  
All that you learn from business management, you know,  
customer relations, management, they are all the same, there is no difference.” (B 23)

The intertextual references to business discourse are very obvious in this quote: “packages” are usually sold by banks (e.g. investment packages) or in tourism (all-inclusive packages). A “product” is commonly defined by its quality of being manufactured for sale. In the last two lines, the interviewee maintains that because of the good quality of the “product” Salsa, he just had to apply general knowledge from business contexts – “customer relations”, “management” – and thus made his school financially profitable and Salsa popular. From my point of view, which was at this stage strongly influenced by the German perspective, where a frequent interest in the cultural authenticity of Salsa can be found, this straightforward reference to business and the capitalist exploitation of culture was rather surprising. It seems that Salsa, for this interviewee, is embedded into a discourse that belongs to a capitalist business sphere. This capitalist discourse can be considered to be located on a global scale, as it is found worldwide. Salsa has been moved from the realm of a cultural practice that originally has been tied to a political discourse, and to the expression of cultural identity, to the sphere of capitalist exploitation. Unexpected for me is that this move between different discourses is described as ‘common-sense’, as it seems obvious to the interviewee that “You need a good product”. Not only is the business attitude towards Salsa portrayed as positive, it

is completely normalised through the uncommented construction of Salsa as “product”. Although any popular music production is tied to the capitalist market, and although, as has been mentioned above, Salsa has been embedded into this system right from its beginnings, it still struck me as unusual that the commercialisation of culture is not hidden or legitimised, as is often the case in other contexts of music culture, but is adhered to here very frankly.

Accordingly, the fact that the commercial interests of one of the biggest spirit companies in the world are partly responsible for the popularity of Salsa in Sydney (and of the dance school) is not seen as problematic. When I ask about the historical development of the dance school and how it happened that the school became well-known to the public at its beginnings, it is mentioned that the dance school had the possibility to teach Salsa during the Barcadi Festival, which used to be part of the Sydney Festival (Australia’s biggest cultural event). When I ask how the two, the dance school and the spirit company, came together, I am told:

“Well, basically, Barcadi sponsored [the dance school].” (V 6)

The subsequent development of the popularity of Salsa is, however, not only attributed to sponsoring and commercial interest. The business mentality of selling Salsa is not only used for making Salsa popular but has effects on the way Salsa is taught and how the dance steps are systematised in order to teach them. A particular ideology of professionalisation is not only found in the sale of dance courses and Salsa parties but is also transferred to an analysis of dance steps, which are then, accordingly, taught in the courses, as one of the dance school owners explains:

“Because I am a doctor by training and my business partner engineer, so we are very analytical, so we analysed all the steps and that’s how we (made it?) so we are very methodical, systematic and that’s the main reason we, our (thing?) was a big hit.” (B 15)

While commercial interests of dance schools and sponsors are seen as the underlying cause for the success of Salsa, the reason why this particular dance school became successful is seen in the analytical approach that the founders of the dance school have taken. In the above quote, the owner of the dance school explains how he and his “business partner” (the other owner of the school) – note again the intertextual reference to business discourse – analysed the steps of the dance and how they developed a programme with several levels in order to teach Salsa. The two founders used their knowledge from university studies in engineering and medicine, where information is also presented in an orderly, systematic fashion, for appropriating Salsa. Indeed, from my own experience at a dance class in that school, I can relate to his explanations on the systematicity of teaching dance steps, which I, however, had

perceived as overly technical. Note that a preference for systematicity can also be found in the interviewees' use of words, where alliteration with the word "so we", followed by a word starting with "a", produces the image of dynamic, lively discourse.

Professionalisation, related to economic interest, does not only affect the sale of the dance and the teaching of dance steps but also the dance itself. In L.A. Style in general, the development of new moves and turns is important, and, as the dance is a show dance, the dancers need to be very analytical in order to be able to learn the complicated choreographies. In the global realm, the dance style has become a profession and is in this respect very different from the roots of the dance, which are a folkloristic expression of transnational Caribbean culture. Accordingly, this style has moved away from these folkloristic roots whereas in other Salsa contexts it is these roots that are adhered to and which are also sold. In the L.A. community in Sydney, the culture of Latin America is not part of the "package". Although I perceive the events and the dance class as inclusive in ethnic terms, the overall absence of people of Latin descent seems conspicuous.

### **7.3. 'YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ITALIAN TO MAKE A GOOD PIZZA' – CONFLICTING ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTHENTICITY**

It was remarkable that during my three-months field observations in L.A. Style contexts, I did not meet anyone of Latin descent, neither in dance parties, nor in the dance school. Of all the people I met and interviewed, there was one who stated that he could speak a little bit of Spanish. From the perspective from which I observed the community, influenced by my background knowledge on Salsa in Frankfurt, this was, in the beginning, very puzzling. The general observation in Frankfurt had shown that ethnic authenticity of dancers and teachers, and the possibility to participate in an 'other' lifestyle, seemed to be crucial factors in the success of Salsa (see Ch. 10). The Sydney L.A. Style CoP did not share these interests and motivations. The activity of Salsa dancing here seems to connect to other activities popular with the majority population, mainly sports activities, that have a highly competitive aspect and that foster a healthy and sober lifestyle through bodily activity. Salsa dancing in this context does not represent the reproduction of ethnic heritage culture, neither in a real, nor in a nostalgia sense. 'Authentic' Latin culture did not seem to be of interest in the community. The issue of authenticity is complicated and may be a focal point in discussions around culture in globalisation. Principles of authenticity are mainly connected to the idea of being 'true to one's roots' and to refrain from commercialisation (Pennycook 2007:ch.6). However, 'authentic' culture is, obviously, also a cultural construct (Lenz 2010) and often a major factor in the commercial success of cultural products. The contradictory position of 'authentic' Latin culture in the L.A. Style community is thus illustrative of a complex of problems that globalisation has brought about.

Because of the lack of Latin Americans and the Spanish language in this community, I asked my interviewees about the ethnic composition of the community. Initially, interviewees



usually highlight that Salsa is for everybody, irrespective of ethnic descent. It is, for example, explained that

“It’s a hub for people for all nationalities,  
they basically came from all over the place.  
You have people from South America, from North America, you have people from  
Europe, you have people from the Pacific, you have people from (Asia?),  
So, and we all came together  
and everybody is so different into it.” (V 16-17)

The absence of Latin people in this Salsa community seems to go unnoticed by this lay dancer. Although she here also refers to a historical context, as she uses the past tense in the second and the penultimate line, it is common in the L.A. context to describe Salsa as an activity that stands out for its ethnic inclusion. The inclusion of all ethnic backgrounds is something that is mentioned often and is evaluated positively by all interviewees. In the quote above, it is furthermore stated that “everybody is so different into it”, expressing a positive attitude towards diversity of Salsa dance itself. This appraisal of diversity and ethnic mixing can be set in relation to Australian discourses on ethnic inclusion, where official discourses continuously emphasise the fact that Australia is a culturally diverse nation (see also Ch. 9). The inclusion along ethnic lines is found as well among Salsa professionals as among the students of L.A. Salsa, as the dance school owner notes:

“My business partner, he’s Italian.  
And, uhm, my instructor, she’s Hungarian.  
We come from so many different backgrounds.  
In my team, we have people from all around the world.  
My customers, come from all over, you know.” (B 30)

The emphasis on ethnic inclusion goes so far that it, paradoxically, implies almost a refusal of people who are ‘really’ of Latin descent, who, because of their ‘authentic’ background do not fit into the framework of inclusion as promoted here. In line with an ideology of ethnic inclusion, interviewees strongly oppose the view that authentic ethnic descent is a valuable resource in Salsa. One dance teacher (of Arab descent<sup>54</sup>) illustrates very vividly that he thinks that Latin heritage is unnecessary when dancing and teaching Salsa:

“I mean, you don’t need to be Italian to make a good pizza.  
You see, you don’t need to be from China to cook some noodles.  
You don’t need to have that background.” (K 24)

The alliteration in this quote (“you don’t need to ...”) shows the strong emphasis the interviewee places on the irrelevance of ethnic descent. Although I never argued that being Latin is a precondition for dancing Salsa, when I ask about the situation of Latin people in

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<sup>54</sup> At this point, I mention the ethnic backgrounds of the interviewees as they serve as background information in the discussion on the role of ethnic authenticity, inclusion and multiculturalism.

the community, interviewees from the L.A. CoP explained that ethnic authenticity does not play any role at all. The emotionality with which a relevance of ethnic authenticity is denied, also indicated by the alliteration in the above quote and shared in some of the quotes of other interviewees, suggests that some have had experiences of being criticised for not being Latin. In one instance, an interviewee mentions former conflicts between the founders of the dance school, who wanted to make Salsa ‘mainstream’, and others (of a committee which decided on the future of the school), who obviously did not want the same:

“[B] and [A] had a falling out with [X?] because [B] and [A] wanted to take it big. (3)  
Mainstream.  
They wanted to make it public, they wanted everybody to know it.  
The rest of the committee was very apprehensive.  
[B] and [A] decided  
‘Oh, we gonna do this on our own.  
We gonna do this regardless.’” (V 10)

Although ethnicity is not explicitly mentioned in this quote, the intention to “take Salsa mainstream” implies – in the context of the historical development of Salsa in Sydney, where only Latin people would dance Salsa until the beginning of the 1990s – to move away from the ethnic backgrounds of the dance. The use of direct speech here enforces the credibility of the interviewee’s report and, again, alliteration presents A and B as very active, in contrast to the other, “apprehensive” members of the “committee”. This positive attitude towards the distribution of Salsa to a mainstream audience confirms what has been observed above: a general positive attitude towards the transformation of cultural forms into ‘mass-products’. Commodifying Salsa and rejecting ethnic authenticity is here clearly linked. Another dance teacher mentions that he is usually taken for a Latin person, due to his looks, and that he had people in his class who were disappointed by his non-Latin descent:

“I had people saying,  
‘You should be Latin because of Salsa’  
and I said, well,  
‘I teach because what I teach is very good and I’ve learned from the best and I’m passing it on’” (K 23)

He also expresses the view that it is better if people who are not Latin teach Salsa, as, according to him, this makes Salsa more approachable for anybody. Thus, ethnic authenticity is actually seen as hindering the distribution (and therefore the commercial success) of Salsa.

Interestingly, at the same time, the quality of being ‘Latin’ is valued highly, if it does not refer to people but to the music and the dance. In explaining why Salsa, although danced, taught and distributed in Australia by people who are not Latin, still remains very ‘Latin’, it is claimed:

“You can still (2)  
even if you (3)  
you can still feel the rhythm, you can, (0.5)  
it is sooo Latin, you know.” (B 17)

The long pauses in this quote show that the interviewee has difficulties to express his view and the quote remains, content-wise, very vague as a circular argument is produced by saying that something is ‘Latin’ because it is ‘Latin’. When I ask what exactly he means by something being ‘Latin’, quite unexpectedly, the very rational, business-minded dance school owner argues that

“It’s something that you feel in your heart.” (B 18)

The ‘Latin’ is here constructed as an essence that simply has to be “felt”. A discourse based on emotionality, although absent in the explanations on the commercialisation of Salsa, is adhered to when it comes to the music and dance itself. Paradoxically, although the quality of being ‘Latin’ is rejected as irrelevant if it relates to people (“You don’t need to be Italian to make a good pizza”), it is appreciated when it comes to the “product”. This connects these micro-level discourses to broader discourses on globalisation, where it is frequently noted and also criticised that globalisation enables the flow of capital and goods but restricts the flow of (particular) human beings — for example, through tighter migration and naturalisation regimes (on migration as a political subject, see e.g. Karakayali 2008).

Simultaneously, it is fascinating to observe that a contradictory evaluation of ethnic Latin identity constantly, but implicitly, re-emerges in the course of the interviews. An example for this is found in the following interview passage, where a dance teacher (of Hungarian descent) states that she feels flattered if she is taken for a Latina:

B: “Ok. But it’s Latinos who think that you’re /Latina?”  
V: “/Yeah, yeah”  
B: “And how do you feel about it, I mean/ it”  
V: “/Ah, you know, I’m just like *whoo* [happy, makes a movement with the arm]”  
B: “So are you glad /to hear it?”  
V: “/I’m very glad to hear it, I’m very glad to hear, that means that I dance (far more?) fancy [laughs] (2)  
I think it’s hilarious (2) uhm (2)  
but, you know, actually (.), I like that fact  
but I also like the fact that I’m not  
because it means that anybody who dances Salsa can get involved.  
And you know,  
you don’t have to be (2) from a Latin background.” (V 33)

The interviewee here is so eager to express that she feels happy about being taken for a Latina that she interrupts me three times. Her spontaneous expression of positive feelings seems very credible through the fact that she uses the non-referential marker “whoo” and also through the repetition of the phrase “I’m very glad to hear it”. Following this spontaneous

acknowledgement of authenticity – to be taken for a ‘real’ Latina, seems, after all, an indicator of dance expertise – the interviewee goes on to consciously lessen the impact of her statement. After having expressed her positive feelings, she distances herself from that evaluation after a laugh and a hesitating pause. She then maintains that this is also partly ridiculous, then hesitates again, and then argues that “actually” she is glad not to be a Latina as this proves the inclusiveness of Salsa.

Overall, such contradictory constructions of authenticity – ethnic egalitarianism versus ethnic essentialism – are found in many interviews. This indicates the complexity of the role of ethnic authenticity (or of imagined authenticity) in globalised forms of culture. The observation relates to the concept of sociolinguistic scales (4.3., Blommaert 2007), as ethnic genuineness seems to carry different meanings and values on different but simultaneously occurring levels or scales, on the community level, the local, the national and the global level. It is difficult from the above quote to say precisely to which scale ethnic essentialism is to be attributed, while it is rather safe to say that the discourse on egalitarianism is influenced by the national, Australian scale, where ethnic inclusion is part of citizenship ideology and is fostered in educational and governmental discourse (see Ch. 9).

In the whole debate on transnational culture and the role of languages – which so often function as an indicator of authenticity – the relationships and interferences between different scales and their influence on local constructions of authenticity is a focal point. The argument will be discussed in subsequent chapters and also more theoretically later on (Ch. 11).

#### **7.4. ‘THEY ARE NOT VERY TECHNICAL’ – PROFESSIONALIST EVOLUTION, MONOCULTURAL COSMOPOLITANISM AND THE STATUS OF LATIN PEOPLE**

The status of people of Latin descent is not only based on the development of Salsa as a commercial product and contradictory evaluations of ethnic authenticity, but is also related to the competitive, professional attitude found in L.A. Style. The dance school owner, who above explained that analytical skill and systematicity are the reasons for the popularity of Salsa in Sydney, assumes that the lack of these skills is responsible for the lack of Latin people in the commercial success of the dance. He (himself of Chinese descent) explains how he learned to dance from Colombians in Sydney and then comments on their lack of professionalism:

“Before that, all the things (0.5)  
they *wére* *pássionate*,  
and they were very very strong about their culture and  
everything (0.5)  
but they were not very (1) *technicál*. (.)  
And when we went and asked them, they said,  
‘Ah, follow your heart, follow the music’  
and we got soo frustrated.

We said  
'So how do you do the steps?'  
And they couldn't really break it down. (1)  
They're not very technical." (B 10)

The informant criticises Latin American Salsa dancers, who obviously assume that dancing is learned by imitation, which is how it is done where the dancers in this case stem from. In Colombia, and indeed the other countries where Salsa is danced as part of the everyday culture, there is no formal instruction of dancing. Dance is acquired at a very young age, in family or community settings. This type of acquisition is also practiced by ethnic Colombians in Sydney. The informant admits that "they" (which, in the context of this interview, refers to "the Latin people") consider their culture to be important but fail in transmitting their knowledge to others in an understandable way. It is especially the lack of a systematic analysis of the dance steps that the informant criticises, as without formal instruction, according to the interviewee, outsiders are unable to learn the dance.

The rising tone at the end of the third line, making the passage sound like a question, is an intonation that is very frequent in Australian narrative talk (high rise terminal (HRT), see Guy and Vonwiller 1989). It emphasises the utterance in seeking agreement with the interviewer and expresses his Australian identity. This, together with the long pause before the word "technical", can be interpreted as the articulation of a critical stance that is taken towards Latin American Salsa dancers who simply engage in dancing but cannot explain verbally how they actually do it. This is again mentioned at the end of the passage, where the informant concludes that "they" are not technical, this time using the present tense, making the essentialist, disapproving claim even stronger.

The fact that dancing Salsa in a Latin community in Colombia, or, indeed, Sydney, is embedded in a different cultural context, with different cultural values (which may need a longer time to get acquainted with as this implies more than just choreographies of dance steps) seems to go unnoticed. It is the dance steps, isolated from any other cultural trait, which the informant perceives as the sole feature of Salsa. Obviously, his view on Salsa has to be understood in the context of a commercialist-competitive discourse, where the motivation of dancing is mainly based on commercial interest and professional competition. The interaction between Latin Americans and non-Latin learners of Salsa, as reported in this quote, can be considered a 'clash' of different discourses.

The construction of Latin Americans as lacking skill – and thus the rejection of Latin Americans – is not only based on the 'failure' of Latin Americans to systematically teach and sell the dance. L.A. dancers usually interpret other styles of Salsa as the inability to dance, even if they are danced in contemporary Latin America:

"What they do in South America, you might call it backyard Salsa." (V 21)

Similarly, the following interviewee maintains that Latin Americans in Sydney cannot dance – but have a great time:

“If you’re a Latin American [in Sydney], you, (?)  
they just have a great time,  
they move to the rhythm,  
the whole body moves but they dance two turns and (movey?) and stuff,  
they don’t do ever a (shine<sup>55</sup>)  
they wanna dance, but you know,  
they can’t.” (J 10)

This quote is also characterised by the use of alliteration in listing the behavioural features of Latin Americans on L.A. Salsa dance floors, which gives credibility to the report and an almost ‘scientific’ approach to observing the ‘others’.

The interpretation of Latin American ways of dancing as either under-developed dance or as no dance at all is partly an effect of the historical development of Salsa dance in Sydney. As L.A. Style came to Sydney later (during the 1990s) than Colombian Style (which is what many Latin American dancers in Sydney dance), most L.A. dancers consider Colombian Style not in terms of difference but understand the development of Salsa in Sydney according to a framework of evolution, where dancing Colombian Style is assigned a place in the past of this imagined time-line:

“If you put it in the context of with what has happened,  
how the Latin scene has evolved,  
it is very old fab.  
I would call it old fab<sup>56</sup>.  
It didn’t evolve.  
What is there now,  
there is now mainstream Salsa,  
the universal Salsa.” (V 1.09)

The consideration of Latin people dancing Salsa being “old fab”, as “backyard”, might be related to a specific Australian discourse of multiculturalism (for details, see Ch. 9). Multicultural policies have been developed primarily between 1970 and 1990, while the 1990s brought along a strong decline of fostering cultural diversity, as the emphasis shifted to English, within an economically motivated discourse (Lo Bianco 2001:18). The celebration of ethnic diversity and of cultural heritage is, in the Australian context, related to a time in the past, namely a discourse that was prominent in the 1970s and 80s. The evolutionary picture that is illustrated with the term “old fab” in describing Salsa that is based in a cultural community can thus be related to the development of national discourses of Australia.

Interestingly, this evolutionary construction not only applies to Colombian Salsa but is also projected to Cuban Salsa. Members of the L.A. community conceptualise an evolution,

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<sup>55</sup> A *shine* is a combination of steps that is danced without the partner.

<sup>56</sup> The term here probably means ‘old-fashioned’.

from Colombian Salsa to Cuban Salsa and from Cuban Salsa to L.A. Salsa and the owners of the Salsa school are seen as responsible actors for this development:

“[A] had a very systematic way of learning,  
he put it down into a syllabus.  
He started breaking down the cumbia<sup>57</sup> and that’s how Salsa evolved. (.)  
It started off with cumbia (.)  
then we went on to Cuban Style (.)  
from Cuba it came to Sydney (.)  
then we went to L.A. style (.)  
because we have a more American influence.” (V 22)

While the different Salsa styles are not necessarily understood in an evolutionary framework in other contexts (e.g. in the Americas or Germany), the local development in Sydney brings along a construction of a linear development, which also implies an evaluative hierarchy. As Colombian Salsa came first, it is conceived as a less developed form of Salsa, Cuban Salsa is taking a position in the middle, while L.A. is constructed as the most developed form. The construction of evolution on several steps is here also mirrored in the language use, where each ‘step’, from cumbia to L.A., is followed by a short pause.

Unsurprisingly, most Latin Americans are not necessarily eager to participate in L.A. Style Salsa, as their heritage culture is here denigrated as an out-of-fashion folklore. Enlightening in this context is furthermore the construction of L.A. Style as “mainstream” and “universal”. “Evolution” in this understanding ends (and thus, finds its most superior expression) in “universalism” and “mainstream” culture. Due to their links to the heritage background of Salsa, Latin Americans on the one hand put into question the ethnic egalitarianism of L.A. Style Salsa; on the other hand, the construction of linear evolution from “ethnic” to “mainstream” positions people with Latin American heritage to a distant past, linked to tradition and backwardness. This construction of heritage culture as linked to an earlier point in the history of humankind might also be related to Australian discourses on immigration, where the first generation of migrants is usually seen as “ethnic”, working-class and traditional, while the integration of the second generation into mainstream society is seen as a sign of climbing up a ladder towards middle-class society (see more in Ch. 9).

In line with this assumption is that ethnic culture contrasts with what is called “cosmopolitan” values in the following quote. Here, the interviewee considers the local environment – Sydney – as “cosmopolitan”, an attitude that he distinguishes from “mentality of ethnic heritage”:

“So Sydney is such a melting pot.  
So cosmopolitan.  
I give you an example,  
the girls here come from all over the world.  
So we are all international,

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<sup>57</sup> A related Colombian dance.

we are all universal in many ways.  
I think mentality of heritage, of ethnic heritage, cultural heritage is very narrow minded.” (B 33)

Next to the sexist implications of this quote (see Schneider 2009 and 6.6. on gender, sexism and heteronormativity in Salsa), it is intriguing to see that, although in a context where a dance is promoted that originally expressed cultural identity, ethnicity and heritage are not valued positively but seen as “narrow minded”.

The construction of “cosmopolitanism” is here linked to a concept of culture where ethnicity and heritage are erased for the sake of a “universalist”, commercial and competitive culture. This particular understanding of cosmopolitanism is different from cosmopolitanism as it is found in cultural anthropological literature (ch 4.1., Hannerz 1996a) or even in the dictionary, where it is defined as “familiar with and at ease in many different countries and cultures” (New Oxford American Dictionary 2009). In this understanding of cosmopolitanism, it obviously does denote that people from different cultural backgrounds participate but these “international” people are supposed to take part in a “universal” culture. From what one can gather from the construction of “universal Salsa” it is here “mainstream” Anglo-Australian culture that is considered “cosmopolitan” as it accepts people of other ethnic backgrounds to participate. This construction is very close to what Ulf Hannerz describes as “metropolitan locals”, people who are in contact with people from other cultures but who are not interested in acquiring competence in other cultures (see 4.1.). It is furthermore interesting to note that Hannerz assumes that it is mainly people from Western backgrounds who become “metropolitan locals”, as most transnational cultures are ‘extensions’ of cultures of Europe and North America. To repeat Hannerz: “[W]estern Europeans and North Americans can encapsulate themselves culturally, and basically remain metropolitan locals instead of becoming cosmopolitans” (Hannerz 1996a:107). L.A. Style Salsa in Sydney can thus be interpreted as a Latin American cultural practice that has been appropriated by people who adhere to Anglo-Western values of achievement and competition. “Cosmopolitan” here does not mean the interaction between different cultures but the interaction between people with the same values, irrespective of their ethnic background.

This image of Anglo-Australian-American mainstream culture as cosmopolitan is also projected onto the global scale. Sydney L.A. dancers usually consider the competitive L.A. Style as the highest step of an evolutionary process worldwide. So, for learning Salsa, it is not recommended to go to Latin America but to the US:

“To be honest,  
if you wanna learn to dance, don’t go to south America.  
Go to the US.  
Go to New York, go to Los Angeles, go to Miami.  
That’s where the best dancers are.



Most of my Latino (friends?) will live over there.  
 And those are the people who, because,  
 you gotta understand, America is a melting pot.  
 The best people migrate there.  
 So a lot of the best dancers,  
 so you go to L.A., for example, the best dance studios, in ballroom, in jazz, in ballet,  
 they're all there.  
 So, so the Latino who live there,  
 they were brought up with all this diversity of different dance schools.” (B 38)

Similarly to what is constructed for the Australian society – mainstream culture as universal and cosmopolitan – the social model and competitive values of the US are also appreciated as “the best people migrate there”. The whole quote, in its linguistic structure, reminds of discourse found in advertising, with its imperative forms and alliterations. The competitive values that have been introduced above reappear here in the perception of the US as an ideal and competitive society. At the same time, the figure of the “melting pot” relates to the monocultural, mainstream construction of cosmopolitanism where people from all countries can participate if they adhere to the competitive values of mainstream society. Values of national scales of Australia and of the US are here regarded as global and universal.

Despite the very low interest in L.A. Salsa by Latin Americans, it has been reported by interviewees that some do attend classes in this style, mainly in private lessons. As a consequence of the evolutionist discourse, this is perceived by this L.A. dance teacher as a sign for the Latin people finally “evolving”, too:

“It’s very much changing.  
 And uhm (1.5)  
 I get a lot of,  
 not a lot, but (0.5)  
 I get a couple of Latinos that come to me for private lessons to learn how to dance L.A.  
 Style. (laughs)  
 You know and some of them say,  
 ‘You know I can dance – but not with Australians.  
 And I wanna learn how to dance’.  
 But it’s really good that they’re coming and they say,  
 ‘Alright, I need to take lessons, cause that’s how everybody is dancing here’. (1)  
 So you see, it has evolved (.)  
 And I mean, I’m sure there’s a lot of Latinos out there that say  
 ‘That’s not Salsa cause Salsa that’s like the cumbia.’  
 Backyard Salsa, cumbia Salsa, right?” (V 1.07)

The acquisition of L.A. style by Latin Americans in Australia is an interesting case of globalised cross-cultural contact, as L.A. Style has been developed in the US by people of Latin descent and is now, in Sydney, transferred from non-Latin to Latin people. Latin Americans who learn L.A. Style Salsa in Sydney do not do this because they want to improve their heritage dancing skills or take part in an ethnic nostalgia but hereby acquire a completely different technique that, for them, belongs to the Australian mainstream sphere. The dance teacher assumes that this is a sign for the “evolution” of Latin people, who finally

have understood that “that’s how everybody is dancing here”. Becoming part of the mainstream society is thus considered to be an evolutionist development.

Yet, she also comments that many Latin people will still insist that L.A. Style Salsa is not Salsa, as they remain in their traditional time frame and still dance traditional Colombian Salsa (which is influenced by the Colombian dance cumbia). The construction of evolution is very influential here and implies a strong hierarchy, as the dance teacher assumes that “it’s really good that they’re coming”, which can – despite its potentially inclusive effects – be considered as a paternalistic attitude towards people of Latin descent.

Equally, the dance school owner reports that the rejection of Latin people is not his intention. However, he does not so much have an interest in the ‘cultural evolution’ of Latin people but more in the money that they spend:

“We don’t exclude Latinós.  
So they’re great (with the music?), with the bar, spend a lot of money.  
That’s always important.  
So we love them.” (B 24)

Again, this interviewee is very frank about his commercial interests. As Latin people spend a lot of money (which he earns), they are welcome to join the parties. The high rise terminal at the end of the first line has a mainly narrative function and expresses that the speaker here wants to hold the ground, as he wants to add an explanation to his statement. It simultaneously has symbolic functions, as this informant of Chinese descent expresses his Australianness with the frequent use of high rise terminals.

Summarising, in this Community of Practice, L.A. Style is considered to be the highest step in a cultural evolution that once started in Latin American countries and has been elaborated in the US context. This concept of evolution is tied to broader discourses, where mainstream culture is perceived as “universal” and also as “cosmopolitan”. This construction of cosmopolitanism is based on the presence of people from different cultural backgrounds; yet, the cultural practices of these people are only recognised as resource or of value if they are saleable.

The invisibilisation of Latin culture, together with the purely financial interest in the presence of people of Latin descent can be interpreted as a particular kind of “globalization” (Ritzer 1993) of Salsa. “Globalization” has been defined as the imperialistic aims of nations, corporations and organisations to standardise consumer culture, as standardised products are more likely to be sold to people from different backgrounds (and thus to a higher number of people). This kind of globalisation renders culture more uniform, and is, accordingly, also described as the “McDonaldization of Culture” (Ritzer 1993). In the case of L.A. Style Salsa, this homogenisation of culture comes in the guise of a discourse of multicultural diversity, which is constructed as “cosmopolitan”. The superficial description of Salsa music and dance as being ‘Latin’ is crucial for the construction of commercialised Salsa as embedded in a

discourse of cultural diversity. As has been noted elsewhere, the commodification of the 'other' is a vital element in many globalised marketing strategies:

[C]ertain kinds of multi-culturalism and internationalism are also essential elements in the project of transnational capital to erase local differences and distinctions in the hope of making all cultural and political units equally susceptible to investment, exploitation, and the sale of mass-produced commodities that make the love of gain and the lure of accumulation the only cultural qualities that count. (Lipsitz 1994:14)

Yet, despite the critique regarding the commercialisation of culture, one must not forget that popular music is always linked to commerce, and the existence of contemporary music culture is strongly dependent on commercialisation, also in 'authentic' places of origin of particular music types. Historically, commodification of Salsa has helped to develop this dance and music into an expression of heritage, but indeed, in the context of L.A. Style Salsa in Sydney, the political significance of Salsa as expressing cultural identity has got lost.

This loss, on the other hand, makes Salsa accessible to people from many different cultural backgrounds. The commercialisation of homogenised Salsa, while excluding Latin people, attracts people from many different minority backgrounds (in my data it is especially the Arab and the Chinese informants who come to mind). One may assume that, within this commercialist Salsa discourse, with its generalised appeal to diversity in performing 'Latin' culture (and not practicing something that is more obviously tied to mainstream culture like e.g. dancing waltz or playing rugby), some dancers can renegotiate their own minority background as "cosmopolitan" (see Ch. 8 for similar observations in the other Sydney CoP). The commercialisation of the cultural practice of Salsa dancing thus makes it ethnically inclusive. While ethnic 'otherness' is constructed as attractive on a superficial and therefore easily attainable level, it is, after all, the dance skill and not the ethnic background according to which belonging is constructed. This construction of belonging as based on skill is closely related to Australian national discourses on citizenship, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

The complex of discourses that has been presented so far – commercialisation/ professional evolution/ mainstream culture and ethnic authenticity – link to the language ideologies of the CoP in intricate and fascinating ways.

#### **7.5. 'SPANISH DOESN'T REALLY COME INTO IT' – THE EFFECTS OF MONOCULTURAL COSMOPOLITANISM ON LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES**

It has been mentioned before that the L.A. Style context is characterised by a stark absence of the Spanish language. It is in this sense comparable to other 'exotic' cultural practices that have been adapted to Western mainstream markets, as, for example, yoga, kung fu or karate. While few people would describe it as remarkable that people who practice yoga do not necessarily speak Hindi or karatekas do not learn Japanese, the perception of an 'absence' of

Spanish in this context relies on the observations that I made in other communities of Salsa. In contrast to these other communities (see e.g. Chs 8 and 10), interest in the Spanish language and in the culture of the places where Salsa originates is very rare among L.A. Style dancers. The only display of Spanish words is on posters or party flyers, where single words in Spanish occur (especially the term *fiesta* (party)). Furthermore, the terms of other Latin dances are kept in Spanish (merengue, bachata, both dances which are also popular with Salsa dancers). Other than that, no usage of Spanish could be documented.

In the dance classes that I attended, the instructions of the dance moves, if they existed before they were adapted to the needs of the “customers” of this variety of the dance, have been translated into English. New moves are given English names. According to one dance instructor, this has the effect that “everybody can understand them”. Using Spanish names for dance moves is actually considered to be discriminatory:

“While I’m teaching (2)  
sometimes, I use Spanish words for a move (1)  
most of the time (.)  
cause I don’t want to come across of saying  
‘you guys need to learn Spanish in order to learn Salsa’,  
I try not to do that (.)  
[...]  
I think nowadays people are able to join much more actively when you give English  
descriptions to the names.” (K 39-40)

Even though the majority of my informants are bilingual themselves, and have native languages such as German, Hungarian, Mandarin, Arabic, etc., it is self-evident for them that everybody speaks English. There are very few instances in the interviews in which an informant mentions their bilingual language skills or their own cultural background as other from the ‘normal’ Anglo-dominated Australian one.

Yet, this normalisation of English is, in a multicultural context as Australia, at the same time, inclusive, as it can be assumed that everybody has access to the English language, in contrast to access to Spanish. Although there are communities of native speakers of Spanish in Sydney, learning Spanish in Australia is a more difficult and also more expensive enterprise than learning English. The audience of Salsa-classes is thus constructed as English-speaking and this teacher actively tries to avoid the link between Salsa and the Spanish language. Simultaneously, he thus invokes an ideology of teaching that aims at minimising the hierarchy between teachers and students as he wants his students to “join actively”. Discourses of social inclusion and equality are thus tied to the usage of the English language in this Australian environment.

Nevertheless, the neglect of the Spanish language is not only based on issues of social inclusion. As the practice of Salsa dancing involves listening to songs in Spanish, it is remarkable that dance teachers and professional dancers, who, for years, spend several hours a day listening to songs in Spanish, do not understand a word of the language. It can be

assumed that this neglect of Spanish is also linked to the discourses that were introduced above, especially the perception of the ‘ethnic’ as “narrow-minded” and the construction of mainstream culture as the most “evolved” form of culture, as, in Australia, mainstream culture is intrinsically linked to the English language.

Most informants are puzzled when I ask about the role of Spanish in the community; interviewees seem to consider the question to be inappropriate. They do not see a point in speaking or learning Spanish, as nobody does so in their social environment. The most common reason that is mentioned for why Spanish might be useful is the ability to understand the lyrics of the songs. But then, it is assumed by a dance instructor,

“They [the songs] all only deal with love anyways, it’s pretty boring.” (V 1.16)

Due to the predominant interest in the dance steps and the performance of the dance, the music and its cultural background are not really of interest and thus stereotypical assumptions about Latin culture guide the interpretation of song lyrics. They “deal with love” and there is nothing interesting about that. The effort of learning Spanish is, consequently, avoided, which is enforced by the fact that native Spanish-speakers do not usually attend the places where L.A. Style is danced.

An attitude that regards Latin people as relatively simple-minded (e.g. being only interested in love) can also be detected in the discourses on the music itself, which, according to the following quote “sounds happy”, even if the contents are sad:

“If you’re listening to Salsa music, they might be singing  
‘oh, I’m so sad, my girlfriend has dumped me, I just lost my house, I live on the  
streets’  
and you listen to it and it sounds so happy.  
The music sounds soooo just like having a party.  
It doesn’t matter what they sing and how sad they are,  
they always sound happy, and happy and exciting.” (B 10)

Although this interviewee is aware that many songs have a sad or even tragic content, the important point is for him not what the musicians of Salsa songs want to express but that (for him) the songs “always sound happy and exciting”. Obviously, for somebody who speaks Spanish, the songs will not always sound happy and exciting, as, indeed, many songs have the topic of unanswered love or, especially older songs, as has been introduced in Chapter 6, have explicit political content. However, for the informant, this is irrelevant as the main focus is on the general, stereotypical perception that Salsa music is “like having a party”. Knowledge of Spanish would actually hinder the pleasure of consumption.

Furthermore, the general attitude of native Spanish-speakers is seen as a cause for non-Spanish speakers not having a motivation to learn the language:

“I don’t know, Latin culture is much more laid back, and easy going

I don't see people (insisting on?) other people speaking Spanish.  
And maybe that's because, I mean,  
look at their style of dancing,  
it's very laid back and it's not very developed.  
The whole thing is very undeveloped,  
so that's maybe, well,  
that's maybe more laid back as well." (V 1.15)

The perception of Latin Americans as "laid back" is inferred from their style of dancing and this is also transposed to them having a general attitude that is seen as "undeveloped" [sic.]. They do not insist on others learning their language – their language ideology, perhaps in contrast to the language ideology of English-speakers, is seen as not developed as they do not ask others to learn the language. The fact that English is highly dominant and hegemonic and that Spanish-speakers in Australia are not in a position to demand others to learn their way of talking is not mentioned as a possible cause for the "laid back" behaviour of native Spanish-speakers. It is interesting to observe here that direct links are made between the figure of evolution – Latin people's dance is not developed – and an attitude that does not demand others to behave like oneself, i.e. to learn the own language. A more 'developed' culture, according to this view, seems more inclined to insist on linguistic assimilation.

Next to social inclusion, the perception of Spanish as irrelevant or even hampering the joy of Salsa and the "laid back", non-missionary attitude of native Spanish-speakers, the fact that Spanish-speakers are not usually met in L.A. Style venues is also regarded as a reason for the low interest in Spanish:

"Spanish doesn't really come into it.  
I don't speak Spanish.  
[B] doesn't Spanish.  
[A] doesn't speak Spanish (2).  
Uhm (1) but the lack of Spanish makes no difference whatsoever.  
Cause we don't actually deal with the Spanish people." (J 7)

For this interviewee, speaking Spanish would only be of interest if the community would encompass people who actually spoke Spanish. As in some other quotes, the interviewee does not differentiate between people from Spain and people from Latin America. The absence is, of course, related to the perception of Latin people as overly traditional and dancing "backyard Salsa", as has been elaborated above. The discourse of L.A. Style as developed and universal in a positive sense hides the fact that Latin Americans may dance differently but that they do not necessarily aim at 'developing' towards mainstream culture.

Yet, some dance teachers also mention that there are Latin Americans who do learn to dance L.A. Style. The following, very revealing quote, an interview conversation passage between me and a dance teacher of Hungarian descent, displays not only that Latin people learning L.A. Style is conceptualised as "evolution" but furthermore shows that this

evolutionist discourse – from “backyard” Latin culture to mainstream Australian “cosmopolitan” culture – is also related to the acquisition of English:

V: “And they [the Latin Americans] have started coming in and started to evolve it as well.

So I mean, there’s more Spanish people coming in.”

B: “But they are like everybody else?”

V: “Just like everybody else.

I mean. They (2)

so I mean, somebody’s got to lead.

And maybe it’s not always the people from Latin culture who lead.”

B: “Yeah. (.) Yeah.”

V: “Bút. It’s, you know.

Basically, it’s a wake up call.

It really is a wake up call.

To the origins of Latin culture, to get them all off to learn English, not left behind.

It’s hilarious to see

and I still see a lot of (envy?)

from some of the people from Latin culture.” (V 1.21)

The language English is here directly related to the discourse on cultural evolution into mainstream culture. Learning English and dancing L.A. Style are both embedded in this discursive construction that relates to time. Latin people “evolve” when they “wake up” and learn English, they should not be “left behind”. The “origins of Latin culture” are conceptualised as being “behind” and this construction here relates to time: they are seen as remaining in the past.

Interestingly, the passage also mirrors a paternalistic attitude that has been described above. Latin people seem to need somebody who “gets them all off to learn English”. The interviewee also expresses her supportive attitude by saying that Latins should not be “left behind” (maybe also an intertextual reference to the No Child Left Behind Act that was introduced in the US in 2001; see U.S. Department of Education 2001), somebody has to help them to “evolve”. As can be inferred, those who help Latin people to “evolve” are those who are in the “lead”. Again, competitive capitalist norms are adopted and projected onto Salsa dance (“I mean, somebody’s got to lead”) and in the case of the L.A. Style community, it is, obviously, not the “people from Latin culture” who lead. The fact that Salsa – which is still attributed to Latin culture – in this community is now led by non-Latins is nevertheless perceived as “hilarious”. This description relates to the contradictory stance that the community has towards authenticity. Although it is explained that Latin people have not evolved sufficiently and that others now lead, this is still considered, in a way, to be unusual. It is “hilarious” that the origins of Latin culture now have to be taught by others, as they, due to their unprofessional attitudes and “narrow minded” mentality of ethnicity, have stuck in the past. The perception of Latin people as remaining in the past is confirmed by the observation that they “still” envy the non-Latin leaders but the adjective “still” implies that, if

the evolution goes on, they will eventually also understand that mainstream culture and L.A. Style are ‘better’ and ‘more evolved’ forms of behaviour.

The “monolingual mindset of Australia” (Clyne 2005), about which will be elaborated in Chapter 9, is indicated here. Yet, English is not only related to Australia, as its official language. Next to participating in the national community, the acquisition of English is also tied to an evolutionist, capitalist-competitive discourse. Similar to some public discourses in Australia, multilingualism is constructed as irrelevant. Becoming a monolingual English-speaker, on the one hand, is a goal in becoming a member of the Australian community. On the other hand, the L.A. Style CoP is also part of a transnational community and, on this transnational level, it also makes use of English, as can be seen in the following quote. When I asked a dance teacher whether the language of the international L.A. congresses in Puerto Rico and L.A. is English or Spanish, he replied:

K: “Ah. (.) in the congress? They speak English.”

B: “And in L.A. as well?”

K: “Yeah, yeah,

and the reason for that is, you get the congresses,

it’s a lot more dancers from different countries (2)

so, a lot more dancers from different countries,

so it’s important for them to communicate, too (2)

If you’re an instructor at an international congress,

I think it’s very very important that you speak English.” (K 16-17)

The function of English as international *lingua franca* is emphasised here, and, as in many other contexts, English serves as tool of communication among people of different language backgrounds. So, by acquiring the English language and L.A. dancing skills, Latin Americans (and all others) can, simultaneously, become part of the Australian mainstream culture and become members of a “universalist”, “cosmopolitan” English-speaking competitive culture, where ethnic identity and other languages than English are considered a thing of the past.

Which of these scales is more influential in the creation of the hegemony of English – the national or the transnational scale – is difficult to tell but the motivation to learn English in the Australian case is interwoven with global, capitalist discourses. As Androutsopoulos has pointed out (Androutsopoulos 2007:221), in analysing the role of English in advertising, it can be observed that ethnosymbolism, English as signifying British or American culture, is usually not present if English is used in promoting goods on non-English markets. English is here used to indicate novelty, modernity, internationalism, hedonism, fun, etc. The construction of English as ‘modern’ or ‘up-to-date’ is also detectable in the above quote, where English is not described in its function as ethnic signifier but as tied to the discourse of cultural ‘evolution’ that exists within this Salsa context, which, at the same time, is intrinsically tied to Australian national discourse.

The English language thus seems to be connected to ideologies of commercialism and capitalist success, which operate on a transnational scale. The identity that is performed



through the usage of English is not an ethnic identity but an identity tied to an evolutionist discourse of capitalism, and, at the same time, national inclusion and international communication: “The world language par excellence is English, and in many parts of the world, English is indeed semiotized as being the emblem of international mobility, success, and prosperity” (Blommaert 2007:13).

Invisible, in the whole context of L.A. Style in Sydney, are the many indigenous languages of Australia and the fact that most of the members of the CoP are actually (at least) bilingual themselves. English seems to be the unmarked norm that functions in a discursive environment that promotes economic success. English, in this discourse, is so dominant that it is not actually apparent, as speaking English here means to be ‘normal’. Spanish, although omnipresent, seems to function more like a brand, rather than as expression of culture or identity, as in words and expressions like *fiesta* or *Una noche de Salsa* convey ‘the Latin touch’. The language practices regarding Spanish indeed remind of marketing strategies of multinational companies such as Bacardi for the “Bacardi feeling” (Bacardi image campaign 2008), which are not accidentally part of the success story of Salsa in Sydney. The whole CoP is thus related to a global capitalist discourse in which ethnic identity is subordinated to the logic of commercialism and commodification. Clearly, the language ideology of this community is strongly influenced by transnational scales, which, however, are interlocked with the national scale that promotes English as part of middle class, mainstream values. It must be mentioned that the language ideology of the L.A. CoP has very inclusive elements and does not, with the exception of Latin people, discriminate along ethnic lines. The focus on commercialism, to which the English language is tied, is thus not a racist discourse; rather, social hierarchies are built on the ability to adopt competitive values and to perform.

Nevertheless, despite the dominance of English, there are some interview passages with contradictory attitudes towards the authentic ‘roots’ of Salsa and also with regard to ideologies of language. As has been mentioned, there are songs in Salsa that are not in Spanish. Although one might expect that the language of the lyrics should, as a consequence of the attitudes towards Spanish, be irrelevant, this is not the case, as this Salsa DJ explains. He, however, assumes that this has not to do with issues of authenticity but with the intrinsic qualities of the Spanish language:

J: “I think the (lyrics?) are much more easy to intonate on the rhythm in Spanish.  
I think the Spanish language (suits?) it much more.  
And the high pitched voice that they use.  
They (use?) a very high voice.  
And the chorus corresponds.  
It just suits Spanish much better.  
I’ve got English Salsa songs, which are really good.  
But it doesn’t sound right.  
It sounds stupid.”  
B: “I never”/  
J: /”There’s a lot of French Salsa, African Salsa.”

B: "I know African Salsa but I've never heard English Salsa."

J: "I have one tune, they're really good songs. Great rhythms, great chorus section, great drums but it doesn't sound right. It just doesn't sound right. It sounds weird." (J 8-9)

Despite the overall refusal of the necessity to learn or speak Spanish in this Community of Practice, Spanish is considered the appropriate medium for the communication of lyrics. Spanish is a syllable-timed language, in contrast to English, which is a stress-timed language (Becker and Bieswanger 2006:ch.2), and it has been argued that the rhythm of a language can have an influence on the rhythm of music and thus also on song patterns (see e.g. Huron and Ollen 2003, Patel and Daniele 2003). Yet, more important for the use of Spanish in Salsa songs is that the audience is generally used to the language, and, furthermore, that a certain appeal to the 'other' is also important in this context, although this is sometimes denied. As the commodification of Salsa, also in this CoP, partly relies on the 'exotic' touch of Salsa that co-constructs a discourse of ethnic inclusion and multiculturalism (see above), it is logical that, at least in the lyrics of songs, the Spanish language is not completely dispensed with. Yet, this happens only in a very limited sense. It is possible to listen to Salsa songs without understanding them; it is only the symbolic value of Spanish as ethnically 'other' that is important but not the contents. Linguistic diversity is here a merely aesthetic and folkloristic supplement to the usual linguistic landscape (compare Römhild 2003:13). The mainstream market adopts what can be consumed easily – single words and the sound of a language in songs. The enterprise of learning a language, which requires a lot more effort, is not so ready-made for consumption and thus not part of the marketing strategies.

The superficial appeal to the Spanish language can, in some instances, also be found in the actual language use of informants. In the following quote, the informant (the business-oriented dance school owner) proves his expertise by the usage of Spanish pronunciation of dance names

"So it's for me, when I listen to it,  
I know what is *Salsa* [Salsa]  
what is *samba* [zamba],  
what is *bachata* [batʃata]  
you know, ah, I can tell the difference." (B 26)

The pronunciation of the back vowel [a] in *Salsa*, *Samba* and *Bachata* come close to a native pronunciation in that they are pronounced more openly than in English. Secondly, the interviewee pronounces *Samba* with a voiced sibilant [z] in *Samba*. This seems to be a form of hypercorrection, as *Samba* is pronounced with an unvoiced sibilant in Spanish and Portuguese and [s] followed by [a] would be pronounced with an unvoiced sibilant in English, too. Furthermore, the pronunciation of the letters <ch> as an affricate [tʃ] in

*Bachata* also indicates that the interviewee tries to produce a 'correct' Spanish pronunciation of these dance names. Although Spanish is generally seen as irrelevant, language crossing (Rampton 1995b) in single instances, such as names for dances, seems to function as the demonstration of expert knowledge. This confirms the contradictory nature of the role of authenticity in globalised forms of culture. As has been discussed above, there is a tension between ideologies of ethnic egalitarianism and of ethnic essentialism and this tension can also be detected in language use. However, without doubt, it can be claimed that the hegemony of English is very strong in the case of L.A. Style Salsa. Spanish has mainly symbolic functions, which do not necessarily express ethnicity but are appropriated according to a market logic.

Relating the language ideologies of the discourses of the L.A. Style community to the research questions developed in Chapter 4, it can, first of all, be noted that the deconstruction of language, the deconstruction of reified notions of language as constructed in a national era, could not be documented in this environment. English is seen as an entity, a 'normalised' medium of communication, while Spanish is also seen as an entity but related to 'other' people, places and times. It is only the use of Spanish as 'branding' the activities of the CoP as exotic and 'Latin' that shows a certain disentanglement of language from ethnicity. Language crossing to Spanish on L.A. Style marketing articles does not necessarily make reference to ethnicity but to a commodified form of lively, exotic and happy party-times. In this sense, it is a form of language crossing that questions national language ideology, as a language is here no longer related to a group. However, members of the community show no signs of a conscious use of several languages that would question the perception of language as coming into being in the form of bounded, static systems that basically express ethnic difference. The perception of English as language and other languages as supplement for marketing strategies or for private realms reminds of pre-modern times, where only Latin was considered a 'real' language (see 3.3.2.). Whether this perception will dominate in future discourses on language cannot be hypothesised on the basis of the data studied in this thesis.

In discussing the second research question – discourses from which *scales* influence local language ideologies – it is most central that English is tied to several scales at the same time. On the local level, language ideologies refusing Spanish relate to the construction of the local L.A. Style community that is contrasted with other local communities, above all local ethnic communities. Lack of interest in the Spanish language is related to the desire to differentiate from 'ethnic' cultures, which implies interesting constructions of time that perceive 'ethnic' culture as belonging to the past. The use of English expresses 'normal', middle class Australian (national) identity and ideologies of ethnic inclusiveness, which also can be attributed to the national scale. Linking 'ethnic' culture to a time in the past is also based in the development of Australian policy discourse, where the celebration of multiculturalism is related to 1970s and 1980s social discourses (see Ch. 9 and Lo Bianco 2001). Simultaneously, English expresses belonging to a transnational sphere. This transnational scale is

characterised by commercialist discourse and globalised capitalism, to which the English language is connected (for further discussion on this connection, see e.g. Piller 2010). Thus, for the case of L.A. Style Salsa in Sydney, it can be observed that the polycentric (see 4.3.) complex of the local, the national and the transnational scale all create and mutually enforce the construction of English as a 'normal', 'up-to-date' medium of communication that is associated with positive images of success.

The previous documentation shows that ideologies of language are deeply embedded in other discourses on culture and community. An interesting finding here is that the symbolic functions of language in this transnational context seem less tied to spatial or political entities (countries, regions, etc.) but more to capitalist ideology and constructions of time, where the figure of 'evolution' constructs English as related to the highest rank within this 'evolution'. Accordingly, ideologies of language, identity and time intersect strongly with social hierarchies.

The intersection of social hierarchy with language ideologies can also be observed in the other Sydney Salsa Community of Practice; yet, different discourses on authenticity and cosmopolitanism have here led to different constructions of language, multilingualism and globalisation. These will be discussed in the following chapter.

## 8. COSMOPOLITANISM AND AUTHENTICITY – THE CUBAN STYLE SALSA COMMUNITY

It is not too easy to find the Cuban Style dance school, as it is located in a little shabby lane close to the railway station. From the outside, it does not look like a dance studio but more like an old, no longer used warehouse. There is a sign on the door, made from cardboard, where someone wrote down the name of the school. When I enter the dance school, I am surprised how bright it is from the inside, as it all looked so gloomy from the outside. My informant is giving a private dance lesson, so I sit down on an old sofa next to the entrance and watch the lesson for a while. It is nice to sit here and listen to the music and watch the dance, while the morning sun is shining through the rooflights. Finally, my interview partner welcomes me and greets me with kisses on the cheeks. With her long hair and colourful dress, and with her whole way of talking and moving, she makes a very lively and also a bit of an artsy impression but I think that it is nice to see someone who seems to have made a living from a real passion.

(Field note passage, 24.09.2007)

My first contact with the Cuban Style dance school, which is the focus of the second Community of Practice that I introduce here, is through a tiny flyer that was attached to a signpost, close to the Central Railway Station. As can be inferred from the field notes above, the dance studio is located in a loft in a small and dark street close to where I found the flyer. The area is a poor neighbourhood that is most likely to be gentrified within the next years due to its central location. It is typical for a trendy area that is inhabited by students, artists and the like. The atmosphere of the school provokes stereotypical images of the poor but passionate dancers as found in Hollywood movies such as *Flashdance*. The logo of the school, a red star, relates to Cuba and its communist regime; but but seems to be used primarily because the school offers classes in Cuban Style Salsa. The first impression of the school links to the fact that Salsa dancing here is related to very different ideologies of culture, politics and language than what has been documented for the L.A. Style environment.

First of all, Cuban Style Salsa in Sydney is tied to different attitudes towards culture, competition and commercialism. This is also indexically expressed by the dance style itself, as understood by dancers. While L.A. Style concentrates on intricate foot choreographies and showy dance moves, Cuban Style Salsa focuses on the movements of the body as a whole. Dance teachers emphasise that everybody has their own way of moving. Complicated steps and turns, as produced in L.A. Style Salsa, are also found but “holistic body movements”, as a teacher of this style describes it, are very important. Furthermore, the couple engages in circular movements while dancing, whereas L.A. Style is danced ‘on the line’ (see Ch. 7). Cuban Style, in contrast, is not as regulated and allows for more individual variation. It is fascinating to observe that a discourse that expresses ‘being relaxed’ and that partly rejects competitive mainstream values, is not only displayed in verbal contents of utterances but also

found in the choice of location and its decoration; and it furthermore has an effect on dance movements (see, however, 8.3. for further discussion. For an introduction to multimodality, although more concerned with visual rather than bodily expression, see Kress and Leeuwen 2001). This relates to the theoretical discussion on discourse analysis (see Ch. 2), where it is conceived that a discourse is not only the verbal utterances of social actors but also embraces the social structures, institutions and objects that create certain ways of knowing, being and acting in the world (see also Pennycook 2010 for a discussion of the terms discourse and practice).

However, concerning the presentation of culture and language discourse in the Cuban Style Community of Practice, the following chapter is, as in the case of L.A. Style, not a general observation on Cuban Style worldwide, but a very local affair that relies heavily on local boundaries and national discourses.

### **8.1. CUBAN STYLE IN SYDNEY**

There are only two schools in Sydney that teach Cuban Style Salsa and one of these schools is here described as the centre of the Cuban Style community<sup>58</sup>. It is the special feature of this school that it offers classes in Cuban Style; nevertheless it also offers lessons in L.A. Style. The founder of the school has a background in European dance and it can be assumed, as L.A. Style is much more popular in Sydney, that economic pressure furthers the interest to cater for as wide an audience as possible. During the research phase in this context, however, I concentrated on the classes in Cuban Style and on teachers and students of Cuban Salsa, as, during the time of my fieldwork, L.A. Style classes here were not very popular. The focus was particularly on the differences between ideologies of Cuban Style and of L.A. Style affiliates. Again, I have to note that I was not aware of these sometimes very strong ideological differences before I started the research so that it is rather safe to say that the boundaries and distinctions of the two introduced discourses are not based on my own pre-assumptions or potential suggestive questions in the fieldwork or in interviews.

Concerning the community's relation to other local, national and global communities, it is first of all interesting to remember that students of L.A. Style with whom I spoke were not aware that there are other styles than L.A.; they thus do not know Cuban Style. From the looks and symbols, the location and the dance style, the Cuban Style community has to be considered a sub-culture in the Sydney context and could be described as 'minority' or 'marked' Salsa, in contrast to L.A. Style. However, professional L.A. dancers do know that different styles exist. It was the L.A. Style teacher of Hungarian descent, who I introduced in the previous chapter, who referred me to the owner of the Cuban Style dance school when I asked about people who dance Salsa and speak Spanish. On the professional level, there are contacts between the different schools, especially through public events like the Latin Fiesta.

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<sup>58</sup> Note again that there are of course people in Sydney who dance Cuban Salsa and have not learned it in this school and therefore may not belong to the community.

The Fiesta is a festival organised by the council of Sydney that promotes Latin culture and takes place annually at Darling Harbour in the centre of the city. It is supported by the Latin American communities of Sydney but was primarily introduced in order to attract people to Darling Harbour, an entertainment district in the centre of Sydney, during a long weekend in October, where a lot of restaurants, cafes, bars and shops wait for customers (personal communication with the organisers). Furthermore, there are professional relationships between the different communities by dance teachers, who sometimes work in different dance schools, and also through events like concerts of famous Salsa bands, which attract people from different Salsa backgrounds. Yet, lay dancers from my data set usually do not mix among communities and the places where Cuban Style dancers are found are very different from the places where L.A. Style dancers go. More on the separation between the two communities will be said in a separate section (8.3.).

The construction of a global Salsa community is much less evident here than in the L.A. community. As there are no global competitions of Cuban Style, or at least none which were attended or mentioned by the people of my data set, the relationships that cross national boundaries are not as institutionalised as in the L.A. Style community. The transnational relations between different Cuban Style communities depend on individuals who have contact with each other and, next to that, on travels to Cuba that are made by many Cuban Style enthusiasts. In this community, Cuba is seen as the authentic place of origin of the dance and it is perceived as almost imperative to visit Cuba and to learn to dance from Cubans if one is to become a professional dancer or teacher. Of course, this importance given to the location Cuba also has to do with the history of Cuba, where a long period of isolation brought about a relatively independent development of this particular dance style. As there are no commercial Salsa congresses in Cuba and as it is usually still difficult for Cubans to come to Australia, the transnational connections in the local Cuban Style scene of Sydney are much more random and individualised as in the L.A. Style context.

On the local level, there are connections across ethnic boundaries that are different from the L.A. Style community. While it has been elaborated above that L.A. Style discourses seem to obstruct the membership of people of Latin descent, these are present in the Cuban Style community. Members of the Cuban Style community with Latin descent are primarily international students who have come to Sydney with a student visa and wish to either improve their English or to study. Except for one, the Latin American informants I spoke to all plan to go back to South America in the near future and do not intend to stay in Australia. Next to that, there are also some participants who are Australians with Latin background who have grown up in Sydney. They, however, represent a small minority and I spoke only to one such informant. Thus, the Cuban Style community differs from the L.A. community in intermingling consciously with people from Latin cultural backgrounds who openly display this background. As the performance of cultural practices and also language use of ethnic 'other' people in this environment plays an important role in its success, the CoP links to the

notion of metrolingualism, which “describes the ways in which people of different and mixed backgrounds use, play with and negotiate identities through language” and “does not assume connections between language, culture, ethnicity, nationality and geography ...” (Pennycook 2010:85, see 4.2. and below).

Concerning the outward appearance of dancers, there is an obvious difference between L.A. and Cuban Style Salsa. Clothing is a lot more casual in the Cuban CoP than in the L.A. CoP. The dressy style of the L.A. community contrasts with the jeans and t-shirts that are worn in the Cuban Style context. The casual clothing, the slightly shabby impression of the location, and the red stars that are found on flyers and posters in connection with the interest in Cuban dance express a more relaxed atmosphere and are also related to a left-wing discourse, in which commercialism is criticised and communist/socialist ideologies are approached with a relatively positive attitude.

The impression that left-wing ideologies are adhered to in this environment partly relies on observations regarding the visual design of advertising material and of the decoration in places where the style is danced. The webpage of the school, for example, although professionally constructed, has a very different design than the site of the L.A. Style school. This is mainly through the use of different colours, where red and white dominate. Furthermore, the red star, which functions as the logo of the school, expresses an alignment with Cuba. Although there is no mentioning of any political ideology, and although it cannot be assumed that this is a conscious intention of the designers, the colour and the star relate to communist visual discourse. Interestingly, next to the entrance of the school, a huge poster is found, depicting the Argentinian Marxist guerrilla fighter Che Guevara, who was a central figure in the Cuban Revolution in 1957/1958. This also indicates a positive attitude towards socialist discourse, although the image of Che has been exploited commercially, too.

The language used on the flyers and on the little posters is, as in the L.A. Style context, in English and the amount of Spanish words is also comparable. It is only single language ‘tokens’ like *fiesta* or *noche* that are in Spanish. The advertising material of the school, except for the professionally designed webpage, is rather amateurish. As has been mentioned, my first contact with the school was through a small flyer that had been posted on a signpost. This flyer was a black and white copy of an invitation to the school and its parties, obviously not created by a professional visual designer. All other flyers and posters detected during the fieldwork were of the same mediocre quality. Although it could be assumed that this style has been produced on purpose in order to attract a particular audience, it has to be noted that the school is commercially less successful than the school that I introduced in the L.A. Style context and has less students. Nevertheless, it seems that the low quality of the marketing material is also connected to the intentions of the dance school owner, which are very distinct from those of the L.A. Style owner. While the L.A. Style school spends a lot of money on professional marketing and advertising material, which consequently are of a very high quality, it has no rooms of its own and hires the rather sterile gym of a council community



centre to conduct its lessons. The Cuban Style school is situated in a ragged loft, which, despite its relatively bad condition, will be more expensive to rent than a room in a community centre. Obviously, the commercial strategies of the two schools are different and are aimed at different audiences.

Similar to the L.A. Style classes, the dance classes that I have attended were given by two dance teachers, a male and a female teacher. Both have a Cuban background and have a strong Spanish accent in their use of English. When I attend my first session, the female dance teacher greets me with kisses on the cheeks and she also bids farewell in the same manner. The dance session is not part of a course but is a casual 'drop-in' class, which means that one only has to pay if one attends. This option does not exist in the other school. There are only seven to eleven other people next to me (it was more than 40 in the L.A. class). The class starts with some exercises that ease the body. Movements are made, with the arms and the hips, which are unusual for a Western audience but are common in Cuban dance. I have difficulties practicing these movements and feel a bit awkward. To me, these movements have strong sexual connotations and I have difficulties identifying with the type of persona that I feel is performed through these moves. After the introductory phase, dance turn patterns are taught. The teacher couple first shows the new moves, afterwards all couples dance them together several times without music. When everybody has understood the move, a practice phase, in which the new turn is exercised with music, follows. As in the L.A. Style class, partners change every few minutes so that every woman and every man will dance with each other and the dance teachers also take part in this. So, in contrast to the other school, every participant has the chance to dance with one of the teachers several times. This ensures that everybody will, at least theoretically, have understood the pattern.

I enjoy this type of class much more than the L.A. Style class. First of all, this has to do with my own identity position in 'normal' life, which is closer to this 'alternative' type of Salsa. Secondly, the class is much easier to follow and the dance teachers make the impression that they are really motivated to teach the moves to everybody. I feel closer to the students of this class whose looks and clothing, are more similar to my own, although they are from a very wide range of age groups (20 to approximately 60 years of age). Yet, in terms of ethnic composition, it seems less inclusive as most students here have a 'white' background.

The dance teachers chat in the class and make a lot of jokes. It is also helpful that the dance teachers, if they are not dancing, clap the rhythm of the basic beat with their hands so that it is easier to keep within the rhythm with the footsteps. The connection between the basic rhythm of the music and the steps is explicitly elaborated and explained. Sometimes, however, it is difficult to follow the rhythm, as the different rooms of the dance school are so close to each other that the music can be heard of the dance lesson that is simultaneously taking place in one of the other rooms. The dance teachers make humorous comments on this and the students seem to be willing to accept the distracting background noise. It seems

to me that the ethnic background of the teachers, and their way of dealing with the problem, motivates the students to go along with a rather unfavourable condition. The imperfect state of the rooms seems to add to the 'authentic' touch of the school.

The dance parties that the school organises take place either in the dance school itself or in a bar in the Central Business District of Sydney. It is not a bar that is built for the purpose of a Salsa party and looks rather like a normal pub. The audience of the parties is the same as in the classes. The posh apparel of the L.A. context is not worn here but, as in the classes, people are dressed 'normally' and not differently for the parties than for having a coffee. Some women might wear a more feminine dress, I see a lot have skirts and dresses, but I cannot say whether this is different to what the dancers normally wear. From the people I meet here, dance with and talk to, all have a university degree or are university students. I also meet several European travellers who stay in Australia on a Work and Travel Visa (see [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) for an overview of different visa categories). As in many L.A. Style parties, there is a basic introductory Salsa class before the party starts, given by the owner of the dance school. It is not different from the other dance lesson but usually less people attend.

Concerning language use, I felt truly relieved when I first came to the school. After I had become anxious that the phenomenon of people being enthusiastic about Spanish might not exist in Australian Salsa communities, I had been referred to this school, particularly to the dance school owner. The owner of the dance school is fluent in Spanish and this ability is very important for her own identity construction. Furthermore, the presence of native Spanish-speakers means that Spanish is an often-heard language in the school. The dance school also collaborates with a language school, which gives discounts to students who learn Salsa in the Cuban Style school.

The language use and the popularity of Spanish is tied to other discourses on the evaluation of the globalisation of culture, authenticity and a particular construction of cosmopolitanism. Before I introduce the language ideologies of the context in more detail in section 8.5., I will, as in the previous chapter, first introduce more general cultural ideologies in detail, and then link them to local discourses on language. I start the introduction of ideologies on culture with the estimations of the reasons for Salsa's worldwide success, which to some extent differ from the estimations found in the L.A. community, and which form a good introduction to the discourses of the Cuban Community of Practice. This is followed by an introduction of the binary oppositions that the members of the Cuban Style community construct between L.A. Style and Cuban Style Salsa. Afterwards, a section each is devoted to the community's constructions of authenticity and cosmopolitanism, which are closely intermingled. Finally, the language ideologies of the Cuban Style community are presented and discussed against the background of the introduced cultural ideologies.

## 8.2. MULTICULTURAL FUN AND LEFT-WING IDEOLOGY – CUBAN SALSA’S SUCCESS

Ultimately, all Salsa styles share a lot of similarities; it is thus not surprising that several common features of the dance are seen as positive in different communities, engaged with dancing different styles. As in L.A. Style, the bodily experience is considered a positive aspect also of Cuban Style dancing and, above all, the pleasure of dancing and the opportunity to make new friends is frequently mentioned as one reason why Salsa is so popular, as is illustrated in this quote from an interview with a lay dancer:

“If you do it, you automatically meet new people.  
I would say.  
And I have the feel that it’s this (1.5)  
happy sort of (0.5) you know (0.5)  
good-natured fun feeling.  
It’s just, it’s a lot of fun.” (A 19-20)

Regarding the “fun” aspect, Cuban Style Salsa does not differ much from L.A. Style. However, in the Cuban CoP, the commercial gains through the teaching of Salsa steps and through organising Salsa parties are never mentioned as a reason for Salsa’s global success.

In alignment with the ‘alternative’ impression that is given by the visual surroundings of the school and the parties, the political background of the history of Salsa is also declared as an important aspect of Salsa by some of the community’s members. For a dance teacher of Chilean descent, who partly grew up in Sydney, this political background is central. He explains how he learned Salsa during a university strike in Santiago de Chile from a Venezuelan friend. Due to this experience with Salsa music, he is keen to emphasise that Salsa dancing is not only about the steps:

R: “So for me, it has (1)  
it’s more than just the dancing.  
It’s more the cultural side (0.5)  
and I’ve always obviously had that (2)  
ah, strive for that (2)  
political (0.5) uhm, connection with Cuba as well.  
And that’s all about the cultural side of Cuba as well.  
And as you know, the cultural side of Cuba is (important?)”  
B: “So for you Salsa has a kind of a political?”/  
R: /“and cultural”/  
B: /“yeah yeah”/  
R: /“meaning”/  
B: “yeah”/  
R: /“so that’s very important.” (R 4)

It is here interesting to observe how the interviewee first mentions the “cultural side”, and then relates the cultural aspect of Salsa dancing to a political background, after two long hesitating pauses of two seconds. I interpret the pauses and hesitation markers “ah” and “uhm” in line 2 to 4 as an expression of the precariousness of talking about political issues if

the political ideology of one's interlocutor is unknown. At the very beginning of the interview, the interviewee had mentioned that his parents had fled Pinochet's military regime in the 1970s, which hinted to his own political positioning; nevertheless, he was first very cautious to openly express his political alignment. In the above quote, the interview had started just four minutes ago, the interviewee does not know how I, his interlocutor, relate to political beliefs and is very careful in mentioning his positive attitude towards Cuban culture and political ideology. His experience and clear political stance may not be representative for the whole Community of Practice, but his central position as dance teacher of the school influences his way of teaching, and consequently his student's attitudes towards Salsa and thus the whole discourse within the school. The left-wing discourse to which the school is loosely tied, however, not only relies on the attitudes of this one dance teacher. People with a certain political ideology are more likely to end up dancing Cuban Style in the first place, as the teacher comments:

“So I've seen a lot of people that have some kind of connection to Cuba's political culture or whatever, the way they think and they sing and dance, they sort of pick up this style more.” (R 12)

Concerning the syntactical structure of the quote, it is here unusual that the personal pronoun “they” in lines 4 and 5 refers to the people of Cuba, while, in line 6, it refers to the people in Australia who “pick up” Cuban Salsa. I infer this from the fact that the people who learn Salsa in Australia usually do not sing and it is thus obvious from the content that it must be the Cuban people who are here referred to.

Despite a “connection to Cuba's political culture”, the political ideology that is transported through Cuban style, and to which a certain section of the Australian population feels attracted, does not necessarily imply that people embrace the ideals of communism. The left-wing culture that is adhered to in this CoP is not concerned with an actual struggle for political change or a genuine appeal to the Cuban communist regime, at least there is no mentioning of this in my data set. Rather, it seems, Cuban culture as denoting some romanticised ‘other’ world is connected to left-wing discourse as it takes shape in the national context of Australia and a central part of this discourse is a positive attitude towards multiculturalism.

In Australia and during its history, multicultural ideology is a crucial aspect of political life (see also Ch. 9) and, as in many other countries, an element in the construction of left-wing positions that counter nationalist, monocultural ideology. In the case of Sydney Cuban Salsa, political ideologies of a generalised global left-wing culture are evaluated positively but it seems that, instead of following communist ideals, this left-wing culture finds expression in an appeal to multiculturalism (which also relates to the construction of cosmopolitanism, as

discussed below). Next to Salsa being an ethnically 'other' practice itself, the mixing of people of different cultural backgrounds is therefore described as a highly important aspect of the popularity of the dance:

“You can meet people of, of different (0.5) different cultures,  
it's sort of a common point,  
for example, Russians, I'm in a class with somebody who's Russian, Lebanese (1)  
and I was born in South Africa, you know,  
uhm, people from the Asian countries,  
I think it's a sort of a common point between a lot of different cultures.” (G 19)

With such a statement, this dance student expresses not only an evaluation of her local Salsa community but simultaneously positions herself as adhering to a particular Australian political position, where the presence of other cultures is highly valued. It is here particularly important to remark that the interviewee mentions the presence of Lebanese as a positive aspect of Salsa communities, followed by a short pause that leaves the listener room to notice this mentioning. Lebanese, in certain public discourses of Australia, are regarded as those who are reluctant to integrate into Australian society and who, generally, make problems (comparable to 'the Turks' in Germany). Inter-ethnic tensions in Australia have been debated nation-wide but also across the world particularly since the so-called 'Cronulla Riot', where in 2005 white Australians and people of Arab descent formed two parties in a mob riot of about 1500 people on Cronulla beach south of Sydney (see e.g. *Sydney Morning Herald* 2005). While the official policies of Australia are ethnically inclusive (see e.g. Australian Government 2003), monocultural and racist discourses exist in Australia, too (see e.g. the nationalist party <http://www.onenation.com.au/>).

As communism is not an issue that is actually debated in the Australian context, Cuban Salsa, its multicultural composition and its connotations as being left-wing, seem to be applied to construct a political identity that is positioned against nationalist and sometimes also racist discourses that exist in Australia. Appreciating the presence of Lebanese people in the CoP can be regarded as an expression of a counter-discourse to nationalist, monocultural sentiments. Another interviewee also mentions that there is a “big divide” in Australia between people of two different mentalities — open and multicultural versus nationalist, provincial. The first political position is related to the construction of a certain type of cosmopolitan identity, which will be discussed in section 8.5., and which also links to ideologies of multilingualism (see 8.6.).

The multicultural nature of the Salsa CoP is commented upon frequently in interviews with members of the community. Although Latin music as multicultural and hybrid is a discourse that can be found worldwide (see e.g. Farley 1999), in the context of Australia this discourse of cultural fusion is intrinsically related to the national history of Australia, as the migration policies of the country brought along a relatively early recognition of the multicultural nature of its population. Multiculturalism has been a topic of Australian public

education and public policies for more than thirty years (see e.g. Australian Government 2003 and Ch. 9). Statements on “different cultures” and multiculturalism in the Cuban CoP thus link to national discourses in the Australian context and it is certainly not accidental that a positive evaluation of multiculturalism and hybridity is here tied to global left-wing discourses that, albeit only in a very general sense, conceive positively of communist Cuba.

A tacit political positioning of many Cuban Style dancers is not only related to discourses on the ethnic composition of national groups. Many Cuban Style dancers also object to commercialist attitudes, as they are found in L.A. Style. A positive attitude towards Cuba and towards Latin American cultures usually implies a negative attitude towards US imperialism and capitalist values (see also 6.1. on the history of anti-US discourse in Latin America). Although these discourses do not always find an explicit expression in the utterances of interviewees, an anti-commercialist stance can be detected in the positions that Cuban Style dancers embrace in contrast to L.A. Style dancers<sup>59</sup>. Members of the Cuban Style community thus often express a determined dislike of L.A. Style and the boundary constructions towards the values of the L.A. community seem to be a vital aspect of identity formation in this Community of Practice (see below).

As in the observations of the L.A. Style community, it is the combination of discourses from several scales that are responsible for the portrayed construction of Cuban Salsa as multicultural and left-wing. A transnational anti-capitalist political discourse, a national discourse on multiculturalism and the local boundary towards L.A. Style Salsa co-construct local ideologies, and the differentiation on the local level seems to be particularly important in this polycentric discourse.

### **8.3. LOCAL ANIMOSITIES WITH TRANSNATIONAL TIES – ‘IF YOU WOULD DANCE L.A., THEN I WOULDN’T DANCE WITH YOU’**

As it turned out from this research, members of Cuban Style and of L.A. Style usually follow clearly distinct ideologies concerning several cultural and linguistic issues, which result in Cuban Style dancers having a sometimes very strong negative attitude towards dancers of L.A. Style. When the dance teacher of Chilean descent is asked about the nature of Cuban Salsa, he explains the intrinsic connections between Cuban culture and dance, also talks about its African roots, and then mentions that there is also an ‘other’ style:

R: “Then you have, on the other side (.)  
the other,  
which is the L.A. style. (1)  
which I respect (.)  
but I personally don’t like.  
I just think that it (.) takes away a lot of the (.) the (.) roots  
and, and the rest of it, where Salsa comes from (0.5)

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<sup>59</sup> It has to be noted that this ‘anti-capitalist’ discourse takes place within a capitalist culture and therefore does not mean that the Cuban Style community rejects capitalism altogether. Unavoidably, the school is also engaged in capitalist practices and partially also profits financially from its alignment with anti-commercialist discourses.

and tries to make it, um, globalise, ah, it globalises it.”  
B: “Mhmmhm.”  
R: “So, for example, you see L.A. Style Salsa just everywhere,  
it’s like, it spreads.  
It’s not, it’s plastic.  
Without disrespecting it,  
it is just, just like separating the dance,  
but it (1) doesn’t have the soul.” (R 12)

Here, the interviewee is careful in elaborating his position. In claiming that he “respects” “the other side” and by explaining that he does not want to “disrespect” the other style, he produces a discourse of objectivism. By creating a distance to his own opinion, he legitimises his position. This position objects that L.A. Style Salsa “takes away the roots”, renders invisible the cultural background of the dance, and also says that the style is “globalised”. It can be assumed that his utterance links to a critique of globalisation, which accuses the global commodification of culture of leading to cultural homogenisation (see also Ch. 4). Interestingly, he also uses the word “plastic” in describing the style, which is also found in the very famous song of Rubén Bladés and Willie Colón that has been introduced in Chapter 6. “Plastic” here denotes a straightforward materialistic attitude. According to this interviewee, in L.A. Style, the dance is separated from its cultural background, which this dance teacher obviously perceives as negative.

In the course of the interview, the interviewee becomes confident to express his attitudes in a more direct manner, so that after half an hour he declares that his dislike of L.A. is so strong that he would not even dance with somebody who dances L.A. Salsa:

“If you would dance L.A., then I wouldn’t dance with you.” (R 32)

A construction of difference in relation to the L.A. Style CoP is very important for the self-concept of the informant. The interviewee is aware of the political background of Salsa and criticises the cultural detachment that exists in the practice of L.A. Style; it is important for the interviewee to see Salsa as embedded in its social, political and cultural history and a boundary is clearly marked towards the people who only learn the techniques of steps. The interviewee gives strong importance to “the roots”, the cultural and social origins of Salsa; in other words, the ‘authenticity’ of the dance. Considering what has been described in chapter 7, particularly the mentality and strategies of the owner of the L.A. Style school, the observation that dance steps and culture are disentangled in L.A. is an accurate observation. Given that this disentanglement involves a degradation of Latin American people as being backward, it is not surprising that the Chilean dance teacher does not consider L.A. Style, as practiced in Sydney, a positive evolution towards mainstream culture:

“Here [in Sydney], it [L.A. Salsa] is very cool.  
And they make a business out of it.  
That’s where it loses all the soul.” (R 36)

The description of L.A. Style as “losing soul” is very vague, however; commodification is seen as being detrimental to the nature of the dance. Paradoxically, although Salsa in Sydney, also Cuban Salsa, is a straightforward example for the commodification and deterritorialisation of culture, Cuban Salsa here also represents an urge for essentialisms (“soul”) in an age of postmodern fluidities, insecurities and the omnipresent logics of capitalism.

Another Cuban Style dance teacher (from Colombia) also disapproves of the cultural detachment in L.A. Style Salsa. Fragments from the discourse on global cultural homogenisation also occur in his utterances, when he describes L.A. Style, as it is practiced in the CoP introduced above, as “McDonald’s Salsa”:

“It doesn’t matter if you’re a good dancer or not,  
it matters if you can teach [as a teacher in L.A. Style].  
We call it the ‘McDonald’s Salsa’.  
Because it is very very fast, you know,  
trying to teach you everything very fast.” (M 12)

The relation that is constructed here, between the way L.A. Style is taught and a global fast food company, which is characterised by selling (almost) the same American, industrialised food all around the planet, is very illustrative of how L.A. Style is perceived by many members of the Cuban CoP. At the same time, it is also illustrative of the structures that indeed exist in the L.A. Style school (focus on technique, a homogenous syllabus for all classes, conscious focus on marketing and sales, competitive ideology).

Although not all interviewees have such a pronounced negative opinion about L.A. Style, most interviewees mention that the two styles are different, attract different people and are related to different ideologies. The owner of the dance school thus explains that the Salsa scene of Sydney is a “divided community”. When asked whether it is important for Salsa dancers that Salsa is linked to Latin culture, she replies

“People come for different reasons, ok? (1)  
The people that want to (3)  
it’s a divided community with this.  
The people that want to learn, uhm (0.5)  
Cuban Style seem to be more like that.  
Wanting to be authentic, wanting to be (2)  
Then there is this younger breed.  
It’s, it’s people who really wanna (1)  
dancing with the stars, kind of thing,  
*So You Think You Can Dance*,  
They wanna be on that  
They wanna perform  
They just want (.)  
the glitzyer, the better”. (S 18)

The division between the two communities is here described in less negative terms but is also portrayed very clearly as a “divided community”. The interviewee has problems defining what



it is that attracts people to Cuban Style and only says that they want to be “authentic” and then stops in the middle of the sentence, which proves that it is actually difficult to define authenticity in an age of transnational culture. It is nevertheless notable that Cuban Style students are not described as being interested in ‘authentic’ dance but that they want to be authentic themselves. After a comparatively long pause, the informant is more specific on the interests of the L.A. Style dancers. This “younger breed”<sup>60</sup> wants to perform, likes it “glitzy” and relates positively to the US-derived TV show *So You Think You Can Dance*, which also features in Australia. This also expresses L.A. Style’s alignment with consumer culture and competitive performance. It seems to be difficult to define the interest in authenticity of the Cuban Style community, but it is very clear what they are not.

The competitive culture of L.A. Style, expressed in competitions and global congresses, which links it to capitalist values, is not appreciated in Cuban Style, which particularly the Chilean dance teacher comments on:

“And in L.A. style, it is really globalised.  
They have cóngresses,  
they have cómpetitions  
and the winners of competitions get together agáin  
and then there will be the world chámption.  
For me, this is, you know,  
this is, it doesn’t fit,  
Salsa and competition.  
I don’t know.”(R 35)

As in one of the quotes above, the verb “to globalise” here seems to denote an adherence to the ideals of competitive culture and capitalism. Instead of conceiving of L.A. Style as the most developed form, which is a common perception in the L.A. Style community, the discourse in Cuban Style here constructs L.A. Style as misguided. The narrative style of the interviewee, which shows in the rise of tone at the ends of lines two to five, is based in the Australian variety of English that the speaker uses. At the same time, it here sounds as if he expresses his disapproval in listing the activities of the L.A. community in a rather monotonous manner. Especially the rise of tone in line 5, “there will be the world chámption”, seems to portray these activities as useless, where a lowering of tone would be expected. The rise gives the line a questioning tenor and thus seems to question the activity. Constructing a competitive culture is considered inappropriate in relation to the meaning and backgrounds of Salsa, which are here linked to a political left-wing discourse, multicultural ideals and the expression of a ‘true’ (non-commercial) culture. Metaphorically speaking, Cuban Salsa discourse constructs a ‘Shangri-La’ space (Bishop 1989), a “heterotopia” (Foucault 2005) in a capitalist age. Competitive values are rejected and members of the community long for traditional values of community and connections to the ‘roots’ of culture – but, ironically,

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<sup>60</sup> A clear difference in the age structure between the two communities could not be detected – the informant might here refer to the conception of L.A. Style as more ‘modern’ and historically younger.

this discourse of traditionalism is also tied to the ideals of multicultural inclusion and has thus an ambivalent relation to questions of authenticity (see next section).

The perception of the L.A. Style community of L.A. Style dance being more ‘evolved’ is strongly rejected also by another Cuban Style teacher and seen as a misconception of people who have no knowledge of Salsa:

“Most of the people who dance ‘on one’ or ‘on two’<sup>61</sup>  
kind of look down on Cuban music and Cuban dance,  
like it’s something (.) nothing.  
But only because they have no understanding of how much is involved. (2)  
It needs years of experience.” (M 43)

The quote shows a clear awareness of the fact that L.A. Style dancers often interpret other types of Salsa as less ‘developed’. So not only do Cuban Style dance teachers describe the evolutionist conception of L.A. Style community members as misled, they even maintain that Cuban Style is more complicated, “needs years of experience” and that people who look down upon Cuban dance “have no understanding”. It is even conceived that, actually, L.A. Style is easier to learn:

“So, it [L.A. Style] is easier to pick up.  
In terms of (1)  
I teach you:  
one, two, three,  
*ching ching ching ching ching*, [sounds that mirror the steps]  
one, two, three.  
Rather than getting that holistic body movement.” (R 12)

Because of the focus on dance steps and turns, it is here considered that L.A. Style is easier, as picking up step choreography is seen as easier to learn than movements of the whole body, which are very important in Cuban Style. The description of L.A. Style as being very technical, expressed through the mentioning of numbers and through the production of onomatopoeic sounds “ching ching ching”, which also express the linear and technical character of the style, remind of discourses that criticise purely technical, quantitative approaches to culture. As has been mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the different (verbal) discourses that exist in the two communities are perceived to be indexically related to the dance moves. This is also elaborated in the following quote:

R: “L.A. is more ballroom, more (2) up,  
I don’t know,  
it’s not easy to explain it.  
It’s, it’s more technique,  
it’s more linear.  
More controlled, more boxy.

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<sup>61</sup> Dancing “on one” or “on two” here refers to a competitive style like L.A. The expressions relate to the relationship between the dance steps and the rhythm.

It's very (boxing?).  
The Cuban style, the Cuban style is what I like.  
And I'm trying to be as least biased as I can,  
is more circular, it's freer.  
It's (1) there's more connection between the dancers (0.5) uhm,  
it doesn't focus so much on the turns  
but it focuses more on the body movement.  
It is (0.5) what I find hard  
but at the same time what I love." (R 10-11)

L.A. Style is here defined as "technique" and as "linear"; the word "boxy" here denotes "restricted" and is contrasted with the "freer" nature of Cuban Style. A discourse of objectivism is created in claiming that the interviewee is "as least biased" as possible. This strategy is intended to give more credibility to the utterance, as it implies that his opinion is not a personal opinion but a neutral fact, based on observation. As a lay Salsa dancer, it is difficult for me to test the claims regarding the "freer" character of Cuban Style. Although I have experienced L.A. Style as very technical in the dance classes that I attended, it is not possible for me to say whether Cuban Style is generally "freer". The circular movements of the couple make the impression of Cuban Style different and the focus on small detail, such as body movements, make the teaching of the style subtler. However, the construction of the notion of 'freedom', as being expressed in the dance moves of Cuban Style, seems not only to be based on the dance itself but also on the discourses that accompany this style in this local context, which put a strong emphasis on certain political and cultural ideals that are projected onto the dance. The description thus seems to be discursively contingent and dependant on the particular discourse of Cuban Style as related to Cuban, non-capitalist and 'authentic' culture.

Summarising, it can be noted that, for Cuban Style dancers, the boundary construction towards L.A. Style is an important component in the self-image of the community. The 'other' style (L.A.) is described comparatively accurately, where a focus of the critique lies on the technicality of the dance steps, the competitive culture, interest in business and on the disentanglement of the dance from its background culture. The description of Cuban Style, on the other hand, remains relatively vague. It is considered to be "freer", focused on body movements and as "having soul". The characteristic of "having soul" seems to be connected to an interest in the cultural and political history of Salsa and thus related to a transnational scale. Knowledge of the culture of Latin America is seen as crucial, a transnational connection that is considered to be absent in the L.A. Style context:

"I'm happy to say that most people who learn L.A.  
will not have any connection at all with Latin America." (R 16)

This connection with Latin America is important in the construction of Cuban Style as the more 'authentic' style. Authenticity is an important construction in the evaluation of culture

in globalisation but also in its commercial promotion. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the concept is a central attribute in debates on cultural globalisation and plays a very contradictory role in these, as ‘authenticity’ means different things on different scales but also in different discourses, related to political discourse, commercialism, ethnicity or local credibility. This seems to be a crucial aspect in understanding not only Cuban Salsa but also other cultural developments in an era of globalisation. The intersection of these developments all have an influence on language ideology in local communities but are generally crucial for an overall understanding of the role of language in a global age.

#### **8.4. ‘YOU HAVE TO GO TO CUBA’ – IDEOLOGIES OF AUTHENTICITY IN CUBAN STYLE**

As has been noted above (7.3.), authenticity is usually defined as “being true to one’s roots” (Pennycook 2007:ch.6). In the case of Cuban Salsa in Sydney, it is, however, usually not Cubans who are ‘true to their roots’ but other, Latin and non-Latin, people who produce a discourse of Latin/Cuban authenticity in learning to dance Salsa and also with their utterances and language ideologies. What is the function of the construction and adherence to principles of authenticity of a culture that is not the ‘own’ culture in the case of most Cuban Style dancers in Sydney? In the following, I will describe this discourse; I will also introduce some discursive contradictions and I will then relate this discourse of authenticity to the community’s construction of cosmopolitanism (8.5.).

It has been noted that people of many ethnic backgrounds intermingle in the L.A. Style CoP. However, the Cuban Style CoP is different in that the celebration of ethnic originality is an important aspect in the formation of the community. ‘Real’ Latin Americans consciously emphasise their ethnic descent in their identity performance by using Latin American greeting formulae and Spanish names. Members of this CoP are usually aware of who is ‘really’ Latin American and being ‘real’ or having contact with ‘real’ Spanish-speakers is of high value. This is confirmed by the fact that this dance school deliberately employs Latin Americans, even if their ethnic background does not mean that they necessarily have learned Salsa as part of their heritage culture. The dance class that I have attended in the Cuban school was given by two teachers of Cuban descent, who, although having grown up with Salsa, were actually educated in European dance (ballet). Generally, the school tries to involve the students in a culturally ‘other’ environment. Accordingly, Cuban Style students state that an interest in the ‘other’ culture is the reason why they learn Salsa:

“For me, the whole point was to get a connection with that culture.” (G 8)

While ethnic belonging to Latin culture does not play a role in the L.A. Style scene, or is even related to a lack of dance ability, students of Cuban Salsa celebrate ethnic authenticity of people of Latin background and typically strive to get into contact with people who are from

Latin America. The owner of the dance school emphasises her close ties to people who are from Latin American countries and is at the same time proud of her daily contact with Latin Americans, as musicians and dance teachers often have a Latin background.

Interestingly, next to an appeal to Latin culture and the emphasis on the Cuban roots of the dance style, there are many interview passages that construct authentic cultural traits as being of high value in general, not only in relation to Latin culture. The dance school owner, for example, at the very beginning of the interview, maintains that her ancestors belong to the first generation of settlers in Australia:

B: “Are you from Sydney origi/nally?”

S: /”Yes, yes, yeah, born here, fourth generation of (1) (settlers?)”

Being ‘really’ Australian is, similar to being ‘really’ Latin, obviously considered valuable, otherwise the interviewee would not mention it (the utterance also seems to contradict her previous mentioning of her Irish heritage, as it is generally assumed that the first generation of settlers, to which the interviewee here makes claims, were of English background (see e.g. White 1981)).

Another general appeal to authenticity can be found in the following quote, where the Chilean dance teacher reports on his attempt to learn Rumba. His interest in Rumba is based on the assumption that the (African) roots of Salsa are important, and therefore, he wants to get to know the predecessors of Salsa that have a stronger African influence:

“And I’m very much attracted to the African part as well.  
The Afro-Cuban celebrátiön.  
So at the moment I’m sort of trying to learn Rumba [rumba],  
Afro-Cuban Rumba [rumba].  
Which is very hard because you have to (?)  
you have to move and not let you finish.  
It’s not natural to me,  
coming from the more southern parts of South America.  
I’m trying to pick up that move.  
It’s very hard.” (R 5)

The construction of Cuban Salsa as more authentic is related to the fact that, in Cuban Salsa, some African-derived elements of the dance, such as particular hip movements, are still used, in contrast to the more Europeanised styles (see e.g. Pietrobruno 2006:ch.1). The high rise terminals in lines 1 to 4 and 6 have a narrative function, they structure the narration and ensure that the interviewer can follow the interviewee and here serve different functions than in the quote above, where the activities of the L.A. Style community were listed in a monotonous fashion (“cóngresses, cómpetitions, chámption”). Here, the rises at the end sound like a facilitating device in explaining something that is presumably unknown to the interviewer. The interviewee here shows his profound knowledge of the history of Salsa, also expressed by his pronunciation of the word “Rumba”, which includes an alveolar trill (‘rolled

r'). The pronunciation is explicable by his Spanish-speaking background but also expresses his consideration for the cultural background of Salsa. A general adherence to principles of authenticity is also found in his mentioning that it is difficult for him to learn Rumba, as his non-Cuban heritage makes it not “natural” to him. Regarding practices or habits of people as ‘natural’ is an important element in the construction of authenticity. Similarly, this interviewee also thinks that, although he is teaching Cuban Salsa, he can’t “provide for the Cuban culture”:

“I can’t provide for the Cuban culture  
because I am not Cuban, it is not my culture.  
You do have Cuban instructors that produce some of that culture. (2)  
And I think this is awesome.  
I admire and I love it but it’s not my culture.” (R 9)

Contradictory constructions of authenticity can be detected here, as authentic attributes are generally described as central in dancing Cuban Salsa; nevertheless, this dance teacher admits that he actually cannot provide for an authentic insight to this culture. Although he previously suggested that the dance and the culture belong together, and here says that only Cubans can “produce Cuban culture”, he is teaching Cuban dance as an Australian-Chilean in Sydney.

Next to these general alliances with authenticity, authenticity in the teaching and acquisition of Cuban Salsa is obviously also an important topic. It is generally conceived that one has to travel to Cuba if one wants to learn Cuban Salsa properly:

“If you want to learn the body movement,  
the way they feel, the happiness, the enjoying of the music,  
you have to go to Cuba.” (M 23)

While the L.A. Style community suggests that Latin America is a place where nobody knows how to dance professionally, the Cuban community sees the experience of the authentic culture of the country of origin of the dance as crucial. Although L.A. dancers conceive that one should go to the US – where L.A. Style has been developed in its present form – this is not based on the idea that one would make authentic experiences with the culture of the place but, rather, that the “best dancers” can be met in the US context (see Ch. 7).

The appeal to authentic experiences with culture is very strong in the Cuban community, which is similar in the Community of Practice that has been observed in Germany (Ch. 10). There are even some instances of what I call ‘overdoing’ authenticity. Several students have no profound knowledge of the history of the dance and, for example, when asked about the gender roles in Salsa, two interviewees claim that these are a legacy of “the 1800s”. Salsa did not exist by then and couple dance was not popular either (see 6.1.). Gender roles are constructed as ‘authentic’ due to their imagined historical age and thus are expression of a gender nostalgia that exists in L.A. Style, as well as in Cuban Style (see 6.6.). The

construction of authenticity is usually related to the idea that certain practices or objects are ‘timeless’ or ‘eternal’ (see e.g. Anderson 1985, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992) (which is a discourse also found in linguistics and debates on language rights, see e.g. Schneider 2010), which is factually incorrect in relation to any cultural practice.

Misconceptions having to do with the discourse of authenticity in Cuban Salsa are not only based on non-Latin dance students’/lay dancers’ construction of imagined gender histories but also on their concept of an overgeneralised ‘Latin’ culture. Many non-Latin Cuban Style dancers ascribe the ability to dance Salsa to all people from Middle and South America:

“And then you have another misconception.  
Because I have a lot of students who say:  
‘We got a Chilean and we go to Chile to learn Salsa.’  
And I say  
‘No, please don’t!’  
You know, sort of,  
then you better don’t leave Australia.  
So you got a number of people who think I dance Salsa because I’m Chilean.” (R 16)

The desire for the ‘other’ in Cuban Salsa does not necessarily require historical or cultural facts to be satisfied but is often content with products of imagination and cultural fantasy. This relates to Appadurai’s claim that imagination is in a correlational relationship to the globalisation of culture (Appadurai 1996, see also Chs 4 and 6). In Chile, Salsa has only been danced after it had become fashionable in the US and in Europe and it is not part of traditional Chilean culture. Yet, the overgeneralisation of the category ‘Latin’ leads to an often-found expectation that all people from Latin America are Salsa dancers, an assumption that is also part of a folkloristic discourse of ‘othering’.

Additionally, the high degree of global commodification of Salsa has caused non-Latin audiences to sometimes conceive that it is only Salsa that is ‘really’ danced in Latin America:

“And there is this misconception,  
ah, you’re Latin, you dance Salsa  
and it’s not always the case.  
There are all types of different music.” (R 20)

Other dances than Salsa are ignored by many non-Latin Salsa dancers or sometimes even rejected as unauthentic (see also Aparicio 2002). These overgeneralisations and misconceptions are tied to a discourse that relates to ‘authentic’ culture but constructs a very simplified concept of that culture. In the case of Cuban Salsa in Sydney, there is an interest in the ‘other’ (instead of refusing it, as in L.A. Style) but, in some instances, the ‘other’ is reduced to a simplistic picture of ‘the Latin’, sometimes also called ‘the Spanish’, who dances Salsa (and nothing else) and, stereotypically, leads a ‘happy’ life. Professional dancers and teachers of Cuban Style usually have a profound knowledge of the history of Salsa; however, there are Cuban Style dancers, usually students, who engage in a discourse of stereotypical

‘othering’. The interest in an ‘authentic’ type of Salsa here reminds of other forms of consumer culture in multicultural society, where cultural difference is appealed to, as long as it can easily be consumed, without the necessity of change or the trouble of learning something new (see also Römhild 2003). This type of simplistic othering in order to relate to an ‘authentic’ culture is also linked to the construction of cosmopolitan identity and, interestingly, is also reflected in the language ideologies of the informants.

Some students of this school, however, completely reject the idea that authenticity is of importance. One interviewee adheres to the competitive ideologies of belonging that are also found in L.A. Style and here displays the intense connections that can exist between national discourse and personal ideology:

“Oh, look (.)  
I think for us (2)  
this is about moving on the dance floor. (2)  
I know some Latin, I’ve met some Latin people, they’re ok.  
They are not that hót (1)  
but I’ve met some non-Latin people,  
it’s a whole lot of dancers, they’re so good.  
So that’s the thing with Australia,  
it’s about, like (1)  
at the end of the day,  
what’s a true Australian, you know,  
well (2) it’s how you live your life,  
your values, that’s what makes you Australian,  
it’s not,  
‘Ok, I’m born in Dubbo and I use *Vegemite*’, you know,  
ah (2)  
(both laugh)  
It’s about who you are, I think that’s what it is about.” (JL 26)

This interviewee considers the ‘authentic’ background of Salsa dancers as irrelevant, as it is, for him, the ability to dance that is important. This ideology of belonging mirrors the one introduced in Chapter 7. Dancers with a Latin American background are not necessarily better dancers and therefore they cannot make a claim to Salsa, at least not more than others. What is very revealing in this quote is that this competitive ideology of belonging is linked to Australian national discourse. Being judged on the basis of performance rather than on ethnic descent is here considered a crucial value of Australian identity. It is not to be born in Dubbo (a provincial town in New South Wales) or to eat Vegemite (an Australian speciality, a yeast spread, similar to Marmite) but it is about values and performance – “how you live your life”. It has to be noted that this refusal of authentic Latin background is here made by an Australian of Filipino descent for whom the possibility to become Australian due to performance rather than ethnicity is of more importance than to an Anglo-Australian. It is



also interesting to note that this informant learned Spanish in a migration hostel<sup>62</sup> in the Sydney suburb of Coogee in the 1980s, where he, as a teenager, spent his first months in Australia and where he met other young migrants, of Latin descent. His Filipino background made it easier for him to learn the language, but, obviously, his experiences with the culture and the language of Latin America were, from their beginnings, truly transnational and not rooted in an discourse of othering or in some form of nostalgia.

A contradictory evaluation of the role of authenticity can also be found in the utterances of the dance school owner. Although she started her interview proudly maintaining that many of her friends and employees are Latin, she also rejects the idea that only Latin people are ‘true’ performers in Latin dance and music. Interestingly, however, she only comments on this in relation to Latin Americans who exclude people of non-Latin descent. In denying ethnic authenticity as important, she does not consider the importance of authenticity within her own school. The idea that ethnic background is irrelevant actually questions the practices of her own school, but nevertheless appears in her utterances.

In one interview passage, she first ridicules a group of DJs who only allow Latin people in their team and then reports on an instance where she sung in Spanish for a Latin Salsa band. A Latin woman later on complained that the job was given to the Anglo-Australian dance school owner, rather than to a Latina. The dance school owner, who partly constructs her identity and the image of her school on the connection to an ‘other’ culture, accuses this Latin woman of engaging in a form of racism when she had suggested that Latin people should sing in Salsa bands:

“I don’t know what it was  
but it was kind of racist,  
Australia is such a multicultural society,  
I think I can (work?) in my country, too.” (S 27)

It is enlightening to see in this quote that, as in the quote further above, the claim that it is racist to exclude people on the basis of their descent is directly related to the Australian discourse on ethnical inclusion. The contradictory value of authenticity is very obvious here, even in an environment in which cultural difference is actually celebrated. Although ethnic authenticity is adhered to when it comes to producing a culturally ‘other’ place and although Latin people are employed in the school to attract people with this interest, ethnic authenticity is rejected when it results in the rejection of non-Latin people. One has to remark that the dance school of Cuban Style is an ethnically inclusive place and there is no need for students or teachers to come from a Latin background. Certainly, no one is excluded here on the basis of ethnic descent. It is nevertheless difficult to grasp the underlying meaning of ‘authentic’ culture in a context where the presence of the ethnic other is

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<sup>62</sup> Migration hostels were government institutions where immigrants that came to Australia with working visas could stay their first months and received financial and social support (see Migration Heritage Centre New South Wales: 2010).

celebrated but where the ethnic other is accused of racism if they want to stay 'authentic'. As in the debates introduced in Chapter 7, it seems that the evaluation of authenticity partly runs along different lines for human beings than for products. An Australian left-wing discourse, in particular, strongly rejects evaluation of people on ethnic grounds, but, on the other hand, is keen to engage in culturally 'other' practices and to buy culturally 'different' products and foods.

Next to different considerations on the 'genuineness' for people and for goods, the position of the dance school owner can also be related to the fact that she is a member of the majority society. She can voluntarily decide to engage in 'other' practices, she shows "a willingness to engage with the Other" (Hannerz 1996a:104) but, in contrast to Latin-Australians, she can decide when authentic culture is of value and when not – "all the time she knows where the exit is" (Hannerz 1996a:104). It has been discussed in section 4.1. that in cultural anthropology, an engagement with the 'other', from which people can disengage according to their own choice, is the defining element of cosmopolitanism.

### **8.5. 'CITIZENS OF THE WORLD' – BOURGEOISE COSMOPOLITANISM**

As has been outlined, a definition of *cosmopolitanism* usually revolves around the idea that one is familiar with and at ease in many different countries and cultures. However, in my data set, there appear different conceptions of the term. The concept as it has been illustrated in the L.A. Style community is mainly based on the idea that people from different countries participate. What they participate in is a relatively pre-defined activity, which renders invisible the cultural heritage of this activity and is associated with monocultural 'mainstream' culture. It has therefore been called "monocultural cosmopolitanism".

The type of cosmopolitanism that is found in the Cuban Style Community of Practice is, in contrast, very much engaged with an interest in the cultural 'other'. This cosmopolitanism is thus closer to the definition of cosmopolitanism of cultural anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (see Hannerz 1996a). Remember that, in Hannerz's words, cosmopolitanism is

first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It entails an intellectual and esthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. (Hannerz 1996a:103)

Willingness and openness towards the 'other', the search for cultural contrasts, is obvious in the Cuban Salsa CoP. The function of this interest is, on the one hand, related to a certain political discourse, which expresses positive attitudes towards left-wing ideals and multiculturalism. On the other hand, this search for the 'other' is also effective in creating a particular social identity. The boundary construction towards L.A. Style Salsa not only expresses an anti-capitalist stance; the production of authenticity in Cuban Salsa has furthermore the function of producing an elite status of culturally-interested people, which can be defined as a class-based (see footnote 36) identity. Being interested in other cultures

and to meet and deal with other cultures and languages is what here means to become cosmopolitan. This interest functions as symbolic and cultural capital, which differentiates the holder of cosmopolitan values from segments of society who are engaged with only one culture.

According to Hannerz, the cosmopolitan's privileged position relies on his/her relationship to the culture of origin. The cosmopolitan can "choose to disengage from it" (Hannerz 1996:104) and thus holds a prestigious position in which culturally decontextualised knowledge – meta-cultural knowledge – can be acquired. The engagement with other cultures is based on the idea of intention, rather than need (Hannerz 1996a:105ff.). Thus, this form of cosmopolitanism is a class-related concept, with which people who voluntarily choose to "disengage" from their culture can differentiate from those who do not disengage from it or who do so involuntarily. Accordingly, Hannerz maintains that lower-class labour migrants, who make involuntary experiences with other cultures, are not cosmopolitan (Hannerz 1996a:105). These class-related functions can also be detected in the discourses of Cuban Style dancers. Hannerz has been criticised for his exclusionary concept of cosmopolitanism (Römhild 2007) but, indeed, it is a very adequate framework for understanding the nature of Cuban Style dancers' construction of identity.

The distinction between voluntary and involuntary engagement with the 'other' reminds of the dance school owners' different evaluation of discourses on authenticity of her own environment, and those of Latin Americans, who want their own culture to remain 'authentic' or to be performed by 'authentic' members of that culture. Making voluntary "divergent cultural experiences" on the side of a mainstream population is rated differently than striving to protect cultural heritage<sup>63</sup> (Hannerz 1996a:103). And, as will be elaborated in the following, the ability to voluntarily make "divergent cultural experiences" with 'authentic' Latin culture is related to the construction of economic as well as cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979) in the case of Cuban Salsa in Sydney.

First of all, the importance given to 'authentic' culture and 'authentic' people intersects with the educational backgrounds of members of the Cuban Style Community of Practice. The dance pupils are mostly white Australians, usually with a high level of education; most pupils are university students and those who are not usually already have a university degree. Next to 'white' Australian students, the majority of Latin Americans in the environment, interestingly, do not come originally from Sydney but are international students who have come to Australia to study and who usually plan to return to Latin America once they have finished their studies. Only one Latin American who grew up in Sydney has been met in this context.

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<sup>63</sup> The construction of knowledge of 'other' cultures as a value, if obtained by certain majority parts of society, but as a stigma, if maintained by members of minority parts of society, is also found with regard to language, where "voluntary" and "involuntary" bilingualism (see de Mejía 2002, ch.2) are evaluated differently in most societies.

Despite many efforts of Australian governmental discourse to counter such tendencies, performing an identity as member of an ethnic community is often related to the image of the lower-class recent migrant in Australia. For Latin Americans with a tertiary education who have grown up in Sydney, this makes it not necessarily attractive to engage in Salsa dancing. As documented in the L.A. Style CoP, the performance of traditional heritage culture is often-times regarded as an activity of the (working class) first generation of migrants. It is thus interesting to observe that those who are the ‘real’ Latin people in the Cuban CoP are mostly Latin Americans who have grown up in Latin America, where their dance culture is not understood as an expression of traditionalist “backyard” culture of labour migrants. As in L.A. Style Salsa, discourses from the national Australian scale have a strong influence on the formation of the Cuban Style community (see also Ch. 9). Thus, belonging to a group of people who engage in Latin culture can function as a cosmopolitan activity for white university students or academics; it also can function as cosmopolitan for international Latin students; but for those who ‘involuntarily’ engage with Australian culture – Latin labour migrants and their descendants – it is usually considered a symbol of ethnic nostalgia (see below, however, for exceptions).

The link between educated elite identity and the engagement with an ‘other’ culture can be detected not only in the educational backgrounds of the members of this community but also in the contents of interviews. In several interview passages, an appeal to multiculturalism and other cultures is directly linked to the membership of a certain social strata:

G: “I think for a lot of younger Australians,  
I think we like the multicultural,  
we like Thai food, and we go to the Spanish quarter  
and like to, you know, have that different sort of influence.  
Uhm, (.)  
I don’t think, I don’t find it threatening.  
And don’t think many people find it threatening  
and I think a lot of the threat comes from, maybe from the government  
with ideas of, the jobs are being taken  
and university places are being taken  
but I don’t really think a lot of people who are studying,  
and who actually think critically  
would feel that way.  
I don’t know.”  
B: “And you actually appreciate the presence of many cultures here?”  
G: “Oh, of course.” (G 41)

First of all, the interviewee here considers a certain age cohort to be identifying positively with “the multicultural”. “Younger Australians” enjoy different cultures, most notably consumer culture – “Thai food” and “the Spanish quarter” (a part of the Central Business District in which Spanish and Latin bars are located). She proposes the idea that xenophobic discourse is actually initiated by the government, without further elaborating on this point. She then goes on to explain that “people who are studying” do not have this kind of thought.

“Thinking critically” and having a high education is here linked to the appreciation of the presence of other cultures. It seems to be particularly important for the interviewee to express that she herself belongs to this type of people. When asked if she appreciates other cultures, the non-referential expression “Oh” indicates her surprise about me considering that she might not, and the very strong emphasis on the words “of course” implies that she thinks it to be obvious and also important that she appreciates multiculturalism.

There are other passages that clearly link the interest in other cultures to a cosmopolitan elite identity. When asked whether Salsa is actually popular in Sydney, this Cuban Style dancer maintains that it is – but only for those he calls “citizens of the world”:

“I think it’s just cool with people who are culturally aware and culturally hip.  
Uhm (1)  
If you are a citizen of the world,  
you might go, you know, to the cinemas  
and see the French Film Festival,  
the Spanish Film Festival, which is on at the moment.” (JL 14)

Being “culturally aware” and “culturally hip” is, obviously, dependant on the educational background of an individual. It is not anyone who has ties to other cultures who is here considered to be “a citizen of the world”; it is not, for example, people who have experiences with living in other countries, but it is people who have an interest in “culture”. The concept of “culture” here does not relate to any type of cultural expression but to ‘high culture’ in a European understanding. So, the interviewee here mentions the attendance of film festivals as an indicator of being “a citizen of the world”. Going to film festivals (especially French film festivals) is an activity that definitely is a ‘high culture’ sort of activity, which is here linked to the idea of being cosmopolitan and to engage in a cultural ‘other’ activity like Salsa.

Interestingly, this concept of cosmopolitanism includes people of Latin descent. This is not so much based on the perception of Latin people generally being members of culturally educated elite strata but more on the fact that, in order to be ‘truly’ culturally aware, one needs to make contact with the ‘real’ people. Thus, instead of neglecting Latin people due to an understanding of maintenance of heritage culture as a sign for backwardness, Latin culture here represents cosmopolitan values. Examples for the inclusion of Latin people can be found in the ethnic composition of the community; furthermore, Latin people are not only described as being the ‘true’ carriers of Latin culture but also as being inclined to engage in multicultural-cosmopolitan communities:

“Just when I go out already with my Latino friends,  
there is always people from all over the world.  
There’s always Latin, Latinos, Latinas.  
That’s why there’s lots of Asian people who come into Salsa.  
And also lots of Australians.” (A 16)

This dancer of Indian heritage explains that his friends of Latin background always mix with people from “all over the world”, which makes it attractive also for Asian people to join. People who are often considered to be part of a minority culture in the Australian context, and linked to discourses of traditionalism, are here able to redefine their ethnic background in terms of cosmopolitanism. This holds true for ethnic minorities from Latin and other backgrounds alike. The Chilean dance teacher, for example, during a considerable part of his interview, elaborates on experiences of exclusion and also racism in his childhood and adolescence in Sydney, where his ‘ethnic’ heritage was strongly stigmatised (see also Ch. 9). Yet, in the Cuban community, his ethnic background is effective in becoming cosmopolitan. The dance school owner, for example, describes how this dance teacher is particularly able to teach Cuban Style as he “is feeling in it” (S 23). In being someone who has authentic knowledge of the culture of Latin America (although his ties to Salsa are as close as those of any other Sydneysider), he is seen as a better teacher and someone with who one can “make a connection with that culture” (G 8, see above).

One has to note, however, that this construction of ‘ethnic’ as cosmopolitan is not only found in the discourses of cosmopolitanism of Western culture. In Latin America, there are many societies that have been culturally diverse for a long time, long before the issue has become prominent in Europe or other Western countries. Due to the particular colonial history, many Latin American countries show a high degree of cultural and ethnic diversity and the discourse on *mestizaje* (ethnic mixing) has been popular since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (for a critical discussion of the term, see Mallon 1996). The high degree of ethnic mixture in many Latin American contexts means that the phenotype of a person does not necessarily indicate her or his national or class membership. Thus, people from various, also non-Latin, backgrounds can become part of Salsa communities and at first sight, it is impossible to say whether a person is ‘really’ Latin American or not. The interviewee above, for example, is originally from India but is very attracted to Latin dance and Latin women. He has travelled to Mexico several times, where he is usually taken for a Mexican. He describes his native language Hindi as very helpful in learning to pronounce Spanish. Also, there are several dancers with Arab background who can renegotiate their ethnic descent as cosmopolitan, while their ‘real’ ethnicity is often associated with negative attributes (e.g. religious fundamentalism, gender discrimination, terrorism, etc.). Being ‘non-white’ does not necessarily mean, in the Latin American context, to belong to lower social strata. The different history and construction of ethnic mixing in Latin America here seems to be partly transferred to the Australian context (a phenomenon that can also be observed in Germany, see Ch. 10). It can thus be suggested that the transnational scale here has an influence on local constructions of identity.

Next to Cuban Style Salsa cosmopolitanism being related to Latin American discourses, the performance of cosmopolitan identity is also intrinsically linked to national discourses of Australia. Both the transnational and the national scale are vital for an understanding of local

discourses on culture and identity, which are mutually linked to the language ideologies of the community. Notably, the ability to speak Spanish is related to the construction of cosmopolitan identity. In the remainder of this chapter, the language ideologies of the Cuban Style Community of Practice will be introduced and analysed on the basis of the discourses on multiculturalism, authenticity and cosmopolitanism.

#### **8.6. 'IT'S THE COOL FACTOR' – COSMOPOLITAN IDEOLOGIES OF MULTILINGUALISM**

As the construction of cosmopolitan identity necessitates contact with the 'authentic other', in the Cuban Style CoP, for a successful performance of this identity, it is important to connect to certain aspects of the culture of origin of Salsa. One of these aspects is the presence of Latin Americans and another crucial one is the Spanish language. Although the observed language use in the CoP does not differ much from the language use of other Australian mainstream contexts – Spanish is not the common medium of communication but only used among some members and it is symbolically used in marketing materials – the Spanish language plays an important role in the construction of Cuban Salsa as the 'authentic' style of Salsa. In the following, I will illustrate the way Spanish is used and conceptualised and show how ethnographic observations and discourse fragments on language are inherently linked to the discourses that have been introduced above.

There are several observations that demonstrate the relevance of the Spanish language in the community. As the prestige of Spanish is not necessarily linked to ethnicity, the Cuban CoP can be considered to engage in "metrolingual" activities (see 4.2.). The school deliberately employs native Spanish speakers; thus, the instructions in Salsa lessons are often in Spanish. The Colombian receptionist at the entrance of the school speaks Spanish with everybody who can speak it. The teachers speak Spanish with each other during the class and also with the students who speak it. As has been described above, teachers greet students with kisses on the cheeks, so not only are Spanish words used but also non-verbal communication patterns of the 'other' cultural background. The dance school has an agreement with a language school, where discounts are given to dance pupils. The (native English-speaking) dance school owner speaks Spanish with her native Spanish-speaking employees but also with those of her students who have learned Spanish. Thus, the teachers and students I have spoken to conceive it is very advantageous to acquire at least a limited degree of the language. Although the medium of communication remains English, as many students only understand bits and pieces of Spanish, being able to speak Spanish and to be familiar with communication conventions of Latin America is a prestigious practice. When I tell the owner of the school that in the beginning of my research in Sydney, I had difficulties to find Salsa dancers who speak Spanish, she replies:

S: "Oh God, oh no, everybody speaks Spanish /here."

B: /“Oh, real/ly?”  
S: /“Not everybody but (.) almost.” (S 7)

It is important for her to emphasise that “here”, in “her” CoP, Spanish is an important part of the whole cultural experience. Even though she admits that her first remark might have been a bit exaggerated, she then explains that even those who do not speak it fluently understand and use at least some Spanish:

“All the people here, that don’t speak Spanish in Salsa,  
are affected by Spanish and use Spanish words. (.)  
All the time. (1)  
Because it just comes up. (.) in Salsa.” (S 8)

This perception is obviously very different from the one that is found in the L.A. Style CoP, where the acquisition of Spanish is mainly perceived as pointless. In the Cuban community, however, speaking Spanish functions as a symbol for in-group membership. People who truly belong to the community are usually not monolingual English speakers. This can also be inferred from the observation that use and competence of other languages than English – and in this quote also of French – is something that native speakers of English are proud of:

B: “And with who do you speak Spanish?”  
S: “Uhm. Musicians.  
Áll the time.  
With the musicians.  
One of them is Australian even and we always speak in French.  
My best friend is from Argentina.  
He’s my ex. But he’s my best friend now.  
We always speak in Spanish.  
And uhm (1) musicians, some dancers, some of my instructors,  
the girl working at the door is Colombian (1)” (S 9)

The dance school owner here lists all the people with whom she speaks Spanish and thus highlights that the use of Spanish is common in her everyday life. The emphasis in line three “Áll the time” shows her self-image as someone whose daily life is characterised by multilingual contacts with the ‘other’. These contacts imply her ability to speak Spanish (and also her ‘artistic’ lifestyle, having to do with musicians frequently). Interestingly, although she is asked about Spanish, second on her list is a friend with whom she speaks French, indicating that speaking languages other than English, especially European languages, is considered positively in general. The overall approval of multilingual abilities is so important that, according to the quote, even two native English speakers converse in French with each other. This kind of language crossing – two native speakers of the prestige language English practice their linguistic abilities in another European prestige language – expresses the level of education and links to the construction of cosmopolitan identity as discussed above. This symbolic function of multilingualism as cosmopolitan is most central in understanding the



role of Spanish in the Cuban CoP and this aspect emerges in various interviews and observations.

language crossing, the “use of a language or variety that, in one way or another, feels anomalously ‘other’” (Rampton 2000a:55, see also 4.2.), is also common among other non-native Spanish-speakers in the school and, as has been mentioned, the school’s owner also uses Spanish with some of her (native English speaking) pupils:

“The other day,  
I was speaking to one of them. [in Spanish]  
And then the other girl was discovering that.  
And came and said  
‘Oh boy, ¿hablas español? Sí, yo también.’  
[‘Oh boy, you speak Spanish?, Yes, I do too’]  
And I’m like  
‘Yóu do tóo?’  
And we all spoke in Spanish.” (S 8)

Non-native Spanish-speakers are usually eager to speak Spanish, even if their interlocutor is also an English-speaker. This is particularly the case if the speakers have native-like competence (there is, however, no quantitative data on this issue). The usage of language crossing within the interview (“¿hablas español?”) makes the narration more authentic; at the same time, it is an opportunity for the informant to present her own language skills in terms of pronunciation to me as her interlocutor, as she is aware that I also speak Spanish. Thus, language crossing in this passage has not only narrative functions but also constructs the identity of the speaker as multilingual-cosmopolitan. It has to be remembered that

in many cases, crossing is not done in order to pass. Rather, it is done in order to ‘index’ – point to – certain characteristics which are culturally associated with the group whose behaviour is being appropriated, and which the speaker wants to claim as part of his or her own identity. (Cameron 2001:175)

This is what seems to happen here. In general, the evaluation of learning and speaking Spanish as very popular in the community is shared by all interviewees. Accordingly, going to Salsa parties or Salsa clubs is also perceived as an opportunity to improve or maintain language abilities for learners of Spanish:

“So (2) if I go to like a Salsa club now  
and I meet Spanish people or people who speak Spanish,  
I can speak to them.” (G 7)

Meeting native Spanish speakers at Salsa venues in order to speak Spanish is generally seen as an aspect of Salsa dancing and confirms the importance that is given to the ability to speak Spanish in the local community. This finding that could be interesting for research on language learning and language teaching, as language learning is here actively and

strategically sought for in a leisure environment, which is not traditionally assumed to be a place for second language acquisition. The linguistic resources that are present in almost any urban contemporary context could be exploited also for less formal types of language learning.

Summarising ethnographic observations on the presence and role of Spanish in the Cuban Community of Practice, although Spanish is not generally used as medium of communication, using some Spanish and Spanish language learning is crucially interrelated with the activity of dancing Cuban Salsa; it is also considered an important aspect of belonging to the local community.

As for many of the local Spanish-speakers, Spanish is not their native language, the question arises why people identify with the language and to which other local, national and global discourses the symbolic functions of Spanish are tied. Next to the interrelations to discourses that have been introduced, the symbolic functions of Spanish in the CoP can, first of all, be inferred from the attitudes members have towards the language itself. Language ideologies often do not arise to a conscious level (see also 3.2.), and thus, in my data, there are many interview passages that do not describe the functions or the use of Spanish explicitly. Many informants articulate language ideologies indirectly through linking the language Spanish to certain attributes or qualities. “[A] definition of language is always, implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world” (Williams 1977:21, see Ch. 3) and it has been discussed in Chapter 3 that attitudes towards certain languages represent attitudes towards the speakers of these languages. Unsurprisingly, in the interview data set, the language Spanish is evaluated extremely positively. It is described as “cool, social and widely spoken”. The language is also considered to be a “passionate” language, which links to the heterosexual ideology that is constructed in Salsa and related to stereotypical images of the ‘Latin lover’ (see Ch. 6). Spanish-speakers are described as “better dancers”, as “open-minded and fun”. It is also conceived that native Spanish-speakers “prefer friendship to money”. In this last comment, it is apparent that anti-capitalist ideologies, as described in section 8.2., also emerge in language attitudes. Spanish in Cuban Salsa contexts has connotations of happiness, emotionality, warmth and as “having soul” (“*Corazon*” [heart]). In this context, the image of Spanish contrasts with the connotations of English, which, considering the language ideologies in the L.A. community and the status of English as global language, is in a connotative chain with capitalist attitudes, business and instrumentality (see also Ch. 10).

Identification with Spanish by people whose native language is not Spanish is closely related to the construction of a certain type of identity. It is a type of identity that, as has been indicated above, is not only constituted through discourses in the local community but that is also linked to broader level discourses, as, for example, anti-capitalist attitudes and cosmopolitanism. Furthermore, attitudes that conceive negatively of L.A. Style Salsa (8.3.) reflect in the discourses on language. The owner of the dance school, for example, calls non-

Spanish speakers who dance Salsa “tourists” and says that she finds it “fascinating” that “people make a living from Salsa but never understand the words”. The fact that the L.A. Style dancers usually do not speak Spanish is seen as a sign for their lack of expertise:

“It is so showy, L.A. Style, it’s really funny.  
They don’t speak Spanish,  
they only do the silly stuff.  
They haven’t been to Cuba. (2)  
Not, nothing against it.  
(laughs)  
But teachers, they all learn Cuban Style.” (S 22)

The quote expresses an evident objection towards the practices of the L.A. Style community and is strongly derogatory – “they only do the silly stuff”. The lack of experience at ‘authentic’ places of origin of Salsa (above all, Cuba) is one reason why L.A. Style dancers are evaluated as being less sophisticated, next to their lack of Spanish language competence. The informant legitimises her negative comments on the L.A. community with the phrase “nothing against it”. Similar to strategies of justification that were introduced in some of the quotes above, the speaker here creates objectivism by saying that she is not generally “against” L.A. Style. She thus constructs her strongly negative evaluation as more neutral. In order to further the idea of being unbiased, she then adds that teachers are usually interested in Cuban Style. This comment serves to show that those who engage in Salsa professionally, according to this informant’s view, see Cuban Style as the more interesting (‘authentic’) style. Thus, she maintains that the negative evaluation of L.A. Style as being superficial – “silly” – is not only her own, personal view. Concerning ideologies of language, it is interesting to note here that the lack of Spanish is described as evidence for the superficial nature of L.A. style. Linguistic abilities function as a marker of distinction between the two different Salsa communities. Some interviewees, furthermore, suggest that Cuban Style dancers often know Spanish before they start to dance and that this is what differentiates them from L.A. Style dancers:

G: “So, for me, the one thing is,  
I didn’t come from the dance to the language  
but from the language to the dance.  
I think this is very different.”  
B: “Yeah, you have a different approach”  
G: “Yeah, I have a Latin approach,  
want to meet people,  
not to be on stage or become a champion.” (G 1)

It is here conceived that linguistic abilities in Spanish result in a different approach to Salsa. This approach is described as “a Latin approach”, which is based in an interest in socialising with people and not in an interest in competition and performance. People who first speak Spanish and then learn Salsa, in the above construction, want to learn the ‘real’ Latin Salsa, and competence in Spanish makes experience with authentic culture possible.

Simultaneously, as in the quote above, language ability here clearly serves as a boundary marker between the different Salsa communities. This form of boundary marking, however, is not framed conventionally, as it is not ethnic identity that is symbolically represented through language.

Apparently, language crossing (English to Spanish) in this context simultaneously relates to several different orders of indexicality that, in turn, relate to different scales. It has the function of creating a sense of belonging to the local Cuban CoP; at the same time, language crossing in the community connects to a global community of Spanish speakers. Next to these two levels – the local and the global – the use of Spanish in Sydney also links to national Australian discourses. For a member of the Australian majority society, being able to speak a second language is here constructed as a sign for being culturally educated (not “silly” or “showy”). One of the students I interviewed explicitly described those who speak Spanish as “people who are culturally aware, culturally educated.” As will be introduced more thoroughly in Chapter 9, Australia has been reported to have a “monolingual mindset” (Clyne 2005) and the number of English native speakers who speak a second language, despite the multilingual composition of the country, is relatively low (Lindsey 2008). Members of the group of “culturally educated” people have access to authentic culture, above all, because of their insights that are given through language. Thus, Cuban Salsa dancers, who so far have not learned Spanish, are described as very likely to learn it, but they are also presented as “bohemians”, who “are so cultural”, watch SBS<sup>64</sup> and go travelling. It is consequently reported that those who have not learned Spanish beforehand will start to learn it after they have begun Cuban Salsa lessons:

“I’ve seen a lot of people [who have learned Spanish].  
They come into a class,  
they get hooked, they go *dadadadá*.  
They go away.  
You don’t know where they’ve gone.  
And they you realise,  
they not only learn Salsa, they’ve also started Spanish lesson. (1)  
I’ve seen that many times.  
And they go to Latin America,  
they spend three months there, and they come back and you ask:  
‘Where have you been?’  
‘Oh, I’ve travelled to Latin America.’  
I’ve seen that quite a few times.  
I would say it’s sort of a very frequent pattern.” (R 16)

In this quote, the connections that are created between different types of activities are crucial: people start a class in Cuban dance, they start to learn Spanish and they also start to travel to Latin America. The interest in the authentic ‘other’ necessitates language learning but also travel to the countries of origin of Salsa (“You have to go to Cuba”, see 8.4.). The

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<sup>64</sup> SBS, the Special Broadcasting Service is a multicultural, multilingual television and radio channel in Australia.

“dadadadadá” sound in the second line indexes a movement in time. The rising tone and the fact that the syllables are pronounced more quickly at the end seems to express that these students get into Latin dance, Spanish language and Latin culture deeper and deeper in a certain period of time. Beginning learners of Cuban Salsa ‘get hooked’, they are drawn into the ‘real thing’. Practices of engaging in ‘other’ cultural practices, language learning and travel are exemplary of the cosmopolitan “willingness to engage with the Other.” Remember also that cosmopolitanism, in Hannerz’s sense, “entails an intellectual and esthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences” (Hannerz 1996a:103), which is the motivation of Salsa students to travel to Latin America. Travelling to foreign countries is an important part of this form of cosmopolitan lifestyle, in which the connection to the authentic ‘other’ plays an important role.

A note has to be made about the culture of travelling, which is crucially related to the discourses and ideologies of Cuban Style Salsa. To travel the world with a backpack, to become a “traveller” or “backpacker” is a global discourse that produces a particular form of tourism. In this discourse, anti-materialistic values are celebrated (although practices of mass consumption are vitally present) and local populations are usually constructed as static and ‘different’ in order for the backpacker to be able to report on ‘authentic’ experiences with the ‘other’ (see Binder 2005). These ‘traveller’ discourses relate to the discourses of the Cuban Salsa community in Sydney. In Australia, the practice of travelling is highly popular and is an almost compulsive component of the socialisation of certain sections and age groups of the Australian society. Australian students and young academics, before entering the job-market, are eager to travel to other countries, not as tourists but as “travellers”. Unsurprisingly, those of the interviewees who speak Spanish also have travelled to Latin America or Spain<sup>65</sup> (see Jaworski and Thurlow 2004 for a detailed analysis of the interrelations of language, tourism and globalisation).

Obviously, speaking a second language as connoting cosmopolitanism links to certain discourses in the national, Australian context. Learning and speaking Spanish is not only popular among those who learn Salsa but also among other Australians who engage in travelling and a certain type of ‘culturally-educated’ lifestyle. To make experiences with another culture and to learn another language is a discourse that is meaningful not only in Salsa communities (see e.g. the Spanish language *meet-up* group of Sydney, which is the biggest of all *meet-up* groups in Australia, see [www.meet-up.com](http://www.meet-up.com)). Although an English-only ideology is largely hegemonic (see Chs 7 and 10), there are discourses in Australia in which multilingualism is the “cool factor”:

“People are actually waking up to the fact  
that it’s actually quite cool to speak a second language.  
Because it’s, as Australians,

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<sup>65</sup> Although Spain is not a country of origin of Salsa (see ch.6), it is considered to be an authentic place to dance Salsa by some Cuban Salsa students.

we travel a lot to other countries,  
just like the German or Scandinavians.  
So you've got to travel.  
After uni and before you buy a house,  
you have to travel  
and it's very eye opening.  
You understand the value of other cultures, you know,  
it's also the cool factor." (JL 2-3)

The cosmopolitan tendencies that have been observed above are strongly confirmed in this quote. Australians are here presented as a nation of travellers who have started to understand the values of other cultures. There is a strong class-bias in this quote, normalised through the construction of the category "Australian" as people with a university degree who generally purchase houses. This class-bias indicates the relevance of Hannerz's concept of cosmopolitanism, which conceives that, for the cosmopolitan, "the engagement with other cultures is based on the idea of intention, rather than need" (see above and Hannerz 1990:105ff.). Travellers go to other places because it is 'chic' and interesting to get to know other cultures and thus become cosmopolitans who acquire culturally decontextualised knowledge – meta-cultural knowledge. They then can perform a prestigious identity where they can "choose to disengage" (Hannerz 1990:104) from their culture of origin. The ability to make "divergent cultural experiences" (ibid.), in the case of Cuban Style Salsa with Latin dance, travel and Spanish, is thus an opportunity to show economic as well as cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979) and therefore vital in the construction of class belonging. It is certainly not all Australians who spend their lives in language and dance classes, who enjoy Salsa parties, study at a university and buy a house after they have obtained their university degree and have travelled around the world with a backpack. The description of second language acquisition as "the cool factor" thus can be interpreted as language learning being one aspect in the construction of an Australian social identity that has ties to a transnational upper middle class.

Although the national level is obviously essential in the analysis and understanding of transnational language ideologies, a transnational discourse simultaneously comes into play in the constructions of identity in the CoP as Cuban Salsa-dancers consider themselves to belong to a transnational cosmopolitan community. This is indexed in the following quote by a dance student:

"And you know,  
the first thing that I do when I come to another country  
is to find a Salsa club  
because I know that I meet people there  
and I know that I meet like-minded people, (0,5)  
uhm (.) people who speak Spanish  
and people who are open (.) and fun  
and it's like a point of contact." (G 6)

While dancers of Salsa are here defined as belonging to a global community, which can be detected anywhere in the world, the attributes that are used to describe the community link to the concept of cosmopolitanism. People who dance Salsa speak Spanish and are “open and fun”; the community is constituted through the common interest in dancing and socialising. Indeed, their contact is based on “desire rather than need” (Hannerz 1996a) and the activities of Salsa dancing and speaking Spanish are thus foundational for performing a cosmopolitan identity. Being “open and fun” – the “cool factor” – is a central point in understanding the language ideologies of the Cuban Style Community of Practice and Hannerz’s concept of cosmopolitanism is adequate in interpreting them.

However, a close analysis of certain interview fragments shows that this type of cosmopolitan multilingualism involves clear linguistic and social hierarchies, which, as suggested by Otsuji and Pennycook (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009), also involves the reactivation of essentialisms. Above all, although Spanish is attributed with highly positive qualities, bilingual language abilities do not challenge the status of English as hegemonic, ‘normal’ medium of communication, as in the following quote by a lay dancer:

“You know, Australians generally feel bad that they only speak English. Whereas their European colleagues speak at least two. The Brits are really bad as well, you know. (1) And they kind of see themselves as unsophisticated because of that. (.) But they also appreciate the knowledge of English.” (JL 3)

English, as instrument of global communication and also in the context of job-related activities (the interviewee refers to the “European colleagues”), is nowhere questioned as the ‘normal’ medium of communication. As English-native speakers already know English – the language that one has to know anyway – there are little incentives to learn a second language. Interestingly, the informant here is not a native speaker of English but of Filipino; nevertheless, he is very clear on the different functions of English and of other languages (essential vs. optional). Although he has Australian nationality himself and speaks three languages fluently (English, Filipino, Spanish), he here constructs “Australians” as monolingual English speakers. In this normalised construction of Australian language identity, speaking a second language is not an important tool of communication but a nice asset, like an accessory, something one feels “bad” and “unsophisticated” about if it is lacking but it is also something that is not really essential. Knowledge of English is, therefore, “appreciated”, even by native English speakers, as they know that it is, basically, English they need. It is interesting that a positive evaluation of native knowledge of English, although hindering bilingual language abilities, is mentioned also in another interview passage:

“And I think, if anything,  
people who are (0.5) Spanish speakers (1)  
enjoy (2)

like, in Australia, (1)  
like the fact that they are English (.)  
and like to meet people who aren't necessarily Spanish speakers." (G 10)

Here, English-native speakers are presented as appreciating "the fact that they are English" who like to meet new people whose language background is irrelevant (as everybody speaks English). Spanish does not really function as language of communication, it is something that is enjoyable but, at the end of the day, everybody communicates in English anyhow. The hesitations in this quote are illuminating as the interviewee struggles in her attempt to use a non-essentialist terminology to express who she is referring to. She avoids terms that refer to nationality or citizenship and it takes her a while to articulate that she here refers to English-native speakers in Australia who speak Spanish ("Spanish speakers in Australia" and not Latin Americans). It only becomes clear that she is referring to Anglo-Australians when she says that these Spanish-speakers "like the fact that they are English". Due to the avoidance of essentialist categories such as nationality, the informant uses language terms ("Spanish speakers in Australia") according to which she categorises people. Yet, she then uses an ethnic term and maintains that Anglo-Australians, first of all, "like" their Englishness. It is unmasking that she here, despite her previously careful way of categorising, falls back into essentialism by claiming not only that Anglo-Australians like that they speak English but even that they, somehow, *are* English. These Anglophile Australians may use their ability to speak Spanish in order to present themselves as open-minded. The conflict between apparently non-essential terms (language) and essentialist terms (ethnicity) reminds of the contradictions that emerge in the discourses on authenticity and is revealing of the simultaneous presence of contradicting discourses in the interview passage.

Spanish native speakers, on the other hand, sometimes critique this language ideology of 'English plus some Spanish' and describe the mediocre abilities of some Cuban Salsa dancers as "funny"

"They know some words and they want to show that,  
like you have been to another places,  
and you want to show, you know, a word in that language.  
(laughs)  
It's so funny [...]  
And most of them, they know the songs. They know the lyrics.  
They think they understand them.  
And you ask them:  
'Do you know what that song says?'  
'No!'  
Yeah, it's so funny, they sing every word  
and 'Do you know what it says?'  
'No!'" (N29)

Although there are some members of the CoP whose second language abilities in Spanish are very high (e.g. the dance school owner), there are also native speakers of English who know



only some words and expressions in Spanish. As described in the above quote by a native Colombian international student, some dancers want to “show” that they have “been to other places” by using some Spanish words. The relevance of the concept of cosmopolitanism comes to mind and one could describe this form of cosmopolitan multilingualism also as ‘decorative multilingualism’. The functions of bilingualism are not necessarily to communicate in a second language but to demonstrate a certain identity by differing from monolingual English speakers.

In the realm of the media, bilingualism with languages that are “not anchored in the speech community but that are understood as belonging to another society and culture” has also been called “impersonal bilingualism” or “ethnosymbolism” (Haarmann 1989, quoted in Androutsopoulos 2007:211,220). Especially in the discourse of advertising, symbolic use of (some) foreign languages is used to make a product more attractive. One example for this is the use of French in German advertisements, where the ethnosymbolic value of French is often linked to constructions of eroticism (Piller 2001a, quoted in Androutsopoulos 2007:221). It is of course intriguing that not all languages seem to function in this respect.

In the case of Cuban Salsa in Sydney, firstly, only the bilingual (partly symbolic) abilities of English native speakers or highly competent English speakers are considered an asset (“voluntary bilingualism”, see Ogbu and Simons 1998), and secondly, it is here only Spanish (and not, for example, Filipino) that functions in the creation of cosmopolitan identity. Thus, one has to beware of understanding this development of multilingualism becoming “cool” as being generally empowering for the multilingual populations of Australia. First of all, it is vital to see that the majority of native Spanish-speakers in the Cuban CoP has not grown up in Australia but studies at Australian universities as international students. Non-native speakers of Spanish appropriate the ‘other’ (“passionate”, “emotional”, etc.) world language, and this is done by those who can afford a lifestyle that includes travel, culture, time and money to spend in dance studios and language classes. Ethnic boundaries between native and non-native speakers of Spanish are not transgressed, but to a certain extent are even enforced, so that the degree of subversion of existing social hierarchies, which could theoretically be an effect of multilingual language ideology, becomes questionable. It rather seems that ethnic traits are consumed as “lifestyle options” (Rampton 2000a:50). Despite claims to authenticity, it is not necessarily the native speaker of Spanish who is considered as being on top of the community’s social hierarchy. As observed by Rampton, in an age of globalisation, it frequently happens that “the consumer’s personal taste and purchasing power matter as much or more than their early socialization” (Rampton 2000a:50).

This links the language ideology of ‘decorative multilingualism’ to the contradictions that can be detected in the discourses on authenticity (see 8.4.), where claims to authenticity of Latin Americans are described as “racism” although it is their ‘authenticity’ that is used to adorn oneself with ‘Latin’ plumes. These contradictions may be an effect of the simultaneous presence of different discourses from different scales. According to the logic of national

discourses, there are 'roots', 'authentic cultures' and native speakers, while, at the same time, there is the logic of global discourses, highly influenced by capitalist ideology, where more or less superficial second language abilities of English speakers indicate "personal taste and purchasing power", or in short, class. Depending on the position of the speaker, either the one or the other logic is used to present the own abilities and activities as legitimate and attractive. However, contradictions emerge in the moment where the different discourses and different orders of indexicality come together, and also, in the "zones of contact between dominant and dominated groups, between persons of different and multiple identities" (Pratt 1987:60). The advantage of the majority member of Australian society is that they can choose to disengage from the 'other' background. It is still their identity that is seen as the 'normal' identity. "The cosmopolitan may embrace the alien culture, but he [sic] does not become committed to it. All the time he knows where the exit is" (Hannerz 1996a:104). The construction of the 'normal' Australian identity remains crucially influential and is partly constitutive of the cosmopolitan identity of Cuban Salsa dancers.

Nevertheless, there is an aspect of social change, of "liminality" (see Turner 1974, quoted in Rampton 1995b, see 4.2.), that can be detected in the language ideologies of the Cuban Salsa community. Those who cross boundaries and transgress and transform everyday reality (and whose practices are therefore "liminal") are, paradoxically, those who do have an early socialisation with Latin American culture. However, the boundaries 'real' Latin Americans transgress are not ethnic boundaries but the intersections of ethnicity and class as they have developed in the Australian context of multiculturalism. 'Ethnic' identity in Australia – denoting non-Anglo, non-northern European ethnic identity – instead of being related to a working-class immigrant background, can now be linked to cosmopolitanism if the 'other' can speak English. Latin American students, due to their ability to speak English, can participate in the community. Due to their ability to speak Spanish, they can perform 'authentic' identity and reappropriate their linguistic and cultural knowledge. They then become part of a global "'new class', people with credentials, decontextualised cultural capital" (Hannerz 1996a:108).

Thus, despite the presence and relevance of national discourse and ideologies of authenticity, the transnational scale to which Cuban Salsa is linked offers an opportunity to renegotiate and shift the meaning of multilingual identity. Interestingly, the starting point of this opportunity is not a national, governmental discourse but a commercial discourse; after all, Sydney Cuban Salsa is primarily embedded in capitalist regimes of exploitation. Although one has to be careful in not overestimating the liminal effects of the renegotiation of multilingual identity as cosmopolitan, it can here be observed that "in a world characterized by the circulation of commodities, commercial culture can provide an effective means of receiving and sending messages in unexpected ways" (Lipsitz 1994:13).

Summarising this chapter, it can be observed that, as in the previous chapter, several discourses and orders of indexicality from different scales come together in the Cuban Salsa

Community of Practice in Sydney. Left-wing ideologies of anti-commercialism relate to a strong objection to the L.A. Style CoP. Ethnic authenticity of Latin American music, dance and people is celebrated in the community and important in the construction of non-commercialist positions; yet, there are contradictory lines of argumentation with reference to the role of 'authentic' Latin culture and identity. While contact with authentic culture and language is based on the idea that authentic culture actually exists, the identity that is aspired to by Cuban Style dancers is related to a cosmopolitan concept of identity, which is based on the ability to make cultural experiences with the 'other' and thus to partly disengage from the culture of origin. Disengagement from the own culture of origin is vital for becoming cosmopolitan but in order to disengage, one has to make contact with others who have not disengaged from their culture of origin. The contradictions with reference to authentic culture that emerge are therefore based on the simultaneous presence and contradictory interrelatedness of two different types of discourses: ethnic/national identity (of the 'other') is necessary to construct cosmopolitanism but, at the same time, adherence to ethnic/national identity is the opposite of cosmopolitanism.

Mobility in terms of ethnic belonging is thus an element in the construction of transnational cosmopolitan elite identity (this relates to Binder's observation on 'traveller' discourses, which construct the 'other' as static. See Binder 2005). The contradictory role of the notion of authenticity in the context also relates to the concept of "metrolingualism" (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009), as the term captures the "complex and contradictory processes" (5) that occur due to the fact that "the celebrated spaces of hybridity, third space and transcultural interaction may also include monolithic ascriptions of culture and identity". As the authors on metrolingualism maintain, "we need to both avoid turning hybridity into a fixed category of pluralisation, and to find ways to acknowledge that fixed categories are also mobilised as an aspect of hybridity" (ibid.).

Considering the degree of deconstruction of the concept of language as an entity, the type of language crossing as it is found in Cuban Style Salsa shows a certain disentanglement of language from ethnic identity as Anglo-Australians here see it as vital to become bilingual speakers of Spanish and English. This form of bilingualism seems to question nationalist categories, as there is an identification with a language that is not based on ethnic or national belonging. It is nevertheless difficult to understand this disentanglement as necessarily subversive in a political sense. Although cosmopolitan multilingual identity does not belong to the traditional national framework of "one culture – one language", the appropriation of a language in order to participate in an elitist lifestyle does not overcome established intersections of class and ethnicity and is furthermore actually based on the existence of fixed (national or cultural) categories. The re-appropriation of ethnic heritage of native Spanish-speakers as cosmopolitan instead of working class migrant might here be interpreted as the most transgressive act, in which a restructuring of established intersections of class and ethnicity can be found.

Bilingual abilities serve to represent mobility in terms of ethnic belonging; however, there are strong linguistic hierarchies involved and not all languages function to symbolise cosmopolitanism. In the example of Cuban Salsa in Sydney, English is the unquestioned 'background' language, which is essential for the possibility to become cosmopolitan in the first place (and somehow reminds of the role of Latin in pre-national times). The languages English and Spanish are still considered to be entities and in this respect, national frameworks of thought are not questioned. Knowledge of Spanish, however, does not necessarily symbolise ethnic belonging but can symbolise contact to an 'authentic other' culture and it is this contact that is vital for differentiating from commercial Salsa (the "silly stuff") and for constructing a cosmopolitan, elite identity. Interestingly, the hierarchies emerging in discourses on authenticity (cosmopolitan mobility versus authentic immobility) mirror in the different ideologies towards Spanish and English. English is the unquestioned language of communication, the precondition for becoming cosmopolitan, while it is sufficient to engage in 'decorative multilingualism', to have only a very superficial knowledge of Spanish, in order to be considered a cosmopolitan bilingual.

Concluding, it can be observed that the language ideologies of the Cuban Style Community of Practice are the result of a combination of transnational discourses – the development of transnational commercial culture and the construction of cosmopolitan identity – national discourses – the role of English and the symbolic meaning of bilingualism – and local discourses – being different from L.A. Style dancers.

The social and linguistic hierarchies that are found in the community are closely related to the national level and although transnational discourses are constitutional of the CoP as such, national discourses are highly influential in the construction of local identity and local language ideology. Due to the relevance of national discourses on language and belonging in both, the L.A. and the Cuban Style community, the following chapter will have a closer look at these national Australian discourses as they are reflected in the language ideologies of Salsa dancers.

## 9. AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGE DISCOURSE – THE RELEVANCE OF FIXED CATEGORIES IN AN AGE OF FLUX

In this chapter, language ideologies of the Australian national space are introduced and discussed. Firstly, a short overview of the historical development of Australian policies on multiculturalism and multilingualism gives crucial background information; secondly, empirical data on concepts, experiences and attitudes towards national issues are discussed.

As the main interest of this thesis lies in the analysis of language ideologies in *transnational* Communities of Practice, the question arises why a whole chapter is here devoted to the description and analysis of *national* language discourse. The decision to include this chapter is mainly based on the observation that the national level cannot be ignored in the study of transnational phenomena. On the basis of the analysis of discourses on language and culture in the two introduced Communities of Practice, it has become clear that national discourses are highly relevant in the individual and local discourses of the two communities. Although it may seem contradictory at first sight, global discourses do not generally overcome static, traditional categories but may even be dependent on them, which has been discussed in section 4.2.:

What often seems to be overlooked in discussions of local, global and hybrid relations is the way in which the local may involve not only the take up of the global, or a localised form of cosmopolitanism, but also may equally be about the take up of local forms of static and monolithic identity and culture. (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009:4-5)

In the L.A. Style CoP, English-only discourse is an obvious effect of the Australian environment, as English is the dominant language in Australia. Furthermore, ideologies of belonging on the local, community level, where achievement is more crucial than ‘original’ ethnicity, are related to Australian citizenship policies. The ideology of ‘evolutionism’, related to English, although simultaneously linked to a global level, is clearly dependent on national, Australian discourses. The Cuban Style community is characterised by a particular interest in Latin culture and also in the Spanish language, which relates to a transnational sphere. Yet, the function of this interest can only be understood thoroughly if Australian national discourses on language and (class) belonging are taken into account. Members of the Cuban Style community belong to a particular group of Australian society, where knowledge of other cultures and languages functions as symbolic capital. In the Australian context, there is a strong emphasis on the acquisition of English in discourses concerned with education and citizenship (Clyne 2008) and it is not all Australians who can renegotiate their multilingualism as valuable competence so that only particular types of multilingualism function as prestige resource. Additionally, the comparatively low number of language learners in Australia (Lindsey 2008) leads to multilingualism being a stronger distinctive trait than in some other countries.

In both Salsa communities, the documented discourses and ideologies are highly dependent on national discourse. Thus, in order to fully grasp transnational language ideologies, the national level turns out to be most relevant. In the interviews that have been conducted for this research, there is a very high number of passages that relate to Australian language policy or that point to language ideologies that directly or indirectly relate to Australian citizenship policy and identity discourse. Therefore, in this chapter, I will introduce the outlines of language discourse that are linked to the Australian, national level, as they are found in the data set. The reader has to be reminded at this point that the data is of a qualitative nature. It is therefore not possible to say anything about the quantitative distribution of the discourses that are introduced. What is clear, however, is that due to the interdiscursive nature of any statement, they do express discourses – fields of knowledge – as they exist in Australia (see also 5.3.1. for a discussion on the validity of qualitative methods). Furthermore, it has to be noted that the perspective on national discourse in Australia is necessarily influenced by the national environment in which the analyst grew up and lives permanently (Germany). As, in comparison to Australia, the history of German governmental discourses is characterised by strong monolingual tendencies, but as, on the other hand, language learning (especially of English) takes a prominent role in German public education, the issues of monolingualism, multilingualism and language learning are at the centre of attention of the analysis of language ideologies in Australia.

The contents of interviews relating to the Australian national language discourse are not differentiated according to membership to the different Communities of Practice as they all describe rather similar experiences and beliefs; community membership is therefore not used as a category in introducing interview data. In this chapter, additionally, data of interviews conducted with members of the Sydney Colombian community is included. These interviews were originally carried out in order to compare the language ideologies of ‘ethnic’ Salsa dancers with those of the ones found in the other two CoPs (see 6.4.). However, due to theoretical reasons (Colombians in Sydney do not form a Community of Practice but an ethnic community) and due to practical reasons (the community resides far away from the city so that, if dependent on public transport, ethnographic fieldwork at Salsa venues was difficult to accomplish), the data of these interviews is problematic if used in comparison to the two Communities of Practice, Cuban and L.A. Style. However, migration experiences to Australia and experiences related to language ideology, described by Latin American migrants to Australia, irrespective whether they belong to an ethnic Latin community or to a Salsa Community of Practice, are similar. They are also closely related to what Australians of other backgrounds (mainstream and other) describe and report.

The sampling of this chapter may be accused of being eclectic, including interviewees from very different backgrounds, who, after all, only have in common that they live in Australia and dance Salsa. Yet, the number of interview passages that are concerned with the topic and the outcomes of the analysis of discourses led to the conclusion that the data is highly

relevant in understanding transnational language ideology. The national level is, in contrast to what some contemporary theories on transnationalism may imply (see e.g. Appadurai 1998, Papastergiadis 2000), extremely influential. Blommaert, for example, describes the national level as a “switchboard” between the local and the global scale (Blommaert 2005b:396). While the pre-assumptions of this thesis had been that discourses of the transnational would have diminishing effects on nationalism and on nationalist language ideology, the analysis of discourses in the transnational CoPs seem rather to confirm the continuing discursive power of nation-states, albeit the framework in which they act has changed. In this context, Blommaert’s observation — that the state is, after all, a centring institution with considerable scope that contributes materially in providing and regulating education and infrastructure — is crucial. Blommaert also remarks, for example, that, “despite enormous differences [in power/scope] between the states, all non-governmental actors act with reference *to* the state” (Blommaert 2005b:397, emphasis in original).

The exposure to the national discourse of Australia has an effect on people’s beliefs and thoughts, even if they are active members of a transnational community. Considering the role of national media (television, radio, newspaper) and national education systems, it is not particularly remarkable that national discourse remains central in any analysis of discourse in society. The inclusion of interview data on national Australian discourses, therefore, is here not based on essentialist assumptions of national belonging but on the observation that, despite opposing theoretical pre-assumptions, and despite the eclectic sampling that is the basis of this chapter, national discourses are highly relevant and fundamentally influential in analysing language ideology in a transnational age. This proves that “imagined communities” (Anderson 1985), such as national communities, or “communities as semiotic sign” (Rampton 2000b) have to be taken into account in the analysis of discursive and also small-scale linguistic data. According to the logics of social constructionism, “community-as-representation is treated not only as a antecedent resource required in the coordination of meaning, but also as a productive device in the structuring of subsequent interaction” (Rampton 2000b:10).

The data is not only interesting in relation to the transnational level but also enlightening in itself, in giving insights into how individuals evaluate and negotiate Australian discourses on language and immigration policy and multicultural ideology. The critical views that are expressed in many passages show that constructing (national) community in cultural diversity is a very complex and often conflicting issue. The data introduced here also illustrates Australian discourse on language and belonging as an interesting case of national language discourse in a global age.

The interview data that are introduced in this chapter are structured according to two issues: firstly, the experience of migrating to Australia – on the one hand experiences with and attitudes towards multicultural policies, on the other hand, experiences and beliefs concerned with the pressure to learn English in the context of an Anglo-Australian

hegemony. This first part is therefore mainly about a migrant's perspective on Australian society. Secondly, ideologies of monolingualism and multilingualism of 'mainstream' Australia are introduced, which represents the perspective of Anglo-Australians in Australia. Obviously, the two topics are closely interlinked but are here introduced in a linear manner for the sake of clarity. It has to be remarked that the division between 'migrant Australians' and 'mainstream Australians' is, of course, highly problematic, especially in a context like Australia. Yet, this division has a discursive reality in Australian public discourse (see 9.1.) and the passages in the respective chapters are not categorised according to interviewees belonging to one of these groups but according to content.

Before the empirical data is discussed, the following section introduces a brief history of governmental policies of multicultural Australia, which is necessary in order to understand contemporary language discourse in a national context.

### **9.1. MULTICULTURAL, MULTILINGUAL AUSTRALIA – A HISTORY OF POLICIES**

Governmental authorities play a decisive role in the creation of public discourse and are dominant agencies in the struggle over meaning. Discourses in Australia, whether in transnational or other contexts, are obviously pervaded by the discourses that have been created by governmental institutions. This is particularly apparent in a context like Australia, where a high number of citizens have personal experiences with migration and thus have come into contact with visa and immigration policies – which are the result of governmental discourses. A brief insight into the history and present day policy discourse of Australia is thus constructive. Special focus is here on policies and discourses related to immigration and the creation of a multicultural and multilingual nation, as these issues have been a starting point for the research design (see Ch. 1) and are crucial in understanding constructions of Australian identity.

Due to the short history of the Australian nation as it is known today, Australian identity cannot make claims of relating to some ancient history. The imaginative status of Australian national identity is even more obvious than in other cases (see also White 1981), as every Australian is aware that what today represents Australian identity is not based in an 'eternal' or at least very long history (Anderson discusses the claim to 'eternity' of a nation as a typical construct in the formation of national identity; see Anderson 1985). The large number of cultural backgrounds of Australian citizens, which have diversified strongly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see e.g. Jupp 2001), makes it furthermore difficult to create a homogenous identity for all Australians. Today, the government of Australia defines the country as a multicultural and multilingual nation and, since the 1970s, engages in a clearly visible discourse of multiculturalism (Lopez 2000). Nevertheless, especially during the 1990s, there also have been aims of re-establishing monocultural Anglo-Celtic dominance (Cox 2010), in which English has played a central role (see e.g. Lo Bianco 2001).



Looking at numbers, it can be inferred that the Australian nation belongs to one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world. In 2006, 24% of the population of Australia was born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, see Farrell 2008:24). The same census shows that, for example, 29% of the population of Sydney speaks a language other than English in the home. The statistics for the top 10 community languages for Sydney and Australia in 2006 shows the diversity of languages involved:

<b>Sydney</b>				<b>Australia</b>			
	<b>Language</b>	<b>Number of Speakers</b>	<b>% of Respondents (4,119,191)</b>		<b>Language</b>	<b>Number of Speakers</b>	<b>% of Respondents (19,855,288)</b>
1	<b>Arabic (incl. Lebanese)</b>	161,098	3.91	1	<b>Italian</b>	316,893	1.60
2	<b>Cantonese</b>	125,292	3.04	2	<b>Greek</b>	252,222	1.27
3	<b>Mandarin</b>	96,704	2.35	3	<b>Cantonese</b>	244,554	1.23
4	<b>Greek</b>	80,148	1.95	4	<b>Arabic</b>	243,662	1.23
5	<b>Vietnamese</b>	72,615	1.76	5	<b>Mandarin</b>	220,596	1.11
6	<b>Italian</b>	71,769	1.74	6	<b>Vietnamese</b>	194,858	0.98
7	<b>Spanish</b>	44,663	1.08	7	<b>Spanish</b>	97,998	0.49
8	<b>Tagalog</b>	44,296	1.08	8	<b>Tagalog</b>	92,330	0.47
9	<b>Hindi</b>	36,981	0.9	9	<b>German</b>	75,634	0.38
10	<b>Korean</b>	35,943	0.87	10	<b>Hindi</b>	70,013	0.35

(table taken from Farrell 2008:25, compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007)

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Australia's immigration policies were based on racist conceptualisations of human populations. The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (Chesterman and Galligan 1999) had been installed in order to ensure that migrants were of 'white' races, preferably from Britain, and is therefore also often referred to as the White Australia Policy (Jayasuriya, Walker and Gothard 2003). The Immigration Act implemented a dictation test that could be conducted by immigration officers for ensuring the legitimacy of entrance of potential new citizens. Interestingly, this test had not to be in English but could be carried out in any European language (Piller 2001b). Language testing was here not made in order to test fluency in the language of the country but under the assumption that Europeans are able to produce written forms of European languages. It was thus basically a policy that aimed at testing the racial and class status of the immigrant, who had to be

literate Europeans; but in general, it was arbitrary as the immigration officer could choose in which language the test was to be conducted<sup>66</sup>.

Due to an increase of migration after World War II and due to economic reasons, White Australia policies were given up in the second half of the 1940s. After the near invasion of Japan in 1942, the slogan ‘Populate or Perish’ characterised the fear of low population numbers in face of densely populated Asian neighbours (Migration Heritage Centre, New South Wales 2010). Immigration was no longer restricted to ‘white’ individuals (Lopez 2000) and high numbers of immigrants from mainly European countries were brought to the country in different migration schemes (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2010a). In 1961, already 8% of the population had a non-British background (mainly Italian, German, Greek and Polish, see Migration Heritage Centre New South Wales 2010). A policy of assimilation meant to ensure that new citizens should “become indistinguishable from the Australian-born population as rapidly as possible” (Australian Government 2009:24). In 1948, the AMEP, the Adult Migrant Education Program was introduced (see Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009, McNamara and Shohamy 2008), which has become famous for being the first comprehensive programme in the world to teach a national language to newcomers (Lo Bianco 2003). Although embedded in assimilationist policies, the programme produced positive results in terms of the linguistic integration of non-English speakers.

Due to the development of an increasingly diverse population during the 1960s, and the observation that assimilation policies led to segregation and poverty (ibid.:27), “the Australian Government made attempts at developing positive and progressive social policies with the introduction of multiculturalism over assimilation” in the 1970s (Farrell 2008:27). In the first half of the 1970s, the Whitlam Labor government began to discuss multiculturalism as a necessary approach to govern the Australian society (Rubino 2007) and in 1978, under the Liberal-National Fraser government, the *Galbally Report* (Australian Government 2009: 28, May 2003:133) implemented multiculturalism as official policy in Australia. It was aimed at ensuring equal access to resources for all citizens of Australia and to support cultural maintenance (Jupp 2001:783). The report made cultural diversity a shared political programme of all sides of politics, as, before that, multiculturalism had been mainly a Labor project (Lo Bianco 2001:27).

Multicultural policies from the 1970s have been generally criticised for their essentialist approach on the one hand (Radtke 1998) and for the possible interpretation that they are not “a policy to foster cultural differences but, on the contrary, to direct them into safe channels” (Ang and Stratton 1994, quoted in Farrell 2008):

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<sup>66</sup> The most famous case of this form of testing is that of Egon Kisch, a Jewish left-wing activist, in the 1930s, who was considered an undesired immigrant. He failed the test, which was given to him, being a multilingual European, in Scottish Gaelic (Cochrane 2008).

Indeed, recognizing the cultural identity of a minority group and promoting its maintenance through official financial support may well be an indirect and Machiavellian technique to consecrate exclusion of the minority group, or more appropriately to continue to dominate it. (Paquet 1994, quoted in Pietrobruno 2006:97)

Yet, it must not be forgotten that Australia is one of the forerunners of the development of culturally inclusive policies and, in comparison to many European countries, has to be considered as truly progressive at the time. Furthermore, in policy texts since the 1970s, Australia's culture has not been described as static but as dynamic or "evolving" (Clyne 2005:165), so that it is not fair to accuse Australian multiculturalism of being based on essentialist assumptions.

In the 1980s, multicultural policies faced a period of "disillusion and retreat" (Jupp 1991, quoted in Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1997:123) but multiculturalism was again officially reinstated with the *National Agenda for Multiculturalism* in 1989 (Australian Government 1989). It confirmed the right to maintain cultural identity and demanded social justice and economic efficiency, regardless of the cultural background (Australian Government 2009:30-31). Despite the Agenda's comparatively progressive nature, it also emphasised national demands as, for example, in the following passage: "multicultural policies are based on the premise that all Australians should have an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia, to its interests and future first and foremost" (1989, quoted in Castles and Davidson 2000:166).

Next to the acknowledgement of cultural diversity with the *Galbally Report* and the *National Agenda*, in the 1980s, the Australian Government was a crucial innovator in the field of inclusive language policies (see e.g. Lo Bianco 2008, Ozolins 1993, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1997). Already in the 1970s, community languages, languages spoken by the 'ethnic' (non-Anglo) communities in Australia, became part of many primary schools' curricula, above all in urban areas (Lo Bianco 2003:22, see here also for a brief discussion of the different roles of 'community' and 'aboriginal' languages at that time). During the 1970s and 1980s, the interests of language professionals (teachers, etc.), community activists (indigenous and migrant) and of trade needs came together in a powerful coalition that made the language issue a national topic (Lo Bianco 2001:14). The results of activism for multilingual provision were unique and had a far reach. Radio programmes in community languages, support for the teaching of community languages, interpreting in hospitals, provision of multilingual information leaflets in governmental institutions, telephone interpreting and multilingual TV programmes belong to the crucial and outstanding innovations of language activism of the 1970s, which are still in use today (Clyne 2005:145-151).

While some of Australia's states further improved the status of community languages, especially in the educational realm, the development of language policy on the federal level

faced a phase of inactivity in the beginning of the 1980s. Yet, in the second half of the decade, “Australia became the first predominantly English-speaking nation to develop an explicit national languages policy. This has often been cited internationally as a model for pluralist language policy” (Clyne 2005:154). The *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco and Australian Department of Education 1987), also known as the *Lo Bianco Report*, which was endorsed as a result of the demands of grassroots initiative and expert research, was introduced in 1987 and it “stressed the importance of the recognition and promotion of languages other than English in the Australian context” (Kipp, Clyne and Pauwels 1995:20). As can be inferred from the following quote, its aims were comprehensive and intended to make multilingual resources part of a mainstream ability:

The language pluralism of Australia is regarded as a valuable national resource enhancing and enriching cultural and intellectual life and as a valuable economic resource in its potential for use in international trade. [...] It is in Australia’s national interests to develop the linguistic resources of its people and integrate these skills with other broad national goals. (Lo Bianco and Australian Department of Education 1987:4/5)

As a consequence of this policy, in Europe, Australia is still conceived as an innovator in the field of inclusive language policies (see e.g. Lo Bianco 2003, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1997:115). The policy led to an increase in ESL, teaching of Aboriginal languages, cross-cultural training, adult literacy programmes, second/foreign language learning and Asian studies (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1997:125). “The Australian language policy exercise has unquestionably been helpful and productive in bringing language policy into mainstream political *discourse*” (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1997:141, emphasis in original). As recent as 2003, European scholars have described Australia as a “country which now accepts and rejoices in its multilingual composition” (Beacco and Byram in Lo Bianco 2003:6).

With an eye on the “monolingual mindset” (Clyne 2005, Clyne 2008) that can nevertheless be observed in Australia today, these evaluations might be overly optimistic. It was merely four years after the *Lo Bianco Report*, in 1991, that the policy was displaced by the *The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (ALLP). Here, the emphasis shifted to literacy in English as “economic rationalism became the dominant policy” (Clyne 2005:156). Since 1987, two different foci have existed in discourses about language in Australia, and both are related to economic goals. Lo Bianco describes one focus as “Asianism” (Lo Bianco 2003), where Asian languages are taught in order to improve trade relations within the Asian-Pacific region. In 1994 the *National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian School Strategy* (NALSAS) was introduced; its scope, however, is limited to Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian and Korean and these are to be taught as ‘foreign’ languages (although there are of course communities in Australia who speak these languages, Lo Bianco 2001:31).

The second focus is on literacy in English, which is also related to a discourse of “economic competitiveness in a global economy and an ideology of human capital theory” (Lo Bianco

2003:25/26). In 1997, the *Commonwealth Literacy Policy* (CLP) was introduced, which focuses exclusively on literacy in English; furthermore, the “CLP operates from assumptions of an English native speaking Australian community, almost a nostalgic recreation” (Lo Bianco 2001:34). The construction of English as key aspect on the global job market and the tendency to elevate “the interests of economy above those of nation and community [...] constitutes a new kind of challenge for advocates of bilingualism and multilingual language planning” (Lo Bianco 2003:25). It seems that language policy development in the 1990s in Australia represents an illustrative case of shifts from social to economic interests in national discourse (see also Lo Bianco 2001), related to the globalisation of the economy, which at the same time ‘normalise’ monocultural, monolingual tendencies. Yet, some minority communities also profited from these shifts, as it “had the potential of conferring on plurilinguists a new status as those with economic capital rather than just underprivileged people” (Clyne 2005:157). This ambivalent image of plurilinguists as either underprivileged or as possessing economic capital has been observed also in the discourses of the two introduced Salsa communities (see Chs 7 and 8).

The picture of multilingualism in Australia today is very diverse and partly contradictory, which is also due to the federal organisation of Australia. The teaching of community languages is provided in many schools but it depends on the state, the region, the city and the school itself whether a pupil has access to his or her language. It is mainly primary schools where community languages are part of the curriculum (Lo Bianco 2003). Foreign language teaching has become compulsory in all Australian states, although, for example in New South Wales, the state with the lowest provision, only 100 hours of language teaching are compulsory in 12 years of schooling (NSW Department of Education and Training 2009). On the other hand, 40% of primary schools in NSW offer a language other than English (Clyne 2005:159) and “Australian schools and higher education institutions still teach more languages and Australian examination systems still accredit more languages than in almost any other country in the world” (Lo Bianco 2001:40, over 40 languages accredited for examination at the Year 12 level). Yet, in comparison to other countries Australia overall has a very limited provision of language learning:

Australia’s school students spend the least time on second languages of students in all OECD countries. Language studies have collapsed from 40 per cent of Year 12 students studying a second language in the 60s to fewer than 15 per cent today. (Lindsey 2008)

Outside of educational contexts, however, multilingual culture is still vital:

The success of 1990s policy in rolling back 1980s ideologies of language pluralism does not equate with ‘out there’ language and literacy practices. In the ‘real worlds’ of practice and community, counterposed to the real worlds of

policy inhabited by policy-making elites, Australian language and literacy remains plural, diverse and rich. (Lo Bianco 2001:40)

There is a vast array of radio channels in many languages and the radio station Radio Australia broadcasts, for example, in Khmer and Chinese (see [www.radioaustralia.net.au](http://www.radioaustralia.net.au)). It also offers English learning sessions. The multilingual and multicultural television channel SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) is highly innovative and diverse. It broadcasts multilingually and shows news programmes from 23 different countries and offers radio programmes in 69 languages (<http://www.sbs.com.au/>). Movies on SBS television are mostly shown in the original language with English subtitles.

Many web pages of the Australian Government are also a positive example for multilingual inclusion. A lot of pages display a 'Multilingual' option, where important information is translated into many different languages. For example, the Family Assistance Office offers documents in Amharic, Arabic, Assyrian, Bosnian, Chinese, Dari, Dinka, Farsi, Filipino, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Malay, Samoan, Serbian, Sinhalese, Somali, Spanish, Tongan, Turkish and Vietnamese (see <http://www.familyassist.gov.au>).

These are highly positive examples and build an exceptional case of linguistic comprehensiveness, although the success in mainstreaming multilingualism through these provisions is not always seen. Most radio and TV programmes have been initially established by the communities themselves (Ozolins 1993:118–121, 123–127, quoted in Rubino 2007:90) and not by the government, so that mainstream populations are not necessarily targeted. It has been observed that even today, "Australia relies principally on the language maintenance activities of its immigrant communities" (Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2009:4). The discursive construction of a monolingual mainstream population here remains untouched. Similarly, it is not any governmental resource that is in other languages but only those where citizens require practical support (for example, resources for researchers are usually only in English, as well as resources on Australia for the general public; see [www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au)). If multilingual resources are directed at newly arriving immigrants and people in need only, English stays the 'unmarked', 'normal' language. Indeed, multilingual programmes and resources may even lead to the paradoxical result that languages other than English become *less* attractive. If speaking another language is indirectly related to an image of traditional heritage and poverty, the ability of speaking a language runs the danger of being seen as a state to be overcome – at least if there are no other discursive currents that hinder such an image, as in the case of multilingualism for economic success or cultural capital.

Despite Australia's strong multilingual culture, the binary opposition of English as 'norm' and other languages as something for new migrants and people in need is also found when having a closer look at the 1990s policies (*NALSA* and *CLP*, see above). Furthermore, especially under the Liberal Howard government, newer policies on multiculturalism,

citizenship testing and immigration strengthened the hegemony of English in Australia (Clyne 2005). The accompanying anti-pluralist discourse (Cox 2010) was more prominent in rural areas than in urban areas, which confirms observations made by some interviewees in my data-set, who speak of a divided country, divided between cities and the countryside (see 9.3.). The 2003 government statement paper on multiculturalism *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*, although maintaining that Australia profits from linguistic diversity, strongly emphasises that English is the common language (Australian Government 2003:5). The debate on English as expressing Australianess has intensified in the last decade. A particularly disturbing case in this context is that of Cornelia Rau, a mentally ill German-born Australian, who spent 10 months in an Australian detention camp for illegal immigrants on the basis of her production of German words and English with a German accent when questioned by authorities (Clyne 2005:Introduction). Her usage of a ‘foreign’ language was not understood as a possible consequence of her belonging to an Australian community. The tendency of linking Australian identity to English (only) and a mere ‘ornamental’ encouragement of multilingualism from federal governmental realms is enforced with the newly implemented language testing regime.

Since 2007, new citizens of Australia have to attend a citizenship test, in which knowledge of culture and values of Australia is evaluated. Although there is no separate English test, this citizenship test has to be taken in English and applicants thus have to show that they have a “basic knowledge of the English language” (Australian Citizenship Test Review Committee 2008:17). There has been a lively debate on the need for this test and a lot of critique has been made, which led to amendments to the test (see Möllering 2009 for an overview). Above all, the critique has been directed towards two issues: the overall need to test the level of English of future citizens (see Cox 2010), and, secondly, whether the level of English that is tested represents a “basic level” (Piller and McNamara 2007) as the test has been described as “demanding in terms of its proficiency – and literacy requirements” (McNamara and Shohamy 2008:93). The government itself has never questioned the need to test new citizens’ English. Within the contemporary socio-political discourse, it has been argued that the test is “motivated for most part by discourses of national identity in the context of external threats from terrorism” (McNamara and Shohamy 2008:92). The discourse of Islamophobia, which increased after the events of 9/11 and the London and Bali bombings, initiated a debate on Australian values and identity (Cox 2010:92). In this debate, the English language has been linked to other values (democracy, liberty, “mateship”, etc.) and politicians from both the Liberal and the Labor party supported the idea that these values – and an ‘adequate’ level of English – should be a condition of the naturalisation of migrants (for an overview of the whole debate, see Cox 2010). It is also reported that some schools gave up the teaching of Arabic after 9/11 (Clyne 2005:168). Thus, the testing regime “serves its purpose not only in the attempt to ‘integrate’ prospective citizens, but to also assure the other citizens of the suitability of the newcomers” (Möllering 2009:10). This observation confirms that

globalisation does not actually dissolve national boundaries but may even enforce them, as it seems that globalisation “exacerbates [...] uncertainties and produces new incentives for cultural purification as more nations lose the illusion of national economic sovereignty or well-being” (Appadurai 2006:7).

In Australia, English not only plays a role in the naturalisation procedure but also in the allocation of visas. There are numerous different visa categories in the Australian immigration system (see <http://www.immi.gov.au/>) and, depending on these categories, different levels of English are required. In the ‘Skilled Migration’ stream, for example, which is for individuals who are allowed to enter Australia on the basis of their educational or job background, migrants have to know English before they enter the country. Different points are given for different levels of English and, obviously, the more points an applicant has, the higher the chances that the visa will be granted (Australian Government, Department of Citizenship and Immigration 2007b). Interestingly, in the ‘General Skilled Migration’ stream, points are also given for the ability to speak one of the community languages, which shows that there is a place for other languages than English, albeit it is only 5 points that can be attained (whereas 25 points can be attained with “proficient English”; see also Australian Government, Department of Citizenship and Immigration 2009b). In the ‘Sponsored Migration’ stream, where an employer declares that he/she wants to employ a particular migrant, “vocational” English is required, and in some regional areas “functional” English is sufficient (see Australian Government, Department of Citizenship and Immigration 2009a:7). The level of English has to be tested by one of the official language testing agencies, of which IELTS (International English Language Testing System) is most popular in Australia. Some exceptions to this can be made under certain circumstances but there has to be paid an extra “Visa Application Charge” (Australian Government, Department of Citizenship and Immigration 2007b). In the “Family Migration” stream and for migrants who enter the country due to humanitarian reasons, English is not required at entry but has to be learned for naturalisation (see *ibid.*). Family migrants and refugees are eligible for AMEP, which means they can get up to 510 hours of English tuition for free, in some cases up to 910 hours (Lo Bianco 2003). These courses are obviously very beneficial for newcomers who do not speak English. Yet, the cultural and linguistic knowledge that humanitarian and family migrants already have are not mentioned, although it is likely that these resources are vital for the respective communities. Additionally, it might be the only resources these migrants bring along.

The categorisation has to be understood in the context of economic discourses of Australia, where English plays an important role in the job market. Australia’s immigration policies are strongly oriented towards economic goals and foster immigration from people with high education and/or a high income. Speaking English, by all means, contributes to opportunities in the Australian job market. Yet, as Ingrid Piller has observed (Piller in press) the ability to speak English does not necessarily lead to well-paid jobs. For example, in



English-speaking contexts, people with ‘foreign’ sounding names face higher difficulties in finding a job, irrespective of their English skills (Oreopoulos 2009). It is furthermore likely that for some migrants English is not very important in their working life, as either they can use their native language or they may not need language skills at all (Piller in press:19-21). In Australian migration policies, English plays a central role and language testing, performed by non-governmental agencies (e.g. IELTS), is a huge market, as visa applicants have to pay high fees for the tests (e.g. 170 euro in Europe). The results of these tests are vital for the decision on whether somebody can enter Australia. These language testing regimes, where governmental policies, commercialised language testing agencies and university research centres (as, for example, the Centre for Macquarie English, <http://cme.mq.edu.au/>) are interwoven, represent an interesting case of new governance in a globalised world and require further examination.

It is clear that in contemporary Australian governmental discourse, English is constructed as the ‘unmarked’ case. Immigration policies and language testing procedures are indirectly linked to the image of other languages as mostly irrelevant. The multilingual service provision of today’s government web pages constructs Australia as an English-speaking nation, where speakers of other languages may require help. Multilingual media are primarily aimed at ‘ethnic’ communities, who can practise their language and culture in semi-public contexts and in family domains, while some provision (especially on SBS) is made for mainstream Australians interested in ‘other’ languages and cultures. It seems that in governmental discourse, speaking languages other than English remains tied to 1970s and 1980s discourses of cultural and linguistic diversity, where different cultures were supported for social reasons. Despite some tendencies to elevate the status of some languages on economic grounds, in governmental discourses, the construction of multilingualism within Australia intersects with marked ethnicity and lower class identity, while English remains the ‘normal’ language. This contrasts with some sectors of Australian society, where a lively multilingual culture can be found.

In this short overview of different aspects of Australian identity construction and language and migration policy, Australia’s “monolingual mindset” that has been criticised by Michael Clyne (Clyne 2008), is thus confirmed in the realm of contemporary governmental discourse. This “mindset” is, however, not primarily based on ethnic essentialism, as in nationalist discourses on language, but is strongly linked to economic discourse, where English plays a crucial role in the global job market. The transnational scale is here intertwined with the national scale, a phenomenon that has been observed similarly for the Salsa Communities of Practice, too (Chs 7 and 8). In the following, data from interviews with members from these communities and from the Colombian community of Sydney will show that the introduced governmental discourses have an influence on local experiences and discourses.

## 9.2. 'AND I WAS A WOG' – MIGRANT EXPERIENCE IN MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

Discourses on language and integration in Australia figure in the interview samples of this study. In this section, I will introduce interviewees' perspectives on and experiences with Australian policies on multiculturalism and immigration. Secondly, reports on language issues of migrants are discussed. Particularly prominent here are comments on the pressure to learn English and to become Australian in a context of an Anglo-Australian hegemony. Given Australia's vital multilingual and multicultural history, it is sometimes surprising to see how little is known of the 1970s and 1980s discourse on multiculturalism and multilingualism, which has made Australia famous as a pluralist nation.

First of all, attitudes towards policies of multiculturalism are an important topic that turns up frequently in the interviews. Constructions of multiculturalism of the Australian Government not only influence the maintenance and status of languages and cultures (which also influences discourses in Salsa contexts) but also have effects on individual beliefs. Generally, attitudes towards the concept of multiculturalism are ambivalent.

In an interview with an Australian of German descent, it is, for example, positively acknowledged that during the history of Australia, policies have changed so that they no longer require people to "lose their identity" (J 22), as policies of assimilation have been abandoned. Nevertheless, despite the interviewee's awareness of Australia's multiculturalism, he, at the same time, accuses governmental policies that they basically "wanna people to migrate to Australia, learn English and become like little copies of English Australians" (J 14). Given this criticism of assimilationist policies, one would expect a positive evaluation of multiculturalism; yet, multicultural policies are considered critically, too:

"So now they've got this,  
they go multicultural  
and they encourage people to maintain their own language,  
their identity and stay with your identity. (2)  
So there is quite a lot of enclaves,  
I guess like the *Türken* in Berlin, you know. (0.5)  
Maybe they integrate more than the ones you see here.  
You see,  
you got China town,  
we've got the Greek parts,  
you got the Latin American part in the western suburbs  
and it's like that.  
They don't actually mix all that much.  
So there's no need for them to mix." (J 15)

The interviewee here first describes the positive aspects of multiculturalism: people are encouraged to maintain their language and identity. But then, the effects of this policy are considered to be the development of what is here called "enclaves". This is compared to the

Turkish population in Berlin: “*Türken*” in German public discourse are frequently accused of being reluctant to ‘integrate’, to learn German, to accept the equality of women and men and to participate appropriately in the educational system and on the job market (see e.g. Hamann 25.03.2010 for some of these aspects). The existence of different sectors of society which are sorted according to cultural background – “enclaves” – is here considered to be problematic, which can be inferred from the comment that even the Turks in Germany “integrate” more than the migrants in Australia. Without the interviewee using a negative term to refer to this situation, it can be assumed that his observation that people “don’t actually mix” is not to be taken as a positive comment. Instead of conceiving Australia as a multicultural, culturally hybrid and open society, the effects of multiculturalism are described as a form of segregation along ethnic lines. It might be relevant to note that the interviewee is of German descent. Although he migrated to Australia more than 30 years ago, it is important to consider a potential influence from German discourse on his attitude towards multiculturalism. In Germany, public discourse has a strong emphasis on the need of migrants to ‘integrate’, where this concept is similar to what other countries would rather describe as assimilation (see e.g. Koopmans 2001, Schneider 2005). The interviewee insisted to lead the interview in English, which either can be interpreted as indirectly showing his own attitude towards the necessity of migrants speaking English or as the result of language shift in a predominantly English-speaking environment.

The contradictions that occur in the interviewees’ attitudes – accusing the Australian Government of fostering assimilation and complaining about ethnic segregation through multiculturalism while linguistically assimilating himself – are indicative of conflicting discourses that exist simultaneously in Australia (and most likely in many other states). The reasons for the development of ‘ethnic enclaves’ are seen in the governmental support of cultural maintenance and as related to residential policies of the government that have led to spatial separation:

“Australia, it actually gave the different suburbs,  
like the ones known for Italian, Chinese,  
and in Fairfield, Latin Americans, Uruguayans,  
they all hang out in certain areas.” (J 15)

The relationship between cultural belonging and space as described here (and in other instances) reproduces the logic of national frameworks, as suburbs are reported as being inhabited according to national background. As members of ethnic groups are officially encouraged to maintain their identity and culture, it is not surprising that the city has areas with high concentrations of particular ethnic groups. Cabramatta, for example, is famous for the Vietnamese, Leichardt is known for its Italian population and Latin Americans are seen as the residents of Fairfield. Thus, ethnic segregation that figures in the spatial order of the city is here seen as an effect of multicultural policies.

Yet, it is clear that the situation is more complex as financial pressures — that is, class and income — have an effect on the spatial order of the Sydney region, too:

“I think, at least in Sydney,  
a lot of the segregation has to do with economics.  
Because of (1)  
migrants (.) live (.) in the western suburbs.  
Rather than in the city.  
And, obviously, a lot of white Australians were born and live in the city.” (G 38)

In Sydney public discourse, the western suburbs stand for the areas where a lot of migrants live but it is also considered that the inhabitants become poorer the further one travels to the west, which can be up to 50 kilometres from the Central Business District. It is not exactly fashionable to live in the west and it is, accordingly, cheaper. Due to the comparatively slow and underdeveloped public transport (note that this evaluation may be related to the German background of the researcher), it can also take very long (up to one and a half hours) to reach the centre of Sydney from the outer western suburbs. While the eastern suburbs symbolise wealthy and white populations, a vibrant economy, beach life and fashion, the outer western suburbs connote non-Anglo ethnicity and relative poverty.

The informant’s suggestion that “segregation has to do with economics” and that “white Australians” live in the city shows that the intersection of ethnicity and class in Sydney closely relates to spatial imaginations of the city, which have strong effects on real estate prices (for an introduction on the cultural construction of space, see Pennycook 2010:ch.4). It is interesting to observe here that the informant hesitates when she states that migrants live in the western suburbs, as she might be aware of the possible discriminatory status of her utterance, as it is of course not all migrants who cannot afford to live in Rose Bay or Vaucluse. Whether ethnic descent also has discriminatory effects on the real estate market, even for wealthier immigrants, and whether the interviewee’s hesitations in her utterance are related to possible racial discrimination, cannot be said. In any case, the division between the ‘west’ and the rest has a discursive reality and is important and often spoken about in Sydney. In another interview, it is reported that the division even has resulted in linguistic differentiation. The accent of ‘the Westies’ is commented upon and also ridiculed, as I also could observe frequently in many informal conversations. Thus, in my data set, fostering multiculturalism is perceived as positive but it is also described as leading to ethnic segregation, which is seen as having spatial segregation as an effect. This is not considered positively but is described as cementing social division.

For migrants coming to Sydney, it is not only financial pressures on the real estate market they have to deal with, which leads to some newly arriving migrants living far out in the west (which then results in long daily commuting times), there is also the pressure to learn English. Despite official support of linguistic maintenance in certain institutions of Australia, there are only very few traces of a positive discourse on multilingualism in my data set. The

pressure to improve one's English figures a lot more prominently here. Australian identity and membership to the Australian community is perceived to be strongly dependent on the acquisition of English:

“Here, the only way to become Australian is if you speak the language well.” (M 58)

It is compelling in this context that several of the interviewees who had to learn English in Australia say that they acquired the language quickly, in “three or four months” (R15), while Anglo-European interviewees claim that “the original migrants, they speak very poor English” (J17). These differing accounts indicate that the expectations of the majority society on the level of English may differ from the experiences of migrants in their way towards becoming bilingual or multilingual. Generally, there is very little mentioning of experiences with cultural or linguistic support or a positive evaluation of multilingualism; it is even said that migrants often consider language shift a goal:

“Actually, of all people, you know,  
all who came from Colombia or from Latin America,  
they say, you know,  
'Oh, we don't want to speak Spanish.'  
It's that.  
Because of, uhm (2) feeling (securities?) (.)  
and uhm, you know, feel like (.) not (1).  
They want to feel better themselves.  
They thought by no speaking the language Spanish,  
they will be a better person.” (M 1.06.39)<sup>67</sup>

The striking aspect of this quote is that learning English is not only considered to be indispensable, it is furthermore claimed that people “feel better” if they give up their native language and that they might become “a better person” if they speak English. This reminds of evolutionary constructions of English as a ‘developed’ or ‘modern’ language (see Ch. 7). It has to be noted, however, that the interviewee here reports on the past and later goes on to explain that things have changed a bit and that, in the meantime, it has become “cool” to speak a second language (see also below, 9.3., on ideologies of multilingualism in Australia). Nevertheless, the attitudes that are described in the quote contrast strongly with the official policies of the 1970s and 1980s, where multilingualism was officially encouraged (see 9.1.). The reasons for this contrast might be related to the development of discourse in the 1990s, where English literacy and some ‘foreign’ languages were at the centre of attention. In any case, the dominance of English seems here more central than the desire to maintain a heritage language. A pro-English attitude and the impression that one personally ‘improves’ through the acquisition of English may further be enforced through the worldwide status of English and its close ties to an image of success in competitive-capitalist discourse as

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<sup>67</sup> Grammatical peculiarities of this native Spanish-speaker are kept for reasons of accurateness.

introduced in Chapter 7. As has been shown above, this transnational discourse also had strong effects on the development of 1990s Australian language policies so that national and transnational scales here mutually reinforce each other.

Next to English language learning, other experiences of migrants and of contact with the Anglo-Australian majority society are reported. Positive comments on Australian migration policy are made with reference to the fact that it is relatively easy to get a student visa in Australia (although policies have tightened in 2010; see Sydney Morning Herald 2010a). The support of migrants in the 1970s and 1980s is also evaluated positively. By then, newly arriving migrants were sent to ‘migrant hostels’ for several weeks or even months, where they received financial and other types of support (see Migration Heritage Centre, New South Wales 2010). However, it is also complained that such support no longer exists. The support of cultural maintenance is considered to be encouraging. For example, education in the native language Spanish is considered to be a positive aspect of governmental policies but it is only mentioned once and it is here said that it took place once a week and gave the informant “positive feelings” (L7). Ethnic Colombians of the data-set maintain that the Colombian community in Fairfield was important for them in the early years and helped them to start their new life in Australia but it is also claimed that the ethnic communities are no longer very vital. The reasons for the diminishing vitality of ethnic communities are most likely related to the history of migration, as different migration waves came at different times (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2010a). While Chilean migrants came to Australia mainly as refugees in the first half of the 1970s (ibid.), other Latin Americans arrived in Australia predominantly in the second half of the 1970s and in the first half of the 1980s (Iebra Aizpurua 2008), when assisted migration schemes still supported the immigration of labourers (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2010a). Contemporary Australian migration policies no longer foster the immigration of unskilled migration. Today, next to immigration for humanitarian reasons, business, skilled and family migration are the only official migration programmes (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2010b). Thus, South Americans who enter the country today come either as family migrants or as international students. The importance of ethnic communities seems to have diminished, as both types of migrants presumably integrate relatively easily into already existing private and institutional networks, some of which are outside of ethnic community contexts.

Despite these positive reports on Australian immigration and language policy, descriptions of negative experiences in multicultural Australia are also frequent. Ethnic Latin American interviewees report, for example, on experiences of racial discrimination.

“To be honest, when we were growing up, (3)  
uhm, there was the *wog* thing,  
Like you know, there was, you know, there was *wog*,  
You know what *wog* means?”

*Wog* means, uhm (0.5) like uhm, (1)  
people that aren't from Australia.  
Yeah, that used to be a big thing in school as kids when we were growing up." (L12)

The term *wog* is a derogatory term for Australians of Southern European and Arabian descent, here obviously also applied to Latin Americans. It is basically a racial term that relates to people of non-white skin colour. The divide that exists between Anglo-Australians and 'others' is demonstrated here, despite the government's efforts to create a multicultural nation. The initial reluctance to speak about negative experiences – indicated by a three second pause – may be related to the impression that, in contrast to German conventions, it is not as common in Australia to speak about negative or problematic issues in public and, from personal observation, it can be assumed that it is also not very common in private settings. The informant obviously hesitates to speak about a negative experience. Additionally, she starts her report with the phrase "to be honest", which can be interpreted as a strategy of legitimation or as an excuse for saying something negative. She has problems to define who the "wogs" are. She hesitates and then says that it is "people who aren't from Australia", although, of course, she also knows that the status of Australian identity is precarious as all citizens of Australia, Anglo or other, have come to the country relatively recently. Yet, the concept of the 'real' Australian remains tied to Anglo-Australians. The binary dichotomy of "wog" versus Australians is also illustrated quite clearly in the following quote:

R: "I remember growing up,  
there was a distinct division at school.  
Between Australians and the *wogs*.  
Or the immigrants.  
And the Australians, they got League [Rugby League] and we got football, soccer."  
B: "And the Australians would be only people of English heritage?"  
R: "Yes. Everybody else is a *wog*.  
And I was a *wog*.  
And felt, I very identified with being a *wog*." (R26)

Here, the division between the different groups, majority English and 'other' is depicted in an even stronger manner. The informant describes that he identified with being a "wog". He is very clear on the boundary construction of "Australian" versus "wogs". Not only does the informant say that there was a "distinct division" at school, he furthermore, after being asked whether "Australians" were only those of English descent, confirms that the division was based on the presence or absence of "Englishness" and even uses the present tense when he says "Everybody else is a *wog*", which makes it unclear whether the perceptual division actually has dissolved. Earlier in the interview, this Australian of Latin American descent also speaks about his problems to identify with being Australian and says "that Australia for some reason hasn't had the capacity to get the migrants to feel Australian" (R25).

It is interesting that, in the quote above, he also mentions the role of sports in the creation of identity. While Anglo Sydneysiders prefer to practice and watch Rugby League (a version of rugby), non-Anglos are attracted to soccer. This not only shows the relevance of leisure activities in the creation and performance of identity, it is also remarkable as sports play a particularly crucial role in everyday life and in schools in Australia. It can be assumed that it is the Australian culture that here shows traces in the performance of 'non-Australian-Australian' identity by playing soccer rather than Rugby League. Similar to aspects introduced above, it seems that the official discourse of Australian multiculturalism has, in some cases, led to a certain degree of ethnic segregation. One reason for that might be that the concept of the majority culture remained relatively untouched so that a strong division between 'real' (Anglo) Australians and all other Australians ("wogs") seems to have been kept in certain contexts.

Against this background, it becomes clearer why, despite all official claims to cultural diversity, sometimes even demands to assimilate culturally are reported about. This Colombian (recent) immigrant evaluates Australian immigration policy as follows:

M: "I think it's about integration.

There is a lot of emphasis in this culture that you need to be integrated.

You need to learn, you need to learn, you need to be part."

B: "Who says that?"

M: "(2) Constantly, you see it in the news. (1)

A lot of emphasis of the government that everybody needs to speak English. That's the main thing. (2)

Our languages are okay (.)

but you need to learn English, you need to integrate to it, you need to,

you know, uhm (.)

have to communicate,

have to be on a different level (.)

have to be, you know, like a Western." (M50)

It is here difficult to differentiate what this interviewee perceives to be Australian discourse from what would be called "assimilation" in an academic context. In "this culture" (Australia) there is "a lot of emphasis on integration" and the informant feels that the pressure to integrate mainly comes from the media and the government. The most important aspect is to learn English, but then it is striking that the interviewee also says that migrants have to be "like a Western", to adopt a different culture and mentality. Although it remains unclear from this quote why the interviewee perceives such a strong pressure to culturally assimilate, it is remarkable that he refers to contemporary Australia and bases his claim on his own experience as a recent migrant. There is here an obvious (perceived) relationship between the learning of English and becoming "Western". The language ideology that is described here relates the use of a language with a way of being. Although it is not described what kind of mentality is meant by "Western", the language English is here not understood in terms of instrumentality, a tool to communicate, but is seen as indexical of a particular type of



identity. Interestingly, this is an identity that is not confined to the national space but relates to a global division of the 'West' versus the rest, where this Latin American does not feel to belong to the 'West'. Again, the simultaneous presence of several layers of identification can be detected here, as certain national discourses of Australia are described as fostering a national identity that is at the same time a kind of 'global Western' identity.

Partly assimilationist tendencies that migrants perceive to exist in Australia can also be found in several interview passages that concern the usage of other languages than English in public. Usage of other language than English is often described as impolite behaviour and non-native English speakers seem to face a social pressure to speak English in non-private contexts, as reported in this quote by a Chilean-Australian:

“I remember, for example,  
I got a very close friend, also Chilean.  
We went out a lot and we go to his house,  
everything in Spanish.  
Or we go to my house,  
everything in Spanish.  
Or we walked out  
and it was English.” (R24)

The experience of feeling uneasy if using other languages but English in public was referred to several times in the data set and also in informal talks. In one interview, it is even claimed that a common native language is only used if two interlocutors are close friends or members of one family and that a shared linguistic background does not necessarily lead to the usage of the native language of the speakers. For example, it is suggested that, in Australia, speakers of Hindi will speak English to each other although their native language is Hindi and only close emotional ties legitimate the switch to Hindi<sup>68</sup>. Accordingly, languages other than English here have the function of a code that expresses friendship and solidarity, which reminds of what Erving Goffman calls the “sacred part” of an individual where “an individual can be warm, spontaneous and touched by humor” (Goffman 2001b:41).

In interviews with members of the Colombian community of Sydney, it is considered important to maintain Spanish, also in order to be able to communicate with family members who are either too old to have learned English or who live in Latin America. Yet, maintaining the ethnic language can be difficult in an English-speaking environment and, in this study, there was one case where the children of Spanish-speaking parents did not speak Spanish at all, although the parents only spoke Spanish with the children. In these community contexts, languages other than English are understood as transporting and maintaining ethnic identity. Yet, facing the social pressures of an Anglo-Australian hegemony, at least in certain social contexts, the desire to assimilate may be stronger than the wish to maintain heritage ties (Clyne 2005:ch.1). The function of 'ethnic' languages to construct emotional closeness

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<sup>68</sup> However, it has to be noted that Hindi speakers in Australia also share English as a common language in their (or their ancestors') country of origin.

and community bonds may be related to the perception of segregationist tendencies existing between different ethnicities in Australia, as the expression of the personal (in Goffman's terms, "sacred") part of identity becomes confined to community contexts and thus ethnically exclusive realms.

On the other hand, the usage of English by non-native speakers, despite the perception that it is expected in public space, is also described as a positive and inclusive aspect that relates to the possibility of migrants to actually integrate into the Australian society. For example, a non-native accent in English is not considered a hindrance to become Australian by this native Colombian:

"You know, I still have the accent,  
the Latino accent.  
But it's still not a problem.  
You have the accent but you still sound Australian." (M 1.09)

Although the pressure to speak English in public is usually perceived as a negative experience, the acceptance of non-native accents as "Australian" is considered positive, as it makes the Australian society inclusive in terms of the integration of non-Anglo migrants into mainstream society, at least if they show the willingness to conform to some of its norms (e.g. speaking English). Accordingly, despite the accusation of Australian public discourse being assimilationist, the integration of migrants into the national space is considered to be achievable.

One informant thus elaborates that the small number of Latin American people in Salsa communities is a sign for the ability of Australia to integrate people of non-Australian cultural backgrounds:

"There are actually very few Latinos in Salsa.  
Which is another confirmation about (.) about (.)  
being Australia, as being integrating." (M 58)

In contrast to tendencies in, for example, Germany, which also has a high number of immigrants, it seems to be possible to 'become Australian' and the acquisition of English is one step towards the 'normal' Australian identity. In the German case, migrants often report on the impossibility of adopting the national identity of their host country (see Ch. 10). In Australia, migrants do not necessarily feel the need to reproduce and maintain the culture of their 'home' country. Latin Americans do not need to dance Salsa – they can do what the 'normal' Australian does. While academic discourses often support the maintenance of ethnic culture and language in minority contexts, the possibility to become part of the majority society can not only be considered to be an act of assimilation but also means a certain degree of choice, where migrants are not constantly reproduced as 'foreign' or 'other'.

It thus has to be emphasised that the potential of Australian identity to include ethnic ‘others’ is a highly positive aspect of Australian national discourses. Yet, this potential may be related to a relatively strong hegemony of Anglo-English ‘normality’. Although some migrants describe the experience that non-native accents are accepted as ‘Australian’ there are also signs of ethnic discrimination (e.g. the ‘wog’ example, see above). This also includes reports on linguistic discrimination. In the following quote, an informant reports on experiences in the domain of school during the 1980s. Here, non-native accents of English were not evaluated as being ‘normal’:

“If you were Italian or Greek,  
you got the (piss?) at school, cause,  
you know, they have funny names, they have funny accents,  
you know, and they got the (piss?).  
So they wanna be part of the (.) cool.  
So they, you know, they worked really hard on their accents,  
to the point that they forget their mother tongue, their mother language.  
Which I think is sad.” (JL 1)

Non-native accents in the passage above are described as locally indexing that the speaker is anomalous and amusing. Yet, the description of non-native accents as being ridiculed is confined to the institutional space of the school and in this quote, relates to the 1980s. Furthermore, Italian and Greek migrants were the largest immigrant groups in Sydney in the 1960s to 1970s and are associated with working class migration, as they mainly arrived under assisted migration schemes in order to escape from unfavourable conditions in their home countries (Immigration Museum Melbourne 2010, Italian Legacy 2010, Tamis 2005, Tyrell 2001). As the research design of this study does not include school children, it remains unclear whether the experiences of ethnic and linguistic discrimination are based on the particular structure of the domain of the school, whether discrimination has lessened in Australian schools today, or whether the different evaluation of Australia as being “integrating” or “discriminating” is related to the different types of identity of migrants who either came to Australia as children or as adults (migrants who had their socialisation in a different country probably see it as less problematic that they do not fully belong to the Australian majority society). The sentence “So they wanna be part of the (.) cool” is particularly illuminating, as it shows that discourses on ‘hipness’ or ‘coolness’ – the ability to perform a certain lifestyle, related to consumer culture and success – can be highly effective in some contexts. Even if official discourses, also at school, promote diversity, this does by no means ensure the effectiveness of such discourses as they are confronted with other discourses that are produced locally (in the school), nationally (e.g. in the media) and transnationally (also in the media). Top-down approaches to language policy therefore have to be aware of the complexity of discursive relations that all can have effects on language ideologies.

Summarising, it can be said that the Australian discourses on national belonging and multiculturalism seem to have problematic effects in certain cases. In my data-set, multiculturalism is often perceived to foster ethnic segregation. Although the policy to encourage cultural and linguistic maintenance reaches minority populations and is felt to have positive effects, experiences of ethnic discrimination in a personal realm are reported on and have also effects on the identity of non-Anglo Australians as ‘others within’. The division of non-Anglo and ‘other’ Australians may be related to the pressure to ‘integrate’ that seems to be felt to be an activity of migrants only. So, integration seems to be perceived as a one-way process, where minorities have to ‘integrate’ into majority society. Yet, it has to be positively acknowledged that the potential to become ‘Australian’ proves the inclusiveness of Australian majority society.

Strong opinions on the effects of policies (ethnic segregation) and the rather strict social divisions (‘normal’ vs ‘ridiculous’, Anglos vs wogs, other languages only in private contexts) that are described remind of the separation that is found between the two Salsa Communities of Practice, where relatively strict divisions and intense opinions were also detected. The fact that, for recent migrants, learning English is related to the acquisition of a certain mentality may be linked to the language ideology of the members of the L.A. Style Community of Practice, where a strong hegemony of English has been documented, too. Interestingly, many of the informants in the L.A. CoP are first generation migrants (four out of six). Thus, the centrality of English in the L.A. community may be related to a broader level discourse in Australia where the acquisition of English by immigrants is perceived as indexical for social success and integration in a context that constructs a particular ethnicity–class intersection and shows traces of ethnic segregation. This dominance of English is also described as confining other languages to private realms.

How does the experience of migrants link to the language ideologies of members of the majority society? The following section gives an insight into discourses on language as related to ‘mainstream’ (white, Anglo) Australians.

### **9.3. ‘MAYBE YOU MIGHT MEET SOME BACKPACKERS’ – MONOLINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL IDEOLOGY IN MAINSTREAM ANGLO-AUSTRALIA**

It has been shown that migrants in Australia feel the pressure to ‘become Australian’ and to learn English. It is rather obvious that speakers of other languages see English to be a crucial element in the integration to Australian society. So not only is there a need to learn English for migrants; the performance of ‘normal’ Australian identity also includes the usage of English – and, in certain contexts, only English. Yet, as any other society, Australia is not a homogenous culture but has, of course, internal sub-divisions, which evaluate multilingualism differently. Accordingly, a strong monolingual culture is described for one section of mainstream Australians, while another section is described as interested in

multilingualism. However, even in the part that celebrates diversity, strong underlying monolingual tendencies can be detected.

Several interviewees describe the dichotomous structure of the Anglo-Australian society. One section is here described as appealing to diversity (“go travelling”, “watch SBS”, “like Thai food”, “learn other languages”), while another section is described as approving of English (or Anglo-Australian) culture and language only (also called “the Royalists”, those who “don’t go travelling”). Supporters of an English-dominated Australian society are seen to be located in the provinces, rather than in the cities and, for Sydney, the suburb of Cronulla – sadly famous for its race riots in 2005 (*Sydney Morning Herald* 2005) – is mentioned as the place where the provinces start (S18). It is reported that, in the latter context, being bilingual can be considered embarrassing, which is indicated in the following quote:

“Then there are these (hicks<sup>69</sup>)  
who would rather die than having their friends hearing them speaking another  
language.  
Because as soon as you do that, you’re the weirdo.” (S 17)

In the context of the “hicks”, presumably white (working class) Anglo-Australians of the provinces, it is described as undesirable to be bilingual; social pressure seems to dictate a monolingual norm. Native language education for minority pupils at school that is sometimes reported in interviews (see 9.2.) does not seem to mitigate this; one might speculate whether this type of schooling, directed at non-mainstream children only, is indirectly supporting the tendency of Australia as ‘normally’ being monolingual. The “Royalist” section of Australia is described as showing a particularly strong version of a “monolingual mindset”. Ingrid Piller, for example, mentions that there even is an “ideology that considers multilingualism as ‘un-Australian’” (Piller 2006:304). In this part of Australian society, there seems to be a gap between the *de facto* cultural diversity and the construction of a monocultural and monolingual Australian identity, which is also noted by some interviewees, as for example in:

“I think (1) the Australian society is definitely a multicultural society.  
Whether many Australians see it this way is another story, I think.” (R 29)

Despite the long tradition of multiculturalism in Australia, it is here reported that “many Australians” still might consider Australia to be a monocultural (Anglo-Australian) society. It has to be noted, however, that the division between the countryside and urban areas seems to function as an important boundary marker in the distribution of different ideologies.

Yet, it is not only “the hicks” who consider Australia to be a monocultural nation. In the quotes of the members of the Cuban Style Community of Practice, who have to be regarded as representing a part of Australian mainstream society that rejoices in cultural diversity, it is revealing to see that they, tacitly, construct Australia as an English-only speaking nation, too.

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<sup>69</sup>This is a term for provincial, anti-intellectual Australians from the countryside.

Although multicultural diversity is celebrated, the many native and community languages of Australia become invisible in many interview passages, also in quotes of Spanish-speaking Anglo-Australians. In the following quote, the dance school owner of the Cuban Style school suggests, after I have asked about the reasons for the lack of Spanish-speakers in the L.A. CoP, that the geographical situation of Australia makes language learning a difficult enterprise. She thus legitimates the low interest in Spanish by many Australians:

“It’s different in Australia because it’s so far.  
In Europe you can go for a month to a country.  
Or just in your holidays.  
And you can learn.  
You can go over the other weekend to Spain or somewhere.” (S 8)

The fact that Australia officially defines itself as being multilingual (Lo Bianco 2003, Australian Government, Department of Citizenship and Immigration 2007a) remains invisible here. Despite her everyday contact with people who have native languages other than English (see Chapter 9), the interviewee explains the low numbers of Australians who learn other languages (Lindsey 2008:5) with the monolingual and far-off situation of Australia. This may be related to my own presence, where the interviewee may feel the need to defend monolingual Australians, but the same perception is found in other quotes:

“Australia is still quite isolated (.) and (1)  
so I think it is difficult to get an interaction with cultures.  
You are here.  
So you don’t have that constant interaction with countries,  
maybe you might meet some backpackers or something,  
but you don’t really meet (3) people in their cultural context.” (G 27)

What can be detected here is what, in academic contexts, has been described as “methodological nationalism” (Wimmer and Schiller 2002). The perceptual framework of the nation, although cultural diversity is seen as something positive, hinders sight of the *de facto* multiculturalism and multilingualism in Australia – although both informants of the two above quotes have almost daily contact with speakers of other languages. Contact with other cultures is only considered to be ‘real’ in the “cultural context” of origin. “Maybe you might meet some backpackers”, but otherwise there are no ‘others’, as Australia is too isolated for visitors to come, too isolated for interaction across borders and too isolated for regular visits to other countries. The tradition of relating one culture to one nation and to see both as inhabiting a particularly confined space is so strong that the actual mixing of cultures and cultural diversity within Australia is unintentionally ignored. The ‘other’ in another country is attractive and the purpose of travel and journey; the ‘other’ that lives in the same city is not. This perspective on ‘others’ relates to the discussion on cosmopolitanism, which depends on ‘static’ local cultures (see Chs 4 and 9). The ‘other’ within Australia is hidden under the national metaphor – and, additionally, may be less attractive, as it is integrated in

a complex intersection of ethnicity and class. Although contact with other cultures is evaluated positively in these ‘cosmopolitan’ contexts, the presence of other cultures in Australia is not regarded as a resource, probably due to socio-economic hierarchies. Therefore, although other languages are considered a resource, the languages of migrants are not considered as such. Internal diversity is not rejoiced in if it comes to languages as “English is the language”:

“You hardly drive across a language barrier.  
You know, it’s an island.  
Pretty isolated.  
English is the language.  
You got a lot of migrants, but why should Australians learn the migrants’ language?  
It’s up to them to learn English.” (J 20)

The hegemony of English and the national framework of thought have negative effects on the perception of other languages than English in Australia and what is most interesting here is that this is even true for people who consciously describe cultural diversity as something positive. The “order of discourse” (see Ch. 2) is based on a nationalist framework of categorising the world, where ‘normally’ each country has a different language and only one language. This order, in the quotes above, influences the perception of speakers who experience multilingualism every day. It is, however, unclear whether in the above quote the speaker is speaking with his own voice or whether he adopts the voice of a generalised image of ‘the normal Australian’ when he says “Why should Australians learn the migrants’ language? It’s up to them to learn English” (see Chapter 4 and Bakhtin 1984, on double-voicing).

Thus, Australia is generally not described as a multilingual country. This is also considered in the following quote, where a native Hindi speaker (who has experience with multilingualism from his own Indian background) defines multilingualism as the performance of “business” in several languages:

“If you say a country is multilingual,  
then it would mean that the country performs its business in more than one language.  
And I don’t see any business [...] to be happening in a language other than English.  
Some government departments offer templates and forms,  
and you know, in different languages.  
But I think, it’s a very ad-hoc level arrangement.” (A 4-5)

Not only is Australia here described as monolingual in the performance of business, the strategies of the government to promote multilingualism are not seen as a real effort to create a multilingual nation. Rather, they are described as “ad-hoc”; they have not been created to foster multilingualism among the whole population but are directed only at a small section of society and only for particular purposes. The expression “ad-hoc” thus indirectly accuses

these multilingual “arrangements” of being superficial and for image purposes only. Other provisions in languages other than English by the government (e.g. telephone interpreting, interpreting for medical services, Year 12 examinations, etc.) seem to be largely unknown to the interviewees, or at least they are never mentioned.

Despite the interviewee above claiming that business in Australia takes place only in English, he mentions that such “ad-hoc” multilingual arrangements sometimes also occur in the realm of banking. This native Hindi speaker reports on marketing strategies of a bank that make use of other languages in order to attract customers:

“All of a sudden one day I got a call from the bank,  
saying, uhm,  
'Hey, I'm your new personal business relationship manager'.  
And uhm, (2) and,  
'I know that you're from India, I'm from Fiji'.  
Fiji has lots of Indians, they all migrated from India.  
And then he started speaking broken Hindi to me.  
Really really broken and bad and you know, (2)  
I guess he's got (?) he got this decided by the bank,  
saying, you know,  
'Your job is justified because you can develop a better relation with people from your  
part of the world,  
so that we can embrace them all with the bank.'  
Well, it doesn't work out, there is no point speaking Hindi if you can't speak it.” (A 5-6)

The informant here mainly complains about the low level of Hindi language abilities of the bank employee, as he considers mediocre language competence in Hindi to be inappropriate in business calls. Rather than feeling supported or accepted by being called in Hindi by an Australian bank, this interviewee thinks that “there is no point” in using the language if the language competence is not sufficient. He also assumes that this was a decision by the bank, made for economic reasons (“so we can embrace them all”). He thus indirectly accuses the bank of working unprofessionally, as they do not consider the degree of language competence of their employees. This links to the accusation that language arrangements of the government are “ad-hoc” (see above). The symbolic function of other languages as indicating ‘social support’ or a ‘common identity’ can be found in the governmental context, as well as in this business context. In the case of the government, which supplies documents in many languages in contexts of social help and welfare, multilingualism indexes the official support of speakers of migrant languages, while the ‘normal’ language remains English. In the case of the bank employee who speaks broken Hindi, the superiors of the bank were not interested in the level of Hindi that the manager speaks but assume that the mere usage of the language will attract customers from India – ignoring that English is also an official language in India, which makes it likely that middle and upper class Indians rather identify with English than with ‘broken’ Hindi. Other languages than English are used symbolically to index a general



willingness of some agents to deal with diversity, and “methodological nationalism” leads to the assumption that one group of people is attracted by one language.

At the same time, on the basis of the construction of English as the predominant norm, the ability to speak another language becomes a marker of distinction for the Anglo-Australian members of society. On the one hand, languages other than English are invisible in most public contexts; on the other hand, it is also reported that it has been rare for the ‘normal’ Australian to learn other languages:

“Australians, they don’t like learning languages.  
It’s only now that they, (1)  
but it’s actually only, it’s only now that at school, they learn another language.  
But like ten years ago,  
learning another language was something that you might do if you are really really  
interested  
but nobody speaks another language.  
Why would I learn another language?” (J 20)

As has been mentioned above (9.1.), language learning has not been compulsory in Australian schools from the 1960s onwards until relatively recently and, even today, language learning is usually considered a minor priority (Clyne 2005). The ‘common-sense’ of English monolingualism is nicely illustrated in the above quote, “Why would I learn another language?”, which is again a form of double-voicing, where the speaker adopts the voice of a stereotypical monolingual Australian English speaker (which can be inferred from the fact that the interviewee’s native language is German). As has been outlined by Lo Bianco (Lo Bianco 2001, 2003), the background for this monolingual ideology is formed by Australian nationalism, the role of English as a world language and also by the dominance of discourses of 1990s neo-liberal capitalism, where languages are seen as tools to get a job, and where English is usually seen as sufficient to reach this goal.

In social contexts that celebrate diversity, second language learning can therefore gain symbolic functions of being different from the monolingual English-speaking norm. Native English-speakers belong to a ‘special’ and privileged class if they can speak another language. This is related to the fact that it is conceptualised that learning other languages necessitates travel and longer stays in other cultures:

“Here [in Australia],  
it [language learning] is a major commitment.  
So (.) it’s usually life-altering.  
If somebody here decides to learn another language, it’s life altering.  
Cause you need to (.) you know (.)  
try to somehow to go to that other country.  
I mean to really speak the language.” (S 7)

In order to learn a language, the learner, according to this passage, has to go abroad, which is, in the Australian context, very expensive and, of course, not affordable for everyone.

Learning a language, also a sign for being truly culturally interested (see Ch. 8), is thus related to the performance of a certain lifestyle and class. Embedded in the perception of the world as consisting of separate territories in which different cultures reside and different languages are spoken, the ability to speak a second language fluently seems to be determined by money and commitment. As Australia itself is indirectly constructed as monolingual, other languages can only be learned and used in other countries – although this obviously contradicts the everyday experience of the Cuban Style Community of Practice, to which this informant belongs.

Elite bilingualism (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981:97) of English native speakers in Australia is related to the production of cosmopolitan elite identity. Yet, what makes language use in contexts like those of the Cuban Style CoP very interesting is that here it is not only English native speakers but also Spanish native speakers who can base a cosmopolitan identity on their bilingual abilities. As has been discussed (Ch. 8), bilingual abilities as marking cosmopolitanism functions for Anglo-Australians and (some) others alike. Latin American ethnicity, instead of being related to a working-class immigrant background, can also be linked to cosmopolitanism. English native speakers, on the other hand, consciously decide to go to Salsa clubs in order to get into contact with ‘real’ Latin Americans because the performance of ‘real’ cosmopolitanism necessitates a complex and intricate knowledge of the ‘other’. Latin Americans, due to their ability to speak Spanish, their ability to perform ‘authentic’ identities, can reappropriate their linguistic and cultural knowledge. As has been discussed in Chapter 8, although they remain an ‘other’ in Australia, they can become part of a transnational, polyethnic sphere, a “‘new class’, people with credentials, decontextualised cultural capital” (Hannerz 1996a:108). With this possibility of renegotiating migrant identity as cosmopolitan instead of signifying working class belonging, multilingualism can gain new meanings in Australian national discourses – the multilingual cosmopolitanism of the Cuban Style community, although confined to elite strata, may have liminal effects on social hierarchies as they socio-historically have developed in Australian society.

To summarise the above chapter, firstly, it has been shown that a relatively strong hegemonic discourse on integration through the acquisition of English has been described by interviewees in relation to the migrant experience in Australia<sup>70</sup>. Policies of multiculturalism, in contrast to their acquired goal, are sometimes perceived to lead to a certain degree of ethnic segregation, also in the (perceived) spatial order of the city. Experiences of discrimination are reported on and other languages than English are usually seen as confined to the private sphere. Nevertheless, the dominance of English is seen as enabling people to ‘become’ Australian as the language unites people from diverse language backgrounds and non-native accents are reported to be widely accepted. The discourse on English as vital in

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<sup>70</sup> It has to be noted that none of the interviewees is engaged in activities that officially support cultural maintenance, as, for example, in a “community club” (for Latin American clubs, see e.g. <http://www.latinos.com.au/communityclubs.html>), where results most likely would have been different.

the integration to Australian society can be related to the discourses that were detected in the L.A. Style Community of Practice, which, despite its multiethnic composition, is also inclusive in ethnic terms and shows a rather strong monolingual English hegemony.

The mainstream perspective on language in Australia, as given by interviewees, confirms the strength of monolingual ideology in the Australian society. On the one hand, there is a discourse that openly rejects linguistic diversity, but even opponents to this discourse often tacitly construct Australia as a monolingual, English-speaking nation. In the data-set, instances of multilingualism in governmental and business spheres are seen as superficial and not touching the monolingual dominance of the public space of Australia. Yet, the possibility to mark a privileged, cosmopolitan identity by demonstrating access to several (standard) languages in some sections of Australian society might, in the long run, have an effect on monolingual ideology.

Clearly, in the discourses on language that relate to the Australian sphere, the notion of language is not deconstructed but still functions as an important marker of belonging. However, the functions of languages are slightly different than in a national logic as they not only organise ethnic difference but differences at the ethnic/class intersection. There seems to be a form of dichotomy of English as symbolising social and also economic success and other languages as indexing either lower class migrant status or mainstream elite cosmopolitan status.

The discourse of cosmopolitan multilingual language ideology represents an interesting example of transnational and national scales interacting with each other. While some national Australian discourses construct multilingualism as deviant behaviour, this construction leads to multilingualism signifying difference, and therefore, in elite contexts, privilege. The meaning of multilingualism as privilege is co-responsible for the creation of a transnational, polyethnic cosmopolitan class – in the case of Cuban Salsa, the worldwide network of (left-wing oriented) travellers who dance Salsa and speak Spanish. The possibility to accredit cosmopolitan values to multilingualism on a transnational scale, however, may affect national discourses, which no longer can ignore the legitimacy and value of multilingualism in scales above the national level. For the development of multilingual language policies, the positive effects of the meaning of multilingualism as being ‘cool’ should be taken into account in order to create more effective tools to motivate members of the mainstream culture to engage with cultural and linguistic diversity.

However, in total, in all the interview passages that were introduced in this chapter, the dominance of English remains unquestioned. Although multilingualism is no longer necessarily associated with migrant ‘backwardness’ but can mean the belonging to a culturally educated class of people with transnational ties – which would mean the creation of a ‘new multilingual cool’ – this type of multilingualism, nevertheless, does not question the hegemony of English. English is the precondition for becoming part of Australian society and it is also the precondition for becoming part of a transnational elite. Furthermore, the

languages that are, in the example of Salsa communities, used for indexing cosmopolitan ‘chic’ are not just any languages but are two of the most dominant world languages and it remains unclear from this study which level of fluency in Spanish is necessary to symbolise cosmopolitan identity.

Thus, there is the danger that only English is constructed as a *Language* (comparable to how Dante conceived of Latin, see 3.3.2.), as the only real tool of communication, while other languages (including Spanish) may be confined to symbolic or ornamental levels that indicate certain types of identity (migrant, Latin or cosmopolitan). This type of language ideology is deconstructive of national language ideology, as it does not present the world as consisting of different countries to which different languages ‘belong’. The image constructed through this conception of English is rather one of ‘English vs. other’, where English is the ‘normal’ language, used by members of elite strata, irrespective of their ethnic background. Thus, although the concept of *Language* is not deconstructed in this context, the relationships of entities of languages are different than in national language ideologies. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that the symbolic value of multilingualism could be exploited as a resource in the creation of language policies that construct multilingualism as ‘cool’ and a new common-sense.

In any case, the outcomes of this chapter demonstrate that the national scale is most vital in understanding language discourses, also in transnational contexts. The discourses of the two local Communities of Practice, L.A. Style and Cuban Style, are unquestionably based on national discourses. The difference between language ideology in a global age and more traditional national language discourse – which assumes an intrinsic and autonomous relationship between language, culture and territory – is that the national scale is now crucially interconnected with the transnational scale. The particular role of English in Australia is related to the fact that Australia is an immigrant nation, with immigration from all over the world, where English is seen as crucial for social integration. Multilingualism as signifying cosmopolitan identity is a discourse that is based on transnational culture but may be effective on national discourses. The metaphor of the state as “switchboard between various levels” (Blommaert 2005b:396) is thus not only illustrative for discourses initiated by state agents but also for national discourses as they exist in public spheres and on local levels.

## **10. SALSA, LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSE IN GERMANY – LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY IN FRANKFURT’S SALSA SCENE**

Due to transnational relations and the popularity of Latin music cultures, Salsa Communities of Practice are not only found in the Americas and Australia but have come into being in many places all over the world in the last two decades (see Ch. 6). As national discourse has proven to be of high relevance in transnational contexts, in this chapter, data that gives insights into discourses and ideologies of a Salsa CoP in another national context will be presented. The Salsa context of Frankfurt, Germany, is here at the centre of attention and its discourses will be analysed and contrasted with those of the Australian context. A cross-national comparison is a form of triangulation (Flick 2004:330-331) in the hypothesis that national discourses remain highly relevant in an age of globalisation.

Many general features that characterise Australian Salsa CoPs are similar in the German context (see 6.3.). Due to limitations of space, I will not discuss ethnographic details that describe differences of Salsa CoPs in Frankfurt or Sydney; visually and in their organisational structure, there are more similarities than differences in the Salsa communities of the two national environments and some differences have already been introduced in 6.3. The data that will be introduced here will have a focus on discursive phenomena related to national discourses. In this focus on the national scale, I refrain from introducing cultural ideologies in which language ideologies are embedded, as it was done in Chapters 7 and 8, and will exclusively discuss those interview passages that show aspects of ideologies of language.

One has to be aware that of course not all differences in Frankfurt and Sydney are a consequence of differences in national discourses. On the local level, Frankfurt’s Salsa CoP is structured differently than the Sydney examples, as Frankfurt is smaller and although divisions based on different Salsa styles exist, too, this has not led to the existence of different Communities of Practice. Rather, dancers of different Salsa styles mix in different places and also dancers from different ethnic background come together in the same places. Thus in Frankfurt, despite internal divisions, there is only one Salsa CoP. Although this can also be attributed to different ideological formations in the discourses of the community, this has also to do with the simple fact that there are less Salsa clubs and schools (Frankfurt has about 600 000 inhabitants, while Sydney has more than 4 million). Furthermore, some differences are an effect of different individuals who are engaged in Salsa dancing and who have particular contacts or preferences. For example, L.A. Style is not danced in Frankfurt but, instead, New York Style has here the function of the ‘performative’, ‘stiff’ style (as described by interviewees), while Cuban Style Salsa is more popular in Frankfurt than in Sydney. However, the different styles are seldom mentioned and it is only dance teachers and very elaborate dancers who are aware of different styles and, with exceptions, Salsa courses or events are usually classified under the label ‘Salsa’. As the main focus of this chapter is on national issues, I will not present data on the local history and development of Salsa in

Frankfurt and, due to limitations of space, I will not describe interviewee's estimations of Salsa's success or the divisions within the Salsa CoP.

Next to local developments, some differences between Australia and Germany can be ascribed to a transnational scale that has particular relevance in the European context: language discourse and policies of the European Union make, for example, language learning and translation a central topic of the development of European identity (see e.g. EU 2004, Phillipson 2003). Additionally, the geographical situation in Europe is different from the one in Australia. Travel to other European countries is comparatively inexpensive and it is therefore common to spend holidays in other countries. Also, the role of the German language in the world is different from the role of English, as it does not function as a global *lingua franca*. These points have to be kept in mind when analysing differences in language ideologies in contrast to Australia.

Due to the focus on national differences in this chapter, an insight into the German discourse on language and belonging, and the related discourse on citizenship and multiculturalism, is necessary. Thus, before the topics that are of particular relevance in understanding the German Salsa community's ideologies of language are discussed, the following section will introduce some important developments of discourses on multiculturalism and multilingualism in Germany from the last fifty years.

### **10.1. MULTICULTURALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM IN PUBLIC DISCOURSES OF GERMANY**

Comparing German discourses concerning migration, integration and language with those of Australia, it is safe to say that the former are characterised by strong monocultural, monolingual tendencies. The causes for that have to be seen in the historical development of Germany. The idea of an ethnic *Volk* nation was the ideological basis for the formation of the state and the political ideology of the *ius sanguinis* prevailed until 2000 (Koopmans 2001). This law of citizenship declares that citizenship is obtained on the basis of descent and not by place of birth (*ius solis*). In this concept of the *Volk* as a 'biologically' related group of people (see also 3.3.), the role of language has always been salient. Language, in the historical context of Germany, served as the prime symbol and affirmation of the proclaimed organic entity (Barbour and Carmichael 2000, Blommaert and Verschueren 1998:195). Thus, monolingual, nationalist tendencies are widespread both on the policy level and on the level of public discourse (see also Stevenson and Mar-Molinero 2006b). Generally, it can be claimed that German laws on citizenship, together with their consequences for ideologies on culture, language and belonging, have been one of the most conservative in the European context until citizenship laws changed after 2000.

Despite the fact that, on the policy level, Germany officially became a country of immigration only in 2000 (Möllering 2010:145), the percentage of non-German residents in Germany – what today is called “people with migration background” in German discourse –

in relation to the autochthonous population has been high for over 50 years. For example, already in 1973, 6.4% of the population were, officially, foreigners (ibid.). It is, however, impossible to obtain exact numbers on all types of immigration to Germany since 1945. More than 20 million people – from other countries and from territories that no longer belonged to Germany after WWII – have settled within the German borders of today since then (Rudolph 1996:161).

The first group of these is people of German descent from other territories. In the years following WWII, German citizens from the former eastern parts of Germany, which now belong to Russia and Poland, sought refuge within the new frontiers of Germany. These were never declared as foreigners or migrants. Until today, German descendants from the former Eastern bloc can settle in Germany and are legally regarded as part of the German population if they can prove German descent. These *Aussiedler*, repatriates, obtain citizenship easily and have the same rights as other Germans. Most *Aussiedler* who have come in the last two decades stem from German speaking settlers who migrated to territories that never belonged to Germany (Koopmans 2001:6). The reason for declaring these individuals German, although their emigration often took place before the actual existence of nation-states<sup>71</sup>, lies in the construction of ‘Germanness’: the belief in ethnic and biological belonging with the *ius sanguinis*.

In contrast to the unproblematic juridical integration of repatriates, most people who were recruited as *guest workers* from 1955 onwards did not gain German citizenship and their German-born children were declared foreigners. As the German economy grew immensely after WWII, and forced labour convicts no longer were available, the need for foreign workers grew. Labourers from Italy, Yugoslavia, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and Korea were recruited to work in Germany (Terkessidis 2000). Thus, 14 million guest workers had become temporary residents of Germany until 1973<sup>72</sup>. When a recruiting stop was decided in 1973, 11 million already had left again due to a rotation principle that had ensured that guest workers only remained for a short period. In 1973, about four million guest workers still lived in Germany. Those who stayed were authorised to unite with their families and had higher birth rates than Germans, and thus, the number of guest workers increased to approximately 7.3 million in 2002 (Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration 2003:84). Guest workers and their offspring make up approximately 70% of foreigners in Germany (Thürmann 1992:98).

In the early years, there was no intention to grant citizenship to guest workers or to make them part of German society; the term *guest worker* is illustrative of the situation. They were perceived as a work force that would return to their country of origin as soon as they were no longer needed. The fact that Germany had become a multicultural, multiethnic and

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<sup>71</sup> In the case of the Saxons from Siebenbürgen, for example, emigration took place as long as 800 years ago (Koopmans 2001).

<sup>72</sup> In contrast to public belief, it was not only young men who came. One third of the guest worker force was single women (Terkessidis 2000: 21).

multilingual state was officially ignored and thus no federal policies on multiculturalism or multilingual provision can be found in the history of German governmental discourse until the present century. In the 1970s, the concept of the guest worker had made possible that, despite their massive presence, migrants were not seen as part of Germany and they had no right to participate politically. When it was clear that many, indeed millions, would stay, reactions in German public discourse ranged from blatant refusal to the desire to assimilate guest workers. Strongly nationalist reactions were found in all social status groups; some members of the German intelligentsia, for example, considered the presence of people of non-German origin to be problematic. In 1981, several university professors signed the *Heidelberger Manifest*, which declared the repatriation of guest workers to be necessary. The manifesto warns against “Überfremdung unserer Sprache, unserer Kultur und unseres Volkstums” (“Over-alienation’ of our language, our culture and our folklore”) and claimed that every nation had a “Naturrecht auf Erhaltung seiner Identität” (“Natural right of maintenance of identity”) (quoted in Terkessidis 2000:32). In the same year, a law was endorsed that barred children of migrants over the age of 15 to join their family in Germany (Hoffmann 1991:299). Attempts to re-migrate guest workers, which had been started in the mid 1970s, were only partly successful as financial incentives were combined with severe conditions such as commitment to never to return to Germany (ibid.). Guest workers were only accepted as part of the German economic market and only if they had a job. Although guest workers had to pay taxes and were an integral (and necessary) part of the German economy, there were few possibilities for them to gain German citizenship rights. In contrast to Australia, a high degree of social exclusion of immigrants and their descendants prevailed; consequently, very few discussions on the multilingual, multicultural resources of the diverse population of Germany are documented.

The official rejection of ‘foreigners’ as part of German culture not only led to a common-sense concept of ‘German Germans’ but also influenced the self-perception of guest workers. Unsurprisingly, in the 1990s, identification of migrants with the ‘home country’ was a lot higher in Germany than, for example, in Great Britain (Koopmans 2001). As figures after 2000 show, many ‘foreigners’, even though born in Germany, are not necessarily willing to become German. Even though citizenship is obtained more easily since 2000, the numbers of naturalisation are relatively low (Möllering 2010). This has also to do with the fact that those who want to naturalise have to give up their other nationality after the age of 23 (Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Ausländerfragen 2000), which is a consequence of a debate and a collection of signatures against double nationality initiated by the conservative parties CDU/CSU in 1998. Due to the essentialist construction of ‘Germanness’, candidates of naturalisation sometimes perceive the act of obtaining German citizenship as oppressive, as the following quote by a naturalised migrant in 1993 illustrates:



Hier ähnelt die Verleihung der Staatsbürgerschaft einem sakralen Akt. Deutscher zu sein, ist in den Augen der Deutschen ein Privileg, das besondere Bedingungen voraussetzt. Es reicht eben nicht, daß man hier geboren wird. Mit deutscher Staatsbürgerschaft wird irgendwie ein Deutschtum verknüpft, die Zugehörigkeit zu einer Rasse. Ich hatte das Gefühl, als müßte ich nun mit der Überreichung dieser Urkunde meine eigene Identität aufgeben und in eine neue hineinschlüpfen.<sup>73</sup> (quoted in Nghi Ha 1999:62)

The laws on citizenship introduced after 2000 may bring improvements as they acknowledge that people of non-German origin can also belong to Germany but the above quote illustrates the strength of an essentialist discourse in Germany, which is still found today. A particularly descriptive case for the continuing presence of essentialism in German public discourse is the public debate on the release of a book on German identity, German migration policies and German immigrants by a former member of the Executive Board of the Deutsche Bundesbank, Thilo Sarrazin, in 2010: “Deutschland schafft sich ab” (“Germany does away with itself”) (Sarrazin 2010). Here, the author, a former member of the social democratic party SPD, claims the presence of high numbers of Muslims in Germany to be a threat to Germany, as particularly Muslim migrants are described as ‘unwilling and unable to integrate’; furthermore, according to the author, their presence statistically lowers the rate of intelligence in Germany (Spiegel Online 2010). In an interview, Sarrazin describes migrants of Muslim religion as generally relying on social welfare and as constantly “producing little head-scarf girls” (Lettre International 2009). Although Sarrazin had to resign at the Deutsche Bundesbank, a high degree of comments on Sarrazin’s hypotheses in newspapers and other forms of public discourse were welcoming and positive (see e.g. FAZ.net 2010a, FAZ.net 2010b). The idea that Germany is a country for ‘the Germans’ has been officially abandoned, yet, it is not really surprising that it has not been abandoned in other discursive realms and is still vital in many political debates on the future of Germany. Thus, even today, the notion of ‘integration’ is often used in the sense of ‘assimilation’ (a one-way act of migrants to ‘become’ like the Germans) in many political debates or newspaper articles (see e.g. FAZ.net 2010c and the large number of related articles on the topic from October 2010). In October 2010, the head of the German party CSU, Horst Seehofer, for example, claimed again that “Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland” (‘Germany is not a country of immigration’, a notion that had officially been abandoned in the late 1990s) (Focus 2010) and demanded a “strong dominant German culture” (*Sydney Morning Herald* 2010b). The news that Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, maintained that “multiculturalism has utterly failed” made headlines worldwide (*Sydney Morning Herald* 2010b) on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2010. In this recent debate, the claims that migrants ‘do not integrate’ and ‘have to learn German’ are presented as common-sense facts and the comeback of essentialist nationalism

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<sup>73</sup> “Here, the award with German citizenship reminds of a sacral act. To be German is, in the eyes of Germans, a privilege, which presupposes special conditions. Precisely, it is not enough to be born here. Somehow, with German citizenship, some kind of ‘Germanness’ is attached, membership to a race. I had the feeling as if I had to give up my identity with the bestowal of this certificate and to slip into a new one.” (own translation)

and openly formulated ethnic discrimination shows a right-wing tendency that is also on the rise in several other European countries (see e.g. Austria, the Netherlands, France or Belgium). Considering the low birth rates in Germany and the need for immigration on the economic market, the degree of blunt nationalism of the leading parties of Germany is surprising but requires further analysis elsewhere.

Discourses on multicultural and multilingual resources of migrants in Germany during the last 30 years have been mainly confined to academic realms, and, in particular, multilingualism has been an issue in discourses on education (see e.g. Gogolin 1994, Menk 2000, Radtke 1998, Schneider 2005). As has been pointed out in Chapter 1, governmental policies of social exclusion often had, paradoxically, a relatively high degree of provision of teaching in the native languages of migrant children as a consequence (see e.g. Schneider 2005). This provision had not been introduced in order to foster a multilingual culture but to legitimate re-migration of guest workers in case of unemployment (on the basis of the Directive on the Education of Children of Migrant Workers, European Council 1977). The same legislation, as late as 1977, introduced compulsory schooling for children of migrant workers. In comparison to Australia, where, at roughly the same time, ethnic communities succeeded in implementing means to foster cultural and language maintenance and were able to organise a grass roots movement that influenced governmental policies, European policies (such as the Directive) show strong nationalist, monocultural tendencies in the exclusion of migrants. In comparison to provisions made before the Directive, it was, however, an improvement, as, for example, in 1979, around 25% of the children of guest workers in Germany did not attend school at all (Skutnabb-Kangas 1984:31).

Due to the federal structure of Germany, it is not possible to describe the histories of all educational policies and language teaching in German schools here (for details, see Schneider 2005). In each state (*Land*), different provisions existed, and not all of them had possible re-migration as an aim. In Hesse, for example, multilingual education in the native languages of migrant children was well developed during the 1990s (ibid.). Nevertheless, teaching of migrant languages was primarily directed at children of migrant descent and therefore did not usually result in the creation of a multilingual German population. Furthermore, since the new century, simultaneously with the introduction of new citizenship laws, a strong focus on the teaching of German to migrant children has been developed. Native language teaching is no longer an issue of public debates and, for example, in Hesse, has been officially abolished in 1999 (ibid.). Another rather obvious example for monocultural and monolingual ideology is the 'German-only' policy of many schools and kindergartens, where it is forbidden to use any language other than German (Spiegel Online 23.01.2006). There are also an abundance of examples from newspaper articles that regard multilingualism on school grounds as hindering educational success (Stevenson and Schanze 2009). A 2006 report on German language policies criticises the fact that Germany lacks a proper language policy that understands (migrant) multilingualism as an asset rather than as a threat (Leitner and

Schütte 2006); the report also comments negatively on the ‘monolingual habitus’ in Germany and in European nation-states in general.

Today’s emphasis on German language skills by the German government has been enforced through the introduction of compulsory language classes for naturalisation in 2005. These classes comprise of 600 hours language teaching plus a 30 hours of cultural orientation (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF) 2005). The formal citizenship that is followed by this course was introduced across all German states in 2008 (Möllering 2010:152). Although the classes are of obvious practical advantage and are subsidised by the government, it is notable that a rather advanced knowledge of German is intended with these courses and is necessary to obtain citizenship. In the Nationality Act (*Staatsangehörigkeitengesetz*, see [www.bmi.bund.de](http://www.bmi.bund.de)), level B1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* (European Council 2010) is regarded as ‘adequate’ knowledge of German. The general description for this level is:

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise when travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar and of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. (quoted in Möllering 2010:152)

In comparison, this requirement is rather demanding, as in many other European countries, A2 is regarded as sufficient (van Avermaet 2009). In 2011, the government has started to discuss whether only migrants who have passed a language test in the level B2 can apply for a residence permit, and have to leave the country after one year if they fail the test (see Frankfurter Rundschau 2011). Against the historical background of Germany, where, for a long time, guest workers and their children had little chance of becoming citizens, and where no provision of language classes was made, it can be doubted whether the demands of the Nationality Act are directed at the smooth inclusion of new citizens or whether citizenship is here still indirectly constructed as a “reward for integration” (Möllering 2010:155). Additionally, it is interesting to note that these compulsory language classes were introduced at roughly the same time as a new law concerning citizenship, whereby children who are born in Germany now have the right to be naturalised. Concomitantly with this, it seems, the importance to become ‘ideologically’ German on a linguistic and cultural level is reinforced. The observation made for the Australian case that the testing regime “serves its purpose not only in the attempt to ‘integrate’ prospective citizens, but to also assure the other citizens of the suitability of the newcomers” (Möllering 2009:10) seems to be true for the German example, too.

Nevertheless, at the same time, there is a relatively strong multilingual culture in Germany. Bilingual schooling exists and is on the rise, although the focus of this type of

multilingualism is on prestige languages like French, Spanish or English; many schools also offer 'classic' languages, especially Latin. Languages spoken by most ethnic minorities in Germany – Turkish, Italian, Arabic or languages from the former Yugoslavia – are rarely taught beyond primary school level and are not valid for university entry. "Instrumental bilingualism" (Hoffmann 1991) with prestige languages, as found in German high schools, is seen as important in higher education and, especially English, as an asset on global markets and is not considered to touch on questions of (ethnic) identity (see also Hessisches Kultusministerium 2004). Language, in this context, is only considered as tool of communication and not as entry into other cultures (Ammon 2007). In comparison to Australia, language learning is very high on the agenda of German education systems. Most primary schools start teaching a foreign language after the age of 7, in *Gymnasium* (the school form that gives university entry), at least two other languages than German have to be learned. The level of language competence that is reached is (at least in *Gymnasium* in English) rather high and most alumni are able to communicate fluently in English (for detailed numbers, see Eurydice-Netz 2008). In German public discourses, bilingual competence of some speakers is constructed as an elite ability, and multilingual competence that has been acquired in formal contexts usually has a high prestige (on this common distinction between 'elite' and 'folk' bilingualism, see Romaine 1999). Instrumental bilingualism is seen as a valuable asset and relatively widespread, while ethnic identity does not seem to be questioned by this type of bilingual competence. The high prestige of certain languages also results in some residents not being required to learn German. Many professionals in Germany do not actually speak German, as, for example, English-speaking or Japanese bank officials or also scientists, which is not regarded as problematic, as some discourses in Germany (especially in finance and science) take place primarily in English. However, the discourse that considers English a threat to German culture in Germany is marginal in comparison to the discourse that presents lower class migrant diversity as a problem.

Despite a German multilingual elite culture, one may suggest that, in the context of immigration, officially abandoned German ethnic nationalism is tacitly maintained in the guise of an assimilationist ideology. Although not all immigrants face the same requirements in terms of language learning, overall, representations in German language policy "re-assert an idea of the integrity of the nation still based on a stable monolingual norm that is increasingly contradicted by dynamic multilingual realities" (Stevenson 2006:160-161). Indeed, looking closely at multilingual realities in German cities, the picture is complex and the functions of German language policies are embedded in a strong hierarchy of languages. While 'cosmopolitan multilingualism' with some languages is widespread (see also below), other languages symbolise lack of education, unwillingness to integrate and thus have functions of exclusion in political discourses on German identity.

Comparing the German history of governmental discourse related to immigration and language with Australian policies on multilingualism, Germany only very recently has begun to consider that monocultural, monolingual nations are no longer an option in a globalised world (although the debate in October 2010 shows that the idea is still part of mainstream ideology). German language discourse in the political realm still has a tendency to construct a simple *one language – one culture* approach, despite the widespread learning of other languages at school and despite the central role of English in many contexts of science and economy. Contemporary discourses on language and integration show many traces of essentialism and construct German as prerequisite and symbol for successful ‘integration’ of the ‘other’, where it is less the instrumental values of German that are emphasised but the demand to acquire German seems to represent the tacit desire to culturally assimilate ‘foreigners’.

Contradictions and hierarchical distributions in discourses on language can also be found in the data of interviews with members of the Frankfurt Salsa scene. It is here noticeable that discourses on language link more closely to essentialist concepts of ethnicity, but also of gender, than in Australia and that competitive-capitalist discourse seems less salient in the formation of Salsa as a cultural practice.

## **10.2. SALSA IN FRANKFURT**

Generally, Salsa communities are found in all bigger German cities. Members of these CoPs have various ethnic backgrounds, ranging from Latin American to German, and many have other, European and non-European backgrounds (various African ethnic/national groups, also Turkish, Arabic, Greek, etc.). Similar to what has been described in Chapter 6, Latin Americans very often become Salsa-aficionados or ‘Latinos’, as they are often called in the German context, only after they have arrived in Germany (see also Papadopulos 2003).

Above all, it has to be noted that that the Frankfurt CoP, in terms of language ideology, resembles the Sydney Cuban Style community. Salsa-aficionados in Frankfurt not only meet to dance in Salsa venues, they very often also are eagerly interested in the acquisition of Spanish. In contrast to the Sydney example, no Frankfurt interviewee reported Spanish to be irrelevant, while all agreed that the language Spanish is a desirable component of the Salsa experience. The presence of native Spanish-speakers is highly welcome and Salsa schools employ many native Spanish-speakers as teachers; Cuban teachers are especially popular. Native Spanish-speakers are also found among the general audience of Salsa events, as, on the one hand, nativeness is of value, and, on the other hand, especially native Latin Americans feel their culture to be valued (Papadopulos 2003). In the Frankfurt Community of Practice, there is thus a mix of people who are native or non-native speakers of Spanish. Single words of Spanish are often found on marketing materials and also during dance classes, where movements are designated by their original (Spanish and sometimes English) names. Similar to the Australian example of the Cuban Style community, the use of Spanish

here cannot be understood as having an instrumental function in the sense that it would, for example, be helpful in getting a job. For most, it rather seems a crucial tool in the production and performance of a particular type of identity. It is important to remember that these identities are not merely based on ethnic or national aspirations but are the products of interwoven German, Hispanic *and* transnational discourses. The acquisition of Spanish here seems to enhance the status of those performing Salsa identities

The following section portrays the internal complexity of language ideologies of Frankfurt's Salsa CoP. Here, the "attribution of value to linguistic forms and practice" (Heller 2007a:15) sometimes differs significantly from German official discourses. In terms of the construction of cosmopolitanism, the "attribution of value" to Spanish shows strong similarities to the Cuban Style example of Sydney. Yet, it also shows specific essentialisms, which may be attributed to German language ideology on the national level. As the role of ethnic essentialism seems to be the most crucial difference between the Australian and the German example, I will firstly introduce a section on constructions of ethnic essentialism and 'othering' by ethnic Germans. The reproduction of the category of 'native Germans' is adequate in the German context, as the distinction between 'Germans' and 'Germans with migration background' is still a vital element in German public discourse and thus, represents a cognitive reality also for my interviewees. Secondly, effects of discourses on essentialism on the rating of migrants' language skills and ethnicity are discussed. Thirdly, language ideologies on gender and language learning will be presented, which, similarly, show some relatively strong essentialisms. After that, some interview passages that include interesting aspects regarding deconstructive effects as a result of the multilingualism of interviewees are introduced.

### **10.3. 'ZU DEN LATINOS PASST MAN SOWIESO NICHT' – SPANISH AND ETHNIC ESSENTIALISM OF NATIVE GERMANS IN FRANKFURT SALSA**

As has been noted above, in the Frankfurt CoP, Spanish is seen as part of the experience, although far from all Salsa-aficionados speak Spanish. Many members of the CoP are bilingual with German and other languages than Spanish, especially English. Similar to the Sydney Cuban CoP, most lay dancers of the Frankfurt CoP have a rather high educational status and have to be considered elite bilinguals, such as German or Latin American students or professionals who speak Spanish and German fluently. As it is compulsory in Germany to learn at least one language at school, it is considered 'normal' to speak English and German and, in the Frankfurt Salsa CoP, speaking Spanish is relatively common, too. Informants from informal conversation who do not speak Spanish usually excuse this lack of ability and often explain that they actually plan to start learning Spanish in the future. Similar to the Sydney Cuban CoP, the function of Spanish in this context can also be interpreted as a form a linguistic cosmopolitanism. Speaking two languages (English and German) in the German context no longer functions as a marker of class distinction, as the acquisition of English is

compulsory for the younger generation. Thus, a third language, especially a widely spoken language such as Spanish, here serves as symbol for higher education and cultural capital. As the function of Spanish as class marker is very similar to the Australian context, I will not introduce a special section on this issue at this point; however, some of the data below shows traces of the phenomenon.

It has been mentioned above (10.1.) that although language learning is very common in German contexts, the learning of other languages than German by Germans is, in public discourse, not usually discussed in terms of identity but mainly in terms of instrumentality and prestige. Yet, it is very interesting to observe that this seems to be different in Salsa contexts, where the language Spanish is strongly related to questions of personal and ethnic identity. Native German interviewees do not relate their acquisition of Spanish to the desire to use their language skills as tool on the job market; furthermore, they do not only see competence in Spanish as vital in belonging to a transnational Salsa world or to a national or transnational elite. The desire to ‘become someone else’, also in ethnic terms, is found as a central element in several interview passages. The forms of language crossing in this context index a construction of the self as an (ethnic) ‘other’. Similar to the Cuban Salsa CoP of Sydney, language crossing is here connected to discourses of travel, leisure, fun and a privileged, cosmopolitan position that allows interest in the language and culture of others. Native German respondents also relate the speaking of Spanish closely to personal feelings of emotion and to a questioning of their own ethnic identity:

“Ich hab schon das Gefühl (.)  
das macht mich immer fröhlich  
wenn ich Spanisch sprechen kann, total (.)  
das find ich total klásse (1.5)  
ich weiss auch nich,  
ja, es is schwer zu sagen, was es eigentlich is (2)  
doch so’n bisschen (1)  
ja wirklich, dieses aus der eigenen Rolle (1)  
der unterkühlten Mitteleuropäerin bisschen aus (.) zu (.) dingsen.” (A 13)

[I do have the feeling (.)  
it always makes me happy  
when I can speak Spanish, absolutely,  
I find it absolutely thrilling (1.5)  
I don’t know,  
yes, it is difficult to say, what it actually is (2)  
but a little bit (1)  
yes, really, this out-of-the-own-role (1)  
of the frosty middle European a little bit (.) to break out (.) of it.]

The interviewee here maintains that speaking Spanish makes her feel very joyful and happy and she places a strong emphasis on this by pronouncing the words “total” and “klásse” louder and with stress. She then ponders on the reasons for that and her utterance includes relatively many hesitating pauses; it seems difficult to explain the causes for her feelings. The

reason that she eventually gives is that, in speaking the language Spanish, she feels she breaks out of a role that is given to her by other social discourses: the role of the “frosty middle European”. First of all, it is interesting that the informant here does not consider her role as native German but as “Mitteleuropäerin”. It is unclear where the concept of the “frosty middle European” stems from. Stereotypes of being overly serious and socially cold are often associated with German identity, while the concept of ‘middle European identity’ is not very common in everyday discourse. It may be speculated that the interviewee’s various travels to Cuba have brought about an awareness of the image of the own culture in the discourses of other cultures. As US Americans, due to historical-political reasons, have a rather negative image in Latin America (see McPherson 2006), the identity of ‘European’ here sometimes serves as an opportunity for tourists from Europe to differentiate from *gringos*, US citizens (personal observation).

The awareness of the gaze of the ‘other’, which gives access to a cultural meta-discourse, is, in any case, typical for Hannerz’s understanding of cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1996a). The general desire to become part of a different discourse, or even to ‘invent’ a new identity, reminds, on the one hand, of Appadurai’s discussion of the increased role of imagination in transnational culture (Appadurai 1998); on the other hand, the widespread stereotypes of Germans as orderly, strict and stiff in other countries (see the mass of Internet resources on the topic), may also increase the desire of Germans to “break out” of the culture of origin. A binary dichotomy of ‘middle European’ as frosty and of Hispanic cultures as its opposite is here constructed and the interviewee feels the Spanish language to not only index happiness but also to evoke feelings of happiness in herself. Speaking Spanish here has the role of creating a possibility for the speaker to construct an identity that is different from the one that was inherited through geographical location and family ties.

The impression that the Spanish language is closely tied to positive emotions is also found in other interview passages. It is particularly interesting that the relationship between the expression of emotions and the usage of Spanish is mentioned as a vital element for positive attitudes towards the language:

“Also wenn ich Spanisch spreche (1)  
das macht mich immer unheimlich glücklich  
das macht mich unheimlich frei (.).  
Ja, viele Sachen sind viel einfacher.  
Vor allem über Gefühle zu reden (.).  
Ja, und ich komm auch immer in so ’ne (1.5)  
relativ schnell in so ’ne aufgedrehte glückliche Stimmung.” (I 4)

[Well, when I speak Spanish (1)  
it always makes me immensely happy  
it makes me immensely free (.).  
Yes, many things are a lot easier.  
Especially to speak about emotions (.).  
Yes, and I always get into (1.5)



relatively quickly, into an energetic, happy mood]

Using Spanish (instead of German) is here described, similarly to above, as evoking positive feelings of happiness and, also, of freedom. This function of Spanish has not been mentioned in the Sydney data set. Another interesting aspect of this quote is that the interviewee also maintains that communication about feelings is easier in Spanish, which is related to the idea that speaking Spanish makes the informant feel ‘free’. It is not possible to clarify here why the informant thinks that feelings can be expressed more easily in Spanish than in German. Yet, considering lyrics of Salsa songs from the era of *Salsa Romántica* (see Ch. 6), there is indeed a tendency to constantly report on emotions of love or of unanswered love and the construction of ‘coolness’ is less important in this context than in, for example, hip hop music. It is remarkable that male identity, in many Salsa songs of the mentioned era, is constructed with an image of a lover whose love is rejected (see e.g. ‘Por retenerte’ by the Colombian group Los Titanes) or of a lover who is in need of the love of a woman (e.g. ‘Cuerpo a cuerpo’ by Grupo Cariaco). Masculinity is here strongly dependent on heterosexual love and longing and desire of a woman. In the lyrics of such Salsa songs, emotions of love and also of loss are frequent. Nevertheless, it remains speculative to consider this as a reason for the interviewee’s maintenance that emotions are expressed more easily in the Spanish language. It is not possible to say whether a tendency to speak openly about feelings is unique to such Salsa songs, or is also found in everyday discourses in Latin America, where the informant has spent a lot of time as her husband stems from Colombia. Possibly, a German-derived stereotypical image of the Latin lover also has an influence on this idea, which would be less an instance of a transnational, Latin scale having influence on this quote, but more a result of German discourses of exoticism and ‘othering’.

Anyhow, similar to the quote before, for this native German interviewee, language crossing to Spanish serves as a tool to perform an ‘other’ identity. This reminds of Rampton’s observations on language crossing in British educational contexts (see Ch. 4 and Rampton 1995a), where the creation of “liminality” through language crossing is central. Rampton describes liminality as “moments and activities, when the ordered flow of habitual social life [is] loosened and when normal social relations [can] not be taken for granted” (Rampton 1995a:281). This function of language crossing is similar to the one found in this quote and confirmed by the interviewee’s statement that her mood changes when she speaks Spanish. Speaking Spanish here is also a way to ‘break out’ and to construct an identity that is different from the ‘normal’ one. Spanish seems to function as a type of ‘Shangri La’<sup>74</sup>; it has utopian functions in that it serves for German Salsa dancers as a tool to perform an ‘other’ identity. This ‘other’ identity is made possible through the transnational scale, which brings about a desire to be ‘different’ in an ethnic sense and to take part in discourses that do not

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<sup>74</sup> Shangri La is a Tibetan utopia in James Hilton’s novel *Lost Horizon*. The term is also used for describing other imagined ideal spaces, particularly those that present retreats from the pressures of civilisation (Bishop 1989).

traditionally belong to the local or national environment. Simultaneously, the national scale is also relevant in interpreting such a statement, as the ‘longing’ and ‘desire’ for emotions and for happiness may be an effect of stereotypes about Germans as strict and rude, but also of German discourses that construct other cultures as ‘emotional’ and ‘different’.

It is also interesting to note that Spanish in this context sometimes is seen as symbolising an opposition to English. While English is considered to be a technical instrument, the image of Spanish is related to emotions and a certain degree of warm-heartedness:

“Englisch, das lernt man eben,  
muss man ja, schon in der Schule.  
Spanisch ist eben viel mehr so Gefühl als Englisch.” (A 53)

[English, you just learn it.  
You have to, already at school.  
Spanish is much more emotion than English.]

Firstly, English is seen as a compulsory element of schooling, which does not necessarily make it attractive. The modal particle “eben” here expresses the attitude of the interviewee towards English: the teaching of English at school has to be accepted, pupils have no choice and just have to learn it. No emotional bond is created through this formal type of language learning. Similar to the German discourse on elite language learning, the acquisition of a language in school contexts is here seen as devoid of relevance for emotion or personal identity. Spanish, on the other hand, is seen as transporting “Gefühl”, emotion. Considering English merely in its functions related to compulsory (‘business’) activities may also be related to anti-US discourse and anti-capitalist discourse, similar to the discourse of the Cuban Style CoP of Sydney (8.2.). Like in Sydney’s Cuban Style context, in the Frankfurt CoP there are many visual images that relate to Cuba’s communist regime and the Cuban national hero Che Guevara. In dance schools and party venues, flyers and posters promote travel to Cuba, where Spanish is learned in the morning and Salsa in the afternoon and positive attitudes towards Cuba are frequent. All over, the opposition of *English as compulsory* and *Spanish as emotion* reminds strongly of traditional Latin American anti-US discourse (see 6.1). It is also an indication of possible indexical meanings of English as a world language, which remind of those in the L.A. Style community of Sydney, where the instrumental functions of English are seen as (in contrast to here, positively) related to an image of capitalist success.

The construction of Latin American culture and of Spanish as ‘different’ and ‘emotional’ is also found in the following quote, where a general desire, an unspecified ‘longing’ (‘Sehnsucht’), is seen as the reason for the popularity of Latin American dance culture:

“Ja, warum ist diese Kultur so beliebt?  
Ich glaube, es ist einfach diese (1)  
Sehnsucht (2)

irgendwie (1.5)  
diese Sehnsucht (0.5)  
Das drückt es eigentlich ganz gut aus.” (M 0/30)

[So why is this culture so popular?  
I think it is just, this (1)  
longing (2)  
somehow (1.5)  
this longing (0.5)  
This expresses it pretty well.]

The many and long hesitation markers show that it is not easy for the informant to express herself, while the notion of “Sehnsucht” remains pretty vague. Nevertheless, in the end of the quote, the interviewee is confident that this notion expresses what she wants to say. The idea of “Sehnsucht” has strong romantic connotations and thus relates to the discourse of heteronormativity that is found in the whole Salsa context (see 6.6.). The vagueness of the quote reminds of one of the quotes in Chapter 8 on Cuban Salsa in Sydney, where the dance school owner describes distinct interests of L.A. dancers and Cuban dancers and maintains that Cuban Style dancers want to be ‘authentic’, without further specification what this means. Comparing this to the statement of the Sydney L.A. Style dance school owner, who assumes that Salsa is popular because it brings opportunities to accumulate economic wealth (see 7.2.), the different “attribution[s] of value” (Heller 2007a:15) in the two contexts become obvious.

Considering that globalisation has been described as having the effect of creating a longing for ‘otherness’ but also for nostalgic essentialisms (see e.g. Appadurai 1996), the ‘longing’ that is mentioned above may be similar to aspirations in the Sydney Cuban Style CoP, related to a desire for authenticity, for contact with ‘authentic’ and traditional culture (something that the cosmopolitan needs in order to become cosmopolitan). Thus, in the Frankfurt context, language crossing to Spanish is not only a practice of ‘self-othering’ but also a way of relating to an ‘authentic’ other culture that fulfils some unsatisfied needs of native Germans. Yet, despite their enthusiasm for Latin culture and their desire to speak Spanish, interviewees generally assume that it is not possible to truly ‘cross’ ethnic boundaries:

“Ich würd’s echt gerne perfektionieren,  
ja und es ist wahrscheinlich auch der Wunsch von jedem (1)  
ähm, der irgendwie so Spanisch lernt, (.)  
dass man’s halt irgendwann möglichst akzentfrei spricht  
und von den, von den Latinos (2)  
na ja gut, als ihresgleichen aufgenommen wird man wahrscheinlich nicht.” (lacht) (A  
23)

[I would love to perfect it,  
yes, and it is probably also the desire of everybody (1)  
uhm, who learns Spanish (.)  
that one day you speak without an accent  
and to be, by the Latinos (2)

well, to be accepted, as one among them, this will probably not happen.  
(laughs)]

The informant firstly assumes that “everybody” who learns Spanish has the desire to speak the language without a non-native accent (on the ideology of language without accent, see Lippi-Green 1997), which relates to the desire to ‘become someone else’ and to ‘break out’ of the own, given identity. Speaking a second language without a non-native accent means that potential interlocutors will assume that one ‘truly’ belongs to the community of native speakers of that language, while this community is nevertheless understood as out of reach for non-native speakers. Interestingly, the desire to speak another language ‘accent-free’ was never mentioned in the Australian context.

Generally, it may be assumed that the German discourse on ethnic authenticity, which still relies on traditional ideas of ethnicity and belonging, is co-responsible for the popularity of essentialist ideas in a German context. The construction of individuals as ‘naturally’ belonging to a culture is partly based on language ideologies in which language serves for authentic affiliation with that culture (see also Ch. 3) and the same construction is found in the quote above. German ideologies of essentialism not only made naturalisation of immigrants a difficult endeavour until the year 2000, they are also connected to the demand that migrants have to have a rather high command of German if they want to gain German citizenship today (see above). These ideologies are, at the same time, related to a German interviewee having the ambition to learn a language ‘perfectly’, which is synonymous with ‘authentic’ native language competence.

The interviewee here assumes that it is a universal desire to learn a language “without accent”, then she starts the sentence “and to be, by the Latinos ...” and then interrupts herself. She intended to say that the underlying motivation of accent-free Spanish would be to be regarded as a Latina, yet, after a pause in her speech, she corrects herself and says that the ethnic ‘other’ would not accept Germans as part of their community, even if these would speak Spanish without an accent. A difference to the Australian CoPs is here that native Latin Americans seem to occupy a relatively high position in the social hierarchy in the CoP. Native Germans strive to be as ‘Latin’ as possible, although they assume that the complete ‘crossing’ of ethnic boundaries is not possible. Comparing this to the data of the L.A. Style CoP of Sydney, there are striking differences in terms of attitudes towards ethnic essentialism and the possibility and impossibility to become part of another culture. Taking into account the German discourses from the last 50 years (see 10.1.), it is not really surprising that German respondents describe shifts in ethnic identity as basically impossible. At the same time, authenticity is highly valued, which is shown by the desire to speak the ‘other’ language as perfectly as possible.

The value of authenticity results in a high status of Latin people within the CoP, and, in contrast to the Cuban Style CoP of Sydney, where claims to authenticity by Latin people are

taken as ‘racism’ (see 8.4.), in Frankfurt, people from the Latin American continent are reported to feel superior on the basis of their ethnicity in comparison to ‘non-authentic’ salseras:

“Zu den Latinos passt man sowieso nicht,  
die ja sowieso irgendwie ihre mehr oder minder (1.5)  
Enklave da noch bilden (.)  
und da auch die Leute eigentlich gar nicht so wirklich reinlassen,  
beziehungsweise, wir sind hier die Latinos  
und ihr seit hier halt schon so die Deutschen,  
die halt hier so tanzen  
und wenn ihr das gut macht, dann ist das schon cool,  
aber naja.” (A 4)

[One does not match with the Latinos anyways,  
who more or less build their own (1.5)  
enclave (.)  
and who do not really allow other people to enter,  
or, we are here, the Latinos  
and you over there, you are just the Germans,  
who just dance around here and when you are good in it, then it is pretty cool,  
but, well.]

‘Authentic’ ethnicity functions as symbolic capital in this context. Dancing in a particular style seems to lead to increased status, but ‘real’ Latin American ethnicity functions as a boundary marker. In this quote, the Salsa CoP of Frankfurt is described as a divided community, but, in contrast to the Sydney case, it is not the style of dance that divides the dancers but ethnic descent. It is interesting to note here that the ‘foreigners’, the “Latinos” are not described as attempting to belong to the German society or an ethnically mixed CoP. Rather, they are seen as consciously separating from the rest, as building an “enclave” within the CoP. In other interviews, especially Cubans are described as having the tendency to ethnic pride and separatism. Whether this is an effect of Cuban essentialist discourse or of German essentialist discourse, which constructs ‘becoming German’ still as almost unachievable, is not possible to conclude from the data. In any case, it is notable that in Sydney, ethnic Latin Americans are either seen as ‘backward’ (L.A. Style) or as part of a mixed community (Cuban), while in the Frankfurt case they are often described as part of the CoP but nevertheless essentially different due to their ethnic background.

Summarising the discourse of native Germans, it can be assumed that Spanish has here functions of constructing an ‘other’ identity. This is, on the one hand, based in the desire to become cosmopolitan, to get into contact with other ‘authentic’ cultures, which facilitates the development of a cultural meta-discourse. Furthermore, the Frankfurt data set shows some strong traits of essentialism, where ethnic boundaries are seen as insurmountable. The desire to get in touch with this ‘other’ culture is closely linked to romantic imaginations of the ‘other’ as emotional, warm and happy but a genuine belonging to cultures that are not part of the own heritage is seen as basically impossible. Although the constructions here often

resemble those that were documented for the Sydney case, the degree of ethnic essentialism and of nostalgic romanticism seems to be stronger in the interview quotes from Frankfurt interviewees, and ethnic Latin authenticity here clearly functions as a positive asset.

In contrast to the positive image of Latin people in the discourse of the CoP, certain other backgrounds are not necessarily rated as an asset but are linked to lower class status and the unwillingness to ‘integrate’ into German society. Again, there are some interesting traces of interdiscursive relations to German public discourses in the interview passages of Frankfurt interviewees.

#### **10.4. ‘DIE LEUTE, DIE SICH NICHT INTEGRIEREN WOLLEN’ – MIGRANT BILINGUALISM AND THE HIERARCHY OF LANGUAGES**

In contrast to positive attitudes towards ethnic Latin Americans, in the context of the community, ethnic otherness is not generally considered a positive resource. As has been elaborated in 10.1., ethnic diversity is often seen as obstructing a cohesive society in German public discourse. In this discourse, some ethnicities have a very negative image and especially migrants and Germans of Turkish descent are almost symbols of a presumed inability to ‘integrate’ (see here especially the debate in October 2010, see 10.1.). It is thus striking to note that during the course of all (!) interviews with members of the Frankfurt CoP, when it comes to the question on multilingualism in Germany, the Turkish minority of Germany is mentioned. Similar to constructions in public discourses, the claim that ‘the Turks’ – “die Türken” – are those who are unwilling to learn German and who are therefore problematic is frequent, as in the following quote with a native German Salsa dancer:

“Ja natürlich gibt es da schon auch Probleme hier in Deutschland,  
mit den Leuten, die sich nicht integrieren wollen,  
wie ja zum Beispiel die Türken,  
die kein Deutsch lernen.  
Das ist natürlich total respektlos.” (I 27)

[Yes, sure, there are problems, here in Germany,  
with those who do not want to integrate,  
like, for example, the Turks  
who don’t learn German.  
This is of course very disrespectful.]

The interviewee here produces a very ‘common-sense’ discourse in saying that “natürlich”, ‘naturally’, there are problems with those who do not want to “integrate”. Although the notion of ‘integration’ is rarely defined, the accusation that ‘foreigners’ form ‘parallel societies’, while they should, instead, ‘integrate’, is a widespread belief in German public discourse and effects of this construct on individual attitudes have been documented in ethnographic research (see e.g. Gruner 2010). Immigrants of Turkish origin are seen as the most problematic group of those forming ‘parallel societies’ (and are the biggest minority in Germany with approximately two million inhabitants); it is therefore not unexpected that the

interviewee here immediately refers to “die Türken” in relating to problems in German society. The modal particle “ja” in “wie ja zum Beispiel die Türken” shows that the speaker supposes that the consideration of Turks being a problem is shared by the hearer. She thus constructs common ground and assumes this attitude to be universally valid knowledge. From the syntactic construction of the sentence “die Türken, die kein Deutsch lernen” (“the Turks who don’t learn German”) it is unclear whether she here intends to say that Turks generally do not learn German, or whether she here refers only to those Turks who do not learn the language. In any case, she constructs a ‘matter of fact’ image of the idea that there are problems with Turks who do not learn German and then concludes that this behaviour is disrespectful.

The fact that all respondents from the Frankfurt CoP mention the Turkish minority as problematic is particularly interesting because in none of the interviews did the interviewer mention this ethnic group at all. In contrast to people of Latin American origin, in the interviews, the ethnic group of Turks is described as unwilling to acquire German and seems to be symbolic of the general undesired ‘other’. This seems to be an effect of national discourse, which produces this image. The negative image of the Turkish ethnic minority in Germany in some German discourses is not necessarily based on a *de facto* precarious status (for example, Italian pupils perform worse than Turkish pupils in the German school system; see Duschek, Weinmann et. al 2005) but may be interpreted as an effect of various factors (German history, the size of the community, non-Christian, non-European culture of Turks) that co-construct an image of Turks as ethnically ‘different’.

Yet, while Turkish people are accused of being “respektlos” on the presumed limited ability to speak German, incomplete German language skills of other minority groups are not rated as severely. English speakers from English-speaking countries, for example, who live in Germany, are often not expected to learn German and it is reported that it is difficult for them to learn German as Germans constantly speak English with them (personal observation). Similarly, as has been noted above, academics from other countries are usually not expected to learn German if they can speak English, and foreigners can be naturalised if this is in the interest of the German nation, irrespective of their language skills or other conditions (which happens regularly with top athletes; see also Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Ausländerfragen 2000:39). The demand to learn German is thus only understandable in a complex of ethnic–class intersections and is not a universal requirement that is imposed on all immigrants to Germany. In this context, ‘the Turks’ function as a symbol of undesired, lower class ‘others’.

In the Salsa Community of Practice, respondents also differentiate between different ethnic groups in their demands for the acquisition of German. Poor German of Turks is rated negatively by all interviewees, but in the case of Spanish native speakers, interviewees differentiate on grounds of language background *and* class. Economically precarious situations count here as reasons for not succeeding in learning the language. Thus, people

with a Latin background, who do not learn German, are excused because of their difficult economic situation.

“Gente Latino que no aprende alemán,  
si hay (2)  
pero eso depende de la clase.  
Si uno no tiene educación y vive aquí feliz, no es grave. (1)  
Y también (.) tienen que trabajar tanto  
que no tienen tiempo para aprender el lenguaje.” (J 33)

[Latin people who don't learn German  
yes, this happens (2)  
but this depends on class.  
If somebody has no education and lives here happily, it doesn't matter. (1)  
And also (.) these people have to work so much,  
they don't have time to learn the language.]

The differentiation on the basis of class – “eso depende de la clase” – is only made for people with Hispanic language background. Where language skills of Turkish migrants are discussed, the ethnic background alone seems to be sufficient for perceiving individuals as having a minority status that is rated negatively. As has been observed by Collins and Slembrouck (Collins and Slembrouck 2008: 5, 12), it is frequent not only in popular but also in academic and policy discourses of Europe to discuss deficit multilingualism in isolation from the effects of socio-economic background. Thus, the exception that is here made for people with a Spanish language background can be interpreted as sympathy for those who are perceived as in-group members and who may be known personally to interviewees through contact in the Salsa scene. Through the comment that Latin people who do not speak German have to work hard, it is clear that it is not a transnational elite that is here referred to.

In the Salsa CoP in Frankfurt, there is a group with Latin American background that is differentiated from transnational elites and that is, despite their Latin origin, sometimes considered negatively, although a negative mentioning of this group occurred only once in the interviews. Yet, in informal conversation and from other sources, it can be seen that Colombians with refugee background who spend their free time in Salsa venues have a rather negative image in the CoP. Interestingly, their allegedly poor German is also considered a problem. There exists the prejudice that Colombian women generally work in red-light-districts (personal communication and see Papadopulos 2003:93) or have married German men in order to gain a residence permit. Although their bilingual competence may be quite high, the ability to speak in Spanish and German is not valued in the same way as if they had acquired it in a more formal setting. It may be furthermore assumed that the language competence of economically marginal speakers does not adhere to standardised norms, of German, or Spanish. Thus, in the context of another ethnographic research project on Salsa in Frankfurt, this native German speaker describes Colombians as non-German speakers:



“Frankfurt hat ja natürlich auch eine spezielle Szene,  
die auch leider sehr viel mit Kolumbianern zu tun hat.  
Und diese Szene speziell,  
oder diese Kolumbianer,  
die reden,  
also die können auch kein deutsch sprechen,  
ja, leben eigentlich nur unter sich selber.”

[Frankfurt has, of course, a special scene,  
which unfortunately has to do much with Colombians.  
And this scene especially,  
or these Colombians,  
they speak,  
well, they can't speak German,  
actually only live among themselves.]  
(M, see Papadopulos 2003:93)

The image that is produced here resembles closely the one is given of Turkish speakers: people who cannot speak German and do not mix with others. Accusing non-Germans of being unwilling to ‘integrate’ into the German society, as it is regularly done in German public discourse, is here directed against particular groups of economically marginal non-Europeans. Generally, language skills seem to be problematised only with reference to people from economically marginal groups, while the ‘authenticity’ of those Latin Americans who have a leading role in the community, for example, as dance teachers, is highly valued. In comparison to Australia, it is interesting to note that in Sydney, ethnic segregation has also been mentioned as problematic; however, it has not been linked to lack of language skills. Rather, although there is also a clear ethnic–class intersection, ethnic segregation was here described as mainly an effect of governmental policies. The concept that all ethnic groups should ‘integrate’ into Australian society – as if they would not already be part of Australian society – does not occur in the Australian data set.

In the German case, Spanish-speakers are nevertheless relatively fortunate in that their native language is prestigious in a global ranking. It is still considered ‘better’ to speak Spanish and German than, for example, Turkish and German. Discrimination against ethnic Latin Americans is an exception in the Salsa scene as ethnic authenticity is usually more valuable than German language skills. It is symptomatic of this value of ethnic authenticity that there is one venue in Frankfurt that gives free entrance to people with Latin American passports on Salsa nights. Having real ‘Latinos’ and ‘Latinas’ at a Salsa party increases the authentic value of the event. Selling the image of the ‘real Latin lover’ is part of the marketing strategy of this club (*Living*, Summer 2007). At the same time, it has to be assumed that this is also a strategy of ethnic segregation, as it is otherwise not possible to differentiate between people of Latin descent and people of other (undesired) ethnic descent. From phenotypical features, people from African and Arab countries cannot be differentiated from Latin Americans and the former are often rejected at Frankfurt nightclubs as it is assumed that they ‘make trouble’ (personal communication).

Yet, people from non-European and non-Latin American backgrounds are also a vital part of Frankfurt's Salsa scene. In contrast to Sydney, there are less people of Asian ethnicity but in most Frankfurt Salsa parties there are many dancers of Turkish, Arabic, Sub-Saharan African or Southern European descent. Here, it is especially males who seem to attempt to acquire a male ethnic identity that is of higher cultural capital than their own ethnic identity: Latinos or Salseros as 'better' foreigners. Not only is it easy to find these men in Salsa venues, where their phenotype is not marked as 'other' in a negative way, furthermore, there are some who have acquired the Spanish language and who thus perform a male identity that is of higher cultural capital than their 'original' ethnicity. The identification with Spanish in one case goes as far as re-naming oneself with a Spanish name in an attempt to abandon the ethnic Afghan identity (see also Papadopoulos 2003).

This special type of mimicry (Bhabha 1994) has to be understood within the German context, with its particular history of *Gastarbeiter*-migration (Terkessidis 2000), where Spanish-speakers and speakers of other languages of today's EU (Italian, Portuguese) are not as marginalised as speakers of non-European languages. Furthermore, Latin Americans have not had the role of guestworkers and are often met with sympathy in German left-wing circles as many Latin Americans have entered Germany as educated political refugees who fled from right-wing regimes (for more on the history of immigration from Latin America to Germany, see Kohut 1996). Class, on a global level – but constructed in a national environment – where some countries and its citizens are perceived as wealthy or 'cool', some as poor or 'unfashionable', plays a key role in this desire of 'other' ethnicities to cross to Latin ethnicity and to the Spanish language. And again, as it is mostly men from 'other' ethnic backgrounds who perform Salsero identities, gender also turns out to be a crucial factor in the motivation for language acquisition and the construction of linguistic identity.

Overall, it can be maintained that divisions that are found in German public discourse show their traits in the discourse of the Salsa Community of Practice of Frankfurt. Firstly, lack of German language skills is discursively linked to low economic status. This, however, is in contrast to the high status that (some) Latin Americans enjoy in the CoP on grounds of their ethnic authenticity. Similar to the Sydney Cuban Style example, ethnicity can function as a resource in the production of cosmopolitanism. Yet, Latin ethnicity is constructed as more valuable than other ethnicities. This resource is also exploited by participants of other ethnic backgrounds, who sometimes try to re-negotiate their own ethnicity as 'Latin', as their own ethnicity has a negative image in public German discourses (and, in the case of Turkish, also in the discourses of the interviewees). In contrast to Australia, it is remarkable that ethnic descent is here crucial in ascribing identity and that ethnic identity is seen as essentialist, although there is an awareness that class has an effect on identity and language skills, too. The level of national discourse, which produces discourses of ethnic essentialism, seems to impact strongly on the discourses of the community, where ethnic authenticity is not questioned. However, 'other' ethnicities and languages are not generally rated as a threat

but are embedded in a hierarchical value scale where especially Spanish and Latin American culture are valued exactly because of their assumed ‘otherness’ – which is linked to the history of Germany and to the transnational commercial success of Salsa

Interestingly, forms of essentialism are also frequently found in relation to gender in the Frankfurt CoP. In contrast to the Australian data, in interviews with Frankfurt dancers, the acquisition of Spanish is explicitly linked to the gender of the language learner and the samples from the Frankfurt case thus show a form of gender essentialism that is partly constructed through the acquisition of languages.

#### **10.5. ‘DIE FRAUEN LERNEN EBEN DIE SPRACHE IHRER MÄNNER’ – ESSENTIALIST GENDER IDEOLOGIES AND LANGUAGE**

It has been discussed that heterosexuality and nostalgic gender constructions are vital in understanding the success of Salsa Communities of Practice, and this is also true for the Frankfurt sample. The performance of masculine and feminine identity in ‘traditional’ but also sexualised ways is quite drastic in Frankfurt Salsa venues, and on the basis of participant observation, Frankfurt Salsa indeed “marks a return to prefeminist gendered relations” (Pietrobruno 2006:19), which is similar to what has been observed in the Sydney context. Yet, the production of heteronormativity in Frankfurt is more explicitly linked to language choice. For example, male native Latin Americans often prefer to speak Spanish in this environment and greeting rituals not only include kissing but also take place in Spanish and male informants use Spanish even if they do not know whether their interlocutor actually speaks the language. The performance of a stereotypical ‘Latin lover’ identity seems here linked to the Spanish language. Non-Latin American males of non-German descent similarly use Spanish greeting formulae and habits to greet women (saying *hola* and giving kisses on the cheeks).

Furthermore, on the basis of casual observation, male native Spanish speakers not only use Spanish in greetings but also in conversations, even if their German is very good and the Spanish of their (female) counterparts mediocre. This is an interesting observation with regard to gender and language acquisition. As far as can be said from this qualitative study, it is in fact more (German) women who learn Spanish as a second language than (German) men, whereas Latin American men seem to adhere to their native language. This observation was also confirmed by the interviewees (while Australian interviewees did not mention gender in relation to language learning and denied any relevance when explicitly asked). When asked about these language acquisition practices and the potential reasons for that, the Frankfurt interviewees state that women learn languages more easily because of their ‘natural’ talent to do so:

“Ich geh tendenziell davon aus (.)  
dass Frauen Sprachen leichter lernen als Männer,  
ich weiss nich, ob das ‘n Vorurteil is (2)

aber irgendwie geh ich schon davon aus. (.)  
Aufgrund der höheren Emotionalität von Frauen. (.)  
Ich weiss nich, ob man das irgendwie so sagen kann,  
aber irgendwie (2.5)  
denk ich dass Frauen Sprachen leichter lernen.” (A 8)

[I generally assume (.)  
that women learn languages more easily than men,  
I don't know if that's a prejudice (2)  
but somehow I assume that.  
Because women are more emotional than men. (.)  
I don't know if you can say it like this  
but somehow (2.5)  
I do think that women learn languages more easily.]

It is obvious here that the interviewee is aware of the partly problematic content of her utterance. This is not only shown by the relatively long pauses of hesitation but also by her remarks “I don't know if that's a prejudice” and “I don't know if you can say it like this”. The interviewee ends the utterance with re-affirming that, despite these doubts, she is still convinced that women learn languages more easily. The reason for that is seen in the ‘emotionality’ of women, a rather vague position. It is furthermore unclear how women's assumed inclination to be ‘emotional’ is related to the acquisition of languages.

In another interview, an interviewee assumes that women are more predisposed to learning the language of their male partners, as they want to ‘adjust’ to their partners:

“Ich glaub sowieso dass Frauen eher sprachbegabt sind. (.)  
Deswegen denk ich natürlich schon (1)  
dass es eher viele Frauen sind.  
Und dann glaub ich auch, (.)  
also wenn's so Päärchen sind,  
denk ich immer, dass die Frauen dann Spanisch lernen.  
Und wenn's andersrum is,  
dann lernen die Frauen eher deutsch, ja. (1)  
Die Frauen lernen eben die Sprache ihrer Männer (2)  
[weil die Frauen?] sich eher an den Mann anpassen. (.)  
Heute noch wahrscheinlich.“ (I 18)

[I believe anyways that women are more talented to learn languages. (.)  
And therefore I, of course (1)  
think that it is more women.  
And then I believe also that (.)  
if it is couples, I always think that the women learn Spanish.  
And if it's the other way around,  
women rather learn German, yes. (1)  
Women just learn the language of their husbands (2)  
[because women?] rather adjust to the man. (.)  
Even today, probably.]

This quote is very interesting as the interviewee here uses several strategies to de-essentialise her statement, while she produces a very essentialist discourse. She does not say that “women are more talented to learn languages” but that this is her personal belief. Similarly, she says

that she “believes” that women learn Spanish if their male partner speaks Spanish. It is only in the end that she concludes that “women just learn the language of their husbands”, without softening this statement through a relativising strategy. In the last line, she again includes the softener “probably” in saying that “even today” women adjust to their men, but through using the word “probably” she makes clear that she does not think that this is scientific knowledge or an assumption shared by everybody. On the other hand, she legitimises her essentialist perspective on the differences between women and men through these verbal strategies and thus makes the utterance justifiable – although she seems to be aware that such an utterance is problematic. Content-wise, she produces a very traditional image of women who subordinate to men through learning ‘their’ language. Language learning here has the status of a) being easier for women and b) symbolising submissive assimilation. Later on, this interviewee further explains that women are more interested in the memories and emotions of their male partners and that they are therefore more motivated to learn the other language.

Language ideologies concerning language learning and gender in their relation to the production of a particular gendered identity (see also Pavlenko, et al. 2001) – women as empathetic, understanding partners for their husbands – become very obvious here. It is not possible to draw a direct connection between essentialist German ideologies on ethnicities and these essentialist gender ideologies. It may be assumed that there is a certain tendency in German discourse to construct a person as ‘naturally’ being born in a certain way and as conceiving identity as an unchangeable trait (this has also been a critique regarding the German education system, where intelligence is seen as inborn and unchangeable and where, therefore, different school types for ‘more gifted’ and ‘less gifted’ children exist; see Lenhardt 2002). However, it is not possible to say here whether the above introduced essentialist ideas on the learning of languages by women, representing emotionality and subordination to men, is an effect of this tendency. The tendency in transnational Salsa discourse to produce traditional images of women and men might equally come into play here, but, also, personal, idiosyncratic experiences.

In the following section, it is also difficult to attribute interview passages to a specific broader level social discourse – it is not possible to say here which scale is responsible for the introduced phenomenon. It is, however, possible to maintain that the data in the following section presents a case of deconstructivist approaches to the construction of language as an entity and that transnational experiences are responsible for this type of language ideology.

#### **10.6. ‘PIMP MY LANGUAGE’ – THE DECONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE AS AN ENTITY**

In the data presented in the previous chapters, the concept of a *Language*, as it has been constructed in national discourses (see 3.3.), remained relatively untouched. Although languages are no longer seen as only linked to ethnic or national groups but also to other

social formations or features (class, CoPs, progress, political attitude, ...), the concept itself, *a Language*, as an entity with clearly defined boundaries, has never been questioned.

In two of the interviews with Frankfurt Salsa dancers, the interviewees start to speak about the fact that they not only use Spanish and German (one a native German, the other a native Colombian), but that they furthermore mix languages when they use them. A third native German interviewee also mentions code-switching<sup>75</sup> practices but describes this as a very negative feature of spoken language that should be avoided wherever possible, as she connects this to the inability to keep languages apart and therefore to a lack of education (interestingly, this statement stems from the oldest of all interviewees in the data-set). Instead of approaching code-switching with purist ideology, however, two other interviewees show highly positive attitudes towards the practice of using two or more languages at the same time.

Code-switching – not the act of speaking Spanish – is met with a lot of enthusiasm in these two interviews. The following quote compares the usage of several languages to ‘tentacles’, which open up a whole new world:

“Die Sprachen zu mischen zeigt halt einfach,  
dass man in allen Ebenen irgendwie da so, (1.5)  
also es kommt halt einfach. (.)  
Es kommt mir so vor, (.)  
wie so Tentakel,  
dass man überall sein Dingens drin hat, sozusagen,  
und dass man sich einfach irgendwo dazwischen bewegt. (.)  
Und das eröffnet einem so eine ganz neue Welt.“ (A 42)

[To mix languages just shows  
that on all levels you are somehow, (1.5)  
well, it just comes. (.)  
And it feels, (.)  
like tentacles,  
that, everywhere you have your thingies, so to say,  
and that you move somewhere in-between. (.)  
And that just opens a whole new world.]

In this quote, it is above all the content level that is interesting. Using several languages makes several “Ebenen”, “levels”, accessible. The interviewee then uses the metaphor of the “tentacle”, of having many arms that allow access to these levels. With several languages, the speaker has access to more levels but also to levels that are described as “irgendwo dazwischen”, “somewhere in-between”. Finally, this image of the ability to get into and to move between various levels is described as opening up “so eine ganz neue Welt” – “a whole new world”. It is not the language Spanish that opens up this world but the possibility to use several languages and to get access to ways of conceiving the world that are beyond the confines of a single language.

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<sup>75</sup> I do not differentiate here between code-switching and code-mixing, as it is here referred to the general act of using two or more languages in one conversation (for a definition of the two terms, see Auer 1999).

Code-switching and the general ability to use more than one language is here basically described as allowing access to a meta-discourse on language and on the world. This image resembles the concept of cosmopolitanism, which, similarly, conceives that the access to several meaning systems has the development of a meta-discourse as an effect. In any case, languages and their meanings are here not described as separate entities, which exist side by side, but the simultaneous usage of several languages is seen as enabling a meta-discourse. The idea of a language as expressing the “spirit” of a nation (see 3.3.2.) is deconstructed in the sense that a language is seen as one possibility in a wider, super-national meaning system, which is somehow beyond *Language* (or beyond language?) and to which an individual, irrespective of the national background, can have access.

In the following short, but highly compelling quote, the speaker relates the usage of several languages to a US American television format:

“Es como ‘Pimp my language’.” (J 1.04)  
[It is just like ‘Pimp my language’.]

The interviewee here refers to a television programme on MTV where cars get refurbished and customised – Pimp my Ride (for an impression, see <http://www.mtv.de/fotos/19806699>). Speech is here described as ‘restyled’ or ‘upgraded’ but also individualised if bits and pieces from several languages are used. With an eye on newer developments of sociolinguistic theory (see 4.3., and Heller 2007a, Errington 2001a, Makoni and Pennycook 2007, Rampton 1995a), this may be interpreted as a form of deconstruction of national language categories. In both passages, usage of several languages is described in a way as if they were part of *one* language competence, which is a competence that is beyond the traditional idea of languages as systems.

This language competence is not only instructive of ideas about language systems but can also be related to the emergence of transnational and multilingual forms of identity. Thus, speaking Spanish and German (and potentially any other language) in a mixed fashion, is for these individuals a way to create a multilingual, cosmopolitan identity, as cosmopolitanism is “an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrast rather than uniformity” (see Ch. 4 and Hannerz 1990:239). These comments on the mixing of languages pose questions to the nationalist understanding of the concept in general.

As has been noted above, it is not possible to relate these quotes to existing discourses or scales. However, the insight that a language is one possibility among many and that it is exactly the mixing of categories that gives access to meaning beyond given meaning systems can be seen as an effect of close contact with several cultural systems. Both interviewees have made elaborate experiences with the ‘other’ culture, as the Colombian interviewee resides in Germany as a student, while the German has studied Latin American culture at university

level and has spent several consecutive periods in Cuba. Thus, the occurrence of these comments can be attributed to a transnational scale, without which given national concepts would not have been questioned. Overall, the comments relate closely to Hannerz's concept of cosmopolitanism, for which the development of a "meta-culture" is conceived as characteristic. This is an instance of the deconstruction of language as it has been constructed in national discourse and it thus can be concluded that transnational forms of culture can show traces in ideologies of language. The above comments may be described as a form of transnational or "translingual" (Pennycook 2007) language ideology. It is, however, unclear why this transnational language ideology occurs in the German context, which is characterised by relatively strong essentialisms, and not in the Australian context, which conceives of language and identity as more fluid. It might be speculated that the influence of competitive-capitalist culture reifies the instrumentalist value of languages to such an extent that deconstructive perspectives become difficult to develop; yet, this remains speculative and requires further examination.

The German national scale, similar to the Australian national scale, shows traits in individual discourses of members of Salsa Communities of Practice. Similar to the Sydney Communities of Practice, transnational and national discourses interact in the construction of language ideologies of the community. Transnational relationships between Germany and Latin America make possible that the Frankfurt Salsa community exists in the first place; furthermore, the interaction between dancers from different ethnic groups allows for the development of a meta-discourse on culture, where, for example, German dancers know about stereotypes regarding their own culture and aim to overcome such images through their engagement in the community. The acquisition of Spanish is vital in the production of 'other' identities and is related to stereotypes of Latin Americans and their discursive habits. The performance of culturally different identities – breaking out of being "frosty middle Europeans" – evokes personal feelings of 'happiness' and 'emotionality'. This is related to national stereotypes and transnational discourses, which both construct Latin American identity in particular ways.

The prime difference between the effects of the two national discourses – Australian and German – is that essentialist constructions regarding identity figure more strongly in the German sample. This is, above all, true for ethnic essentialism. German respondents describe ethnic difference as insurmountable and relate individual feelings to ethnic stereotypes associated with Latin culture. The general tendency to consider essentialist traits of a person as fundamental may be attributed to the German national scale, especially if compared to the Australian example, where competence and performance of an individual are explicitly mentioned as more important than ethnic descent. Considering the qualitative approach of this study, it is, however, not possible to say how far this observation is significant on a broader level and whether the tendency to construct identity on the basis of ethnic essentialism is distributed more widely in the German than in the Australian context.



Nevertheless, in both cases, national discourses – statements that can be attributed to public discourses of the two countries – appear in the data and are relevant for the interpretation of the language ideologies of Salsa Communities of Practice.

While in the Australian examples the interaction between the national and the transnational scale mutually enforce the status of English as hegemonic language, and thus a high status of native English speakers in both transnational Communities of Practice, the relevance of ethnic authenticity in the German example is stronger. People of ‘original’ Latin descent are here seen as superior to German dancers and as genuine experts of Latin dance. This again is a result of the interaction of transnational and national discourses. Transnational discourses construct Salsa as up-to-date and fashionable, while German essentialism constructs cultural genuineness as almost mandatory in the transmission of ‘true’ Salsa dance.

The high status of many Latin Americans in the community contrasts with the low status of several other ethnic minorities in Germany. Although ethnic ‘otherness’ is of high value in the CoP, the national discourse that conceives of many ‘foreigners’ as alien and unwilling to ‘integrate’ appears as an integral part of the interviews. The ‘Turks’ here represent the ethnic group that is seen as disturbing national cohesion because of their ‘otherness’ and, in particular, their assumed inability to speak German. In this discourse, the acquisition of the German language is constructed as a symbolic marker of ‘integration’ (assimilation?) into German society. This discourse of social exclusion is a result of German history, with its tradition of constructing belonging on the basis of the *ius sanguinis*, and also with its *guest worker* system, which creates a hierarchy of different ‘types’ of foreigners in Germany. Language functions as a prime marker of difference that legitimates exclusion in an age in which segregation on the basis of ‘race’ or ethnicity has become questionable and is no longer ‘politically correct’ (see also e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1989). Nevertheless, learning German is not demanded from everybody in the same way. In the Frankfurt Salsa CoP, for example, Latin Americans are excused if their class status is taken into account (while public discourses usually invisibilise elite migrants’ lack of German if they speak English).

One aspect that is principally comparable to the Australian sample is that speaking a language not only expresses ethnic or national identity but also class, gender or lifestyle. The logics of linguistic capital here function across cultural and linguistic boundaries, as nationally and transnationally developed hierarchies that relate to the global scale – English as elite, Turkish as lower class, whereas the functions of Spanish depend on the class background of the speaker – intersect with national ideals of monolingualism. Concerning the multilingual language competence of members of the Frankfurt CoP, it is here constitutive of a lifestyle that connects to the language ideology of a transnational, multilingually educated class and construct a cosmopolitan identity in a comparable way to the Sydney Cuban Style CoPs. The role of the German language in this context is one among

several sources of identification and not an exclusive one, contrary to claims to social inclusion made by German mainstream public discourse.

Another interesting observation of the Frankfurt case is the construction of binary gender identities through the language acquisition practices. The acquisition of languages is seen as 'naturally' easier for women and, at the same time, the act to learn a language is seen as a form of subordination to the culture and identity of a man. Subordination of women under men is here to a certain extent attributed to biological, essentialist traits through the adaption of the idea that women have a natural talent to learn languages. It is unclear whether the construction of essentialist gender identities is related to essentialist tendencies in German discourses in general, or whether this is an effect of the desire to construct stable forms of identity in contradictory discourses on ethnicity and belonging in a transnational culture. In any case, the discourses of the interviewees demonstrate the fruitfulness of thinking of discourses as an effect of the interaction of different scales, as it has been conceived by Blommaert (see 4.3.).

Finally, the deconstructive aspects in the language ideologies of two members of the Frankfurt Salsa Community of Practice show interesting results with regard to the second research question: How relevant is the notion of *Language* in language discourse in a transnational context? While in the Australian examples the notion of language was not questioned, it is here not only that the concept of a language is related to non-ethnic identity, but furthermore, language use beyond the confines of single language entities is described. The concept of cosmopolitanism, with its emphasis on the development of meta-discourse through cultural contact, has close and interesting interrelations to such descriptions. Languages are here, similar to what has been described in relation to cultures by Appadurai (see Ch. 11 and Appadurai 1996:60), no longer understood as self-referential but exist in interaction with other languages. Nevertheless, the modernist concept of *Language*, although it can be questioned in the theoretical context, although it functions differently in transnational contexts, remains a vital concept in categorising the world. In the final chapter, these insights will be discussed on a more theoretical level.

## 11. LANGUAGE IN A TRANSNATIONAL AGE – INTERACTING SCALES AND THE MULTIPLICITY OF LANGUAGE BOUNDARIES

As has been pointed out at the very beginning of this thesis, the interest in transnational language ideologies is not only of a descriptive nature, but relates to more theoretical questions. Focusing on language ideologies and embedding them into wider discourses on nation, culture and identity is primarily based on an understanding that transnational social structures have brought about changes in local worlds that necessitate new approaches to language and, thus, new approaches to the study of language. Categories that often have been taken as ‘given’ – *Language*, the speech community, the native speaker – can no longer be assumed to be unproblematic entities; they have been co-constructed through discourses that belong to the national era. In order to be able to describe how individuals in transnational contexts conceive of these categories, the present study has taken an ethnographic approach with a prime emphasis on discursive data. The aim of the study thus relates to the idea that

[i]t should be accepted by now that the limitations of a sociolinguistics that focuses exclusively on the details of social interaction should be tempered by the study of structural features that interaction reproduces. It should focus on the link between the characteristics of the linguistic practices and the social and historical conditions of their production, and how they are accepted. This involves how communities constitute objects, how the uses of such objects are contextually determined and how they reflexively interface with other interpretive fields. (Williams 2010:18)

This concluding analysis of the study of language ideology in transnational contexts will therefore focus on the interpretation of empirical results with reference to the questions that have been developed in the theoretical chapters (see 4.3.). These have been already touched upon in the previous chapters and relate empirical data to structural features. The alignment of results from the above chapters and their linking to the key research questions aims at elevating the discussion to a more theoretical and structural level. The first question examines the discourses that are significant for the local configuration of language ideologies, while the second question asks about the ontological status of the entity *Language* and its relations:

- Which discourses are influential in the constitution of language ideologies in Salsa Communities of Practice? To which scales do they relate and which orders of indexicality do they construct?
- What is the role of the notion of *Language* in language discourse in a transnational context?

The first part of this chapter will summarise the discourses that are significant for language ideologies in transnational culture and describe which orders of indexicality are constructed

in the communities and to which scales these discourses are linked. A *scale* has been defined as a spatiotemporal dimension in which particular forms of normativity are developed (see 4.3.). Scales can have different scopes, from very local to global. Different contexts are influenced and constituted by various scales and in these, there are different orders of indexicality, different “metapragmatic organizing principles” (Blommaert 2010:37). Next to the linking of specific local discourses of Salsa CoPs to discourses of a more general relevance – modernity, cosmopolitanism, the role of the nation in globalisation and the notion of mobility – the focus of analysis will be on the interrelations between the different scales, as these relationships indicate that global, national and local orders simultaneously constitute language ideology in contemporary, local environments. This demonstrates that “[b]ig things matter if we want to understand the small things of discourse” (Blommaert 2010:41).

Secondly, in section 11.2., it will be asked whether the concept of *Language* is deconstructed in the transnational contexts that have been observed. As this notion is crucially related to discourses of nationalism, it is here understood as the outcome of a particular historical discourse (see 3.3.). It was assumed that the concept might become less relevant in communities that are not constituted by national belonging but are oriented towards a transnational scale. The sample of Salsa Communities of Practice was chosen on the basis of this hypothesis. Are languages deconstructed in the discourses of communities that are constituted through Salsa dancing? To which notions of community and identity is language related, if it is not the national scale? What types of communities are here created?

The final section of this chapter gives an outlook to what these complexities of contemporary language ideology can mean for the development of language policies and the study of language (*Language?*) in an age of globalisation.

### **11.1. THE INTERACTION OF SCALES – NEW ORDERS OF INDEXICALITY ON THE BASIS OF ZOMBIE CATEGORIES**

Discourses on language in transnational Salsa Communities of Practice are complexly tied to discourses that are interlocked with scales from local, national and transnational levels. A key issue in understanding contemporary language ideology is to map the interaction of these scales and to describe the orders of indexicality that thus come into being. A focus on this interaction makes clear that nations (or ethnic communities) are no longer autonomous frames of reference responsible for the formation of certain ideologies or beliefs. In other words, “[t]he link between language, place and identity is broken, and people must constitute links that work for them” (Heller 2010:5).

In Chapter 7, it has been shown that the L.A. Style Community of Practice considers English to be the only ‘normal’ medium of communication. The usage of English is based in the national context of Australia, where English is the dominant and official language. Yet, although English is the national language of Australia, it also relates to a transnational scale. And, considering the transnational scale, it becomes clear that the symbolic functions of

English in the CoP context are not only linked to spatial or political entities (countries, regions, etc.) but also to non-territorial concepts. English in the L.A. community is tied to transnational competitive discourses, which are part of a capitalist ideology. Thus, English is not only understood as symbolising national or transnational identity, but it is also related to ideologies that consider competitive, capitalist values as positive and universally valid.

Despite the multicultural composition of the L.A. Style community, the order of indexicality of the community constructs other languages than English as primarily related to traditional minority culture. This view on languages other than English as expressing traditional values or even a “narrow mind” (see Ch. 7) is an order that relates to a transnational scale, in which neoliberal capitalist values have a dominant position and worldwide influence. English is here seen as “an accompanist to the inevitable march of globalization” (Pennycook 2003:521), the language for international communication, which is considered primarily as a useful and advanced tool to construct an identity of ‘success’ that is needed to participate in a globalised job market. Transnational hierarchies are reproduced on a local level, a process that is typical for the relationships between different scales:

Center–periphery patterns valid at a worldwide scale also occur for instance within a geopolitical region (think of the expanding EU as a case in point), within one state (the urban versus rural areas) and even within cities, towns or neighborhoods (reflected, often, in real estate prices). (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:202)

In sociolinguistics, the idea that English serves for international communication, while other languages are local languages for local identities (e.g. Crystal 1997, House 2003, Kirkpatrick 2007) is widespread. This usually fails to notice that languages not only symbolise territorial entities but also more abstract values that express, for example, ‘centrality’. In the case of English, this ‘centrality’ is based on connotations of economic success, progress, or technological advancement. The turn towards English and capitalist-competitive culture is evaluated as cultural progress or ‘evolution’. The overly simple and unproblematised dichotomy of ‘English as international’ vs. ‘other languages as local’ or ‘English for communication’ vs. ‘other languages for identification’ underestimates the power of social discourses that, as in the case of the L.A. community, can result in a stigmatisation of other languages than English.

In the context of Sydney, competitive ideology is the more authoritative voice – the more ‘normal’ ideology – in comparison to an ideology that would place social relationships and community values to the foreground. And, as has been discussed, this authoritative voice has effects on language ideology in conceiving English as an index of progress and achievement<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> However, it has to be noted that, from the qualitative research design, it is not possible to conclude that the national context of Australia is overall determined by competitive ideology and an evolutionist framework. Strong ideological differences between different cities in Australia and between rural and urban parts of Australia are subject to manifold debates in an informal environment as well as in the media. The regional scale is thus a further level to consider.

This evolutionist ideology also affects other realms of culture. For example, L.A. Style dancers of Sydney project their evolutionist, competitive way of conceiving of Salsa to Latin American dancers and thus interpret Colombian Style Salsa (and also Cuban Style Salsa) as 'less developed'. The L.A. Style discourse constructs a hierarchy between languages and between styles – the competitive ideology results in 'blind spots' by automatically constructing difference as a difference in value. As Blommaert has outlined in various texts, it is typical that "differences in scales create blind spots or invisible spaces" (Blommaert 2007:15), as the normativities of one scale make it difficult to understand the normative structures of other scales.

The transnational role of English as 'modern' and 'up-to-date' or even involving a "neoliberal vision of the world" (Bourdieu 2001, quoted in Williams 2010:226) is related to an evolutionist ideology that considers other languages than English as somehow belonging to the past and, thus, to lower ranks of a social order. It has been suggested that the relationship between some languages and English "begins to resemble the conventional relationship between minority languages and the state languages within bilingual states" (Williams 2010:60). A comparison to the pre-modern relationship between Latin and 'vulgar' languages (see 3.3.2.) is obvious. An interesting finding in this context is that languages are metaphorically related to imaginations of time, where some languages are regarded as more 'forward' and others as remnants of the past. In the local L.A. Style CoP, constructions of time – migrant cultures are a residue from the past – and of space – these cultures exist in the geographical margins of the city – are constitutive of a social hierarchy. Again, this proves that the social meaning of languages should not be reduced to signifying cultural groups but is complexly interwoven in imaginations of time *and* space and potentially many other cultural concepts (see 11.2.).

The order of indexicality in the L.A. Style community, which considers English as 'normal' and 'universal' and other languages as 'backwards', is enforced through the national scale, where an evolutionist image of English as 'progress' exists, too. The construction is similar to the transnational scale, but explainable through the national history of the country. Thus, the status of English in the L.A. community is characterised by polycentric (4.3.) influences. It is not only one 'centre' towards which indexical behaviour is directed. The normativities from a transnational scale overlap strongly with those of the national scale. The orders of indexicality of the transnational scale and of the national scale influence each other and enforce the status of English in the local Community of Practice. Because capitalist-competitive ideology is seen as a universal value on a transnational scale and because it is linked to English, the national language of Australia is enforced in its status as symbolising integration into Australian mainstream society and socioeconomic opportunity. Thus, particularly for members of the L.A. Style community whose language background is not English, using English represents a kind of double "scale-jump", as English is indexical of progress on the national *and* the transnational level.

The order of indexicality of the L.A. Style community is illustrative of one possible development of modernity in transnational society. Particularly the figure of ‘evolution’ reminds of distinctions between modernity and tradition. Although it is here in a transnational context, such distinctions are foundational for what has been called *First Modern Society* (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003). First Modern Society is defined by the existence of territorial nation-states, individualisation, sexual division of labour, the nuclear family, closed-off social milieus and particular scientific ideologies (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:4-5). The nation-state, with its internal and external divisions, is characteristic of this type of society. According to contemporary sociological theory (Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994, Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003), processes of globalisation, liberalisation and technological development have dissolved the above named features to a certain extent. Current societies are therefore not defined as First Modern Societies but as Second Modern Societies or Reflexive Modern Societies (see also 11.2. and Williams 2010). Interestingly, the figure of ‘modernity’ vs. ‘tradition’, typically distinguishing traditional society from First Modern Society, appears in the discourses of the L.A. Style CoP. While L.A. Style and English are conceived as ‘modern’ (up-to-date, progress-oriented), Latin American communities and their practices, including their language practices, are seen as ‘traditional’. This distinction is characteristic of First Modern Society, where evolutionary images, similarly, play an important role:

The founding dualism of sociology [whose existence depends on the existence of modern nation-states] is the distinction between traditional and modern society. It has been formulated in numerous ways: as mechanical vs organic solidarity (Durkheim); as status vs contract (Maine); as *Gesellschaft* vs *Gemeinschaft* (Toennies); and as military vs industrial society (Spencer). All of these oppositions have in common that they presume an evolution over time. They are *evolutionary* dualisms. (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:9)

The discursive construction of modernity vs. tradition that is found in L.A. Style discourse, which links the language English to ‘modernity’, is, in its structure, related to discourses that construct a ‘first modern’ form of society. The evolutionary dichotomies of L.A. Style vs. other, English vs. other, competition vs. community, despite their ostensible progressive nature, seems to be a remnant of a modernist past and thus contradictory in a transnational context where globalised forms of culture are practised. Yet, transnational discourses bring about or even enforce not only deconstruction but also ‘traditional’ modernist models of culture and society – a point that has been discussed in the debate on *metroethnicity* and that is crucial in the theory of *Reflexive Modernization*, which will be discussed further in the analysis in section 11.2.

What has become clear for the L.A. Style context is that the interrelationships between the local, the national and the transnational scale re-enforce certain tendencies. There is an obvious ‘clash’ of different discourses between the local ethnic Latin American communities

and the L.A. Style community, where one is characterised by interpreting dance as competitive performance while the other conceives of dance as mainly social activity. It is fascinating to observe that both discourses construct different orders of indexicality, where multilingualism is either seen as indexing the culture of not (yet) integrated migrants, of people who have somehow been stuck in the past, or as symbolising ethnic ties to a culture of origin. Both orders also contrast with the language ideology of the Cuban Style Community of Practice.

The Cuban Style community has a strong urge to differentiate from the L.A. Style community and expresses this explicitly by describing L.A. Style as lacking “soul”, being superficial and “stupid” (Ch. 8). The desire to be different from L.A. Style intersects complexly with discourses from national and transnational scales. Local boundary constructions of Cuban Style versus L.A. Style are based on a negative evaluation of transnational commercialist culture, which is criticised as concentrating on pure technical detail, competition and the accumulation of economic wealth. The critique of capitalist ideology is directly linked to the transnational scale, where Cuba and its communist regime form a point of reference. Yet, in the local community, left-wing discourse and Cuban Style Salsa are not only linked through a transnational scale that approves of socialism but a particular national, Australian left-wing liberal discourse is interlocked with left-wing ideology from transnational realms. On the national scale, left-wing positions, rather than associating with ideals of socialism or communism, are indexed particularly by a positive attitude towards multiculturalism. Liberal multiculturalism on a national level is thus related to a transnational critique of capitalist ideology in this local community. The function of contact with ethnic ‘others’ expressing political attitude thus comes into being through the combination of principles from national (multiculturalism) and transnational (left-wing socialism) discourse.

A critical evaluation of competitive-capitalist values and a positive attitude towards cultural diversity has interesting effects on the order of indexicality of the Cuban Style Community of Practice. Speaking only English is seen as indexical of a lack of interest in other cultures and a merely technical, competitive approach to Salsa. Thus, the acquisition of Spanish by Anglo-Australians is a way to index willingness to engage with cultural difference. Engagement with cultural difference has been defined as one form of cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1996a, see also 7.3.) and is based on the contact and interaction with ‘other’ cultures. In this community, being multilingual represents the economic and cultural ability to “disengage” (Hannerz 1996a:104) from the own culture. The transnational scale, in this case, produces multilingualism that is seen as indexical of being educated and well-travelled, as speakers of several languages have made ‘authentic’ experience with a cultural ‘other’ in other parts of the world. Speaking Spanish is here indexical of mobility and represents a “scale-jump” (Blommaert 2010:36) from the national to the transnational level. It is important to note that this particular construction of cosmopolitanism, this particular form



of scale-jump, depends on the existence of static categories of culture – the ‘other’ – with which the cosmopolitan can get into contact.

Regarding the construction of class, it is enlightening that in the data from the Cuban community, contact with an ‘other’ is only evaluated as ‘real’ if it takes place in other countries. Interactions in other languages than English in Australia (although occurring regularly) are not regarded as an experience with ‘other’ cultures and languages and it is not conceived that mobility and multilingual language competence can be achieved within Sydney. Nationalist epistemology is strongly effective here and results in Australia being perceived as a monolingual country, despite an opposing actual experience. The dependence of cosmopolitan identity on travel shows that the engagement with different cultures and languages in different countries indexes class identity. It is above all university students who are adherents to this lifestyle, whose flexibility and economic status makes it affordable. For engagement with cultural difference becoming a symbol for (upper middle) class belonging, it is necessary that cross-cultural interaction and the usage of other languages take place in Havana or Caracas and not in Cabramatta or Fairfield. Travel across geographical distance and speaking several languages thus represent cultural and economic mobility and these are key aspects in producing social mobility on a national *and* transnational scale.

Paradoxically, despite its claims to openness, ethnic essentialism plays a bigger role in the Cuban community than in the L.A. community. Due to the importance given to contact with ‘authentic others’, the boundary construction between ‘real’ Australians and ‘real’ Latin Americans is much more visible and important than the role ascribed to ethnic difference in the L.A. Style community, where ethnic difference becomes reduced to superficial aspects and is only relevant in symbolising a general appeal to consumable difference. The commodified (L.A.) version of cosmopolitanism only appeals to difference in *products*, while *people* adhere to English and competitive values. Thus, this ideology differs from ideologies in the Cuban Style milieu, where, within confines, difference is allowed for languages, people and, to a certain extent, also for mentality. The Cuban Style multilingual, multicultural type of cosmopolitanism has essentialising effects, but at the same time, enables cultural ‘others’ (Latin Americans) in Australia to renegotiate their ethnic identity as cosmopolitan and ‘hip’ instead of working class and stigmatised.

Due to an order of indexicality that relates to a transnational scale, ethnic Latin Americans can renegotiate their linguistic identity as ‘fashionable’ also on the Australian, national scale. The national order of indexicalities, where ‘other’ languages often signify lower class identity, is reinterpreted through the transnational scale, in which elite multilingualism indexes social mobility and status. A second aspect of the national discourse adds to the value of multilingualism in the Cuban Community of Practice. The construction of multilingualism as ‘chic’ has not only to do with the creation of a transnational elite identity – cosmopolitan and well-travelled – but is also tied to the national scale of Australia. The fact that English monolingualism is no hindrance to succeed career-wise in Australia and is usually conceived

as norm (irrespective of actual numbers of bi- and multilingual speakers) means that bilingualism for some fractions of society becomes a marker of distinction, a symbol for “cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1992). The most transgressive aspect of this discursive formation is the fact that what was formerly seen as migrant language and identity can now be interpreted as multilingual “cool” (Ch. 8). The transnational scale here may have positive effects on the national order of indexicalities. Other languages than English gain a place quite high in the local social hierarchy (‘up to date’ and in the centre of the city) instead of being located in low socio-economic strata (in a time ‘in the past’ and far out in the west of Sydney).

Despite these positive tendencies in terms of social inclusion and a positive evaluation of diversity, the order of indexicality of the Cuban Style Community of Practice also confirms the strong dominance and hegemony of English. Although multilingualism is considered a positive and valuable asset in the community, English remains the unmarked ‘normal’ language. The function and value of both languages in the community, Spanish and English, differs to a large extent. The zombie term *Language* for Spanish and for English, on the local level, “obscures the fact that we are facing two different, hierarchically ordered resources” (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck 2005:205). Considering deconstructive theories of language (see 4.2. and e.g. Pennycook 2004) or the notion of “truncated repertoires” (Blommaert 2010; see 4.3.), the roles of both languages in the CoP have to be analysed according to their functions, not only in terms of their mere presence. Although fluency in Spanish is considered an asset in producing an ‘upscaled’ and mobile identity, it is obvious that the two languages do not play the same role. It is not necessary to be fluent in Spanish in order to participate in the community. The general medium of communication remains English. The usage of Spanish is highly symbolic and Spanish is not primarily a functional resource (for similar observations on multilingualism in the media and in advertising, see e.g. Androutsopoulos 2007, Piller 2001a). The order of indexicality in which speaking a different language is appraised differs from monolingual mainstream orders of indexicality. However, a critical evaluation of this form of multilingual language ideology detects parallels to a general trend in global marketing, which sells capitalist ideology in the guise of an “ethnic-food-court”:

Today the buzzword in global marketing isn’t selling America to the world, but bringing a kind of market masala to everyone in the world. In the late nineties, the pitch is less Marlboro Man, more Ricky Martin: a bilingual mix of North and South, some Latin, some R&B, all couched in global party lyrics. This ethnic-food-court approach creates a One World placelessness, a global mall in which corporations are able to sell a single product in numerous countries without triggering the cries of ‘Coca-Colonization’. (Klein 2001:131; quoted in [www.languageonthemove.com](http://www.languageonthemove.com))

The Cuban Style community is thus also influenced by transnational capitalist discourse, where cultural authenticity and multilingualism gain value because of their global middle

class appeal that is based on the commodification of cultural practices, including language. “We might therefore ask whether the distinction between resistance and commodified bilingualism (Heller 2000) is perhaps better viewed as a continuum rather than as rigid dichotomy” (Androutsopoulos 2007:227). The national discourse of Australia that constructs language learning as ‘special’ and as signifying a high degree of cultural education enforces the status of multilingualism as a class symbol and lowers its relevance as symbol of resistance towards standard language hegemonies.

However, although the hegemony of English is not questioned, it can be assumed that the presence of Latin culture and of Spanish in the Cuban Community of Practice relativises the status of English as the only ‘normal’ language and that mainstream Anglo-Australians’ desire to disengage with their culture of origin may increase an understanding of the native culture as territorially contingent and not necessarily superior. The transnational scale that is imported through cosmopolitan elite multilingualism may thus have effects on a national order of indexicality that shows a high degree of monolingual ideology.

With regard to their orders of indexicality, the most crucial difference between the L.A. Style community and the Cuban Style community is the fact that one constructs monolingualism as norm, while the other rejoices in ideals of multilingual competence. These two different ideologies of language mirror different conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism. Being ‘cosmopolitan’ – displaying mobility between national and transnational scales – is of value in both communities. However, the concept of cosmopolitanism is constructed differently in the two CoPs. A thorough analysis reveals that this difference is illustrative of a tension between universalism and particularism that comes into being through processes of globalisation (Williams 2010:195). “There is no doubting that globalisation produces a tension between sameness and differences, between the universal and the particular, between cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation” (Williams 2010:223).

In transnational discourses, some see a “new emphasis on universalism” (Habermas 1996, quoted in Williams 2010:221) and assume that there is a “real danger of a link between economic hegemony, global law and the imposition of ‘universal values’” (Williams 2010:221). The order of indexicality of the L.A. Style community reminds of this, as economic hegemony – competitive ideology – here indeed is constructed as a ‘universal’ value. Cultural difference in this context is constructed similarly to the construction of a ‘brand’ that has a recognition value and is easily consumable. If only indexed through superficial traits, as for example through the phenotype, ethnicity here no longer has the function of belonging to a community but is embedded in the commodification of everyday life through capitalist discourses, in which everything is evaluated in the light of its market value (and where difference can acquire the function of being positively recognisable).

In the Cuban Style Community of Practice, difference – or ‘particularism’ – has a higher value (although the effects of this on everyday discourse and culture must not be overestimated). Transnational mobility that regards cultural diversity as enrichment and not

as a lack of progress is much closer to Hannerz's definition of cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1996a). It regards the world as plural and not as one in which some are 'more evolved' than others. Thus, Cuban Style's concept of cosmopolitanism, despite its 'classist' connotations, allows for a perspective on the world as culturally diverse. This is more aligned with contemporary philosophies on cosmopolitan culture, which question "viewing the world as a systemic totality, arguing for its replacement with a plurality of different orders, each with its own sets of practices which can only be understood from within" (Williams 2010:228).

In contrast to pre-assumptions on language ideologies in transnational contexts, the study has shown that discourses from the national scale remain central in the constitution and formation of local and transnational ideologies. Therefore, two chapters on national language ideologies have been included (Chs 9 and 10). Although the observations have confirmed that "[g]lobalisation has de-nationalised the normative space of society, and the state is losing its monopoly on power" (Williams 2010:219), it has also been shown that without a consideration of national discourses, discourses from other scales can not be comprehended. For example, the research in the Sydney Salsa communities shows that the status of English as the 'normal' language is intensified through the link to transnational 'progress', 'modernity' and economic success. Yet, in the discourses of the interviewees, the significance of English is mainly discussed in relation to the national scale, which implies that the national scale remains crucial. This assumption is affirmed in the chapter on Salsa in Frankfurt, Germany. The differences between this Salsa CoP, and the CoPs in Sydney are partly caused through national discourses. The Australian order of indexicality constructs an 'English vs. other' dichotomy, while the German one constructs a linguistic hierarchy, with some languages at the top (German, English), some in the middle (e.g. Spanish) and some (particularly non-European migrant languages) at the bottom.

Both national orders can only be understood if their embeddedness in a global system is considered. Appadurai comments on similar phenomena that "[c]ulture does imply difference, but the differences are no longer taxonomic, they are interactive and refractive" (Appadurai 1996:60). The nation is no longer a system that is self-determining and only referring to itself but national discourses always involve a reaction to events and activities in other nations. For example, German language policies of exclusion do not exclude everything that is non-German but construct a regime that tries to satisfy national sentiments and, simultaneously, aims to profit from resources from transnational realms (see also 11.3.). Languages therefore appear in a hierarchy that is an effect of national and transnational scales. It is then transnational classes that are co-constructed through orders of indexicality, where some languages are conceived as minority languages or 'unimportant' languages, others as languages of education and some as 'business' languages. Again, it is here important to see that languages connote non-territorial, non-ethnic and abstract entities, next to their function of symbolising cultural groups. Autonomous nationalism does not exist anymore – it is no longer possible to see a single nation as an isolated vessel. Policies and

discourses that may originally have been intended to carry meaning on a national level only, gain new and other meanings in globalised, transnational scales and discourses, which are now a vital part of everyday life. The “myth of a stable monolingual norm” (Stevenson 2006:14), which is particularly vital in German national language discourse, may rather be a sign of the “growing instability” (ibid.) of national ideologies, and can often be dismantled as a class discourse.

Considering the interaction between national and transnational scales, the notion of *mobility*, which has become central in recent debates of sociology and anthropology, comes into focus (Lenz 2010:23ff., Urry 2007). The so-called *mobility turn* considers the social world as non-static and people, artefacts, material and immaterial resources to be constantly in movement. While the mobility turn criticises modernist social sciences as limited to non-mobile, static forms of culture, the mobility perspective attempts to grasp movements between different territorial and non-territorial entities, without rejecting the existence of static entities. John Urry, a central figure in the mobility turn, envisages “the broader project of establishing a movement-driven social science” (Urry 2007:18). While spatial movement of people, symbols and resources is an aspect that first comes to mind in this context, a concentration on the mobility of signs and discourses in the same spatial environment also fits into the paradigm of mobility. The study of the interaction between different scales – the move from a discursive meaning in one scale and its reshuffling to a different, related, or similar meaning in another scale – represents an illustrative case of a sociolinguistics that takes mobility into account. Jan Blommaert, in his *Sociolinguistics of Globalization* (Blommaert 2003, Blommaert 2010), also discusses the notion of mobility as central in developing adequate methodological approaches to language in a global (mobile) world. He describes mobility as a “key feature of sign complexes in globalization” (Blommaert 2003:611) and claims a “sociolinguistics of mobility”, which “focuses not on language-in-place but on language-in-motion, with various spatiotemporal frames interacting with one another” (Blommaert 2010:5). Mobility, in this understanding, is crucial for getting access to the development of meaning in local, contemporary worlds.

Mobility is furthermore intertwined with issues of power. Geographical mobility usually implies social mobility or expresses the desire for social mobility (as in many migration movements). In relation to language and discourse, Blommaert describes more mobile orders of indexicality as more prestigious and conceives that the less contextualised an order is, the more mobile – also in social terms – it becomes. For example,

[a] standard variety of a language allows moving to adjacent places where people speak similar dialects, as well as across social spaces, into elite. International languages such as French or English allow insertion in large transnational spaces and networks as well as access to the elites. (Blommaert 2010:46)

Upward social mobility is, to a certain extent, dependent on the mobility of linguistic and discursive resources that an individual possesses. In the Cuban Salsa community in Sydney and in the Frankfurt Salsa community, the acquisition of Spanish partly relies on the attempt to take part in 'higher' social and geographical scales. Speaking Spanish here represents a "scale jump" (Blommaert 2010:35) and, in Blommaert's framework, 'higher' scales are described as intrinsically less contextualised. Yet, it has to be taken into account that the production of 'higher' scales also interacts with local conditions. Speaking Spanish in the Cuban Style Community of Practice in Sydney refers to a 'higher' (transnational) scale but the particular value of English/Spanish bilingualism is partly derived from the national context of Australia, where relatively low levels of language learning persist. The meaning of global forms as 'less contextualised' thus works only within a particular environment. The production of a relationship to a 'higher' scale through the ability to speak Spanish and English is locally contingent and it is easy to think of other places where this form of bilingualism would not necessarily represent a scale-jump. If, therefore, 'higher' scales are defined as 'less contextualised', it has to be considered that the production of 'higher', 'global' or 'transnational' scales is not the production of universally valid and globally functioning spatiotemporal frames. The construction of 'mobility', likewise, does not work in a global and universal context but depends on the discourses that are locally and nationally available. For example, a monolingual repertoire is very rare, if not non-existent, for German university students. Therefore, the value of bilingual abilities with English is not as high a scale-jump as the ability to converse in German and English for an Australian university student, for whom fluent bilingualism is a marker of distinction. Nevertheless, some competencies, as for example 'native' competence in English, are linked to 'higher' scales in more places than other competencies.

Mobility is a key feature of discourses, meanings and signs and the trajectories these take in different localities – and thus the meanings they carry along – can be very different. The question that remains is how and why some items, structures and languages are more mobile than others. Only linguistic items and discourses that are mobile – that are quoted – gain credibility and power; thus, intertextuality and iteration have to be considered as important element in the reproduction of power structures (see also Pennycook 2010:ch.2). The reiteration and combination of local and national and transnational discourses is a creative act that is constitutive of contemporary worlds. In the discursive realm, reiteration and mobility are mutually dependent. Tiny fragments of such reiterated discourses have been analysed in the previous chapters. The general power of iterability, however, has to be the subject of theoretical discussions elsewhere (see e.g. Butler 2003, Pennycook 2010, Wirth 2002).

Before I go on to discuss the notion of *Language* in section 11.2., in the following concluding paragraphs I summarise the outcomes of the above analysis in order to highlight the relevant points that are crucial on a structural level. Ideologies of language in local

contexts in Frankfurt and Sydney are constructed through a combination of discourses that relate to different spatiotemporal scales. These scales connect to transnational, national, regional and local spaces. This is different from a perspective that conceives national discourses as the main frame of reference. Methodological nationalism (see 3.2.), the pre-assumption that the nation is the first and foremost agent in structuring social relationships, has to be overcome in the social sciences, as there are discourses from several realms that interact and intersect to create local realities.

Interacting discourses from several scales can lead to the re-enforcement of certain tendencies in local contexts. The thorny term *fractal recursivity* can be used to describe such processes. Fractal recursivity is the “the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship, onto some other level” (see 3.2. or Irvine and Gal 2009:403). An example of this is the status of English in Australia that is mutually re-enforced through discourses from national and transnational scales and the same type of opposition is found on both scales. The term *fractal recursivity* originally refers to the construction of language boundaries in national or ethnic contexts and their effects on internal divisions within such groups. Yet, it is similarly applicable in contexts where transnational discourses are co-constructed through linguistic oppositions. Through processes of transnationalisation, there are wider frames of reference that go beyond the national level and these wider frames have similar effects on the national level as the national level has on its own, inner divisions. Another aspect is that the relationships of divisions have become more complex as more orders of indexicality meet in one place through migration, transnational communication, travel, tourism and media.

Through the interaction and intersection of discourses from several scales, it is, however, not only processes of mutual re-enforcement that can be detected. There are also ‘blind spots’ that can develop where different types of ‘truths’ are confronted with each other. ‘Blind spots’ that occur because of the interaction and simultaneous presence of different discourses in one context require particular attention, as structures of dominance and inequality are easily reproduced through such blind spots (for more examples, see Blommaert 2010). Additionally, blind spots that are based on dominant discourses of transnational relevance increase the danger of the creation of universal normativities on a global level, which discriminate against all other forms of culture.

Although it has been demonstrated that methodological nationalism is not an adequate approach in the analysis of transnational language ideology, it has to be emphasised that national discourses remain central. However, national frameworks are not exclusive and absolute but are in interaction with discourses from other scales or, in other words, national differences “are no longer taxonomic, they are interactive and refractive” (Appadurai 1996:60). Transnational influences have diverse effects on national discourses, depending on the specific shapes of the respective “areas of social knowledge” (see Ch. 2). Australia’s competitive ideology of belonging, which comes into effect in its regime of citizenship and visa allocation, is in a relationship to a dominant transnational discourse of neo-liberal

capitalism that regards economic profit as a main goal. In Germany, in contrast, more traditional forms of national citizenship ideology interact with transnational discourses and lead to contradictory constructions of culture and identity with regard to the own and 'other' identities.

A related aspect to the interaction of scales is that the boundaries constructed through symbolic meanings of languages (or bilingualism or multilingualism) not only relate to groups or group identity, which has been focused on in research on language ideologies in the past (see, however, Gal and Irvine 1995 and see Ch. 3). While national, ethnic or local groups are still important categories in this respect, languages can also index other abstract entities. An important finding is that boundaries constructed through language not only relate to images of space but also to images of time, particularly where the opposition of tradition vs. modernity is salient. Figures of progress and evolution, which have their origin in modernist discourse, are here constitutive of the symbolic meanings of certain languages and intersect with the opposition of mobility vs. immobility.

The dominance of English in many communities and contexts, for example, depends on its function of giving upward social and geographical mobility. Social and geographical mobility are interrelated in transnational contexts, as the ability to move among different scales, places and languages represents social mobility towards higher social classes. Class and mobility are here clearly linked. However, this type of mobility is not a universal construction, as local conditions co-determine what counts as 'mobile', as related to 'higher' scales. Ideologies of transnational mobility, nevertheless, can have effects on national scales, if moving across scales becomes a value for national upper and middle classes. Language learning, for example, can gain a higher value because of the aim to increase mobility. In general, mobility is a crucial factor in understanding the value of sign complexes and discourses in transnational culture. Mobility depends on the iterability of signs and, due to historical and political reasons, English can be iterated in more places than other languages. Next to its provision of social and geographical mobility, English is a linguistic resource that is mobile, as it allows for more intertextual references in more contexts and is thus regarded as more 'central' (see also 4.3.). English may be in the process of becoming a global 'majority' language. This reminds of the process that has been described by Bourdieu with reference to the nation-state and the national language (Bourdieu 1980 (2005)), where all other languages become 'dialects' and are subordinated under a national hierarchy. In certain transnational scales (e.g. economy, science but possibly also in discourses of resistance), English may gain the status of 'normal' language of communication, which categorises 'other' languages as secondary resources with limited functions<sup>77</sup>. In fact, it seems that the observed discourses "construct new linguistic hierarchies that distinguish between 'global/cosmopolitan' and 'national/local' languages" (Pujolar 2007:83). The functions of

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<sup>77</sup> Due to limitations of space, the question of which varieties of English are regarded as 'central' and which as 'peripheral' is here ignored.



English then resemble the function of Latin in Europe in pre-modern times. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that English as a global language has not only suppressive functions (as allocating ‘other’ languages to subordinate positions), it also allows for communication among those who are subordinated.

Interestingly, the status of English as global *lingua franca* can also reproduce the division between tradition (other languages) and modernity (English), which is typical for the constitution of *First Modern Society* (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003). In such modernist discourses, English is related to a ‘universalist’ type of cosmopolitanism that constructs an evolutionist image of the world, strongly influenced by neo-liberal capitalism. On the other hand, there is a form of cosmopolitanism that rejoices in cultural and linguistic diversity. For both types of cosmopolitanism, mobility is a crucial aspect but one constructs a modernist either–or logic, while the other accepts diversity. However, the second type, which rejoices in diversity, has its own pitfalls; it is not *all* languages that here have the same status and the notion of “market masala” (see above) characterises the type of commodification that often takes place in these contexts.

An element that remains central in any discussion on language is the category of *Language*. Although it has been described as a remnant of national and modernist discourse, in the following discussion, the relevance of the concept of *Language* and its meaning in reflexively modern times is analysed.

#### **11.2. DECONSTRUCTION IN TRANSNATIONAL DISCOURSE. THE CONCEPT OF LANGUAGE IN REFLEXIVE MODERNITY**

It has been outlined in section 4.2. – Transnational Language Ideologies – that various linguists have questioned the ontological status of the concept of *Language* during the last decades. A language can be described as one of the “zombie categories” whose existence is characteristic of contemporary life worlds (see Ch. 1 and Beck 2001). *Languages* remain an important site for the workings of power that construct social and political boundaries. Thus, a language cannot only be regarded as an autonomous linguistic system but “language instead may be serving as a terrain for the construction of boundaries and relations of power in ways that are legitimate within dominant discursive regimes” (Heller 2007c:345, see also 4.2).

As the role of the nation-state changes due to processes of globalisation, it has been argued that “[c]hanges in the role and nature of the state open up the space for a reconstitutionalisation of the language object” (Williams 2010:18), the analysis of which is the aim of this section. It will be shown that the observations with regard to language are in line with the framework of *Reflexive Modernity*, a central sociological theory on the role of modernism in contemporary society (see below). It is crucial to emphasise that the following discussion is concerned above all with the symbolic functions of languages and not with their actual use. It has been argued that the sociolinguistics of globalisation should be a

“sociolinguistics of mobile resources and not of immobile languages” (Blommaert 2010:180) and that the idea of languages as autonomous structures should be abandoned. Yet, in the present context, the concept language is primarily referred to in its function as cultural construct that plays an important role in the construction of social boundaries.

Although a deconstructive perspective on language does not predominate in the interview passages that have been introduced, in the German data set (see Ch. 10), there are two examples that show traces of the idea that the usage of several languages can open up a space ‘beyond’ languages. This can be interpreted as the construction of a meta-discourse, which allows a perspective ‘in-between’ or ‘behind the scenes’ of languages. The development of meta-discourse has been discussed as characterising the form of cosmopolitanism as discussed by Hannerz (Hannerz 1996a). Overcoming ‘common-sense’ forms of knowledge, which regard the own culture as ‘normal’ or even ‘natural’, is a defining feature of this definition of cosmopolitanism. In the quotes from the German data set – the “tentacles” that open up “a whole new world” and “pimp my language” – the contact with and competence in a non-native language similarly creates a distance to the native language, which implies a certain kind of “personal autonomy *vis-à-vis* the culture” (Hannerz 1996a:104) – and language – of origin. The cosmopolitan language user can “choose to disengage” (Hannerz 1996a:104) from the native language and thus develops a form of linguistic meta-knowledge. This allows relativising the own systems of meaning and to construct a non-naturalised relationship to the language of origin and to the idea that languages are bounded, unquestioned systems that describe the world in an all-embracing way. This ability can also be described as “dialogic imagination”:

The central defining characteristic of a cosmopolitan perspective is the ‘dialogic imagination’. By this I mean the clash of cultures and rationalities within one’s own life, the ‘internalized other’. The dialogic imagination corresponds to the coexistence of rival ways of life in the individual experience, which makes it a matter of fate to compare, reflect, criticize, understand, combine contradictory certainties. (Beck 2002a:18)

This is indeed different from language concepts of the national episteme (see 2.2.); “[t]he national perspective is a monologic imagination, which excludes the otherness of the other” (Beck 2002a:18). National imagination conceives a ‘natural’ relationship between a language and a *Volk*, which sees languages as organs that exist similar to the bloodstream in the body (3.3.2.). If the simultaneous usage of several languages “opens up a whole new world” and customises individual language use, then there must be a form of language competence that is beyond the existence of discrete language systems – a meta-language that takes into account the “coexistence of rival forms of life”.

Nevertheless, it is vital to note that in the empirical data, generally, the concept of *Language* remains a central category. None of the respondents puts into question the idea of languages as such. Languages clearly serve as boundary markers in the constitution of social

groups and communities. In the majority of cases, even multilingual language ideologies as found in Salsa Communities of Practice do not question standardised varieties of language that are seen as ‘belonging’ to one culture and discourses that construct multilingual cosmopolitan identity do not aim at a deconstruction of language. Rather, elite multilingualism is related to ensuring

the privileged position of dominant groups who foster knowledge of powerful ‘foreign’ languages in their standard forms but delegitimize or ignore other languages and other forms of multilingual competence and performance (e.g. code-switching, heterogeneous skills). (Pujolar 2007:78)

In the introduced context, it is three of the most widely spoken, most prestigious languages of the world, where the ‘other’ languages that are involved – native languages of many of the informants, mixed codes, etc. – are usually not mentioned. This “can only change very slightly monolingual standardizing ideologies which were hegemonic in modernity” (Heller 2000:9).

Even the possibility to construct meta-knowledge about language depends on the existence of language categories that are – at least to a certain extent – fixed. The ability to develop a perspective beyond languages is only possible if there are languages. This reminds of the discussion in Chapter 8 on Cuban Salsa in Sydney, where, in a similar fashion, cosmopolitan identity can only be constructed through access to cultures that are regarded as ‘other’ and more or less static. The concept of metrolingualism (4.2. and Otsuji and Pennycook 2009) is related to this idea, as “[m]etrolingualism describes the ways in which people of different and mixed backgrounds use, play with and negotiate identities through language” (Pennycook 2010:85). In this context, it has been argued that the apparent contradiction in metrolingual activity is that concepts of ethnicity and of language are not given up, although traditional boundaries between these cultural categories are partly dissolved through non-native users of languages. In contrast to the assumption that static categories of culture will dissolve through processes of mixing and hybridity, the notion of metrolingualism assumes that “one of the driving forces to be different and multiple and dynamic is the interaction between fixed and fluid cultural identities” (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009:4). There is a dialectal relationship between fixed and fluid forms, as the construction of fluid forms depends on the existence of fixed forms. In the examples from the data set of the present study, similarly, fluid forms – in-between and meta-levels of language – depend on fixed forms (*Languages*). Thus, it seems unlikely that, at least in the observed contexts, the concept of language as an entity or as a fixed system will be given up. Rather, users of language may develop an understanding of the constructed nature of culture and of language and the fact that the relationship between groups and languages is not natural, without this understanding leading to a deconstruction of these categories.

This observation links to the framework of *reflexive modernisation* (Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994, see also Williams 2010:204-205), which conceives that modernity has changed on the basis of modern principles and is reflexive in the sense that it problematises its own foundations. Reflexively modern discourse in Western societies is characterised by a problematisation and recognition of categories as socially constructed, and not ‘natural’ or ‘given’, without assuming that categories dissolve or are meaningless. Modernist concepts, among which the nation-state and its accompanying idea of *Language* are central, take boundaries of categories to be unambiguous and institutionally guaranteed (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:22), whereas reflexive modernity (also described as *second modernity*) is characterised by questioning modern categories and boundaries. These are then “fictive boundaries that are understood as such but which are handled as if they were true under the circumstances at hand” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:20). A fundamental advantage of this perspective is that modern categories – the nation-state, the subject, rationality, *Language* – are not treated as given but are seen as relevant, albeit constructed and to a certain extent fictional:

So, whereas for many theorists of postmodernism the issue is one of the *de*-structuration of society and the *de*-conceptualization of social science, for re-modernization [reflexive modernization] it is a matter of *re*-structuration and *re*-conceptualization. The goal is to decipher the new rules of the social game as they are coming into existence. The old certainties, distinctions and dichotomies are fading away, but through close investigation of that process we can discover what is taking their place. (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:3)

Similar to the notion of metrolingualism, scholars who adhere to the theory of reflexive modernisation conceive that both fixed and fluid forms of culture exist side by side, or, in the terminology of reflexive modernisation, “instead of an either-or between first and second modernity we face in sociological analysis the challenge of a specific this-as-well-as-that-realities: aspects of first and second modernity are interlocked” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:28). This has also been illustrated above (11.1.), as the different scales to which discourses and orders can be attributed likewise show elements of first and second modernity and the interlocking of both is a crucial aspect. In a broader frame, this leads to the conclusion that “[m]odernity has not vanished but it is becoming increasingly problematic” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:2)<sup>78</sup>. Accordingly, the modernist category *Language* remains an analytically relevant concept but loses its status of unproblematised given (which should be taken into account by linguists, see below and also end of section 11.3.).

Next to forms of language deconstruction that appear on the conscious level of discourse, as in interview passages, certain types of language use can be described as active, yet unconscious forms of the deconstruction of languages. It has been discussed in section 3.1.

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<sup>78</sup> It has to be noted that the theory of reflexive modernity has Eurocentric tendencies, as it “takes for granted that the institutions that second modernity dissolves [e.g. the nation-state, the welfare state, or gainful employment societies] are there in the first place.” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:7).

that language ideologies can appear in conscious realms but also on the level of practice. One type of language use that can be considered 'deconstructive' is language crossing (see 4.2. and Rampton 1995a). The usage of an 'out group' language is common for native speakers of English and German in two of the observed communities. Language crossing can be interpreted as an active form of the deconstruction of language, as the category of the native speaker, which is constitutive of entities of language, is put into question. The native speaker is typically regarded as the 'genuine' user of a language (see also the discussion on the native speaker in Rampton 1995a:336ff.) and her competence is crucial in the interpretation of linguistic data in other disciplines of linguistics (think of the notion of *grammaticality*). The usage of and identification with Spanish by non-native speakers in a non-ethnic community context questions this category in a practical way.

It has already been mentioned (4.2.) that the type of crossing found in Salsa CoPs is different from the crossing that has been observed in Rampton's seminal 1995 study. Solidarity among socially marginalised populations is not an issue in the data; rather, the production of socially upwards oriented, elite identities. As in Rampton's interpretation of language crossing, language crossing in Salsa contexts shows forms of liminality but these are here linked to the creation of connections to 'authentic' culture; in the German sample, it is also a form of emotional liminality that comes into play through the creation of 'other' – happier, livelier, more emotional, more 'Latin' – identities. The production of authentic links to an 'other' culture is, in contrast to Rampton's examples, not anti-hegemonic, as language crossers do not express a subversive identity through their alignment with otherness but rather express a status of educational and social superiority. As in Rampton's data, however, social knowledge on the "wider social meaning" (Rampton 1995a:283) of languages is expressed through language crossing in Salsa CoPs. This wider social meaning is not only the knowledge of a language of an ethnic other, but also the knowledge of its ties to other discourses, such as class, capitalism, left-wing discourse, being 'up-to-date' or no longer being the "frosty middle European".

There is another aspect in which language crossing in Salsa Communities of Practice is different from the classroom contexts that Rampton has observed. As the presence of native speakers of Spanish is a constitutive element of two of the observed CoPs, it is here problematic to consider the language Spanish to be an 'out-group' language. What kind of group is a Salsa community and where does it differ from an ethnic group? And to which types of groups are languages related in transnational contexts? The multi-ethnic nature of Salsa CoPs expresses another form of deconstruction of the traditional language–nation–identity nexus. In questioning the nationalist concept of language, the concept of 'group' has to be questioned, too. It seems, on the one hand, very obvious that languages are not only tied to ethnic or national social formations; on the other hand, it is increasingly difficult to define the notion of *group* or *community* in transnational contexts.

Concerning the question to which groups languages are tied, it has been shown for all three observed Salsa communities that languages can index group membership to groups that are not ethnic groups. It has been introduced in section 4.2. that different understandings of the notion *community* are relevant in analysing language ideologies (see also Rampton 2000b). “Imagined communities” (Anderson 1985), as for example the global community of Salsa dancers, function as semiotic signs and can become “objects of desire, fashion accoutrements and/or marketised life-style options, with ‘authenticity’ becoming as much an issue of commodity branding as a matter of ethnic roots” (Rampton 2000b:10). Local face-to-face communities are related to and influenced by these imagined communities but have different forms of boundary constructions. Traditional national “imagined communities” are also a problematic analytical category as they no longer can be assumed to be autonomous but form a “switchboard” (Blommaert 2005b:396) between transnational imagined and local face-to-face communities.

It is theoretically important to clarify that the bond between a language and a group is destabilised through the identifications with non-native languages and through the meaning of languages as expressing abstract entities or notions of time. “The old certainties, distinctions and dichotomies are fading away, but through close investigation of that process we can discover what is taking their place” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:3). Although the notion of language is not dissolving and although imagined national communities are still highly relevant, practices of crossing and new symbolic meanings of languages may have an effect on language groups:

Given how identity is no longer tied to tradition and the associated institutions of industrial society means that language groups will no longer necessarily consist of individuals who have learnt the language through family or community membership. It involves opening the language group to anyone with sufficient interest to want to learn whichever language provides access to the language group. The motivation to do so may derive from a number of sources, the desire for employment and social mobility being among them. Decisions about such alignments are made autonomously and individually. It obliges the language group to display an openness towards the ‘other’, and to accommodate them in the relevant institutions and networks. (Williams 2010:211)

Thus, the nature of “language groups” changes through processes that transcend the logics of the category of the native speaker, a defining element of speech communities in the traditional sense. What types of communities are then constructed through competence in a language? It is not only to be asked whether language groups are now local, national or transnational, it is also important to question the notion of *speech community* as such if social structures and interaction in a particular language do not necessarily end in the formation of something that speakers perceive as membership to a bounded group. Questioning the concept *speech community* is not new. Linguistic anthropologists and

scholars of the ethnography of communication have maintained early that “[t]he assumption that speech communities, defined as functionally integrated social systems with shared norms of evaluation, can actually be isolated [has to be] subject to serious question” (Gumperz 1982:26). In problematising speech communities, Dell Hymes assumed that shared interactional norms develop on the basis of “enduring social relationships” (Hymes 1968:23) – yet, what does this mean if social relationships are not “enduring” but if social networks are fragmented and relationships become more and more individualised?

Salsa Communities of Practice form a case in point, as these communities are relatively fluid and someone who is an active member this year may be a Tango *aficionado* next year. Salsa CoPs are different from ethnic groups but they nevertheless form social relationships. Social relationships in contemporary Communities of Practice in leisure and work contexts are different from traditional relationships of family and community, as they are more fragmented and produce more multiple identities. Even more fragmented are social relationships that develop in virtual social networks such as *Facebook*, where each member has their own network and individual networks overlap only partly. The Milroy’s concept of “dense” and “multiplex” networks (Milroy 1987) is here difficult to employ. Individual networks are very complex and depend on individual and diverse factors (interest, time, identity, access to technology, etc.) so that it would not make much sense to map and compare them in order to study their effects on language. The formation of ‘groups’ in virtual social networks (e.g. groups based on a common interest) is also very varied – some rely on face-to-face contact, most do not – and traditional concepts of (speech) community or of social groups are not applicable in this environment. Obviously, interaction that depends on mass media constitutes a separate subject of study but presumably has effects on other types of communication. This shows that, if contemporary forms of social interaction are taken into account, notions that express ‘boundedness’ (such as community) become problematic. “There is a view that the relationships between discourse and community are being dramatically reconfigured in this new age” (Rampton 2000b:14). Different conditions of working and living and different channels of communication lead to different social relationships. What is the relationship between linguistic features and social units, if social units are more temporary, more multiple and spread over larger stretches of space?

As has been pointed out in section 4.2., linguistics very often relies on the existence of communities and Mary Louise Pratt has given an accurate critique of the “linguistics of community”: “the linguist’s choice [was] often to imagine separate speech communities with their own boundaries, sovereignty, fraternity and authenticity” (Pratt 1987:56). The traditional “linguist’s choice” can thus, in the terminology of theorists of reflexive modernisation, be described as modernist, or belonging to *first modernity*, as the category of speech community here has been taken as given and as the basis for subsequent study.

According to the theory of reflexive modernisation (see 11.1.), modern categories do not necessarily dissolve but are increasingly problematised and become multiplied. Modernist

concepts of ‘groups’ or speech communities thus remain vital; it is, however, important to understand the processes that lead to their re-conceptualisation. Interestingly, one source of re-conceptualisation lies in modernity itself. Reflexive modernisation is characterised by a radicalisation of modernity, where structures of modern societies are put into question through modern principles themselves (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:8). The dissolving of modern structures, including communities, is an effect of modernity, and not caused by new (postmodern or other) conditions. For example, ‘first’ modern society has kept some countermodern social structures, such as the nuclear family, non-market roles of women, class structure and the nation-state (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:15-16). However, at the same time, a central and acknowledged value of modernisation is the emancipation of the individual, which opposes the above named countermodern structures. Thus, non-modern but constitutive aspects of modernity – for example, fixed groups or the nuclear family – have become destabilised through intensified individualisation, through intensified modernisation. One effect of increased individualisation is the emergence of what Beck calls “new secondary forms of community” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:15). These show a different structure than modern forms of community. Salsa Communities of Practice are an example of these new communities. Their endurance, nature and effect is still unknown:

Reflexive modernity can be seen as a vast field of social experiment where, under the pressure of globalization, various types of post-traditional social bonds and post-national imagined communities are being tried out in competition with each other. [...] Whether this process will produce reflexive solutions, that is, community structures that can stabilize themselves without depending on an appeal to naturalness for their legitimacy, is still an empirically open question. (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:16)

With reference to the question of membership in post-national communities, it can be assumed that other features next to descent are here crucial. Due to the current dominance of capitalist ideology, relevant factors in getting access to them are likely to be shaped by the logics of capitalism – an aspect that reminds of the Communities of Practice based on Salsa:

‘[L]ife-style’ communities [...] may be more open and inclusive but [...] can also be construed as ‘neo-tribes without socialisation’ where centres of authority, inner organisation, platforms or statutes are hard to find (Bauman 1992b:25), and where entry is a matter of the consumer’s desire, personal taste, shopping skills and purchasing power. (Rampton 2000b:16)

As other aspects than national and ethnic descent become relevant in defining membership to a group, practices of inclusion and exclusion function here along different lines. In the L.A. Style Community of Practice, for example, exclusion is mainly based on performance and lifestyle and thus ‘real’ Latin Americans from the ethnic communities who practice more traditional forms of the dance are excluded. This exclusion is not based on ethnicity but on discourses of competition and achievement. In these forms of exclusion, there is the danger



of the development of neo-fascist ideologies, where the inability or also unwillingness to compete is a basis for discrimination. In contrast to traditional forms of exclusion (which are of course also discriminatory), rights to access are here not maintained through birth but are tied to economic resources and practices of consumption. Interestingly, as in the Australian case (see Ch. 10), contemporary regimes of citizenship have taken up these forms of exclusion and have developed a

neo-liberal conception of citizenship that exalts individualism and the spirit of enterprise that enables the citizen to construct her own human capital. It stimulates an assimilationist discourse that distinguishes those who display the dynamism and autodiscipline of the successful native from those who do not display these values, but who resemble the underclass. (Williams 2010:225)

As has already be demonstrated above, languages similarly can get linked to neo-liberal discourses, resources and practices. Language and community are then still tied to each other but in a different and more multiplex fashion, and communities, including those that have developed in modernity, are still an important analytical category (see also Rampton 2000b: 16-17).

English is a particularly illustrative case of the fact that languages and ethnic cultures have lost their once taken for granted 'natural' connection. The effects of this have been discussed in different ways. While the argument that the spread of English 'threatens' other languages is common (see e.g. Heller and Duchêne 2007b, Phillipson 1992, Skutnabb-Kangas 2000), others also conceive positive aspects of the "dissociation of language and nation [...] as counter-normative uses of non-native English construct imagined alliances with global cultural movements and may well be used to challenge the hegemony of English-speaking countries" (Androutsopoulos 2007:225; for a related argument, see Pennycook 2010:ch.5).

In the examples of this thesis, however, it is problematic to propose a challenge to the hegemony of English-speaking countries. Although English here is indeed linked to "global cultural movements", such as capitalism, commerce, success and to images of cultural evolution, these "movements" are still seen as related to English-speaking countries (as e.g. to the US in the L.A. CoP). And although in the Cuban Salsa community and in Frankfurt, the language English serves as a contrastive point of reference for alternative approaches and ideologies, this does not diminish the relevance of English. In both communities, there is clear dichotomy of English/German vs. Spanish and even though English is a non-native language in Germany, the associations with the two languages are similar in the two national contexts; the English vs. Spanish dichotomy is in both cases embedded in a set of binary relationships: emotion vs. function, emotion vs. reason, warm vs. cold, body vs. mind, etc. (Rampton 2011 also discusses such binary relationships). Nevertheless, in all communities, even in the German one, English is a 'must'. This has to do with the role of English in the labour market:

[T]he international labour market increasingly focuses on English. This generates a labour market segmentation wherein those who have bilingual competence in English and the [respective] state language have access to more prestigious and more lucrative employment opportunities [...]. (Williams 2010:213)

As native and non-native speakers are distinguished (see part. Ch. 8), and as ‘native’ uses of the language are still seen as ‘correct’ (see Ch. 9), English remains connected to ideologies of ‘native’ competence. Thus, speakers from countries where English is spoken are still considered the legitimate users of the language so that the hegemony of these countries – at least not in my data-set – is not challenged. However, it was also shown that English has integrative functions and allows individuals to participate on national levels (as e.g. in Australia) and in transnational contexts.

Whatever their ideological orientation (hegemonic or subversive), it is in any case important to note that languages remain very important means to construct cultural boundaries. In contrast to traditional frameworks, which focus mainly on ethnic boundary divisions, there is now a multiplicity of boundaries. A language can serve to mark an ethnic boundary but this boundary can intersect with other types of boundaries; for example, ‘modernity’ or ‘tradition’, ‘mainstream’ or ‘subversive’, ‘majority’ or ‘minority’, competitive ideology or an ideology of community, and also others. It is not that dominant languages that relate to discourses of, for example, capitalism or vocational success, do not have an effect on languages that link to ethnic identities (as is sometimes proposed for English, see e.g. House 2003). It has to be assumed that languages that enter a certain language ecology (Creese, Martin and Hornberger 2010) will have an impact on the sociolinguistic composition of a particular context, but not in a simple ‘either–or’ fashion.

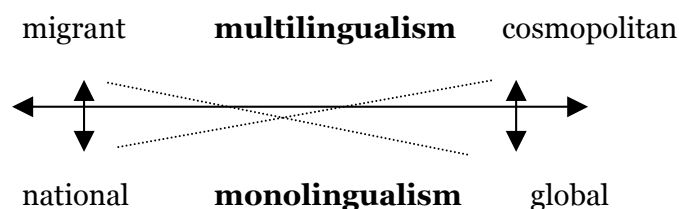
The multiplication of functions of linguistic boundaries again relates to the theory of reflexive modernisation. Due to the “coexistence of rival forms of life” (Beck 2002a:18), “[a]n operational definition of reflexive modernization is that the boundaries between social spheres are multiplied” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:19). In other words, reflexive modernisation leads to a “multiplication of the plausible ways in which boundaries can be drawn” (ibid.). With regard to the concept of *Language*, this means that the concept is not overthrown but there are different types of discourses to which the category can be ‘attached’. A language can be indexical of different concepts and these different relationships exist side-by-side and can also intersect. Some typical relations of languages to discourses are:

- language as expressing culture, ethnicity or nationality
- language as indexing political, social or economic discourses (e.g. English – economic success, Spanish – community values)
- languages as expressing class status (e.g. as in second language learning to construct cosmopolitan identity)

- language as a right (typical argument in minority language policy or in education)
- language as creating social cohesion (often found in discourses on the integration of migrants)
- languages as a product of nature that needs to be protected (in discourses on language endangerment)

On a local level, each of these possible functions of language can serve to mark relationships between different languages and also mark boundaries between social groups that are related to these categories. The picture becomes very complex. Not only do languages represent different social functions and are tied to different types of discourses, they are furthermore connected to different types of groups in different local contexts. As languages are mobile resources and have spread globally, the diversification intensifies. The language Spanish, for example, has a very different symbolic meaning in the US, where it is closely aligned with the Hispanic minority, than, for example, in German Salsa communities, where it represents access to cosmopolitan ‘otherness’. The diversification of boundaries thus takes place on two levels. On the one hand, the category *Language* expresses different social functions and relates to different types of discourses (not only ethnic identity); on the other hand, each of these social functions of language can be related to different social formations, depending on the local context. Thus, “it cannot be taken for granted that involvement in various language or culturally related institutions constitutes the diacritica of ethnicity” (Williams 2010:214).

Additionally, it is not only single languages that can construct multiple boundaries but also notions such as *monolingualism* and *multilingualism*. Multilingualism means different things in different contexts and with different languages. Knowing Spanish and English is elite multilingualism in Salsa Communities of Practice in Frankfurt and means access to economic and cultural capital. Spanish and English language abilities in Sydney can either mean belonging to traditional ethnic communities (heritage multilingualism, language as right) or it can mean elite multilingualism, as in the case of Cuban Salsa (language to express class status). In the observed contexts the discursive space of the meanings of multilingualism and monolingualism may be depicted like this:



Ideologies that support migrant multilingualism and those that support national monolingualism are clearly opposed and are in conflict with each other. Tendencies of global monolingualism (as e.g. in the L.A. Style community) and ideals of cosmopolitan multilingualism (as e.g. in the Cuban Style community) are also two ends of a related scale,

where one stands for a globalisation based on universalist values, the other recognises a (limited) diversity of languages and cultures (see also 11.1.). The other relationships on this figure are more intricate. National and global monolingualism belong to the same logic in the context where English is spoken and universalist transnational values (e.g. competitive values) are promoted. The L.A. Style community is an illustrative case. In Germany, however, this relationship is more complicated. While national monolingual discourse that is directed against migrant multilingualism is rather strong, there is a high degree of acceptance of English as a global business and academic language, and English monolingual ideology on the global scale is not seen as problematic. Simultaneously, certain types of multilingualism index cosmopolitan elite values. The paradox of the simultaneous presence of national monolingual ideology *and* global monolingual ideology *and* ideologies of cosmopolitan multilingualism can be explained with reference to the multiple boundaries that are constructed through language. This multiplicity has effects on the role of boundaries themselves:

The existence of multiple boundaries changes not only the collectivity defined by them but the nature of boundaries themselves. They become not boundaries so much as a variety of attempts to draw boundaries. In a similar manner, border conflicts are transformed into conflicts over the drawing of borders. (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:19)

Given the circumstances, not excluding apparent paradoxes but to accept that several logics exist at the same time is required. The discursive space in which languages find themselves has become multiple and this necessitates what Beck calls “methodological cosmopolitanism”, a methodology that “rejects the either–or principle and assembles the this-as-well-as-that principle” (Beck 2002a:19). The question of how “linguistic units come to be linked with social units” (see Ch. 3 and Gal and Irvine 1995:970) in transnational cultures can thus be answered tentatively by saying that the links between social units and linguistic units have diversified.

Summarising the above analysis, it has first of all been demonstrated that the idea of *Language* remains a vital concept. Standardised varieties of language are still highly salient in constructing social boundaries. National standard languages play an important role in creating elite identity, also in transnational realms; however, contemporary elite identity is characterised by different types of mobility (social, geographical, linguistic, etc.) that express ties to transnational scales. Through the links to transnational realms, the ties of languages to discourses that do not constitute groups (as explicated above, e.g. ‘progress’) become more visible. It is thus possible to speak about *Languages* without giving them a ‘natural’ status (see Ch. 1).

Secondly, the notion of *speech community* or of *language group* has to be questioned. An effect of transnationalism is that language groups have de-essentialised, as membership to

language groups is no longer understood as a quasi-natural process. Access to cultural groups is no longer dependent on heritage but various options have become possible. A capitalist ideology of performance and success here often interacts with other features in constructing belonging. Although the link between a language and a group is no longer an exclusive source in the definition of symbolic meanings of languages, such links do not cease to exist. They are, however, more diversified and more complex and less easy to define. Studies on the link between languages and communities will still be of vital interest in future research on the sociolinguistics of globalisation.

Phenomena of language crossing show that language groups have de-essentialised to a certain extent. Yet, such phenomena are often based on the existence of rather static notions of languages and the social knowledge (including the stereotypes) that comes along with them. Static notions of culture are in an intriguing relationship to cosmopolitan discourses, which appeal to mobility. These are dependent on the existence of non-mobile cultures, discourses and language. The category of language is not deconstructed but the framework in which it operates has changed. Aspects of first and second modernity are here interlocked, as modernist categories – in this case, languages – still form a basis for understanding social processes but these same categories are problematised through processes of de-essentialisation – which have their source in modernity itself.

As languages remain relevant categories, *iconisation*, the process by which a language becomes an index for a group (see 3.2. and Irvine and Gal 2000), is still an important factor in understanding the fields of social knowledge that accompany them. Yet, the crucial observation in this context is that languages do not only index groups or group belonging. Examples for this are that languages can be constructed as right, they can be understood as indexing social mobility, constructing transnational class, but at the same time, they remain indexes of cultures. Languages in contemporary language ideologies construct a multiplicity of boundaries simultaneously. Concepts of language (and also of bilingualism, multilingualism or monolingualism) remain “definition[s] of human beings in the world” (Williams 1977:21, see Ch. 3) but now are multiplied and index different social formations and different discourses. The multiplication of language boundaries can furthermore be understood as a change in the epistemological grounding of the concept of *Language*. A consequence for linguists is that languages cannot be taken as quasi-natural, static objects of study. Linguists in reflexive modernity have to problematise their own foundations. Although languages remain analytically relevant, linguists, including those concerned with structural aspects, have to be aware that *Languages* are culturally constructed categories that have multiple social functions in a multiple social space. Languages and accompanying notions, such as *grammaticality* or the *native speaker*, are thus subject to change and are culturally contingent (which does not affect the idea that human beings are genetically conditioned to use verbal semiotic systems).

Finally, these observations will be related to issues of language policy, which has been one of the original inspirations for this thesis. What are the effects of the multiplication of language boundaries on contemporary regimes of language policy? And what can the insights gained from the above analysis mean for the development of contemporary language policy in language education?

### **11.3. LANGUAGE POLICY IN REFLEXIVE MODERNITY AND THE VISION OF COSMOPOLITAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

Although the ‘zombie’ notion of *Language* remains a crucial category in reflexive modernity, its diversified connections lead to a high complexity of language relations and add to the *super-diversity* (Blommaert 2010:8) of contemporary life worlds. This diversity

can be met in at least two ways. Either an attempt can be made to restore the authority of the old boundaries, or the interaction with uncertainty and insecurity can be incorporated into an institutional learning process. (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:20)

Apparently, current national public debates on language issues decide for the first option. They seem to focus on the traditional *nation–Language* dimension and give the impression of ignoring other functions of languages. In many public debates on language in nation-states today, for example, language testing and the linguistic integration of migrants into the (presumably) monolingual population of the host country (see e.g. Slade and Möllering 2010) are at the centre of attention. Such discussions seem to instrumentalise language in order to “restore the authority of the old boundaries” (see also Möllering 2009). However, looking more closely at the governmental policies and public discourses, it can be shown that the multiplicity of language boundaries is already taken into account. Different orders of indexicality are applied for different people. While, for example, certain cohorts of migrants are requested to ‘integrate’ and to subordinate under ‘national’ values and the national language, other sections of the non-native population are rather constructed as belonging to global markets and therefore face different rules. This is particularly obvious in Germany, where the demand to learn German is posed primarily to migrants from national backgrounds that are associated with relative poverty. Ethnicity and class here intersect due to the embeddedness of the nation in a global system. Migrants from English-speaking countries, or also from Japan, are excluded from some of the rigid policies that demand, for example, that those who want to marry someone who is of non-German origin but lives in Germany have to have learned German before they enter the country (see Die ZEIT 2009). The national ideology of a monolingual country is valid only for those who are seen as being on the bottom of a transnational hierarchy, while those who are ranked on top of this hierarchy are not considered accordingly. Another example are the exceptions made for migrants who are of national interest — for example, professional athletes (Die Beauftragte

der Bundesregierung für Ausländerfragen 2000:38). At the same time, it has been observed that in many pre-school German language classes, originally initiated for children of migrants (for example in the German *Land* Hesse), a relatively high percentage of native German children is found as teachers consider their language skills to be inadequate (see e.g. Bildungsserver Hessen 2007). The boundary that is constructed here has been intended to function along ethnic lines and (presumably) now functions along class divisions. An Australian example for an implicit consideration of the multiplication of social boundaries through languages is found in the Australian visa system. Here, different levels of English are required from migrants, depending on the destination where they want to live. In some remote regional areas (which have a more urgent need for immigration on economic grounds), it is only “functional English” that is required, instead of “vocational English” (see Ch. 9). Again, the national logic here intersects with a capitalist logic.

The relationship between a language and a nation has changed. While the old framework proposes is oriented along cultural lines, the new one functions according to the logic of a global market system. Both models live side by side – the “this-as-well-as-that” logic, instead of an “either-or” (see above). While this does not mean the restoring of “old boundaries”, it is questionable whether there is an “interaction with uncertainty and insecurity [that is] incorporated into an institutional learning process” (see above). Languages and nations remain but they have a different role and are embedded in a global system that is strongly influenced by a capitalist market logic, which seems to enforce rather than to diminish existing inequalities. Further studies on nationalist/capitalist regimes of language in contemporary societies are required to understand their effects.

The realisation that the world has become more complex and that boundaries have diversified cannot lead to a fatalistic postmodernism in the sense of ‘anything goes’. Although it will not be possible to find universal solutions to language problems, decisions have to be made and

where decisions must be made, where legitimacy is demanded and where responsibility must be assigned, procedures must be worked out and criteria must be agreed upon at least to the degree that better solutions can be distinguished from worse. (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:17)

In the context of language policy, solutions that widen gaps, intensify inequalities and ostensibly restore “old boundaries” do not belong to the “better solutions”. Language testing in most cases has to be understood as a regime that aims at excluding those who are economically marginal, although it presents itself as the reinforcement of national boundaries. Restoring “old boundaries” in the context of minority language protection also has its pitfalls, as it often relies on epistemological frameworks that are responsible for the actual suppression of the languages it intends to protect (see Ch. 1 and below and e.g. Moore, Pietikainen and Blommaert 2010, Schneider 2010). Next to language testing and the

protection of minority languages, language policies play an important role in the realm of public education. What do the outcomes of the study of transnational language ideologies imply for language education in public schools? Language education is constitutive of wider language ideologies – think of the example given in Chapter 1, where children of *guest workers* in Germany were subject to ‘othering’ through native language tuition. And through compulsory schooling, all citizens are confronted with a state’s language ideology. The state here remains a crucial agent, as it is responsible for the development of school curricula. Language ideologies in public education can have an effect on language discourse in other contexts and public education is therefore an important field for adapting policies to changed circumstances. It is here the place to introduce some preliminary thoughts on how to develop a ‘cosmopolitan’ education of language, which, at least to a certain extent, incorporates the “interaction with uncertainty and insecurity”.

Traditionally, language education in the public school system is based on nationalist concepts of language. While the national language is seen as one of the major subjects of schooling, the focus is usually not on teaching the language explicitly; the subject rather concentrates on literature, deriving from the national context (Florack 2003). Typically, non-national languages are taught as ‘foreign’, as belonging to other countries (for further discussion of these problematic divisions, see Schneider 2005). In a critique of the underlying national epistemology that informs language education, scholars concerned with the deconstruction of language have posed the question “what language education might look like if we no longer posited the existence of separate languages” (Pennycook 2010:132). However, after the above discussions, although it has become clear that a *Language* is a cultural construct, it nevertheless can be suggested that the concept remains central.

One problematic aspect of traditional language education is that it implies the idea that each language belongs to one cultural ‘container’ and that the world consists of such containers, which co-exist side-by-side. This relationship is usually taken as ‘given’ and not problematised. The construction of one language as ‘normal’ and other languages as ‘foreign’ does not give access to understanding the contingency of languages and furthermore hides the multiple functions of language boundaries. Native language tuition of migrant children is, again, another example of the (implicit or explicit) attempt to “restore the authority of old boundaries”. Approaches to language education that operate with the *one nation–one Language* framework thus reify one-dimensional modernist concepts.

An awareness of the constructedness of linguistic boundaries and of the fact that speakers and cultures do not overlap in a one-dimensional way corresponds with the everyday experience of urban citizens and gives access to a meta-level in contemplating about language and culture. Access to such a ‘meta-level’ is important for several reasons. First of all, it has been demonstrated above that languages can mark several boundaries and an awareness of this multiplicity gives access to a realistic estimation of these boundaries. Secondly, understanding a particular language and culture as relative, as one possibility among many,



being able to reflect on traditional cultural conventions, is crucial in being able to communicate in a globalised world where people from different cultures converge.

Globalisation leads to a 'cosmopolitan world' within which actors from quite different 'traditions' are in contact. This obliges drawing upon rationality in justifying traditional praxis within a 'detraditionalising society'. As tradition retreats, so life involves a more open and reflective quality. (Giddens 2002:36-50, quoted in Williams 2010:202)

Being aware of the diversity of cultural, semiotic systems relates to Ulf Hannerz's discussion of *cosmopolitanism* (see 4.1.). A 'distanced' ('reflective') relationship not only to other cultures but also to the culture of origin is here central. A cosmopolitan access to the own culture does not conceive already known rituals, language conventions and everyday behaviour as "absolutely natural, obvious, and necessary" (Hannerz 1996a:110). And in interacting with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, it is obviously of advantage not to assume that other cultures are 'abnormal', strange or even 'less developed'.

Access to meta-levels of culture and language is not only important for those who travel abroad, as transnational scales today pervade local culture. Normativities from several scales meet in one place. It is typical that "differences in scales create blind spots or invisible spaces" (Blommaert 2007:15). Blind spots are problematic as they often lead to a misevaluation of the behaviour of the diverse population of contemporary cities.

Under conditions of globalization, the increase of sociolinguistic complexity in urban environments due to migration and diaspora can only lead to an increase of such blind spots. The presupposability of linguistic resources, competences, and actual skills is considerably reduced, and more and more people find themselves in spaces where their linguistic baggage has very unclear value. (Blommaert 2007:16)

The normativities of one scale can disable an understanding of the orders of indexicality of other scales and it is thus important to develop a general awareness that there is a simultaneous existence of several scales with different orders. Ideologies of universal normativity do not lead to an adequate description of contemporary life and can increase structures of inequality.

Yet, daily interaction with 'other' cultures does not necessarily lead to a meta-perspective on the own culture. Especially in neo-colonial contexts, where historical inequalities persist, "western Europeans and North Americans can encapsulate themselves culturally, and basically remain metropolitan locals instead of becoming cosmopolitans" (Hannerz 1996a:107). Due to historical and economic reasons, in many contexts, European and North American cultures enjoy a higher status and have a higher prestige than 'other' cultures. There is a particular danger for members of these cultures to produce a form of cultural chauvinism (prejudiced loyalty), as the idea of cultural 'evolution' is typically linked to these cultures of higher prestige. In majority contexts in general, having no access to meta-

discourses on culture and language, and no experience in relativising the own habits of thought, can lead to constructions of monocultural, universalist global culture or ‘monocultural cosmopolitanism’.

It is important to understand that categories and culturally constructed hierarchies are not universal but have developed in specific discourses and are culturally, historically and spatially contingent. Therefore, education should make an effort to provide access to meta-discourses, which give “individuals an insight into their implicit knowledge” (Williams 2010:166), as this allows for a problematised, ‘reflexive’ view into the own culture. The result should be the ability to regard the own culture as relative and contingent and not as ‘normal’ or ‘natural’, which is the development of a cosmopolitan perspective of the world. In this way, education for cosmopolitanism aims at overcoming the “hierarchical subordination which serves to exclude social groups from identity and equality through their categorisation as ‘others’” (Beck 2007, quoted in Williams 2010:227).

How can access to meta-levels of culture and language be gained? Learning a language is one step in this direction, as language is the prime means of human communication, it is the central locus where meaning is socially constructed (see Ch. 2 and Williams 2010:162ff.). The acquisition of a language that is different from the one an individual has grown up with seems to be a particularly suitable tool in developing a discursive meta-level. A thorough understanding of other semiotic systems allows for a view on the ‘native’ semiotic system as contingent and relative. Cosmopolitan language education, first of all, introduces the means of communication of one or more other languages (in this respect, it is not different from traditional second language acquisition).

Secondly, it should not stop at teaching that ‘other’ people, meaning systems, languages, forms of knowledge, may be strange, but valid, too<sup>79</sup>. Next to the practical functions of learning languages, relativising ‘native’ languages should be an aim of this type of language education. Language education here plays a central role, as it not only gives access to ‘other’ forms of knowledge and communication but also lends itself to problematising ‘native’ languages and discourses of a certain context. In order to avoid cultural chauvinism, social evolutionist or racist ideology, explicit awareness about the own culture is as important as knowledge about others. Linguistic meta-awareness, the ability to talk *about* language, is thus a helpful means to develop a cosmopolitan perspective on the world. Therefore, it would be sensible to implement acquaintance with linguistics, particularly with structural aspects of language and with sociolinguistics, as a normal part of contemporary curricula in public education.

Thirdly, next to learning other languages and relativising the language of origin, an access to meta-discourse and an awareness of the contingent social construction of meaning can be improved with the experience of communicating in multilingual contexts. As Glyn Williams

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<sup>79</sup> For examples of an attitude that constructs other languages as ‘strange’ or ‘funny’, see e.g. <http://www.languageonthemove.com/recent-posts/banal-multilingualism>.

argues, “the reflexive process is enhanced by operating across more than one language” (Williams 2010:166). He thus suggests: “working within communities of practice which operate across languages would be far more productive by reference to both the generation of knowledge and innovation than operating within monolingual contexts” (ibid.)<sup>80</sup>. The point is not to be fully fluent in the languages of the other members of a multilingual Community of Practice; however, communication across languages fosters the development of a meta-level, as the constitution of meaning is intrinsically questioned. Language education should therefore not be limited to the acquisition of vocabulary and structure but should, as soon as possible, enable communication between speakers of different languages.

Within multilingual interaction there is a constant process of translation and interpretation that interrupts the flow of language use as social practice. [...] There is a search for shared meaning within a conscious and unconscious reflexivity. The individual is not merely translating language but also discourse, in the sense that she is comparing the constitutions of meanings in both language and discourse. (Williams 2010:160)

Thus, communicating across language and culture increases the awareness of the constructed nature of meaning and gives access to tacit knowledge of the ‘own’ language and culture and therefore to a general cultural meta-discourse.

The possibility to create multilingual Communities of Practice exists in almost any school class in contemporary urban environments, where, due to migration flows, monolingualism builds an abnormal exception. It is here not the place to develop concepts of how and in what way the multilingual resources of today’s school populations can be employed practically in school contexts. It is nevertheless obvious that these resources could be made use of in the enterprise of creating a cosmopolitan awareness. The example of the *meet-up* groups (see Ch. 8) shows that there is an enormous interest in interacting multilingually in local urban environments, which could be combined with the resources of school classes. In today’s schools, classes *are* cosmopolitan and form an array of opportunities to foster meta-awareness and to teach that languages create a multiplicity of boundaries and relate to contingent local normativities. Making use of the local cultural and linguistic diversity in school contexts furthermore avoids limiting the notion of cosmopolitanism to elite contexts as it advances an awareness of the intersections of ethnicity and class in contemporary orders of indexicality.

‘Cosmopolitan language education’ should give access to ‘other’ semiotic systems, it should lead to an improved ability to reflect on the ‘own’ culture and language, and should give the opportunity to communicate across language boundaries in order to deepen the understanding of meta-levels of discourse and language. Cosmopolitan language education

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<sup>80</sup> Williams’s argument goes further, in maintaining that the access to reflexive processes through multilingual communication enhances knowledge generation in workflows, which would be advantageous in the knowledge economy (see Williams 2010). As I here concentrate on the educational realm, I do not introduce the full argument.

should also be understood as an education of ethics in a world full of diversities. Language education with a focus on cosmopolitan perspectives should foster the “resources [we] must have in order to transform the exclusive nation-state organized societies into inclusive cosmopolitical societies and states” (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003:8). Essentially, a cosmopolitan awareness should end in the deconstruction of naturalised perspectives on cultures and cultural hierarchies and “lead to the compassion and humanization of others” (Gilroy 2005:67).

Finally, it has to be asked what implications the points made above have for future research and epistemology in linguistics. First of all, contemporary linguistics has to take into account that the concept of *Language* is the result of a historically and spatio-temporally conditioned discourse and not a ‘naturally’ given phenomenon. A language does not only construct boundaries between cultures but also is co-responsible for the implementation of other social boundaries. Linguistics in a reflexively modern world has to consider the multiplicity of boundary constructions through language, which is of particular relevance in studies on language that are concerned with its social aspects. Furthermore, the multiplicity of language boundaries is not only relevant for academic interest but also in the application of scientific research outcomes. Language policy is here a particularly relevant field. Next to the call for cosmopolitan language education, this study has shown that the national framework remains a vital producer of discourse and discursive power in contemporary transnational contexts. It has been a hypothesis in the introduction to this thesis that national language ideologies may have changed through transnational cultural phenomena. Indeed, the role of national language ideologies has changed. Nevertheless, national epistemology stays vital. The “zombie” *nation* keeps on wandering: national language ideologies, national regimes of ‘integration’, their interaction with global, regional and local discourses, and their consequences for those who are confronted with them, will be of central interest in future studies on language, discourse and power in a globalised world.

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## APPENDIX

### *Transcription Conventions*

(.)	pause of less than a second
(1.5)	pause with indicated length
/	overlapping talk
stréss	rise of tone
<u>underlined</u>	louder
(word?)	word difficult to hear, analyst's guess