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Pathways to Paradigm Change: Critical Examinations of Prevailing Discourses and Ideologies in Second Language Education

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CENGAGE
Chapter 9
L2 Academic and Disciplinary Discourse
Socialization in a Short-Term Study Abroad Context:
An Autoethnographic Inquiry

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Introduction
In the current study, I examine my own socialization into second language (L2) academic and disciplinary discourses (e.g., common ways of speaking about language education practices) in interaction with Meike, a fellow German language educator based in Germany. Meike and I hail from different international contexts—I was born in Canada and have lived primarily in Canada and the United States, while Meike was born in the former East Germany and has lived primarily in the former East and current reunified Germany. Our professional training and career trajectories reveal different educational preparation and institutional experiences. I completed a PhD in German and Applied Linguistics three years prior to the current study, and I began as an assistant professor of German at a degree-granting state university in the United States (hereafter called State U) immediately upon graduation. At the time of the current study, I had been working in my position for three years and was leading the short-term study abroad (SA) program State U for the first time. Meike, for her part, received a Magister title (roughly the equivalent of a Master’s degree) in Deutsch als Fremdsprache (DaF), or German as a foreign language, from a major German university and, at the time of the study, had worked as a language instructor at the language institute for more than 10 years. Two years prior to the study, she had taken on the role of coordinator of the host site’s summer language courses.

State U enjoys an excellent institutional partnership with Meike and the Germany-based host site. The host site has been involved from the program’s inception (prior to my arrival at State U), and Meike and her colleagues are directly involved in the provision of local, on-site support (e.g., language instruction, accommodation arrangements). In addition, Meike and an upper administrator had visited State U and other partner institutions in the United States during the year prior to this study. During their visit, they visited our classrooms, met some of
our students, and listened to our needs and concerns. We also discussed future possibilities. In the following year, I led the SA program and communicated regularly with Meike while I was there to ensure that the participating students were supported as well as maintain our strong institutional partnership.

My interest in this specific context for L2 academic and disciplinary discourse socialization (ADS) is heavily influenced by scholarship from English language educational contexts that examines how language teachers negotiate their multiple situated identities in interaction in international contexts. Findings from this scholarship have shown that socialization practices in these spaces involve not just the maintenance of particular routines but also resistances to them (e.g., Canagarajah, 1993, 1999; Duff, 2010; Morita, 2000; Park, 2012; Tracy, 1997; Tsui, 2007). In other words, performing or doing “being English language teacher” in interaction is a social practice clearly situated within the history of the discipline, the local institution and space, and the relationships of those working together, and is thus anything but simple or straightforward.

Doing “being German and/or non-English language teacher” by contrast has rarely been framed in these terms. While voices in contexts of English language education have criticized pedagogies that do not consider contextually relevant and multilingually, locally informed approaches to language learning and teaching, on the whole, non-English or world language education in the United States has tended to abide and collectively engineer what Gramling (2016) has called a “methodological monolingualism” (p. 529). In fact, few scholars in world language educational contexts have pursued reflexive work of this kind, with a couple of important exceptions (e.g., Marx, 2002). It is for this reason that I reflexively pursue an investigation of my own L2 ADS here, investigating both the interview that I conducted with Meike and a researcher identity memo (Maxwell, 1998) that I noted down immediately after the interview in consideration of our different ideologically shaped orientations, or beliefs that reflect particular systems of ideas and ideals, about language education. By scrutinizing my own contributions to interviews and other interactions, I have become more aware of the ideologically constructed beliefs that I actively reproduce with Meike while leading a short-term SA program in Germany. In light of this context, I also aim to make visible the mutual socialization work that Meike and I participate in given ongoing shifts in the SA landscape, as described in the following section.

**Short-Term Study Abroad**

As an enduring part of 21st-century world language curricula, short-term SA programs have risen in popularity, especially in the United States (see Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Institute for International Education, 2016; Wolcott, 2013; Woolf, 2007). U.S.-American college students today are much more likely to participate in short-term SA programs rather than the more traditional junior semester or year
abroad model. These shifts in the SA landscape and participation are the result of a number of influences, including the increasing diversity of student bodies and contemporary institutional endorsements of international academic experiences as key to developing a more global citizenry (Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). Also reflected in these changes is the university’s ongoing enthusiasm for summer SA programs, as they generate supplementary income.

My point, however, is this: U.S.-based world language educators are increasingly involved in short-term SA program design, sometimes even accompanying students abroad in these programs. At times, faculty leaders even teach the local language courses. In other situations, local language institutes are enlisted to provide language instruction. Regardless of the situation, U.S.-based world language educators now frequently lead SA programs abroad and thus more regularly encounter international language professionals (e.g., administrators, coordinators, teachers). These new encounters may uncover ways of talking about language education and SA that rely on very different systems of ideas and ideals (i.e., ideologically shaped views), which may also raise questions about who has L2 academic and disciplinary expertise. These conversations certainly influence their institutional partnerships and agreements as well.

In spite of these shifts, little research has done what I set out to do here, namely, bring reflexive scrutiny to these interactions among world language educators as they socialize one another into particular ways of talking about L2 education. I ask the following research questions:

1. How do I participate in my own L2 ADS in the interview interaction with Meike?
2. Do I participate in particular routines and/or display resistances to them? Why?

Three points about this piece make it a unique contribution to language education and language program direction. First, I focus on a scrutiny of two world language education professionals. Second, although most projects conducted in SA investigate the students’ experiences, here, I analyze a world language education professional’s ADS in the context of a short-term SA program. Finally, this project is unique due to the recruitment of a reflexive, autoethnographic approach to examine my ADS. Beginning with researcher reflexivity allows me to attend to my own identity and experience explicitly in order to better understand how I uphold or resist particular ways of orienting to German language education in interaction in SA.

L2 Academic and Disciplinary Socialization

To examine my L2 ADS in an interview interaction with Meike, I rely on tenets central to language socialization (Duff, 2010). Language socialization (and by extension, ADS) takes place in interactional contexts, invariably involving two
or more individuals who co-construct knowledge displays together. As Duff notes, language socialization allows us to view “development as culturally situated, as mediated, and as replete with social, cultural, and political meanings in addition to propositional or ideational meanings carried or indexed by various linguistic, textual, and paralinguistic forms” (p. 173). Previously, a core theoretical premise of language socialization was that language was learned through interactions with others who were more proficient (e.g., in L2 disciplinary practices) and who provided novices with explicit and (or) implicit mentoring or evidence about normative, appropriate uses of the language, and of the worldviews, ideologies, values, and identities of community members. More recently, however, dynamic views of this theory have encouraged “bidirectional models of language socialization” (Duff, 2007, p. 311) or re-specifications of more traditional descriptions that move away from static notions of expert/novice in favor of addressing the mutuality of language socialization (Duff & Talmy, 2011, my emphasis). These newer conceptualizations provide scholars with helpful ways to account for development, especially in interactions in which both socializing parties (e.g., Meike and I) have shared expertise and experiences.

I take up this more flexible approach to language socialization and ADS here, given that socialization processes into academic and disciplinary discourses are complex and bidirectional. This approach is especially useful for scrutinizing world language educators’ exchanges, since they are increasingly interdisciplinary, international, and intertextual, and are thus more likely to be “characterized by the multiplicity and instability of their discourses, values, and practices” (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008, p. 249). In other words, dynamic approaches to ADS allow me to position us (Meike and me) as situated collaborators with our own histories and ideologically informed beliefs. For example, Meike and I may encounter conflicting beliefs that reveal completely different orientations to language and who should teach it. Re-specifying experts and novices as mutual socializing agents departs from traditional assumptions; however, scholars from a variety of contexts have also challenged the notion that so called “socializing experts” do ineludibly good and/or competent socializing work (e.g., as teachers, writers, mentors) (Duff, 2007; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Morita & Kobayashi, 2008; Tracy, 1997; Tsui, 2007). Viewing “socializing experts” as undeniably competent also misses the fact that identity and expertise (e.g., in language teaching) are accomplished interactionally, from moment to moment, and are not a function of some other supposed trait (e.g., simply being a native speaker). In the current project, I understand that as professional colleagues, Meike and I may act as socializing agents at different moments in the interaction. Our efforts to identify with one another are highly coordinated and emerge in moments where our systems of ideas about who we are and what we know diverge, something that I will expand on in the following section.
Identity and Identification

As I investigate how I negotiate my multiple identities in the interview interaction with Meike, I approach identity as a situated, emergent, and collaboratively produced phenomenon, resulting from the use of linguistic and other semiotic resources in social interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 588). When people use semiotic resources to identify with one another in social interaction, they also communicate specific sociohistorical information to their interlocutors. In other words, people coordinate with others not just who they are right now but also who they have been (e.g., language educators). In this way, displays of identity and expertise are coordinated social action. An interactional perspective on identity moves away from characterizing it “as housed primarily within an individual mind” (p. 587) or as “a psychological mechanism of self-classification” (p. 588). This approach corresponds with conversation analytic approaches that conceptualize identity as something that is an “interactionally relevant” accomplishment (e.g., Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Auer, 1998).

Given that people co-construct their identities in situated contexts of use, it is often easiest to recognize identity as emergent in cases where speakers’ language use does not conform to the social category to which they are normatively assigned (e.g., cases of transgender identity and cross-gender performance, ethnic/racial boundary crossing) (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Rampton, 1995). Although these specific examples of non-normative identity performances may not seem relevant for the current article, we must consider that as world language educators increasingly lead short-term SA programs and collaborate with international partners, they are likely to discover that normative practices in one space are not normative practices in the other. These practices are ideological constructions based on particular ways we organize our ideas and what we value. In this way, crossing borders may yield distinctive constructions based on these divergent systems, leading to identity and expertise negotiations becoming recognizable and analyzable as reflective acts.

Investigating L2 ADS

Empirical work in L2 ADS tends to fall into one of three strands. First, some studies have attempted to uncover what learners need to know by reporting on the particular academic and linguistic information and abilities that would help students “meet their academic demands” (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008, p. 243). Second, scholarship in this area has focused on how people are socialized into L2 academic and disciplinary practices. Scholars may enlist qualitative or ethnographic approaches, focusing primarily on the participants’ perspectives. Third, scholarship in this area has highlighted the issue of power from critical discourse and literacy perspectives. Scholars who enlist critical perspectives take issue with the claim that language and socializing processes are neutral; rather, for these
scholars, language is a “value-laden, social practice that constructs and is constructed by unequal relations of power” (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008, p. 245).

In a project examining both how people act as socializing agents and negotiate issues of power, Tracy (1997) analyzes her department’s weekly academic colloquium. Tracy, who describes the colloquium space as a communicative event known to have tensions and contradiction (p. 4), discovers that a number of shared dilemmas and salient affective responses emerge both from the vantage point of individual participants as well as from the group perspective. Her findings across both of these analyses reveal different systems of ideas across group and individual surrounding identity negotiation, affect and emotion talk, and positioning. By viewing the colloquium as a dilemmatic, or tension-filled situation, Tracy proposes that emerging problematic issues (e.g., emotional concerns, concerns about power/status) can be harnessed to cultivate better discussion and create new local meanings.

Investigating the ADS of non-native-English-speaking teachers participating in graduate programs in the United States, Park (2012) closely pursued the experiences of an East Asian woman, Xia, who was enrolled in a U.S.-based MA TESOL program. Park’s analysis revealed that Xia experienced a number of personal and institutional dilemmas before and after her time in the program. For example, Xia constantly felt that her experiences in China, her TESOL program in the United States, and her mentored student experience were very disconnected, revealing that she was navigating multiple identities and very different systems of ideas and ideals. Numerous difficult and complex negotiations with peers, faculty members, and her student teaching mentor ended up playing a major role in Xia’s emerging L2 ADS.

These studies’ findings highlight the fact that L2 ADS requires one to navigate complex identity work and possibly differing ideological constructions in collaboration with other agents (e.g., peers, professors, others) who are potentially operating in/from very different spaces. The results also show that the co-construction of multiple identities and navigation of expertise can involve many emotional reactions given ideological incongruences (e.g., different systems of concepts, thoughts). In addition, findings from these studies show that ADS is rarely linear or predictable. Similar issues are central to the current project.

**Methods**

**Autoethnography**

The study I pursue here is a reflexive one; it involves the use and combination of autobiographical information and ethnography, or the cultural interpretation of the connectivity between self and others (Anderson, 2006; Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Denzin, 1997; Ellis, 2004). Importantly, in using an autoethnographic approach to investigate my own experiences, I go well beyond the mere narration of personal history (Chang, Ngunjiri, & Hernandez, 2013, p. 18).
As an autoethnographer, I am aware of the fact that I am constantly negotiating two roles—researcher and participant. In conducting this study, however, I am not concerned about “claims to objectivity” (Chang et al., 2013), as my goal is to make central “subjectivity and researcher-participant intersubjectivity” (Foster, McAllister, & O’Brien, 2006, p. 47). Those socialized into research and scholarly inquiry as a positivistic and objective enterprise may find these points perplexing; however, autoethnographic approaches reject “the hegemony of objectivity or the artificial distancing of self from one’s research subjects” (Chang et al., 2013, p. 18). Instead, scholars pursuing autoethnography do so with the explicit goal of analyzing data through the “unique lens of self” (p. 18). This includes a close scrutiny of one’s own contributions, something that other approaches to scholarly inquiry rarely, if ever, allow.

Exactly how scholars go about interjecting their stories into the research process, however, can vary. For this reason, it is crucial to elaborate on the reasons for choosing the current analytic methods used here: a macro-level analysis of my own salient affective responses and a micro-level analysis of how those responses shape my work as a socializing agent in the interview interaction.

Data Collection
I collected data for this study while conducting a broader project on U.S.-based student participants’ experiences in short-term SA. As a part of this broader project, I recorded an interview interaction with Meike and was struck by the noteworthy emotional reactions I experienced afterward. I then documented these responses in a reflexive researcher identity memo (Maxwell, 1998) to investigate my own L2 ADS further.

Maxwell (1998) suggests that qualitative researchers document any conflicting emotions and feelings to bring subjective concerns to bear. In this study, I took down a researcher identity memo immediately after the interview was finished, writing it down by hand in a notebook. The memo itself was about 250 words long. In the memo, I describe tension and annoyance at how Meike positions U.S.-American German language educators/learners in the interview. Perhaps paradoxically, I also express relief that I, the interviewer, controlled my emotions in response to these tensions. While identity memo writing does not give the researcher “license to impose your assumptions and values uncritically on the research” (p. 225), ensuring that the primary experience is not stifled can allow for consciousness-raising work to take place as we account for potentially relevant issues in the micro-level analysis. This was certainly the case for my experience in this study.

Once in Germany, I met with Meike and others to discuss my data collection procedures for the broader research project I was conducting. I then led and recorded a semi-structured interview with Meike. In other words, I came to the interview with a number of prepared questions (e.g., about Meike’s beliefs about
and approaches to language education and reflections on U.S.-American students learning German) but also provided space for her to ask questions or deviate from the point. The interview was 75 minutes long and was conducted entirely in German. I transcribed the interview using a number of common CA transcription conventions (Jefferson, 2004) along with some of my own notation (see Appendix 9.A). I then translated the focal transcripts for the purposes of this autoethnographic project.

**Data Analysis**

To investigate my L2 ADS, I took a two-pronged approach to this study. First, I recursively examined my emotional reactions to the interview in both the researcher identity memo and the interview itself, looking for particular themes connected to my emotional reactions. To better understand how I act as a socializing agent around these themes (e.g., discourses about *Auslandsgermanistik* or international German studies, beliefs surrounding the role of SA in L2 pronunciation, and beliefs surrounding SA as “entertainment”), I enlisted conversation analysis (CA) to transcribe and analyze focal sections of the interview where the themes emerged.

In using CA to analyze the interview interaction, I view our talk in the interview as locally situated, culturally constituted behavior that we mutually coordinate in interaction. This view corresponds to dynamic approaches to language socialization that emphasize socialization as a jointly constructed endeavor. I view interviews as co-constructed and socially situated speech events (Talmy, 2011); any data garnered from these coordinated exchanges emerge from that specific social setting. That setting is an example of “but one cultural event within the life world of the participant” (Roulston, 2011, p. 80). In other words, I understand that interview data neither directly reflect internal states of mind nor do they directly reflect exterior states apparent in the world. Rather, interview data are situated demonstrations of how individuals, in a particular space and time, orient to one another and coordinate talk together.

A CA approach pursues more than just a qualitative examination “of the functional and sense-making properties of language” (Wooffitt, 2005, p. 71). CA gives scholars the tools to examine conversational elements to explicate the ways in which the interactants (e.g., interviewers and interviewees) organize social action. Here, however, I also turn the lens onto myself, analyzing and reconstructing my contributions in the interview interaction. This involves close scrutiny of any interactional moves I make in order to coordinate my identity work and expertise. For example, I may align or *structurally* cooperate with Meike’s utterances in the interview (e.g., use acknowledgment tokens like “uh huh”). To align or cooperate structurally means to facilitate and accept an interlocutor’s proposed action(s) and presupposition(s); however, it does not mean to match and endorse...
those proposed action(s) and presupposition(s). I may also communicate affective or affiliative cooperation with Meike’s utterances in the interview. Affiliating, or cooperating affectively, means that we communicate to our interlocutor that we match, support, or even endorse their stance as the interaction unfolds (e.g., display empathy) (Prior, 2017; Steensig, 2013). I may also disalign or disaffiliate with Meike’s claims communicating resistance to particular beliefs and routines (e.g., remaining silent). The findings show that I participate in my own L2 ADS by regularly cooperating structurally in the interview with Meike.

Findings

Macro-level Analysis

The results of the macro-level analysis show that in both the interview and the researcher identity memo, I experience salient emotional reactions due to conflicting systems of ideas and ideals along three topics. Thus, at all times, our different ways of orienting to language education inform our interactions and my L2 ADS.

The first issue that yields a salient affective response is the notion of Auslandsgermanistik. Auslandsgermanistik, or “international German studies,” refers to German studies carried out outside of Germany. The use of the term Auslandsgermanistik also tags Germanistik as a domestic area of study, or an area “housed” in Germany. Thus, Germanistik is sometimes (consciously or unconsciously) positioned as the “more authentic” German studies. Although neither Meike nor I use this term explicitly, the results show that I feel I am being positioned in ways connected to these beliefs about German studies both within and outside of Germany. In my researcher identity memo, I note: “I think they think we don’t teach well or something. I get the impression that [Meike] thinks that what they do [at the host site] is more ‘real’ than what we can offer.” In the interview interaction, for example, Meike states that students “face the big surprise when they come to Germany” as if to suggest that going to Germany is when they face “real” German for the first time. Additionally, she recounts a decision made by the host site to refuse to cater to U.S.-German programs that request summer SA programs with extracurricular programming in English. I clearly struggle to negotiate these conflicting beliefs given a desire to validate my identity as a German studies scholar.

The second issue that yields a salient affective response is the notion that German language learning in SA (e.g., in Germany) improves one’s pronunciation. For example, I note the following in my researcher identity memo:

At one point, [Meike] joked about [my U.S.-American students’] pronunciation and even imitated the “American” r-sound. How did I respond? Well, I laughed because I felt like I couldn’t criticize her jokes. But I was annoyed and actually found it kinda [sic] shocking.
In the interview, Meike imitates the retroflex approximant [ɻ] in a jocular manner. In the memo, I was struggling to manage my reactions to her behavior in light of my desire to display my expertise as a trained linguist, maintain my rights and responsibilities as interviewer, and navigate my relationship with Meike as institutional partner.

The third issue that yields a salient affective response is the notion that language learning in SA involves entertainment. For example, in the researcher identity memo, I note the following: “I think she said: American students want to be entertained. Like, okay, I get what she’s saying, but I can also name three students in my cohort who absolutely do not fit the stereotype.” In the interview, Meike does explicitly state that U.S.-American students “want to be entertained.” In the identity memo, I labor while navigating Meike’s comments about U.S.-American students given the multiple identities that I am negotiating (e.g., researcher, interviewer, professor, and faculty leader).

After identifying the connections between my emotional reactions and these issues, I located areas in the interview interaction where they emerge at the micro-level in order to examine my own contributions.

**Micro-level Analysis**

The micro-level examination of our interview talk reveals that I actively participate as a socializing agent when discourses about *Auslandsgermanistik*, beliefs surrounding SA and L2 pronunciation, and beliefs surrounding SA as entertainment emerge. My participation as interviewer involves choosing and posing certain questions related to these issues, as well as utilizing particular strategies to display (or avoid displaying) both structural cooperation (e.g., facilitating proposed actions) and affective cooperation (e.g., supporting or endorsing stances) with Meike’s claims (Steensig, 2013).

Overall, the micro-level analysis shows that I consistently aim to achieve intersubjective understanding with Meike in the interview interaction. My reasons for doing this are twofold: One, I do this to maintain my rights and responsibilities as interviewer. As a qualitative researcher, I have been socialized into appropriate interviewing practices as rapport building, or participating in affiliative or empathic work (Prior, 2017), with interviewees to encourage “true dialog” (Roulston, 2011, p. 80). Two, I continually aim to achieve intersubjective understanding with Meike due to my position as representative of the State U side of our institutional partnership. All the same, the analysis shows that managing these multiple identities is at all times a complex, negotiated endeavor and a broader aspect of my own L2 ADS. In what follows, I present an analysis of excerpts from the microanalysis across themes to report on my collaborative participation as socializing agent.
Auslandsgermanistik.

The microanalytic results of moments in which Auslandsgermanistik discourses emerge show that I make the management of my multiple identities and expertise visible by continuing to do “being interviewer.” For example, prior to the conversation shown in Figure 9.1, Meike and I discussed difficulties that English native speakers might have as they learn German. In lines 4–9, she communicates her view regarding why this might be, identifying, to her mind, a problematic language teaching approach (i.e., the communicative approach) commonly used in the United States. Although not the purview of the current article, debates about a communicative approach to language teaching (i.e., what it is and if it is an appropriate approach to language teaching) are not new.¹ Notably, in the following excerpt, Figure 9.1, I participate in structural, not affective cooperation, both facilitating and accepting (but not endorsing) what Meike is claiming with regard to a communicative approach to language teaching across lines 7, 10, 20, and 24.

Figure 9.1 Auslandsgermanistik (MK = Meike, IN = interviewer)

In my final two contributions, before turning to another question, I whisper (line 20) and then shorten (line 24) my acknowledgment tokens, indicating that I want to display just minimal structural cooperation with Meike’s claim. This corresponds to the concerns I articulate in the identity memo, namely, that Meike and others at the host site might believe that Germany-based German teachers teach grammar (unlike U.S.-based German teachers) and thus utilize “better” language teaching practices. It is clear, however, that I still want to fulfill my role as interviewer by cooperating (even if only very minimally) with Meike.

Relatedly, in Figure 9.2, Meike communicates her belief that U.S.-American students often have an extremely good vocabulary but lack grammatical knowledge. The specific line of interest here is her claim that U.S.-American students “have also never been corrected in their life.” Meike’s assertion again reflects her belief that the best German language teaching practices involve the explicit instruction of grammar and do not involve the use of a communicative approach to language teaching, something she believes to be a problem with language teaching in the United States. Her utterance also reveals her belief that U.S.-American students will only have the chance to have grammatical mistakes corrected (thereby also experiencing “good” German language teaching practices) while in Germany.

In the researcher identity memo, I express concern about how I am positioned as a German language educator outside of Germany. However, the microanalysis shows that I abstain from uttering acknowledgment tokens and do not intervene in any way until line 20. This may seem surprising, especially

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MK und das dann dazu führt (.) MK and then that leads to the</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>eh dass sie (...) oft ein fact that they have an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>extrem guten haben wenn sie extremely good vocabulary if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>lange gelernt haben (...) uhm they’ve taken German for a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>oft aber auch nicht long time, but have also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>korrigiert worden sind in never been corrected in their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ihrem leben (...) und dann die life. And then comes the big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>große überraschung kommt wenn surprise when they come to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>sie nach deutschland kommen Germany and we say, well… you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>und wir dann sagen naja (...) sound good, it’s even uhm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>es ist schön was sie sagen es relatively fluid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ist auch (...) uhm relativ -- the Americans can do that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>flüssig das können die as well when they’ve studied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>amerikaner auch gut wenn sie for a long time, you know? --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>länger lernen ne dass sie that they aren’t afraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>keine angst mehr haben (...) anymore, uhm, but in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>uhm (...) aber es ist in den rarest of cases is it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>seltesten fällen wirklich actually correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>korrekt</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>IN mmhm</td>
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**Figure 9.2 Auslandsgermanistik**
since Meike pauses a number of times; in other words, she creates room for me to cooperate structurally. My silence could thus be interpreted as evidence of the fact that I want to avoid facilitating her claims. Eventually, I accept Meike’s claims (i.e., I display structural cooperation with her) in line 20, which reflects my broader desire to both maintain my rights and responsibilities as interviewer in this interview interaction and negotiate my role as State U institutional representative.

**Language learning in SA as pronunciation learning.**

The microanalysis shows that I manage my identities and expertise in a visible manner when language learning in SA is linked to pronunciation learning by shortening and minimizing my contributions. At one point in the interview interaction, Meike and I talk in detail about the host site’s phonetics training component, a topic that I address explicitly in Figure 9.3 (lines 1–3). Meike takes

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**Figure 9.3** Language learning in SA as pronunciation learning
up this topic immediately, noting that she had almost forgotten to mention it herself. Her repeated utterances in lines 4–5 reveal that she views the phonetics and pronunciation training component as a very important aspect of the host site’s offerings, something that she states outright in lines 7–8. By highlighting her strong endorsement of the phonetics and pronunciation training to me (as interviewer and State U representative of our institutional partnership, or, put differently, client), she simultaneously navigates her role as interviewee, as host site director, and as international program provider (lines 12–18).

Notably, in response to Meike’s talk about the phonetics and pronunciation training component, I participate in backchanneling work (i.e., I use repeated acknowledgments to show Meike that I am listening). Indeed, my minimal contributions in lines 11 and 19 show that I facilitate Meike’s continued description of this particular training component. However, immediately after Meike expresses that the host site is happy to be able to offer phonetics and pronunciation training to students (line 20), she utters a brief complaint, noting that the component is often evaluated well by students “if they really understand why we do it.” In lines 24–26, Meike’s voice becomes hushed and her speech hurried. This suggests that she is not only balancing two identity positions (i.e., as host site director and language educator) but also actively pursuing an affiliative response (Prior, 2017) from me. The fact that she tags “yeah” onto her complaint immediately afterward is further evidence of this. Meike’s utterance calls on me to respond and thus positions me in complicated ways. It is clear that I recognize that I am being called on to answer and coordinate this work with her by responding with laughter in line 27. My laughter communicates affective cooperation and support for her jocular complaint, which also encourages her to continue.

In what follows, Meike performs an imitation of how she believes Standard American English (SAE) speakers sound when they use the retroflex approximant [ɻ], a commonly used SAE sound (as in the word <car>) when speaking German. In response to this, I continue laughing into line 30, although my laughter is notably much quieter. I also discontinue my laughter quickly. Overall, the change in my laughing response in line 30 can be understood in two ways. One, it can be seen as an attempt on my part to disaffiliate with Meike’s facetious simulations of SAE-speaking German language learners and their struggles with pronunciation, especially in consideration of my own non-native speaker identity. Two, this change in my laughing response can also be understood as an attempt on my part to disaffiliate with Meike’s broader claim that SAE-speaking German language learners need (and indeed, should value) phonetics and pronunciation training while in Germany.

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2 The Standard German sounds used to articulate the German alphabet letter <r> are not a part of the SAE sound inventory. For that reason, it is common for SAE-speaking German language learners to substitute the retroflex approximant [ɻ] in place of the Standard German sounds.
Meike’s complaint sequence reveals that she is sensitive to students’ reactions to the curricular decisions she (or other host site administrators) has made with regard to phonetics and pronunciation training. It also indexes her own ideologically constructed belief system about what language is. The fact that phonetics and pronunciation training is something she feels that students taking courses at the host site should value more (or at all) suggests that she does not believe that they see it as important. Later, she states outright that she believes phonetics is an important but oft-forgotten component of language classrooms (see Figure 9.4) and elsewhere comments on the fact that this particular site is the only language institute in Germany that offers phonetics and pronunciation training to short-term SA students.

In Figure 9.4, Meike continues to talk about the role of phonetics and pronunciation training in the L2 classroom. In line 1, she positions us both as German language educators in an effort to appeal to our shared experience and get me to affiliate with her claim that teaching pronunciation to U.S. students is extremely important. Notably, in line 6, I do not affiliate with (i.e., endorse) her stance, even though she has attempted to elicit my support by explicitly positioning me as a fellow German language educator.

Across the entirety of this conversation, Figure 9.4, the analysis shows that I cooperate structurally (not affectively) with Meike, as evidenced by my repeated use of acknowledgment tokens in lines 11, 19, 24, and 30. This backchanneling work is once again an indication of my desire to fulfill my rights and responsibilities as interviewer. The macro-level analysis reveals that I left the interview annoyed at Meike’s imitation sequence (see the aforementioned research identity memos); yet in the interview interaction itself, I continue to do “being interviewer.” In other words, what begins as a display of affective cooperation with Meike’s jocular behavior becomes a display of minimally cooperative work over a number of turns.

As Meike articulates her thoughts on the importance of teaching pronunciation, she hails normative beliefs about L2 learning and pronunciation that have been critiqued by scholars working in critical sociolinguistics and critical language education. For example, in lines 20–23, Meike suggests that as long as students have “clean” pronunciation, grammatical errors are not a problem in contexts of use. I cooperate in very minimal ways here, evidence that I am attempting to manage my role as researcher, SAE speaker, and applied linguist who reads a lot of critical scholarship. Instead of contesting Meike’s claims using findings from the critical literature (e.g., that the notion of “clean” pronunciation reflects raciolinguistic ideologies about language and language learning; see Flores & Rosa, 2015), I elect to avoid intervening and pursue the maintenance of my rights and responsibilities as interviewer. These interconnected sequences are evidence of my own ongoing ADS into ways of talking about language teaching and pronunciation.
MK und ich weiß nicht du du unterrichtest auch deutsch äh je MK and I don’t know you you teach German too uh, the longer I teach
(.) länger ich deutsch unterrichte desto weniger ist mir German the more important phonetics becomes for me
MK ähm (.) aber phonetik ist ja auch das was im normalen sprachunterricht zuerst wegfällt MK uhm, but phonetics is also the thing that first gets eliminated in the normal language classroom
wenn man zeitprobleme hat MK ähm (.) aber ich sag immer (.)
MK uhm, but I always say at the end even if you know the grammar and die grammatik kennt und das alles ist richtig (..) und man traut sich die phonetik ist so schlecht dann versteh ja ↑trotzdem niemand↓ MK uhm, but phonetics is also the thing that first gets eliminated in the normal language classroom
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MK uhm, but I always say at the end even if you know the grammar and die grammatik kennt und das alles ist richtig (..) und man traut sich die phonetik ist so schlecht dann versteh ja ↑trotzdem niemand↓ MK uhm, but phonetics is also the thing that first gets eliminated in the normal language classroom
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wenn man zeitprobleme hatMK aussi (.). lieber (.). laut sprechen mit sauberer phonetik und mit nem grammatischfehler und das passiert einem nichts MK so, better to speak aloud with clean phonetics and with a few grammatical errors and then nothing will happen to you
MK ja (.). aber natürlich ist das so dass man (.). SEHR viel an phonetik arbeiten kann und das ist extrem wichtig es für das für das um das sichere sprechen MK yeah but of course we have it so that people can work on their phonetics a lot and that’s extremely important for for uh secure speaking
MK ja das man sich selber auch mal hört (.). und wir freuen uns dass wir das anbieten können MK yeah that they also listen to themselves sometimes, and we’re pleased that we can offer that

Figure 9.4 Language learning as pronunciation learning
Language learning in SA as entertainment.

The microanalysis shows that I make the navigation of my multiple identities and expertise visible in the interaction when discussions emerge regarding effective teaching methods for U.S.-American students and language learning in SA as entertainment. In response to a question I pose about course design, Meike articulates the fact that there is a focus on “conversation” and “a little bit of entertainment.” In her utterance, Meike makes a distinction between the regular non-summer courses that prepare students for certified language proficiency tests and the courses offered to international students as a part of the host site’s summer offerings. The implication made by this distinction is that since the host site’s summer courses are designed for international students who come to Germany for a short-term stay and thus are not meant to lead to certified language proficiency testing, different expectations, including less rigor, are to be expected.

In Figure 9.5, Meike is discussing these different expectations. By uttering an acknowledgment token (“mmhm”) to respond to Meike’s description of the host site’s summer courses as involving some entertainment in line 5, I facilitate Meike’s proposed action, encouraging her to continue explaining why the summer courses are set up in this way. This action also hails my rights and responsibilities as interviewer, which Meike recognizes, as evidenced by the fact that she continues to elaborate.

In lines 6–15, Meike provides explicit reasoning for why the host site’s summer courses are set up in this way. She notes a number of elements that are a part of their curriculum that “one can’t do back home.” This utterance suggests that Meike views German learning in Germany and the United States as different, which also points to the first theme I analyzed (the notion of Auslandsgermanistik).

Much later in the interview, I ask Meike about her thoughts on the most effective teaching methods for American students. She eventually describes U.S.-American German learners as students who want to be entertained. However, as the analysis shows, this claim is the result of an elaborate co-constructed sequence in which Meike and I socialize one another into ways of talking about U.S.-American learners of German. In Figure 9.6, as the interviewer, I begin by asking a question. Yet, in this question, I arrange specific populations in interesting ways. First, I locate U.S.-American German language learners as an unambiguous group to whom there are more or less effective ways to teach German. This construction shapes how Meike and I continue to coordinate talk in this sequence, especially since, by asking her this question, I position her as someone who believes that this is a helpful way of organizing these populations and as someone who has knowledge and/or opinions on this matter. The fact that I ask this question also reveals that I am someone who is familiar with commonly held beliefs about U.S.-American German language learners. All told, this question is not an unprovocative one, as seen in the variety of strategies I use across lines 1–13 to get Meike to respond.
I first stumble while attempting to utter the German word for “effective.” This may be a simple production error or evidence of the fact that I am anxious to ask Meike to answer this question. I immediately repair the stumble via a restart in line 4. Meike overlaps with my restart, offering corrective feedback. Her feedback is indexical of a power relationship that neither of us address directly here (i.e., native speaker and non-native speaker). Notably, I do not take up Meike’s assistance directly; I repair the stumble in line 4 before or at the same time and continue posing the question. As I continue to ask Meike about effective methods for teaching U.S.-American students German, it is clear that my concerns about the question and her hesitation to respond shape my utterance over many lines. In line 7, I pause to allow her to take the floor and answer the question, which she resists. I thus change my approach and begin to employ a number of strategies to encourage her to answer. For example, I modify my utterance (lines 6–7) in a number of ways. First, I start to answer my own question by stating that there is no correct answer. I then produce laughter (line 7). I also pause multiple times across the utterance, hedge, and communicate explicitly that one can answer...
this question in many ways. Our coordinated work here shows that my query is a difficult one, and my modifications, pauses, and laughter are all my attempts as interviewer to save face and maintain intersubjective understanding with Meike. For her part, Meike is clearly unsure of how best to answer the question, although she eventually does. Together, as we form question and answer, we also navigate many situated identities (e.g., interviewer and interviewee, two language educators, native and non-native speaker).

In her response, Meike first resists the notion that there might be specific effective teaching methods for U.S.-American German language learners by highlighting that students’ identities as “young people” are often more salient for teachers than their national identities (lines 17–18). I structurally cooperate with her claim in
lines 19 and 23, using acknowledgment tokens to backchannel or encourage Meike to continue. In Figure 9.7, Meike continues answering, constructing U.S.-American German language learners as holding particular expectations of a language classroom, noting that they “want to be entertained” (lines 32–33).

Crucially, in stating this claim, Meike does not operate alone; rather, she coordinates her answer with me. Just prior to this utterance, in lines 29–30, Meike asks me not to view the coming claim as discriminatory. In doing this, she positions me not just as a person who is complicit in her proposed action but also points to the fact that it could be possible to view her claim as discriminatory. My response in line 31 is a smile, which is evidence of minimal cooperation with Meike’s claim. In other words, my smile facilitates Meike’s proposed action. One could also view my response as evidence of the fact that I am cooperating affectively by communicating minimal support for her stance. In either case, Meike believes that she can or should continue speaking and

**Figure 9.7** Language learning in SA as entertainment 3

| 24 MK | das erste was ist so die ersten | MK | the first thing is so the first |
| 25 MK | zwei dinge die ich sagen werde | MK | two things that i will say have |
| 26 MK | haben nichts mit sprache zu tun | MK | nothing to do with language but |
| 27 IN | mmhm | IN | with mentality |
| 28 MK | und ich bitte das jetzt nicht als | MK | and i’d ask you now not to |
| 29 IN | <<smiling>> | IN | understand this as discrimination |
| 30 MK | diskriminierung zu verstehen | MK | understand this as discrimination |
| 31 IN | <<smiling>> | IN | <<smiling>> |
| 32 MK | amerikanische studenten (. | MK | american students...want to be |
| 33 IN | mmhm | IN | entertained |
| 34 IN | mmhm | IN | mmhm |
| 35 MK | das musst du sicherlich von zu hause wissen (. | MK | surely you must know that from home...one always has to keep |
| 36 IN | mmhm | IN | mmhm |
| 37 IN | mmhm | IN | mmhm |
| 38 IN | mmhm | IN | mmhm |
| 39 MK | und manchmal (1.0) kann man das problem manchmal schafft man es nicht | MK | and sometimes (1.0) you can have the problem that sometimes you don’t manage it |
| 40 IN | [mm du fühlst dich als verkäufer | IN | [mm you feel like a salesperson |
does so, uttering her belief that U.S.-American German learners want to be entertained. Following this moment, I avoid linguistically supporting her claim, which corresponds to the researcher identity memo in which I wrote that I was made uncomfortable by how Meike talks about U.S.-American students.

**Summary**

The analysis of the researcher identity memo and interview interaction with Meike has revealed that I experience salient emotional responses along three themes. Whenever notions of *Auslandsgermanistik* and language teaching in Germany versus the United States emerge, I minimally align via structural cooperation with Meike’s utterances, even though I note later that Meike and her colleagues seem to think less of German language instruction in the United States as compared to German language instruction in Germany. Taken together, these findings index that I am not only aware of the normative beliefs about German studies outside of Germany but also that participating in my own L2 ADS is a struggle for me here.

In reconstructing our interactions around pronunciation learning in SA, I manage many situated identities and avoid endorsing much of Meike’s talk about teaching pronunciation. Although I wrote in the researcher identity memo that this part of the interview interaction was “kinda shocking,” I still maintain intersubjective cooperation with Meike by navigating and fulfilling my rights and responsibilities as interviewer. The microanalysis shows that coordinating these various instances of identity work and expertise together shapes my own L2 ADS in this short-term SA setting.

Finally, the microanalysis of our talk about language learning in SA as entertainment shows that our exchange is not the product of one individual’s beliefs or expertise. Instead, beliefs are a collaborative production in which Meike and I co-participate as socializing agents. In other words, together we socialize one another into how to talk about U.S.-American German language learners (i.e., vis-à-vis supposed effective teaching approaches and expectations of entertainment). Analyzing this exchange has accomplished a few things. One, it confirms that even supposedly static question-and-answer sequences in interviews are dynamic and managed collaboratively, moment-by-moment, in interaction. For example, Meike’s request for me not to understand her utterance as discrimination shapes my subsequent response (as interviewer, researcher, international partner, non-native speaker, and German language educator in the United States). Two, the microanalysis indicates that, even in the context of an interview interaction, we mutually participate in L2 ADS when talking about U.S.-American German language learners during short-term SA.
Discussion

In this chapter, I have shed light on my experiences as a U.S.-based German language educator and scrutinized my participation in an interview interaction with a German language educator in Germany. To answer the research question regarding how I negotiate my situated identities in the interview interaction with Meike and researcher identity memo, I took a two-pronged analytic approach. The macro-level analysis reveals my labor to negotiate our different orientations to the notion of Auslandsgermanistik, German language learning in German SA contexts improves one’s pronunciation, and language learning in SA as entertainment. The micro-level CA reveals how my salient affective responses are collaboratively produced in the interview interaction, as we mutually socialize one another into particular ways of talking about language education. In other words, our contributions shape how we orient to one another in ways that are consequential for our ongoing socialization into L2 academic and disciplinary discourses.

The findings provide clear evidence that I aim to maintain my rights and responsibilities as interviewer throughout the interview with Meike. The reasons for my desire to do this are as follows: First, as an experienced researcher, I orient to qualitative interviewing as a way to elicit information or get “data” from interviewees. For this reason, it is unsurprising that I ask questions, expect Meike to respond in a detailed manner, and minimize my contributions, even when I experience salient affective responses. Second, my desire to cooperate structurally with Meike uncovers my desire to endorse the continued maintenance of State U’s long-standing international partnership with the host site. In both cases, I do “being good interviewer” and “being good institutional partner” via repeated moments of backchanneling (e.g., “mm,” “uh huh”) and other elements that display my desire to cooperate structurally (e.g., smiling). Finally, cooperating with Meike in the interview allows me to try to position myself and be validated as a fellow German language educator. Interestingly, getting Meike’s professional endorsement at the host site would be an impossibility, since the host site only hires native German-speaking teachers. There is no space to address this further here, but it is clear that diverging systems of ideas and ideals can be incredibly difficult to reconcile when arranging and collaborating across international contexts. For this reason, I now address future research and praxis, especially for U.S.-based world language educators leading summer study abroad programs at host sites.

Implications

The findings of this autoethnographic study reveal a number of implications for future praxis in (especially world) language education and support what scholarship in applied linguistics and discursive psychology have already shown: namely, that interviews are coordinated and complex social activities in which certain
practices and discourses are contested and/or (re)produced (Mann, 2016; McGregor & Fernández, 2019; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Roulston, 2011; Talmy, 2010, 2011).

The results compel world language educators to extend this reflexive approach and consider how our own (non-neutral) contributions and identity negotiation in any interaction with colleagues and students, perhaps especially in international settings, are far more than the mere representations of our work as educators, scholars, native or non-native speakers, and so on. Instead, our contributions and identity work in interaction are evidence of our ongoing (and mutual) ADS into particular communities (e.g., language learning and teaching) and uncover diverging ideologically constructed beliefs or systems of ideas and values. The results of this study also remind us that we sometimes choose to conceal our emotional reactions to problematic claims. At times, this choice is a privilege; at others, we have no choice but to show or conceal how we feel. Regardless, there is interactional evidence that I deliberately choose to avoid endorsing Meike’s comments (e.g., emotionally matching or supporting Meike’s claims) and instead elect to cooperate structurally. I also choose not to display overt disalignment with her claims (e.g., saying “I disagree” or “I find that characterization problematic”).

As practitioners, we should consider the ways in which (not) responding to divergent ideological positions impacts our students and programs. In other words, do our interactional moves aim to endorse, reproduce, disrupt, or possibly decolonize approaches to language education that rely on problematic systems of ideas and ideals? In their discussions about decolonizing students’ thinking (and here, I add, language educators’ thinking), Tuck and Yang (2012) point out that social justice and critical pedagogies that attempt to decenter “settler perspectives” have objectives that may be incommensurable with the act of decolonization itself. In contexts of world language education, this means that centering the native speaker in language teaching and learning may appear similarly incommensurable in certain spaces, given diverging positions, contexts, and histories. Yet, as language educators cross borders to work with one another in the context of short-term SA programs, we must find new ways to challenge and disrupt ideologically informed futurities in language education that uphold the native speaker and native speaker teacher as the ideal. For this reason, language educators should closely examine their own language and approach to language teaching in the classroom.

One way to start this work is to do “identity inventories”—both alone and with students—in order to make central the various personally meaningful ways in which “who I view myself to be” matters to us all, both in terms of validating and being validated by others. This also gets students thinking about the ways in which views of the self and the world may be shaped by unexamined belief systems.

Second, one could design classroom activities that bring both teachers and students to collaboratively challenge hegemonic structures that we and our materials may appear to be upholding. This allows us to explicitly consider and practice different futurities together. For example, language educators could
incorporate an introductory text on multilingualism and/or interculturality into their beginner language classrooms; another possibility is to invite successful multilinguals who started in a beginner language class and can problematize the native/non-native binary to talk about their experiences with language learning. In this way, teachers and learners can begin to make informed choices regarding how to respond to different ideological positions when they encounter them domestically or internationally.

It is commonly believed that SA experiences offer language learners important opportunities for advanced language and intercultural learning, yet precious little is done to help students or faculty leaders prepare to disrupt commonly held beliefs about language teaching and learning. To conclude, in order to disrupt problematic ideological constructions and meaningfully connect with international colleagues and programs, we need to prepare ourselves and our students to navigate diverging belief systems and challenge claims that position our students and their work in problematic ways. This must begin among language educators and students in the classroom.

References


Appendix 9.A

(.) brief pause

(1.0) longer pause; measured in seconds

[ ] overlapping

= latching

° whispering

: elongation

! exclamatory intonation

? rising intonation

<<laughter>> laughter