

**The Autoethnographic (De)Construction:  
How German writers of Turkish heritage manipulate the  
German language to reexamine ideas of national identity and -lingualism<sup>1</sup>**

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## Abstract

This paper examines how the innovative, non-standard German language and usage presented by minority German authors with Turkish heritage stand as reactions to constructed ideals and myths that pervade modern Germany society. Using the medium of ‘autoethnographic texts,’ these authors work to dissolve the myths of nationhood, monolingualism and a ‘mother tongue’ in order to surmount the limitations they impose. Examining Feridun Zaimoğlu’s novel *Kanak Sprak: 24 Misstöne Vom Rande Der Gesellschaft* (1995) and Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s work *Mutterzunge: Erzählungen* (1990), this thesis challenges the precondition of a solely monolingual identity and analyzes these works and the unique languages they employ as commentaries on both the heritage Turkish and the host German culture.

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## 1 Introduction

Although immigrants have been arriving in Germany since the mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century, Germany did not acknowledge itself as a country of immigration, or *Einwanderungsland*, until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Even now, the topic of immigration is surrounded by controversy and taboo and is only slowly making an appearance in the national discourse. The Turkish population in Germany comprises the largest non-ethnic German minority group<sup>2</sup>. The first wave of Turkish immigrants came in the 1950s and 1960s as *Gastarbeiter* ‘guest workers’<sup>3</sup>, and, though they have been members of German society since then and “Turkish is the second-most-spoken home language in the country,” they are still considered Germany’s “primary Other” (Yildiz 2012:144). A long-term failed immigration policy and Turkey’s strong sense of tradition and religious Islamic beliefs make it easier for Turkish immigrants to be labeled as ‘foreign’, for they were never properly integrated and their culture challenged the German construction of national identity. In Germany, national identity is a constructed concept rooted in Romantic and heritage-based notions of belonging to a specific nationality according to tradition and ancestry. This approach is unwelcoming to immigrants, for adding new members breaks with its principles of innateness and exclusivity. Furthermore, the hostility of the imagined nation is supported by the myths of monolingualism and the mother tongue that both deemphasize the benefits of a multilingual and multicultural society.

Confronting these issues are modern multicultural writers, who draw upon their multilingualism and experiences as minorities in Germany to comment on these myths that perpetuate minority discrimination and repression. They use the medium of autoethnographic

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix A presents data from a 2010 Federal study showing the break down of the different minorities in Germany.

<sup>3</sup> The problematic connotation of the term *Gast* ‘guest’ is further discussed in section 5.2.

texts, which are texts written in the majority language that offer an opinion of the host majority culture and comment on the conditions within that culture. This thesis highlights the authors Feridun Zaimoğlu and Emine Sevgi Özdamar, who both write in German and are of Turkish heritage. Through their unique manipulations of the German language, the authors offer commentaries on Germany's failure with immigration, and advocate concepts such as multiculturalism, anti-discrimination and fluidity of identity, which stand in contrast to the ideals in the constructed German national identity. By examining these works, the context in which they were written, and the way each author utilizes language, this paper reveals the native-Turkish minority's attempt to refute national myths, reconcile cultures and establish their place in the German imagined community.

In discussion of formatting, the paper will firstly present the authors and texts, as well as a basic introduction to the German and Turkish languages. Section 3 will then summarize immigration in Germany, including its current state, recent history and the history of German immigration policy. In order to establish the roots of immigration problems in Germany, the paper will then discuss theories about how a nation is constructed and the progression of German national thought in section 4. Section 5 highlights the importance of the German language in Germany and how that has affected immigrants. Then, discussion of linguistic features of language and cultural contact occurs in section 6, followed by myths associated with language in section 7. Sections 8 and 9 focus on the analysis of Zaimoğlu's work *Kanak Sprak* and Özdamar's *Mutterzunge*, respectively, and final comments appear in the conclusion.

## 2 Explanation of Corpus

### 2.1 Choice of Authors

I selected the authors Feridun Zaimoğlu and Emine Sevgi Özdamar to focus upon in this thesis, as they both are German writers of Turkish heritage who use their writing to explore issues facing the minority population in Germany. Both authors were born in Turkey but have lived the majority of their lives in Germany. Zaimoğlu's family immigrated to Germany in 1965, shortly after he was born, and Özdamar, born in 1946, travelled independently to Germany first in 1965 for two years to work as a *Gastarbeiterin* 'female guest worker' and then later permanently to East Berlin in 1976 to pursue a career in acting (Horrocks and Kalinsky 1996:45). Although Özdamar and Zaimoğlu are almost twenty years apart in age, their subject matters both refer to contemporary minority issues in Germany. Both have lived in Germany for comparable amounts of time and within the same time period, as Özdamar moved to Germany at a much later period in her life. Their gender and generational differences contribute to the unique ways in which they approach literature. Özdamar writes in Standard German and draws upon autobiographical elements to connect her multiple languages and cultures in a more discrete way than Zaimoğlu, who jarringly and obviously mixes German and Turkish in a more intrusive fashion. Since Özdamar was a *Gastarbeiterin* 'female guest worker' herself and was a member of the illiterate immigrant population, she proves her mastery of the German language by writing in Standard German, showing that she too can belong in Germany, whereas Zaimoğlu, who grew up in a Germany that was trying to get the immigrants to leave, cares less about assimilation and forcefully asserts the established social and linguistic position of his peers.

They write primarily in German, but incorporate elements of the Turkish language and their Turkish heritage, albeit employing different techniques. While Zaimoğlu employs a type of

slang speech that modifies the orthography and pronunciation of standard German, Özdamar translates literally and uses rich metaphors, creating new combinations within German. This difference in style is what makes the authors ideal for comparative linguistic analysis, for they use dissimilar means of writing to express similar ideas. Although also fluent in Turkish, both write almost exclusively in German, which could be a mere preference but could also be an attempt to, as Yildiz (2012:5-6) suggests “to bring German into contact with a series of other languages [...]” and “explore the strictures of the monolingual paradigm and evaluate the means of reimagining the identitarian force of language [...]”. In addition, these two authors have come into conflict with one another. In June of 2006, claims by German newspapers were made that Zaimoğlu’s novel *Leyla* (2006) plagiarized much of Özdamar’s novel *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserai...* (1992), since both narrate the life of a Turkish girl who eventually migrates to Germany. Yet, while they both have similar themes, Özdamar’s novel is a semi-autobiography, and Zaimoğlu’s is based off the recorded tapes of his own mother’s life story. Naturally, there are similarities, as both women grew up in a similar region of Turkey and had similar life-trajectories, and both novels, drawing upon these life stories, exemplify oral literature. No legal action was taken, however, and they are presently still writing and living in Germany.

## 2.2 Literary Selection

I chose to work with textual data and literature, focusing primarily on Feridun Zaimoğlu’s *Kanak Sprak: 24 Misstöne Vom Rande Der Gesellschaft* (1995) and Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s *Mutterzunge: Erzählungen* (1990). These works are grouped under the label of migrant-literature or “*MigrantInnenliteratur* in academic and publishing circles,” which is a problematic term as it labels their literature as non-native, somewhat diminishing their literary value to the native

German society and automatically grouping them with literature of other migrants who are not fluent or sophisticated in the German language, in spite of the nonnative German author's "high degree of critical sophistication" (Seyhan 2001:102). The main reason for working with the language in these texts is that, in these examples of migrant-literature<sup>4</sup>, the authors not only meld together aspects of both the Turkish and German languages, but also use language to address difficulties and struggles of the minority population living in Germany. While examining real speech and recorded conversations would provide a more accurate depiction of the language used by the Turkish minority, they would not necessarily provide commentary on the minority situation in Germany, which this thesis examines. I also have not studied Turkish and would need to rely upon dialogues that have already been translated and analyzed by other academics, and thus would not be able to fully understand nor examine natural-occurring speech. I believe this option to be less than ideal.

*Kanak Sprak* is Zaimoğlu's first book, and it gives recognition and a distinct name to the slang language or dialect used among the minority German youth of Turkish origin<sup>5</sup>. Although the book is written in German, it is written in a vernacular that modifies German words and distinguishes them from the standard dialects, as well as from the commonly spoken *Kiezdeutsch*

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<sup>4</sup> Although the term 'migrant' is neither accurate nor ideal, the term 'migrant-literature' is used in this thesis in order to situate these works of literature within the larger context and corpus of the same genre. However, Tom Cheeseman (2004:92) disagrees that *Kanak Sprak* belongs to 'migration-' or 'multicultural literature,' but rather to *Popliteratur*, defined as "commercially oriented literature by, about, and primarily for young people, produced in knowing consort with the media and culture industries, concerned with issues of lifestyle, consumption, sex, and economic life chances, fully aware of the local impacts of globalization, and disenchanted with organized politics."

<sup>5</sup> I would like to clarify that, although *Kiezdeutsch* and specifically *Kanak Sprak* are spoken primarily by male youth of Turkish heritage, it is also spoken by young Germans with no similar background of migration who live in the same multiethnic districts such as Berlin-Kreuzberg (Brammertz 2008).

‘German youth dialect’<sup>6</sup>. The title of the book is made up by a modified slang word, *Sprak*, to be understood as the German word *Sprache* ‘language’ or ‘speech’, and *Kanak*, which refers to the extremely derogatory label *Kanake*, denoting immigrants originating from countries south of Germany (Yildiz 2012:172). Representations of words in *Kanak Sprak* do occasionally appear to classify the speech as an eye dialect<sup>7</sup>, but, as some words are pronounced differently<sup>8</sup> and Kanak Sprak employs alterations in morphology, lexical combinations and influences of Turkish as well, it is not merely an eye dialect. The novel describes the monologues as *Misstöne* ‘discords’ from the *Rande der Gesellschaft* ‘edges of society,’ highlighting both the physical alienation in ethnic communities and the psychological ostracizing due to their ‘otherness’ and the dissenting sounds of their language.

Emine Sevgi Özdamar likewise plays with language in *Mutterzunge: Erzählungen*, which is a collection of short prose pieces that deals with the themes of linguistic adaptability and language as a vital component of one’s self-identity. The first word in the title *Mutterzunge: Erzählungen* can be broken into the words *Mutter* ‘mother’ and *Zunge* ‘tongue’, translating literally to ‘mother tongue’. Yet, the semantic equivalent for the English ‘mother tongue’ in German is actually *Muttersprache*, or ‘mother language,’ which reveals Özdamar’s application of deliberate literal translation of the Turkish idiom *anadil* ‘Mother tongue’. The word *anadil* can be segmented into the words, *ana* ‘mother’ and *dil* ‘tongue’ or ‘language’. So, Özdamar both literally translates the idiom, but also plays with the meaning of *dil*, which is ambiguous in

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<sup>6</sup> The word *Kiez* ‘neighborhood’ is specific to large metropolitan areas. However, although *Kiezdeutsch* arose in neighborhoods of large metropolitan areas with high-immigrant populations such as Hamburg and Berlin, the term *Kiezdeutsch* can refer to the dialects spoken by immigrants in multi-ethnic communities in cities that would not normally be considered to have *Kieze* per se.

<sup>7</sup> An eye dialect is a literary technique defined as the orthographic nonstandard spelling for speech employed to draw attention to pronunciation, yet does not indicate a difference in pronunciation. Rather, it is typically used to make character judgments about the ‘speaker’.

<sup>8</sup> As determined by various dramatic representations of Zaimoğlu’s work.

Turkish as it means both ‘tongue’ and ‘language,’ whereas its translation, *sprache*, only signifies ‘language,’ not ‘tongue’ in German (Matthes 2005:4). *Erzählungen* means ‘narratives’ or ‘stories’, thus the complete title reads ‘Mother tongue: narratives’. The use of the word *Erzählungen* ambiguously refers to stories either in or about the mother tongue and playfully juxtaposes the speaking tongue and the oral history of story-telling with the printed medium of the book in which the narratives are written.

### 2.2.1 Overview of Novels

The content of *Kanak Sprak* is based on interviews that Zaimoğlu conducted with minority German male youth of Turkish origin living in Kiel, Germany who are responding to the question, ‘What’s life like as a *Kanake* in Germany?’ However, he “creates a distinct linguistic style that is not actually found on the streets, even as it mimics some characteristics of postmigrants’ linguistic practices,” with “postmigrant” referring to the generations in Germany who descended from the Turkish migrants (Yildiz 2012:173). The language in *Kanak Sprak* is a fabrication “nicht nur, weil schriftliche Texte gar nicht anders können, als Mündlichkeit bloß zu *simulieren*” {not only because written texts cannot do anything other than merely *simulate* orality}, but also because Zaimoğlu overemphasizes and draws attention to the regional and dialectal features that distinguish the linguistic style of the young German men of Turkish heritage living in Kiel (Abel 2006:300, translation mine)<sup>9</sup>. Thus, *Kanak Sprak* should not be analyzed as an authentic or accurate linguistic sample. There is also a linguistic variation among the narratives of the different men based upon their educational level. The sociologist, poet and school child adhere closer to Standard German than do, for example, the petty stolen-goods

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<sup>9</sup> All English translations of German text are mine unless otherwise indicated.

dealer, gigolo or rappers. The *Kanak Sprak* language serves not only as a social indicator to race, but to certain economic and regional circles as well.

Also written in German, *Mutterzunge* follows the progress of a young Turkish woman in Germany who learns Arabic in order to relearn the lost, forbidden language of her native country. Arabic was a widely spoken language in Turkey before the language reform of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, after which only Turkish was allowed in the nation's discourse. The process of regaining her lost language ultimately allows her to feel liberated in Germany due to her new sense of self-awareness and understanding, thus highlighting language as a means to bridge cultures. The novel is composed of four *Erzählungen*, or chapters, entitled "Mutterzunge", "Grossvaterzunge" 'Grandfather tongue', "Karagöz in Alamania" and "Karriere einer Putzfrau" 'Cleaning Woman's Career'. The first two stories "illustrate how history and memory, geography and genealogy inhabit language," the third is a comedic play following the story of a Turkish man and his travels between Turkey and Germany, and the last is an autobiographical recollection of working in Germany as a young woman (Seyhan 2001:118). Özdamar does not write in a slang language as Zaimoğlu does, however, she employs other techniques such as literal translation to connect the two languages, German and Turkish, together.

## 2.3 Comments on Language

### 2.3.1 The German Language

The German language descends from the West Germanic branch of the Indo-European languages and is the most widely spoken language in the European Union (Sanders 2010). It became a standardized form through a large, extended process that included Martin Luther's translation of the Bible in 1522, and Otto von Bismarck's unification of Germany in the nineteenth century, as

well as the relatively recent spelling reforms in 1901 and 1996. The standardization declared the German *Hochdeutsch* ‘High German’ variant as the national language. Before the standardization, there had only existed divided dialect groups, yet, Germans continue to speak regional dialects that are not always mutually understandable, mostly due to lexical and phonetic variation. Of special importance to this thesis is that of *Plattdeutsch* ‘Low German’ spoken mostly in Schleswig-Holstein, the northernmost state in Germany of which the city Kiel is the capital. *Plattdeutsch* differs from Standard German significantly and could be analyzed as a separate language. In addition to lexical variations, *Plattdeutsch* does not employ the accusative nor dative cases, which are used extensively in Standard German. The language in Zaimoğlu’s novel uses words that are particular to this dialect and region of Germany. For example, his characters use the verb *schnacken* ‘to talk’, which is not used in other regions of Germany and would not be initially understood by someone distant such as in southern Germany.<sup>10</sup>

German morphology includes four cases that appear in noun phrases as bound suffixes. The four cases are the nominative, accusative, dative and genitive cases, which generally denote the subject, direct objects, indirect objects and possession or nominalized clauses, respectively. Nouns in German each have assigned genders and are denoted as feminine, masculine or neutral. This gendering is most apparent in the form of a noun’s indefinite or definite article, which not only indicates gender, but also the noun’s case as well. However, the most important component of German grammar is syntax and word order. The language is classified as having a SVO<sup>11</sup> structure according to Greenberg’s word-order typology, with the existence of a subject marker

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<sup>10</sup> Alternative forms of the verb spoken in other regions are: *sprechen* (most common), *reden*, *schwätzen*, *küren*, *praten*, *plaudern*, *schmatzen*, *kallen*, and *brachten*. Werner König (2005:176) provided the information about *schnacken* and its regional varieties.

<sup>11</sup> SVO describes syntax structure by the order of its particles, and is one of the many variations among the world’s languages. This particular order signifies that, in a typical German sentence construction, the Subject precedes the Verb which precedes the Object, hence SVO.

and the correct placement of the verb being especially vital to a German sentence's grammaticality.

### 2.3.2 The Turkish Language

The Turkish language belongs to the Turkic language family. It is spoken by 40 percent of the total number of speakers of Turkic languages, making it the most-spoken language in the family group (Kornfilt 1997:xxi). It is also the official language of Turkey, where it is the native language of over 90 percent of the population (Kornfilt 1997:xxvi). During the language reform implemented in 1929 under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who founded the Republic of Turkey in 1923, Latin was adopted in place of the Arabic script in an attempt to unite and westernize the country, and there was an attempt to replace all loan words<sup>12</sup> in the language with Turkish equivalents (Kornfilt 1997:xxiii). Hans Kohn (1965:83) explains that while the reform may have attempted to unify Turkey's national consciousness, it limited its wider identification with the Arabic-speaking Islamic community.

Turkish is an agglutinative language with a vowel harmony system (Mandel 2008). Vowel harmony in Turkish is determined by vowel frontness and rounding, and is divided by front or back and rounded or unrounded vowels (Underhill 1976:24). Within a word, front vowels must be followed by front vowels, back vowels must be followed by back vowels, and round or unrounded vowels must be followed by round or unrounded vowels, respectively<sup>13</sup>. Turkish is also "classified as a rather rigid SOV language" with 48 percent of sentences in adult speech being SOV (Erguvanlı 1984:2). Turkish, then, is primarily a verb-final language, as

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<sup>12</sup> Or, words taken from other languages. This feature is further defined in Section 6.1.1.

<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, a following low vowel must be unrounded. The eight vowels in Turkish are /e/, /i/, /y/, /ø/, /ɘ/, /u/, /o/ and /ʊ/ (Underhill 1976:23).

opposed to German, which, also very rigid in its word order, is primarily a verb-second language. According to Volker Hinnenkamp (2008:263), a German sociolinguist who has studied Turkish-German intercommunication extensively, there is no differentiation in Turkish phonetics like there is in German between short and long vowels, such as in the comparison between *dise* and *diese*<sup>14</sup>. He additionally notes (2008:263) how Turkish does not have diphthongs, but instead has vowel combinations that come close to the German diphthongs, for example ‘ei’ /ay/ as ‘ay’. Yet, both German and Turkish include the umlauts, ‘ü’ ‘ö’ and ‘ä’. Zaimoğlu and Özdamar explore the relationship between the Turkish and German languages as they merge concepts of both into their writing. For example, Zaimoğlu mixes Turkish orthography, contractions and sometimes syntax with German words, and Özdamar uses the German grammar and lexicon to relate Turkish expressions and metaphors. How the authors interrelate the two languages will be discussed extensively in sections 8 and 9.

### 2.3.3 Terminology

One issue I faced when writing this thesis was what terminology to adopt in reference to ‘Turkish-Germans’ and the type of slang language used by the young men in *Kanak Sprak*. The younger generations and now grandchildren of Turkish immigrants were, on the most part, born and raised in Germany, so it does not seem accurate to continue to label them equally ‘Turkish’ and ‘German’. Even the politically accepted phrase in Germany, *mit Migrationshintergrund* ‘with a background of migration’ is not ideal, for it similarly defines German residents by a ‘migration’ that was never their own undertaking, but that of their ancestors. It supports the

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<sup>14</sup> *Dise* is not linguistically significant in German, although it can refer to the name of a female deity from Norse mythology, yet *diese* is a pronoun meaning ‘these, those, etc’ for feminine or plural objects in the nominative and accusative cases.

connotation that migrants are foreign and constantly on the move. Additionally, as Horrocks and Kolinsky (1996:xi) point out, “[i]n German society, the term ‘migrant’ is less neutral and includes a hidden assumption about the destabilizing and negative effect of migration” and thus migrants “seem under suspicion of detachment and divided loyalties”. Are they rather “resident non-Germans” (Horrocks and Kolinsky 1996), “transmigrants” (Ayhan 2007) or “postmigrants” (Yildiz 2012)? I find all of these suggestions to be problematic. The first was coined before the new citizenship law that made German citizenship more attainable was enacted, thus, ‘non-German’ referring to an official political status would no longer be a general fact. Additionally, the latter two continue to label them as ‘migrants’, regardless of attempts to refer to their continuous travel between Germany and Turkey with ‘trans,’ or separate them from earlier generations with ‘post’. I propose to use the term ‘German of Turkish heritage’ for those who identify with Germany and hold German citizenship<sup>15</sup>, and the term ‘minority German youth’ for the young men of Turkish heritage in *Kanak Sprak*, as their citizenship status is not determined and they all seem to identify together with their status as a minority living in Germany.

The classification of *Kanak Sprak* is equally problematic, for there is a difference between the form in the novel and that which is actually spoken in the streets, and it is unclear whether it should be termed as a language, dialect, slang, sociolect, ethnolect, creole, pidgin, “artificial idiolect” (Cheeseman 2004:86), “geschaffene Kunstsprache” {created artificial language} (Abel 2006:300) or *gemischt sprechen* ‘speaking mixed’. There must be a differentiation between the naturally spoken slang and the construction by Zaimoğlu. The construction used in the novel *Kanak Sprak* will be referred to simply as *Kanak Sprak*, as opposed to the naturally spoken slang which will be referred to as *Kiezdeutsch*, a term that was

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<sup>15</sup> For further discussion of the construction of national identity, see section 4.

previously explained in Section 2.2. Özdamar does not have a term for Kiezdeutsch as she wrote her novel at a time when Kiezdeutsch would only have been starting to emerge, and she does not reference other Germans with Turkish heritage. Zaimoğlu, interestingly, describes Kanak Sprak as “eine Art Creol oder Rotwelsch mit geheimen Codes und Zeichen” {a type of Creole or a thieves’ argot with secret codes and signs} and a “Free-Style-Sermon im Rap” {Free-style sermon in rap} (Zaimoglu 2010:13). He also uses purposefully derogatory labels to describe all ethnic groups, referring to his generation as the ‘Kanakengeneration’, which altogether do not help to contribute to a positive conception of the type of people who speak this ‘thieves’ argot’: the minorities living in Germany.

### **3 The Minorities in Germany**

#### **3.1 The Minority Situation**

According to a study done by the Berlin Institute for Population and Development, “Zugewanderte sind im Durchschnitt schlechter gebildet, häufiger arbeitslos und nehmen weniger am öffentlichen Leben teil als die Einheimischen” {Non-natives are, on average, more poorly educated, more frequently unemployed and participate less in public life than local [German] inhabitants} (Woellert et al. 2009:8). “Mit Abstand am schlechtesten integriert ist die Gruppe mit türkischem Hintergrund,” {By far the worst integrated is the group of Turkish descent} and reasons for this disparity can be partially attributed to language barriers (Woellert et al. 2009:9). After the group of German-heritage repatriates, “[d]ie Türkischstämmigen bilden mit fast drei Millionen Menschen erst die zweitgrößte Gruppe, auch wenn sie in der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung meist als die gewichtigste gilt” {those of Turkish origin make up only the second biggest [ethnic minority] group with almost three million people, although in the public

perception they are generally considered the largest} (Woellert et al. 2009:8). Additionally, “[d]ie in Deutschland lebenden Personen mit türkischem Hintergrund sind bereits zur Hälfte hierzulande geboren-prozentual mehr als in jeder anderen Gruppe” {already fifty percent of the people living in Germany with Turkish backgrounds are born over here- a higher percent than in any other [minority] group} (Woellert et al. 2009:8). Yet, xenophobic and racist perspectives have made living in Germany as an immigrant dangerous at times. In the early 1990’s after German reunification, “arson attacks and physical violence against newcomers [...] began as soon as the first groups of asylum seekers were distributed to the new Länder” (Kolinsky 1996:104). There were murders in Mölln in 1992 and Solingen in 1993, where a house of a Turkish family was burnt down and three people in Mölln and five in Solingen were killed, even though they had already been living in Germany for twenty years (Kolinsky 1996:104). Barbara A. Fennell (1997:46) mentions that Germany is not unique in having xenophobia, but is made separate because of “the execrable legacy of the Third Reich and the burden of guilt that remains”. Feridun Zaimoğlu and Emine Sevgi Özdamar address these problems of inequality and German xenophobia, and comment on how the Turkish-heritage minority fits into the unified Germany. Zaimoğlu’s minority German youth speak out against the German majority with feelings of alienation and frustration with their economic and social standing, as per the conditions in 1995. Their slang language serves not only to unify them as a group, but also to exclude Germans who have ostracized them, highlighting Germany’s failed attempt at integration. Özdamar, in her earlier work (1990), foreshadows conflicts that could, and do in Mölln and Solingen, arise in a society where the minority is perceived as the collective ‘non-German’ and unwelcome ‘other’ as a result of immigration discourse and policy.

## 3.2 History of Immigration and Immigration Policy

### 3.2.1 Post-World War II and Divided Germany

In the *Wirtschaftswunder* ‘Economic miracle’ of the 1950s and 1960s, Germany encouraged millions of *Gastarbeiter* ‘guest workers’ from Italy, Yugoslavia, and especially Turkey to work in Germany and “to answer a need for industrial workers” (Degler 1998:7). Yet, “[a]mbivalent attitudes toward emigration and immigration hardly changed in postwar Germany” (Bade 2001:38). Once the wall was built in 1961 and Germany was divided into East and West, many Turkish *Gastarbeiter* were employed in West Berlin since the West’s access to East German workers had been barred. The *Gastarbeiter* were considered a temporary solution and had been welcomed as very cheap labor, who “cost nothing to train, were largely nonunionized, easily exploited” and who lived in special working residences (Fulbrook 1994:226-227). However, following the oil crisis of 1973, by the later 1970s and 1980s Germany was halting the call of foreign labor recruitment and trying to encourage the *Gastarbeiter* to return home. Tensions rose as a large amount of workers did not leave, but rather were joined in Germany by their families from Turkey. After the fall of the wall in 1989 and Germany’s reunification, former East Germany became suddenly exposed to a multicultural, multiethnic society in which “East Germans had never really experienced living” since only 1% of the East German population was foreign and “this small percentage was kept tightly segregated from the indigenous population, restricted to the confines of special hostels rather than living in the community” (Fulbrook 1994:228). So, while the West “had not developed a successful strategy for the harmonious integration of the work force from abroad,” the “East German government had never even seriously confronted the problem” and both were unprepared to provide for immigrants as permanent members of German society (Fulbrook 1994:228). Both Zaimoğlu and Özdamar were

surrounded by this environment of the *Gastarbeiter* and atmosphere of tension between the Turkish workers and the Germans. Özdamar herself was a *Gastarbeiterin* as a teenager and worked in a factory for two years. Zaimoğlu's parents were *Gastarbeiter* during this time as well. The *Gastarbeiter* situation was what originally brought them to Germany and it greatly influenced their perceptions and thus their writing. After the reunification, they both experienced and struggled with the issue of where the descendants of the *Gastarbeiter* then fit into Germany society, and they then write about the daily lives and struggles of those people dealing with this same issue.

“Since the late 1970s the so-called guest worker population had been turning more and more obviously into a true immigration population” (Bade 2001:42). Yet, the German Federal Government “consistently denied that Germany was increasingly becoming a country of immigration” (Bade 2001:42). “The German government’s position vis-à-vis the immigrant minority stemming from the former guest worker population shows that questions of immigration until the late 1990s were hardly viewed any more favorable” (Bade 2001:42). The government “suppressed political action regarding immigration, thereby blocking any political discussion” and, until 1994, “the German Ministry of the Interior the word ‘immigration’ remained a taboo term even in internal discussions” (Bade 2001:42). These failures of immigration policy were particularly problematic, for Dittmann et al. (2011:396) explains that, “[c]itizenship laws, as elements of the cultural context in which citizens exist, may contribute to how citizens perceive and express their national identity”. Thus, citizenship laws that fail to address the changed immigration situation and do not accommodate immigrants may help contribute to the exclusivity of the German national identity.

The Turks had more difficulty than other minority groups due to lack of government attention, tensions between the ethnic German settlers from the East and the Turks and violent xenophobia in the early 1990s (Bade 2001:43). By the end of 1998, there were 2.1 million Turks in Germany and 196,000 dual citizens. The reason for the relatively small amount of dual citizens is due to that “Turkey is interested in retaining Turkish citizenship and therefore, if applied for, tacitly annuls applications for deprivation of Turkish nationality in favor of the German one (Bade 2001:44). Thus, people with Turkish ancestry were forced to make a decision between German and Turkish citizenship. Exemplifying this issue, Zaimoğlu and Özdamar merge Turkish and German elements into their writing. Not only do their languages themselves include aspects of both, but also their characters often attempt to reconcile the two identities, German and Turkish, into one individual identity.

### 3.2.2 The 21<sup>st</sup> Century

“Zwischen 1954 und 2006 zogen über 36 Millionen Menschen nach Deutschland, von denen 80 Prozent ausländischer Herkunft waren” {Between 1954 and 2006, over 36 million people moved to Germany, of which 80 percent had a foreign ancestry} (Woellert et al. 2009:14). To meet this rapidly rising number of immigrants, a new citizenship law implanting jus soli elements<sup>16</sup> and dual-citizenship passed in May of 1999, and officially became effective on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000. The law states that “[c]hildren born in Germany to parents who are legally resident foreigners, i.e., with one parent who has stayed at least eight years in Germany and who has a secure

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<sup>16</sup> As opposed to jus soli policy in which nationality is determined by ‘birth’, or the location where one is born, jus sanguinis policies determine nationality by ‘blood’, or ancestry. Thus, for the majority of the history of the German nation-state, citizenship has been dependent upon one’s ancestry, and being born and raised in Germany did not mean that one was granted German citizenship.

resident status, have a right to dual and even multiple citizenship until the age of twenty-three,” and the law also provided a naturalization option for children born in 1990 or later whom the law would have effected if it had been in force (Bade 2001:43). Although this was not a full and clear acceptance of the *jus soli* principle, it was monumental in that it broke with the German ethno-national tradition. Zaimoğlu and Özdamar foreshadowed this rewriting of the citizenship law by outlining problems that arose from Germany not acknowledging itself as an immigrant country and having an antiquated citizenship law that caused foreigners to have a very limited acquisition of citizenship. The authors use their minority voice try to escape and reevaluate the ethno-national, monolingual tradition of the German nation.

#### **4 The Nation and National Identity**

##### 4.1 The Nation

###### 4.1.1 Primordialists v. Modernists

There are two major conceptions of what constitutes a nation. One viewpoint describes nations as heritage groups that have developed historically from ethnic communities, whereas the other argues that the idea of a nation is an imagined, constructed identity that is produced and reinforced by the nation’s discourse. The former conception is upheld by the ‘primordialists’ and is itself ‘primordialistic,’ a term coined by Reiterer (Wodak et al. 2009:22). It is based on ideas of a natural process, ethnic and linguistic groups, and a common will. Primordialism was the dominant viewpoint until it was largely criticized and overthrown after the Second World War in favor of the second, modernist approach. The modernist or constructivist interpretation is the current accepted school of thought. It emphasizes the nation as a modern construct and argues

that people will themselves to be a part of a nation, refuting the idea that it is a natural, ancient phenomenon.

#### 4.1.2 The Civic Nation

The idea of a nation involves a shared will and is discursively constructed, as per the modernist approach. Ernest Renan (1991:19), in his influential 1882 lecture “What is a nation?,” makes an early attempt to define a nation as “the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion” wherein the essential conditions are “To have common glories in the past and to have a common will in the present; to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more”. Here, he sets forth the idea of a civic nation, one united by shared ideologies and aspirations, not by a shared heritage or ethnicity. He also distinguishes between types of civic nations, according to which, as opposed to the *Willensnation*, or political ‘nation by an act of will’, a *Kulturnation* is a nation defined by its culture<sup>17</sup> (Wodak et al. 2009:17). Friedrich Meinecke (1970:10) further elucidates that culture nations have a component of “jointly experienced cultural heritage” whereas political nations, or *Staatsnationen*, have the “unifying force of a common political history and constitution,” and that “A standard language, a common literature, and a common religion are the most important and powerful cultural assets that create a cultural nation and hold it together”. Although many civic nationalists tend to equate nations with a shared language, Renan (1991:16) clarifies that “[l]anguage invites people to unite, but does not force them to do so”. The nation is, however, a concept that is communicated through the national discourse, which can only be accomplished because of the creation of a national language. Thus, language and narratives construct the nation. By writing in German and

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<sup>17</sup> Terms coined by Ernest Renan in his “What is a nation?” lecture.

mastering the German language, Zaimoğlu and Özdamar will themselves into the German nation. They present alternative narratives to the dominant national narratives, and thus attempt to establish themselves as a part of the German nation and add their narratives and experiences to Germany's cultural heritage. However, they cannot merely will it and be a part of the nation, but rather Germany must accept them as members of its national community.

#### 4.1.3 The Imagined Community

Benedict Anderson (1991:145) in his renowned book *Imagined Communities* states that, “from the start the nation was conceived in language, not in blood, and that one could be ‘invited into’ the imagined community”. According to him, the nation “is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them” (Anderson 1991:6), yet they still imagine themselves as a community with feelings of a “deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 1991:7). The communities are distinguished by how they are imagined, and are “imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson 1991:6). The imagination is “*limited* because even the largest of them [...] has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations” (Anderson 1991:7), and is sovereign because the idea of a nation arose at a time in which ideas of the divine and a hierarchical dynasty were being overthrown and the sovereign state became the “gauge and emblem of this freedom” of which nations dream (Anderson 1991:7). Similar to the idea of the *Kulturnation*, Anderson describes nationalism as a cultural system, not as a political ideology, and emphasizes that it does not have a primordial foundation in ethnicity or heritage, but rather is willed by a collective imagination.

He further claims that these communities are imagined and take shape through language and discourse. Starting with the sacred languages in ancient classical communities, Anderson

traces the contribution of language to the development of the imagined community. He cites capitalism and print as the creators of the “monoglot mass reading publics” (Anderson 1991:43) who, when reading the daily newspaper, are “well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion” (Anderson 1991:35). Print-language served both to assemble related vernaculars into one standardized written form and to unify the related language-speaking groups under the common identity of their print language. Print was also no longer subjected to the variations of individual writers, but rather took a standard, fixed form in print-language, which contributed to “that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation” (Anderson 1991:44). Using the German national print language, then, Özdamar shows her commonality with and appeals to the imagined German community. And, conversely, because Zaimoğlu employs a printed language used neither by the Turkish nor the German nation, he reveals his societal marginality and defiance towards the German imagination.

## 4.2 Germany’s Constructed Myth

### 4.2.1 German Romanticism and National Identity Constructs

Perpetuating cultural conventions, systems of the nation state introduce and reinforce the dominant national narrative in the nation-state’s education system. As characterized by Ruth K. Dittmann, Valerie Purdie-Vaughns and Richard P. Eibach (2011:395) in accordance with prevalent analyses of German identity constructs, Germany has a “heritage-based” national identity, or “an identity characterized by expression of *self-descriptive traits* (e.g., personality traits) and *cultural traditions*”. Discursively constructed in nation-state educational systems, the

“heritage-based identity is similar to an ethnic identity (Phinney, 2000) in that individuals define their membership based on shared ancestry and cultural elements” (Ditlmann et al. 2011:396). This heritage-based national identity therefore contrasts with an ideology-based national identity, which tends to focus on core values rather than traits.

This identity construct became integrated into the education system due to German Romanticism and the German literary canon, which contributed significantly to the rise of nationalism. Hans Kohn (1965:34) argues that German Romanticism connected nationalism and tradition, for the German Romantics expressed a “longing for a true, harmonious community, and organic folk-community, which would immerse the individual in the unbroken chain of tradition”. In Germany, Romanticism served as “an interpretation of history and society, of the totality of human life” and glorified things that appealed to past national glory and beauty, such as medieval tales, castles and nature, thus emphasizing Germany’s ‘shared ancestry and cultural elements’ (Kohn 1965:34). As Eerik Lagerspetz (1998:182) observes, “[t]he Romantics, the nationalists [...] see the connection between a particular language and a particular culture as fundamental and constitutive”. Thus, he goes on, “an opportunity to use one’s own native language is a necessary precondition for the preservation and development of one’s own culture” and “the opportunity to use their own language is of fundamental importance to them” (Lagerspetz 1998:182). This notion still exists today, for modern Germany has referred to good German language skills as the *unabdingbare Voraussetzung* ‘indispensable precondition’ for the integration of immigrants into German society. German Romanticism brought together the ideas of history and tradition with that of a nation, and created ideas of racial and linguistic purity and superiority in order to promote nationalism. However, this conception of nationalism was based upon primordial notions, thus rigid and supremely exclusive, which provoked later issues, and

which continues today to hinder the progress of cultural and societal thought. The German Romantics accurately documented German dialects and used the fictional medium of fables and myths, and, likewise, Zaimoğlu stylizes his writing as a version of an actual slang language and Özdamar explores idioms, metaphors, myths and tales in *Mutterzunge*. Dissimilarly, though, the authors use their representations of language and fiction to unravel the myths that the German Romantics helped to create.

#### 4.2.2 Issues Stemming from the Myth

Problems with immigrants stem from this identity construct, since citizens coming from a country that has a heritage-based national identity may view them as threatening if the immigrants “pursue an acculturation strategy that is discordant with their own definitions of citizenship” (Ditlmann et al. 2011:400). There tends to be more acceptance among Germans of immigrants who rather “demonstrate [...] understanding of the distinctiveness of national identity and respect the identity by not claiming it” as opposed to the immigrants who do not share the society’s cultural heritage but express attachment, destabilizing the “cultural bond that holds the nation together” (Ditlmann et al. 2011:400). Appendix B charts German public opinion on the question of whether or not immigrants should adhere to and accept core German values. These trends arise from the notion that “[r]eactions to immigrants often reflect assumptions about national identity- ideas about ‘us’ as citizens and ‘them’ as outsiders that are collectively shared” (Ditlmann et al. 2011:395). Zaimoğlu and Özdamar address these concepts and the identity construct. They frequently refer to their positions as outsiders, even the full title of *Kanak Sprak* refers to the speakers as being on the margins of society, and they talk about their struggles trying to feel like they belong in Germany.

Moreover, at the birth of the nation and nationalism there was a certainty about who lead the nation and what it represented, but “[i]n the more recent national state, however, [...] the most widely differing individualities and social groups seize on the idea of the nation and project themselves into it” (Meinecke 1970:16-17). This creates a struggle between the ‘pre-existing’ groups and those that seek to become in-group members. Yet, the earlier national state did not conduct itself better in order to be more unified, but rather “was lacking in spontaneous activity” that “springs from the fruitful differences within society and between its members” (Meinecke 1970:17). Instead of eliminating these differences, the modern state should attempt to “achieve a unified position in certain basic matters and a tolerance and appreciation for whatever diversity and variety it can permit” (Meinecke 1970:17). In a way, this goal is what *Kanak Sprach* and *Mutterzunge* strive to endorse and impart. By highlighting the existing diversity in modern German society and giving a voice to the diverse individuals, they attempt to raise awareness and of tolerance for their situation and placement in Germany.

## **5 Language in German Society**

### **5.1 Language Policy: Expectation and Requirement**

Volker Hinnenkamp (2005:3) explains that public policy discourse in Germany maintains the superiority of one language over another and the imposition of that language on the entire speech community, so that a “good command and knowledge of the German language...” is “the indispensable precondition (‘unabdingbare Voraussetzung’) for social integration into German society”. This language imposition was not a new policy in Germany, however, for as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century Otto von Bismarck reacted to his fear of Poles as threats to national identity and ordered that the German language be prescribed in all of the courts and public administration

(Degler 1998:7). The focus on language adaptation rather than encouraging multilingualism is problematic and does not encourage a multicultural society, but rather a society in which many cultures assimilate to the majority culture. This issue is further made problematic since, according to Bade (2001:44), “Long-established collective mentalities die hard and cannot be immediately altered by legal reform”. Thus, even though the citizenship laws and some of the immigration policies shifted in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, it will take a significant amount of time until the national thought progresses and shifts as well, and many more changes in policy are needed.

Through her dissertation study, Lucy Hottmann (2008:6) reveals that there is “a clear lack of any linguistic policy at state or federal level other than that of ignoring languages other than German”. Hottmann cites findings and evidence from her in-depth collection of data from different public sector services in Berlin, including institutions of education and health and council offices, among other diverse public services. Rather than aiming to promote multilingualism, she (2008:6) discovers that the public institutions focus only on facilitating communication in German for non-Germans. Hottmann (2008:11) claims that it is the government’s responsibility to “respond to the (linguistic) needs of immigrant groups” and that the language planning policy reflects Germany’s beliefs about the national language and multilingualism. Minority languages are not considered valuable assets for German society, but rather “are conceived as sources of problems and deficits and obstacles to integration” (Hottmann 2008:13). Public policy discourse maintains the superiority of one language over another and the imposition of that language on the entire speech community in order to “maintain standards of communication” (Hinnenkamp 2005:3). The government promotes assimilation, not integration, whereby one is “permitted to join a community but asked to leave[]

one's culture (and language) at the door" and there is the conviction that immigrants should surrender and just speak German (Hottmann 2008:18). Hottmann's dissertation provides a specifically political perspective on the immigrant population in Germany and how multiculturalism is not just expressed in language, but also how it is enacted. Focusing on the rhetoric of migration and conflict, Leslie Adelson (2005:6) discusses the paradoxical position of Turkish migrants in Germany in that they are encoded in the public imagination as "inarticulate foreigners [...] while dialogue is nonetheless expected of them, albeit as representatives of an alien national culture they are mistakenly held to represent." As recently as 2010, there was a campaign by the Deutschlandstiftung Integration advertising *Raus mit der Sprache. Rein ins Leben* 'Speak out already, throw yourself into life' (Yildiz 2012:206). Although it was a call for integration, it told foreigners to 'speak [German] already' in order to be a part of German life, implying there is no place in the society for other languages or that one cannot be a part of life without German. Zaimoğlu and Özdamar do speak fluent German, however, they debunk the concept that merely speaking German allows one to lead a normal German life. *Kanak Sprak* makes it clear that Germany and even the Deutschlandstiftung Integration refer to Standard German when they talk about foreigners speaking German. For, *Kanak Sprak*, although mostly German, is considered to be an incorrect way of speaking and would certainly not be referred to as a form of German. And, Özdamar and the woman in *Mutterzunge* speak fluent German, yet the novel is considered a form of 'migrant literature,' and the novel's main character feels excluded, reverting to learning Arabic in order to discover her identity and where she belongs. This highlights the discrimination that these terms evoke, for *Kanak Sprak* is not considered a dialect of German such as *Plattdeutsch*, but rather lowly, incorrect speech, and, despite the

clarity and sophistication of German in the writing, the literature is still considered to be ‘migrant’, or non-German.

## 5.2 German Socio-political Discourse

The concept of a multi-cultural society first emerged in the United States and Australia, and in the 1980’s, it reached Germany as well (Kürsat-Ahlers 1996:114). Yet, the “discourse of *multiculturalism* was not intended to recast the German concept of nations or produce a new blueprint for socio-cultural change,” so whereas the term brought about equal rights movements and anti-discrimination policies in the United States and Great Britain, “[i]n Germany no such movement and no such political purpose were ever intended” (Kürsat-Ahlers 1996:114). Changes in the discourse, then, take a while to become fully implemented and engrained in society and to eventually influence national thought.

Over a decade later, Germany has begun to reexamine its political discourse and the relation between the semantic meaning of a word and its referent in society. “Die lange Zeit übliche Aufteilung der in Deutschland wohnenden Bevölkerung in ‘Deutsche’ und ‘Ausländer’ reicht immer weniger aus, um die Lebenswirklichkeit zu beschreiben” {The long-standing, customary segmentation of the population living in Germany into ‘German’ and ‘foreigner’ is becoming less and less adequate at describing everyday reality} (Woellert et al. 2009:11). Ethnicizing labels have “indirectly served to reinforce a stereotypical social reaction to foreign workers” and have stuck “so that once again we are faced with a classic lag between naming conventions and the structure of society” (Fennell 1997:93; 92). The main example is the term *Gastarbeiter* ‘guest worker,’ which inherently connotes a transitory element, as typically guests are invited to stay for a while but eventually expected to leave. This was an obviously inaccurate

description for the workers in Germany, and yet the term remained used and reinforced in the public discourse. Adapted from Lucy Hottmann's (2008:27) division of the development of Turkish labor, Figure 1 provides a brief overview of the progression of political correctness in the German discourse, originating with the term *Gastarbeiter*.

*Figure 1*

<b>Period</b>	<b>'Politically Correct' Terminology</b>	<b>Phase</b>
<b>early 1960s -1973</b>	<i>Gastarbeiter</i> 'Guest-workers'	Recruitment of workers
<b>1974 - mid 1980s</b>	<i>ausländischer Arbeitnehmer</i> 'Foreign employees'	Joining of family members
<b>1980s - 2008</b>	<i>(Arbeits-) Migrant</i> '(labor-) migrant'	Final settling, establishing communities
<b>2008 - Present</b>	<i>Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund</i> 'People with an immigrant background'	Immigration reform, move towards integration and multiculturalism

Although politically correct terms historically exist in German, problems arise as they are very slow to permeate into the public discourse and were not until recently used often in political discourse as traditionally the topic was generally avoided.

Current German political discourse does not exclusively or always correctly apply the 'politically correct' term *Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund* and frequently frames Turkish-Germans as *Ausländer* 'foreigners', not as "a legitimate national minority with valuable contributions to offer" (Mandel 2008:10). Instead of recognizing the diversity of the Turkish immigrants, the "German narrative of ethnicizing Turkishness would often homogenize Turks into a monolithic unit" (Mandel 2008:3). They collectively became the 'other'. In fact, until 2005, federal data and statistics only represented the labels 'German' and 'Non-German' in their census data. A recent reform now distinguishes not only between people with and without backgrounds of migration, but additionally between those with or without their own migration

background. Appendix C illustrates these labels in a diagram from the 2010 Migration Report published by Germany's Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. Although Zaimoğlu calls his speakers *Kanake* and uses very politically incorrect discourse to describe other minorities as well, he stands outside of the necessity of political correctness as his crudeness reappropriates the labels and offers up a commentary on the accepted discourse. Even Özdamar does not refer to people of Turkish heritage except by their appearance, labeling two Turkish women in her fictionalized play 'the one with a headscarf' and 'the other Turkish woman without a headscarf' (Özdamar 1998:62). Zaimoğlu's reference to people based upon their ethnic or heritage groups demonstrates the emphasis of these distinctions in German society. And, by exemplifying Turkish stereotypical descriptions of other minorities and the German majority, he reveals the absurdity and futility of generalizations.

## **6 The Minority Voice in Contact**

### 6.1 Contact-induced Linguistic Changes

#### 6.1.1 Language Feature Borrowing

Borrowing occurs when two or more languages encounter each other and features of the languages are used in the production of the other. As Thomason and Kaufman (1988:14) expand upon this definition, "as far as the strictly linguistic possibilities go, any linguistic feature can be transferred from any language to any other language"<sup>18</sup>. A common reference to borrowing is the

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<sup>18</sup> Borrowing should not be confused with code-switching, which as Hinnenkamp (2000:4) states, "Code-Switching bezeichnet im allgemeinen die Verwendung zweier (und mehr) Sprachen innerhalb eines Gesprächs und es liegt in der Natur der Sache, dass natürlich bestimmte Voraussetzungen, wie das reziproke Verständnis der verwendeten Sprachen – jedenfalls bis zu einem bestimmten Grade – erfüllt sein müssen" {Code-switching generally refers to the use of two (or more) languages in a conversation, and it is in the nature of things that certain conditions

term ‘loanword’, which is a lexical item taken from one language and used in another, an example such as the German loanword ‘Sauerkraut’ in English. This example is quite typical of linguistic borrowing, for sauerkraut refers to a specific physical item. According to Timothy Curnow (2001:413; 415), it is more common for languages to borrow words referring to concrete objects than those referring to abstract items or actions, as they are easier concepts to transfer between languages and may involve items that previously had not existed in a linguistic community. Thomason and Kaufman (1988:37) agree with this notion of lexical ease of transfer for they consider words to be the first foreign elements in the borrowing language, and they define borrowing as “the incorporation of foreign features into a group’s native language by speakers of that language”. This definition confines the changes to only be additions to the native language, however, Curnow (2001:413) argues that borrowing can involve the “addition, loss or retention of features under contact,” whereby a language may also lose features that the contact language does not have and retain features that are similar among the languages that would have otherwise been lost. Borrowing is not limited to lexical items and includes loan translation, or calque as well, where a meaning or idiom is borrowed. What is or is not borrowed is impossible to predict for it involves multiple systems: “the system in the original language and the system in the borrowing language, as well as some sort of potentially universal semantic system” (Curnow 2001:415). The German language borrows words from Turkish such as *döner*, which is *Döner* in German and signifies a type of Turkish kabob. Zaimoğlu’s *Kanak Sprak* borrows English words such as *Pop* as in *Popmusik* ‘pop music’ and *cash money* (Zaimoglu 2010:41). He also borrows from Yiddish, as exemplified with the word *Dreck* spelled *drek* in Yiddish, meaning ‘filth’.

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such as mutual understanding of the used languages – must naturally be met – at least to a certain degree.}.

Özdamar's *Mutterzunge* cites many examples of Arabic loan words in the Turkish language such as the *İkbal* 'grace' and *Hasret* 'longing' (Özdamar 1998:39). Additionally, she explains how the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* first learned and borrowed from German nouns particular to the German cultural context. She narrates, "[d]ie Türken sprachen in ihrer Sprache, die mit deutschen Wörtern gemischt war, wofür sie in Türkisch keine Worte hatten, wie: Arbeitsamt, Finanzamt, Lohnsteuerkarte, Berufsschule" {the Turks spoke in their language, which was mixed with German words that they lacked words for in Turkish, such as: employment agency, tax office, income tax form, vocational school.} (Özdamar 1998:77). She therefore exemplifies the necessitated acquisition and application of loanwords in the German-Turkish context and shows how it contributes to the blending of language and cultures.

### 6.1.2 Substratum Interference

Another possible occurrence during linguistic contact is that of 'substratum interference'<sup>19</sup>. 'Interference' is a term that Weinreich coined in 1953 to classify the potential influence of one language on another (Queen 2001:55), and Thomason and Kaufman (1988:38) introduced 'substratum interference' as a "subtype of interference that results from imperfect group learning during a process of language shift". Thus, while borrowing incorporates foreign features into a language, substratum interference occurs when a group of speakers does not correctly learn the target language and their errors subsequently spread to the entire target language (Curnow 2001:419). Another difference between borrowing and substratum interference is that, while borrowing typically requires contact over a period of a hundred years or more, the process of interference transpires relatively quickly, potentially over a generation (Thomason and Kaufman

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<sup>19</sup> Also referred to as 'Shift-Interference'.

1988:41). Yet, as Thomason and Kaufman (1988:45) note, “[...] there is unfortunately no reason to expect these two types of interference to take place in mutually exclusive contexts”.

Therefore, it can be challenging to determine which type, borrowing or shift, is prevalent. While examples of substratum interference occurred in the *Gastarbeiter* generation since their *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* was characterized by errors and code switching, whereas the speakers of *Kiezdeutsch* and Kanak Sprak frequently are equally fluent in both German and Turkish. Özdamar also had reached fluency by the time she had written *Mutterzunge*, although she references the *Gastarbeiter* and the mistakes in language they made.

### 6.1.3 Additional Theories

Robin M. Queen (2001) expands upon Thomason and Kaufman’s 1988 model of contact-induced change. In her study on the bilingual intonation patterns of Turkish-German bilingual children, Queen (2001:56) identifies a new mechanism, FUSION, which categorizes a pattern that occurs in both a native and target language, but that is common to neither. She argues that fusion “represents a new structure altogether” and “depends critically on exploiting the formal difference between them [two languages],” thus making it different from codeswitching and the ‘convergence’ and ‘compromise’ strategies (Queen 2001:57). Unlike forms of interference, fusion is linked to multiple linguistic systems, and “the type and frequency of fusion are largely dependent on the sociolinguistic context of language contact” (Queen 2001:57). Zaimoğlu unites Turkish and German into slang that functions as an almost unique, separate third language. Although his primary linguistic system is German, his systematic contractions of indefinite pronouns exemplify fusion, as the form exists in the third language, but neither in German nor Turkish separately.

Gillian Sankoff (2012:2) goes beyond contributing an additional mechanism to replace the concept of interference with that of ‘transfer’, as well as the term ‘interlanguage’ in efforts to “conceptualize the linguistic system of the second language learner as rule-governed and orderly, rather than an error-ridden version of the target language”. She sets forth a new way to classify language contact, yet clarifies that “when community members regularly use both languages, language loss, language shift and convergence are not necessary consequences in a minority language situation” (Sankoff 2012:17). She also raises the problematic issue of labeling new variations of target languages as full of ‘errors’. This issue is particularly relevant in the perceptions of *Kiezdeutsch* and minority dialects in Germany.

#### 6.1.4 Language External Influences on Language Contact

Thomason and Kaufman (1988:35) present the idea that “[p]urely linguistic considerations are relevant but strictly secondary overall and perhaps “[...] it is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact”. Curnow (2001:419) agrees with them, citing language external influences including “the social context in which the language contact took place, and the attitudes of the speakers involved towards their language or languages” as “one of the most important factors which needs to be taken into account in developing and using any constraints on borrowing”. Examining how a language is used in society and the norms and expectations surrounding a language may be more successful in predicting how languages in contact might evolve. Sankoff (2012:3) also cites language contact as the “historical product of social forces” and the linguistic outcomes as being determined by these forces, including “economic, political and demographic factors”. This applies to the Kanak Sprak, for it is influenced by many

language external influences. The interviewees' German vocabulary is highly influenced by their location in Kiel, their educational status and their will to subvert Standard German. As a common language that they use to include one another and exclude the majority of German speakers, they purposely intersperse *Kanak Sprak* with predominantly colloquial, non-standard German words.

Some of these social factors have to do how a group integrates into the host society. Sankoff (2012:5) states that immigration, or “the kind of population movement [...] where newcomers fit themselves into an existing polity rather than establishing a new one...[sic]” has “usually resulted in rapid linguistic assimilation”. She goes on to refer to the bilingual speaker as the “locus of language contact” and a speaker identifying with many languages is “at the heart of linguistic change” (Sankoff 2012:5). The slang language used in *Kanak Sprak* uses predominantly German lexical items and grammar, for the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* and immigrants arrived in Germany, which had an already existing, domineering linguistic policy. Yet, elements of Turkish and Arabic still appear in the languages used in *Kanak Sprak* and *Mutterzunge*, respectively, because the characters identify with both nations and are not completely nor solely integrated in Germany.

## 6.2 The Cultural Contact Zone

### 6.2.1 Holistic v. Syncretic Notions of Culture

Kaya writes about two notions of culture. The first is the holistic version, which, as the name implies, approaches culture as a “highly integrated and grasped static ‘whole’” (Kaya 2007:484). Currently the dominating model, the holistic view claims that “‘shared meanings and values’ are the principal constituents of each distinct culture” and that any disorder in this unity or deviation would have catastrophic results, namely conditions such as “an ‘identity crisis,’ ‘in-betweenness,’

‘split identities,’ or ‘degeneration’” (Kaya 2007:484). An application of this notion is Eerik Lagerspetz’ (1998:182) recounting the idea of a “connection between a particular language and a particular culture as fundamental and constitutive,” which has its roots in the German Romantics. This idea necessitates using one’s native language in order to preserve and develop one’s culture, since ties to one’s culture and thus language are of extreme importance and part of the complete whole (Lagerspetz 1998:182). *Kanak Sprach* and *Mutterzunge* both represent minority citizens who attempt to find a voice as they wrestle with these issues of ‘split identities’ and ‘in-betweenness’ since the German conception of culture tends to be predominantly holistic, which thus emphasizes native cultures and languages and leaves little room for new additions.

Conversely, syncretism or ‘bricolage’ occurs when “[...] elements from different cultural traditions, sources, and discourses are constantly intermingled with and juxtaposed to each other” (Kaya 2007:484). While the holistic approach disregards syncretism for it challenges the authenticity and unity of a single culture, the syncretic notion claims, that “mixing and *bricolage* are the main characteristics of cultures” and that “[c]ulture does not develop along ethnically absolute lines but in complex, dynamic patterns of syncreticism” (Kaya 2007:485). The syncretic approach to culture embraces interconnectedness and cultural mixing. As opposed to viewing migrants as “pre-given social units,” the syncretic approach asserts that “migrants have acquired a set of new tools during the migration experience and they mix them with their previous lives and cultural repertoires” (Kaya 2007:485). If Germany were to adopt the syncretic notion of culture into its national thought, immigrants would be viewed as interconnected, valuable components of the society rather than impositions to German unity. However, the holistic approach is tied up in Germany’s national identity construct, so in order for the syncretic notion

to take root, the myth of German nationalism would need to first be exposed as a discursively constructed concept.

### 6.2.2 The Autoethnographic Text

Mary Louise Pratt (1991:34) uses the term ‘contact zones’, which refers to “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today”. Introducing her analysis of autoethnographic texts, Pratt cites an example of a Peruvian man in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century who wrote a letter to the king of Spain in a “mixture of Quechua and ungrammatical, expressive Spanish” (Pratt 1994:34). In writing this letter, in which he rewrote and blended Christian biblical history with that of his people, the man appropriated the genres and language of the Europeans, essentially mixing both cultures and languages. Pratt (1991:35) considers the letter to be an instance of an *autoethnographic text*, which she defines as “a text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them”. Whereas a majority writes ethnographic texts about the ‘other’, autoethnographic texts are written by the ‘other’ as responses to and dialogues with the majority. Oftentimes the autoethnographic text creates an “oppositional representation” of the majority’s speech while speaking in the same (Pratt 1991:35). For example, the Peruvian writes in Spanish about the Spaniards’ lust for gold, which are qualities they do not speak about themselves in an attempt to suppress the undesirable image. Through the construction of an autoethnographic text the writer does not imitate, but rather appropriates and adapts pieces of the majority culture’s “representational repertoire,” which can be described as a process of transculturation, when minority members utilize the majority’s transmitted materials

to create anew (Pratt 1991:36). Such a text can only exist in a contact zone, in which imposed, constructed boundaries of cultures and languages are reexamined. It is useful to define and analyze *Kanak Sprak* and *Mutterzunge* as autoethnographic texts, for both Zaimoğlu and Özdamar, similar to the Peruvian man, write in the language of the majority, blending the cultures of their heritage and Germany, in an attempt to confront the majority. Zaimoğlu's characters refer to themselves as *Kanake*, reappropriating the derogatory term first used by the German majority culture to describe the minority people from Turkey. They describe undesirable qualities of the Germans, and the slang *Kanak Sprak* serves as an 'oppositional representation' of Standard German. Özdamar also describes the majority culture and mixes multiple cultures and languages, appropriating pieces of the German culture while retaining her heritage culture.

## 7 Prevalent Beliefs about Modern Language

### 7.1 Monolingualism and other -lingualisms

Despite being a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of the world's languages and language groups, monolingualism is now considered the normative state. More than just a simple term, Yasemin Yildiz (2012:2) explains that the conception of monolingualism, "constitutes a key structuring principle that organizes the entire range of modern social life, from the construction of individuals and their proper subjectivities to the formation of disciplines and institutions, as well as of imagined collectives such as cultures and nations". This paradigm has a wide-reaching impact both on how individuals speak and view languages as well as on large-scale social, political, educational, and ideological realms, which directly influence multilingual practices. Yildiz (2012) describes the current era as the 'postmonolingual' period and the belief in monolingualism as the dominant notion the 'postmonolingual condition'. She suggests that, due

to the “amnesia about multilingualism [...] its existence as a widespread phenomenon” must be reestablished (Yildiz 2012:15). Moreover, lingualism must not be viewed as a finite quality wherein monolingualism, dedication to one language, entails mastery but multilingualism, knowledge of multiple languages, implies deficiency in many.

Volker Hinnenkamp (2005:1-2) reveals truths about bilingualism by exposing modern society’s ideal of ‘double monolingual’ rather than ‘bilingual’, and yet two languages side-by-side- could weigh differently and ‘bilingualism’ could be merely “mastering the right language at the right time in the right place”. The prevalent ‘norm’ and conception of bilingualism as only being achieved when two languages are completely mastered does not hold in Germany or any society with a migratory background of multilingual development (Hinnenkamp 2005:2). Rather, what is created are “blurred genres of bi- and multilingualism in every respect – the typical (post)modern complexity” (Hinnenkamp 2005:2). This more accurate depiction of bilingualism points to its mixed usage, language productivity and the blurring of constructed language boundaries.

Yet, in reference to minorities and actual bilingual or multilingual speakers, the monolingual ideal still pervades and imposes upon society. In Germany, teachers tend to comment on their students’ language deficits in one language rather than the interplay of both, and there is a criticism of these speakers being ‘semilinguals’ instead of ‘proper bilinguals’, leading in part to migrants’ poor school performance and low unemployment rate (Hinnenkamp 2005:2). The individual alone is blamed for failure and the languages of ethnic minorities seen as deficit, receiving imposed labels such as ‘Semilingualism’ from the majority society. Hinnenkamp argues for a re-evaluation of the “multifoldness, richness and creative potential of migrant language use” as these languages are not deficit but rather “different in form and

expression, covering different functions and [...] closely related to the life world of the respective communities” (Hinnenkamp 2005:2-3). Also, he clarifies that mixed speaking is not merely a juxtaposition of the elements of different languages, but the blending and creating of new compositions and hybrid forms that fill up previously unfilled and undefined semantic room (Hinnenkamp 2005:16). More specifically, the mixed language used by German adolescents with Turkish heritage stands in opposition to discourse labels and “constitutes a re-appropriation and re-contextualization of a discourse that so far has been defined solely by others,” functioning as a “mirror of the historical, social, cultural and linguistic conditions” in which they grow up (Hinnenkamp 2005:17). The characters in *Kanak Sprak* and *Mutterzunge* debunk this monolingual ideal, for it is precisely because of their multilingualism and embracement of languages other than their ‘mother tongues’ that they are able to create a unique, rich language.

## 7.2 The ‘Mother tongue’

The monolingual paradigm is, according to Yildiz (2012:10), held firmly together by the single myth of the ‘mother tongue’<sup>20</sup>. The idea of a mother tongue evokes a “unique, irreplaceable, unchangeable biological origin that situates the individual automatically in a kinship network and by extension in the nation,” or a “static mode of belonging to the national collective” (Yildiz 2012:9). Historically, the term arose along with the bourgeoisie, as it is by the image of a bourgeois mother that the term is defined (Yildiz 2012:11), namely with qualities of singularity, unconditional belonging and unceasing acceptance, and an origin. Similarly to the myth of monolingualism, the mother tongue carries a greater weight than that of a metaphor and instead

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<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to note that Yildiz (2012:12) cites Rosi Braidott in *Nomadic Subjects* as arguing that “there is no such [...] thing as a mother tongue” and that “all tongues carry the name of the father and are stamped by its register,” however this idea of a ‘father tongue’ is not a dominant or widely-shared notion.

says much about origin and identity (Yildiz 2012:12). She explains that, “The notion of the unique, gendered ‘mother’ insists on one predetermined and socially sanctioned language as the single locus of affect and attachment and thus attempts to obscure the possibility that languages other than the first or even primary one can take on emotional meaning” (Yildiz 2012:13). It is a term that is “highly ideological, charges, and misleading” and permeates into all aspects of life (Yildiz 2012:13). The majority culture considers Zaimoğlu’s characters Turkish despite that their ‘mother tongues’ are both German and Turkish, if not solely German, demonstrating the possibility of multiple mother tongues and the division of one’s heritage and ‘mother tongue’. In fact, *Kanak Sprak* speaks to the absence of a mother tongue since the youth peer group, rather than the mother, are the instigators and advocates of the slang language. Furthermore, Özdamar’s character struggles with her mother tongue, Turkish, after it was corrupted and defiled by the language reform, and uses German and Arabic to rediscover Turkish. She refers at one point to Turkish sounding and feeling like a foreign language to her, which questions the innate qualities that the mother tongue myth perpetuates.

## **8 *Kanak Sprak* and *Kanak Sprak***

### **8.1 Linguistic Samples**

The speech used by Zaimoğlu’s minority German youth is significant not only in how it is stylized, but also in the content of what the interviewees try to express. I will first present an entire sentence or string from one of the interviews in the novel, then contextualize the statement, comment on general defining features of the language, and then break the segment down into smaller constituents where beneficial. Organization by entire passages instead of by

the linguistic phenomenon is done in order to analyze both the linguistic techniques and the critical commentary that the entire example asserts.

Example (1) is ‘spoken’ by a rapper named Abdurrahman, 24, and the chapter is titled *Pop is ne fatale Orgie* ‘Pop [music] is a fatal orgy’.

- (1) Es schafft **ne** egalität, wo jeder gleich **is** und keinen **feinschliff** braucht, nur tausend **träume** von **rittern**, die **olle** jungfrauen wachküssen, tausend **träume**, billig zu haben, **wie’n** **pfifferling**, tausend träume für’n **appel-und’n-ei-preis**, **tausend-tropfen-schnaps**, daß du **man** den zappligen **schlotter** kriegst. Pop:die große **hure** **babylon**.<sup>21</sup> (Zaimoglu 2010:19)  
 {It [pop music] creates an equality, where everyone is the same and no one needs fine-tuning, only a thousand dreams of knights, who kiss awake all virgins, a thousand dreams to have cheap, like a damn, a thousand dreams for the price of nothing, a thousand drops of schnaps, that just gets you the jittery shivers. Pop: the biggest whore of Babylon.}

Criticizing the lack of originality and substance in the pop music industry as well as its stupefying effect, he employs vivid imagery and uses common German idioms, such as *appel-und- ‘n-ei* ‘on the cheap’ or ‘for nothing’. He also references the *hure Babylon* ‘Whore of Babylon’, who is a famous evil figure in the last book of the *Bible*, Revelation. This is interesting because Christianity is the largest religion in Germany and, although his heritage lies in Turkey, an overwhelmingly Islamic dominant country, he mentions a Christian allegorical woman.

The most obvious feature of the language is that the orthography looks completely different than that of Standard German orthography. While German capitalizes all of its nouns, this noun capitalization rule is absent in the Turkish language, and the orthography reflects that of Turkish<sup>22</sup>. So, the words *egalität*, *feinschliff*, *träume*, *rittern*, *jungfrauen*, *pfifferling*, *preis*, *tropfen*, *schnaps*, *schlotter*, *hure*, and *babylon* would all be capitalized in Standard German. In examination of the first constituent:

<sup>21</sup> The bolded items are those that are of particular significance and that will be later mentioned.

<sup>22</sup> This holds true for the entirety of the novel.

(1a) *Es schafft ne egalität, wo jeder gleich is und keinen feinschliff braucht*

It creates an equality, where everyone same is and not a fine-tuning needs

(Es schafft eine Egalität, wo jeder gleich ist und keinen Feinschliff braucht)<sup>23</sup>

Excerpt (1a) demonstrates, in addition to the lowercase noun orthography, which henceforth will not be noted, a contraction of the German indefinite article and an incorrect spelling of the German verb *sein* ‘to be’. The contraction *ne* is a shortened form of the German indefinite article *eine*. The base form of German indefinite articles is *ein*, but, since the noun it modifies in the noun phrase (NP) is feminine and in the accusative case, the *ein* has a [-e] suffix morpheme, hence *eine* and the contraction *ne*. Interestingly, although the negated form of the indefinite article *keinen* has the similar base form *kein*, it is not contracted later in the phrase. This is due to the addition of the prefix [k-] as well as the fact that the indefinite article has the accusative masculine declension and takes a [-en] suffix marker, rather than the suffix with the single phoneme [-e]. It should be noted that the *ne* contraction of German indefinite articles does occur in German, however it is considered extremely colloquial.

Another feature of this excerpt is that the verb *ist*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular conjugated form of the verb *sein* ‘to be’, is written without the final *t* as *is* instead. Although Standard German does include a large amount of loan words from English, it does not typically alter the words it already has in its lexicon. Thus, this feature is not influenced by English and is unique to Kanak Sprak.

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<sup>23</sup> For *Kanak Sprak*, all samples will include the original line, the English transcription, and the Standard German equivalent version of the slang. A Standard German equivalent is inserted in the third line so as to highlight the deviations in Kanak Sprak.

(1b) *wie 'n pfifferling, tausend träume für 'n appel-und 'n-ei-preis, tausend-tropfen-schnaps*  
 like 'a mushroom, thousand dreams for 'an apple-and 'an-egg-price, thousand-drops-schnapps  
 (wie einen Pfifferling, tausend Träume für einen Apfel-und-ein-Ei-Preis, tausend Tropfen des Schnaps)

Excerpt (1b) similarly exemplifies contraction of articles, along with compound words and German idioms. The contraction of *einen*, the accusative, masculine declension of the indefinite article, appears as 'n in *wie 'n* and *für 'n*. The modified nouns *Pfifferling* and *Appel* are both masculine nouns that, in this context, take the accusative case. A contraction of the neutral nominative or accusative form *ein* also occurs in *und 'n*, with *Ei* having a neutral gender. These contractions are orthographically connected by the apostrophe to the preceding word, as opposed to the independent *ne* seen in (1a). It is important to note that, although contractions of indefinite articles do not appear in Standard German orthography, contractions of the definite articles do when paired with prepositions, for example *ins* for *in das* and *im* for *in dem*. Also, as demonstrated, the contraction 'n does not distinguish between the accusative masculine indefinite article and the nominative or accusative neutral indefinite article. This distinction may not be as important in Kanak Sprak, for the Turkish indefinite article *bir* 'a' or the numeral 'one' does not undergo morphological change depending upon the noun (Kornfilt 1997:275). The concept of indefinite article contraction is limited to German, and the lack of this feature in Kanak Sprak demonstrates its mixed qualities.

Additionally significant is the speaker's word choice, for he uses a colloquial German expression *für 'n appel-und 'n-ei*, meaning 'on the cheap' or 'for next to nothing'. However, he inserts contractions, making it even more colloquial, uses the expression to form a complex noun modification to the word *preis* 'price', and furthermore uses the word *appel*, which is an

extremely old version of the Standard German *Apfel* ‘apple’. His use of *appel*, a word dating back to the pre-High German consonant shift around the 7<sup>th</sup> century, demonstrates the regional influences on Kanak Sprak. The consonant shift originated in southern Germany, and since Kiel is in the northernmost region of Germany, it did not alter its spelling and use of particular words, including *appel*. This, along with his integration of the entire German idiom, exemplifies the permeation of colloquial German in Kanak Sprak.

Finally, he creates the complex compound *tausend-tropfen-schnaps* ‘thousand drops of schnaps’ through the string of the two nouns and cardinal number. Although understood, this string joined together by hyphens is not typical to Standard German. Standard German regularly invents complex compounds, but is usually done so systematically and without hyphenation. It could be analyzed as a neologism, or a phrase that has been newly coined and is not yet a part of the Standard German lexicon, however this phenomenon occurs often throughout *Kanak Sprak* and thus merely attests to the creative mixing the Kanak Sprak speakers employ. What the speaker means to say would be expressed in Standard German with the genitive case, with the ‘of schnaps’ necessitating the masculine, genitive definite article *des* preceding *Schnaps*. Otherwise, Standard German would typically construct the compound *Schnapstropfen*, or ‘Schnapps tears’.

(1c) *daß du man den zappligen schlotter kriegst.*

that you just the jittery shivers\* get

(dass du man das zapplige Schlottern kriegst)

This last excerpt includes a modal particle and a generation of a new word form with *schlotter*.

The word *man* ‘just’ or ‘only’ is used here as a modal particle, but is typically used as the

indefinite pronoun meaning ‘one’. Its modal particle form is colloquial and specific to North German dialects. The word *kriegst*, the present tense, 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular conjugated form of the verb *kriegen*, is a colloquial form as well, though not entirely specific to a region. The excerpt also features the word *schlotter*, which does not exist in German. There is the noun *Schlottern* ‘shivering’ and the verb *schlottern* ‘to shudder’, but the noun *der Schlotter* is the narrator’s own construction. This word conjures the image of a male person dancing wildly to pop music, shaking his body uncontrollably with the music. It can be understood as ‘the shivers’ and follows Standard German grammar in that it has a typical noun ending and a masculine gender, typical to nouns that end in [-er]. Thus, he asserts his creativity and control of the German language while also manipulating it and commenting on what it lacks, namely its failure to have a word for what he wants to say.

The second example comes from the interview titled *Der direkte Draht zum schwarzen Mann* ‘The direct wire to the black man’ and the interviewee is Ali, 23, a different rapper from “*da crime posse*”, the title of his music group.

(2) So’n **lieb-alilein** ist der wahre **kanake**, weil er sich dem **einheimischen** zwischen die **ollen** arschbacken in den **kanal** dienert, und den **kakaoüberzug** als **ne art identität** pflegt.

(Zaimoglu 2010:32)

{That sort of loveable little Ali is the real *Kanake*, because he bows and scrapes his way up between the native’s ol’ arsecheeks into the canal, and shows off the cocoa coating as a kind of identity.}<sup>24</sup>

Referring to a type of people with Turkish heritage residing in Germany, Ali criticizes those who meekly submit to the expectations and demands of the majority society and who perceive themselves as the majority culture does, deriving a superficial identity from the color of their

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<sup>24</sup> Translation by Tom Cheeseman (2004:87).

skin. The canal he mentions is the Kiel Canal, which leads to the Baltic Sea and is the world's busiest artificial waterway, thus the source of a large amount of jobs for immigrants related to upkeep and sea transportation. The Kiel canal is also an indirect reference to colonialism and the racialization of German identity, for it was the primary route for German colonialism, through which the Germans presented themselves as a singular, racialized unit. Another region-specific reference is that of *ollen*, which is a declension of the adjective *oll*, meaning 'old'. This word is only used in North Germany and is very colloquial; it can be compared to the antiquated colloquial 'ol in English. Excerpts (2a) and (2b) further detail Ali's language.

- (2a) *So'n lieb - alilein ist der wahre Kanake*  
 Such'a beloved - Ali.little is the real Kanake  
 (So ein liebes Alilein ist der wahre Kanake)

Of note in this excerpt is the way in which he illustrates the Turkish minority. He refers not only to *wahre Kanake* 'real *Kanake*', hence implying that an element of the label is valid, but he also uses a diminutive construction of the typical Turkish name, Ali<sup>25</sup>. The suffix morpheme [-lein] adds a diminutive semantic meaning, and gives the word a neutral gender. Examples are *die Frau* 'the woman' and *Fräulein* 'the young lady,' and *der Fisch* 'the fish' and *das Fischlein* 'the little fish'. Adding the suffix to a proper name acts like a nickname or a term of endearment. Here, the suffix serves to make the exotic Ali appear smaller and non-threatening. In stark contrast to an intimidating and confrontational *Kanake*, *lieb-alilein* is a 'darling little Ali'. He thus is beloved yet condescended by the majority Germans, and because he allows himself to be their 'little darling,' he deserves the label *Kanake*. The excerpt features both *Kanake* and the

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<sup>25</sup> Ali is the name of the narrator, but since it is the archetypal Turkish name, it can be assumed that he is generalizing rather than specifically describing himself.

hypothetical *lieb-alilein* as the language the majority culture uses to describe the minority with Turkish heritage, which exemplifies the excerpt's autoethnographic qualities. Moreover, the narrator mixes the German diminutive suffix [-lein] with a non Standard German compound *lieb-alilein*, demonstrating the mixed qualities of Kanak Sprak.

- (2b) *und den kakaüberzug, als ne art identität pflegt*  
 and the cocoa.covering, as a type identity maintain  
 (und den Kakaüberzug, als eine Art der Identität pflegt)

The independent contraction *ne* is shown in this excerpt, as well as a noun compound and a non-standard usage of the genitive case. The noun compound, *kakaüberzug* 'cocoa.covering' refers to the color of Ali's skin, and he comments on it as a mere coating, not a part of him. Yet, Ali uses it to demonstrate a type of identity, one that the narrator does not think is legitimate. He uses the genitive case in the description *art identität* 'type of identity', or rather implies the genitive case. In Standard German, the genitive construction would require genitive morphology attached to an article or adjective. Here, the Standard German would appear as *Art der Identität*, with the feminine, genitive definite article *der*. The absence of the genitive article can be attributed different application of the genitive case in the Turkish language. Although Turkish does have a genitive case form, it is only employed relatively infrequently "for subjects of nominalized clauses, in addition to being a means for expressing the function of a noun phrase as possessor in possessive noun phrases" (Kornfilt 1997:212). Thus, the genitive case is used in Turkish more as an indication of ownership rather than signifying '[noun] of [noun]' or a more abstract notion of possession. The application, then, of the genitive case in an abstract, non-ownership situation may then be ignored, whether selectively or not, in Kanak Sprak.

Example (3) is ‘spoken’ once again by the rapper Abdurrahman, age 24, in the chapter *Pop is ne fatale Orgie*.

- (3) [...] ‘**n** **kanake** als **freund** rangiert ganz unten auf der **multikultiliste**, besser **is’n** **jamaikanigger** mit **ner zottelperücke**, noch besser’n **schmalzlatino**, und die ganz heiße oberfesche **krone is** denn ‘**n** **yankee-nigger**, auf den das einheimische **mösenmonopol** abfährt. (Zaimoglu 2010:22)  
 {[to have] a *Kanake* as a friend ranks lowest of the low [*ganz unten*] on the multiculti-list, better is a Jamaica-nigger with a dreadlocks-wig, better still a schmaltzy Latino, and the hottest top-cool crowning number is a Yanky-nigger, the native snatch-monopolists go crazy ‘bout him.}<sup>26</sup>

The excerpt contains article contractions and many autoethnographic self-references to *Kanake* and immigrants in Germany. His colorful and politically incorrect descriptions of the different types of immigrant populations in Germany serve to reappropriate his usage of the derogatory words and establish both his connection with and dissimilarity to the other German minority groups. As excerpt (3a) highlights:

- (3a) *besser is’n jamaikanigger mit ner zottelperücke, noch besser’n schmalzlatino*  
 better is’a Jamaica.nigger with a wool hair.wig, still better’a schmaltzy.Latino  
 (besser ist einen Jamaikanigger mit einer Zottelperücke, noch besser ein Schmalzlatino)

The excerpt illustrates the contractions of *einen* and *ein* to ‘*n*’, as well as the simplification of *einer* to *ner*. While the former two contracted forms have already been analyzed, *einer* has not. It is the feminine genitive declination, and stands independently just like *ne*, the contraction of *eine*, examined in excerpt (1a). He also creates novel noun combinations to describe and stereotype other minorities. *Jamaikanigger* and *schmalzlatino* both degrade and insult the people

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<sup>26</sup> Translation by Tom Cheeseman (2004:88).

within the minorities, however, because he is a self-identified *Kanake*, it is ambiguous whether he uses the terms maliciously or not. In my analysis, he uses the derogatory labels just as he uses *Kanake*; as a reappropriation of the labels that the host majority culture has created based upon stereotypes and racism. He does, though, invent a new word *zottelperücke* meaning ‘dreadlocks’, even though the words *Rastalocken* and simply *Dreadlocks* already exist in Standard German. The component nouns, *Perücke* ‘wig’ and *Zottel* ‘dag’ or ‘wooly hair,’ most commonly used in the context of animals like sheep and goats, connote an animality that intensifies the already derogatory description. By applying and including the terms in his dialect, he both sets the *Kanake* in the larger frame of victims of German racist language and, significantly, expresses disdain for other minority groups that may have an easier time in Germany than himself and other minority people in Germany with Turkish heritage. He draws attention to a ‘hierarchy’ of minority groups, with the *yankee-nigger* ranking highest on the scale of German acceptance. Yet, even the *yankee* is subjected to the ‘snatch-monopolists’ and is viewed as a prized novelty rather than an integrated member of society.

Example (4) comes from the chapter *Ich bin, der ich bin* ‘I am who I am’ by Hasan, age 13, who is a wanderer and student.

- (4) Diese scheiße mit den zwei kulturen steht mir bis hier, was soll das, was bringt mir’n kluger schnack mit zwei fellen, auf denen mein arsch kein platz hat, ‘n fell **streck** ich mir über’n leib, damit mir **nich** bange wird, aber unter’n arsch brauch ich verdammich bloß festen boden, wo ich kauer und ende. (Zaimoglu 2010:96)  
 {I’ve had it with this shit about the two cultures, what’s that about, what good to me is a smart phrase about two furs, with no room on either for my arse, I throw a fur over my body, so I don’t feel scared, but under my arse I damn well need firm ground where I crouch and end.}<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Translation by Tom Cheeseman (2004:88).

The content of this example deals with the issue the minority German youth of Turkish heritage, as well as those with other, non-German ancestries, have with multiple identities and feelings of belonging to more than one country and nation. He refutes the idea of two distinct cultures, and compares the cultures to two furs that still leave a gap on his backside, ultimately preventing him from settling down and being comfortable. He thus equates an identity built on the idea of two distinct cultures with a lack of unity that leaves one dissatisfied and that does not completely cover, or describe, one's entire self and true identity.

The language he uses is noticeably less interspersed with slang words and is closer to Standard German. This is most likely since he is part of a younger generation that has been affected positively by the changes in citizenship policy and immigration policy, particularly those of education and a renewed emphasis on German language learning. His application of German syntax is the most significant feature of the language, for, while the other narratives do not employ incorrect syntax grammar per se, they do not adhere to customary syntax patterns and traditions. Example (4) demonstrates multiple modifying clauses, embedded questions and both a coordinating and subordinating conjunction, all neatly spaced out and separated by commas. Excerpts (4a) and (4b) exemplify features already examined, as well as some additional ones that are more particular to certain German dialects.

- (4a) *was bringt mir 'n kluger schnack mit zwei fellen*  
 what brings me-DAT'a smart phrase with two furs<sup>28</sup>  
 (was bringt mir ein kluger Schnack mit zwei Fellen)

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<sup>28</sup> The English gloss clarifies that *mir* is the dative 1<sup>st</sup> person singular pronoun translated to 'me' but indicating 'to me', as opposed to the accusative *mich*, which is also translated to 'me'.

Excerpt (4a) contracts the indefinite article *ein*, but more notably employs the word *schnack* ‘phrase’ or ‘chitchat’, which is a colloquial Northern German noun derived from the verb *schnacken* that was discussed in section 2.3.1. Excerpt (4b) demonstrates additional regional qualities of his narrative.

- (4b) *‘n fell streck ich mir über’n leib, damit mir nich bange wird*  
 a fur stretch I me-DAT over’the body, so that me-DAT not afraid become-PASSIVE  
 (ein Fell strecke ich mir über den Leib, damit mir nicht Bange wird)

The words *streck* and *nich* both lack final-position phonemes. However, although the correct forms would be *strecke* and *nicht*, the orthography reflects how the words would be pronounced and heard, demonstrating eye dialect properties. The narrator also, arguably, contracts a definite article, rather than an indefinite article. He contracts *den* to ‘*n*, which would indicate that the phenomenon extends to the rest of the definite articles as well. Yet, it is possible that his intention is to contract the indefinite article *einen* because, although the Standard German indicates that the phrase should read *den Leib* since he is referring specifically to his own body, he could contract from the less-correct form *einen Leib*.

Hakan, a 22-year old motor vehicle apprentice narrates example (5) in the chapter entitled *Ich spiel in der Liga der Verdammten* ‘I play in the league of the damned’.

- (5) Schau dir **man** das **pack** an, wenn die **man orntlich** bedonnert sind, bei uns singen die **leute** wenigstens ein paar **takte aus der sentimentalen mottenkiste** [...] Hier wird gebrüllt und fremdes verflucht oder gejagt. Folklore **is für’n deutschen musikantenstadl** oder **schlesien-wie-fehlt-du-mir oder’n** karatehieb ins **kanaken-genick** [...] Der deutsche **malocher is ne pogromsau**, tottreten **is** für die hier oberster volkssport. (Zaimoglu 2010:85-86)

{Just look at the pack of them, when they're hammered on booze. Our people sing a few sentimental old tunes [...] Here they shout and curse foreigners or go hunting them. For the German, folklore's Bavarian music or Silesia-how-I-miss-you or a karate chop on a Kanake's neck [...] The German worker is a pogrom-pig, kicking people to death is the top popular sport here.}<sup>29</sup>

Serving as an acute example of an autoethnographic text with its oppositional representation of the German people, he points out their unfavorable actions when they are under the influence of alcohol. As opposed to *bei uns* 'with us', meaning 'our people', he claims that the Germans shout, curse and hunt foreigners, and he criticizes their folklore music as being Bavarian country music, reminiscent of their lost land, or violent against people of Turkish heritage. He goes so far as to reference pogroms, which are taboo, repressed pieces of German history, as they mostly occurred against the Jewish population. The use of *pogromsau* 'pogrom-pig' references the Holocaust, and the compound *schlesien-wie-fehlst-du-mir* 'Silesia-how-I-miss-you' references World War II and Germany's war dues, for, at the time of German reunification, Germany had still not legally given up the land<sup>30</sup> that they lost as a condition of the war's end. In further examination:

(5a) *Schau dir man das pack an, wenn die man orntlich bedonnert sind*

Look-IMP you-DAT just the pack at<sup>31</sup>, when they just fairly drunk are

(Schau dir man das Pack an, wenn die man ordentlich bedonnert sind)

<sup>29</sup> Translation by Tom Cheeseman (2004:88).

<sup>30</sup> Silesia was a region in Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic that was entrusted largely to Poland after World War II.

<sup>31</sup> *an* is the separable prefix to the verb *anschauen* 'to look at'. In main clauses, it separates from the verb root and undergoes syntactic movement to the final-position.

This excerpt illustrates the use of the modal particle *man* ‘just’ and eye dialect features, as demonstrated by the word *orntlich*. The modal particle is used in the sentence twice and adds a colloquial, slang tone to the phrase. Also, although *orntlich* is not a German word, it is the eye dialect representation of the word *ordentlich* ‘fairly’ or ‘properly’. Here, *orntlich* is neither a typo nor a signifier of incompetent grammar, but rather is an orthographical spelling of the way *ordentlich* would be said and heard in German.

(5b) *oder schlesien-wie-fehlst-du-mir*      *oder ’n karatehieb ins kanaken-genick*  
 or    Silesia -how -lack -you -me-DAT or’a    karate chop in the *Kanaken-neck*  
 (oder Schlesien-wie-fehlst-du-mir oder einen Karatehieb ins Kanaken-Genick)

The narrator is referring to what folkore music means to the Germans here, saying that it deals with longing for land that does not belong to them and violence against foreigners. As stated previously, this mention of Silesia references the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, and thus it jarringly provides heavy cultural criticism of the German’s view of their *Heimat* ‘homeland’ in a very colloquial, stylized language. Additionally, this Silesia homeland issue is connected to folklore music and World War II in an extremely indelicate way, since folklore music trivializes the issue’s importance and a mixed, colloquialized language is used by non-native Germans to describe the issue that is distinctly comprised of German monolingual and nationalistic ideals.

He uses a complex construction with the compound *schlesien-wie-fehlst-du-mir* ‘Silesia-how-I-miss-you’ or, more literally, ‘Silesia-how-you-are-lacking-to-me’. This compound creates a noun from the component including a noun, adverb, conjugated verb, and two pronouns. Separately, the compound could form an entire grammatical sentence, yet with the hyphenation it

manipulates the compound into acting like a noun in the sentence describing the type of music to which Germans listen. This application of hyphenation to create a single word with many components, while very infrequent in Standard German, is reminiscent of the agglutinative properties of the Turkish language, in which many suffixes are attached to words to alter their grammatical category and to add complex meanings. The narrator applies a Turkish grammar function to German, both illustrating a mixed form and commenting on his dissatisfaction with purely Standard German grammar. He uses additional hyphenation with the noun *kanaken-genick* ‘*Kanaken-neck*’ instead applying Standard German by, for example, making *kanaken* an adjective modifying the noun *genick* or using the genitive case such as in *Genick der/von Kanaken* ‘*Kanaken’s neck*’. Once again, he resists Standard German forms in favor of innovating and appropriating the German language.

## 8.2 Comparison to Kiezdeutsch and Standard German

In comparison to Kiezdeutsch, Brammertz (2008) refers to Kanak Sprak as the ‘stylized version,’ saying, “Für die stilisierte Version von Kiezdeutsch wird häufig der Ausdruck Kanak Sprak gebraucht” {The stylized version of Kiezdeutsch is frequently termed Kanak Sprak} (translation: Chris Cave). Appendix D shows a complex but thorough outline of the differences between bilingual (Turkish/German) speakers and those in Zaimoğlu’s literary work. Elizabeth Loentz 2006:38) outlines elements of this stylized “portrayal of the ethnolect in pop culture” in her description of what she terms the ‘medial ethnolect’. She characterizes it as including the shortening of long vowels, the omission or contraction of articles, the omission of prepositions and articles in prepositional phrases, errors, in gender, case, and word order, phonetic differences such as a rolled [r] and the use of the voiceless palato-alveolar fricative [ʃ] instead of the

voiceless palatal fricative [ç], as well as the use of characteristic lexical and discourse markers. By classifying the ethnolect, or a language spoken by a specific ethnic or cultural group, as ‘medial,’ she separates it from the primary ethnolect, which *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* that belonged to the initial *Gastarbeiter* generation. As opposed to the primary ethnolect, the “secondary ethnolect is a reduced or stereotypical form” that “exhibits select easily recognizable aspects (often in exaggerated form) of the primary ethnolect,” but also has unique elements as well (Loentz 2006:38). The speakers of the secondary ethnolect have a command of Standard German as well as regional dialects, but speak an altered form in order to express their belonging to a minority sub-group. They ironically include and exclude both the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* generation and Germans with German heritage as they allude to and draw from both languages in the creation of a unique form, which “appears almost exclusively in fictional genres” (Loentz 2006:39). *Kanak Sprak* then serves as an example of this secondary, or medial ethnolect, as it demonstrates non-standard, stylized features and purposefully combines and separates itself equally from the language of their ancestors and the language of their current host culture.

According to Pfaff (2005:204), “Zaimoglu’s characters’ speech is basically colloquial German, with ‘eye-dialect’ representations of rapid speech phonology, e.g. contractions of function words and shortened forms of some content words. Further, there are lexical items from English and Yiddish”, exemplified in section 6.1.1, and “[t]hese features are characteristic of native varieties of Germans [...]”. Thus, since it includes shortened forms and borrowed items, the speech is not merely an eye dialect, but rather involves a more complex blending of German and Turkish, along with foreign loan words that are typical in the two languages. Pfaff (2005:205) lists characteristics of German in *Kanak Sprak*, including the reduced forms of indefinite articles, articles cliticized to preposition or copula, colloquial first singular forms

without the [-e] suffix, rapid speech phonology and discourse fillers. Examples of these characteristics are the contractions of indefinite articles such as *einen* to 'n and *eine* to ne, the dropping of the first singular [-e] suffix in *strecke* in excerpt (4b), long, run-on phrases with multiple short constituents divided by punctuation marks, and the frequent use of the modal particle *man*.

### 8.3 Analysis

By “destabilizing the ways in which the German state, and popular culture as a whole, classify their other” and undermining the state-imposed language of communication for nonnative Germans, *Kanak Sprak* reveals the imagined nature of nationhood and culture (Mandel 2008:21). In an autoethnographical fashion, *Kanak Sprak* criticizes the host majority culture and purposefully presents an intralingual language that is “not immediately comprehensible to the ‘native’ speakers unfamiliar with this code, even though all the words are in German,” subverting “the sanctioned ‘native speakers’” access and taken-for-granted relationship to the language” (Yildiz 177). Thus, a large part of *Kanak Sprak* is untranslatable to a native German speaker, in spite of it being directed towards an entirely German-speaking audience as it is written entirely in German and absent of Turkish lexical items. This cuts off the majority culture’s access and control of the minority, emancipating and empowering the minority youth speakers. It additionally implies that, although the German language is important for ideas of national identity, the language can be accessed and manipulated by those who might not be typically thought of as part of the national community. According to Tom Cheeseman (2004:86), “‘*Kanak Sprak*’ is a customized German, featuring rap rhythms and verbal riffs, using international English phrases, and deploying a vast vocabulary of German dialect and slang

terms, with frequent fresh-minted compounds”. This ‘customization’ and ‘fresh-minting’ enable its speakers to take control of an imposed language. Even if they actively speak fluent Standard German, they would not be necessarily perceived as members of the culture and German nation, a situation that draws attention to the exclusive quality of the German imagined community, but that also encourages the young men to find their own community among fellow speakers.

## 9 *Mutterzunge*

### 9.1 Linguistic Samples

#### 9.1.1 Literal Translation

Literal translation involves purely lexical translation and does not account for underlying meanings in the origin language. Özdamar translates literally in the first two chapters of *Mutterzunge: Erzählungen*, “Mutterzunge” and “Grossvaterzunge”. The first example of literal translation comes from the opening passage of “Mutterzunge”:

- (6) Zunge hat keine Knochen, wohin man sie dreht, dreht sie sich dorthin. (Özdamar 1998:9)  
 {A tongue has no bones: twist it in any direction and it will turn that way.}

This phrase *Zunge drehen* ‘to turn or twist the tongue’ is translated literally from the Turkish idiom *dili dönmek*, in which *dili* means ‘tongue’ and *dönmek* ‘to turn or twist’ (Seyhan 2001:118). The idiom itself refers to the idea of being able to pronounce something (Seyhan 2001:118). So, when the narrator later states “Ich saß mit meiner gedrehten Zunge in dieser Stadt Berlin” {I sat with my twisted tongue in this city [of] Berlin} and describes herself as having a ‘twisted tongue’, she relates to the reader that she has an ability to pronounce and master different sounds (Özdamar 1998:9). This idea of a ‘twisted tongue’ only makes sense with an understanding of the Turkish idiom from which the German translation is derived. In German,

the term *Zungenbrecher* means ‘tongue twister’, but can be separated into its literal components *Zungen* ‘tongues’ and *Brecher* ‘breaker’. This German expression, then, implies that the tongue does have bones, because when one twists the tongue in a *Zungenbrecher* ‘tongue twister’, one breaks it with a *Brecher* ‘breaker’. The semantic meaning of example (6) comes from the literally translated Turkish idiom, yet the example simultaneously negates the German metaphor that tongues do, indeed, have bones. Thus, although the metaphor is written in German, it requires multilingualism, or knowledge of both Turkish and German to completely comprehend its meaning.

Example (7) is a literal translation of a phrase that is typically said at the beginning of Turkish fairy tales.

(7) Es war einmal, es war keinmal...“ (Özdamar 1998:33)  
 {Once there was, once there was not}<sup>32</sup>

As the Turkish version of ‘once upon a time,’ the literal translation of the phrase in German is confusing in that it says that there was something once, and something not once (Seyhan 2001:123). In Turkish, the phrase is seen as an acknowledgment of the ambiguity of the past, however, a German readership would not be able to innately understand that underlying notion. The narrator goes on to tell a fairy tale about a young girl, but, although she writes in German, the fairy tale is of Turkish origin and she uses the traditional Turkish phrase to begin the tale. Özdamar mixes Turkish phrases and stories through their manifestation in the German language. These cultural stories and phrases are not confined, then, to one culture, but can be shared, applied and repeated in many.

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<sup>32</sup> Translation by Azade Seyhan (2001:123).

Without familiarity with Turkish expressive phrases and idioms, example (8) would seem extremely violent and misogynistic.

- (8) “‘Ja, Meister, ihr Fleisch gehört Ihnen, ihre Knochen mir, lehre sie, wenn sie ihre Augen und Gehör und ihr Herz nicht aufmacht zu dem, was Sie sagen, schlagen Sie, die Hand der schlagenden Meister stammt aus dem Paradies, wo Sie schlagen, werden dort die Rosen blühen’.” (Özdamar 1998:15)  
 {“Yes, master, her flesh belongs to you, her bones to me. Hit her if she does not open her eyes, ears and heart to what you say. The hand of the master who hits hails from paradise. Where you hit, there roses will bloom’.”}

Arriving for her first day of Arabic lessons, the narrator cites example (8) as what her father would say to her Arabic teacher, Ibni Abdullah, if he had brought her to the lesson himself.

Lacking the Turkish metaphorical context that “preserves the memory of the ancient histories of hunting, warring, [and] conquering tribes” and “is rich in idioms that express the body in pain,” the example reads like a father offering his daughter for beatings and dismemberment (Seyhan 2001:123). Rather, there exists a Turkish expression stating, “Her/His flesh is yours, the bones are mine” that is said when parents bring their children to a teacher that “illustrates the great faith put in teachers in Turkish culture” (Seyhan 2001:123). Likewise, the Turkish proverb “Spanking hails from paradise” emphasizes the reprimanding of misbehaving children, and the Turkish aphorism “Where the master touches, there roses bloom” depicts the importance and praise of teachers on the lives of their students (Seyhan 2001:123). Here, all three expressions are mixed together and literally translated into German, offering little explanation as to its original meaning.

### 9.1.2 Metaphor

Özdamar applies many vivid metaphors in *Mutterzunge* that she repeats and advances throughout the first two *Erzählungen*. One such metaphor is that of the multicultural and multilingual individual as a bird.

- (9a) Ich bin ein Vogel. Geflogen aus meinem Land, ich war auf den Autobahnen am Rande der XY-ungelöst-Städte. (Özdamar 1998:27)  
 {I am a bird. Having flown from my country, I was on the autobahns on the edge of the XY-unresolved-cities.}

Here, she introduces the idea of herself as a bird. She explains that she has flown away from her country, and uses the image of her traveling along the German autobahn by uncertain cities with unknown names to express her feelings of marginality. Reminiscent of Zaimoğlu's characters 'from the edges of society,' Özdamar's narrator is a passerby on the outskirts of cities. She continues the metaphor when her teacher, Ibni Abdullah tells her:

- (9b) 'Wenn du mich anguckst, setzt sich ein Vogel auf meine linke Schulter und fliegt und setzt sich auf die andere Schulter.' (Özdamar 1998:30)  
 {When you look at me, a bird sits itself on my left shoulder then flies and sits itself on the other shoulder.}

This image of a bird flying between and sitting on Ibni's shoulders educes that of a bird in an unnatural state. Unprepared rather than unwilling, the bird does not remain in flight very long and prefers to return to the safety and firmness of the shoulders. Analyzing the narrator as the bird and Ibni as the imparter of her grandfather tongue, his shoulders metaphorically represent the two languages, Turkish and Arabic, and his head German. She aims to, as she states at the beginning of her novel, learn her grandfather tongue in order to find the way to her mother tongue, Turkish, which was corrupted by Atatürk's language reform and imposition of the Latin

script. Thus, she tries to make connections between Turkish and Arabic, finding Arabic loanwords in Turkish and learning Arabic script. She still has to fly over his head, or use the medium of German, to get from one shoulder to the other shoulder, however, once she is able to reach her mother tongue through the grandfather tongue and join both together, she can fulfill her potential as a bird and fly. She succeeds in (9c):

(9c) [...] ein Vogel fliegt und verliert seine Federn über dem Weg, wo der Pfeil gegangen ist.  
(Özdamar 1998:44)  
{[...] a bird flies and loses his feathers over the path the arrow went.}

She refers here to her interpretation of the Arabic script, in which the script incites images and tells stories. Yet, because she constantly refers to herself as a bird, she is implying that her mastery of the Arabic language enables her become free like a bird and to take flight. She drops feathers, or pieces of herself, along the path that the script takes her. This signifies her multiculturalism in that she leaves a trace and impact at the different places she travels, as well as draws attention to her unity with the Arabic script or grandfather tongue.

Additional metaphors include orthographies and languages as personified, living beings. The pictorial Arabic script encourages her to build a new relationship with language, one that was disallowed with the arbitrary Latin scripts of German and Turkish. Citing the narrator's first description of the Arabic characters:

(10a) Manche sahen aus wie ein Vogel, manche wie ein Herz, auf dem ein Pfeil steckt, manche wie eine Karawane, manche wie schlafende Kamele, manche wie ein Fluß [...] (Özdamar 1998:18)  
{Some looked like a bird, some like a heart with an arrow through it, some like a caravan, some like sleeping camels, some like a river [...]}

The orthography inspires images of nature such as a bird and the arrow that she cites later in the novel as seen in (9c), as well as images from Turkey including the caravan and sleeping camel.

She juxtaposes the two environments, Germany and Turkey, and fuses them together with Arabic script. As she develops a closer relationship to the script in her lessons, she alters her description:

(10b) Heute manche haben würdevolle Gesichter, sie hören das Rauschen ihres Herzens, manche ihrer Augen sind ganz, manche halb geschlossen. Manche sind dünne Waisen mit bleichen Gesichtern, manche Allahs Vogel, sie wandern Hand in Hand. (Özdamar 1998:18-19)

{Today some have dignified faces, they hear the rush of their hearts, some of their eyes are wide open, some half closed. Some are slender orphans with pale faces, some Allah's birds; they migrate hand in hand.}

Now, instead of evoking images of nature and Turkey, the letters remind the narrator of people.

She describes their faces, eyes, hearts, body types and hands, connecting the idea of language to a physical form. Just as Ibni Abdullah embodies languages in (9b), the Arabic letters have bodies themselves and physical qualities. They even 'migrate' together, going on a journey just like the language learners, the birds. Lastly, the narrator notices:

(10c) Ibni Abdullahs Gesicht sah wie ein zorniger Buchstabe aus, der seine eine Augenbraue hochgezogen hatte. (Özdamar 1998:19)

{Ibni Abdullah's face looked like an angry letter who had raised his eyebrow.}

In this development, the script does not resemble people, but rather a person reminds the narrator of an Arabic letter. She not only ascribes human features and characteristics to the letters, but begins to see the script manifest everywhere to the point that the script has come so alive to her that she sees living people as resembling the script. This metaphor serves to illustrate the indivisible relationship between people and language.

### 9.1.3 Language

The narrator's use of multiple languages reveals her commentary on the notions of the mother tongue and monolingualism, as well as personal identity through language. When she first meets Ibni Abdullah he says to her:

- (11) Es ist eine Gemeinheit, mit einer Orientalin in Deutsch zu reden, aber momentan haben wir ja nur diese Sprache. (Özdamar 1998:15)  
 {It is a disgrace to converse in German with a Middle Eastern woman, but we really only have this language at the moment.}

Supporting the myth of the mother tongue and linguistic national identities but also placing value on multilingualism, the teacher notes how, although they both have heritages in neighboring areas and speak closely related languages, they are forced to communicate in a language that is neither of their first languages. This situation is common in areas of cultural diversity, where immigrants who may speak merely different dialects of a language find it easier to communicate in the dominant, majority culture language. However, Ibni Abdullah's perspective is detrimental, for it implies that German, as a non-native language, is somehow lesser than a mother tongue would be.

The narrator, though, sees the value in multiple languages. A self-labeled *Wörtersammlerin* 'word gatherer,' she slowly increases her inventory of Arabic words and Arabic loan words in Turkish, while also providing definitions in German. In example (12) she lists a few Turkish words of Arabic origin:

- (12) *Medyun* – verbunden  
*Meytap* – Feuerwerkskörper  
*Yetim* – Waise  
 ‘Ja’, sagte: Ibni Abdullah, ‘es hört sich ein klein bißchen anders an.’ Ich sagte: ‘Bis diese Wörter aus deinem Land aufgestanden und zu meinem Land gelaufen sind, haben sie sich unterwegs etwas geändert.’ (Özdamar 1998:29)  
 {*Medyun* – connected  
*Meytap* – fireworks  
*Yetim* – orphan  
 ‘Yes’, Ibni Abdullah said, ‘it sounds a little bit different.’ I said: ‘When these words got up from your country and ran to mine, they somewhat changed themselves along the way.’ }

After listing the Arabic words, Ibni comments that they sound strange in her Turkish accent.

Continuing the metaphor of personified words, the narrator responds that words undergo change as they migrate to different countries. According to her, languages are fluid and adaptable, not limited to a specific country or execution. She exemplifies the mixing of languages as she combines semantically equivalent words in Turkish, Arabic and German and relates them to one another. Thus, she fights against the myth of monolingualism and rigid language.

In the final chapter of *Mutterzunge*, Özdamar recounts her time spent in Germany as a cleaning woman and *Gastarbeiterin*. She recalls her interaction with the German language in example (13), which is the very last passage in *Mutterzunge*. It comically depicts her confusing German words with ones that sound very similar. As she begins her new job at a theater, she talks to herself and tries to remember her instructions. She states:

- (13) 'Hier ist die **Bohnermaschine**, die **Bühne** wird täglich **gebohnert**, haben sie gesagt, nein, hier ist die **Bohnermaschine** haben sie gesagt, die **Bühne** wird täglich **gebühnert\***, die **Bohne** wird täglich **gebohnert**, nein, nein, die **Bühne** wird täglich **gebohnert**.' (Özdamar 1998:120)<sup>33</sup>  
 {'Here is the **electric floor polisher**, the **stage** is to be **polished** daily, they said. No, here is the **electric floor machine**, they said, the **stage** is to be **gebühnert** daily. The **bean** is to be **polished** daily, no, no, the **stage** is to be **polished** daily.'}

The segment *Bohner-* 'polishing-' and words *gebohnert* 'polished', *Bühne* 'stage' and *Bohne* 'bean' all sound alike. Her instructions are for the stage to be polished, or *die Bühne wird gebohnert*, but at a certain point she switches lexical items and refers to a bean being polished and invents the verbal past participle *gebühnert* from the noun *Bühne*, over-applying German morphological rules. This mix-up demonstrates the ongoing struggle with words and playfully draws attention to some of the peculiarities in the German language, such as exceptions to derivational morphology and the pairing of *Bühne* with *gebohnert*, not with *gebühnert\**.

A different form of linguistic mix-up occurs at the end of "Grossvaterzunge" when the narrator approaches and has a conversation with a German girl, which ensues:

- (14) 'was machen Sie in Deutschland?' fragte das Mädchen mich. Ich sagte: 'Ich bin Wörtersammlerin.' Und Ibni Abdullah, die Seele in meiner Seele, dachte ich und erinnerte mich noch an ein Wort in meiner Mutterzunge: *Ruh* – '*Ruh* heißt Seele', sagte ich zu dem Mädchen. 'Seele heißt Ruh', sagte sie. (Özdamar 1998:48)  
 {'What do you do in Germany?' the girl asked me. I said: 'I am a word-gatherer.' And I thought of Ibni Adullah, the soul in my soul, and remembered yet another word in my mother tongue: *Ruh* – '*Ruh* means soul', I said to the girl. 'Soul means peace', she said.}

During her interaction with the girl, the narrator declares that she is a 'word-gatherer' and remembers yet another Turkish word. This word, *Ruh*, is of Arabic descent, but Özdamar does not make that explicit that in the novel (Brandt 2004:7). *Ruh* in Turkish and Arabic can mean

<sup>33</sup> Certain words were bolded to make their interrelation more apparent.

‘soul,’ ‘human being’ or ‘breath of life’ in a religious sense, and the narrator shares the translation with the German girl (Brandt 2004:7). However, the girl mishears the word as the German word *Ruh*’ short for *Ruhe*, which denotes ‘peace’, ‘rest’ and ‘tranquillity’. She thinks that the narrator equates peace and serenity with the definition of a *Seele* ‘soul’. This misinterpretation creates a connection between all three of the narrator’s identities and languages: Turkish, Arabic and German. Özdamar creatively links the languages through both their orthography and semantic meaning, meanwhile revealing to the reader that, through the interconnectedness of all three languages in the single meaning of a soul, she has finally found peace in the unity of all her tongues.

## 9.2 Analysis

Because she writes in a literal translation and uses vivid metaphors, Emine Sevgi Özdamar presents a unique form of multilingualism that is “both visible and invisible in the text”; she employs literal translation as “a postmonolingual writing strategy, gesturing towards and unfolding in the tension between monolingual paradigm and multilingual practice” (Yildiz 2012:144). Her novel *Mutterzunge* is credited with representing authentic Turkish culture, using memory culture to counter official history, enriching German culture, delving into the German ‘Other’, and acting as an intercultural dialogue (Yildiz 2012:146). The main character struggles with the ‘betrayal’ of her mother tongue, Turkish, which due to language and orthography reforms, she became unable to communicate via writing to her grandfather, who only knew the Arabic script. She communicates in German, learns Arabic, and tries to rediscover Turkish, and her identity and experiences are bound in all three. She refutes monolingualism and a single

mother tongue in favor of a rich array of languages and the unity of her mother tongue, Arabic grandfather tongue and her German ‘cultural tongue’.

Azade Seyhan (2001:124) notes, although “written in an accessible and visually enticing German, Özdamar’s tales require translation at many levels, historical, political, social cultural”. She translates Turkish proverbs, idioms and expressions into the German language, but does not translate the other ‘levels’ that are needed to fully understand the translation. She also uses metaphors drawing upon concepts from all three cultures, such as when she says, “[Ich ging mit Kamelen und weinenden Frauenaugen wieder zum anderen Berlin“ {I went with camels and crying eyes of women again to the other Berlin.} (Özdamar 1998:18). The Turkish imagery of camels, the reference to the personified Arabic letters or the “weinenden Frauenaugen” and her detailing of her commute between her lessons in West Berlin and her apartment in East Berlin in a divided Germany illustrate her personal connection to multiple cultures and nations. Matthes (2005:7) refers to a ‘Third Space’ where Turkish and Arabic meet and a ‘Third Language,’ which “denies the idea of linguistic purity and incorporates the different roots and ‘routes’ of the narrator’s heterogeneous identity instead”. By creating this ‘Third Language,’ the narrator embraces the multiplicity and ambiguity of mother tongues and questions her “multinationally and multiculturally constructed identity” (Matthes 2004:7). She expresses the importance of language to shaping identity as well as the necessity of embracing all contributing nationalities and cultures in one’s identity.

## Conclusion

The texts that Feridun Zaimoğlu and Emine Sevgi Özdamar craft demonstrate linguistic manipulations and deviations from Standard German, and provide insights into and commentaries on the minority situation in Germany. Functioning as autoethnographic, both texts are written in German, the host-language, by the of-Turkish-heritage ‘others’ in Germany as responses to their minority situation and in dialogue with the German majority. Zaimoğlu’s *Kanak Sprak* is a highly stylized, colloquial variation of German that serves to vengefully exclude German speakers from fully comprehending its contents. His interviewees, minority German male youth of Turkish heritage, complain about their disadvantaged economic conditions and bitterly criticize majority German culture, while simultaneously using almost exclusively German language. Özdamar’s narrator in *Mutterzunge* sets on a journey to come to terms with her Turkish mother tongue in Germany. She experiences Berlin in a multilingual and multicultural fashion, oftentimes combining elements of all three languages and cultures within the language of Özdamar’s literal translations and inventive, evocative metaphors. Countering myths of monolingualism and rooted German ideals and constructions of national identity that emphasize a single culture heritage, the characters in both works mix multiple cultures and blend Turkish and German elements together. The speakers of *Kanak Sprak* demonstrate, through their intensely modified, manipulated German, that they have just as much access and as many rights to the language as citizens of German heritage, and they achieve visibility in Germany society through the printed medium. Özdamar’s narrator expresses her mastery of German via Standard German, but integrates elements of Turkish to create a ‘third language’ that, despite the Standard German, requires translation due to the hidden associations and content. *Kanak Sprak* is a ‘third language’ as well, although its translation is required more on the lexical and grammatical level,

and both of these languages transcend ideas of mono- nationality, identity and lingualism. Thus, these two autoethnographic texts both deconstruct preexisting, widely held notions and exemplify new, modern constructions of a multinational, multicultural and multilingual German society.

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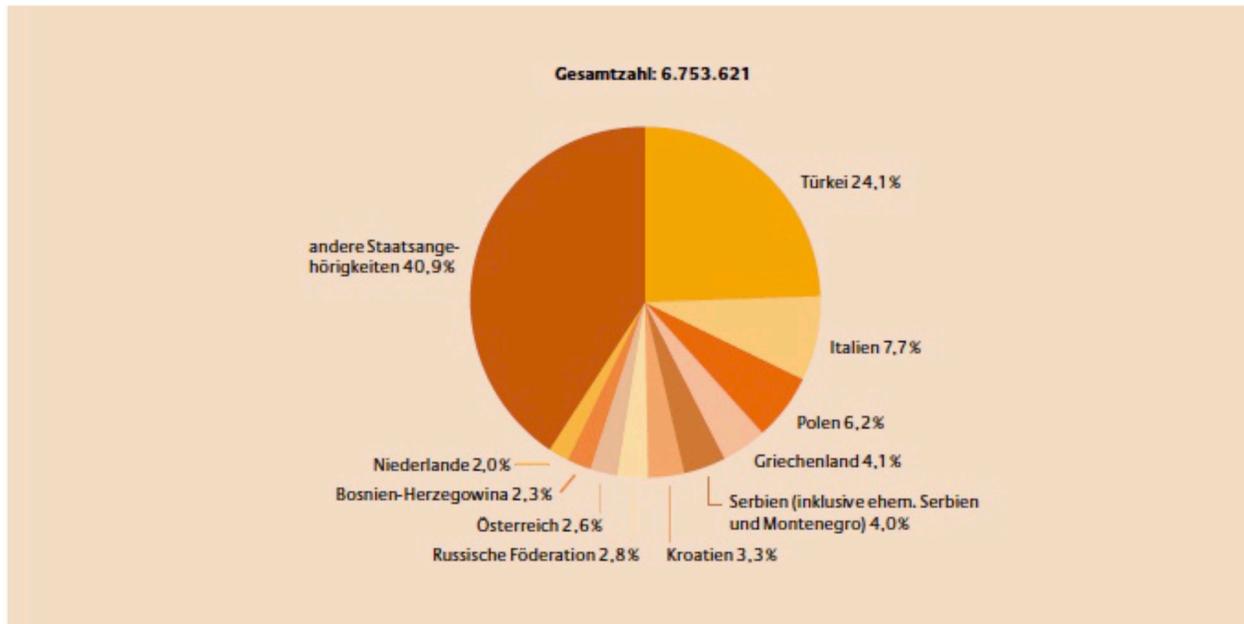
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## Appendix A

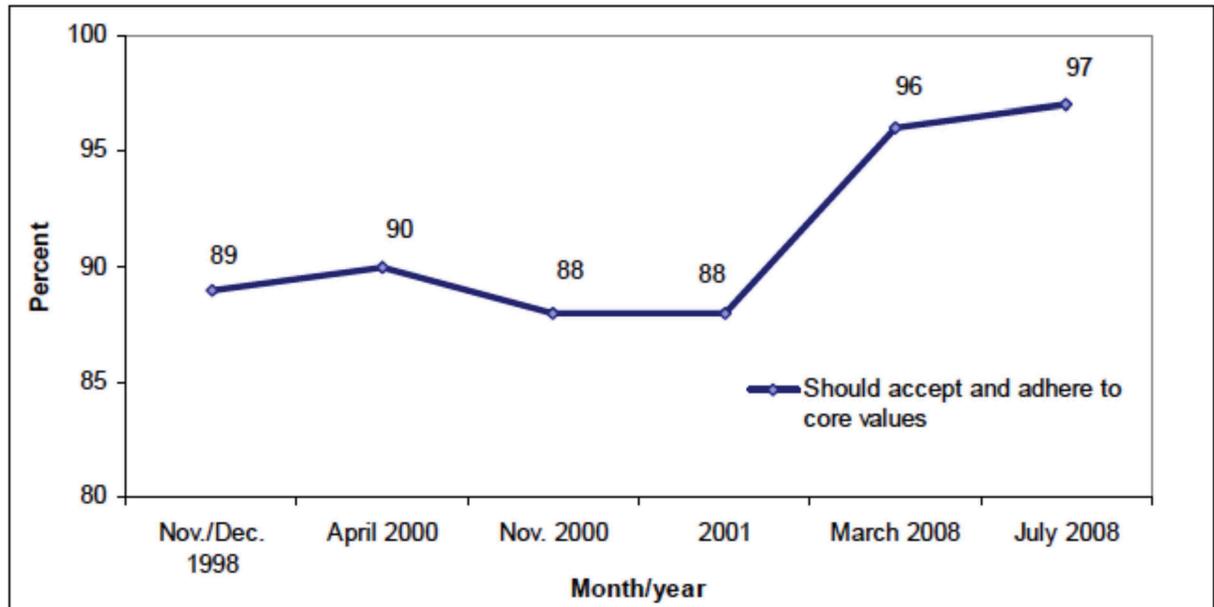
“Ausländische Bevölkerung in Deutschland nach den zehn häufigsten Staatsangehörigkeiten am 31.Dezember 2010” (BAMF 2011:177)  
 {Foreign population in Germany of the ten most common nationalities as of December 31, 2010}



*Total number: 6,753,621*  
 Other nationalities: 40.9%  
 Turkey: 24.1%  
 Italy: 7.7%  
 Poland: 6.2%  
 Greece: 4.1%  
 Serbia (including former Serbia and Montenegro): 4.0%  
 Croatia: 3.3%  
 Russian Federation: 2.8%  
 Austria: 2.6%  
 Bosnia-Herzegovina: 2.3%  
 Netherlands: 2.0%

## Appendix B

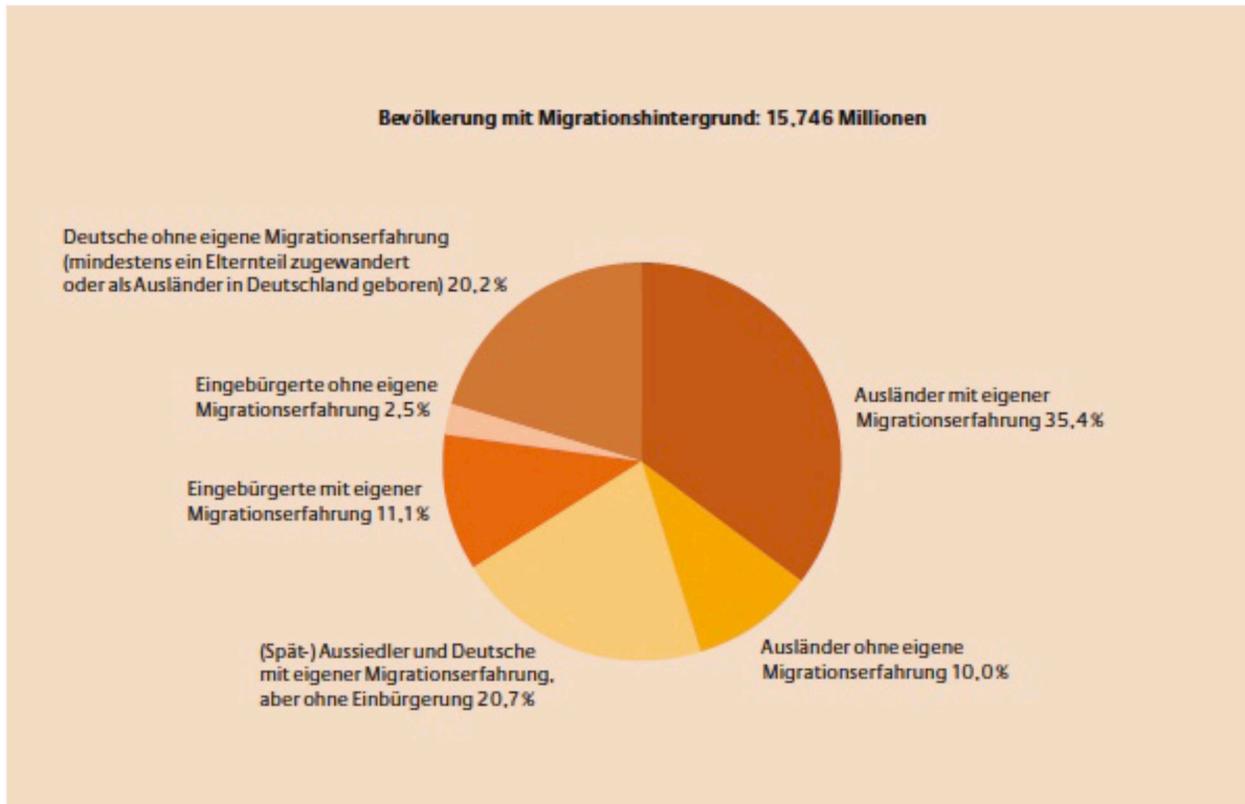
“Public Opinion on Whether Immigrants Should Adhere to and Accept Core German Values, 1998 to 2008” (Abali 2009:7)



*Note:* Answers were in response to the following question: "If an immigrant who has been a long-term resident of Germany or who was born here wants to be naturalized, should he or she accept and adhere to the principles and core values of our society, or is that not necessary?"  
*Source:* Allensbach Archives, IfD Surveys 6071, 6090, 6099, 7007, 10018, 10023.

## Appendix C

“Personen mit Migrationshintergrund in Deutschland im Jahr 2010” (BAMF 2011: 190)<sup>34</sup>  
 {People in Germany with a migration background in 2010}



*Population with a background of migration: 15, 746 Million*

Clockwise from top-right-

‘Foreigners with personal migration experience’:	35.4%
‘Foreigners without personal migration experience’:	10.0%
‘(Late/Returning-) ethnic German immigrants and Germans with personal migration experience, but without naturalization’:	20.7%
‘Naturalized citizens with personal migration experience’:	11.1%
‘Naturalized citizens without personal migration experience’:	2.5%
‘Germans without personal migration experience (at least one non-native parent or born in Germany as a foreigner)’:	20.2%

<sup>34</sup> BAMF’s source: Statistisches Bundesamt, Mikrozensus

## Appendix D

“Features of Actual Bilingual Speech and Zaimoglu’s Representations” (Pfaff 2005:217-218)

<b>L2 acquisition</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> generation children’s speech</b>	<b>literary representations</b>
<b>Universal</b> (also found in L1, pidgins, attrition)	zero elements (copula, articles, auxiliaries...) overgeneralization of regular forms difficulty with grammatical gender	not characteristic
<b>Possibly Turkish substrate</b> morphosyntax	variable persistence of zero items, e.g., copula, article, preposition, prodrop	not characteristic
lexicon	persistent difficulty with natural gender, transitory periphrastic progressive SEIN+verb  Turkish items in German (rare, limited to early stages) except for food items	not characteristic  rare (kin terms in direct address), e.g., <i>baba</i> ‘father’, <i>oglum</i> ‘my son’
<b>German “superstrate”</b> phonology	local vernacular: <i>icke</i> , ‘n	local vernacular: <i>icke</i> , articles cliticized to preceding lexical item
morphosyntax	case marking e.g., dative/accusative in personal pronouns, dative/genitive	
lexicon	local German slang	frequent local slang, including English loan words
<b>L1 attrition</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> generation children’s speech (particularly German-dominant)</b>	<b>literary representations</b>
<b>Universal</b>	reduction of tense/aspect forms ( <i>mIs</i> , multiple TMA), verbal derivation (passive, causative, reciprocal...)	not characteristic
	reduction of complex syntax (participles, gerunds, non-finite forms)	not characteristic
<b>German “superstrate”</b> phonology	not characteristic, but some use German pronunciation when reading Turkish	not apparent
morphosyntax	convergent lexicalization explicit pronouns, case government by verbs, possessive marking	not characteristic
lexicon	incorporated German lexical items case marked nouns, verbs with <i>yapmak</i>	not characteristic

In input phonology	contracted personal endings <i>-yom/ -yorum</i>	not characteristic
morphosyntax	dialect morphology: <i>-IEn/-IE</i> (committative)	not characteristic
lexicon	verb incorporation with <i>yapmak, etmek</i> , etc.	not characteristic
<b>Putative mixed code</b>	<b>2nd generation children's speech</b>	<b>literary representation of vernacular</b>
Alternation	alternation to German	alternation to Turkish
Insertion	insertion of German in Turkish Matrix Language	insertion of English in German
Congruent lexicalization	some, needs further investigation	not characteristic

(Appendix C continued)