TRANSNATIONALISM AND IDENTITY IN STUDY ABROAD: MULTILINGUAL SOJOURNERS IN BARCELONA

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By

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ABSTRACT

Study abroad (SA) research has interrogated the assumption that a temporary sojourn abroad implies immersive access to language leading to dramatic language gains. The robust finding that SA outcomes and experiences vary widely has led scholars to investigate variable opportunities for language use arising from the interaction of particular SA settings and factors related to the identity and agency of individual sojourners. Multilingualism and transnationalism, while prevalent among SA sojourners and settings, have received little attention in this literature. This dissertation examines the lived experiences of bi-/multilingual students learning Spanish on a U.S.-based summer program in Barcelona, an officially bilingual and de facto multilingual city where local linguistic and identity practices are shaped by widespread bilingualism in Spanish and Catalan and often English and other transnational languages. I adopt a longitudinal, qualitative multiple-case study approach, combining ethnographic and introspective methodologies, which afforded a rich and nuanced perspective on sojourners’ orientations and responses to individual and societal multilingualism, their negotiations of ideologies and identities, and how these orientations and negotiations shape students’ lived experience and their access to language while abroad. Triangulated analysis of interview and diary data for eight focal participants revealed how the multilingual SA environment challenged sojourners’ ideologies, often leading to surprising personal discoveries. Sojourners exhibited varied orientations to multilingualism, ranging from viewing it as an obstacle to construing it as an affordance.
Individual case studies of three ethnolinguistically diverse sojourners demonstrated the diverse ways in which biographies, identities, and ideologies interact to mediate learning opportunities. For Ben, monoglossic ideologies clashed with multilingual realities, resulting in isolation and disappointment. For Lucia, SA entailed skillful negotiation, reconstruction, and development of a cosmopolitan Cuban American identity. And David’s lived experiences as a multilingual, mixed-race Korean-White American and social justice orientations profoundly shaped his learning approach, perceptions, and interaction abroad. Together, these findings hold relevance for SA research by problematizing the ideology of monolingual immersion as an ideal to strive for, stressing the importance of racialized identities in shaping access to language, highlighting friendship as a driver of social networking, and revealing how a language pledge is best treated as a negotiable affordance.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Study Abroad as a Research Domain

The amount of research on study abroad (SA) has risen sharply in recent years. In a scoping review of the SA literature published between January 1995 and March 2017, Tullock and Ortega (2017) report that of 401 SA publications in English, nearly 50% appeared since 2010. The raw numbers of students from the United States and other countries who are part of an overseas sojourn has also increased considerably. In the United States, for example, over 330,000 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit during the academic year of 2016/2017, a 2.3% increase over the previous year. Nevertheless, this figure only represents around 11% of U.S. undergraduate degree holders. As scholars have pointed out, this population tends to be predominantly White, female, and socioeconomically privileged (e.g., Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). Thus, it must also be recognized that proportionally, the SA experience is exceptional, as it is only undertaken by an elite minority. Many SA experiences include a language learning component and are undertaken by classroom foreign language learners who pursue intensive exposure by taking up temporary residence in a country or region where the target language under study is predominant. Because of this language learning orientation, the bulk of SA research has been carried out by second language acquisition (SLA) researchers with a focus on the nature of the relationship between language learning and SA. These scholars’ endeavors have resulted in a large and diverse body of literature. Particularly since the watershed 2004 special issue of Studies in Second Language Acquisition (SSLA) was devoted to learning contexts (Collentine & Freed, 2004), empirical research on language learning in SA has regularly and increasingly more often appeared in dozens of articles in refereed journals as well as edited volumes (e.g., DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Kinginger, 2013b; Mitchell,
Tracy-Ventura, & McManus, 2015; Pérez Vidal, 2014; Pérez Vidal, López-Serrano, Ament, & Thomas-Wilhelm, 2018; Diao & Trentman, forthcoming). We have now at least two meta-analyses (Xu, 2019; Yang, 2016; and one more outside SLA, Varela, 2017), several syntheses (Isabelli-García, Bown, Plews, & Dewey, 2018; Kinginger, 2009; Llanes, 2011; Sanz, 2014; Tullock & Ortega, 2017), at least six special journal issues (Barron, 2019; Collentine & Freed, 2004; Davidson, 2010a; De Costa, Rawal, Zaykovskaya, 2017; Diao, McGregor, & Wolcott, 2016; Plews, 2016), and one handbook devoted to the topic (Sanz & Morales-Front, 2018).

SLA researchers are interested in SA for what it might reveal about the relationship between contextual and individual factors in language learning. Research into the individual factors has only begun. It acknowledges the fact that the benefits of SA cannot be expected to be the same for all individuals and seeks to identify which cognitive factors may modulate such benefits. An example is Grey, Cox, Serafini, and Sanz (2015), who investigated the role of working memory and phonological short-term memory capacity in moderating the gains in morphosyntactic and lexical development made by participants on a short-term SA program.

Among the contextual factors, opportunities to use the target language has always been viewed by researchers as central to explaining the benefits: Sojourners who study a language abroad are assumed to have ample opportunities for engaging in high-quality language usage, including rich interaction with speakers of the target language. That engagement with high-quality language usage will propel language learning benefits has been a fundamental part of theories of SLA as different as interactionism (Mackey & Gass, 2015; Fernández-García & Martínez-Arbelaitz, 2014; Pérez-Vidal, 2014), usage-based constructionism (Ellis & Wulff, 2015; McCormick, 2018), and language socialization theory (Duff & Talmy, 2011; Wang, 2010). They all put a
premium on access to (rich immersive, iterative, and personally meaningful) language as a key element that will lead to maximal benefits in SA.

Accordingly, increasingly more SA scholars are turning their lens onto understanding the variable opportunities that different SA contexts afford for language use. Whether using quantitative or qualitative methodologies, they investigate increasingly more often the enticements and barriers that different learners experience in taking or not taking advantage of these affordances. In the quantitative stream an example is Dewey, Bown, Baker, Martinsen, Gold, and Egget (2014), who measured social networks and time spent using the L2 among seven factors in a large-scale, multisite study that involved 118 learners across six SA programs. Another example is García-Amaya (2017), who used a daily online survey to measure the evolution of first language (L1) and second language (L2) use for 43 L2 learners of Spanish over the course of a six-week SA program in Salamanca, Spain. In the qualitative stream, we find several in-depth qualitative ethnographic studies of sojourners’ negotiation of affordances for language usage in SA contexts. Well-known examples are several of the studies gathered in the collection by DuFon and Churchill (2006), Language Learners in Study Abroad Contexts, and Kinginger’s (2008) monograph in The Modern Language Journal, “Language learning in study abroad: Case studies of Americans in France.” Qualitative lenses into opportunities for learning through language use during SA have great potential to provide rich, nuanced accounts of how specific contextual factors at the macrosocial level and the SA program level, for example, as well as factors that relate to the identity and agency of individual participants interact to impact language use during SA and hence learning opportunities.
1.2 Why Focus on Multilingualism and Transnationalism?

Increasingly more of the qualitative studies have been able to capture the diverse backgrounds of the college students who engage in SA experiences. For example, Kinginger (2004) revealed the transformational negotiations during study abroad of Alice, a non-traditional, working-class college student for whom learning French formed part of a larger quest to lay claim to a more coherent and satisfying multilingual identity for herself. This and other studies (e.g., Anya, 2017; Brown, 2016; Du, 2018; Goldoni, 2017; Jing-Schmidt, Zhang, & Chen, 2016; Miyahara & Petrucci, 2007; Quan, Pozzi, Kehoe, & Menard-Warwick, 2018; Riegelhaupt & Carrasco, 2000; Talburt & Stewart, 1999; Wilkinson, 1998a) suggest that not all students who engage in SA fit the prototype of the mainstream White, monolingual Anglo-American sojourner who educators and administrators of SA programs may have imagined in the past. This reality also reflects the changing college populations, which in the United States as in other countries is increasingly diverse and multilingual. This is clearly illustrated in the most recent report by the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, which reveals that, while the number of White students earning bachelor’s degrees rose by 29% between academic years 2000 – 01 and 2015 – 16, this number increased by 75% among Black students, 202% among Hispanic students, and 75% among Asian/Pacific Islander students in the same time frame (NCES, 2019). This diversity is also reflected in the SA figures for the United States: According to the most recent Open Doors Report by the Institute of International Education (2018), U.S. minority students now account for 29% of those who go abroad, a figure which does not include international students completing four-year degree programs in the United States, for whom participation in U.S.-based SA programs is also an option. Many of these students grew up using other languages alongside
English and go abroad to add a third or additional language to their multilingual repertoires or to develop their proficiency in an ethnic heritage language.

Youth in the United States will inevitably encounter ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity by the time they become adults, as Tran (2019) has recently showed in a study of 422 ethnoracially and socioeconomically diverse people living in Iowa, Minnesota, New York City, and San Diego, using interview data collected in 2002 – 2003 when the informants were between 21 and 38 years of age. If diversity is not encountered in one’s own family and neighborhood, as is the case for many U.S. individuals who are children of immigrants, it will be a familiar experience for those growing up in transnational cities like New York and San Diego. Even for Anglo Americans who may grow up in geographies such as Iowa, where lack of prior exposure to communities different from one’s own and learned negative stereotypes may make it challenging and intimidating at first, access to diversity reaches everyone’s experience as a function of schooling, college, or the workplace. And, according to Tran, diversity is perceived by most young U.S. adults, with some exceptions, as a positive expansion of their horizons (p. 49).

If educational contexts are becoming as diverse and even super-diverse as non-educational contexts (De Fina, Ikizoglu, & Wegner, 2017), SA is no exception. The language learners who become sojourners abroad are multilinguals who also experience the pulls and affordances of transnationalism (De Fina & Perrino, 2013), a condition of late modernity whereby “mass migrations and global communications bring people together both spatially and virtually in ways that would have been unthinkable in the past, [and] they also allow for an unprecedented variety of new forms of contact, communication, and socialization” (p. 509). Transnationalism breeds transculturality, “a condition characterized by the mixing and
permeation of cultures and facilitated by migratory processes, communication systems, and economic interdependencies [where] nothing is ever absolutely foreign,” because “learners immersed in this cultural hybridity are able to draw from multiple languages, symbols, practices, and modalities to encode and decode meaning” (Darvin & Norton, 2018, pp. 89-90). Not only SA sojourners but, as I will discuss later in more depth, SA host sites are themselves often multilingual as well as deeply transnational. Whether or not sojourners are expecting to encounter such multilingualism, they may find that their access to the target language is shaped, directly or indirectly, by the presence of other languages that are entangled in language hierarchies shaped by the transnational dynamics arisen in the given local context.

The multilingualism of SA participants and SA host sites should not come as a surprise. There is growing recognition among contemporary applied linguists that multilingualism, not monolingualism, is the norm in human societies and that this reality shapes language learners’ motivations and investments as well as their experiences and their achievements (e.g., Douglas Fir Group, 2016). SA is no exception to this. Nevertheless, despite the diverse, multilingual realities of SA participants and host communities, multilingualism, whether individual or societal, has been dealt with only peripherally in the SA literature to date. In order to come to a more complete and nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of language learners abroad, there is a need to investigate the encounter between sojourners and multilingual contexts in SA as it relates to their opportunities for language use and, hence, language learning.

1.3 Identities During Study Abroad

Identity has emerged as a central theme and construct of interest in the quest to understand sojourners’ variable access to opportunities for language learning and use in SA (Kinginger, 2013a; Tullock, 2018). Identity has been defined as “how a person understands his
or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2013, p. 45). In line with contemporary applied linguistics research on identity (Block, 2007a, 2007b; Norton, 2013), SA identity scholars reject essentialist notions of a biologically or socially determined self, instead adhering to a postmodern understanding of identity as multiple, fragmented, and dynamic. Individuals construct identities by positioning themselves and others in terms of intersecting social categories such as race, gender, and social class. Social identification according to these dimensions, in turn, shapes and drives individuals’ lived experiences of power relations. The positionings, tensions, and struggles experienced by a given individual often cannot be attributed to one single identity category but must be understood with reference to the intersection of multiple categories, which relate to one another in complex ways—a phenomenon which has been termed “intersectionality” (Block & Corona, 2014; Crenshaw, 1991).

Reviews of the SA identity literature highlight the many ways in which multiple facets of sojourners’ identities mediate their opportunities and willingness to take advantage of interactional affordances, and how aspects of identity fluctuate and become contested in SA, how sojourners resolve identity-related tensions by (re)constructing and negotiating their identities in situated interactions with hosts (Block, 2007a, 2007b; Kinginger, 2013a; Tullock, 2018). Research taking a longitudinal perspective has captured the short-term and long-term L2-related identity development that may occur as a result of a sojourn abroad (Benson, Barkhuizen, Bodycott, & Brown, 2012, 2013; Kinginger, 2004; Mitchell, Tracy-Ventura, & McManus, 2017). In SA, which combines border crossing with language learning, identity becomes contested, as sojourners find themselves positioned in new and unfamiliar ways. Moreover, unstable knowledge of the L2 and varying interpretations of identity categories in the home and host
environments give rise to conflicts between the identities that students claim or desire for themselves and the ways that these identities are recognized by their hosts. Identities and related conflicts influence the degree to which locals extend or rescind interactional affordances, as well as whether such affordances are embraced or eschewed by sojourners. Identity issues also mediate sojourners’ pursuit of access to opportunities for language use and drive it as well, as sojourners’ language learning efforts through usage are connected to their efforts to (re)claim and (re)negotiate new identities for themselves.

While recognizing that identities are multifaceted and intersectional, much of the SA literature on identity has focused on singular dimensions of identity such as gender, nationality, and foreigner status. As Kinginger (2013a) notes, many of these dimensions, such as gender, have received much attention, while others, such as race, ethnicity, ethnolinguistic identity, and social class remain underexplored. The dearth of research on these latter dimensions may be in part to the over-representation of traditional, White, Anglo-American students from monolingual backgrounds in SA. A focus on diversity and multilingualism in SA thus brings to the fore underexamined dimensions of identity and raises new questions about the construction, negotiation, and emergence of hybrid, transnational, and multilingual identities.

1.4 Overview of the Dissertation

In the present dissertation, I aim to contribute to scholarly understanding of the lived experiences of language learners who are sojourners abroad when they encounter multilingualism in a transnational, superdiverse urban context, and how the negotiation of identities and ideologies that clash or connect with that multilingualism influence their opportunities for language use and, hence, language learning. I chose to do so by investigating the experiences and perceptions of bi-/multilingual students of Spanish on a U.S.-based five-
week summer SA program in Barcelona, Spain, the transnational, cosmopolitan capital city of the autonomous political community of Catalonia, where Catalan and Spanish share co-official status, English is often drawn on as a lingua franca, burgeoning groups of immigrants speak their own languages, and the norms of everyday interaction among locals, migrants, and visitors are characterized by fluid language and identity practices. The Barcelona Study Abroad (BarSA) program is an ideal context to investigate these issues, as it takes diverse groups of students abroad to Barcelona. This context has the advantage of having generated ample sociolinguistic research from a variety of perspectives, including attitudes and language ideologies. It is also an ideal context for me because I am deeply familiar with it, based on my four years of residence in Barcelona in the past, my family ties, and my bilingualism in Catalan and Spanish. I also know the particular program well, having conducted research in it prior to this dissertation, in summer 2014 (Tullock, 2014; 2015; 2016a & 2016b). Finally, it is a context that has been and is being formally investigated for outcomes and individual differences by Sanz and students (Bryfonski & Sanz, 2018; Grey et al., 2015; Marijuan, 2015; Méndez Seijas, 2018; Nagle et al., 2016; Tullock, 2016a; Zalbidea et al., 2016 & 2017). I adopt a longitudinal, qualitative multiple-case study approach (Duff, 2018; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2003), combining ethnographic and introspective methods in ways that are inspired by Kinginger (2008). These methods enable an in-depth, nuanced, emic (i.e., participant-oriented) understanding of bi-/multilingual sojourners navigating a multilingual SA context.

The dissertation is organized as follows. In this Chapter, I have presented the topic, the aims, and the focus of my research. In Chapter 2, I review the extant literature on SA, concentrating on what has been revealed about language learning processes and outcomes and what new insights may be gained by reframing the SA experience in multilingual terms and
examining ideologies and identity negotiations in highly multilingual, transnational contexts such as Barcelona. In Chapter 3, I present my research questions and methods, situate the context of the study, and describe my participants. Chapter 4 presents the results regarding eight focal sojourners’ attitudes and ideologies of language as they encountered and negotiated the multilingual SA site of Barcelona. The next three chapters are devoted to one case study of a sojourner each. Chapter 5 is the story of Ben, a traditional Anglo-American sojourner from a monolingual background for whom monoglossic ideologies of language, language learning, and SA clash with multilingual SA realities. Chapter 6 presents the SA experiences of Lucia, a third-generation Cuban American immigrant and confident Spanish-English bilingual, who negotiates, reconstructs, and develops multiple facets of a hybrid identity across time and space. Chapter 7 offers the recount of SA lived by David, a mixed-race Korean-White American student and fluid multilingual for whom race, ethnicity, and family migration history intertwined with a multilingual outlook and social justice orientations and interacted with aspects of the transnational and multilingual SA context to impact his engagement and social interaction in profound ways. The dissertation ends with Chapter 8, where I bring together the three case studies, summarizing main findings and discussing their ramifications for SA research on beliefs and ideologies, identity, social networking and interaction, and program design. I also acknowledge limitations and offer suggestions for strategies that might support the educationally meaningful implementation of SA in multilingual contexts and with multilingual sojourners as well as recommendations for further research into language learning in SA contexts.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I review the literature that motivates this dissertation study and shaped the research questions that guide it. Section 2.1 briefly summarizes what we know about the linguistic outcomes of SA, based on the contribution of the many quantitative studies that exist. Section 2.2 discusses the recent surge of qualitative studies of SA, and Section 2.3 suggests a multilingual reframing of the SA experience. Section 2.4 examines the roles of attitudes and ideologies in accounting for variability in how bi-/multilingual sojourners navigate a multilingual, transnational SA context, whereas Section 2.5 focuses on the contested identity negotiations that take place in SA. Section 2.6 offers an in-depth review of Barcelona and Catalan. The chapter closes with a summary of key patterns and findings in the extant literature that guided the design and conduct of the present study.

2.1 The Linguistic Outcomes of Study Abroad, in a Nutshell

The bulk of SA research focuses on the language-related learning outcomes of studying abroad. The interest is to uncover the effects of SA on various holistic and fine-grained domains of target language development, as well as the individual- and program-related factors that facilitate language learning success in SA. The theoretical thrust is, explicitly or implicitly stated, a cognitive-interactionist approach (Collentine, 2009; Pérez-Vidal, 2014) and the methods are quantitative, often featuring pre/post study designs, sometimes including a comparison group of learners in other domestic learning contexts, particularly in earlier studies a so-called “At Home” comparison group (e.g., Collentine, 2004; Dewey, 2004; Díaz-Campos, 2004; Freed, Segalowitz, & Dewey, 2004; DeKeyser, 1991; Freed, 1995a; Lafford, 2004; Llanes & Muñoz, 2009; Pérez Vidal et al., 2018; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004).
abilities over writing skills, and gains in general spoken proficiency, oral fluency, and sociopragmatic performance tend to outpace those in grammar and phonology, for example (Kinginger, 2009). Nor are gains always as clearly demonstrable as initially expected. For instance, in their meta-analysis of fluency Tullock and Ortega (2017) concluded that “while it is probably the case that sojourners experience fluency gains as a result from studying abroad, both the nature and the magnitude of these gains remain empirically under-determined, because the findings are ultimately mixed” (p. 16). They attribute the tentativeness of findings to individual differences and methodological inconsistencies.

As in the area of fluency, when evaluating the robustness of linguistic gain findings across studies, more generally, a certain lack of consistency emerges, as some studies have reported only modest gains or even not necessarily superior outcomes to those made by learners in other contexts (e.g., Collentine, 2004; DeKeyser, 1991; 2010; Díaz-Campos, 2004; Freed et al., 2004; Isabelli-García, 2010). Such a lack of consistency across studies might be attributable to variability in the specific characteristics of SA contexts investigated in particular studies, which may render them non-comparable, to the fact that participating individuals may vary in how much they can benefit from SA, or to both. Quantitative researchers of SA have attempted to account for this observation by investigating various moderating variables. Two variables considered for their promise as likely sources for individual differences in the past have been initial level of proficiency in the target language (Collentine 2009; DeKeyser, 2007; 2014; Issa & Zalbidea, 2018) and amount of target language contact while abroad (Segalowitz & Freed, 2004; García Amaya, 2017).

A feature of SA programs that is known to affect the magnitude of learning gains observed across studies is the length of stay. Studies comparing varying lengths of stay have
supported the notion that “longer is better” (e.g., Dwyer, 2004; Ife et al., 2000; Llanes & Muñoz, 2009; Llanes & Serrano, 2011; Sasaki, 2009; 2011). However, research focusing exclusively on shorter-term programs has shown that a short stay abroad of six weeks or less can result in measurable linguistic progress (e.g., Allen & Herron, 2003; Cubillos et al., 2008; Evans & Fisher, 2005; Grey et al., 2015; Llanes & Muñoz, 2009; Nagle et al, 2016; Reynolds-Case, 2013; Tschirner, 2007; Yager, 1998). This finding is supported by results from the BarSA Project, a research endeavor carried out by Cristina Sanz and collaborators that examines the linguistic outcomes of the “Georgetown in Barcelona Program” (BarSA) an intensive five-week summer SA program which will also be the site of the proposed dissertation. These researchers have found that, by the end of their stay, participants demonstrate robust gains in performance on grammaticality judgement and lexical decision tasks (Grey et al., 2015), pronunciation of stop consonants (Nagle et al., 2016), processing of sentences with non-canonical word order (Marijuan, 2015), and syntactic complexity and accuracy in oral production (Zalbidea et al., 2016, 2017). These robust gains are attributable, in part, to the highly intensive nature of the program, which was designed to promote immersive language exposure through a combination of rigorous content-based instruction, extensive fieldwork, and twice-weekly meetings with language exchange partners. And, indeed, as first suggested by Segalowitz and Freed (2004), the amount and intensity of target language exposure while abroad has also emerged as possibly the most promising explanation for why across studies and across individual sojourners the gains of SA may look to vary (Dewey et al., 2014; García-Amaya, 2017), even though the challenges in measuring SA exposure are many (Dewey, 2017).

The strong empirical reality that the outcomes of SA are highly variable has incentivized outcomes-oriented researchers to search for new means of accounting for individual variability.
Some have begun to examine various aspects of the social networks that learners develop while abroad (Dewey, Belnap, & Hillstrom, 2013; Dewey et al., 2012; Dewey, Ring, et al., 2013; Gautier & Chevrot, 2015; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2017). Others have attempted to link together language outcomes to the qualities of learner experiences using mixed-methods designs (e.g., Hardison, 2014; Isabelli-García, 2006; Kinginger, 2008; Magnan & Back, 2007; McManus, Mitchell, & Tracy-Ventura, 2014; Tracy-Ventura, Dewaele, Köylü, & McManus, 2016).

2.2 Qualitative Studies of Study Abroad

Not all SA investigations have been quantitative and outcomes oriented. Some researchers have long been interested in exploring the qualities of SA experiences through the eyes of the participants themselves, and they have found qualitative research methodologies useful for this purpose. Increasingly, these studies follow the social turn in SLA (Block, 2003) by drawing on socially-attuned theoretical approaches to language learning such as language socialization theory (Diao, 2014; Duff & Talmy, 2011; DuFon & Churchill, 2006), Vygotskyan sociocultural theory (Allen, 2013; Kinginger, 2008; Kinginger & Wu, 2018; Lantolf, 2011), and poststructuralist theories of identity (Anya, 2017; Benson et al., 2013; Norton & McKinney, 2011; Kinginger, 2004; Trentman, 2013b, 2015). Research methodology involves the use of introspective methods, such as diaries (e.g., Brown, 2016; Hassall, 2006; Polanyi, 1995), e-journals (Jing-Schmidt et al., 2016; Stewart, 2010) and interviews (e.g., Barkhuizen, 2017; Goldoni, 2013; Kinginger, 2004, 2008; McGregor, 2016; Plews, 2015), as well as observational methods, such as ethnographic case studies of individuals and cohorts (e.g., Anya, 2017; Duff, 2018; Goldoni, 2017; Kinginger, 2008; Wilkinson, 1998a & 1998b) and micro-analysis of interactions taking place in the SA environment (e.g., Cook, 2006; Diao, 2017; Iino, 2006;
Reverberating and augmenting the findings of great individual differences in the quantitative SA literature, the qualitative studies have also found high individual variability in terms of learners' experiences abroad, particularly in terms of the intensity and nature of their contact with their hosts, the social networks they construct, and their ability to cope with challenges to their identities and expectations. They have also shown that, while abroad, sojourners experience many internal and external barriers and enablers to participation in local communities. While some participants are welcomed and assisted by their hosts (Churchill, 2006), others are met with indifference (Wilkinson, 1998a) or even hostility (Pellegrino Aveni, 2005) and many sojourners may experience discrimination based on social identity categories such as gender (Polanyi, 1995, Trentman, 2015; Twombly, 1995) or race (Goldoni, 2017; Talburt & Stewart, 1999). Some participants actively seek out opportunities to meet and interact with locals while others maintain only superficial contact with their hosts, retreating instead into social networks composed mainly of fellow cohort members (Kinginger, 2008; Polanyi, 1995; Rivers, 1998; Wilkinson, 1998a, 1998b) or spending their time chatting with friends and family members back home via the internet (Durbidge, 2019; Jackson, 2008; Kinginger, 2008; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002). Students also experience identity-related conflicts as they cope with self-construction using new linguistic means and encounter unfamiliar cultural norms which clash with their expectations (Benson et al., 2013; Block, 2007a, 2007b; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005). The pages of the qualitative literature are filled with stories of successful learners who are able to overcome these challenges, as well as accounts of unsuccessful learners who withdraw from opportunities to interact with their hosts, often adopting ethnocentric stances as they do so.
In a scoping review of the SA research published between 1995 and March 2017, Tullock and Ortega (2017) found that most empirical SA study reports were quantitative and outcomes-oriented, with such studies being two and a half times more frequent than qualitative and process-oriented ones. Examining longitudinal publication trends, the authors also noted a dramatic increase in outcomes-oriented research in 2004 followed by a marked increase in qualitative research in 2013. The authors concluded that qualitative SA research may soon become a vibrant line of SA research.

2.3 Multilingualism in Study Abroad

Many scholars in applied linguistics, critical sociolinguistics, and second language acquisition have for some time now mounted a critique against monolingualism as the default of human language and the fundamental starting point and comparative benchmark against which foreign language education can be understood (Conteh & Meier, 2014; May, 2014; Ortega, 2013 & 2014). In the SA literature to date, as well, the criticism can be leveled that the experience and outcomes of studying abroad have been conceived in monolingual terms. A cursory reading of many SA reports shows that SA participants have been imagined as monolingual classroom learners of foreign languages with no experience using any language other than their first (the L1) for meaningful communication. SA sites have been imagined as monolithic environments containing linguistically homogeneous communities of native speakers, who provide target language input and with whom interaction takes place according to native speech community norms. Language learning outcomes have been evaluated, implicitly or explicitly, in terms of how closely learners’ post-sojourn linguistic performance approximates a native speaker
baseline, and learner engagement with the SA context has been understood dichotomously—learners spend their time either using the target language, which is viewed positively, or using the L1, which is viewed as a problem (e.g., García-Amaya, 2017). However, as I will argue in this section, this conceptualization fails to capture the multilingual realities of many SA participants and the sites that host them.

2.3.1 Multilingual sojourners. Several SA qualitative studies suggest that not all students who engage in SA fit the prototype of the mainstream monolingual sojourner who educators and administrators of SA programs may have imagined in the past. Among others, Anya (2017), Brown (2016), Du (2018), and Quan et al. (2018) show that the student populations who go abroad for the sake of language study are increasingly diverse and multilingual, even in an ideologically monolingual nation like the United States. Moreover, we might say that, by definition, all participants in any SA program will exhibit varying degrees of bi- and multilingualism. At a minimum, anyone who goes abroad to learn a language can be described as an emerging bilingual. And nowadays more and more SA participants exhibit diverse multilingual profiles. This is increasingly the case as contemporary globalization-related phenomena have led to an increase in the number of multilingual, transnational individuals in higher education and to more of them participating in SA programs. Examples of such individuals include but are not limited to speakers of minoritized languages from indigenous, migrant, and other transnational backgrounds, as well as seasoned foreign language learners with extensive prior experiences with multilingual language use and/or border-crossing. The heterogeneity of multilingual sojourners is great, as a multitude of unique situations and personal sociocultural histories give rise to highly individualized linguistic repertoires (Blommaert, 2010) and diverse multilingual identities which may be experienced as hybrid, hyphenated, or
transnational (De Fina & Perrino, 2013; Duff, 2015). Regardless of the degree of multilingualism they exhibit, individuals who study abroad carry with them their full linguistic repertoires, which are available to them as resources for achieving a variety of communicative and social functions, including exchanging information, constructing social networks, and performing identities.

To date, there has been little nuanced discussion in the SA literature about sojourners’ multilingualism and the multilingual practices in which they engage. One might attribute this fact to a tendency among SLA researchers to focus on what Ortega (2005) calls “pastoral” language learning populations—that is, White, privileged, middle-class university students, who grew up monolingually, and who pursue elective bilingualism through the addition of English as an international language or another prestigious global language. Indeed, this population is overrepresented both in the SA literature (Kinginger, 2009) and in U.S. SA as a whole (Sweeney, 2013). On the other hand, highly multilingual individuals are nearly always and increasingly present to some degree in SA cohorts. This hidden reality becomes evident from skimming the methods section of virtually any SA study report, where students’ status as heritage learners or another type of multilingual is often provided as demographic information. Well studied SA cohorts in the literature have also been entirely comprised of participants who come from officially bilingual geographies. To give just two examples, the sojourners studied in a monograph by Regan et al. (2009) were Irish-English bilinguals learning French. In another volume edited by Pérez-Vidal (2014), the participants were Spanish-Catalan bilinguals studying English (as well as another foreign language) in fulfillment of their degree program in Translation and Interpreting. While multilingualism was acknowledged as a participant characteristic in these study reports, it received no attention as a reality potentially affecting the processes and outcomes related to their SA experience. It thus seems that the lack of explicit
discussion of individual multilingualism in most SA research is not due to a lack of multilingual participants or contexts, but part of the larger problem of erasure of multilingualism by SLA researchers (Ortega, 2014). Such erasure, which is considered normal and inconsequential in many research domains in SLA, introduces threats to disciplinary knowledge by distorting the object of study –emergent bilingualism—and potentially by casting learners under a deficit light (Ortega, 2014). In the SA domain, the erasure of multilingualism likewise limits not only our understanding of the full range of SA experiences but also our ability to serve the growing population of multilingual sojourners.

Although sojourner multilingualism is often erased, it has sometimes been acknowledged in a few, perhaps indirect ways. One of them is in discussions about L1 use, an issue which, of course, arises because of sojourners’ multilingualism, that is, their ability to carry out communication in a language other than the target language. The role of the L1 in SA contexts is subject to ideological struggles and negotiation of learning affordances. Interestingly, in the domain of SA very few studies, whether qualitative or outcomes-oriented, have addressed this issue. But the little that can be gleaned reveals an interesting tension surrounding the pledge never to use the L1 while studying abroad, which is a feature of many SA programs. In most reports the language pledge is treated, if at all, as a self-evident policy that is assumed to support linguistic gains. Yet, two studies suggest that a language pledge may be counterproductive on occasion, and most particularly when the sojourners come from English speaking geographies and the worry to avoid L1 use is felt acutely. In their outcomes-oriented SA study, Dewey et al. (2013) found that sojourners used their L1 English as a strategy for gaining access to local social networks of Arabic speakers. The directors of 14-week SA programs in Jordan and Morocco encouraged the 30 U.S. students enrolled in them to gain access to Arabic by exchanging
tutoring in one language for another. The strategy was successful in generating greater opportunities for L2 interaction while abroad, according to the quantitative results and the qualitative comments of the sojourners. On the other hand, in her qualitative SA study, Trentman (2013b) notes that a language pledge can benefit sojourners who are native speakers of English by allowing them to claim identities as dedicated language learners and thus continue to use the L2, even in situations where switching to the L1, a global lingua franca, might seem more natural. As these two studies show, the L1 does not influence sojourners’ engagement with the SA context dichotomously. To think that either SA sojourners are using the target language and this is good, or they are not and this is a problem, denies the complexity of multilingual learning and use. The roles that the L1 and the other languages of sojourners play in L2 learning deserve much greater research attention when investigating SA contexts.

**2.3.2 Multilingual study abroad contexts.** In SA contexts, multilingualism is present in diverse configurations and to varying degrees of visibility in SA contexts. While abroad, learners will encounter new accents (e.g., George, 2014; Knouse, 2013; Ringer-Hilfinger, 2012), lexical choices (Kanwitt, Elias, & Clay, 2018), registers (e.g., Bacon, 2002; Regan et al., 2009), and even styles (e.g., Iwasaki, 2008; Shi, 2011; Siegal, 1996) of the target language. But they are also likely to encounter other forms of linguistic diversity. For example, they might encounter regional dialects of the target language that differ from the standardized varieties presented in classroom teaching materials. This has been shown by Shiri (2013) and Trentman (2017a) to be highly visible for learners of Arabic who learn Modern Standard Arabic in the classroom but who, while studying abroad in the Arabic speaking world, encounter situations of diglossia, where regional vernaculars that may have reached the status of national standard varieties (e.g., Egyptian Arabic, Raish, 2015) are used in everyday communication while Modern Standard
Arabic is relegated to more formal situations such as literacy and schooling. Students in many contexts might also encounter other additional languages, including indigenous and/or regional minority languages, such as Catalan or Galician in Spain (DePalma, 2015; Gallego-Balsà, 2014; Tullock, 2016), so-called international or global languages, such as English as a lingua franca (Dervin, 2013; McGregor, 2016; Trentman, 2013a), and even lingua francas other than English such as Wolof in Senegal (Coleman, 2013). Although to my knowledge not studied in the SA literature, it is also possible for multilingual sojourners to encounter in the host site the ethnic heritage languages of large communities of transnational migrants. For example, students may encounter Turkish during a SA in Germany. SA encounters with multilingual diversity are likely to be practically unavoidable in urban settings characterized by transnational dynamics, where phenomena related to current globalization trends—including the creation of new geopolitical entities, intensified and highly complex migration patterns, and the rise of new communication technologies—have led to highly visible “superdiversity” (Vertovec, 2009; see also De Fina et al., 2017). Despite criticisms that rightly caution against the sloganization of the term (in applied linguistics, see Pavlenko, 2019), superdiversity remains an important way of drawing attention to “new patterns of inequality and prejudice including emergent forms of racism, new patterns of segregation, new experiences of space and ‘contact’, new forms of cosmopolitanism and creolization (including what’s more recently discussed in terms of conviviality and multiculture), and more” (Vertovec, 2019, p. 126). Importantly, along with superdiversity, SA students will encounter language ideologies (Kroskrity, 2004; Woolard, 1998), that are particularly salient in transnational contexts and which legitimize and valorize certain ways of speaking above others, and they will perhaps be confronted with challenges to their own language ideologies. I will return to this issue in the next section.
Despite the ubiquity of societal multilingualism in SA sites, this phenomenon has largely been ignored in much of SA research. This is the case even when studies have been carried out in highly multilingual contexts. For example, four studies in a seminal special issue of *SSLA* edited by Collentine and Freed (2004), were carried out with learners of Spanish in Alicante, in the autonomous community of Valencia in Spain, where the Valencian variety of Catalan is co-official alongside Spanish, a fact which was never mentioned in any of the studies (Collentine, 2004; Díaz-Campos, 2004; Dewey, 2004; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). The neglect of societal multilingualism in SA can be attributed in part to a tendency to focus on what I call the traditional paradigm of SA, where the target language is a standard, literate variety of the dominant national majority language. The bulk of SA studies have examined this paradigm, where multilingualism is easily rendered invisible or, at most, an inconsequential add-on.

However, several more recent studies have begun to examine what I refer to as alternative SA paradigms, where multilingualism is more visible. To name a few examples: In her work with U.S.-based learners of Modern Standard Arabic in Egypt, Trentman (2013b) identifies lack of familiarity with the regional variety of Egyptian Arabic as a potential obstacle to gaining access to local communities. In a survey study of UK-based learners of French in Senegal, Coleman (2013) reports that many learners also learned some Wolof, a local vernacular that is used as a lingua franca alongside French, and that learning Wolof was correlated with longer stays, greater integration, and more positive experiences overall. Finally, DePalma (2015) examined a multinational cohort of sojourners learning the minoritized language, Galician, in Spain. She reports on how the dominant presence of Spanish as the everyday lingua franca of Galician society complicated sojourners’ access to the target language. Nevertheless, many of the sojourners were able to establish what DePalma calls contexts for micro-immersion through
agentive choices such as opting to frequent establishments that did their business in Galician and seeking out the company of highly patriotic individuals.

In sum, SA sites are best thought of as multilingual ecologies into which sojourners insert themselves. Furthermore, SA sites are made more multilingual through the workings of transnationalism, with the presence of border-crossers including migrants, tourists, and the sojourners themselves, who bring along with them their own diverse linguistic repertoires. While abroad, sojourners construct social networks that may include individuals from some or all of these groups as well as locals and are likely to adopt varying linguistic practices with each of them. If so, multilingualism should be investigated as a parameter along which SA sites can vary, being more visible and available in some contexts than others. Questions about how societal multilingualism in the SA destination structures language learning opportunities are also of practical relevance to SA policy makers, administrators, teachers, students, and their families, who may wonder about the potential benefits, drawbacks, and challenges associated with SA in a highly multilingual environment.

2.4 The Roles of Attitudes and Ideologies in Navigating Study Abroad Experiences

As mentioned in Section 1.1, regardless of theoretical persuasion, a premium is placed in SA research on access to (rich immersive, iterative, and personally meaningful) language as a key element that will lead to maximal benefits in the SA experience. This has catapulted variable opportunities for language use during SA to the forefront of many SA studies, both quantitative (e.g., Dewey et al., 2014) and qualitative (e.g., Kinginger, 2008). But willingness to opt for the L2 in interaction is in part shaped by attitudes towards other codes circulating in the SA context, and, more generally, local ideologies of language that circulate in the SA host environment as well as the language ideologies that learners themselves bring with them might influence their
SA experience. Many students hold unrealistic expectations of SA as situation of monolingual immersion due to the one nation, one language ideology (Woolard, 1998). The qualitative research on SA has shown that sojourners experience unmet expectations as conflicts, in response to which some adjust their expectations and others become frustrated and withdraw from engagement (e.g., Diao, Freed, & Smith, 2011; Mendelson, 2004; Wilkinson, 1998a). This raises questions about the kinds of conflicts potentially posed by multilingualism, including the role of identity and ideology in these conflicts, and the ways in which such conflicts are resolved (or not).

Some qualitative and mixed-methods studies offer glimpses of locals and learners exhibiting negative attitudes toward linguistic diversity in the SA context. For example, in an ethnographic study of dinnertime conversations amongst U.S.-based students and Japanese homestay families where the hosts were Kyoto dialect speakers, Iino (2006) found that hosts accommodated to students, speaking a hyper-standard form of the Tokyo dialect, and sanctioned and repaired other family members’ use of the local dialect. In interviews with the author, students expressed correspondingly negative views of the dialect, complaining that they could not understand it, calling it “bad language” and “backward,” and considering themselves lucky when they got an “educated” host family who spoke standard Japanese (p. 172, footnote 3). In a study by Fernandez (2013), Isabel, a student from the UK learning Spanish in Barcelona, complained of having few opportunities to use Spanish in Barcelona, due to locals’ use of Catalan, which she perceived as a hindrance to learning. Her local roommates used Catalan for communicating with one another and only used Spanish when addressing Isabel directly. This is, in fact, a typical pattern of participant-related codeswitching amongst Catalan-Spanish bilinguals (Pujolar, 2011; Woolard, 1989). Isabel also described locals as reluctant to use Spanish due to
what she perceived as their “very strong feelings” against the rest of Spain (p. 322). At the end of the trip, she said that she would go back to Spain in the future but not to Barcelona, preferring instead Madrid or, somewhat ironically, the Balearic Islands (where Catalan is spoken). Attitudes and ideologies are not always homogenous or negative. Students in other studies have exhibited a mixture of positive and negative orientations towards linguistic diversity. In a study of U.S. Chinese heritage learners in China by Jing-Schmidt et al. (2016), one focal participant, Vanessa eagerly learned the local dialect and drew on it to construct an identity of herself as a local, while another participant, Meryl, wanted nothing to do with the local dialect that she encountered. Other things being equal, nevertheless, in transnational, superdiverse contexts for SA, the circulating language ideologies may be particularly complex and the identity conflicts that need to be negotiated may be particularly acute. I turn to a review of identity in SA in the next section.

2.5 Identity in Study Abroad

In recent years, identity has become increasingly prominent as a construct of interest in SA research. This is due in part to researchers’ attempts to understand the underlying causes of individual variation in SA outcomes. Early qualitative studies aimed for an emic (i.e., participant-oriented) perspective and used methods such as ethnography (e.g., Talburt & Stewart, 1999) and narrative study of learner diaries (e.g., Polanyi, 1995) to gain insight into the varied experiences of SA participants. These studies, which were carried out almost exclusively with participants on U.S.-based programs, highlighted how identity-related issues mediate participants’ opportunities and willingness to take advantage of interactional affordances. A new wave of identity research that is currently emerging also relies largely on ethnographic and narrative methods but focuses on the complex identity negotiations that take place in SA (e.g., Kinginger, 2004), and the (supposedly) more or less permanent identity changes that occur as a
result, including more dramatic emergence of new “target language-mediated subject positions” (Block, 2007a) or more moderate L2-related identity development in domains such as the ability to project desired identities through the L2, in changes in one’s self-perception as a language learner and user, or in personal growth that is mediated through L2 use (Benson et al., 2012). Following broader trends in SLA, these researchers have increasingly been influenced by the work of social constructivist and poststructuralist scholars who conceive of identity as multiple, dynamic, contested, and socially constructed in the context of unequal power relations (Block, 2007a). These more recent studies often include a critical perspective by focusing on the way conflicting discourses and ideologies give rise to identity-related conflicts in SA. This research continues to exhibit a tendency to be U.S.-centered but now also includes studies of participants on UK and European-based SA programs (e.g., Dervin, 2013; Llanes, Tragant, & Serrano, 2018; Mitchell et al., 2017; Murphy-Lejeune, 2002; Pogorelova & Trenchs-Parera, 2018) and students from the Asian Pacific Rim learning English (e.g., Benson et al., 2012, 2013; Jackson, 2008, 2016; Umino & Benson, 2016).

The SA research on identity has produced several substantial findings. The first is that language learning in SA takes place within the context of destabilized identity. This is in part due to the fact that SA is a type of border-crossing experience, related to, yet distinct from other sorts of mobility such as migration and tourism (Kinginger, 2009). As Block (2007b) notes, “when individuals move across geographical and psychological borders, immersing themselves in new sociocultural environments, they find that their sense of identity is destabilised and that they enter a period of struggle to reach a balance” (p. 864). In the SA environment, sojourners find their identities affected in multifarious ways. For example, some identities, such as national identity, may become more salient, while others (e.g., medical student, rowing team captain)
may become less available (Wilkinson, 1998b). Students may find themselves positioned in unfamiliar ways with respect to their newly salient national identities. In a case study of a U.S. SA cohort on a program in France in 2003 which coincided with the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, Kinginger (2008) recounts the story of Beatrice, who was caught off-guard when her host family challenged her support for the intervention. Sojourners may also find that familiar subject positions, such as gendered and heterosexual identities, are oriented to and performed differently in the home and host contexts (e.g., Anya, 2017; Kinginger & Farrell Whitworth, 2005; Siegal, 1995). Entirely new subject positions may become available to sojourners, such as a foreigner identity. Studies have shown that hosts accommodate to foreigners by adapting their speech to make it more comprehensible and by relaxing conversational norms, overlooking potential face threats (e.g., Iino, 2006; Brown, 2013). While such behavior may facilitate interaction, it can also limit exposure to authentic language and impede development of advanced sociopragmatic knowledge (Siegal, 1996). Studies of White sojourners in East Asian contexts have shown how these sojourners may embrace or resist such positionings (e.g., Brown, 2013; Cook, 2006; Iino, 2006).

Another substantial finding of the SA literature on identity is that identity-related conflicts are characteristic of SA and that their resolutions vary, resulting in some outcomes that constitute ways of moving forward identity-wise and hence pursuing access to language in new and perhaps better ways, and others that involve withdrawing identity-wise and hence disengaging from the goal of gaining access to language. Identity conflicts arise in SA not only because of the new and unfamiliar ways of being positioned that go along with border-crossing experiences, but possibly because these identity negotiations are coupled with and complicated by other SA-related stresses, particularly the fact that this is often sojourners’ first real
experience using the L2 outside the classroom. One type of conflict experienced by individuals is an inability to project desired identities through the L2. Pellegrino Aveni (2005) refers to a “reduced sense of self” (p. 18) experienced by U.S. students in Russia, who reported feeling as if their limited L2 competence had made them become like children. This threat to their sense of status led many students in the cohort to withdraw from opportunities to use Russian spontaneously, which was the reason they had gone abroad in the first place. Another related type of conflict experienced by sojourners is a disparity between projected and ascribed identities. When interacting with their hosts, sojourners attempt to present themselves in socially desirable ways. However, students’ success in projecting desired identities may be limited by several constraining factors. On the one hand, cross-cultural pragmatic failure may result from a lack of sociopragmatic knowledge, including pragmalinguistic knowledge of the relevant language forms and their literal meanings and the sociolinguistic knowledge of the broader social significance and values attached to different ways of speaking and identifying within hierarchical power structures in the new environment (Thomas, 1983). On the other hand, students with advanced sociopragmatic knowledge may choose to accept, negotiate, resist, or challenge these norms. This is illustrated in several studies focusing on gender identity which have noted the struggles of female students to resist others’ positioning of them as sexual objects and to claim more nuanced and powerful subject positions for themselves, and the limited engagement that is often brought about by such occurrences (e.g., Polanyi, 1995; Twombly, 1995; Talburt & Stewart, 1999). As was first pointed out by Siegal (1996), such difficulties are often the result of conflicting discourses and ideologies which influence how (gendered and other) identities get constructed by participants and their hosts, a point echoed by scholars more recently (e.g., Block, 2007a; Kinginger, 2013; Kinginger & Farrell Whitworth, 2005; Tullock, 2018).
Block (2007a), following Papastergiadis (2000), refers to the “negotiation of difference” that occurs when individuals struggle to achieve a new moral and emotional balance in the wake of experiences that upset their taken-for-granted views and destabilize their sense of identity. He notes that this is often a painful process that is characterized by feelings of ambivalence, but which can result in the emergence of new “third place” identities (e.g., Bhabha, 1994; Kramsch, 2009). The qualitative SA literature exhibits cases of sojourners who are successful in this regard—often with the support of local social networks—as well as those who find themselves unwilling or unable to negotiate difference and for whom identity-related conflicts may come to define the SA experience and whose home-grounded identities are strengthened as a result (e.g., Jackson, 2008; Kinginger, 2008; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005; Polanyi, 1995; Twombly, 1995; Talburt & Stewart, 1999). In a chapter of his book, Second Language Identities, Block (2007a) reviewed the SA literature dealing with identity issues and noted a common tendency among these students to adopt ethnocentric stances toward new, alternative practices and discourses of identity encountered in the SA environment. He suggested that such tendencies might be characteristic of U.S. sojourners. At first blush, Block’s argument might seem persuasive: U.S. sojourners abroad may be particularly ethnocentric in their outlook on cultures and languages. However, the charge may have been more an artifact of the fact that, at the time, the extant research Block reviewed almost exclusively reported on the experiences of sojourners in U.S.-based programs. Although the imbalance persists today, it has lessened somewhat, as Kinginger (2013a) notes. Other more recent studies since Block (2007b) have highlighted similar dynamics of ethnocentrism among sojourners from Europe (e.g., Patron, 2007 for France) and Asia (e.g., Benson et al., 2013 for Hong Kong) and thus problematize his interpretation. In fact,
ethnocentrism can arise out of many contexts and individuals and is a complex dynamic that
does not inhere in any nationality.

Some of the early research on identity in SA was mainly concerned with obstacles
sojourners encountered in gaining access to language due to singular identity factors that were
defined \textit{a priori}, for example, gender (e.g., Polanyi, 1995; Twombly, 1995). Such an approach
reflects a modernist conception of identities as fixed and determined rather than the
postmodernist understanding of identities as dynamic and socially constructed that is the
preferred paradigm in current Applied Linguistics scholarship (Block, 2007; Norton, 2013).
Moreover, it fails to account for the overlapping and interdependent nature of identity categories
and thus neglects variation among sojourners positioned according to the same dimensions of
identity (e.g., as a woman, as Black). As Applied Linguistics scholars working on
intersectionality have pointed out, identity is multilayered and complex and is best understood
with respect to multiple interrelating dimensions (Block & Corona, 2014; Norton & De Costa,
2018). When a more nuanced approach is adopted that considers individuals and their sources of
diversity, multiple identities come into focus that complicate essentialized views of sojourners of
a particular “type.” One of the most famous successful cases of identity development in SA is to
be found in Kinginger’s (2004) case study of Alice, a U.S. sojourner who, over multiple sojourns
learning French abroad in Quebec and France, was eventually able to emerge with a much more
satisfying French-speaking identity for herself. Alice’s success in the long run turned out to be
attributable to her social class, gender, and age identities as an older, working-class female
student from a disadvantaged background. Alice had been through a great deal of hardship in her
life, including being homeless and getting pregnant at 19 and, thus, having to delay her studies,
put the baby up for adoption, and eventually work a job during college. Thus, she had experience
persevering through difficult circumstances, which translated into resilience when she found her worldview challenged by her hosts. Furthermore, her identities and lived experiences made her different from her cohort, which was largely made up of younger, more privileged students. Thus, in contrast to many sojourners, she did not experience a strong pull to withdraw into her conational cohort and was instead pushed to develop local French social networks. Alice’s story shows how individuals’ multiple identities, as well as life-defining events, which are often structured by social identities and social constraints, can have a huge impact on the nature of identity negotiation in SA. However, many studies of identity in SA fail to achieve this level of nuance or detail with fleshing out the participants and their lives.

2.6 Transnational Barcelona and the Sociolinguistics of Catalan

Since the goal of the present study was to understand how language learners encounter and negotiate multilingualism when engaged in a SA experience, I focused on Barcelona, a highly multilingual and transnational site, as a destination for SA. Therefore, in this section I review relevant sociolinguistic and geopolitical research-based characterizations of Barcelona, the city, and Catalan, the language.

Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, an autonomous political community located in northeast Spain. It is bordered to the north by France and Andorra, to the west and south by the Spanish autonomous communities, Aragon and Valencia, and to the east by the Mediterranean Sea. Of roughly 7.6 million Catalan residents, the vast majority (about 5.5 million) lives in the Barcelona metropolitan area. Catalonia is one of six officially bilingual autonomous communities in Spain. While only Spanish (more commonly referred to in Barcelona as castellano / Castilian) is official throughout Spain, both Spanish and Catalan have been co-official in Catalonia since 1983. As of 2016, Catalan had slightly over 10 million speakers,
including 6,045,000 in Catalonia, 2,561,000 in the Valencian Country, 888,000 in the Balearic Islands, 38,000 in the region of the Franja in Aragon, 165,000 in Northern Catalonia in France, 56,000 in Andorra, 27,000 in the town of Alghero in Italy, and 266,000 living abroad in other countries (Plataforma per la Llengua, 2016). Catalan, like Spanish, is a Romance language. The two languages share many structural similarities due to their close typological relation and history of extensive contact. However, they are not mutually intelligible and are considered distinct languages by their speakers and linguists alike.

Visitors to Barcelona will encounter a highly complex bi-/multilingual situation among the local population, as virtually all residents are bi-/multilinguals, exhibiting varying degrees of command and use of the two local languages and, increasingly, additional languages, depending on age, educational background, and family origin. There are no monolingual speakers of Catalan, and people who grew up in Catalonia with Spanish as a home language are often seamlessly fluent in both Spanish and Catalan, particularly those who were brought up in the Catalan school system since the late 1980s (Muñoz, 2005).

2.6.1 Near-universal bilingualism. The facts just presented are clearly illustrated in data from the most recent Catalan census (Institut d’Estadística de Catalunya, 2013). Table 1 shows the first language (i.e., the language that the interviewee claimed to have learned first at home), the language of identification (i.e., the language that the person being interviewed claimed to consider their own and identify with), and the habitual language (i.e., the language that the interviewee claimed to use most often) of individuals living in Catalonia. Table 2 gives a breakdown of individuals’ self-reported knowledge of the two languages by skill. As the data in Table 1 illustrate, for about half of 6.25 million Catalan residents of age 15 or older, Spanish is the language that they learned first, identify with, and use habitually, while for slightly over
30%, the same can be said of Catalan. Nonetheless, as shown in Table 2, nearly all Catalan residents (94%) self-report to be able to function in both languages, particularly when it comes to understanding Catalan (as opposed to speaking, reading, or writing it, where the percentages range from 61% to 82%). In addition, a significant portion of them are multilingual in that they report to speak either English (about 1/3 of residents) or French (about 1/5 of residents). Finally, as with all metropolises, Barcelona has a substantial presence of migrant languages. According to figures from the Barcelona local government in January 2017, international migrants made up 17.8% of the population in Barcelona. Of these, most come from Europe (35.9%), followed by the Americas (31.8%), Asia (25.0%), Africa (7.1%), and Oceania (0.2%) (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Catalan</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Both languages</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First language</td>
<td>31.02%</td>
<td>55.14%</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>36.38%</td>
<td>47.55%</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
<td>9.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual</td>
<td>36.29%</td>
<td>50.73%</td>
<td>6.82%</td>
<td>6.16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data from Institut d’Estadística de Catalunya (2013).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Understand</th>
<th>Speak</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Write</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>99.77%</td>
<td>99.67%</td>
<td>97.42%</td>
<td>95.90%</td>
<td>95.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>94.33%</td>
<td>80.39%</td>
<td>82.39%</td>
<td>60.38%</td>
<td>60.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>38.39%</td>
<td>30.99%</td>
<td>34.74%</td>
<td>30.56%</td>
<td>28.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>23.91%</td>
<td>16.37%</td>
<td>19.20%</td>
<td>12.79%</td>
<td>12.13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data from Institut d’Estadística de Catalunya (2013).
2.6.2 The impact of history and transnationalism on contemporary multilingual realities. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 also show that linguistic resources in Catalonia are unevenly distributed, as is true of all multilingual societies. In several historical overviews of the current sociolinguistic situation in Catalonia (Boix-Fuster & Sanz, 2008; Newman & Trenchs-Parera, 2015; Pujolar, 2011; Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2015), this situation of asymmetrical bilingualism in favor of Spanish is situated with respect to two historical processes.

The first of these processes is the political repression of minority languages, including Catalan, under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939 – 1975) and the subsequent implementation of a pro-minority language policy in the period that followed. Under Franco, public displays of regional identity were considered a threat to Spanish nationalism and were hence prohibited. During this time, the Catalan language was censored in the media, education, and public institutions. While generational transmission of the language continued, Catalan experienced considerable domain loss in this period, and many older Catalans never learned to read or write in Catalan.

In the period of democratic transition following Franco’s death, the autonomy of the Catalan government was restored, along with its democratic institutions. The Catalan language was made official again, and a language policy of linguistic normalization (normalització lingüística) was implemented with the aim of restoring the use of Catalan to all domains of public life as well as extending the use of Catalan among monolingual Spanish speakers. Catalan became the preferred language of public administration and was gradually re-introduced into education until by 1998 it eventually became the primary medium of instruction (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015). Due to the current educational model of Catalan linguistic immersion, with
Spanish taught as an additional language, all school students are now expected to be fluent in both languages by the time they graduate school (Boix-Fuster & Sanz, 2008).

The second historical process leading to the current situation of linguistic stratification is the massive influx of primarily Spanish-speaking migrants in two waves. The first wave of migration occurred in the mid-20th century, when the intense industrialization taking place in the region led to increased demand for low- to mid-skilled workers. This demand was met by migrants who primarily came from Spanish-speaking regions of Southern Spain. This made Spanish dramatically more prevalent as an oral language in historically Catalan-speaking territories. By the 1980s, these Spanish-speaking migrants and their descendants came to comprise about half of the population of Catalonia (Woolard, 1986). Over the past two decades, the international migration that characterizes transnationalism has brought a second wave of immigrant workers which has come from other Latin America, and, to a lesser extent, other global regions, including Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia. Long-term international migration to Barcelona has given rise to particularly sizeable communities originally from Latin America and China (see Newman, Trenchs-Parera, & Ng, 2008; Trenchs-Parera, 2013). Galeano and Bayona-i-Carrasco (2018) estimate that between 2000 and 2010 the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona sustained 18% of foreign-born people and became the fourth immigrant densest region in Spain, after the Balearic Islands (23.4%), Madrid (20%), Valencia (19%), and the Canary Islands (19%). They note that the largest subgroups of immigrants in Barcelona are Ecuadorian and Moroccan, at over 50,000 people each, but that there are “as many as nineteen [other] groups with populations exceeding 10,000” (p. 102). In terms of integration, Latin American groups and Eastern European groups show the least residential segregation, whereas Asian and African immigrants are spatially more concentrated in less desirable neighborhoods.
The multilingualism of Barcelona does not only come from the co-official languages and the international migration of the last two decades, but also from tourism, a contemporary transnational phenomenon itself that is also implicated in language learning and language ideologies (Heller, Pujolar, & Duchêne, 2014). Barcelona receives millions of international visitors each year, especially during the summer. According to estimates by the Barcelona city government, the city welcomed a record 14.5 million international tourists in 2017, the year in which the data were collected for the current study (La Vanguardia, 2018, 10 January).

In this context of transnationalism, Spanish tends to serve as a lingua franca among international migrants and with locals (Corona, Nussbaum, & Unamuno, 2013), whereas English likely fulfills the lingua franca role with tourists.

2.6.3 Language hierarchies and the value of Catalan amidst language ideologies. Sociolinguists’ descriptions of language practices in Catalan society note that over their large-scale social, historical, and transnational trajectories, Spanish and Catalan have accrued a variety of indexical meanings and occupy different social positions (Boix & Sanz, 2008; Pujolar, 2011; Woolard, 2016; see review by Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2015). These authors concur that language choice in Catalonia is bound to an intricate complex of sociopolitical, social class, and interpersonal orientations, whereby Spanish is traditionally associated with a Spanish social and political identity, the working class and low-skilled labor, and is the preferential lingua franca for interacting with non-Catalans, while Catalan indexes a Catalan social and political identity, the middle class and prestigious professions, and is generally avoided in interactions with non-Catalans, who are not expected to know the language. These associations are by no means straightforward, however, as language and identity in Catalonia are fluid, dynamic, and contested.
and have shifted considerably since the turn of the century (Trenchs-Parera & Newman 2015; Woolard, 2016; Woolard & Frekko, 2013).

Pujolar (2011) describes these positions as “a result of—and as reproducing—political and socioeconomic divides; but which do not unambiguously establish clear differences of status” (p. 365). Here, the “political divide” refers to mutually exclusive discourses of Spanish and Catalan national identities that invoke monolingual Romantic ideals grounded in the ideology of the nation state and through which language choice has traditionally been seen as an emblem of national belonging, reflecting pervasive one-language, one-nation ideology tensions. These discourses have their roots in the mid-19th century and are still routinely drawn on in public discourses and debates over language policy in Catalonia (Woolard & Frekko, 2013). The “socioeconomic divide” refers to the historical predominance of Spanish-speakers in the lower-skilled job market and Catalan-speakers in higher-level and managerial positions. Thus, in addition to being interpreted as an ethnic identity marker, language choice has also developed connotations related to socioeconomic status, with Spanish being associated with the working class and Catalan with middle-class prestige. It is important to point out, once again, that these associations are not straightforward and that they are constantly evolving (see Woolard & Frekko, 2013; Woolard, 2016).

The remarkably complex sociolinguistic situation in Catalonia must be understood as the result of shifting and interacting sociocultural, political, and ideological forces. In an overview of Catalan-Spanish language contact in social interaction, Pujolar (2011) reviewed the shortcomings of traditional sociolinguistic approaches, such as the framework of diglossia (Fishman, 1967) and micro-analysis of conversational code-switching (Auer, 1984; Blom & Gumperz, 1972; Gumperz, 1982), to understanding the complex bilingual practices typical of
interaction in Catalonia. While Pujolar acknowledges the existence of “domains” of life where one language or the other tends to predominate (e.g., Catalan in high-skilled and managerial positions, Spanish in mass media and telecommunications), he points out that this distribution is rarely neat and straightforward, but rather that “both languages can be seen as having a given ‘market share’ or often as competing for hegemony in all domains” (p. 367). Likewise, he shows that it is possible to account for many, but not all, aspects of Catalans’ language choice in interaction by appealing to traditional concepts of “situational” and “metaphorical” code-switching (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; Gumperz, 1982), or “discourse-oriented” and “participant-oriented” code-switching. For example, students are often reported to switch from using Catalan in the classroom to Spanish on the playground (Vila, 1996; Galindo, 2008). Languages may be used to produce momentary stylistic effects related to the social personae indexed by one language or another; for example, Catalan may be used to voice school-teacher-like authority figures, while a stylized Spanish is called upon to evoke the working class (Pujolar, 2001). A language switch can be used to make a shift in topic or a punchline more salient (Woolard, 2004, p. 79). Often, a language switch indicates a change in who is being addressed. For instance, many researchers have noted a common tendency of Catalans to speak Spanish with perceived outgroup members (e.g., Boix-Fuster, 1993; Boix-Fuster & Sanz, 2008; Pujolar & González, 2013; Woolard, 1989). While Pujolar (2011) recognizes the value of examining language choice at the micro-level of social interaction, he contends that a complete and nuanced understanding of Catalan translingual practices, particularly those related to social identity, requires a critical sociolinguistics approach that seeks connections with macro-level phenomena such as linguistic ideologies (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994) and struggles over access to material and symbolic resources (Bordieu, 1991).
Much research has been conducted in Catalonia from these perspectives. One well-known example of such scholarship comes from a 2013 special issue of the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* on Catalan in the 21st century edited by Katherine Woolard and Susan Frekko. The contributions in this special issue take a qualitative ethnographic approach to focus on the everyday practices and ideological views expressed by individuals of diverse backgrounds living in Catalonia. The findings of these studies capture the profound disconnect between locals’ on-the-ground translingual practices and hybrid displays of identity on the one hand and the persistent discourses surrounding language policy debates on the other, which are dominated by “a monolingual Romantic national ideal that pits Catalan and Castilian [Spanish] against each other as two mutually exclusive languages and corresponding identities” (Woolard & Frekko, 2013, p. 129).

Underlying these local practices are important ideological shifts that have taken place over the past two decades, largely because of the successful Catalan language policy of linguistic normalization, which has led to high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy among the younger generations of Catalans. One such shift is captured in earlier work by Trenchs-Parera and Newman on the language attitudes of adolescent Catalan urban dwellers of Spanish-speaking origin (Newman et al., 2008; Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2009). Using experimental (Newman et al., 2008) and qualitative methodologies (Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2009), they identified a spectrum of language ideologies, with “linguistic parochialism,” favoring monolingualism in either Catalan or Spanish, at either end of the spectrum and “linguistic cosmopolitanism,” favoring bilingualism, accommodation, diversity, and crossing, in the middle. Despite some expressions of both Spanish and Catalan parochialism, the findings of both studies indicate a growing predominance of mixed and cosmopolitan ideologies.
The attitudes towards Catalan held by Spanish-speaking Latin American residents in Catalonia likewise are the object of much study. The findings are similar to the findings just reviewed for the autochthonous Catalans and the southern Spanish long-term migrant residents: They show conflicting ideologies that ambivalently embrace Catalan as emblematic of integration while hierarchizing it lower than English and Spanish (Patiño-Santos, 2018). These attitudes are in flux and change with affective socialization into the “new” homeland, such that an initial resistance towards Catalan viewed as an obstacle to integration can later give rise to an alliance with it and an appreciation for minoritized languages in general (Cortès-Colomé, Barriéras, & Comellas, 2016).

2.6.4 Multilingual practices. The situation of near-universal bilingualism in Catalonia (Section 2.6.1) and the social meanings that both Catalan and Spanish have accrued over their extensive history of contact (Section 2.6.2) shape everyday language use in complex ways. The fact that most residents are bilingual in Spanish and Catalan, regardless of home language, means that resources from either language may be—and often are—drawn on in communication.

In some cases, this leads to the exclusive use of one language or another in ways that are surprising for visitors. This is what occurs with much public signage, where language choice depends largely on the sources of political control bearing on a given context (Pujolar, 2011). In contrast to other officially bilingual autonomous communities in Spain, monolingual public signage in Catalan is common. In a study of the linguistic landscapes in different Barcelona neighborhoods, Comajoan Colomé and Long (2012) found that between 17.7% and 37.5% of public signage was only in Catalan, while between 25.0% and 46.0% was monolingual in Spanish, and that this varied depending on the demographics of the neighborhood (i.e., the relative presence of Spanish and international migrant communities). In typical everyday
interaction, however, Catalans routinely draw on and mobilize resources from both languages, switching between them strategically, alternating between languages depending on individual and perceived interlocutor preferences, and creatively producing new, hybrid linguistic forms to index complex multilingual identities (Pujolar, 2011; Woolard, 2016). For example, the students in the current study eventually noticed and reported that a habitual public encounter exchange would start with “Bon dia! ¿Cómo estás?” [<Catalan>Good morning!] <Spanish>How are you?]. The everyday linguistic practices of Catalans can largely be subsumed under what is now commonly referred to as “translanguaging” (Li Wei, 2018).

In sum, the in-depth review of Barcelona and Catalan I have offered in this section strongly suggests that a near-universal bilingualism in the autochthonous population and the presence of shorter- and longer-term migrants as well as international tourists influences interactional dynamics between relative newcomers and old-timers in Barcelona and will likely have an impact on SA sojourners themselves. Furthermore, it stands to reason that the partially overlapping multilingual repertoires of visitors and local residents of autochthonous, Spanish migrant, and transnational migrant backgrounds must contribute to the linguistic complexity of the social environment that sojourners need to learn to negotiate, including negotiating tensions regarding the role of Catalan among other geopolitically more powerful languages, particularly English and Spanish.

2.7 Chapter Summary

The review of the extant SA literature presented in this chapter has shown that the empirically observed language learning outcomes of SA vary by outcomes measure, context, and individual participant in ways that can only partially be accounted for by moderating variables such as initial level of proficiency, length of stay, and target language contact. Likewise, the
qualities of sojourners’ experiences abroad vary in terms of access to local social networks, intensity and nature of contact with hosts, and ability to cope with unmet expectations and challenges to ideologies and identities. Reframing SA in multilingual rather than monolingual terms is a move that both aligns SA research with contemporary multilingual realities and raises questions regarding sojourners’ interpretations, orientations, and responses concerning multilingualism in the SA environment as well as the construction, negotiation, and development of multilingual and hybrid identities across time and space. In this dissertation, accordingly, I will investigate multilingualism in SA both at the individual and contextual level by focusing on sojourners on a U.S.-based SA program that takes place in Barcelona, Spain, the cosmopolitan capital city of the autonomous region of Catalonia, where local linguistic and identity practices are shaped by widespread official and de facto bilingualism in the regional language, Catalan, and the national language, Spanish, in a wider sociolinguistic ecology of transnationalism where immigrant languages and English as an international language also enter into a complex multilingual hierarchical relationship.
Chapter 3: Methods

In this dissertation, I am interested in the ways in which individual and societal multilingualism are oriented to by sojourners, how they give rise to any negotiations surrounding the multiple ideologies and identities and how these orientations and negotiations may shape the SA experience. I will adopt a qualitative case study approach, combining introspective and ethnographic methods. These methods will enable an in-depth, nuanced, emic (i.e., participant-oriented) understanding of the identity and ideology negotiations of multilingual sojourners in a multilingual SA context. Kinginger (2013a) has warned qualitative SA researchers against limiting their scope to participants’ perspectives, as SA participants are cultural novices who are unaware of the local significance of social practices:

Novice participants in any community are by definition unaware of the local meanings of social phenomena, including language use. When researchers report only what students have to say, the result is a body of literature about what is perceived to be wrong with the rest of the world (p. 354).

Heeding this warning, I will take a critical approach by interrogating the language ideologies informing identity negotiations between sojourners and their hosts and also by triangulating introspective data with ethnographic observations of sojourners while abroad.

This chapter is organized as follows. In Section 3.1, I present the research questions that guide this dissertation study. Section 3.2 describes and highlights key components of the BarSA program design. Section 3.3, outlines recruitment and sampling procedures and comment on my positionality as a researcher. Section 3.4 characterizes the sample for the present dissertation, the BarSA 2017 cohort and focal students. Section 3.5 provides demographic information on the conversation exchange partners (intercambios). Section 3.6 contains an overview of data
collection procedures, followed by Sections 3.7 and 3.8, which describe in detail the introspective and ethnographic methods of data collection that were employed. Section 3.9 discusses data transcription, coding, and analysis procedures. Finally, Section 3.10 concludes the chapter with a preview of dissertation findings.

3.1 Research Questions

The present dissertation contributes towards filling several gaps in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Specifically, by focusing on the heretofore overlooked aspect of multilingualism in SA I expect to generate insights which will be of use to SLA researchers interested in language learning in SA, SA practitioners seeking to design effective programs, and prospective host universities that aim to attract sojourners and anticipate their needs. In the present study, therefore, I set out to explore the following sets of questions:

1. What orientations do sojourners exhibit towards the languages that are available in the SA environment besides Spanish—the learning target, that is, Catalan and any other languages they may encounter? How do such orientations relate to views of multilingualism as an obstacle or an affordance for language learning? Do orientations change over time for any of the sojourners, and what might explain the changes?

2. How do sojourners leverage (or not) their multiple identities as a resource to language learning? What kinds of identity-related obstacles might arise during the SA experience, and how are these challenges approached and resolved (or not) by different sojourners? Under what circumstances do sojourners experience their own identities as transnational/multilingual?

These are all open-ended, complex questions that guided my study. The answers were difficult to anticipate, although plausible expectations were formed as I reviewed the extant
literature. I will close this Methods chapter with a preview of main findings, which will then be presented in detail in four chapters, 4 through 7. In the bulk of this chapter, however, I present my Methods in detail.

3.2 The Research Site: Barcelona Study Abroad Program Design

The context of the present study is the U.S.-based Barcelona Study Abroad (BarSA) Program, a five-week summer language immersion program for undergraduate students. It was designed in 2007 by the director, Cristina Sanz, who has also been the lead researcher in the formal study of linguistic outcomes arising from it (Bryfonski & Sanz, 2018; Grey et al., 2015; Marijuan, 2015; Méndez Seijas, 2018; Nagle et al., 2016; Tullock, 2016a; Zalbidea et al., 2016 & 2017). Using quantitative methods, these studies have found that, by the end of their five-week stay, BarSA Program participants tend to demonstrate robust gains in performance on grammaticality judgment and lexical decision tasks (Grey et al., 2015), pronunciation of stop consonants (Nagle et al., 2016), processing of sentences with non-canonical word order (Marijuan, 2015), and syntactic complexity and accuracy in oral production (Zalbidea et al., 2016, 2017). Missing from this body of outcomes-oriented research, however, are detailed accounts of program participants’ experiences, perceptions, and situated practices while abroad. Furthermore, by focusing only on Spanish learning outcomes, questions surrounding how the multilingual realities of Barcelona may shape students’ experiences remain unanswered. In the current study, I depart from the quantitative tradition and turn a qualitative lens on the BarSA program. In doing so, I shift the focus from outcomes to learning processes. It should be noted that short-term programs like the BarSA program are increasingly popular in the United States, where 65% of outbound sojourners opted for programs of eight weeks or less in 2016/2017 (Institute of International Education, 2018). Spain is also a popular destination for SA in the
United States. It is the third most frequent destination country for U.S. students, hosting 9.4% of all U.S. students who study abroad, in close third place after the UK (12.0%) and Italy (10.6%) (Institute of International Education, 2018). The BarSA program aims to promote meaningful language gains and intercultural development during the short period of 5+ weeks through a combination of rigorous, content-based academic coursework, active engagement with the environment through immersive fieldwork in the form of excursions and cultural activities, and twice-weekly conversation exchanges with local university students. To the maximum extent possible, program features were carefully designed to heed main findings in the SA literature for what they suggest are effective SA programmatic practices. While maintaining a strong focus on language learning, the program also includes cultural, intercultural, and professional learning goals. These goals reflect the diverse needs of the student population served by the program, which, in line with broader national trends, includes not only students majoring in Spanish but, increasingly, students of Business, the Social Sciences, as well as STEM- and other fields (Institute of International Education, 2018).

3.2.1 Content courses on-site. Immersion in the target language is attempted not only in the social environment but also inside the classroom. By participating in the program, students enroll in three content courses which are taught entirely in Spanish by faculty from both the home institution, Georgetown University (GU), and the host institution, La Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF). Students thus earn nine credit hours at their home institution, which can count towards a major or minor in Spanish. Typically, GU students complete 12 to 15 credit hours per semester, so it is a highly intensive program. Students may choose their three courses from among the four available options: Bilingualism, Catalan Art History (Art), History and Politics of National Identity (History), and Spanish for Business (Business). In all of these courses, but
especially the Bilingualism and History courses, issues related to identity, culture, and multilingualism in the Catalan context are dealt with openly, and learners are encouraged to draw on their own prior experiences with these phenomena as well as the new forms that they encounter while studying abroad.

Enrollment in these courses during the five-week SA program means that each week students spend a total of 12 hours in class and an additional 10 hours doing homework. As part of their coursework, students carry out weekly written reflections, as well as ethnographic research projects, such as documenting and comparing the linguistic landscapes of two places in the environment, such as different cities, neighborhoods, or areas within the same neighborhood, or consulting academic and media sources and conducting interviews with local students in order to elucidate local views regarding the Catalan independence movement. These activities are designed to promote students’ engagement with their environment and to help them integrate in- and out-of-class experiences.

3.2.2 Engineering of interactional opportunities for immersion outside the classroom. Supporting rich access to the target language in extramural interaction is also a central programmatic concern, and one that is not left to chance but maximized purposefully, in at least three ways. One way is through mandatory twice-weekly conversation exchanges (intercambios) with local university students lasting for two to six hours per week. During the exchanges, students form pairs or small groups with one exchange partner per group and seek out an informal setting such as a café or pub, where they converse casually about topics of their choice in Spanish. The conversation exchanges are carried out only in Spanish, and the conversation partners are given a small monetary compensation by the program director in return. SA students are encouraged to meet with different exchange partners and group members
each time so as to get exposure to a variety of accents and interactional styles. The object of these exchanges is to maximize students’ opportunities to engage in rich, authentic, and meaningful communication with local age peers, and potentially to foster the development of lasting friendships.

Another way in which the program creates opportunities for students to obtain rich linguistic and cultural exposure is through twice-weekly guided tours of different areas of Barcelona and cultural excursions to other parts of the surrounding region of Catalonia. Students spend 14 hours per week on visits to museums, monuments, and other and sites of cultural significance in Barcelona, as well as key sites in the Catalan region, including Tarragona and the Delta de l’Ebre; Girona, Figures, Cadaqués, and Cap de Creus; and the monasteries of Santa Maria de Santes Creus and Montserrat. The excursions are led by local doctoral students in the Humanities program at the UPF and involve structured activities, including answering comprehension questions, carrying out pedagogical tasks, and participating in guided group reflections on the day’s events. They follow a chronological and topical order that is intended to promote students’ construction of connections between their course contents and their environment. On these excursions, “the streets are your classroom” is stressed as a motto. In addition to receiving information about the historical context to the sites that they visit, students also learn about the sociolinguistic context, and their attention is drawn to languages and other symbols of national identity in the linguistic landscape that surrounds them. For example, whenever the group visits museums outside of Barcelona, they are instructed to pay close attention to the visual presentation of languages on signage and to note which languages are present and how these are represented.
Finally, beyond these structured program activities outside the classroom, students experience a wide range of interactional settings, including the residence hall, the university campus, and service encounters at cafés, pubs, restaurants, supermarkets, and shops. Students are housed together in individual rooms in a residence hall along with other cohort members, program assistants, and students from other universities who are also studying abroad. The residence hall and the university are both located within the district (districte) of Sant Martí on the eastern side of Barcelona, near the coast. Within just a few blocks, students have access to the university campus, locales where food and other basic amenities can be purchased, sport centers offering monthly guest memberships, and tourist attractions such as the historic city center, and the Barceloneta beach. Students spend their free time in the evenings and on weekends exploring the city for themselves and are encouraged to travel to other regions of Spain during their sojourn.

3.2.3 Language pledge. The initial level of proficiency in the target language is set at the advanced level by virtue of a prerequisite that students must have taken coursework at the Advanced Spanish II level or higher (equivalent to 6+ semesters of university Spanish) prior to studying abroad. While abroad, students sign a language pledge, agreeing to communicate only in Spanish for the entirety of the stay. Students are aware that repeated language pledge violations may be penalized by a reduction of course grades or suspension from the program.

Thus, while in some respects, the BarSA Program upholds a traditional monolingual approach to language learning, including not only the L1 avoidance via a language pledge, but also the intensive and structured inclusion of hours of Spanish-medium instructional and extracurricular activities, the program also positions multilingualism in the host environment as an affordance for cultural learning in ways that promote interaction with locals and extensive and
focused engagement with linguistic and other symbolic artifacts in the social environment, and ultimately, learning about the program theme of individual and cultural identity in language, politics, and the arts. That is, in an interesting paradox, sojourners encounter multilingualism in general and Catalan in particular not only outside the classroom but also inside the official SA curriculum, which teaches them explicitly and enthusiastically about Catalan, while not actually teaching them Catalan, all the while promoting the value of monolingual elements such as the language pledge for the sake of multilingual development.

3.2.4 The Barcelona study abroad curriculum in summer of 2017. Students’ experiences abroad, including the timing of their stays, their daily routines, and the nature of the activities in which they engaged were structured by the BarSA program curriculum, as were my research activities. In this section, I provide an overview of the program structure as it actually took place in the summer of 2017, when the data for the study were collected. I also summarize this information in three tables: Table 3 provides an overview of the BarSA Program timeline, Table 4 shows sojourners’ class schedules, and Table 5 gives their weekly schedules.

BarSA program participants were responsible for arranging for their own travel to and from Barcelona. Their dormitory rooms became available from the program’s onset on June 22, 2017 and remained available until July 30, 2017, two days after the program ended. Some sojourners arrived early or remained abroad for a brief time after the program, often with visiting family members. Visits from non-Spanish-speaking friends and relatives during the program were strongly discouraged.

While abroad, students on the BarSA Program take three credit-bearing content courses, which are taught in Spanish by instructors from the students’ home and host institutions, for a total of nine credits earned at the students’ home institution. To fulfill their enrollment in three
credit-bearing content courses taught in Spanish during that summer, the sojourners in the present study could choose from among three of the following four courses: Bilingualism, Catalan Art History (Art), History of Politics and Identity (History), and Advanced Business Spanish (Business). These courses were scheduled back-to-back on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Each course lasted for one hour and 15 minutes each, followed by a 15-minute break. On Mondays and Wednesdays, students attended mandatory conversation exchange sessions, beginning at 8:00 pm and lasting for a minimum of one hour. On Tuesdays, students attended guided tours of Barcelona, beginning at approximately 10:00 am and lasting until around 2:30 pm. On Thursdays, students departed for all-day regional excursions between 8:00 and 10:00 am and returned in the evenings at around 8:00 pm. The Tuesday and Thursday excursions were led by Laia (a pseudonym), a licensed local tour guide.

Weeks 1 and 3 of the program followed a modified schedule, whereby Friday classes were held on Thursday. This was done in order to create two long weekends. On the first long weekend between Weeks 1 and 2, following the Week 1 excursion to Tarragona, which was moved to Friday, the cohort traveled together to the Delta de l’Ebre region in southern Catalonia, where they spent two nights and participated in activities led by Meritxell (a pseudonym), a tour guide local to the region. On the second long weekend between Weeks 3 and 4, students were encouraged to travel to another region within Spain. Those who remained in Barcelona were invited to participate in an optional program-led cultural excursion to Parc Güell.

As can be appreciated in Table 5, students’ time to do homework, carry out routine tasks, and engage in leisure activities during the day was largely confined to Mondays and Wednesdays between classes and the conversation exchanges, Tuesdays after the guided city tours, and the weekends, which began on Fridays after classes.
Table 3

*Barcelona Study Abroad Program 2017 Timeline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, Jun 22</td>
<td>On-site orientation meeting, walking tour of Sant Martí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, June 23</td>
<td>Walking tour of Ciutat Vella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, June 26</td>
<td>Academic orientation, classes begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 27</td>
<td>Guided tour: Roman Barcelona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 29</td>
<td>Classes follow Friday schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, June 30 – Sunday, July 2</td>
<td>Weekend excursion: Tarragona and Delta de l’Ebre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, July 4</td>
<td>Guided tour: Medieval Barcelona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, July 6</td>
<td>Excursion: Girona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, July 11</td>
<td>Guided tour: Decadence—War of 1714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, July 13</td>
<td>Classes follow Friday schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, July 14 – Sunday, July 16</td>
<td>Long weekend, optional visit to Parc Güell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, July 18</td>
<td>Guided tour: Modernism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, July 20</td>
<td>Excursion: Figueres and Cadaqués</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, July 25</td>
<td>Guided tour: Barcelona in the 20th Century—Civil War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, July 27</td>
<td>Excursion: Montserrat / Caves Codorniu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, July 28</td>
<td>Last day of program, farewell dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, July 30</td>
<td>Students check out of residence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4

*Barcelona Study Abroad 2017 Class Schedules*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Instructor(s) (Institutional affiliation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 11:15</td>
<td>Bilingualism</td>
<td>Cristina, Nuria, Tom (GU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 – 12:45</td>
<td>History, Politics, and Identity</td>
<td>Dani (UPF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00 – 14:15</td>
<td>Art History</td>
<td>Carles (UPF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30 – 15:45</td>
<td>Advanced Business Spanish</td>
<td>Cristina, Nuria, Tom (GU)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

*Barcelona Study Abroad Program 2017 Weekly Schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Weekend</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>City tour</td>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>excursion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>15:00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:00</td>
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<td>17:00</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Free</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>20:00</td>
<td>Exchanges</td>
<td>Exchanges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.5 The Barcelona study abroad program staff. While abroad in the summer of 2017, the BarSA sojourners had contact with two important groups of stakeholders: the BarSA program staff and the local UPF students and graduates who participated in the twice-weekly conversation exchange sessions. In this Section, I briefly describe the members of the program staff. I will discuss the demographics of the conversation exchange partners in Section 3.5.

The BarSA program staff comprised the program director, four GU graduate students—two of them program assistants and two of them researchers, two UPF faculty members, and two local tour guides, and included members of diverse nationalities, including the United States, Latin America, and Spain (see Table 6). The program director, Cristina Sanz, is a Barcelona native and is a Professor of Spanish & Linguistics at GU. Since designing the program in 2009, she has taken a cohort of students to Barcelona each summer. During this time, she has also
conducted research on the program, along with her PhD student advisees. The four GU graduate
students were PhD students of Spanish and Linguistics (Tom, Nuria, and José) and Applied
Linguistics (me, Brandon). Tom and Nuria worked as program assistants and, along with
Cristina, co-taught the Bilingualism and Business courses. Nuria, José, and I all collected data
for our PhD dissertation research from the students on the program who provided their written
consent. José collected data only during the first week, whereas Nuria and I remained in
Barcelona for the entire duration of the program. The two UPF faculty members, Dani and
Carles, were both natives of Catalonia and had many years of experience teaching U.S. students
both at home and abroad. Dani has worked with the BarSA program for many years. Laia and
Meritxell are both licensed tour guides in Catalonia and both have been involved long-term with
the BarSA program.

Table 6
*Barcelona Study Abroad Program Staff*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Institutional roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GU faculty and staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristina*</td>
<td>Spain (Catalonia)</td>
<td>Program director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Graduate student program assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuria</td>
<td>Spain (Castille and Leon)</td>
<td>Graduate student program assistant and researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Graduate student researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon*</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Graduate student researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPF faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dani</td>
<td>Spain (Catalonia)</td>
<td>History class instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carles</td>
<td>Spain (Catalonia)</td>
<td>Art class instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed tour guides</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laia</td>
<td>Spain (Balearic Islands)</td>
<td>Tuesday guided city tours and Thursday excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meritxell</td>
<td>Spain (Catalonia)</td>
<td>Weekend at Delta de l’Ebre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All names are pseudonyms except for these.*
3.3 Recruitment, Purposive Sampling, and Researcher Positionality

The participants in this study were recruited from the cohort of undergraduate students at Georgetown University (GU), a midsize, private research university located in Washington DC, who would participate in the BarSA program during the Summer 2017 term. While recruitment and even data collection was maximally inclusive of the cohort, the eventual focal participants were selected purposively, that is, based on the characteristics of the cohort and the objectives of the present research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I was guided by my a-priori theoretical understanding of the qualitative SA literature and, given the gap in documenting multilingual sojourners in multilingual SA sites, I wanted to sample individuals who may have had a unique, different, or important perspective upon encountering the superdiverse multilingualism of Barcelona, representing rich multilingual backgrounds themselves. In addition, all qualitative researchers must make their subjectivities explicit, with the goal not to achieve neutrality or objectivity but integrity as to possible biases and attributes that have helped co-construct interpretations with participants (Duff, 2014; Pillow, 2003; Talmy & Richards, 2011). This makes it more possible for readers to judge whether the design and claims are trustworthy. I address this issue of researcher positionality, in this section as well.

Recruitment took place as follows (see also Table 13 later for a timeline that includes recruitment and data collection). I first met all potential participants in April of 2017 at an orientation meeting, where I was introduced by the program director as a doctoral student in linguistics with an interest in designing and directing study abroad programs in the future and that I would be accompanying them, not as part of the program staff, but as an apprentice to the program director. Students were told that I would ask them questions about their experiences and collect some of their program materials. They were also told that I had lived in Barcelona for
several years with my spouse, a Barcelona native, and were thus invited to appeal to me for
guidance during their sojourn in Barcelona. I provided such mentoring on an as-requested basis
before and during the program.

Once IRB approval was secured in early June, participants were recruited via an email
that I sent out to all enrolled students (see Appendix A). Participation was on a voluntary basis
and students were not compensated in any way for participating. Of the 20 students in the cohort,
19 agreed to join the project, and one declined. While I collected data from all students providing
informed consent, I was primarily interested in purposively identifying focal participants for in-
depth case studies, and I was hoping to focus more closely on sojourners who grew up using
more than one language at home and for whom multilingualism was a crucial aspect of their at-
home identity, including speakers of indigenous, heritage, diasporic, or minority languages, and
students from migrant backgrounds. Based on a biographical questionnaire that was administered
to the entire cohort before departure, I thus initially selected eight focal participants. This is the
number that Duff (2014) considers ideal for doctoral research, as it permits multiple ways of
reporting the findings, balances manageability with accounting for diversity in individual profiles
and experiences, and acts as a safeguard against participant attrition. The eight focal participants
included six individuals from multilingual home backgrounds and two from “traditional” (i.e.,
monolingual, White, middle-class) backgrounds. I decided to collect data from two sojourners
from largely monolingual backgrounds in order to make possible some select comparisons
between SA students with more multilingual and more monolingual backgrounds. Eventually, I
analyzed in depth the data collected for all eight focal cases (which I report on in Chapter 4), and
the remaining students became secondary participants, providing additional background and
contextual information. The main analyses of these eight focal participants in the dissertation
gave rise to three in-depth case studies focused on Ben, Lucia, and David, whom I introduce later in this chapter (and the results of their case studies are reported in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, respectively). My case-study approach focusing on the lived experiences of individual sojourners was modeled on Kinginger (2008).

Finally, I would like to disclose some relevant facts about myself that no doubt shaped, and at times may have constrained, my interpretations of the data. I am in my mid-30s, a straight White male, a native speaker of English, and was born and raised in the United States. I was born and raised in a small town in rural East Tennessee, where my exposure to ethnolinguistic diversity was limited to encounters with a handful of classmates from migrant family backgrounds who had assimilated and were well-integrated into the community. As an adult, however, I developed multilingual competence in German, Spanish, and Catalan as a result of social relationships formed through traveling, studying, working, and living abroad. My encounters with diversity became regular and extensive when I began attending university in Nashville, where I was paired with a German exchange student as a roommate. This experience inspired me to begin learning German at 19 and, eventually, to change my academic major from Music to German and to study abroad in Germany for one semester during my third year of college. After graduating from college, I lived and worked for two years in Austria, where I met my wife, a Barcelona native; we then moved to Barcelona, where we lived for four years before moving to Washington DC so that I might pursue my PhD. I still travel regularly with my family to Barcelona, where we spend our winter and summer holidays.

While interacting with the participants both at home and abroad during data collection, I grappled with my insider and outsider status vis-à-vis the cohort of students. At times I felt that the students viewed me as an insider based on our shared U.S. allegiance and status as foreigners
in Barcelona. As someone who, like many of them, grew up monolingually in English but went on to learn other languages successfully, it is possible that some of them held me as a model. At other times, I was clearly an outsider. For example, I was obviously older than they were—a difference that became salient any time we discussed popular culture. As a graduate student, I held a similar institutional status as the program assistants, Tom and Nuria, who were the students’ instructors. Thus, they may have seen me as someone closer to a professor or teacher than a peer. The students were also aware of several biographical details that set me apart from them. Related to my age, they knew that I was married and a new father. Regarding my personal life, they knew I had family from Barcelona with whom I habitually spoke Catalan. Perhaps I was more of an insider for some students than others. For example, as an Anglo American who grew up monolingually in English, my background was similar to that of Ben, and was patently different from Lucia or David, both of whom were members of ethnic minorities and grew up in homes where other languages were spoken alongside English. Indeed, I will never really know how much of an insider or outsider I was to the cohort or to the individual sojourners. In line with the recommendations of Tinker & Armstrong (2008, p. 55) for outsider researchers, I attempted to address my researcher identity and positionality by eliciting detailed answers to interview questions, minimizing students’ anxieties of being judged, formulating questions from the position of a cultural outsider, and examining the data from a critical perspective.

3.4 The Study Abroad Cohort and Focal Students

Basic demographic information on the 19 students who provided written informed consent to participate in the study and whose data I collected is given in Table 7. All students were given a numerical code, shown in Table 7, and the eight focal students we assigned a pseudonym, also shown there. One of the 19 student participants, Caroline, was the only student
not affiliated with GU: She was completing her undergraduate studies at a midsize private research university located near Boston, MA.

The participants were 18 – 20 years old during the summer when they participated in the BarSA program. Seven of them were between their first and second year of college, 10 had completed two years of college, and two of them had finished their third year. Regarding self-identified gender, only three were male, two of whom identified as straight, and one, David, identified as gay. Of the 16 women, 14 identified as straight, one identified as bisexual, and one declined to respond. In terms of ethnicity, three of the women identified as Black or African American and two other, Lucia and Caroline, reported being Hispanic of Cuban American background and came from the same home community in Miami. Three students identified as having mixed ethnicity: two women as Indian-White, and David, the gay male student and one of the three focal case studies, as Korean-White. The other eleven students, including Ben, identified as White or Caucasian. All students were U.S. citizens, and five had additional nationalities, including Australian (1), German (1), Irish (1), British (1), and Irish-British (1). When compared with the U.S. national average reported by IIE (2018), the cohort of students in the present study is more female-dominant and ethnically diverse, as the percentage of men in the cohort, three of 19 or 15.8%, is appreciably lower than the 2016/2017 national average of 32.7%, whereas the percentage of minority students, eight of 19 or 42.1%, is considerably higher than the national average of 29.2% (IIE, 2018).
Table 7

Basic Demographic Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies (N=3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>P03 Ben</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<tr>
<td>P18 Lucia</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>P07 David</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>P11 Lauren</td>
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<td>P13 Patrick</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>P16 Shelby</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Straight</td>
<td>Indian-White</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>P19 Samantha</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>Straight</td>
<td>Indian-White</td>
<td>United States, Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remaining Participants (N=11)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants’ academic majors and minors, not shown in 3.8, are worth noting. There was an eclectic mix of academic majors, 12 were students in the College of Arts and Sciences, five were in the School of International Relations, two were in the Business School. Twelve students enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences were majoring in Government (5), Spanish
(2, 1 with a double major in Art History), Neurobiology or Biology of Global Health (2), Psychology and Child Development (1), and two were Undecided. Five students enrolled in the School of Foreign Service were majoring in Science, Technology, and International Affairs (1), Culture and Politics (1), International Politics (1), and two were undecided. Of two students in the Business School, one was majoring in Finance and International Business and the other was a double major in International Business and Political Economies and Marketing. Spanish was a major for three and a minor for 12 of the 19 participants. Of the four students for whom Spanish was neither a major nor a minor, three had not yet declared a major or minor. The diversity of academic majors and the low number of Spanish majors reflects a broader demographic shift in U.S. SA, entailing the reduced involvement of students specializing in languages, while participation by students majoring in Business, Social Sciences, and Management, is on the rise (Institute of International Education, 2018). Although no nation-wide statistics are available for comparison, the number of students in the SA cohort with government and foreign service-related majors is notable (five and five, respectively, and thus 10 out of 19). This likely reflects the location of GU in the nation’s capital and its long tradition in these areas. Wikipedia, for example, asserts that GU is cited by various sources as the top feeder school to U.S. intelligence and other governmental agencies and that it also has more graduates serving in the United States Senate than any other university. Moreover, although I never asked directly about the socioeconomic milieu of their families in the questionnaire or in the interviews, all information available points at parents with college degrees and ample means to afford international travel for themselves and their children and private high school and college tuition for their children. It is known that, in general, SA programs are biased towards socioeconomically privileged students (Lörz, Netz, & Quast, 2016), a bias that also is seen in the study of foreign or world languages in
the United States (Anya, 2011) and UK (Lanvers, Doughty, & Thompson, 2018), The sojourner sample in the present study is likely to exhibit this same bias, and perhaps more so than sojourners in state universities investigated in other studies such as Kinginger (2008).

In terms of language skills in Spanish and academic preparation, the sample can be considered strong. For one, by virtue of the program prerequisites all of the students were required to have a minimum GPA of 2.7 and to be in good academic and disciplinary standing. Moreover, the program included an advanced proficiency requirement requiring students to have taken at least Advanced Spanish II—the equivalent of six semesters of university-level Spanish—by the spring semester preceding the program. Here, it is also worth noting that the five students in the School of Foreign Service all took and passed the GU Spanish Department’s oral proficiency exam either before or during their sojourn abroad in order to fulfill their college’s foreign language requirement. According to the college’s website, a “pass” on this exam is roughly equivalent to an Intermediate-high to Advanced-mid level on the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency (ACTFL) Guidelines rating, or a B1 / low B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The overall advanced proficiency expected, required, and exhibited by the participants in this study distinguishes the sample from most cohorts examined in the U.S. SA literature to date — including many well-known qualitative studies — which have focused predominantly on cohorts of sojourners, where most if not all students exhibit beginning to intermediate levels of proficiency before departure (e.g., Dewey et al., 2013; Kinginger, 2008; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005; Trentman, 2013a, 2013b; Wilkinson, 1998a, 1998b, 2002).

Table 8 shows the participants’ previous courses in Spanish in year-long sequences at the pre-secondary and secondary levels and in semesters at the college level. Given considerable
variation in the relationship between high school study and college placement, the Table also lists the level of the Spanish courses they took immediately before departing for study abroad.

Table 8

*Prior Spanish Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Course Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case studies (N=3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03 Ben</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18 Lucia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07 David</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining focal informants (N=5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06 Caroline</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 Lauren</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 Patrick</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16 Shelby</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19 Samantha</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining participants (N=11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Elementary = Kindergarten – Grade 5; Middle = Grades 6 – 8; High = Grades 9 – 12.
Table 8 demonstrates that most of the participants in this study had spent considerable time studying Spanish (Mean = 10.26 school years or college semesters, Median = 10, Mode = 10, Min = 5 [P05], Max = 17 [P17]). For most, Spanish language courses had been available prior to the secondary level of education, and for nearly half, foreign language study had begun in elementary school. This is quite unusual at the national level in the United States, where it is estimated that 80% of English-speaking children in K-12 are not enrolled in foreign language study and 75% of “mainstream” Americans have never studied another language at any point in their lives (American Councils for International Education, American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages, & Center for Applied Linguistics, 2017). This reflects the fact that many students admitted to this university come from high-performing high schools where studying foreign languages is more common than average in the United States. A typical case in this cohort appears to be a student who began Spanish language study in elementary or middle school, pursued this study through high school, took one year of college-level Spanish, and was placed in a 300- or 400-level course at the time the preset study began. Exceptional cases are those of P05 and David, who did not begin studying Spanish until high school, and, at the other extreme, P14, P17, and Lucia, whose study of Spanish began in Kindergarten and continued uninterrupted for their entire educational career.

The participants in this study were also asked to describe any exposure to Spanish at home growing up as well as any exposure to additional foreign languages other than Spanish. English was the self-reported native and dominant language for all of the participants. The two female Cuban American participants, Lucia and Caroline, were bilingual native speakers of English and Spanish. There were eight students who reported early bilingual exposure and/or
experience studying other foreign languages besides Spanish, as displayed in Table 9. I will expand on some of these cases in Chapters 4 to 7.

Table 9
*Additional Language Exposure*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Additional Home Languages</th>
<th>Additional Foreign Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case Studies (N=3)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03 Ben</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18 Lucia</td>
<td>Spanish (parents, grandparents)</td>
<td>Portuguese (3 semesters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07 David</td>
<td>Korean (mother, grandparents)</td>
<td>Latin (7 years), French (1 semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remaining Focal Informants (N=5)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06 Caroline</td>
<td>Spanish (parents, grandparents)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 Lauren</td>
<td>French (father, grandmother)</td>
<td>French (4 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 Patrick</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16 Shelby</td>
<td>Hindi (father)</td>
<td>Italian (3 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19 Samantha</td>
<td>German (father)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remaining Participants (N=11)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Latin (5 years middle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>French (independent study, Duolingo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All but two of the 19 participants (Ben and P08) had traveled abroad, however briefly, before. Of the 17 students with international experience, 11 reported extensive stays abroad, as displayed in Table 10; of these 11, five belonged to the group of eight focal informants (and only one, David, was a case study participant), and six were non-focal cohort members. Five students had studied abroad in high school. Of these five, only one (Lauren), belonged to the group of eight focal informants. Seven students reported having family members abroad whom they had visited once (David, Shelby), multiple times (Patrick, P14, Samantha), or regularly (P10, Lauren). The other nine students had traveled abroad for pleasure either with friends or on family vacations. The high number of students reporting international experience might be considered unusual, at least if compared to U.S. middle- and working-class students their age.

Table 10

*Extended International Travel*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Details of extended international travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case Studies (1 of 3)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07 David</td>
<td>South Korea, family visit; Argentina, family vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remaining Focal Informants (4 of 5)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 Lauren</td>
<td>Spain, study abroad; France, family visits; Mexico, annual family vacations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 Patrick</td>
<td>Ireland, family visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16 Shelby</td>
<td>India, family visit; Europe, family vacations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19 Samantha</td>
<td>Germany, family visits; Spain, New Zealand and Australia, family vacations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remaining Participants (6 of 11)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>Costa Rica, study abroad; England and France, family vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>England, study abroad; Dominica, family vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Australia, lived until age 5, annual vacations; Costa Rica, study abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Costa Rica, two family vacations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>England, study abroad, high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>Spain, Portugal, and Hungary, vacation with friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While abroad, students on the BarSA Program may choose from among three of the following four credit-bearing courses: Bilingualism, Catalan Art History (Art), History of Politics and Identity (History), and Advanced Business Spanish (Business). Table 11 indicates which students took which courses. Bilingualism and History had the highest enrollment with 18 students each, while Art had 16 students, and Business had eight. All of the students in the Business class were female. Most students (11 of 19) took Bilingualism, Art, and History; four took Bilingualism, History, and Business; two took Bilingualism, Art, and Business; and two took Art, History, and Business.

Table 11

Course Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Bilingualism</th>
<th>Art</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case studies (N=3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03 Ben</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18 Lucia</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07 David</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining focal participants (N=5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06 Caroline</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 Lauren</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 Patrick</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16 Shelby</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19 Samantha</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining participants (N=11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68
3.5 Conversation Exchange Partners (Intercambios)

While abroad, the BarSA sojourners had contact with two important groups of stakeholders: the BarSA program staff and the local UPF students and graduates who participated in the twice-weekly conversation exchange sessions (see Section 3.2.2 for a brief explanation of this latter element of the BarSA program). I have already briefly described the members of the program staff in Section 3.2.5. Here, I discuss the demographics of the conversation exchange partners.

The exchange partners in the summer of 2017 comprised a total of 13 local UPF students and graduates, though not all came to every session. While all 13 conversation exchange partners resided permanently in Catalonia, they exhibited a variety of ethnic backgrounds. By listening to recordings of the conversation exchanges which students carried out as part of their program assignments and which I gathered through artifact collection (see Section 3.7.3), I was able to glean basic information about the socially-constructed gender identities, ethnic backgrounds, and migration status of the conversation partners. This information is displayed in Table 12. Eight partners, four male and four female, were autochthonous Catalans (whether from Catalan-speaking, Castilian-speaking, or bilingual home backgrounds), and five partners, one male and four female, came from transnational migrant backgrounds. In this way, they were reflective of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Bilingualism</th>
<th>Art</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* A cross (x) indicates that the student took the course, whereas a blank space indicates that they did not.
the ethnolinguistic diversity of 21st-century Barcelona. As will become clear in subsequent chapters, two of the transnational partners, Miriam and Amira, established relatively close friendships with Lucia and David, respectively (for more details, see Chapters 6 and 7).

Table 12

*Conversation Exchange Partner Demographic Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Migration status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autochthonous Catalan Background</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberto</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edu</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lídia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mireia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Catalan</td>
<td>Autochthonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transnational Migrant Background</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amira</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Moroccan</td>
<td>Generation 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emilio</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Peruvian</td>
<td>Generation 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Venezuelan &amp; Portuguese</td>
<td>Generation 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indra</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nepalese</td>
<td>Generation 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Ecuadorian</td>
<td>Generation 1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.6 Overview of Data Collection

As discussed in Chapter 2, prior SA qualitative research has called for a more thorough, nuanced understanding of the SA experience from participants’ perspectives (Benson et al., 2012; Jackson, 2008; Kinginger, 2004; Pellegrino, 1998; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005; Wilkinson, 1998a, 1998b). In line with this call, I determined that the optimal approach to answering the research questions posed above is a longitudinal, qualitative multiple-case study design (Duff,
2018; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2003), like Kinginger (2008) and other studies in the SA qualitative
tradition (e.g., Anya, 2017; Benson et al., 2013; Doerr, 2015; Du, 2018; Jackson, 2008,
Pogorelova & Trenchs-Parera, 2018; Trentman, 2013b; Wilkinson, 1998a, 1998b, 2002) utilizing
introspective and ethnographic methods. In the coming sections, I explain each type of data
collection in detail. First, however, in this section I offer a general rationalization for my
methodological choices.

A chronological summary of the main data collected is shown in Table 13. I used a
combination of introspective, self-report data including questionnaires, semi-structured
interviews, and sojourner diaries as well as ethnographic observation shadowing participants
inside their courses and in their classroom- and non-classroom related activities in the
community during their five-week program, and analysis of instructional assignments and
activities, including their audio-recorded language exchange conversations. Additional
supplementary data sources included the collection of coursework artifacts and informal check-
ins with other stakeholders on the program, including the program director, program assistants,
and course instructors. These other types of data were collected and used only as a means to
contextualize, triangulate, and provide varied perspectives on students’ accounts. In this way, I
hoped to elicit richly triangulated interpretations of the focal participants’ experiences of the SA
program and of multilingual Barcelona.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Participants Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predeparture</td>
<td>3 weeks before (June 5, 2017)</td>
<td>IRB Clearance</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 week before (June 15 – 20)</td>
<td>Recruitment, Granting of Written Consent, Background Questionnaire</td>
<td>All 20 students, 19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Predeparture Interviews</td>
<td>12 students (3 cases, 3 of 5 focal, 6 of 11 remaining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Written Diaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnographic observations, Collection of artifacts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Conversation Recording 1</td>
<td>19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(June 22 – July 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Conversation Recording 2</td>
<td>19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(July 3 – 9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Conversation Recording 3</td>
<td>19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(July 10 – 16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Conversation Recording 3</td>
<td>19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(July 17 – 23)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Conversation Recording 3</td>
<td>19 consenting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(July 24 – 30)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-sojourn</td>
<td>11 – 17 weeks after (October 10 – November 21)</td>
<td>Retrospective Interviews with case studies and focal informants (Round 1)</td>
<td>David, Lucia, Caroline, Lauren, Shelby, Samantha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 months after re-entry (January 10 – 15, 2018)</td>
<td>Retrospective Interviews with case studies and focal informants (Round 2)</td>
<td>Ben, Patrick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 Introspective Methods

3.7.1 Background questionnaire. During the week prior to departure, a language background and biographical questionnaire was administered via Google Forms to all students who expressed willingness to participate in the dissertation study (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was primarily used to elicit biographical and academic information about the participants on the program. It was also used to select focal participants by screening for those with multilingual home backgrounds.

As can be seen in Appendix B, the background questionnaire consisted of a total of 25 questions in three response formats: multiple choice, short answer, and long answer. The questions were divided across three sections focusing on basic demographic information, language background and travel experience, and motivation. The first section elicited information on participants’ gender identity, sexual orientation, ethno-racial identification, age, place of birth, nationality, place of residence prior to starting university, academic standing, major, and minor. In the second section, participants were asked about their native language(s), other home language exposure, Spanish language learning experience, additional foreign language learning experience, and prior experience of international travel. The third section asked participants about their motives for learning Spanish and reasons for studying abroad.

3.7.2 Semi-structured interviews. Prior to students’ departure and again after their return, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured, digitally audio-recorded interviews with select focal participants in order to learn about their experiences before and during SA as well as the meaning-making process through which they give coherence to these experiences. The interviews were semi-structured to include certain pre-defined topics while allowing flexibility for the emergence and pursuit of other topics that the participants or I found interesting. I offered
students the choice of conducting the interviews in Spanish or English, whichever language was more comfortable for them. All of them chose English, which was the shared L1 and/or dominant language of the participants and me, the researcher. A summary of the pre- and post-sojourn interviews that I conducted is shown in Table 14.

Table 14

*Interview Schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Predeparture Interview Date</th>
<th>Post-sojourn Interview Date(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case studies (N=3)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03 Ben</td>
<td>June 18, 2017</td>
<td>January 15, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18 Lucia</td>
<td>June 17, 2017</td>
<td>November 2, 9, &amp; 21, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07 David</td>
<td>June 15, 2017</td>
<td>October 26, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focal informants (N=5)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06 Caroline</td>
<td>June 20, 2017</td>
<td>November 17 &amp; 20, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 Lauren</td>
<td>June 17, 2017</td>
<td>October 10, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 Patrick</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>January 11, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16 Shelby</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>October 17 &amp; 25, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19 Samantha</td>
<td>June 20, 2017</td>
<td>October 20, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remaining participants (N=11)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>June 17, 2017</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>June 18, 2017</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>June 19, 2017</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>June 18, 2017</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>June 16, 2017</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>June 16, 2017</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The predeparture interviews were conducted one week prior to students’ departure and covered the topics of academic and professional goals; family background; personal history of language learning and use at home, in instructional settings, and in informal contexts; motives for studying Spanish, reasons for studying abroad, and expectations, aspirations, and concerns they held regarding their imminent SA experience in the BarSA program (see Appendix C). I also explored participants’ awareness of and attitudes towards multilingualism at home and in Catalonia; their expectations for language use while abroad, including how much they hoped and expected to use Spanish and other languages, how closely they expected to abide by the language pledge, and the challenges they anticipated to realizing their language use goals; and the issues of identity and culture shock they expected to confront. In the end, before departure I was able to speak with 12 participants who expressed their willingness to be interviewed via their preferred medium of contact, face-to-face or via skype or phone. Of the 12 interviews, which lasted for 20 to 30 minutes on average, 11 were carried out via phone and one (with David, who ended up being one of the three sojourners chosen for the case studies) was carried out face-to-face on the GU campus.

The post-sojourn interviews were conducted with a total of eight focal participants. I began by interviewing six focal participants in October and November, approximately 11 to 17 weeks following their re-entry to the United States. These individuals were selected on the basis of their early exposure to multiple home languages. After transcribing and conducting preliminary analyses on these interviews, I decided to expand the sample of focal participants to include the perspective of two other students, Patrick and Ben, both of whom grew up monolingually. I attempted to schedule meetings with Patrick and Ben in late November, but due to their final exam schedules and the Winter Holidays, these interviews had to be postponed until
January, six months after their return. Of the eight interviewees, I met with seven students (including the three case-study participants) face-to-face in local cafés, and one student, Caroline, via Skype. The interviews, which lasted around one hour and 45 minutes on average were carried out over the course of one to three sessions, which were scheduled according to the students’ availability and at the venue of their choice. Five of the interviews were conducted in one session, Caroline’s and Shelby’s interviews were split over two sessions, and Lucia’s was completed over the course of three sessions.

The post-sojourn interviews focused on students’ memories and rationalizations of their first impressions of the city and the SA program and how their experiences living, studying, carrying out daily tasks and interacting in Barcelona compared with their predeparture expectations (see Appendix F). I aimed to elicit narratives about positive and successful experiences as well as challenging and unsuccessful experiences interacting in the various communicative settings they encountered in Barcelona: in the classroom, on excursions, with language exchange partners, in service encounters and other informal extramural interaction, and with other program colleagues. I also tried to elicit students’ reflections about what went well or poorly and the strategies they adopted in response. I asked about circumstances under which they and their peers used languages other than Spanish on the program and their stances toward these practices. I also explored participants’ encounters with the translingual practices (Li Wei, 2018) that are characteristic of large urban enclaves such as multilingual Barcelona. This included experiences with public signage, menus, and other written language in the linguistic landscape (Comajoan Colomé & Long, 2012) as well as code-switching and mixing practices that are common in ambient spoken language in the city (Pujolar, 2001, 2011; Woolard, 1989) and that the sojourners may have witnessed, noticed, and/or experienced in interaction with the language
exchange partners and other local residents. According to prior pilot research on the BarSA program I had conducted in 2014 (Tullock, 2016a), I expected that many of the students would find these to be salient aspects of the sociolinguistic situation in Barcelona and that they might express strong emotional reactions with respect to them. I also anticipated that students’ interpretations of and dispositions toward multilingualism would be shaped in part by discourses that circulate within various aspects of the SA program, including the predeparture orientation to the SA program, the courses they took at the host university in Barcelona, and the overt views expressed by instructors, the program staff, language exchange partners and other locals, and myself. Accordingly, I also elicited information about what they thought they had learned in their classes and what they remembered others had told them about the sociolinguistic and sociopolitical situation in Catalonia, before and during their stay abroad. I asked students to reflect on their predeparture goals and expectations and the nature and evolution of their experiences and activities on the program. In follow-up questions, I aimed to target the development of multilingual, hybrid, and / or transnational identities and the role of specific critical experiences and program elements that may have facilitated or constrained such development.

3.7.3 Written diaries. As part of their regular program activities, students were required to complete one weekly reflection on their experiences in Spanish, for a total of five times. Students were asked to write approximately 500 words on one of the following topics: (1) a significant experience in Barcelona, (2) a relationship between out-of-class experiences and in-class learning, and (3) learning strategies and goals for the following week or for the end of the program (see Appendix D). Students were also given the option of maintaining a blog about their experiences in Barcelona in lieu of the written reflections. The prompt for these reflections was
sent out each week via email by me, who with the consent of the students would then keep a
copy as data and forward it to the SA program staff for fulfillment of the instructional
requirement. Students were asked to submit their reflections to me via email as a word document
on Fridays and received a reminder email each Thursday. All participants fulfilled this
instructional requirement and submitted all five weekly reflections and wrote between 400 and
500 words on average. These diaries served as data that helped triangulate analyses and
interpretations, and they also provided information to be followed up on in post-sojourn
retrospective interviews.

3.8 Ethnographic Methods

I conducted regular observations of the participants in a variety of communicative
settings during the five weeks of the SA program and maintained a researcher journal with field
notes written immediately following each observation. These ethnographic field notes
constituted a rich data source as well as a resource to draw on in the post-sojourn interview. I
also collected students’ self-recorded interactions with local exchange partners (which they
recorded as part of their program assignments) as well as course materials. I detail each source of
data below.

3.8.1 Participant observation. I compiled rich field notes based on my observations of
the participants in a variety of communicative settings, including on-site orientation sessions,
their university courses, excursions within Barcelona and to other parts of Catalonia, and other
activities that they carried out as a group (e.g., a study session in the student residence, a farewell
gathering with the conversation exchange partners). In order to limit my interference in their SA
experiences, I chose to limit my observations to structured program activities, unless a student
would explicitly invite me to join some other activity. On the handful occasions when I was
asked to have a coffee or share a meal with them, I always obliged. During my formal observations of sojourners’ routine classes on the local campus, however, I frequently had coffee with them before, between, and after classes, and occasionally went to lunch with them.

Over the course of the five weeks, I observed students in their Bilingualism, Art, and History courses a total of 10 times—three times during Week 1, once during Week 2, and twice weekly during Weeks 3, 4, and 5. I observed the Business course only once before deciding, for practical reasons, not to attend this class, as my personal schedule did not permit me to attend all four classes each day. Observing the Business course seemed to be of lower priority than the other courses, due to the relatively small number of students and the little attention given to sociolinguistic and sociopolitical issues in Catalonia. I accompanied students on two of the initial orientations during Week 1—a walking tour of the Ciutat Vella district and the UPF academic orientation—as well as two guided tours of Barcelona in Weeks 2 and 3. Additionally, I traveled with the group for three regional excursions to Tarragona (Week 1), Girona (Week 2), and Montserrat (Week 5). These excursions afforded opportunities for lengthy interactions with students on the bus and at meals. Finally, I participated in a special study session in the student residence and a farewell dinner with the conversation exchange partners, both of which occurred during Week 5.

3.8.2 Recordings of conversation exchanges. As part of their program assignments, students are asked to audio record themselves for 30 minutes during their conversation exchanges on three separate occasions—at the beginning (Week 2), middle (Week 4), and end (Week 5) of the program (see Appendix E). The recordings were intended as a self-evaluation tool for the students as well as a source of insight for the BarSA program director and her collaborators into the nature of interactions with the exchange partners. The members of the
program staff informed the students that these recordings would not be used to evaluate or monitor them in any way (e.g., to find out whether they violated the language pledge), and that they would access the recordings only after the conclusion of the five weeks for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the partner exchange element of BarSA program. The students used their cellular phones to make the audio recordings. They were advised to seek out a quiet place indoors with little background noise, to form groups of four to five members including the conversation exchange partner, to place the recording device in a place that was accessible to all members, and to identify themselves at the beginning of each recording for transcription purposes. The students had consented to allow me access to the recordings as data. They proved to be an interesting window into the SA experiences for the rich information they provided on the social dynamics of the conversation exchanges, the range of topics discussed, as well as the subject positions, roles, and interactional strategies adopted by the U.S. students and their interlocutors.

3.8.3 Coursework artifacts. Issues related to sociolinguistics, geopolitics, and cultural identity are dealt with openly in the courses that students take in the BarSA program each year. Often, students’ course assignments and projects center around related themes. For example, students taking the Bilingualism course conduct a comparative analysis of the linguistic landscape (Gorter, 2006) of two places in Catalonia (cities, neighborhoods, or places within the same neighborhood) as one of their final projects (see Comajoan Colomé & Long, 2012). After securing permission from the students to do so, I contacted the local university instructors and collected the artifacts students produce related to these projects, including presentation slides, essays, interview protocols, photographs, and audio and video recordings, all of which constituted valuable sources of data.
3.9 Data Transcription, Coding, and Analysis

Data transcription, coding, and analysis were carried out in an ongoing fashion throughout the study, and interview protocols and other instruments were adapted accordingly. I transcribed the audio-recorded interviews according to conventions adapted from Tannen, Kendall, and Gordon (2007) (see Appendix G). I also wrote summaries of the data from the conversation exchange recordings and transcribed select excerpts according to the same conventions. The data were compiled into a single database using QSR NVivo (Gibbs, 2002; Richards, 2002). I created a case node for each participant and arranged their data chronologically. I then carried out a within-case analysis, constructing a narrative for each participant, identifying themes in a cyclical process of top-down themes extracted from the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2 and other bottom-up themes found in the data that seemed to be unattested in previous literature. I focused primarily on introspective data from the background questionnaire, interviews, and personal diaries. Secondary data included the conversation recordings, my field notes and observations, and other artifacts. I then carried out a thematic analysis of the data across cases, looking for commonalities as well as differences. Triangulation was carried out both within and across cases.

3.10 Preview of Dissertation Findings

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, I set out to explore the following sets of questions:

1. What orientations do sojourners exhibit towards the languages that are available in the SA environment besides Spanish –the learning target, that is, Catalan and any other languages they may encounter? How do such orientations relate to views of
multilingualism as an obstacle or an affordance for language learning? Do orientations change over time for any of the sojourners, and what might explain the changes?

2. How do sojourners leverage (or not) their multiple identities as a resource to language learning? What kinds of identity-related obstacles might arise during the SA experience, and how are these challenges approached and resolved (or not) by different sojourners? Under what circumstances do sojourners experience their own identities as transnational/multilingual?

With respect to the first set of questions, I was guided by the following expectations. One of the reasons learners choose to study abroad is the assumption that they will be immersed in the target language. However, when students encounter (perhaps unexpectedly) an additional minority language in the SA context, much can happen. I expected that the sociolinguistic and geopolitical milieu in the SA environment of transnationally multilingual Barcelona and the sojourners’ individual sociocultural histories would interact in different ways for different individuals. As we will see in Chapter 4, some of the eight focal sojourners came to see the multilingualism of the city, in general, and Catalan, in particular, as less of an obstacle, with some perhaps even gradually considering it an affordance by the end of their five-week stay. For a minority of sojourners, however, Catalan became and remained a symbol of their lack of belonging and a scapegoat in interactions where locals switch to English when speaking with them.

With respect to this second set of questions, my expectations were shaped by the extant literature (see Chapter 2) that has shown sojourners experiment with new ways of constructing identities through the target language while abroad (Kinginger, 2008; Jackson, 2008; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005). They also learn to assume, resist, and negotiate the new subject positions afforded
to them by the sociocultural context (Cook, 2006; Trentman, 2015). Nevertheless, these hunches were only vague. I expected that the multilingual and transnational realities of the present SA setting, whether intuited prior to departure or discovered abruptly upon arrival, would be given different meanings by different learners, probably in part depending on what they expected to encounter in their SA experience. How would this situation shape their access to language? What adjustments would different learners make to their approaches to pursuing access based on the multilingualism they gradually would learn to recognize? I expected that different sojourners might position locals in interaction and in stories of those interactions differently with respect to different languages. In these intercultural communications, different individual sojourners might construct or reconstruct transnational or hybrid identities; these identities, in turn, might be oriented to by others, or remain unratified. How does SA affect learners’ sense of themselves, especially with respect to their (trans)national identities and multilingualism? In the end, the evidence uncovered by this dissertation will reveal how, for some learners, as will be shown of Ben (Chapter 5), the feelings of ambivalence caused by the complex identity negotiations and circulating language ideologies may cause them to withdraw from further interaction with hosts. In such cases, new multilingual subject positions may fail to emerge. For others, as we will see of Lucia (Chapter 6), it appears that no major challenges come their way that need to be negotiated. Such learners may have already developed a confident and skilled identity with respect to learning or using the target language, and as a result they experience relative ease in positioning themselves strategically in the unfamiliar environment, foregrounding and backgrounding certain aspects of their multiple identities whenever it seems appropriate or beneficial. Yet for other transnational sojourners who initially do encounter unexpected challenges, as was the case with David (Chapter 7), positive responses may come after they
persist in engaging with the multilingual host community, and they learn to navigate successfully challenges to their identities and along the way discover more powerful subject positions from which to speak as they pursue access to language in new and perhaps better ways. In this sense, the findings reported across the next four chapters of the dissertation illuminate the forces that structure learning as sojourners add new resources to their linguistic repertoires, while also adding new subject positions to their repertoires of identities, which they carry with them into future interactions both abroad and at home, and perhaps even renegotiating their language ideologies as they come into contact with local language hierarchies and ideologies. The four chapters together will show that, at least for some students in our transnational world, study abroad is about negotiating successfully (or not) the emergence of new multilingual subject positions -- with new multilingual positions being both an outcome of the SA experience in and of itself and a factor mediating, in general, the degree of satisfaction and perceived success in experience and, in particular, influencing how opportunities for language use and learning are created and oriented to, and thus, mediating linguistic outcomes as well. The qualitative case study and ethnographic methodology, explicated at length in the present chapter, enabled me a glimpse, even if partial, of the emergence of multilingual subject positions, as participants come to experience themselves as transnational or hybrid, either for the first time or in new ways.
Chapter 4: Attitudes and Language Ideologies Mediating the Multilingual Study Abroad Experience

As explained in Chapter 3, I carried out thematic analysis of the data for the eight focal participants. In this chapter I report on the results regarding the eight focal sojourners’ attitudes and ideologies of language as they encountered and negotiated the multilingual SA site of Barcelona. These findings help answer the first set of research questions guiding the dissertation:

What orientations do sojourners exhibit towards the languages that are available in the SA environment besides Spanish—the learning target, that is, Catalan and any other languages they may encounter? How do such orientations relate to views of multilingualism as an obstacle or an affordance for language learning? Do orientations change over time for any of the sojourners and what might explain the changes?

I addressed these questions mostly by drawing on analyses of the predeparture and post-sojourn interviews. First, I transcribed the interviews and compiled all of the data into a common database on NVivo. Second, I created a case node and developed a profile for each focal participant based on several readings of their recounts of SA experience as well as comparison across cases. Third, with this holistic perspective in mind, I isolated segments related to the topic of multilingualism in the SA environment and coded these segments thematically. Finally, I

1 An earlier version of this chapter, reporting on the results for seven rather than eight focal participants, was published as Tullock, B. (forthcoming). Encountering multilingualism in study abroad: Sojourners’ orientations to linguistic diversity and language hierarchies in Barcelona. In E. Trentman & W. Diao (Eds.), The multilingual turn in study abroad. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
inspected the rest of data collected (see Table 13) in order to search for potential counter
evidence or disconfirming instances that might question the accuracy or validity of the themes I
saw emerging from the interviews. In this chapter, I report thematic results and patterns that
stood the test in the chain of evidence after a comprehensive triangulation check and negative
case analysis against the rest of data sources for each of the eight focal participants (Bogdan &
Biklen, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Richards, 2003).

4.1 Variable Perceptions of the Salience of Catalan in Barcelona

I was able to surmise from the predeparture interviews that seven of the eight students
had already anticipated encountering Catalan before going abroad. For many, this was because it
had been dealt with in their prior Spanish classes, particularly when their instructors at their U.S.
institution were from Catalonia. Samantha and David specifically mentioned that a key factor in
their signing up for the Barcelona program was their interest in the Catalan language and its role
in the mobilization for Catalan independence, which they had learned about in their university
Spanish courses. Some had heard about Catalan from relatives or friends who had visited
Barcelona. All of them except for Patrick had attended a pre-program orientation where the
program director, a Catalan herself, informed the students about the presence of Catalan in
Barcelona but also assured them that it would not be an obstacle to their language learning. She
explained that while they would see and hear Catalan around them in Barcelona, they would not
learn Catalan on the program and no one would speak Catalan with them, as local residents all
spoke Spanish and generally used either Spanish or English with non-Catalans. Thus, most
students were not completely naïve about the complex sociolinguistic situation that they were
about to encounter. Nevertheless, as it turns out, upon encountering the actual multilingual SA
context, their perceptions of situated language use in Barcelona only partially corresponded to their expectations.

Upon arrival in Barcelona, the students encountered complex patterns of written and spoken language use that reflect conflicting locally-circulating language ideologies and hierarchies that differentially legitimize and valorize the presence of Catalan, Spanish, and other transnational languages, especially English (Pujolar, 2011; Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2015; Woolard, 2016). Catalan was particularly salient to them in the visual linguistic landscape, which resonates with findings reported by Comajoan Colomé and Long (2012) regarding the linguistic landscape of three streets in Barcelona. When asked about their experiences with Catalan several months after the program’s end, almost all of the interviewees could describe ways in which it was meaningfully present throughout the program, and most could still recall their very first encounter with the language on monolingual or multilingual signage in the linguistic landscape or in ambient spoken language. For example, most recalled being surprised to discover that many street signs and supermarket product labels were written exclusively in Catalan and that, furthermore, when signs and menus were multilingual, Catalan was often featured in a more prominent position than Spanish. For instance, Patrick, who did not attend the pre-program orientation and claimed never to have heard of Catalan before going abroad, recalled, “I kind of expected to be able to read all the signs around me, and just like looking at the signs I was like, \textit{<smiling>wait this doesn’t seem right.>” Likewise, Lauren recalled that despite having been prepared to encounter Catalan, she was “initially confused” by the linguistic landscape: “When I was in (.) the cab from the airport, I was looking at some signs like, that is not Spanish, like the street signs and everything, I was like, that was the first time that it kind of clicked.”
While nearly all of the sojourners were struck by the presence of Catalan, their perceptions of its prevalence varied widely, especially in the extent to which in the post-sojourn interviews they reported witnessing locals actually speaking Catalan in everyday interactions. Some saw it as predominant in both the visual and aural linguistic landscape. Ben, who before departure had expressed concern about locals’ willingness to speak Spanish, “because I know they speak Catalan and everything,” found Catalan to be ubiquitous: “I’d go out to lunch with someone on the program, we’d be eating, and then like all around us, just like language that we don’t understand.” Similarly, Caroline, whose Basque family friends had joked with her, “Are you sure it’s a castellano program and not Catalan immersion?” described a similar situation: “For all I know there’s thousands of <laughing>people in Barcelona> who, like only interact in castellano, but I like definitely got the vibe that everybody was speaking in Catalan.” But in their post-sojourn interviews, other BarSA sojourners reported rarely encountering Catalan aurally in their environment. Patrick recalled that in written language, “there was a lot of stuff in Catalan,” but that in ambient spoken language, “I really didn’t feel like I encountered it too much.” Shelby had been warned by her cousin who had visited Barcelona while studying abroad in Granada, that people in Barcelona would insist on Catalan or English and refuse to speak Spanish, but she said she was pleasantly surprised to find that “everyone got really excited when I spoke Spanish, actually.” When I asked her about her experiences with Catalan, she could scarcely remember having encountered it at all, saying, “Honestly, I’m not gonna lie to you, the only thing that I remember in Catalan was the exit sign on the metro.” She was shocked to learn, when I pointed out to her later in the interview, that the street name signs in Catalonia were only in Catalan. Her shock is somewhat surprising, given that this fact had been pointed out numerous times by the program director and the local tour guide during orientations and excursions. When I further
prompted her, however, she was able to recall a few instances of seeing Catalan translations of menus and museum signs. It is worth noting here that, Patrick and Shelby differed markedly from the other focal participants in the amount of time and resources dedicated to leisure activities such as enjoying the Barcelona nightlife. In the post-sojourn interviews, their recount of their most meaningful experiences and interactions were often situated in environments that were geared toward international tourists rather than locals and where Catalan was likely less prevalent than English and Spanish. Patrick also explicitly acknowledged that he might have overlooked Catalan “just ‘cause it’s a language I don’t know.”

The low salience of Catalan during SA for a minority of focal sojourners may have been in part a by-product of these and related contributing factors, such as Patrick’s not being attuned to the presence of Catalan before departure or Shelby’s decision to opt out of the Bilingualism course. For the majority of focal participants, however, Catalan had been meaningfully present throughout their SA experience, in the instruction provided by the BarSA courses, in the linguistic landscape, or in the ambient spoken language around them.

4.2 Keen Awareness of Language Hierarchies Within Multilingualism

While the students’ comments above refer to their perception of a general predominance of Catalan in the SA context, and to the variable salience of Catalan language speakers for some of them, many sojourners provided reflections that were suggestive of their being keenly aware, implicitly or explicitly, of multiple competing language hierarchies.

For one, students commented that Catalan seemed to play a more important role in the smaller cities and towns that they traveled to on program-led excursions than it did in Barcelona proper. Some noted variation in patterns of language use in different spheres within Barcelona. David noted the prevalence of Catalan and the subordination of Spanish on signage in public
spaces. In everyday interaction, however, David perceived Catalan as a much less frequent and "behind the scene" language that was used in intimate and covert interactions among locals and that was eschewed in interactions with outsiders, for which Spanish and English were preferred. Lucia recalled that at the university, most signs were written exclusively in Catalan, local students would interact mostly in Catalan, and it was also the default language of the web platform which she and her colleagues used to access their course materials. In her observations in the interview after the program, she commented on the predominance of Spanish and English in "touristy" places and associates the preferential use of Catalan with "residential" areas and "local" establishments near the university campus:

At some of the more local like coffee shops and businesses along the way to, um the campus of the university, like menus were more in Catalan, like the people, you would hear speaking to each other more often in Catalan, not all the time, but more often than in other areas of the city. (Lucia, Post-Sojourn Interview)

Other languages in the linguistic environment apart from Catalan and Spanish were also acknowledged by the students, including two other official but minoritized languages in Spain, Basque and Galician, as well as other prominent world languages, such as Arabic, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Tagalog, and Urdu. Students encountered these various languages in their SA experience, on signage and menus and in the linguistic repertoires of individuals of varied national and ethnic backgrounds with whom they interacted while in Barcelona, often long-term immigrants who themselves speak Spanish and Catalan and hold variably positive language attitudes towards the two (see Section 2.6.3; also González-Riaño, Fernández-Costales, Lapresta-Rey, & Huguet, 2017).
4.3 Ambivalence About English and the Language Pledge

Of the many languages noticed besides Spanish and Catalan, it did not escape the focal participants’ attention that English was their own dominant language as well as a language with the status of global lingua franca, used in interactions between locals and international tourists who did not speak Catalan or Spanish. For example, all students commented on the fact that English translations were frequent on signage as well as on restaurant menus, brochures, and other informational materials in museums, and that employees of these establishments often spoke English.

Some students reported English-related difficulties in claiming identities as competent users of Spanish when interacting with locals, particularly early on in the journey, a complaint reminiscent of U.S. sojourners in other SA contexts (Allen, 2010; Bown, Dewey, & Belnap, 2015; Diao et al., 2011; Kinginger, 2008; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005; Trentman, 2013a, 2013b). Many of students’ interactions with locals outside the structured program activities took place in the context of service encounters such as ordering food at a restaurant or checking out at the supermarket. The students described numerous instances where locals would respond to them in English or hand them English-language menus or brochures. For instance, Lauren recalled, that “a lot of people (. .) would try to speak English like try to practice English back with you and then like you could correct them and be like, no, we’re, we want to practice Spanish.” While Lauren seemed to assume that her interlocutors’ use of English was related to their desire to “practice,” other students, such as Samantha, associated such behaviors with being ascribed a tourist identity:

It happened in a lot of stores on the Rambla because they’re so used to dealing with tourists that, like I think most of them, just that if you don’t look Spanish and you don’t
look like you know what you’re doing, they’ll like start speaking, they won’t even like say hi to you in Spanish, so they’ll just start speaking to you in English. (Lauren, Post-Sojourn Interview)

She and other students found it difficult to contest imposed tourist and other foreigner or English speaker identities and complained that locals would often persist in English, even after students expressed implicitly or explicitly their intention to speak Spanish. For Caroline, such persistence seemed to be driven by locals’ desire to carry out the transaction at hand with maximum expediency:

I think for the most part in like quick service places like a restaurant, people don’t want to-, I just think they think it’s more efficient if they speak to us in English so that way, they don’t have to worry about us understanding or misunderstanding. (Caroline, Post-Sojourn Interview)

Much as Allen (2010), Magnan and Back (2007), and Wilkinson (1998a) reported of other U.S. sojourners in France, ideological tensions surrounding language choice were also felt by the present SA sojourners in Barcelona, in interactions with other cohort members, with whom the students spent a great portion of their time. They acknowledged that there was a general propensity to default to English, especially in the face of linguistic struggles, and that this tendency conflicted with their desire to practice Spanish. The significance of this struggle will be developed further in the case studies of Ben (see Chapter 5) and Lucia (see Chapter 6).

Related to the reported English-related difficulties in claiming identities as competent users of Spanish when interacting with locals, all of the focal participants expressed positive attitudes towards the language pledge in the interviews both before and after the SA program. They considered the pledge to be an important and necessary reminder to resist the temptation to
use English for the sake of improving their Spanish. For Samantha, struggling through awkward conversations in Spanish early on in the journey resulted in a “weird bond” amongst cohort members. Lucia said that she was especially thankful for the language pledge whenever she was out traveling with the whole group, because speaking in Spanish kept them from being pinpointed as “the really annoying Americans” who were “obnoxiously speaking English all the time,” an identity-related struggle that will be elaborated upon in Chapter 8. This protection against losing face to negative stereotypes against U.S. tourists is an interesting positive role for the pledge that has been also noted by Trentman (2013b). Ben and Shelby both lamented that other students on the program often violated the language pledge whenever no members of the program staff were around to enforce it. However, all of the students, including Ben and Shelby, admitted that they sometimes used English covertly with their peers in stressful or time-sensitive situations or when they simply became tired of speaking Spanish, a statement that is reminiscent of García-Amaya’s (2017) observation that members of the U.S. cohorts in Spain he studied began using less Spanish and more English once they bonded and friendships were formed. Some BarSA sojourners in the present study also resorted to English with other international travelers who did not speak Spanish, as well as with visiting relatives and friends, a phenomenon also noted by Kinginger (2008) in her research on U.S. sojourners in France.

While commenting during the post-sojourn interviews on their native English as a potential obstacle to being able to use their Spanish, many of the focal sojourners also came to realize that English held a certain prestige in the eyes of their hosts and that their assumed perfect native speaking competence in English conferred on them some privilege. A similar observation has been made in SA studies of UK learners of French by Mitchell, McManus, and Tracy-Ventura (2015) and U.S. learners of Arabic by Dewey et al. (2013). In both studies, these
L1 English speaking sojourners were able to start friendships or access target-language speakers in exchange for help with English. In a somewhat similar vein, the eight focal participants in the present study became adept at exploiting English to improve their social capital in the SA environment. For example, David recalled multiple interactions in service encounters where his interlocutors oriented to him as a language expert, such as when he taught a grateful Ecuadorian taxi driver how to realize the t in little as a flap, rather than a hard t (for more on this, see Chapter 7). Interestingly, some students expressed concern that their required biweekly meetings with language exchange partners (intercambios) felt forced due to a lack of linguistic reciprocity (i.e., the exchanges were carried out only in Spanish, rather than half in Spanish and half in English), yet others reported that they learned to leverage their social capital as native English speakers without necessarily violating the language pledge. Lucia offered an explicit rationalization of this in her post-sojourn interview:

like the students from Barcelona that were doing the intercambio with us very much liked that we spoke English, because, like, while the conversation was always in Spanish, they would ask us questions like, oh how do you pronounce this in English? and like, you can still help them out on that, just like our general knowledge of English phrases and things like that, you can explain in Spanish, you know what I’m saying? but the phrase is in English, um, that like maybe they wanted to know. (Lucia, Post-Sojourn Interview)

In the accounts of some sojourners, certain locals seemed to associate English with even greater prestige than Spanish. Lucia recalled being surprised to hear this view being articulated by some of the local language exchange partners:

I remember my, like talking to people in intercambios and them saying like oh yeah, like the students prefer-, like first they prefer Catalan and then they prefer English and then
Spanish, which I thought was interesting, like amongst younger people. (Lucia, Post-Sojourn Interview)

Even more unexpectedly, this view was even shared by some students whose families were not from Catalonia originally and whose home language was Spanish. Regarding these students, she said:

like they don’t have a necessary, like necessarily a preference towards it, but like on the campus, like as both a political statement but also cause like Catalan is like, for them the most used and like part of their identity, and then English for them was like the like global language. (Lucia, Post-Sojourn Interview)

Occasionally, what a student would see as locals’ persistent use of English in the multilingual context led to troubling ambiguities. In the following excerpt, Ben describes a situation where a restaurant server’s persistent use of English with him and two of his program peers and her use of Catalan with other customers led him to consider two alternative conclusions: either she was assuming they preferred English because they were Americans, or she was unable or unwilling to use Spanish:

I ordered in Spanish and she responded in English, and then I think it was like oh, this is the American table, we’re gonna speak to them in like English, and then I heard her actually speaking in Catalan to the next table, so I was like, okay, so I’m not sure of this, because this is not something that I can tell you definitely, but like I feel like her two things were either English or Catalan. It didn’t really seem to be Spanish and Catalan, at least in my experience, but then again, that could have just been because we were Americans and she recognized that immediately, but maybe not, you know? (Ben, Post-Sojourn Interview)
4.4 Orienting and Reorienting to Catalan

The BarSA students’ discovery of unexpected language hierarchies and the ambivalent value of English interacted with their learning about the complexities of the Catalan sociopolitical context. Many students expressed initial shock regarding the apparent strength of the independence movement. In their classes, they were taught about the historical, economic, and cultural background underlying the conflict between Catalonia and the Spanish state. They also learned to identify and understand the meaning of various symbols associated with Catalan nationalism, such as the Catalan flag (i.e., la senyera) and various versions of the pro-independence flag (i.e., l’estelada). The specific timing of the program intensified this learning, as it took place just months before the highly controversial October 1 referendum on Catalan independence (see Anderson, 2018, for an overview of independence movements in Europe, including the Catalan one). Despite being declared illegal by the Spanish government, over 2.3 million of 5.3 million registered voters would participate and over 92% of them would cast a “yes” vote. Thus, during this particular summer while the students were enrolled in the program, Catalan and pro-independence flags and symbols were proudly displayed on thousands of balconies throughout the city and region and vastly outnumbered Spanish flags and other pro-union symbols. On their excursions within Barcelona and around Catalonia, too, the program staff encouraged students to pay attention to these symbols as well as the hierarchical arrangement of the languages on signage in restaurants and museums in order to gauge national identities and the relative strength of the pro-independence sentiment in different areas of the city and the region.

Students’ growing awareness of the sociopolitical context combined with their sense of themselves as outsiders led them to reflect critically on the sociopolitical implications of their
interlocutors’ patterns of language use as well as on their own decision to learn and use Spanish in Catalonia. This had implications for their attitudes towards the role of Catalan in their SA experience, which can be summarized according to three main orientations: Catalan as an obstacle, Catalan as not an obstacle, and Catalan as an affordance. Students drew on these orientations to make sense of situations where they encountered complex patterns of language use. These orientations seemed to be in flux for all participants at least part of the time, and overall, they evolved from initial shock to more embracing attitudes over the five-week sojourn.

In some situations, Catalan was oriented to as an obstacle to acculturation and to having friendly and equitable relationships with the locals. Ben, who as will be seen in Chapter 5 had wished for a monolingual immersion experience, sensed that Catalan was the language that locals wanted and expected him to speak and thus regarded negotiating a language switch from Catalan to Spanish as “uncomfortable” for all parties. He recalled several incidents on the streets or in the gym when someone would approach him first in Catalan and then, when he indicated lack of comprehension, would switch to Spanish with a “disgusted” expression. Patrick viewed the use of Catalan as key in an episode of perceived intense exclusion at a restaurant in an unfamiliar neighborhood in Barcelona, where “it just felt like everyone around us was just speaking in Catalan and the menus were only in Catalan, and stuff like that, so it almost felt kind of like an inside circle.” While he and his friends were waiting to be seated, a couple of ladies approached them, said something in Catalan, and appeared to cut line. Looking back on this experience, Patrick said, “I think they knew that we didn’t understand it and just kind of took advantage of that.” Caroline, a heritage speaker of Spanish with roots in Northern Spain, said that locals sometimes addressed her in Catalan and felt that her inability to respond in kind outed her as “not from Barcelona.” She recalled several situations in which this left her feeling
flustered and momentarily speechless such as when a supermarket clerk addressed her in Catalan while trying to explain how to weigh her produce.

In other situations, Catalan was oriented to as not an obstacle. For example, students commented that even in locales such as restaurants and museums where Catalan seemed to take precedence, Spanish translations (e.g., of menus, brochures) were always available upon request. Most students reported that on the rare occasions when someone addressed them in Catalan, this was easily resolved by continuing confidently in Spanish. Shelby, the student who was generally unable to recall encountering Catalan at all, said during the post-sojourn interview that she was neither interested in nor bothered by the presence of Catalan and simply ignored the language wherever she was confronted with it.

In contrast, however, some took an interest in Catalan and came to view it as an affordance for cultural learning, as indicated in the following comment by Patrick:

I think if I had studied abroad in somewhere that was monolingual though, I probably wouldn’t have realized what was going on in Spain with the two sides of the issues [surrounding the Catalan independence movement], because I feel like the language was a huge part of that, and I feel like that’s something that you can truly only understand by being there, um, and like hearing the differences in the words and seeing the differences in the writing. (Patrick, Post-Sojourn Interview)

4.5 Embracing and Resisting Catalan

Over time, many students shifted from relying on familiar monolingual frames of reference (i.e., expecting Spanish-only immersion and assuming that locals expected only Catalan) toward more nuanced, locally grounded interpretations of multilingualism in Catalonia
and developed increased agency in negotiating among new Spanish-mediated and multilingual identities. Occasionally, this involved picking up some Catalan.

Catalan learning was most notable in Samantha and David, the two students who signed up for the program to learn more about the independence movement. Samantha, who was of mixed Indian-German ethnicity, found that her olive skin and European style of dress enabled her to pass as a local, so long as she remained silent. She described multiple occasions when someone would misidentify her as a local and address her in Catalan. She said that initially, “It got frustrating when it would take me a second to recognize that someone was speaking Catalan and not Castellano, especially when they were talking directly to me.” Over the course of the program, she learned to distinguish between the two languages, a skill which helped her navigate a smooth transition from Catalan to Spanish. David, the student who was of Korean descent and whose case study will be developed in Chapter 7, found that he stuck out as a foreigner due to his physical appearance. Early in the sojourn, he struggled to maintain interactions in Spanish without his interlocutors switching to English, often with what he thought was a cold demeanor, which he suspected might be due to his race. As he learned about Barcelona’s immigrant population through his SA coursework as well as observing and interacting with Barcelona residents with migrant backgrounds, he learned that many of them mobilized resources from both Catalan and Spanish (and sometimes other languages), even though Spanish would have been sufficient in most cases. Over the course of the sojourn, as his self-confidence as a user of Spanish increased, his concerns about racism subsided and he instead became preoccupied with resisting a negative tourist identity. He found that by sprinkling bits of Catalan (e.g., merci [thank you], bon dia [good morning]) into his Spanish, he elicited positive reactions from locals. He thus came to see Catalan as a tool for negotiating race and indexing a “good visitor” identity.
as someone who was there to learn Spanish while acknowledging and respecting Catalan culture. It is interesting to note that in the case of Samantha and David, race and ethnicity seemed to influence their interlocutors’ perceptions and thus their choice to initiate interactions in a language other than Spanish—Catalan in Samantha’s case and English in David’s. While the languages and positionings involved contrasted with one another, they resulted in a similar initial frustration, which Samantha and David both drew on Catalan to resolve in satisfactory but different ways. Ultimately, the two students both seemed to share not only an interest in culture and history, but also a sensitivity to a broad range of possible benefits of SA and the project of language learning, such as gaining in-depth and firsthand knowledge of a context and its people, which perhaps stemmed from their multilingual and multicultural upbringing as second-generation German American and third-generation Korean American, respectively.

Not all students incorporated bits of Catalan into their multilingual repertoires. Some resisted doing so. This was most clearly visible in Ben, whose resistance towards the multilingualism of the SA learning experience will be illuminated in Chapter 5. Ben believed that locals expected him to use Catalan. In route to one of the early excursions at the end of Week 1, the local tour guide prepared the students for the site that they would be visiting, and her comments included a sociolinguistic description of the location. She explained that the site, a relatively isolated rural community had experienced far less contact with Spanish than Barcelona and other urban centers in Catalonia. She taught the students how to say hello, goodbye, and thank you in Catalan and suggested that they might use these expressions to impress locals. Several months after the program ended, during the post-sojourn interview, Ben voiced fierce opposition to this strategy. His reluctance to use Catalan seemed to stem mostly from a belief that using any other language while abroad might interfere with his mastery of Spanish.
Throughout and beyond the program, Ben persisted in his orientation to Catalan as an obstacle, saying he probably would have done better somewhere like Madrid, because “People just value Spanish a lot more in places where it’s monolingual.” As will be seen in detail in Chapter 5, Ben’s resistance against Catalan, which never came to any positive resolution, seemed related to the fact that he was only attuned to language learning (of Spanish only), which he understood within a monolingual mindset.

4.6 Summary and Significance of Results in Chapter 4

The main themes presented in this chapter illuminate what happens when personal projects of SA are implemented in a context where multilingualism is not only highly visible, but also highly political, as in the case of officially bilingual and de facto multilingual and transnational Barcelona, in the present study. The analysis of the eight focal participants’ pre- and post-sojourn interviews, triangulated with the written diaries and my field notes during participant observation, revealed that when sojourners are confronted with linguistic diversity through multilingual SA experiences, their existing ideologies and beliefs regarding language, language learning, and study abroad can be challenged, in many cases in productive ways that lead to a number of personal discoveries.

Students quickly discovered the presence and salience of various languages other than the target language, Spanish, in the linguistic environment. These included Catalan, the co-official minoritized language, and English as a lingua franca. This was, to a certain degree, anticipated by the students, who noted in the predeparture interviews that they had been prepared to encounter Catalan in particular. Nevertheless, the lived encounters with multilingual Barcelona created some dissonance and tension. It is a well-attested finding in the qualitative SA literature that students often hold expectations about study abroad that are challenged by the realities that
they encounter abroad, and that such challenges make necessary the recalibration of beliefs and strategic action (Surtees, 2016).

A more surprising discovery for the students appears to have been that languages are not randomly present in Barcelona but relate to one another in meaningful hierarchies. Students became aware of these hierarchies by engaging with and navigating their environment. In situated encounters with hosts, students found Spanish was sometimes subordinated to English, a fact which was related to the status of English as a global lingua franca, their imperfect knowledge of Spanish and identities as native speakers of English, and their role as temporary international visitors to the city. Similar dynamics have been reported in other studies, such as Trentman (2013a) for U.S. and European students of Arabic in Egypt, who reported that their access to out-of-class Arabic practice was limited by interlocutors’ tendency to switch to English. DePalma (2015) reports that for a multinational cohort of students whose purpose in studying abroad was learning Galician, a minoritized language, in Vigo, Spain, rather than Spanish, students found the predominance of Spanish over Galician to be greater than they expected and found that their interlocutors tended to switch to Spanish as a lingua franca, thus limiting their access to opportunities to practice Galician.

A further surprising discovery for sojourners was the disputed value of various languages in the geopolitical context and for different subgroups and individuals involved. Students learned that using and learning a particular language in a particular SA context can enact strong sociopolitical orientations, and that these enactments are highly sensitive to the people deploying those languages and the contexts in which they choose to deploy them. This related especially to Spanish and Catalan and problematized students’ role as learners and users of Spanish in Barcelona.
In sum, the interview analyses suggest that the BarSA students exhibited a wide variety of responses to Catalan, which ranged from embracing and using it, to seeing it as an obstacle, to not noticing it much or at all. This variation seemed to relate to multiple factors, including sojourners’ backgrounds, identities, investments, ideologies, and patterns of interaction and engagement while abroad. The next three chapters report in-depth on three of the focal sojourners. The case study methodology and the purposive sampling of Ben, Lucia, and David, will help illuminate why some students, seemingly sensing the social capital afforded by identification as a native speaker of English or an international visitor with some Catalan knowledge, oriented or reoriented themselves towards the multilingualism of the SA setting, eventually translanguaging through their Spanish, English, and newly emerging Catalan repertoires in ways that arguably enhanced their engagement in the host community and hence their access to learning opportunities—while others chose not to or even resisted doing so.
Chapter 5: Ben’s Story

Ben was an 18-year-old Completing his first year of university in the College of Arts and Sciences. When we first spoke before going abroad, he had not yet declared an academic major or minor, but in the fall upon returning from SA, he declared a double-major in Spanish and Economics.

Ben identified as straight, White, and male. He came across as a shy and reserved person, but he was used to being praised for his ease with sports and languages, both activities that may be prototypically associated with extraverted personalities (Dewaele, 2013; Stephan, Boiche, Canada, & Terracciano, 2014). He had an Irish surname and a dark completion. Ben grew up in the mid-Atlantic states and, while he was raised in English only, at least two of his close family members had successfully learned foreign languages outside the home. His mother taught Spanish, which she had studied in college, and his older sister was fluent in Spanish and French, as well as Wolof, which she had learned on a bridge year in Senegal after finishing high school, much like the UK sojourners in Senegal investigated by Coleman (2013).

Growing up, Ben attended several different schools, as his family moved around frequently. He studied Spanish on and off during elementary and middle school, depending on whether or not it was offered by the school he was attending at the time. At age 13, Ben began attending a private boarding school with a student body of just over 200, which he described as “very diverse” with a large population of students of Latin American and Asian heritage. There, he began studying Spanish in earnest. He excelled as a classroom language learner, and his promotion was accelerated, such that after just two years of formal study, he was granted early entrance into a college-level Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish language course. At the end of that year, he took the standardized AP language exam and obtained the highest possible score, a
Ben’s Spanish teacher, a native Venezuelan, took a special interest in Ben and created custom-designed Spanish literature and film courses for him and two other students, who were heritage speakers of Spanish—a Mexican American student from Florida, and a student who had migrated from Argentina. The classes were discussion-oriented with a strong oral component, which Ben said had a lasting effect on his speech, which he modeled after his Argentinian classmate:

She had an Argentinian accent, so I just kinda *<snapping>*picked*-* up on it, she always used the *vos*, you know like everything like that, and um I just was more of a: I’m like a little bit impressionable when I speak, when I was developing, because I got so much better that year, speaking with her, and like some of her tendencies were shown in my speaking *<laughs>*. (Predeparture Interview)

It is interesting to note that everything I have presented thus far about Ben’s linguistic profile growing up counters most stereotypes of the monolingual Anglo-American learner of Spanish, the prototypical foreign language learner imagined in many studies. Namely, he grew up surrounded by family members who had become successful multilinguals, such as his sister, or had even devoted their career to language, such as his mother; he began the formal study of language early and experienced high degrees of academic success with it; some of his language teachers, at least, were innovative in their curriculum and inspiring (Lamb & Wedell, 2015); and he was also able to get access to high-quality use of the target language inside the classroom with more proficient same-age peers, who also became his model speakers, such as his Argentinian heritage classmate; finally, he apparently developed some exposure to sociolinguistic diversity and chose to align with a variety of Spanish, Argentinian Spanish, that, although still normative and non-U.S. grown (del Valle, 2014), is of low visibility in U.S. classrooms and textbooks.
5.1 From High School Success to Master of Spanish

At university, Ben continued to study and excel at Spanish. Based on the results of the university’s foreign language placement exam, Ben was exempted from Spanish language courses and took 400-level content courses in his first two semesters in college, immediately prior to the summer SA experience.

Ben attributed his drive for learning Spanish to his positive experiences and success in the foreign language classroom. He said that Spanish had always been one of his favorite subjects and that he found studying the language intensely enjoyable. When asked to elaborate on what fueled this enjoyment, he responded, “To be honest, I just kinda like things I’m good at,” and likened his love for Spanish to his enjoyment of playing tennis, which he also learned and excelled at in high school. Ben intended to major in Spanish purely for the intrinsic enjoyment of learning the language and did not expect to use it in his future career. When I asked him about his intention to double major in Spanish and Economics in college, he said:

Um, well I started off as a Biology major, I kind of got bored with it, and I’ve always studied Spanish, it’s something that I enjoyed since I was young, so I figured I uh would switch over to that, and I wanted to pick up a second major, so I decided Economics was uh pretty applicable, and uh I didn’t mind it, but I guess my real interest is in Spanish, and Economics is just kind of a supplemental thing, but I’m probably going to end up working more in that field than with my language. (Predeparture Interview)

Thus, it is fair to characterize Ben as intensely fueled by an intrinsic motivation to learn Spanish, as defined in self-determination theory (see Noels, Vargas Lascano, & Saumure, 2019). That is, Spanish learning was a voluntarily chosen activity that Ben associated with enjoyment and self-competence.
Ben’s decision to study abroad was principally motivated by his desire to “master” Spanish and his belief that Spanish-only immersion was crucial to achieving this goal. Prior to departure, he regarded himself as “fairly close to fluent” but added that he was not entirely certain, having never been immersed in a Spanish-speaking environment. In the predeparture interview, he reported occasionally conversing in Spanish with his high school tennis coach, who was from Chile, and with two college friends from Mexico and Madrid, although “never […] for more than an hour or so.” Nevertheless, he lamented that his opportunities to interact in Spanish at home were limited by his interlocutors’ ability to speak English: “At Georgetown, I’m really discouraged from using my Spanish with native speakers, because everyone speaks English and there’s really no point in trying.” He believed that while abroad the language pledge would override the social norm of defaulting to English with other Spanish-English bilinguals, including his colleagues:

“No that I’m kind of forced to [use Spanish], there’s no awkwardness, there’s no feeling like you’re trying to prove something, it’s just that you know, we all have to speak Spanish and we all do it, and we’re all getting better, it seems a lot more comfortable that way, so I’m looking forward to that.” (Predeparture Interview)

We see in Ben, therefore, discourses that have been identified in past studies: a firm belief in the superiority of immersion as the best environment for language learning (Doerr, 2015; Wilkinson, 1998b) and a belief that the language pledge can help make the best out of the immersion experience while saving face with less eager peers (Trentman, 2013b). We further get a sense of the rich exposure to linguistic diversity that Ben has always had access to through his social networks in the United States (e.g., a high school tennis coach from Chile, college friends
from Mexico and Madrid). Yet he seems to somehow see those networks as less valuable for language learning than the truly immersive experience he imagined SA to be.

5.2 Desire for Linguistic Immersion Leading to Disengagement from Peers

When Ben and I spoke before his departure for Barcelona, he said that he did not know any of the other students on the program and had met them only briefly in the predeparture orientation. Apart from practicing Spanish, Ben said that he most looked forward to making new friends while abroad. On the day of his arrival, he was both excited and nervous about meeting his program peers. Students on the BarSA Program were responsible for arranging for their own travel to and from Barcelona. Some arrived early or remained in Barcelona for a brief time after the program, often with visiting family members, as visits from non-Spanish-speaking loved ones during the program were strongly discouraged. Ben flew into Barcelona alone and joined his program peers later that day. Speaking after the conclusion of the program, he recalled recognizing and introducing himself to one of his colleagues in the airport. He began the conversation in Spanish but obliged when she requested that they speak in English until they arrived at the student residence. Upon meeting the rest of the cohort members, Ben discovered that many of his colleagues seemed to know one another already and had begun to cluster into small groups. This seems to have left him feeling somewhat alienated, as is hinted at in the following excerpt from his post-sojourn account of his arrival:

I think after the [on-site orientation] meeting, like me and like seven people had dinner together, again, people whom I had never met. Five of them already knew each other, and one of them was from [another university], so I was just kind of sitting there silently. I was also super jet lagged, so um, didn’t really talk a whole lot, went to bed, but like (.) yeah. (Post-Sojourn Interview)
Nonetheless, Ben went on to say that these early feelings of loneliness did not dampen his enthusiasm or his high hopes for the SA experience.

Due to the sheltered nature of the program, the U.S. students inevitably spent many hours together, as they shared housing accommodations, took classes, and engaged in excursions and other mandatory program activities. In the absence of a local social network, Ben and his colleagues also turned to one another for affective support and company during extracurricular activities. As Ben himself described it, “Pretty much our full day was, go to class with Georgetown students, go back with Georgetown students, go to the pool with Georgetown students, have dinner with Georgetown students, and go to bed.”

Despite spending a large amount of time together, Ben struggled to connect with his U.S. peers. Reflecting on these difficulties after the sojourn, he noted multiple impediments to his integration into the cohort. One obstacle related to the demographics of the cohort. Ben lamented that there were only two other male students in the U.S. group, saying, “It’s not that I can’t hang out with girls, [but] it’s easier for me […] to associate with a /guy/ in general.” Another obstacle arose from apparently diverging SA investments between Ben and his peers. While Ben was highly invested in Spanish-only immersion, his colleagues, he said, ignored the Spanish-only rule. Likewise, he prioritized cultural experiences that were unavailable elsewhere such as going to art museums, but his colleagues “seemed more interested in just like going to the beach.” Ben alluded to but did not elaborate on other reasons for not fitting in with the group, saying, “I had a lot of differences with a lot of people on the trip, and that’s gonna happen when there’s only twenty people, but um, it’s just like I didn’t really feel like I really connected with anyone.” By the end of the program, he was only close to one colleague—David, whose case study will be developed in Chapter 7.
In his description of the facts in the post-sojourn interview, it became evident that one major source of frustration for Ben was his perception that the other students were either unwilling or unable to carry on high-level conversations in Spanish. He seethed as he recounted how his colleagues would speak English except when members of the program staff were present: “I can tell you for a fact that fifty percent or more, as soon as we stepped outside of the classroom <snaps> immediately switched into English.” He also recalled with frustration interactions with his peers, where, in his memory, he would have to repeat himself several times and sometimes switch to English in order to be understood, as in the following narrative:

I would say something, and they would just look at me and be like, What? In English. And I would just like say it in English and they were like, oh, okay. […] there was even one time like where I like was talking to one of the girls on the trip and […] I think I said um, is that purse like heavy? Because you know, it looked huge, and she was like, Thank you, and I was like, well <laughs> not really what I said, but um, I think that’s how she interpreted it, as me saying I like her purse, because she heard the name purse. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Ben believed that spending time with his peers constrained his Spanish learning opportunities and worried that his Spanish was deteriorating as a result. In his view, not only did they limit his exposure and interaction in Spanish, but they also made him wary of taking linguistic risks when speaking, since he did not trust them to provide accurate feedback, whether positive or negative. Eventually, Ben’s desire for community on the one hand and Spanish-only immersion on the other entered into conflict, apparently leaving him in a double-bind where he felt forced to choose between embracing the cohort and speaking English or withdrawing from interaction with the cohort for the sake of his Spanish. In the end, he determined that the
possibility of improving his Spanish outweighed the affective returns of engaging with the peer group. He explained his reasoning at the time: “In my mind I was like, you know what? If I’m thinking in Spanish and just not engaging with anyone, it’s better than like taking three steps backward and speaking in English every night.” Thus, around the end of Week 2, he decided to interact with the other students as little as possible for the remainder of the sojourn, even if it meant isolating himself. Ben’s fear to lapse into English to the detriment of his immersive experience of Spanish may have been justified. García-Amaya (2017) found that the gradual forming of friendships among sojourners from the United States spending six weeks in Salamanca resulted in increasing amounts of first-language use by Week 3, where in the early weeks there had been more use of the target language. At the same time, the concern may have impacted negatively his ability to have meaningful personal connections with his SA peers.

In the post-sojourn interview, Ben described the daily routine that he developed, whereby interaction with his program colleagues was minimized. On class days, he would wake up, have breakfast, and walk to campus alone with earphones in, listening to music in Spanish. He quietly attended classes and then walked back to the residence alone, to have lunch. After lunch he would exercise at the local gym and then return to the residence in time for the conversation exchanges. After dinner, he would do homework for two to three hours, watch a Spanish TV show, and go to sleep. On Tuesday afternoons and on the weekends, he said, he tried to be more social and would sometimes join his colleagues at the beach, the pool, or out and about in the city. However, on these days too, he often ended up going to the gym or visiting museums alone. Ben had hoped to spend his spare time in Barcelona doing things he knew he could not do elsewhere. He carefully budgeted his resources and preferred non-consumption-driven activities over eating out and going shopping. He was particularly fond of art museums and urged his
colleagues to join him, but he lamented, “Everyone else just kinda like seemed more interested in, just like going to the beach.”

Ben’s withdrawn approach to engagement with his U.S. peers looked very different to others than it did to him. Members of the program staff became worried about Ben as they watched him grow more isolated and less communicative over the course of the five-week sojourn. While abroad, the program director and assistants routinely expressed concern regarding Ben, both in informal conversations involving me, as well as with Ben himself. In the post-sojourn interview, Ben revealed that he had interpreted these well-intentioned expressions of concern as admonitions and felt fundamentally misunderstood and persecuted for doing precisely what the program advocated—maximizing his exposure to Spanish and avoiding contact with other languages:

[They said] that I was isolating myself from the group, um, and not engaging with anyone else, and what my intention, what my thought was, was that I would meet people who were not part of the Georgetown group so that I could speak and really learn more about the culture by immersing myself. Apparently, that’s frowned upon. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

While Ben remained convinced that his decision to withdraw from interacting with his U.S. peers was justified in light of his desire for linguistic immersion, he felt ambivalent about his decision, which he himself wondered if it might have resulted in a lose-lose situation where he neither made friends nor improved his Spanish. As Ben would discover, and as we will see in the next section, meeting people outside of the U.S. peer group and achieving full immersion were not as straightforward as he imagined. At one point in our interview, Ben remarked that, in the end, his Spanish did not improve at all over the course of the sojourn: “If anything, during the
At the time, I interpreted Ben’s comment as a judgment of his (lack of) linguistic progress over the course of the sojourn. However, as I analyzed the data, I realized that Ben’s comment was a verbatim translation of an oft-repeated statement by the program director during the sojourn, which I recorded in my field notes (2017.07.07_Excursion_Girona): “Cada vez que hablas en inglés, das dos pasos hacia atrás por cada paso hacia delante en el aprendizaje del español” [Every time you speak English, you take two steps backwards for each step forward in learning Spanish]. Thus, in Ben’s statement above, he aligns with the ideologies of Spanish-only immersion and L1 avoidance for the sake of language learning, which were also reproduced in components of the BarSA program design, namely the language pledge and the intensive schedule filled with Spanish-mediated activities. In aligning with these ideologies, Ben positions himself as a victim of the multilingual reality that he paradoxically experienced as a BarSA program participant. Ben’s complaint resonates with the well-attested finding in the SA literature that, when faced with realities that do not match their expectations, sojourners who do not modify their beliefs often experience disappointment (Diao et al., 2011; Wilkinson, 1998a). This instance also exemplifies how sojourners may draw on and mobilize language ideologies in order to make sense of conflicts in ways that serve their own interests (Surtees, 2016).

5.3 Making Real Friends Is Impossible

Ben’s early interactions with Spanish-speaking locals were positive and rewarding. This is illustrated in Ben’s first weekly reflection about an encounter that took place at the beach just two days after the start of the program and during the festival of Saint John’s Eve (la Fiesta de San Juan in Spanish, la Revetlla de Sant Joan in Catalan). In this account, Ben overcomes his initial anxiety about talking to strangers and introduces himself and a male friend to a group of
young women from the Basque Country, who indulge them in an extended conversation about centering on mutually interesting topics related to the United States, Spain, GU, and the Basque language:

Typicamente soy tímido cuando conozco a nueva gente—charlando con desconocidos nunca ha sido una fortaleza mía. No obstante, mi di cuenta de que estaba en España y había que practicar y salir de mi zona de comodidad. Entonces cuando un amigo y yo vimos a un grupo de personas con quienes queríamos hablar, yo tuve que acercarles y introducirnos. Resulta que ellas eran del país vasco, y solamente habían venido a Barcelona para la celebración. Hablamos de la euskera y su uso, de Georgetown, el presidente Trump, y la corrupción en España hoy en día. Me preguntaron si yo fuera de Latinoamérica, lo que me hizo sonreír, porque no tengo sangre latina para nada. Mi apellido es [Irlandés]. (Week 1 Diary)

[Typically, I’m shy when I meet new people—chatting with strangers has never been my strong suit. Nevertheless, I realized that I was in Spain and I needed to practice and get out of my comfort zone. So when a friend [masculine form] and I saw a group of people that we wanted to speak with, I had to approach them and introduce us. It turned out that they [feminine form] were from the Basque Country, and they had only come to Barcelona for the celebration. We talked about [the Basque language] Euskera and its use, about Georgetown, President Trump, and the corruption in Spain nowadays. They asked me if I was from Latin America, which made me smile, because I don’t have any Latin blood at all. My last name is [Irish].]

It is noteworthy that, in Ben’s account, the Basque young women mistake him as being Latino and that this case of mistaken identity seems to amuse and likely pleases Ben in light of
his measure of success in language learning, which was how closely he approximated a native speaker. In my estimation, Ben could pass visually as a Spaniard or Latin American, perhaps because his dark hair and eyes helped in terms of appearance. In the above account as well as other stories told by Ben, it appears he was also able to pass aurally as a native speaker of Spanish or someone who grew up in Latin America. That is, the Basque young women in this story might have thought that his Spanish was “too good” or “too Argentinian or Latin American sounding” for him to not be a native speaker. This account thus also could be taken as evidence that Ben had already seemingly attained his goal of approximating a native speaker at the outset of the SA experience. Indeed, it is possible to speculate that both Ben’s aptitude and his linguistic ability may have been quite high, high enough to pass for a native speaker with some interlocutors, something occasionally documented of other exceptionally advanced instructed learners of German (Moyer, 1999) and Arabic (Samimy, 2008). It also adds another perspective to Ben’s comments about his Spanish getting worse over the course of the sojourn, as situations such as this one, where interactions were positive and he was taken for a native speaker, became less frequent.

Despite a handful of successful interactions such as the one described above, Ben struggled to construct meaningful relationships with locals in Barcelona, especially with other male students his age who shared common interests:

I really enjoyed speaking to people /who were natives/ because I just felt more comfortable, but at the same time I never really reached a stage with anyone where I found, like, college-age students that I could really engage with and become better friends. (Post-Sojourn Interview)
The SA literature shows that this struggle is common among sojourners (Kinginger, 2004; Isabelli-García, 2006; Magnan & Back, 2007; Trentman, 2013a, 2013b; Wilkinson, 1998b). In Ben’s case, these common obstacles may have been exacerbated by the timing and the short duration of the program, as he recalled that their sojourn was beginning just as local students’ spring term at UPF was coming to an end and lamented that few local students remained on campus beyond Week 2 of the BarSA Program. Thus, his interactions with local residents were largely limited to brief, routine exchanges in public spaces or commercial establishments.

The lack of meaningful connections to locals was one of Ben’s main disappointments with his SA experience, as it furthered his social isolation. The following excerpt from Ben’s post-sojourn interview is representative of his comments on his interactions with locals:

I think like really making real friends would have been the best thing, because you know I did talk to strangers like on a daily basis, like you’re saying you’re asking for directions, whatever, it’s not really about like talking, it’s about like actually meeting people. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Students on the BarSA program were encouraged to pursue social interaction with locals independently through extracurricular activities such as signing up for gym memberships or regularly attending a place of worship, as these strategies had proven successful to sojourners on prior iterations of the program. Ben signed up for a month-long gym membership as soon as he arrived and went there nearly every day while he was abroad. As a talented and experienced tennis-player, weightlifter, and intramural rugby player, he was well-positioned to benefit from the gym’s affordances for rich socialization and interaction. However, it seems that such learning opportunities failed to materialize.
When I asked Ben about his interactions in the gym, he said that he had overall positive interactions with the gym staff and other gym patrons but that their conversations were mostly superficial:

I spoke to people in the gym, but it was all very topical, like it was like um, I mean, we would talk about like just lifting things, like how long we’d been lifting, like where we were from. People were generally very surprised um (when I’d) say (that I’m) from America. Um, just like, I guess they don’t see a lot of it. Maybe it was the accent, I don’t really know. I kind of speak with like a little Argentinian accent a little bit. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Given the limited ranges of topics he described, I wondered if Ben’s apparently high linguistic competence led locals to expect more of him than he was actually capable of in terms of leading the conversation. When I asked him if he had wished for more meaningful interactions, Ben indicated his own lack of interest due to a perceived age gap between himself and the other gym patrons:

BT: So, when you were talking to people at the gym and it was like sort of a limited conversation, did you feel like you wished it could have gone further, or-

Ben: I mean, most of them are like forty years old, so it was people that I could speak to for a couple of minutes, but it was like-

BT: Not, like, people you saw yourself making friends with?

Ben: Yeah, I think it might have just been the gym I was at. <laughs> It was like for older people.

BT: Yeah?
Ben: Which is fine. Just not people I could have realistically developed a stronger relationship with. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Ben recounted one instance where he struck up a conversation with another gym member who turned out to be a rugby player, like him. They had a long conversation about their athletic hobbies and decided to have dinner together after working out. However, as with Ben’s evening out with the exchange partners, this too remained an isolated incident. He eventually settled into a routine at the gym where he would opt out of interaction with the other gym patrons and instead spent his time on video-calls to Sergio, his Spanish American friend from university who was spending the summer with his family in Madrid. During these calls, Ben was able to use his Spanish, while using it with someone whose friendship was already secure and mutually valued. It is worth noting that Ben’s use of Internet technology to connect with a member of his home-grounded friendship network contrasts somewhat with other SA studies which have reported that such behavior detracts from engagement and target language use (e.g., Kinginger, 2008; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehardt, 2002) and highlights instead the ambivalent role of technological affordances for shaping language access in SA (Durbidge, 2019).

5.4 The Failed Potential of the Conversation Exchanges

That sojourners would encounter obstacles to establishing local social networks in the short period of five weeks was anticipated by the BarSA program design. The twice-weekly conversation exchanges were intended to facilitate access to local students. However, Ben found these exchanges to be unsatisfying. He described the interactional dynamics as more classroom-like than immersion-like and “very much teacher-student,” as he elaborates in the following comment:
The idea of having three people, Georgetown students, and one person having a structured conversation for two hours, I do not consider immersion. I think that’s that’s forced and that’s, you know, it’s kind of like, and maybe this is exaggerated, but it’s like talking to a kid! It’s like, how was your day? What did you do? You know? That’s like, that’s things that you can do in Introduction to Spanish, but if I’m actually trying to have a real conversation, it won’t be with four people and three of whom, me included, not a native speaker. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Ben blamed these interactional dynamics on the presence of his peers, who in his view lacked both interest and the necessary proficiency for carrying on a stimulating conversation in Spanish. Ben’s remarks on the exchanges also hinted at a perceived lack of reciprocity. His account indicates that the asymmetrical relationship inherent in the teacher-student or adult-child roles that were, in his recollection, adopted prevented him from pursuing his own conversational agenda by nominating topics or asking his local partners questions about themselves.

Practically speaking, nothing prevented students from meeting with their exchange partners individually outside the scheduled sessions. In fact, many students did this. Ben himself recounted one instance in which he went out with a couple of the exchange partners:

Ben: That was a great night, so I was just like speaking to them and we were just going to bars and stuff and talking about normal things outside of the structured intercambio, which is why I know that the structure was kind of uncomfortable,

BT: What kind of things would you talk about- would you consider as normal?

Ben: Um, they were like, I could finally ask them about themselves, what they like, what they do, we like connected on a couple of topics, one of them was a big tennis player, so we would talk about tennis, like I coached as well and I played all throughout high
school, so it was like just normal things that don’t have to do with like why are you studying Spanish? What do you like about Spain? (Post-Sojourn Interview)

While some might see Ben’s night out with the exchange partners as a perfect opportunity to construct the social ties that he desired, for Ben, this one-time incident merely served to reinforce his belief that his experience of the conversation exchanges was constrained by the presence of his U.S. peers.

5.5 Sergio in Madrid: Spanish-Only Immersion at Last, a Bit too Late

Sergio was one of Ben’s best friends from GU. He had grown up in Madrid with his Spanish-native mother and U.S.-native father. Ben seemed admiring of Sergio’s prowess with language and perhaps held him as a model: “[His mom]’s from Spain and the dad’s American, that’s what he speaks, so he has an American accent and a Spanish accent in Spanish, which is why it really got me used to the Spanish accent before I even came.” In the predeparture interview, Ben told me of his plans to visit Sergio in Madrid over the summer while they were both in Spain. He did this over the long weekend between Weeks 3 and 4. By this point, he had come to feel trapped in Barcelona and regarded his trip to Madrid, in his words, as an “escape.” The lasting impact of Ben’s trip to Madrid can be seen in the following excerpt from the predeparture interview, when I asked him to recall places to which he felt a strong connection while abroad:

BT: Great. Um, were there any places, so the gym might be one, that you felt like a strong connection to or like where you, I don’t know, you have like lots of memories or something like that?
Ben: Honestly, if I think about the trip, like I know this sounds weird because I spent just an exorbitantly more amount of time in Barcelona, but my strongest memories are from Madrid.

BT: Hm

Ben: And maybe that means something, I don’t know, but it’s like, I had absolutely the best time when I was there. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

During the long weekend in Madrid, Ben experienced Spanish immersion from the moment he woke up to the moment he went to sleep, with people who he believed were genuinely interested in him and committed to helping him reach his language learning goals. Ben stayed at home with Sergio and his Spain-native mother while his American-native father was away on a business trip. Every morning, the three had long conversations over breakfast on the terrace. During the day, Sergio showed Ben around the neighborhood where he grew up, told him stories about his youth, introduced him to new Spanish popular music, took him to museums and monuments, and introduced him to his Spanish friends. At night they would go out to dance clubs with Sergio’s friends. Ben’s excitement was palpable as he triumphantly recounted these experiences:

I was speaking to people, my friend introduced me to all of his friends and I met all of them, we hung out, I saw all these museums, like things that I like to do, but it wasn’t just by myself, and I was like engaging with people with the language, I was speaking Spanish, it was the best that I had spoken all break! (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Ben’s temporary escape from Barcelona enlightened him to what could have been and exacerbated his frustrations with the BarSA Program. After four days in Madrid, he returned to
Barcelona with his negative views reinforced and grew increasingly unhappy and withdrawn during his final two weeks in Barcelona.

5.6 Catalan is Everywhere: The Stress of Exposure to a Language One is Not Studying

In addition to intensifying his dissatisfaction with his sojourn in Barcelona, Ben’s trip to Madrid also sensitized him to the impact of Catalan on his experiences. When I brought up the role of Catalan during the post-sojourn interview, Ben remarked on how the notable absence of Catalan in Madrid increased his feelings of ease and well-being:

Ben: That is a very good point that I one hundred percent forgot to mention, because I felt like way more at home in Madrid <laughs>. I felt like way more at home in Madrid <laughs>.

BT: Because of the language issue?

Ben: It’s that, like people would walk by me, and it’s not that I would like listen to their conversations, but I knew what they were saying if I wanted to and street signs, I could read them all, I knew where I was going, like I could see different shops and be like I know what’s in there <laughs>, things like that, um, I just felt like that was a lot easier for me to engage with in terms of /navigating/ the city, because like I know that any given person that I went up to was also gonna speak my language and wouldn’t come up to me and speak Catalan. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

In Barcelona, by contrast, Ben perceived Catalan to be ubiquitous on street signs, product labels, menus, and in ambient chatter. He said that he could usually understand the gist of written Catalan by relying on cognates and, if necessary, translating it into Spanish using his phone; but he could understand very little spoken Catalan. Ben recalled, “I think overall like just having people around you use a language that you’re not studying all the time […] it’s just a little bit
stressful.” Probing further, I learned that part of this stress was due to Ben’s strong conviction that exposure to Catalan (and any other language) would interfere with his acquisition of Spanish. When I asked about his interest in Catalan, he responded:

Catalan, it seems interesting, but it wouldn’t even be something that I would consider until I considered myself a master of Spanish, which honestly I don’t think I ever will, and that’s not saying that I won’t ever master it, but I won’t ever think that I’ve mastered it. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Another source of Ben’s stress surrounding the presence of Catalan in Barcelona was related to the negotiation of language choice in everyday interaction. In the predeparture interview, Ben had expressed some worry that the presence of Catalan might negatively affect his access to Spanish: “What I was concerned about was people in Barcelona wanting to speak Spanish, because I know they speak Catalan and everything.” However, he said that he had been reassured by people who were connected to the program that “there would be no issues with that.” In the post-sojourn interview, Ben reported having felt acute discomfort whenever he would have to negotiate a switch from Catalan to Spanish while in Barcelona. Ben recounted several such instances, some of which were harmonious, while others were conflictive. A harmonious example can be seen in the following narrative of such a negotiation, which took place early in the program when Ben inquired at the gym about a short-term membership and the gym receptionist initially greeted him in Catalan but then accommodated his use of Spanish:

I walked up, and I was like, hey, excuse me, which I guess might be the same in Catalan, because she responded in Catalan, and I was like, oh, in Spanish, like, I don’t speak that, and she was like, and she said, do you want English? And I was like, no, in Spanish. Don’t worry about it. I speak Spanish fine. And she was like oh, that’s great /what you’re
doing/. And she was like super happy about it. I was like, oh I’m from America. I’m studying here. And she was like, oh that’s wonderful! I’m glad that you’re studying Spanish. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Ben said that this receptionist’s positive response to him was, in part, why he chose her gym over another.

But Ben also recalled several instances where local interlocutors addressed him in Catalan and responded with what he perceived as hostility when he said that he did not speak Catalan:

“People would ask me for directions a lot in Barcelona, and I was like, do I look like I live here? But um, they’d ask me in Catalan, and I’d respond, I don’t speak that, and they’d ask me in Spanish disgusted, so I mean like, /that/ was just kinda, you know.”

(Post-Sojourn Interview)

Ben’s assessment of such interactions was that these locals realized that he was a U.S. student of Spanish but nevertheless expected him to speak Catalan. An alternate interpretation is that he was mistaken for a local resident who could thus be assumed to speak or understand Catalan. Such an interpretation is consistent with scholarly observations about shifting ideologies regarding language choice in Catalonia in the 21st century. Namely, with the increase in the number of Castilian speakers who adopt the use of Catalan in routine social exchanges, Catalan speakers rely less and less on ethnolinguistic classification when considering which language to speak when initiating conversations (e.g., Pujolar & González, 2013). This change has occurred alongside an ideological shift away from linguistic parochialism favoring monolingualism in either Catalan or Spanish, towards mixed and cosmopolitan language ideologies favoring bilingualism, accommodation, diversity, and crossing (Newman, et al., 2008; Trenchs-Parera &
The notion that Ben was mistaken for a local resident is supported by his numerous accounts in written reflections and the post-sojourn interview of being able to pass, whether intentionally or unintentionally, as a Latin American native speaker of Spanish. If Ben was indeed mistaken for a Barcelona resident of Catalan, Spanish, or Latino origins, then ironically, his declaration that he did not speak Catalan, which he paraphrased in English as “I don’t speak that,” may have been interpreted as a refusal to accommodate to his interlocutor’s linguistic preferences. When I asked Ben if he had considered this scenario, he indicated that he had not but acknowledged that it was possible.

Overall, Ben felt that people in Spain were appreciative of his efforts to use Spanish but believed that his use of Spanish would have been “better received” and “better appreciated” in one of Spain’s officially monolingual regions. According to Ben, Catalans wanted others to speak Catalan, because “the pride of the region is that language.” Spanish, on the other hand, was “not […] a language that they’re super proud of, especially in general, because you have all these people that don’t want to be a part of it.” Probing further, I learned that this impression stemmed in large part from comments made during Week 1 by the group’s tour guide, Laia, in route to one of the regional excursions. As she was preparing the students for the site that they would be visiting, her comments included a sociolinguistic description of the location, a relatively isolated rural community that had experienced far less contact with Spanish than Barcelona and other urban centers in Catalonia. She taught the students a few token expressions in Catalan such as hello, goodbye, and thank you, and suggested that students might use these expressions to impress locals. Ben was offended and interpreted her recommendation as advocating the supremacy of the Catalan language and identity. He recalled, “it seemed like she was kind of propagating the idea that maybe the Catalan identity was like better than Spain itself.” He felt
very strongly that she should not have encouraged them to use Catalan, especially in light of the fact that they were there to learn Spanish. Nevertheless, Ben was thankful for learning about Catalan politics, culture, and identity on the BarSA Program, especially in the History course. He recognized that they would not have discussed or learned so much about these aspects if they had not been in Catalonia.

5.7 What I’ve Always Wanted, One Language That I Can Speak Like a Native Speaker

While Ben acknowledged that there were multiple ways to be multilingual, he took a decidedly monolingual approach to language learning. He contrasted his approach to that of his sister, who spoke Spanish, French, and Wolof:

My […] sister, um, she speaks a lot of languages well, but uh, I want to speak Spanish fluently. That’s what I’ve always wanted, one language that I can speak like, as, like a native speaker, which is English, obviously, and one language that I want mastery of, and I’d, like, rather not be kind of like a dilettante than like other things, cause that’s just not, never the way I’ve operated. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

It was clear that Ben judged his mastery of Spanish according to how closely he approximated a native speaker. He said that he understood Spanish perfectly but that his speaking skills lagged behind. He said that his native Spanish speaking friends at university told him, you speak Spanish perfectly, like, especially for an American.” This last qualification—for an American—he said, nullified their compliment. Ben believed that studying abroad would fix whatever it was that kept him from sounding like a native speaker. He admitted that this goal would sound almost impossible to most people, and perhaps it was impossible. But, he said, “What’s the point in not getting as close as I can before, you know, moving on?” He believed that his Spanish would not be enhanced by learning another language—if anything, it would be hindered: “I mean, it would
get confused in my head, we have like different uh, I mean like the things we learned about in Bilingualism, we have like interference, like different like uh trans- something, transference, transferencia.” It is ironic that, while speaking about this, he realized that he was uncertain about the English word for transferencia. That he should avoid English transferencia (i.e., transfer or interference) in his Spanish was drilled into him in high school. He actively avoided making such errors in Spanish in order to avoid “sounding stupid,” which, he said, was one of his biggest fears. He did not want others to have to adapt their speech or “dumb down their conversation” for him.

Ben did not question his decision to go to Barcelona to learn Spanish, nor did he regret never learning or using any Catalan. While speaking with me, he invoked the official status of Spanish throughout the Spanish state to claim the moral high ground over anyone who might have resented his decision to learn and use Spanish in Barcelona: “It’s like an official language, so anyone who looked at me wrong because I didn’t speak Catalan, I didn’t really blame myself.” Nevertheless, he also said:

People just value Spanish a lot more, in places where it’s monolingual. That being said, «<low voice>» I did take a class in bilingualism and understand the importance of bilingualism,> » <laughing>but it’s just like> as someone who is not trying to be trilingual, I just want to really <laughing>master> Spanish, I just think that going to a monolingual state in Spanish would have been (.) more cohesive with my goals. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

5.8 Taking Stock of the Study Abroad Experience

Looking back, Ben was disappointed with his SA experience overall. He returned home thinking that he had not achieved his goals for language learning. In large part, he blamed his
dissatisfaction on the BarSA Program, which he said emphasized “being there and studying” over true immersion. Ben acknowledged that the program had provisions to foster immersion but felt that these were insufficient, particularly for highly capable and driven students such as himself. Before going abroad, he had considered other externally run SA programs of longer duration but opted for the BarSA Program due to its lower cost, the ease of earning course credits directly at his home university, and the opportunity to get to know the other GU students on the program. He now wished that he had opted for a semester-long program with direct enrollment, where he lived with other local students in a dorm or homestay.

In the predeparture interview, Ben claimed to have never spoken Spanish extensively in an extracurricular setting. Indeed, it will be remembered that in the predeparture interview he lamented that at home his opportunities to interact in Spanish were limited because of everyone’s ability to speak English: “At Georgetown, I’m really discouraged from using my Spanish with native speakers, because everyone speaks English and there’s really no point in trying.” Interestingly, his views on this changed quite dramatically in the post-sojourn interview. Namely, in noticing the shortcomings of his interactions abroad, Ben seems to have become aware of the benefits of his prior interactions with native Spanish speaking friends in the spring semester before going abroad, where he would try out new words and structures, and they would give him feedback. As I learned in our post-sojourn interview, conducted six months after the conclusion of the BarSA program, he had expanded his home social network of Spanish-speaking friends from two to six, including not only Sergio and one friend from Mexico, but now also another friend from Mexico, two from Colombia, and one from England who had family in Spain, and he met with them once a week to cook a meal together and speak Spanish. Ironically, the most valuable transformation that the experience of studying abroad may have afforded Ben
seemed to be a newly discovered appreciation for at-home opportunities to meet his two language learning goals: To practice Spanish to mastery, and to do so in the context of meaningful friendships.
Chapter 6: Lucia’s Story

Lucia was a 20-year-old completing her second year of college. She was majoring in International Politics with a Spanish minor. She contemplated a career path after graduation that might involve working for the United States State Department or pursuing a Law degree with a focus on immigration or human rights. She identified herself as a straight Hispanic / Latina female.

Lucia was born and raised in Miami, Florida, the granddaughter of Cuban immigrants. Her father was born in Miami, and her mother was born in Puerto Rico. Her Cuban identity seemed to prevail, however, as her mother’s Puerto Rican ties never came up in our conversations. She thus self-ascribed as a third-generation Cuban American, a grandchild of the original immigrants who were members of the middle and upper middle socioeconomic classes of pre-Castro Cuba and left the island to establish themselves in Florida during the first waves of political exile, in the 1960s and 1970s (Eckstein & Berg, 2009/2015). Sociolinguists have determined that third-generation, Miami-born Cubans are English dominant and may present considerably variable profiles of Spanish proficiency, but regardless they all view Spanish-English bilingualism as “incontestably the social norm” (Lynch, 2009, p. 767). This seems true of Lucia. She was exposed to both English and Spanish from birth and acquired both languages simultaneously. Lucia’s parents seem to fit the description of Lambert and Taylor (1996), who found that middle- and upper-middle-class Cuban parents in Miami tend to espouse additive family language policies that support the active use of Spanish inside the home. She mentioned, however, that much of her early exposure to Spanish came from her grandparents, who kept her during the day before she started school. Lucia reported that both her parents were fully bilingual in Spanish and English, but that she used English with them “like ninety percent of the time,”
and that she spoke only English with her two younger sisters. With her grandparents, she always spoke in Spanish. Gradual intergenerational language shift towards English accompanied by home language loss is typical of the United States (Fishman, 1964), but Miami Cubans have been shown to hold very positive attitudes towards bilingualism in general and Spanish in particular, such that some scholars have noted they enjoy the best conditions for language maintenance of all different U.S. Latinx groups (Alfaraz, 2014; Porcel, 2006). Lucia seems a good case in point, as her proficiency and comfort with Spanish seem very high. The successful outcomes of her bilingual upbringing differ from the experiences of another focal sojourner, David (Chapter 7), who was also third-generation Korean American but reported limited comprehension and no real production abilities in Korean, a common situation that is predicted by Fishman’s three generation rule.

Lucia was also exposed to Spanish outside her home and extended family. She said that, apart from her continued use of Spanish with her grandparents and at large family gatherings, the main factor enabling her to maintain her Spanish was living in Miami, where, she said, she was “constantly exposed to Spanish” in her environment. She described Miami as “a really culturally diverse city [where] everywhere you go, people will be speaking Spanish, and a lot of menus are in English and Spanish.” And indeed, Miami is not only home to the world’s second largest population of Cubans (after the island of Cuba), but also a city that is 70% Hispanic (of which 54% is of Cuban origin) (Carter & Lynch, 2015). Other languages are also significantly present, particularly Haitian Creole, Brazilian Portuguese, and Russian (Carter & Lynch, p. 379). But it is the Spanish-speaking communities in the city that are “both cohesive […] and of high social status,” such that “the presence of the Spanish language alongside that of English is very strong in the media, in boardrooms and government offices, and on the street” (Eilers, Pearson, &
Most of Lucia’s friends growing up came from families with similar ethnolinguistic backgrounds to her. In fact, one of her BarSA program colleagues, Caroline, was also a third-generation Cuban American and a childhood school friend of Lucia’s. Despite the two young women’s shared background and friendship, there were some key differences. Unlike Lucia, only half of Caroline’s family came from Cuba and spoke Spanish as a home language—her father was born in the UK and immigrated to the United States as a child. He had been raised in English only and had learned Spanish as an adult. Also, Caroline both identified and passed as White, whereas Lucia, who had a darker complexion, may have self-identified as White as well but did not pass. (Rumbaut [2009] notes that it is common for Hispanics in Florida to self-report White much more often than in other U.S. states, as shown in the 2000 Census, where 92% of Cubans living in Florida and 67% of Puerto Ricans living in Florida as well as 81% of Puerto Ricans living on the island self-reported White, all much higher percentages than in other states such as Texas or New York.) Yet another interesting point is that Caroline, having a U.S.-American-sounding name, sometimes chose to adapt to the Spanish-sounding version and go by Carolina. Lucia, on the other hand, never was observed adapting her Spanish-sounding to the English version, Lucy. (These qualities are reflected in my choice of these students’ pseudonyms.)

Lucia received moderate formal support for her heritage language throughout her educational career (as did Caroline, who attended the same schools as Lucia from ages 10 to 18). Although English was always the primary language of instruction, Spanish was taught as an obligatory subject at all grade levels, mostly by bilingual instructors who were native speakers of Spanish, including one who was from Barcelona. Lucia estimated that around 95 percent of her classmates growing up were Hispanic and were fluent in Spanish by the time they started school.
According to her description in the predeparture interview, her elementary school Spanish courses were traditional and grammar-focused but were tailored to students with Spanish as a home language: “Compared to my friends who did not come in [to school] speaking Spanish, what I was doing in the fourth grade was not what they were doing […] We were conjugating a lot more complex verbs.” Beginning in high school, she took college-level AP courses in Spanish language and literature, where, she said, she developed her literacy and public speaking skills. In this, once again, Lucia defies the pattern of loss of the home language predicted for the third generation by Fishman (1964), challenging as well the portrayal dominant in the heritage language development literature of heritage speakers who are said to join college language classrooms insecure in their home-language literacy, inexperienced with public and formal registers, and even almost completely illiterate in the language they supposedly learned only orally at home (Ortega, 2019). Like the biliterates studied by Tse (2001a, 2001b), Lucia seems to have been able to thrive in both oral and written Spanish, while remaining dominant in English, all throughout her schooling prior to entering college.

6.1 Cultivating a Multilingual and Cosmopolitan Cuban American Identity in College

Lucia continued to study Spanish during her two years at university and took one 400-level Spanish course each year. She expressed both practical and identity-related motives for continuing to study Spanish in college. On the predeparture questionnaire, she wrote:

I am learning Spanish as a way to provide academic reinforcement and formal training in my somewhat native skills. I also take Spanish courses as a way to ensure that I do not lose command of the language, and as a way to remain engaged with my heritage.

(Predeparture Questionnaire)
I was intrigued by the phrase, “somewhat native skills,” since Lucia reported having acquired both English and Spanish simultaneously. When during the predeparture interview I asked her to elaborate on what she meant by this, she said, “I meant that obviously English is my native language. That’s what I default to, that’s what I count in, that kind of basic stuff.” In this Lucia echoes the sociolinguistic literature, which highlights the vitality of the bilingualism in Miami Cubans while simultaneously recognizing the predominance of English (Carter & Lynch, 2015).

I also asked Lucia about the anxieties she expressed about losing her connection with her language and ethnic heritage. She recounted that after starting school as a child, she “defaulted to English a lot more” and that she had worried that leaving Miami for college in DC would tip the balance even further towards English: “I was fearful that if I didn’t take Spanish, and if most of the people I was surrounded by wouldn’t necessarily speak Spanish, that I just wouldn’t speak it as often and […] that I would start losing it.” Hence, she enrolled Spanish courses in college in order to create “a space each day or three times per week where I was, not forced, but willingly choosing to speak only in Spanish.” Lucia was pleased with her amount of Spanish use at university, which she believed had remained stable. She was also proud of the development of her Spanish language skills since coming to GU. On the one hand, her Spanish had become “more refined” due to the “high caliber” Spanish classes at GU, where “they teach you the proper language skill, and the vocabulary is geared more towards politics or the economics of the region.” Lucia’s use of the adjective “proper” has hints of the linguistic insecurity that is often captured in the handful qualitative studies of Spanish heritage speakers. For example, Coryell, Clark, and Pomerantz (2010) interviewed seven women who were second- or third-generation heritage speakers, although unlike Lucia of Mexican descent and most of them ten or twenty years older than her. All of the women spoke to the researchers with pain and embarrassment of
the demoralizing discovery, often through textbooks and professors, that they grew up all their lives fluent in Spanish yet not speaking “proper” Spanish. Rebbekah, the only woman of the seven who was closer to Lucia’s age, a third-generation Mexican American in her early-twenties, recounted “you know how professors are, they’re like, ‘you were taught Tex-Mex, and you’re saying it wrong, and you’re using the wrong dialect, and you’re not rolling your ‘r’s right.’” (p. 462). However, Lucia did not seem to suffer any negative experiences of the kind reported by the women in Coryell et al. On the contrary, she said traveling home to Miami on a holiday break made her realize that she “enjoyed speaking Spanish more since being in college than probably ever before.” She added, “I guess distance makes the heart grow fonder. Something like that.” And while she may have internalized a somewhat prescriptivist notion of “proper” Spanish, and certainly valued having access to formal Spanish through college-level instruction, she also invested in developing diverse registers beyond the classroom walls. For example, she noted her colloquial vocabulary had also increased and become more “relevant” since she started college away from home, as she made a conscious choice to watch television series in Spanish in her free time.

In order to fulfill a modern language proficiency requirement for her degree program, she took and easily passed her college’s Spanish proficiency exam at the end of her first semester, where a “pass” is roughly equivalent to an Intermediate-high to Advanced-mid level on the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency (ACTFL) Guidelines rating, or a B1 / low B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Having fulfilled the language requirements for her academic major, Lucia decided to add Portuguese as an additional language. She chose Portuguese because she felt that the language would be useful for her academic focus on Latin American politics, given the political and economic influence of
Brazil. She expected learning Portuguese to be “a relatively easy transition” due to its similarity to Spanish. Lucia’s expectations of positive language interaction aligned well with the tenets of her intensive “Portuguese for Spanish Speakers” course at the university, which encouraged students to accelerate their learning by exploiting their prior knowledge of Spanish and other languages, an emerging pedagogical paradigm that makes Spanish into a pivot (Travers, 2018) or gateway (Donato, 2018) language for the accelerated learning of cognate languages such as Portuguese (Carvalho & Child, 2018). At the time of our predeparture interview, Lucia had completed Advanced (i.e., 300-level) Portuguese in just three semesters and planned to continue studying the language in the fall.

Lucia said that she had wanted to study abroad for as long as she could remember. She recalled experiencing the allure of GU’s many SA options when she was deciding which university to attend. Ideally, she would have liked to go abroad for a semester, but her work as a university residence assistant (RA), in exchange for which she received free room and board, required her to remain on campus for the whole academic year and thus limited her options to summer programs. In addition to the BarSA Program, she applied to and was accepted by an externally run summer program for Portuguese in Brazil. However, she chose the BarSA Program for several reasons: The program’s course selection and its focus on politics and identity were directly related to her major in International Politics, she would earn enough credits on the program to complete her Spanish minor, she would get to visit a new city and have the opportunity to travel in Europe, and she “just felt more comfortable going with a GU group of people.” She looked forward to meeting new people her age, both within the U.S. cohort and through the conversation exchanges with local students. She was also excited about what she would learn from a blend of taking formal classes, participating in program excursions, as well
as traveling independently while abroad. It appears that Lucia was unaware of the fact that Spain has attracted the second-largest group of Cuban diaspora after the United States: In 2013 there were 120,000 Cuban-born people in Spain (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Revision of the Municipal Register 2013, cited in Eckstein & Berg, 2009/2015) and two million Cubans in the United States (López, 2015). In Barcelona in 2019 there are slightly over 8,000 Cubans, according to Spain’s Instituto Nacional de Estadística (http://www.ine.es/en/welcome.shtml).

In sum, Lucia began her sojourn with a well-developed and affirmed Cuban American identity that she felt free to continue cultivating in college through renewed investments in her Spanish. College also brought with it an opportunity to expand her bilingual identity into a multilingual one, with her addition of Portuguese. And her thrill at the thought of studying abroad may also suggest an incipient cosmopolitan identity, cosmopolitanism understood, following Hayes and Carlson (2018), as an ideal that values “cultural openness, conviviality and willingness to bridge cultural difference” (p. 200), or a disposition towards those values, often held by individuals in a position of relative privilege, that leads them to embrace specific strategies and practices, including the choice to travel abroad, and to imagine identities beyond the boundaries of a single nation.

6.2 Meeting the Cohort of Sojourners: Negotiating Language Choice

Speaking several months after the sojourn, Lucia recalled having been excited and anxious on the day that she departed for Barcelona—excited to be traveling to a new setting but anxious about practical matters such as how to arrive at the student residence without appearing lost. She drew confidence from the fact that she had experienced international travel in Europe with her family the previous summer, and she was comforted by the fact that she would be able to communicate in Spanish if something went wrong. She had arranged to travel with P09, a
program colleague with a layover in Miami. After a smooth landing, the friends exchanged money at the airport and split a cab to the residence, where they freshened up and immediately set out in search of a restaurant to have lunch. As she sat on the sunny terrace waiting for her food, Lucia remembers her anxieties began to dissipate and her excitement prevailed, as the fact that they were in Barcelona began to feel real.

Later that evening, Lucia met her other program colleagues at the on-site orientation session. Lucia was already acquainted with some of the other students before departure—Caroline was a childhood friend, and she had also worked with David and P17 on campus as RAs. The majority of her colleagues she did not know, however, and she wondered what it would be like getting to know them in Spanish. She imagined that it would be strange at first and expected that they would be tempted to “default to English,” as friends who had studied abroad before had warned her. Thus, she was grateful for having a language pledge, which “forces you to use the language in all your surroundings.” In these feelings, she seemed to share with Ben a similar positive attitude towards the pledge. Looking back on the experience of meeting the U.S. cohort in our interview after the sojourn, Lucia recalled that the experience had been more or less in line with her expectations. It was strange at first, but in the end, she felt that she “got to know people equally well.”

In striking contrast to Ben, however, Lucia described her colleagues as both capable and committed when it came to using Spanish to communicate. Nevertheless, she observed that some of her peers seemed to be more comfortable speaking than others, especially early on in the program. According to Lucia, they all had “a high level of fluency” and “everyone was definitely like making the effort to do it in Spanish cause like we all did want to improve and like meet the standard of the program.” There were obstacles to overcome, however. For example, the social
strategies that she and her peers relied on for bonding with other students back home translated awkwardly into another language:

Like obviously [...] we’re gonna talk about either like, some random Georgetown things that we have in common or like, American culture things or like, oh, our favorite movies but, like, there that’s all usually conducted in English, so like, having to translate that to Spanish and, like, talk about those things in Spanish was a little weird. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Lucia believed that she struggled less with this issue than her program colleagues, and she attributed this to having often discussed aspects of U.S. culture and college life in Spanish with her grandparents. However, she realized that she was much more comfortable speaking to older people in Spanish than she was other students her age. Apart from noticing gaps in her own Spanish vocabulary, she also found that the Spanish lexicon seemed to lack satisfactory translation equivalents for slang terms and lingo associated with the way young people speak, such as the intensifiers, “highkey” and “lowkey,” (as in: “I highkey want to eat healthy but lowkey want to eat an entire cake” [“Lowkey,” 2016]). Heritage speakers have often been characterized as limited in their facility with formal registers, allegedly because many of them learned from family members in the absence of any formal minority-language schooling and ended up with “kitchen language” (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007, p. 369). Lucia’s comment is unusual and interesting in revealing a different register asymmetry, one that leaves her wanting in her Spanish resources to produce linguistically a youthful or at least age-appropriate identity, that is, a “style” in Bucholtz’s (2015) sense: “the semiotic production of social identities of all sorts” (p. 57), in the case of Lucia’s comment, a youthful identity. And while contemporary views of style in the research into the sociolinguistics of identity emphasize that style is much
more than just a matter of language (it is a multimodal, semiotic deployment of actions, as Bucholtz details), it is language choices in Spanish that Lucia seems to perceive as lacking in her appraisal of why it is less comfortable and even “weird” to use Spanish for certain topics and interactions with her same-age peers. While some of her colleagues appeared to feel overwhelmed by these challenges during the early days of the program, Lucia noted that they eventually became more comfortable: “I would say like weekend and a half, everyone kind of like was contributing in like casual conversations.”

6.3 The Emergence of Translanguaging as a Stable Resource

Lucia also noted that, as she and her BarSA peers became more comfortable with one another, a mild relaxation of the Spanish-only rule also took place. In her account, she and the other students had initially been fearful that one of them might tell on the others for breaking the language pledge. But once they became friends, the fear was assuaged, and she recalled that they would sometimes “default to English” when telling funny stories and when they found themselves lacking “the slang or the lingo to say like certain words.” What Lucia described, and what I witnessed during field work and while listening to the recorded exchange conversations, is a mild form of translanguaging, or “the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential” (García, 2009, p. 140; also García & Li Wei, 2014; García & Tupas, 2019; Li Wei, 2018). Admittedly, Lucia and her peers felt that by doing so, they were treading a slippery slope: “The problem was that once you switched to English, like someone would like continue the story and the conversation in English.” Eventually, she said, the students found a balance between the desire to practice Spanish and the need that they sometimes felt to default to English:
I feel like for a lot of us it became like a lot of Spanglish in the sense that, like, we would be telling [...] the general parts of our conversation in Spanish, [but] when we really needed this, like, one phrase or this, like, term that we feel, like, is only, like, in English, like, people would just, like, say it. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

While abroad, I observed numerous instances where Lucia and her colleagues use “Spanglish” in the way she describes above. Undoubtedly, the most frequent and salient example was their use of the English discourse marker, “like,” while speaking Spanish. This discourse marker is ubiquitous in the speech register of young people in the United States and UK alike, and it is perceived to be more markedly young and female than it actually is (Dailey-O’Cain, 2000). It fulfills a number of functions, including a marker that focuses, exemplifies, approximates, or fills, as well as it introduces quotatives. The high frequency of use and multifunctionality appears to make it also highly salient. For example, Italian L1 sojourners increased in their use of it over just six months in Ireland (Magliacane & Howard, 2019). In bilingual Spanish-English communities, the codeswitched insertion of like in ongoing Spanish discourse has been shown to occur (Kern, 2014), although not necessarily frequently enough to displace the Spanish equivalent marker como or como que (Kern, 2019). Excerpt 1, from a conversation exchange recording that Lucia submitted during Week 2, shows how the BarSA sojourners used “like” very frequently, laced in their Spanish discourse, and how this use is oriented to by all interlocutors as salient and funny codeswitching.

Excerpt 1: “Me hace gracia porque decís like” [It’s funny because you say like]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>P09:</th>
<th>Todo:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No puedo explicar tanto en español</td>
<td>&lt;risas&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Es muy, like, difícil para hacer bien</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Todos:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

141
Edu: No, está súper bien

?: Ehm

Edu: Me hace gracia porque decís like cuando habláis

Todos <risas>

P09: ¡Sí! Estoy tratando a no,

Porque los profesores son como,

[No de-, like

P04: [No debes usar inglés y-

Edu: Like!

(¡ya está!)

<risas> Ya lo has dicho!

Lucia: Lo más común es que decimos pero like,

Edu: pero está bien.

P09: Pero like, o como like

Lucia: No es pero, como, but,

Pero con like atrás es

Todos: <rien y hablan a la vez y no se entiende bien>

P04: Me encanta

Lucia, P04, P09: Pero like!

P09: Pero like o como like o-

Lucia: Sí

Edu: Está bien.

Es gracioso.
Excerpt 1 occurred about 18 minutes into a conversation between Lucia, two of her close U.S. peers—P04 and P09—and a local exchange partner, Edu. P09’s remark in lines 1 – 2 (No puedo explicar tanto en español, es muy, like, difícil para hacer bien / I can’t explain so much in Spanish, it’s very like difficult to do well) is a metacomment on the immediately foregoing discourse, in which she spoke at length (in Spanish) on the topic of structural racism in U.S. voting laws and discourses surrounding voter fraud. Her speech during this long term exhibited many short and long pauses that were often filled with or preceded by “like.” In line 6, Edu addresses both P09 and her peers as he explicitly comments on the use of like (Me hace gracia porque decis like cuando habláis / I find it funny because you (plural) say like when you (plural) talk), to which the three young women respond with laughter (line 7). It is interesting to note the dissonance between lines 9 – 11, where P09 and P04 co-construct their professors’ negative evaluation of any use of English while speaking Spanish using constructed dialogue (Tannen, 2007) (porque los profesores son como, no debes usar inglés / because the professors are like, you shouldn’t use English) and lines 14 – 25, where Lucia, P04, and P09 demonstrate playful awareness of their own code-mixing practices, which they orient to as laughable and Edu orients to in lines 24 – 25 as not only acceptable but also funny (Está bien. Es gracioso. / It’s fine. It’s fun/funny). This dissonance reflects a tension between ideologies of language separation that advocate the use of one language at a time and translanguaging ideologies that support fluid code-mixing and semiosis drawing on a holistic multilingual repertoire (García & Tupas, 2019). Such a tension is also echoed in comments made by Lucia in the predeparture interview when we discussed her family language practices:

Lucia: At home we address each other in English for the most part, but in larger family settings with my grandparents for example it’s all in Spanish. I hate to admit this, but we
sometimes default to Spanglish, or within the sentence we’ll mix words and things like that, which is not good for language acquisition, but that also happens occasionally.

BT: I understand that’s kind of the norm in Miami, right?

Lucia: Yes. (Predeparture Interview)

Thus, competing circulating ideologies coexist and inform language choice in Lucia’s experience of SA. She accepts occasional codemixing and translanguaging during the stay abroad as natural and possibly aligns with Edu in thinking it is “gracioso” [funny/fun] in communication among sojourners. She also admits to codeswitching as a regular practice at home, while at the same time being aware of language professors’ negative evaluation of any use of English while speaking Spanish (lines 14 – 25 in Excerpt 6.1). All along, she aligns to the learned prejudice against Spanglish as less “proper” than Spanish-only communication and thus a regrettable practice that she hates to admit to. A recent study by Cox, LaBoda, and Mendes (2019) strongly suggests that self-reports of codeswitching are a likely faithful reflection of actual frequent codeswitching, and therefore Lucia can be assumed to be a frequent codeswitcher. The extant literature also amply supports the conclusion that in highly proficiency Spanish-English bilinguals like Lucia (and her peers) the switches are more often intrasentential, that is, respecting constituent boundaries, just as is the case with the like insertions in Excerpt 6.1. Finally, Lucia seems to be reproducing ambivalent attitudes towards Spanglish, or codeswitching/translanguaging, captured in previous accounts of competing goals in discourses in the classroom and outside to endorse what Lucia called “proper” Spanish for professional success but also valuing home linguistic practices, including codeswitching and translanguaging (Showstack, 2015).
6.4 Establishing a Daily Routine: From *Visitando* to “*Viviendo*” Barcelona

Looking back on her interactions with her U.S. colleagues over the course of her sojourn, Lucia reflected that, despite the challenges of using Spanish to communicate, “I still think I was able to make friends with everyone and have good relationships.” She added that connecting with her U.S. peers in this way had been “fun to do” and a “different way of getting to know people.” In this, clearly, her experience was very different from Ben.

Once classes began after the first weekend, Lucia established a routine. On a typical class day, after waking up and having breakfast, she would meet one or two of her friends, and they would walk together to the university. After her classes, she would have lunch with her peers at the UPF dining hall, where she and her peers enjoyed observing but did not typically interact with local students, especially after the first two weeks, when few local students remained on campus. In the afternoon, she would run errands on the way back to the student dormitory, where she would then spend time in her room alone either resting, doing homework, watching Spanish television, or chatting in Spanish with her family back home until it was time for the conversation exchanges. After the exchanges, she and a small group of friends would take turns preparing meals for one another. Before going to sleep, she would do homework, plan what to visit during her free time, and journal in Spanish about what she had seen and done. She spent Tuesday afternoons and weekends in Barcelona exploring different neighborhoods with her close friends in the cohort, usually with Caroline, and often including other program colleagues as well. On rare occasions, she and her friends would go out at night to a pub or dance club located near the residence.

In a written reflection submitted at the end of her second week, Lucia reckoned how establishing a routine made her feel less like a visitor and more like a resident in Barcelona:
Esta semana se ha sentido como una semana muy normal. Normal relativo a que estoy viviendo afuera de los Estados Unidos, en un lugar donde nunca he estado antes. Pero, esta semana he creado una rutina y me siento que estoy “viviendo” y no solo visitando la ciudad de Barcelona. Aunque me encanta visitar los barrios en la Ciutat Vella, y comer tapas con mis amigas por las noches, también le encuentro gusto en ir a las clases, hacer compras en el supermercado y completar las actividades de la vida diaria.” (Week 2 Diary)

[This week has felt like a very normal week. Normal relative to the fact that I’m living outside the United States in a place where I have never been before. But this week I created a routine and I feel like I am “living” and not only visiting the city of Barcelona. Although I love visiting the neighborhoods of the Ciutat Vella [Old City district], and eat tapas with my girlfriends at night, I also find pleasure in going to classes, going shopping at the supermarket, and completing the activities of daily life.]

6.5 Managing Study Abroad Investments: ‘Enjoying My Time Without Sacrificing My Studies’

Students’ daily routines and the activities that they carried out while abroad were structured around the intensive weekly program schedule. The U.S. peer group attended university classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays lasting from the mornings into the afternoon. On Monday and Wednesday evenings, they also participated in mandatory hour-long conversation exchange sessions. On Tuesday mornings, students attended guided tours of Barcelona, which lasted into the afternoon, and the Thursday regional excursions lasted all day. Thus, students’ time to do homework, carry out routine tasks, and engage in leisure activities, was largely concentrated on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, Mondays and Wednesdays between
classes and the conversation exchanges, and the weekends. In written diaries, post-sojourn interviews, and informal conversations taking place while we were abroad, many students, including Lucia, expressed a tension between fulfilling the expectations of the program while also achieving their own personal objectives for their SA experience. In her Week 2 weekly reflection, Lucia discusses her experience of this tension:

Algo que he encontrado un poco dificil es ajustarme a todo el trabajo que tengo para mis clases mientras disfrutando del ambiente y la ciudad. Pienso que soy una persona que se dedica mucho a sus estudios. Como tantos estudiantes de Georgetown, siempre deseo sacar buenas notas y quiero aprender lo más posible. Esto sigue siendo lo mismo para mí en este programa, pero a veces tengo que trabajar más para encontrar un balance apropiado. No es bueno ni ideal estar el día entero encerrada en mi cuarto estudiando para un examen o completando un trabajo. Sé que debo estar disfrutando de mi tiempo en este nuevo lugar pero a la misma vez no quiero sacrificar mis estudios. (Week 2 Diary)

In the foregoing excerpt, it becomes clear that this tension relates directly to Lucia’s identity as a good GU student, who dedicates herself a lot to her studies. Like so many students at Georgetown, I always want to get good grades and want to learn as much as possible. This remains the same for me in this program, but sometimes I have to work more to find an appropriate balance. It’s neither good nor ideal to be shut in my room all day studying for an exam or finishing an assignment. I know that I should be enjoying my time in this new place but at the same time I do not want to sacrifice my studies.]

In the foregoing excerpt, it becomes clear that this tension relates directly to Lucia’s identity as a good GU student, who dedicates herself to her studies, achieves high marks, and
exhibits observable learning outcomes. By studying abroad, Lucia’s good student identity is threatened as she is projected into the role of a sojourner, a subject position created by discourses of SA such as “the immersion discourse,” which as Doerr (2015) has noted subordinates classroom learning abroad to out-of-class learning through immersing oneself in mundane daily life and interacting with locals in the host society. Like students, sojourners can be constructed as more or less ideal based on the extent to which their activities abroad align with the hierarchies of SA experiences established by the immersion discourse. The context of this ideological struggle between two competing identities lends perspective into Lucia’s dilemma: “Sé que debo estar disfrutando de mi tiempo en este nuevo lugar pero a la misma vez no quiero sacrificar mis estudios” [I should be enjoying my time in this new place, but at the same time I do not want to sacrifice my studies].

In her Week 2 written reflection, Lucia goes on to explain how she transcends this dilemma by negotiating her beliefs and by taking strategic action. First, she intentionally reframes for herself (i.e., trying to adopt a new way of thinking, in her words) her in- and out-of-class experiences as complementary to one another, rather than as a zero-sum game:

Estoy intentando de adoptar un nuevo pensamiento. Si la validez del programa solo estaria en las clases, entonces me hubiera quedado en el campus de Georgetown y estudiado en la biblioteca durante el verano entero. Pero, parte del aprendizaje es en las experiencias que tenemos a fuera de las clases, en las visitas y en nuestro tiempo propio. La tarde que paso en un museo también me ayudará en mis estudios y en mi experiencia.

(Week 2 Diary)

[I’m trying to adopt a new way of thinking. If the validity of the program was only in the classes, then I would have stayed on the Georgetown campus and studied in the library]
for the whole summer. But, part of the learning is in the experiences that we have outside
of the classes, on the visits and on our own time. The afternoon that I spend in a museum
will also help me in my studies and in my experience.]

Then, she adopted learning strategies to maximize her efficiency, such as taking notes on texts as
she reads, looking up new vocabulary in the dictionary, grouping new information into sections
and related themes, reviewing information with classmates and taking notes on their discussions,
or illustrating concepts with examples from personal experience.

The remainder of Lucia’s weekly written reflections as well as her post-sojourn interview
comments revealed that her navigating the delicate balance between fulfilling the program’s
expectations and her own was a constant struggle that she sometimes felt that she was losing, as
in the final week when she “barely slept” and became ill after pulling back-to-back all-nighters
working on final projects. Nevertheless, in her post-sojourn interview comments, she said that
she was pleased with her academic results at the end of the program, and her activities while
abroad indicated that she also managed to see more of Spain than many of her colleagues. For
example, she and Caroline were the only students to take two weekend trips to other regions of
Spain.

6.6 The Conversation Exchanges: From Lack of Reciprocity to Mutual Satisfaction

When I spoke to Lucia before going abroad, she spoke excitedly about the conversation
exchanges as an opportunity to form new friendships. In the early weeks of the program,
however, the exchanges fell short of her expectations for reasons that echo Ben’s complaints (see
Section 5.4) about forced, unnatural interactions and a lack of reciprocity. In her Week 3
reflection, she wrote regarding the exchanges during the first two weeks, “Las conversaciones no
eran muy naturales. [...] No era necesariamente muy entretenido y era mayormente una serie de
The conversations were not very natural. [...] It wasn’t necessarily much fun and was mostly a series of general questions instead of a conversation. In the post-sojourn interview, she elaborated that part of the initial awkwardness stemmed from uncertainty regarding how to select a partner when no one knew one another, as well as the questions of where to go, what to do, and what to talk about. She recalled thinking, “[The conversation partners] totally feel like our babysitters, […] especially since like we were such newbies there was a lot of like where do I go for this, how does this work, and they were doing a lot of explaining.”

During Week 3, however, all of this changed for Lucia. In her weekly reflection, she wrote, “Esta semana fue diferente. […] Por fin, tuvimos más conversaciones ‘reales’ y encontramos intereses que tenemos en común.” [This week was different. […] Finally, we had ‘real’ conversations and found interests that we have in common.] She went on to describe the mutually satisfying interactions that she had with her two exchange partners that week, Patricia and especially Miriam, with whom she bonded over overlapping academic interests, political ideas, tastes in pop culture, and even shared existential crises regarding what to do after graduation. She continued:

Lo mejor fue hoy por la tarde cuando me encontré con Miriam en la cafetería de la UPF. Ella fue la quien me reconoció y me introdujo a sus otras amigas. Fue muy reconfortante en ese momento darme cuenta que he empezado a formar amistades aquí afuera de los estudiantes de Georgetown. Suena como un ejemplo y momento muy simple pero se siento muy significativo para mí. (Week 3 Diary)

[The best part was this afternoon when I ran into Miriam in the UPF cafeteria. She was the one who recognized me and introduced me to her other friends. It was reassuring in
that moment to realize that I had begun to form friendships here apart from the
Georgetown students. It sounds like a very simple example and moment, but it felt very
meaningful for me.]

After this point, she said in the post-sojourn interview, she determined that if she was
going to cultivate lasting friendships with the exchange partners, she would have to take
initiative. She became more deliberate about who she chose as her partners and collected their
phone numbers and added them on social media so that she and her friends could meet them
outside the scheduled exchange sessions. As the students became more familiar with the city, the
perceived lack of reciprocity dissipated, according to Lucia. Occasionally, she and her U.S.
colleagues were the ones who told the local exchange partners about events in the city such as
street parties and festivals.

Lucia also reported other ways in which reciprocity was achieved. For instance, she
found that, just as she and her peers learned about the local culture from the exchange partners,
the local students were equally curious about U.S. culture. She said that one of her fondest
memories from her sojourn was one Saturday when she and a group of her friends invited the
exchange partners to brunch at an American style restaurant. Apart from cultural representatives,
the exchange partners also looked to the U.S. students as important sources of linguistic
knowledge for English, even though the exchanges took place only in Spanish:

[The exchange partners] very much liked that we spoke English […] They would ask us
questions like, oh, how do you pronounce this in English? And like you can still help
them out on that, just like our general knowledge of English phrases and things like that,
you can explain in Spanish. (Post-Sojourn Interview)
Lucia’s account of using English in this manner resonates with the findings of prior studies of Anglophone sojourners, which show that these learners may exploit the social capital afforded by being a native speaker of English in order to enhance their desirability as conversation partners in the host context (Dewey et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2015).

In the second half of the program, a friendship began to form between Lucia and Miriam. The two were the same age and shared many of the same interests, opinions, and tastes. Miriam had migrated with her family from Ecuador as a small child, and Lucia explicitly attributed their strong bond in part to their shared Latin American immigrant roots. It is interesting to appreciate parallels between Lucia and Miriam in their collective immigration experiences and spaces, which cemented their friendship. The reasons for migration for Ecuadorians are mostly macro-economic and led by urban lower-middle class women (Castellani & Martín-Díaz, 2019) and thus very different from the political reasons for the exodus of the first Cuban exiles in the 1960s, migration waves from both countries have originated since the 1950s and continue to this date. However, in both Cuba and Ecuador migration is a central experience that has touched many families. Ecuadorians are the major Latin America sub-group in Barcelona, accounting for 19% of the Latin American population in the metropolitan area in 2013 (Galeano and Bayona-i-Carrasco, 2018); Cubans are the major Latin American sub-group in Miami, accounting for 54% of all Hispanics in the city (Carter & Lynch, 2015). In the second conversation recordings, I observed Lucia and Miriam discussing their troubled relationships to their families’ ancestral homelands and their ambivalent feelings about returning as economically privileged global citizens to the poverty-stricken and politically troubled societies that their families had left behind. The two friends seemed to converge on shared discourses of migration that, in their cases, may have been part of the immigration imaginary rather than lived by their families.
Historically, different Cuban migration waves have been motivated differently by political exile versus economic migration, and Lucia’s family experience of leaving Cuba is that of émigrés who self-identified as political “exiles” and thus very different from that of waves after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s of “new Cubans” searching for better economic opportunities (Eckstein & Berg, 2009/2015), in Miami as well as Spain—including Barcelona (Simoni, 2019)—and in Canada and Europe (Krull & Stubbs, 2018). Miriam, too, may have come from a relatively privileged background within the Ecuadorian community in Barcelona. For example, she had also previously studied abroad in London. Be that as it may, the two young women bonded over their shared family migration narratives as well as their cosmopolitan orientations, their love of traveling, and eagerness to meet people from new places.

6.7 Struggles of a Hyphenated Identity

Apart from the conversation exchange partners, Lucia did not interact regularly with any other Barcelona residents. Her interactions with local people outside the language exchanges were largely limited to service encounters and taxi drivers. She recalled these interactions as positive overall and the service personnel as “helpful in, like, getting me what I needed.” Sometimes she was alone, but often she was with her U.S. peers. Generally speaking, she recalled being treated better when she was on her own than when she was “with a huge group of very clearly obviously American students.” When she was on her own, she said that she was able to blend in and never felt out of place. She could recall two or three times when someone who was not from Barcelona would approach her on the street, thinking she was from there, which made her feel “really honored.” She reported that her interactions with the locals, limited as they were to public encounters, were “one hundred percent in Spanish.” Occasionally she would use her English to translate for an American tourist seen in trouble on the street. She also recalled
one brief exchange in Portuguese with another study abroad student from Portugal at a pub. Thus, it seems just as Lucia was able to negotiate the use of Spanish with some English, she was seamlessly able to use her other multilingual resources, although always sparsely.

It seems that for Lucia to blend in as much as possible was very important, and this was motivated by a fear of being negatively stereotyped as “the really annoying American.” She recalled that when she and her family had traveled in Europe the previous year, they had spoken in Spanish, because

people were, like, significantly more receptive than if we were speaking English, like if we were to be speaking in English, like automatically yes we’re Americans, but if we were to be speaking in Spanish, people were like oh like where are you from in Latin America, you know what I’m saying, and they were a lot more willing and just like receptive than like, “Pull the brakes, it’s the Americans,” you know? (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Now that she was in Barcelona for the SA program, too, she spotted the same stereotype of the really annoying American tourist at work in public spaces: “I would get really annoyed when I would see like these groups of tourists come in and not even try to speak in Spanish and would just like, take over in English.” Thus, for Lucia this negative American identity needed careful avoidance negotiation, and particularly when she could be seen as just a part of the SA group. While she believed the U.S. peer group probably stood out because of their style of dress, she said:

[When] we were sitting in a restaurant and not obnoxiously speaking in English all the time with like no regard for, like cultural, like you know, like cues and things like that, I think that like, that was really helpful. (Post-Sojourn Interview)
Thus, she felt grateful for the language pledge whenever she was out and about with her peers.

The trope of the ugly, obnoxious, or annoying American that Lucia reproduces was first captured in popular literature, in a novel by the title *The Ugly American* written by Eugene Burdick and William Lederer and published in 1958. It fictionalized the diplomatic defeat of the USA to the Soviet Union at the height of the cold war because of American diplomats who were utterly unadaptable to the new “other,” insensitive to the local language, culture, and customs. The novel was hugely successful and prompted John F. Kennedy to create the Peace Corps in 1961. Sociologists Hayes and Carlson (2018) also explore the trope, which they found to be pervasive in the narratives of North American lifestyle migrants to Ecuador, mostly retirees who can focus on leisure and strive to cultivate a transnationalism of virtuous adaptation to the local host, a felt cosmopolitanism accompanied by “anxiety about” and “moral condemnation” of stereotypical North Americans abroad who are loud, obnoxious, and lack respect for and knowledge of different cultures” (p. 195). These researchers suggest that the ugly American or obnoxious gringo anxiety is typical of privileged transnationals and leads to specific strategies of adaptation, whereby learning the language is viewed as a key strategy, to blend in and distance themselves from “‘uncultured’ compatriots who have not traveled or do not demonstrate interest in other cultures” (p. 196) and are not deserving transnationals.

In the SA literature, the issue has been discussed in terms of national identity and ethnocentrism. As Wilkinson (1998a) first noted, national identity tends to become salient in SA (see also Kinginger, 2008; Plews, 2015). The stereotype of the obnoxious American as a point of struggle for sojourner identity negotiation during SA has been well documented in previous SA literature by Block (2007a) and Kinginger (2008), among others. However, the negotiation of
locals’ stereotypes about Americans was highly ambivalent in Lucia’s SA experience, and her struggle was complicated by her American hyphenated identity.

While proud that she could blend in by making her Cuban identity salient to locals when on her own, and despite her investment in avoiding a negative American national identity when hanging out with her SA peers, there were occasions when Lucia wanted to reclaim an American identity as positive. She noted that locals seemed to imagine Americans as having blonde hair and blue eyes. She said, “I feel like because of that, like, the American stereotype, like, wasn’t put onto me by like a waiter, or like the person on the street.” Yet, passing for a local, or at least concealing her American background, could be occasionally felt not as a blessing but as an unwelcome obliteration of her identity: “People like don’t believe that you’re American, so you have to like explain like you’re like I am American, but not all Americans are like this.” On these occasions, Lucia experienced the pain of identity denial, which Wang, Minervino, and Cheryan (2013) describe as a frequent experience among ethnic minorities when others question their nationality, “a discrepancy between how much they associate themselves with their national identity and how much they believe they are seen by others as possessing that identity” (p. 600).

Although in the social psychological research on identity denial members of minoritized and racialized groups are treated as “perpetual foreigners” in their own country, in the context of study abroad the identity denial was inflicted to Lucia by locals and thus out-group because she did not conform to locals’ image of what Americans are like. In other words, her hyphenated identity required difficult maneuvering in the otherwise superdiverse SA context of Barcelona because she was not attributed an American national identity, whether a negative one, which she avoided, or a neutral or positive one, which she sometimes reclaimed by negotiating locals’ stereotypes. As a hyphenated American, however, as much at home in the United States as
abroad, for example in Barcelona, the implicit identification of American with White is likely the culprit (Devos & Mohamed, 2014). Yet Lucia seemed to view the experience of having to explain herself in terms of national identity (“I am American, but not all Americans are like this”) as something that arose only in the Barcelona context for her. It may be that in her native Miami “being both” Cuban and American is not something in need of explanation, and the SA experience may have confronted her with mild anxieties related to her hybrid identity for the first time as many other immigrants experience in our era of transnationalism (Verkuyten, Wiley, Deaux, & Fleischmann, 2019).

Interestingly, attributions of Americanness or not were, in Lucia’s mind, also entangled with attributions about and expectations for her Spanish proficiency. She believed that whenever she was in groups of “people who were all obviously, clearly American,” locals would expect that her Spanish “wouldn’t be that good.” However, when these locals heard her speak (“maybe because my like accent in comparison to like maybe some of the other people’s accents on the program was like different”), they would deny her a U.S. identity: “They’d be like oh, like you’re not American, and I was like well, but I-, I was like yes I am! I was born in America, but like this is why my Spanish like sounds not like what you think all American Spanish sounds like, you know?”

While the American side of Lucia’s hyphenated identity seems to have caused conflict that required the many negotiations that she recounted in the post-sojourn interview, her Cuban or Latin American side apparently did not pose any particular challenges to her. She learned from her exchange partner Miriam that, admittedly, “Spaniards also don’t have like a necessarily positive outlook on Latin Americans either.” However, she told me she never experienced negative stereotyping as a Latin American. On the contrary, she recalled getting a positive
reception from cab drivers, who “loved talking to me because I would like tell them where my family was from and they were like so into it, so they would like always just like ask me, cause like I would like speak to them and they were like oh, you like must be like from a Spanish-speaking like place, so that always was like the conversation.”

6.8 Emergence of a Place-Related Identity

Lucia’s family had fled Cuba in the 1960s following Castro’s rise to power. They were strongly opposed to the current regime and had conflicted emotions regarding their ancestral homeland. While none of Lucia’s living family members identified as Spanish, they felt connected to Spain as their other ancestral homeland, and one to which they held a less-troubled relationship than to Cuba. It seems her family’s dual ancestry affiliation with Cuba and Spain, and Lucia’s familiar knowledge—even if vicarious up until the BarSA sojourn—of places in both far-away heritage countries, made a range of geographies and places particularly salient in Lucia’s SA experience. In addition, Lucia’s name, as it turned out, acquired a special significance to her vis-à-vis places in Spain. And she was also a more avid traveler during her sojourn than all other BarSA peers, which gave her an opportunity to see not one or two but three main cities: Barcelona, Madrid, and Sevilla.

In the predeparture interview, when I asked Lucia about her family history, she said that, going back beyond her Cuban roots, her family ultimately traced their ancestry back to “the northern regions of Spain,” although they had no current connection with anyone living there. She also disclosed that she had learned that she had Catalan ancestry while considering the BarSA Program. Lucia’s last name was conspicuously Catalan and would have been noticed by anyone familiar with the region. When she went to inquire about the BarSA Program, the program director pointed this out to her, to Lucia’s surprise. I observed one occasion during the
sojourn when her Catalan heritage was made relevant. In the second conversation recording which was submitted during Week 4 of the program, Miriam asked Lucia who in her family was Catalan, having noticed her last name when the two became Facebook friends. Prior to going abroad, Lucia had told me that she had “no info about what family members lived in that region [the unidentified northern region of her ancestry].” However, when I analyzed her conversation exchange with Miriam on Week 4, her remarks suggested that she had since investigated her family history. She responded to Miriam by saying that her paternal grandfather’s family had migrated to Cuba from Catalonia, “pero hace muchos muchos años atrás, […] like siglo diecinueve” [but many years ago, […] like in the nineteenth century]. She went on to explain that her paternal grandfather and his parents were born in Havana and that she did not have any present family in Catalonia. She also said that her mother’s side of the family came from Asturias, where her great-grandfather was born, and where she had distant cousins whom she had never met and who had last names that were “mucho más común que [el mío]” [much more common than [mine]]. (Asturias is another northern region of Spain, distinct from Catalonia.)

Lucia said, “all my great-grandparents are from Spain, so […] my grandparents really, like, think Spain’s, like, the greatest.” Her grandmother was an avid follower of the royal family and subscribed to ¡Hola!, a weekly Spanish-language gossip magazine based in Madrid and a leading title in Spain of la prensa del corazón (the heart’s press) or la prensa rosa (the pink press). This genre was initially associated with the rightist and nationalist ideologies of Franco (1939–1975) and has witnessed continued huge success in Spain since the 1940s (Widlak & Guillaumet Llovras, 2017). In Spain, ¡Hola! is found as light reading in the waiting rooms of almost every doctor’s office and every hairdresser’s salon. According to Wikipedia, it is nowadays published in 15 other countries, with a local edition also in the USA. A traditionalist
gossip magazine, its fond coverage of royalty celebrities in Europe is a particular staple. Lucia described herself as “a huge fan of the Spanish royal family” and recalled waking up at 3:00 am to watch the royal wedding of the current king and queen of Spain with her grandmother when she was seven years old. In the first group exchange conversation recording submitted during Week 2 of the program, Lucia’s U.S. peers can be heard teasing her about her fondness for the royal family and for being “como una persona de Disney” (like a Disney person/character). Lucia responds by saying that she realizes that royal families are not as beloved in Europe and that she primarily enjoys the gossip aspect. The local exchange partner, Edu, agrees with this perspective, saying that he believes that the royal family is corrupt and that being ruled by someone who inherited their power is fundamentally undemocratic but, “luego te puede gustar” [at the same time you can enjoy it (rough translation)].

While Lucia was the first in her family to visit Barcelona, her parents and grandparents had vacationed in Spain and had visited Madrid. In the predeparture interview, Lucia enthusiastically told me that she was “definitely going to Madrid.” Later, in the post-sojourn interview, she explained that she had been eager to compare Barcelona and Madrid, because “everyone always talks about how they’re so different.” In the predeparture interview, Lucia also said that she hoped to visit Portugal as well as Madrid. While abroad, she considered spending her long weekend in Lisbon but decided to go to Sevilla instead, as more of her colleagues wanted to go there and she did not want to travel alone. Over the weekend between Weeks 2 and 3 of the program, Lucia traveled to Madrid with Caroline. On the long weekend, she traveled to Sevilla with a group of four female peers—Caroline, P04, P14, and P01.

I asked Lucia to describe these trips in the post-sojourn interview. In Madrid, she said, she and Caroline stayed near the city center and meticulously mapped out walking routes to all
the important landmarks so that they could see as many different neighborhoods as possible. They visited the *El Prado* and *Reina Sofia* art museums, went shopping along the *Calle Serrano*, and toured the Royal Palace and the *Almudena* Cathedral where the present king and queen of Spain had gotten married in 2004. In Sevilla, she and her four friends rented a tourist apartment and again explored the city primarily on foot, albeit at a slower pace. They saw the *Alcázar* palace and the cathedral and visited a flamenco bar. When I asked Lucia about the effect of these trips on her, she described learning about diverse regional identities within Spain. She said that “Sevilla was, like, what, like, Americans, like, the stereotypes of Spaniards, like, <snaps> flamenco dancers <snaps> and really sassy people and, like, […] that southern Spain image.” She was surprised to find that, while this reflected a commercialized and commodified identity, it was also “a very real identity at the same time.” She found that her parents’ and grandparents’ image of Spain was “very much like Madrid and not Barcelona.” What Lucia astutely captured in locating her family’s stereotypes of Spain is what some call the Spanish imaginary focusing on the emotive effect of such images (Watson & Waterton, 2018) and others, more critically focusing on the market motivation, call the *españolada* (Box Varela, 2015; Storm, 2013), an exaggerated national image of an exoticized Spain through picturesque elements mostly borrowed from Andalusia (folklore, bullfighting, flamenco, and Islamic heritage places such as Seville, Granada, and Cordoba) that dates from the Romantic travelers in the 19th century but found its boom in an international tourism campaign launched by Franco in 1957 under the slogan “Spain is different,” which then made Madrid an extension of it all (Box Varela, 2015). These stereotypes met with such commercial success that international visitors to Spain rose from four million in 1959 to 34 million in 1973 (Storm, 2013). Lucia said that before going abroad, she was “very aware” that Catalonia and Barcelona were “very unique” in comparison to
other parts of Spain. Apart from having heard about Catalonia through the news media and other sources of informal contact, she had learned about the Catalan language and culture in a college Spanish course, as well as previously from a high school Spanish instructor who was from Barcelona. However, traveling to Madrid and Sevilla and having the opportunity to “physically see the differences” between Catalonia and Spain reinforced her perception that “the identity of Barcelona and the region were like so different from other regions of Spain.” She said that Madrid and Sevilla had much more in common with one another than either city did with Barcelona. For instance, in Madrid and Sevilla she observed that “there were a lot more people flying the Spanish flag and like small things like that” and that there seemed to be “more, like, Spanish pride versus regional pride.”

Not only cultural differences, but also linguistic differences were noticeable to Lucia throughout her travels. She noted that while both Spanish and Catalan were ubiquitous in Barcelona, she did not encounter Catalan anywhere in Madrid or Sevilla. She also perceived regional differences both in how people spoke Spanish and also in how they interacted with her and her program colleagues. She described people in Sevilla as being “so warm” compared to people in Barcelona. She said that people in Sevilla seemed more interested in them. For instance, “The waiters were like oh is this your first time here? like what have you seen and done? like what is your home in America?” She spoke of an interview that she and Caroline carried out at the cathedral in Sevilla as part of their linguistic landscapes project for the Bilingualism course. She recalled:

And like this one security guard like spent like an extra twenty minutes talking to us, like showing us pictures of his daughter, like we didn’t even like ask for it, but like that would have never not happened at the cathedral in Barcelona, like it didn’t happen. (BT: Yeah)
And just like they were a little bit more like, we don’t have time, but like we’re still gonna answer your questions and like help with your project but like, moving on. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

While she acknowledged that the different treatment that she received could have been due to her company or the relatively smaller size of Sevilla compared with Barcelona, she believed that it reflected regional differences.

When she returned to Barcelona from her trips to other parts of Spain, she said, she became aware of her evolving personal relationship to the city of Barcelona. She recalled “a weird like coming-back-home feel” when she returned to Barcelona, which, she said, “just became really like normalized […] cause we like had everyday experiences there.” She went on to say, “not that Barcelona ever, like, lost its appeal whatsoever, but it just felt like more of a routine place, which is like crazy to say, because people like spend years wanting to go to Barcelona versus Madrid and Spain.” Having visited both cities, Lucia said that she classified herself as “more of a Madrid kind of person than Barcelona.” When I asked what she meant by this, she said that

“Madrid was more like your, like, classic Spain, like less, it wasn’t as, it’s like artsy, […] but like in the very traditional art way. Like, Barcelona’s a lot more, like, kind of funky and like, trendy and like, \langle laughing\rangle people would not describe me as that\rangle.” (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Lucia said that “traditional” and “classic” resonated with her personality. She also attributed her affinity to Madrid to her family’s ties to Spain: “Not that my family has strong allegiances in this whole, like, Cataluña, like, Spain thing but, like, because they, like, their ancestry comes from regions that are not Cataluña, although I have no idea how my last name occurred, but, like, um
they obviously are on the side of like one, like, unified Spain.” She said that she also felt “slightly [...] more sympathy for [...] the Spanish government’s side in terms of like national unity.” Lucia seems to have developed an acute sense of geography and space, fueled in part by the images and knowledge of Spain circulating in her family, which arguably are nourished from commonplace Spanish imaginary (Watson & Waterton, 2018) but also from a spatial imaginary tied to her Cuban-Americanness. It is perhaps no coincidence that Spain, Cuba, and the United States share a history of disputed colonialism since the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, which ironically turned into transnationalism after the waves of émigrés since the 1959 Cuban Revolution of Fidel Castro. And the United States, and particularly Miami, as well as Spain have been main recipients of Cuban immigrants, including the first wave in the 1960s as political exiles and the more recent waves since the 1990s and 2000s as economic migrants who, only in the case of Spain, can hope to freely exit and enter Cuba (Simoni, 2019).

6.9 Lucia’s Appraisal of the Catalan Question

Given the positive affiliations with Barcelona as a place and the strong place-related sensitivities towards other geographies in Spain, it is interesting to ponder on Lucia’s positioning towards the ongoing conflict between Catalonia and Spain, which was salient for Ben (see Section 5.5) and, particularly, David (see Section 7.8).

When in the post-sojourn interview I asked Lucia for her thoughts, she said that after having the experience of being there in an academic context, especially carrying out the History final project, she was able to evaluate both sides of the conflict. She said that she understood the arguments for independence based on a distinct Catalan identity and historical narrative. But she also felt that separation could have detrimental effects: they would go from being a prosperous region of an important EU country to being a very small country of little international relevance.
due to the size of their economy and the fact that their language was not widely spoken, and also Spain would make it difficult for them to enter the EU, which would have repercussions on travel and the economy. She said that this was the biggest concern that she heard being expressed by young people. The bottom line was that Catalans would struggle more than they thought.

Lucia intimated that prior to going abroad, she held preconceived notions about what Catalans were like. Whenever Spanish regional identities would come up in conversations with her family or people familiar with Spain, she said, “I had always heard like the Catalans are always like so uppity, and they think that they’re so great and much better than everyone.” Through access to “actual like tangible facts and stuff,” she said, “I think I became more sympathetic to their historical and identity differences, now that I understand like their reasoning, not like their reason for being like all I’m so much better, but just like where they come from essentially.” When I asked her if she encountered any elitism in any interactions with Catalans, she said that she “definitely [had] with some people” but not with any of the local professors or exchange partners. When I asked her to elaborate, she said that one of the Catalan students whom she and her partner P15 surveyed for the interview component of their History class final project provided a questionnaire response that, to her mind, smacked of elitism. She recounted the incident as follows:

We did interviews with students from UPF for our history projects, and we didn’t do them in person, we had to do them online for like time constraints, um but like a lot of them, and like a lot of them, like we asked for their family background, and so a lot of them like are were very well off but also like very connected to the region, like their families had always been from there, maybe like only one or two their families had emigrated from other regions of Spain, um, and so like I remember we asked like one
question that was kind of broad, in Spanish, but it was like what do you believe the
impact in Spain on Catalan- Cataluña’s economy were it to separate from Spain, and this
one guy was like I believe the question should be, what would be the impact be on
Spain’s economy if we were to leave, you know what I’m saying? I get it, like you’re the
highest contributor to the GDP but like relax, like you’re not the end all be all of like the
country’s existence. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

6.10 Taking Stock of the Study Abroad Experience

Looking back on her experience, Lucia was “a hundred percent satisfied.” In her Week 5
diary, she reflected that the program had involved more work than she expected, she was happy
with her overall experience and was sad to be leaving. For Lucia, the best part of the program
had been expanding her circle of friends to include students in the United States and in
Barcelona:

_Nunca pensaba que iba a formar tan buenas amistades con los estudiantes del grupo y
con los de intercambio. Me encanta la idea de que cuando regreso a Georgetown tendré
nuevos amigos y que también seguiré teniendo amigos en Barcelona. Las relaciones que
forme y todas las personas con quien he interactuado a lo largo del programa ha sido mi
parte favorito._ (Week 5 Diary)

[I never thought that I was going to form such good friendships with the students in the
group and with the ones from the language exchanges. I love the idea that when I return
to Georgetown, I’ll have new friends and that I’ll also keep having friends in Barcelona.
The relationships that I formed and all of the people that I interacted with over the course
of the program has been my favorite part.]
She also felt that she experienced personal development while abroad and that the program had made her into una persona más independiente y aventurera [a more independent and adventuresome person] and had confirmed her suspicion that she was a natural born traveler: “Siempre he dicho que me gusta viajar y ahora sé definitivamente que eso es cierto” [I have always said that I like to travel and now I know without a doubt that that is true]. Furthermore, she believed that the program had made her más culturada (more cultured) in many ways:

Tengo una apreciación más alta ciudades tan diversas, cosmopolitas e históricas como Barcelona. Me encanta que también ahora puedo discutir la cuestión de independencia, hablar sobre los sistemas políticos en España y la UE, y apreciar obras de arte de distintas épocas. (Week 5 Diary)

[I have a higher appreciation for cities as diverse, cosmopolitan, and historical as Barcelona. I love that also now I can discuss the question of independence, talk about political systems in Spain and the EU, and appreciate works of art from different periods.]

Thus, despite the brevity of five weeks and the fact that Lucia was already a comfortable bilingual when she went abroad, it seems the SA experience had afforded her two types of benefits identified in previous studies for longer stays by sojourners who were less linguistically and culturally experienced than Lucia: benefits that were relational and came in the form of new or strengthened friendships (Mitchell et al., 2017), and those that were personal growth related and had to do with similar benefits uncovered by Tracy-Ventura et al. (2016) for UK sojourners after a full year abroad, who were seen to develop independence and “confidence not only in their second language but in their lives in general” (p. 122).
Four months later, Lucia maintained her positive assessment of the sojourn and its results. She mentioned that her stay in Barcelona had been a catalyst for engaging with Spanish in new ways—she kept her mobile phone and social network platform settings in Spanish and enjoyed interacting with Spanish-language media, such as Buzzfeed España, as she now had a greater appreciation for humorous articles with titles such as “20 Things that Foreigners Find Funny about Spain,” that relied on insider cultural knowledge. She reported that she remained in touch with her program peers and the exchange partners and still spoke to Miriam regularly. She also maintained social media friendships with other UPF students whom she met through the conversation exchanges and the History class interview project and enjoyed browsing their newsfeeds and reading their posts, both humorous ones as well as political ones in the aftermath of the October 1st referendum on Catalan independence. Her regional knowledge had allowed her to shine at her internship on Capitol Hill, as she shared with me in an anecdote: One day, to her surprise, representatives from the Catalan government appeared in the office of the member of Congress for whom she worked, and she had been able to converse with them about Barcelona, about the region, and to show that she was “very aware of what was going on.” She reflected, “that was really cool to like that I was able to apply that.”
Chapter 7: David’s Story

David was a 20-year-old completing his second year of college. He was majoring in International Relations and minoring in Spanish and hoped to work as a public servant. He identified himself as a gay, mixed-race, Korean-White male. Thus, like Lucia, he can be described as a member of an ethnolinguistic minority with a hyphenated identity, although in his case not affiliated to the Spanish language.

David was raised in a suburb of Washington DC and came from a transnational, mixed-race, bilingual home background. His father was a White Anglo American, and his mother was the daughter of South Korean immigrants. Sociologically in the United States, intermarriage across racial and ethnic lines is particularly frequent. Alba, Beck, and Basaran Sahin (2018) note that in 2015 17% of newlyweds were ethno-racially mixed, and the predominant pattern by far (80%) is a marriage between a majority (White) person and a minority spouse, which was the case of David’s parents and—as we will see later—of his step-father, after his parents’ divorce and mother’s remarriage. White-Asian mixed couples comprise 11% of the U.S. 2013 data reported by Alba et al. By comparison, the case of Caroline’s Anglo-American dad and Cuban American mom accounts for 42% of mixed couples in their data.

Growing up, David was exposed to both English and Korean at home. His mother was fully bilingual in English and Korean, and his grandparents, who lived with them, used mostly Korean but could speak some limited English, having learned the language naturalistically over the course of 50 years. David’s mother and grandparents used English with him almost exclusively, but they spoke Korean to one another, often with some English in the mix. Sometimes they addressed him in their mixture of Korean and English, which he sometimes understood, but not always. David learned some Korean from overhearing the language at home.
but said that he was “by no means proficient.” He said that he knew vocabulary related to food and could understand a few brief commands, such as “sit down,” “be quiet,” and “say thank you.” Studies of young adults of Korean heritage reveal a wide range of experiences negotiating their bilingualism and intergenerational maintenance or loss of the home language. Some may grow up conflicted by assimilationist English-first parental ideologies (Jeon, 2008), others seem to feel pride for being able to speak Korean while feeling minimal marginalization (Kim, 2017), and yet other youth embrace and accommodate both identities even if the dominant language is English (Kang, 2013). In David’s case, his relative lack of Korean language skills did not seem to bother him or his relatives. In fact, it was something of a family joke, as his grandmother would tease him by uttering a Korean insult with a smile and a positive intonation before erupting with laughter when he thanked her for what appeared to him as a compliment. Thus, through his home language background, he became skilled at translanguaging (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014; Li Wei, 2018), that is, he was comfortable communicating even when he possessed only partial knowledge of the language being used.

David had attended private schools where foreign languages were taught beginning in middle school and students could choose among Latin, Spanish, or French. He studied Latin for seven years beginning at age 11, eventually taking college-level AP courses and scoring a 5/5 on the AP exam. At 15, he added Spanish as an additional language. He continued to study Spanish at university. Based on his university placement exam results, David was assigned to take Advanced (i.e., 300-level) Spanish. After four semesters of 300- and 400-level Spanish courses, David fulfilled his college’s modern language proficiency requirement by taking and passing the language department’s proficiency exam and could thus be said to possess an ACTFL proficiency rating of Intermediate-high to Advanced-mid, or a CEFR rating of B1 / low B2 in
Spanish. In the predeparture interview, he divulged that he was secretly learning French through an elective “French for Spanish Speakers” university course in order to surprise his family. His parents were divorced and had recently remarried, and his stepfather was the son of French-Belgian immigrants to the United States. His new step-grandparents spoke French at home, and David wanted to surprise them at Christmastime by fluently conversing with them in their native language. At the time of our interview, he had completed Intermediate (i.e., 200-level) French and could already understand much of what his stepfamily said to one another, although he said that he feigned a lack of comprehension by pretending that it was Korean. Thus, David’s degree of multilingualism is noteworthy. His multilingual experiences growing up in English and Korean were rich, and they were further enriched by his learning of high school Latin (a language that has been proposed to uniquely enhance multilingual learning by Jessner, Török, & Pellegrini, 2018), and later Spanish and French, and by the fact that his own family multilingualism augmented after his mother’s remarriage.

7.1 Motivations: “I Want to Work on My Spanish to Ensure a Hospitality That My Grandparents Did Not Receive”

When asked in the questionnaire and predeparture interview why he was studying Spanish, David explained that his motives were complex and had evolved considerably since high school. Originally, he explained, he had wanted to learn about how Spanish evolved from Latin. He recalled being struck by how the Roman elites—and even his Latin teacher—believed that Latin was “the purest form of language” and considered speakers of other dialects to be “less-than,” but then those dialects became the modern Romance languages. At university, he continued to study Spanish largely in order to fulfill his college’s modern language proficiency requirement. However, in his university classes, which were more discussion-oriented than he
was used to from high school, he also found that he enjoyed learning to communicate and express himself in another language. Over the course of his university studies, he said, his motives became “less utilitarian and more passion-driven.” In the predeparture questionnaire, he drew a connection between studying Spanish and his passion for social justice, which was rooted in his family’s immigration story:

When my grandparents immigrated, they had to learn English in the 1960s American south with no infrastructure nor community support. Instead of being able to speak in Korean, the language in which my grandparents received university degrees, they had to use English, despite being able to communicate at a relatively low level. I believe there is a level of dignity in being able to speak in the language with which you are most comfortable. Especially as an individual who wants to go into public service, I do not want people to feel less-than because they have to communicate in a language that is not their own. I want to work on my Spanish to ensure a hospitality that my grandparents did not receive. (Predeparture Questionnaire)

David’s reasons for studying abroad were as complex as his motives for learning Spanish. Apart from being important for developing his language abilities, he considered spending time abroad to be crucial for his academic focus on international studies. Like Lucia, David received room and board at university in exchange for his work as a university RA, which required him to remain on campus for the full academic year. Thus, his options were limited to summer SA programs. He chose the BarSA program specifically because of its programmatic focus on politics and national identity. In the predeparture questionnaire, he wrote:

As this program provides an avenue through which I may learn more about separatist movements as a function of history and linguistic divides (as well as the fact that I get to
spend an entire summer in BARCELONA!!) I knew I wanted to attend. (Predeparture Questionnaire)

David elaborated in the predeparture interview that he was fascinated by separatist politics and wanted to know “when the next big war will happen, between whom, among whom, within which country, that kind of stuff.” In his university classes, he had studied inter-state conflicts extensively and was eager to learn about intra-state conflicts in Catalonia. His interest in such conflicts was piqued by his French-Belgian stepfamily, who told him about the divide between French and Dutch speakers in Belgium. His step-grandmother once told him that “if you’re drowning in the Dutch side of Belgium and you’re begging for help in French, they will literally ask you to say it in Dutch before they actually help you.” Around the time when he had this conversation, he was learning about the Catalan conflict in his Spanish class at GU, which was taught by an instructor from Catalonia. He recalled being rapt with suspense as she explained the historical roots of the situation and was all the more intrigued to learn that the tensions remained unresolved.

In order to prepare for his trip, David said, he listened to music in Spanish in order to maintain and improve his language skills. He also did some light research on the Catalan language to learn about its historical roots as well as how spoken Catalan would sound. He reflected that, while he understood the logic of the language pledge, he would have liked to learn some Catalan as well: “I wish we could learn some Catalan since we’ll be there for so long, but at the same time we’re not. Most people continue studying Spanish here, so I guess it makes sense why we don’t.”
7.2 From Tourist to Sojourner in the Cohort: “We’re All in the Same Boat Linguistically”

David arrived in Barcelona four days before the program started. He flew in alone but in the airport met up with his father and stepmother who had been traveling in the south of Spain. The three stayed in Gràcia, an affluent and centric Barcelona neighborhood, in an Airbnb owned by a local Catalan family. They spent the next four days touring the city together. Once David’s parents departed, he joined his SA peers for the first day of the program.

David was socially active within the U.S. group and was extremely well-liked by his peers, even by Ben, who estranged himself from virtually all other members of the cohort (see Ben Chapter 5.2). I observed that his closest friends in the cohort were P08 and P17, two of the Black female sojourners. He also shared a close bond with Lucia, whom he knew before going abroad, and P09, a White female student who shared his strong social justice convictions.

When I asked him about his interactions with his U.S. peers, he recalled that he got along well with everyone and that a sense of community emerged from the common enterprise of learning Spanish. Reflecting on his program peers’ language abilities, he said “It was nice to know that we were all in the same boat linguistically.” That is, everyone had the requisite level of proficiency to complete the program in Spanish, he clarified. He believed that none of his peers were “clearly superior to the rest” in terms of their Spanish language abilities but recalled that “some students,” whom he did not wish to name, put down others either for speaking “very accented Spanish” or for code-switching into English when they lacked access to a particular expression. The latter was something Lucia admitted most peers did, although her observation was free from disapproval (see Section 6.2). Based on my observations while abroad as well as conversations and interviews with other students on the program, I understood David’s veiled criticism to be a reference to Ben.
When I asked David about his own language use with his peers, he said “I tried my best to stick to Spanish as much as I could, especially since I wrote [i.e., pledged] that I would, but there were certain social cues where I would definitely need to go into English.” He elaborated that such situations included covert comments to other U.S. students about the people around them, who were assumed not to understand English or at least not “the type of language that we used.” This comment is reminiscent of Lucia’s description of the sojourner group needing or wanting at times to use a youthful communication style among themselves that they came by naturally in English and would have been difficult or inauthentic to perform in Spanish (see Section 6.3).

7.3 Daily Routine

Once classes began, David settled into a weekly routine where, on class days, he would wake up early to have breakfast and do homework, then walked alone to the university campus, arriving just early enough to sit and enjoy a coffee before class with whatever program colleagues he happened to meet in the UPF cafeteria. After his classes, he either returned to the student residence to make lunch or sought out new local restaurants and cafés to try out. He typically dedicated a large portion of his afternoon to working on homework. After the conversation exchanges, he would try to convince his program colleagues and exchange partners to join him for dinner. When this failed, he would make dinner for himself at the residence. David recalled spending large portions of his Tuesday afternoons and weekends doing homework in cafés near the residence. He recalled that there were several evenings when he remained at the residence studying while his colleagues went out dancing. When not busy with homework, he would engage in leisure activities with his program colleagues, such as going to the beach, the pool, or taking walks in the city.
A bit like Lucia, David’s daily routine in Barcelona reflects his prioritization of his academic goals. However, unlike Lucia, David did not seem to experience any significant tensions surrounding his tendency to be academically focused. This seems to be consistent with his approach to academic life at home as well. He described his daily routine back home as a coffee- and Melatonin-fueled cycle of going to class, doing homework at the library, and getting what little sleep he could. However, my observations of David suggested that he also highly prioritized social engagement while abroad and may have simply done his homework on a different schedule from his peers. For instance, while I observed that most students either slept or completed homework on the bus to the regional excursions, David tended to spend this time chatting with other students or, often, with members of the program staff.

7.4 Early Struggles: “Learning to Understand the Catalan Accent Like a Pro!”

In the post-sojourn interview, I learned that during the first couple of weeks, David faced a number of difficulties which he overcame with relative ease. One such difficulty related to coping with comprehension of Spanish as it was spoken by locals in the context of a Spanish-Catalan bilingual environment that dates back to the 15th century and where contact phenomena have risen to the level of a stable Catalanized Spanish (Blas Arroyo, 2011), although to my knowledge no research exists gauging comprehension difficulties for nonnative listeners. Part of David’s challenge was due to difficulties distinguishing between Spanish and Catalan. Looking back on the sojourn, he recalled the use of both Spanish and Catalan in his environment as somewhat disorienting, given his limited familiarity with Peninsular varieties of Spanish and his near-complete lack of prior exposure to Catalan. He recalled that when he would encounter spoken Catalan at the time, “I was confused because I was like, this sounds close enough to Spanish, where I thought I knew what they were talking about, but I actually had no clue what
they were saying.” In retrospect, he reflected, “I definitely didn’t know enough Catalan to
determine whether or not someone was actually speaking it or if someone just spoke quickly or
even with a Catalan accent in Spanish.” He added, “I can guarantee you, there were a couple of
times when it was just a very <laughing>thick Spanish accent.>”

The struggle to understand unfamiliar accents in Spanish was acutely felt by David in the
classes led by host institution faculty. While the Bilingualism course was taught by GU-based
instructors whose Spanish speaking and teaching styles he was already familiar with, the History
and Art courses were taught by local professors, whose Spanish he initially struggled to
understand. According to David, the History professor spoke quickly, and the Art professor
spoke with a “thick” Catalan accent, making it difficult to follow along. These struggles were
compounded by the fact that David felt that his content knowledge related to History and Art was
severely limited.

David resolved this challenge by persevering through his initial discomfort and putting
aside concerns about his lack of background knowledge, instead focusing his efforts on
understanding what was being said. Part of this approach involved reframing his troubles
understanding his Art professor. Rather than attributing his difficulties only to the Art professor’s
accent, he also took responsibility for his role in constructing the communication breakdown. He
recalled chiding himself at the end of Week 1 for his preoccupations:

David: What I started to realize was that I- should be better at understanding accents at
this point, like it’s been a long enough time that I need to stop like complaining internally
about the fact that I don’t <laughing>understand him> and start actually like trying to
figure this out, um, especially as someone who comes from a very accented background,
like I- (.) I’m able to understand a very thick Korean accent where no one’s had a formal 
education in English, like, I should be able to understand a Catalanian-, er Catalan 
BT: Yeah 
David: accent (.) in (.) Spanish, like that’s-, THAT should not be the concern for me. 

(Post-Sojourn Interview) 

David’s recount of the accentedness and intelligibility of the Spanish he heard from Catalan 
bilinguals is noteworthy. For one, David seemed to embrace what Subtirelu (2014) has called a 
lingua franca ideology, or a framing of communication difficulties as a fifty-fifty two-way 
street, where the blame cannot be placed on just one interlocutor and must instead be 
understood as shared. However, in David’s case this was a lingua franca reverse ideology, 
whereby an L2 learner seeks to gain control over difficulties with comprehension not by 
refusing to place all the blame on his or her own nonnativeness, as was the case for the 
participants in Subtirelu’s study, but by exhorting himself not to blame it entirely on the (native 
speaker) interlocutor. In doing so, David was clearly drawing on his identity as a multilingual 
who should have learned to be flexible and cope with language diversity well. This tolerant 
attitude towards linguistic variation and linguistic difference may be a virtue that multilinguals 
achieve over time and experience, as van Compernolle (2016) has suggested. David’s approach 
seemed to pay off. He said that in a few short days, his comprehension improved drastically. 
Moreover, by the end of the sojourn, he said, “I was definitely <laughing>understanding the 
Catalan accent like a pro!”

7.5 Learning to Negotiate “the Thing Where They Responded in English”

Another difficulty that David experienced early in the sojourn was the struggle to 
position himself as a legitimate speaker of Spanish in service encounters with locals who were
prepared to carry out the transaction at hand in English. This struggle has been well documented in the SA literature (e.g., Wilkinson, 1998b). He recalled that these troubles began in the airport immediately upon arrival in Barcelona, when weary and jetlagged, he searched the arrivals lobby for a place to sip coffee as he waited for his parents’ flight to arrive:

David: I found a place that had coffee in it and I begged in whatever language that I could muster at that point, because at that point, I think I lost like language ability in the first place, because I was so tired, and I was like please, some form of caffeine is required in my body right now.

BT: I know the feeling.

David: And I tried it in Spanish and then that person at the register like glared at me and then said in like much prettier English than I possess, <stylized voice>you would like a coffee, sir,> and I’m like okay, y- yes, <laughing>humor me, please, I’ve been having a pretty rough eight hours.> Cause it was also a turbulent flight. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Later that same day, following a four-hour bike tour of the historic city center, David and his parents went for drinks at a bar near the beach. David ordered in Spanish, but again, the server’s response came in English, which he attributed to his “broken Spanish”:

David: at that point it was six pm, we ended on the beach, and the three of us just kind of wound out at a restaurant, we got a couple drinks because I could finally do that, um,

BT: In Spanish?

David: I tried in Spanish and then they did the thing where they responded in English, because it was a very touristy destination, they knew that we knew Span-, er, we knew English if we spoke in such broken Spanish with them. (Post-Sojourn Interview)
David lamented in our interview that nearly all of his interactions with locals during the first few weeks followed this pattern where he would initiate the conversation in Spanish and his interlocutor would respond in English:

David: I’d be halfway through my sentence and they would just be like, Yeah, sure, we can seat you over there.

BT: At some point you just got-

David: Or, oh, you wanted a coffee? An American version or a European version?

BT: Aww!

David: Like <defeated tone>American version please</defeated tone> <laughs>

BT: <chuckles>

David: Tail between my legs, like dejected look on my face, I like the wimpy, watered-down version of espresso. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

David viewed his difficulties positioning himself as a legitimate Spanish speaker as a general struggle that affected the entire cohort: “I really do feel like the [best measure] of how well people have developed their Spanish over in study abroad has been whether or not they achieved the part where people stopped responding to them in English.” When I asked him whether or not he ever accomplished this, he told me the story of the turning point when locals began responding to him in Spanish. The incident in question occurred during Week 3 of the program near the student dormitory in an American Sports Bar where David and Ben went to discuss an upcoming joint presentation for Bilingualism class over a meal. David said that by this time, “We were so used to people responding to us in English that we just said [in English], hi, can we have a seat?” The servers “glared” at them, seated them with English menus, and left
without returning. After what seemed like an excessively long wait, David approached the server, this time in Spanish:

David: I went back up and I found our-, the person who sat us, and I like asked them in Spanish, I was like, whatcha doin’? Can we like place our order? Do I have to go up to you? Like I don’t know how this works, but no one’s gone to us in like the past thirty minutes, is like everything okay? And they’re like, oh, you speak Spanish! And then they come over, we got like the best service ever.

BT: <laughs>

David: It’s all in Spanish. […] Somehow, we even got into like this banter with the waiter, and at some point, Ben and I looked at each other, and we’re like, this is only because we actually asked for help in Spanish. […] And then from there, every single person responded to us in Spanish. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

David also obtained increasing access to opportunities to interact in Spanish by adjusting how he navigated the city. He found that in “urban touristy settings” people always responded in English, while in “more residential” places, people tended to respond in Spanish. Furthermore, he recalled many of the individuals who spoke to him in Spanish from the start as being users of Spanish as a lingua franca who were “clearly not from Spain,” (i.e., international migrants) and who often spoke no English. By interacting with Spanish lingua franca users in parts of the city slightly off the beaten path, David could practice developing his confidence in Spanish. There are interesting parallels between the solutions that David eventually crafted for himself and the strategies that 83 long-term life-style immigrants to Ecuador frequently recounted when they were interviewed by Hayes and Carlson (2018). In order to be a good guest, instead of an obnoxious American, and uphold the ideals of moral cosmopolitanism, these lifestyle immigrants
thought that one must blend in, and the two most telling measures of whether one was sincere about it and had been likely accepted by locals were having learned the local language well enough to be able to use it even if primitively with locals, and having chosen to live in local neighborhoods, away from the (more expensive and arguably more comfortable) enclaves chosen by expats.

7.6 Perceived Hostility in Interactions with Locals: “At First I Wanted to Claim Racism”

An additional challenge that David initially faced was that some locals treated him with what he thought was hostility. A striking example of this can be seen in his account of his early interactions with the cashier at the UPF cafeteria, whose name he eventually learned was Glòria (a pseudonym). David bought coffee from her every morning before class. In the post-sojourn interview, he recalled, “The joke about her for the beginning of the program was that she was just like really mean and not big on chatting with foreigners.” He explained that he had arrived at this conclusion after noticing a difference in how she treated him versus local students:

David: I would speak in Spanish with her, and she would like, respond in English, and I’m like ↑okay! Um, and she’d always be really cold and she’d kind of glare at me if I didn’t have like, exact change or something like that, or, even better, she would ask, oh, do you have another five-cent coin? And I’d be like, I don’t. And then she would like grimace as she accepted my credit card. I’m like, I’m sorry!

BT: <laughs>

David: <laughing> This is just not a thing that I’m used to.> Um. And then whenever there would be someone who was actually from the university in front of me or behind me, she would actually have a very jovial conversation in Catalan, with them, and she
would be like smiling, and I had not seen her smile before, and I was just like a little bit bitter that that couldn’t be me. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

When I asked David why he thought Glòria treated him differently, he replied, “I don’t know! […] I really, really wanted to claim racism, but then there was this Asian dude who was definitely speaking in perfect Catalan, and I was like †Damn it!’” Initially, I was confused as to why the presence of an Asian person speaking in “perfect Catalan” would cause David to reassess his perception of racism. It was only after paying attention to the rest of David’s story that I concluded this statement reflected David’s emerging knowledge about race, nationality, and multilingualism in Barcelona. I summarize what I mean by this here and elaborate on each of the three issues—race, nationality, and multilingualism from David’s viewpoint—in the three sections following below. Regarding race, it seems that David initially thought locals might be treating him badly because of his Asian appearance. Ample empirical evidence from micro-aggression studies in psychology, health studies, and migration studies shows that Asian American youth learn to recognize and grapple with racism in various overt and covert forms (e.g., Tran & Lee, 2014; Nadal, Wong, Sriken, Griffin, & Fujii-Doe, 2015). David’s experiences growing up in the United States may have predisposed him towards this initial interpretation. However, after learning about different histories of migration and the presence of different ethnic groups in the United States versus Spain, this view seemed to soften. Regarding nationality, he initially interpreted Catalan nationalist discourses about concerns with preserving the Catalan identity as ethnocentric, but he reassessed his stance after he learned that the Catalan identity is based on not only where one is born, but who one chooses to be and thus can be claimed by immigrants as well, a phenomenon which Woolard (2016) refers to as “project identity.” Finally, regarding multilingualism, he seems to have discovered the emotional and emblematic value of
Catalan in Barcelona, which traditionally corresponded to an ethnolinguistic and social class divide between Catalans and non-Catalans (Woolard, 1989) but which nowadays is increasingly appropriated by Catalan residents of diverse ethnic backgrounds to perform Catalan identities (Pujolar & Gonzàlez, 2013). In other words, David came to realize that, when used emblematically, Catalan could mark one as an insider. Emotionally, Catalan resonated with the value that Korean had for David growing up, in that he viewed it as fostering a sense of intimacy and familiarity among the small community of people who spoke it. Thus, an Asian speaking in perfect Catalan was performing a Catalan identity, which was presumably ratified by Glòria.

David said that around Week 3, Glòria’s demeanor with him began to soften. In the following quote from the post-sojourn interview, he reconstructs in English the moment when a clear shift took place:

> At some point, I tried to strike up a conversation with her, and I tried that every single time I saw her, and she would always reject it, but finally she was like, I’m doing well, sir, how are you? and I’m like, \textsl{<incredulous>Wait a second!}> And then like every single time I would see her since […] I would like, chat with her, and I’d get to know her a little better.” (Post-Sojourn Interview)

By the end of the five-week sojourn, David said, he and Glòria became “best buds.” At some point, she divulged that she was taking a night school course in English, and the two bonded over their struggles with learning the other’s language. He recalled one interaction where she positioned him as the language expert as she put her English skills on full display:

> She was like, you’re very self-deprecating about your accent in Spanish, but if you heard me in English right now, you would laugh. And I was like, I can guarantee you, I would not laugh. And then she spoke in English, and I was like (.) she was like, exactly! And I
was like *<squirming>* eh, that w- that was *not* laughing! That was just-> um ‘cause it was so interesting to see someone go from such a high level of proficiency in their native language, I guess it’s obvious, um, to (.) being very clearly like a beginning speaker?

(Post-Sojourn Interview)

Experiencing Glòria as an imperfect speaker of English seems to have caused David to confront his own linguistic insecurities. He recalled that Glòria’s incomplete knowledge of English was “not something that I judged her for. I guess my conflation was that I thought that people were judging *me* for not being able to speak Spanish as well as them.”

7.7 *Sociohistories and Discourses on Race, Ethnicity, and Migration in the United States and Spain*

Whenever David told stories about interacting with locals, he routinely made mention of their race, nationality, and/or migrant status. Whether at home or abroad, these factors seemed to always be at the forefront of David’s consciousness. He even claimed to have developed an acute sense of who was and was not Catalan based on physical characteristics (i.e., a similar skin tone, hair color, and facial structure). My conclusion is that race, ethnicity, and migration were central to David’s life, and I attribute this to his experience of having grown up as the mixed-race grandchild of Korean immigrants. Much like the Black American study abroad participants in Anya’s (2017) research, David’s ethnic and racial identity shaped both his learning approach and his experiences abroad. In particular, his mixed Korean-White ethnicity affected both how he thought others viewed him and the world views that he willingly shared with me.

The impact of migration on Catalonia was frequently discussed in the History class. The students learned how migration, both from within Spain, and from countries within and outside the European Union, had shaped the current demographics and sociopolitical trends in Catalonia.
One fact that was repeatedly stressed was that, historically speaking, international migration to Spain is a recent phenomenon; only in the last few decades did Spain go from being an immigrant-sending country to an immigrant-receiving country. As David learned more, he reflected on the impact of these factors on local interpretations of racial and ethnic identities and how he, in particular, was perceived by locals.

David said in the post-sojourn interview that he was surprised to learn that “the concept of race over there [in Spain/Barcelona] is completely different from the concept of race over here [in the United States].” According to David, in the United States, “Being someone who very clearly is not ethnically from this area is almost meaningless, because almost all of us are not ethnically from the United States.” Thus, he said, perceived ethnic identity based on physical appearance had little bearing on whether someone was perceived as foreign or not, especially when compared to other features such as accent. In Spain, on the other hand, “If you’re not a Spaniard or if you’re not someone from Cataluña, or if you’re not, I guess, vaguely Mediterranean-looking, then you’re clearly like, where are you from?” It may be fair to say that David is somewhat idealizing the state of affairs with racial diversity in the United States. Namely, the apparently innocent question “Where are you from?” has been amply studied as a manifestation of subtle, everyday racism experienced by non-White Americans (e.g., Ballinas, 2017; and in the UK, by non-White international students, see Hua & Li Wei, 2016). This and other kinds of racially motivated microaggressions have also been documented to be a common experience among mixed raced persons such as David (Tran, Miyake, Martinez-Morales, & Csizmadia, 2016). Nevertheless, the frequency of occurrence must have been salient enough in David’s experience during his study abroad that he commented it on its pervasiveness in Spain/Barcelona.
David also reflected that the symbolic value associated with being Asian in the United States versus in Spain seemed to be quite different in his own experience. While he acknowledged the presence of “few and far between” racist attitudes against Asian people in the United States, David summarized people’s attitudes in the United States, as being largely accepting of hybrid Asian American identities: “You’re Asian, but you’re also American. You’re here. Of course, we’re the same.” While David did not believe that locals in Spain considered him lesser due to his ethnicity, he certainly felt that they perceived him as “different” and “Other” based on his appearance. David’s awareness of difference may be related to the small size of Asian immigrant residents in Barcelona as well as Catalonia, in general: According to Galeano, Sabater, and Domingo (2015), in 2011 Asians were the smallest group of born-abroad Catalanian residents, whereas Latin Americans formed the largest group, and Eastern and Western Europeans and Africans were in the middle. In general, David believed that locals were more hesitant towards those whom they perceived as Asian, which he reckoned was also related to generational status and social class, as most of the Asian migrants he encountered in Barcelona were first-generation migrants who worked in service positions. Of these individuals, he said, “The experiences that a lot of them possessed were a lot sadder than the ones I have.”

He recalled meeting one such individual at a café in a “really bustling part of the city” on the eve of his parents’ departure. He and his family struck up a conversation with their waitress, who they learned was a Filipina immigrant whose first language was Tagalog. David asked her about her migration experience. She said that she and her husband came to Barcelona for economic reasons but that her husband had been deported five years earlier for overstaying his visa. David recalled being struck by her cavalier tone as she said this. At the same time, and on quite a different note, he recounted that he was also fascinated by her degree of multilingualism,
as she chatted with his family in English, attended other customers in Spanish, and spoke to her
coworkers in Catalan, switching fluidly between the languages. He asked her, “How was the
process of learning all that? Was it quick? Was it hard?” He recalled her response as nonchalant:
“Yeah, you just kinda gotta make it work.”

7.8 Multiple Ways of Being Catalan and Diverse Perspectives on Independence

David began the BarSA Program with an interest in the Catalan independence movement.
Initially, he seemed to believe that Catalan nationalism (i.e., the ideology which constructs
Catalans as a nation) implied an essentialist, xenophobic ideology. During the program, I
observed him on several occasions stating that the discourses of Catalan identity and the
independence movement seemed essentialist and xenophobic. However, I also noted that when
he expressed this view in the presence of locals (e.g., in front of his History professor during a
class discussion), locals did not align with this position and sometimes flatly rejected it.

One instance where David’s views on the Catalan identity and nationalist movement were
problematic was captured in two excerpts from the first conversation exchange recording,
submitted during Week 2. The conversation in question involves David, P08, (a Black female
friend and program colleague), and Amira, (their exchange partner that first week, a second-
generation Moroccan immigrant), and the excerpt in question begins approximately nine and a
half minutes into the recording. At this point, the topic of the Catalan independence movement
emerges as Amira points out the Catalan parliament building and remarks that “ahora el tema
está caliente con lo de la independencia” [now things are heating up with the whole
independence thing]. Shortly thereafter, as shown in Excerpt 2, David asks Amira if she
identifies as Catalan (line 23). It is reasonable to assume that she is likely to find this question
surprising, given that she was born and raised in Catalonia. In fact, she anticipates the end of his
question before he is finished and initially gives a negative response while laughing (“<laughing>no>”) (line 24) but later clarifies that she meant that she does identify as Catalan but not as pro-independence, “Si catalana, pero no soy independentista” (lines 25 – 26). She follows this by providing her reasoning for the latter stance. David responds in line 29 by asking her why. Although not shown in the Excerpt, Amira elaborates on why she is not in favor of independence, explaining that it would not solve anything, the party defending independence was doing so opportunistically, and the legal framework of the Spanish constitution should be respected. In this interaction, Amira thus bore witness to how a person whose family migrated to Catalonia can perform a Catalan identity, yet not advocate for the independence of Catalonia, a position that is consistent with dominant discourses and policies surrounding the integration of international immigrants to Catalonia (Conversi & Jeram, 2017; Maíz, Lagares, & Pereira, 2018).

Excerpt 2: “Si catalana, pero no independentista” [Yes Catalan, but not pro-independence]

22 David: me interesa mucho.
23 ehm te identificas como: [catalana?
24 Amira: [<risas>no]
25 o sea si catalana,
26 pero no soy independentista
27 David: okay
28 P08: no?
29 David: [porqué?

A short time later in the conversation, reproduced here in Excerpt 3, David expresses a view, based on articles that he has read, that relates the independence movement and the Catalan
identity with xenophobia. He explains to Amira that what he read led him to believe that of the many reasons underlying the pro-independence stance, one is concern over the regional identity, which he feels is xenophobic rather than just a matter of preservation (lines 53–58). In her response in 60–65, Amira does not align with his view but rather asserts that the many regional identities that exist in Spain must be respected. She goes on to say that she actually supports a referendum on independence but a legal one in which the people decide (lines 66–77).

Excerpt 3: “En España hay diferentes identidades […]. Se debe de respetar esto” [In Spain there are different identities […]. That should be respected]

48 David:  ah sí.
49 algo que me interesa mucho es que
50 yo he leído artículos sobre el movimiento independentista-
51 y- independentista
52 P08:  sí
53 David:  y um me dijeron que
54 obviamente hay muchas razones por ser independentista, pero
55 una es la identidad regional de Cataluña
56 y el querer preservarlo
57 Amira:  hm
58 David:  y me parece más como xenofóbico <risas>
59 que [(.) preservarlo
60 Amira:  es que ehm
61 en Cataluña eh en España hay diferentes identidades
62 hay los vascos
hay los gallegos

tener su idioma, su historia

se debe de respetar esto=

=sí que creo que ahora debe de haber el referéndum

pero un referéndum que sea

o sea, que sea legal

que la gente decida

David:  si

Amira:  creo que va a salir el no

como pasó ya en Escocia

en el Quebec

pero si n-

si sigue

si el gobierno sigue defendiendo que es ilegal

pues se debe de respetar la ley

David:  hm

P08:  hm

As it turns out, over the course of the sojourn, David and Amira became close, and she proved an important source for David’s learning about national identity in Catalonia in other ways. After the sojourn, when I asked him to comment on their relationship, he responded, “I would call her a friend. I would like to believe she would call me a friend, too.” David attributed their special bond to several factors. First, they both studied International Relations. David also admired Amira for the fact that she spoke five languages—Catalan, Spanish, Arabic, French, and
English. Another important factor, in David’s view, was her immigrant family background and bicultural identity: “She was also an immigrant, so she was also a part of the Other, but she was also very much like engrained into Catalan society.”

Through the History class, David became interested in the intersection between migration in Catalonia and the Catalan independence movement. David and P08 chose to focus on this relationship in their joint History class final project. To do this, they consulted class texts and media sources, and also interviewed Amira and her autochthonous Catalan friend, Joan (a pseudonym), about their views on the Catalan identity, the independence movement, and the relationship of immigration to both. While the two friends held opposing views on the question of independence (which Joan favored and Amira opposed), they both held similar views on the Catalan identity as being open to others, regardless of place of birth or national origins. They also shared the view that immigration had little impact on the discourses surrounding the independence movement. The complex position that Amira and Joan shared with David has been called intercultural nationalism by Conversi and Jeram (2017). The authors argue, consistent with Amira and Joan’s views, that despite a sharp increase in international immigration since the turn of the 21st century coupled with a global economic crisis, anti-immigrant sentiment has remained largely absent from Catalan nationalist political discourse; and moreover, the immigration-related policies and attitudes espoused by the main nationalist parties in Catalonia have centered around the proactive integration of foreign-born residents into a shared public culture through the use of Catalan, while simultaneously advocating for a distinctive, diverse society and rejecting assimilationism, whereby “no conflict is perceived between retaining the immigrants’ home culture and ‘feeling Catalan’” (p. 59).
As a result of their research for the History class, and possibly also because of the nuanced negotiation of political opinion with Amira and Joan, a glimpse of which is available in Extracts 1 and 2, David and P08 ended up concluding that the independence movement was less xenophobic and the Catalan identity more open than they had previously thought. When they presented their findings orally on the final day of the History class, David and P08 stated, “Nos sorprendió mucho porque pensábamos que había un elemento casi xenófobo en el discurso independentista antes de hablar con los dos” [It surprised us a lot because we thought that there was an almost xenophobic element in the independentist discourse before we talked with the two of them]. In their project dossier, which they submitted to their History professor, they wrote, “Implica que no hay tan xenofobia que pensábamos antes y la identidad catalana [está] disponible a cualquier persona que lo quiere.” [It implies that there is not as much xenophobia as we thought before and the Catalan identity [is] available to any person who wants it.]

In a sense, David’s experience of having his political opinions challenged is reminiscent of Kinginger’s (2008) account of Beatrice, whose French-Tunisian host family challenged her support for the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Together these stories illustrate how SA interactions can present sojourners with new versions of familiar political narratives, resulting in tensions and multiple possible outcomes. Beatrice responded to this situation by recoiling into a defensive position and rejecting her hosts’ opinions, whereas David learned to see the Catalan conflict from multiple perspectives and seemed to shift his view by the end of the five-week sojourn.

7.9 Learning About Multilingualism

One way that David learned about Catalan was through his informal interactions with the language. When I asked him to recall his first encounter with Catalan, he described it as a rather unremarkable experience at the airport, where he saw Catalan on a sign alongside Spanish,
English, French, and other languages, and “really didn’t think much about it.” When he considered his overall experience, however, he recalled, “I definitely do remember seeing written Catalan all the time.” Not only did Catalan seem frequent and salient in the linguistic landscape, it also seemed to predominate over Spanish. He elaborated that, in his memory:

“Like everything that I could see [was] in Catalan. Like every touristy place I still saw in Catalan, like I still saw Catalan translations for menus and for scripts and for subtitles on the [television in the] metro. [...] I did not see Spanish unless, like, maybe it’s like a really small indented font on the side.” (Post-Sojourn Interview)

He noted a striking difference between written Catalan, which he saw as prevalent in public space, with spoken Catalan, which he described as a “behind the scenes” language. He attributed the prevalence of written Catalan to a “backlash against Franco” by Catalans, who strived to preserve their language. When spoken, however, he believed that Catalan was used to foster a sense of intimacy and familiarity among the small community of people who understood it. He recalled that the locals he encountered in informal interaction tended to use either Spanish or English with the public but would speak Catalan with one another. From this, he concluded that locals reserved Catalan for informal situations and preferred to use Spanish or English in formal and professional settings. Catalan speakers would likely contest this conclusion, as Catalan and not Spanish, has traditionally been associated with professional advantages and social mobility in Catalonia (Frekko, 2013). David’s assumptions likely reflect the fact that his informal interactions with locals were largely limited to service encounters, where many clients were visitors to the city and may have lacked knowledge of Catalan or Spanish. Nevertheless, his perception of a disconnect between Catalan language policies based on monoglot Romantic
ideals and Catalan residents’ everyday multilingual and translingual practices resonates with sociolinguists’ observations about 21st century Catalonia (Woolard & Frekko, 2013).

Catalan seemed to hold a similar value for David as Korean did back home, as a language that he did not know well and was not studying formally but which he encountered frequently in his environment. He drew connections between his experience of fluid home multilingualism and his analysis of the fluid multilingualism of Catalan speakers. When I asked David how he felt when he encountered Catalan in daily life in Barcelona, he said:

David: It was a very pleasant experience. [...] It invoked an almost emotional reaction in me at like the first times when I really became cognizant of that. [...] I was not like moved to tears or anything like that, but it was warm, definitely.

BT: Yeah?

David: “Because I would see people switching between [...] Spanish and Catalan the same way my mom and my grandma speak in between English and Korean with each other [...] and then with me, even though I don’t actually speak Korean. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Many of David’s observations about the use of Catalan seemed to stem from the linguistic landscapes final project, which he carried out for the Bilingualism course at the end of the sojourn together with Ben. The two sought to investigate language use in international and globalized contexts within Barcelona by comparing signage at two markets in Barcelona—La Boqueria, which was located in the historic center of Barcelona in an area with many tourists, and Els Encants, which was located near the student dormitory in a neighborhood with few tourists and a high ratio of international migrants. In both places, they observed that Catalan was prevalent on official signage but that the language use on the names of market stalls and the
signs within them varied idiosyncratically according to vendor preferences. On these signs, they noted an eclectic mix of Catalan, Spanish, and other world languages, such as Korean, Tagalog, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, and most notably English, which was often used either playfully (as in “Eslice Pizzeria,” where “Eslice” is a transliteration of “slice” pronounced with a Spanish accent) or emblematically (as in the printed text on a purse for sale that said “Losing you hurts, but losing my makeup would be a tragedy”). When I asked David in the post-sojourn interview what he had learned from this project, he said, “It was really interesting to see how all the formal [official] writing was in Catalan, but then everything else would not be in Catalan <laughs> [...] Spanish and English were kind of like the lingua francas.” He believed the project was useful for encouraging him to explore new areas of the city and for helping to highlight the “weird power play” between Catalan and other languages in Barcelona.

Given their diametrically opposing views on Catalan and the value of multilingualism in the SA environment, I was curious about the nature of David and Ben’s collaboration on this project. In retrospect, however, and after looking at my observational data, it seems clear that by this late point in the sojourn, Ben had withdrawn from investing in the Bilingualism course, which his interview indicated was due to his feelings of persecution and overall frustration with the program. In the evening just two days prior to the Bilingualism class in which they delivered their linguistic landscapes presentation, I had spoken to David, who told me, somewhat nervously, that Ben had still not begun working on his presentation slides. On the day of their presentation, Ben arrived in class wearing gym clothes and looking downtrodden. During the presentation he read from notecards until the instructor prompted him to look at the audience. When I asked Ben in the post-sojourn interview what he had learned from the project, he said that, as interested as he was in the Bilingualism class material, he simply said that he was “under
too much pressure” to arrive at any meaningful conclusions from the projects. Thus, it is striking that the two friends collaborated on the same project, and one reported “really interesting” learning while the other could not remember learning anything at all.

7.10 The Emergence of a Good Visitor Identity

David’s concern with social justice and undoing privilege sensitized him to the impact of his stay on the local economy and culture, including language. Indeed, one of the conclusions he drew from the linguistic landscapes final project for the Bilingualism course was that the vitality of Catalan in Barcelona was threatened by the presence of tourists and international migrants:

In the Boqueria, it was so touristy and international that you had to use English or otherwise you would not be able to sell your stuff. And then in Els Encants Mercat, [...] people only spoke in Spanish, because everybody there is an immigrant. Like, I did not see Catalan and Spanish people there, so that was very interesting. I saw more people who looked like me than not there. That was like the really weird thing. (Post-Sojourn Interview)

The students learned in their History class about the positive and negative effects of mass tourism on Barcelona and the growing sense of ambivalence felt by locals towards the tourism industry and tourists themselves. In tourism studies, the phenomenon has been called overtourism, “a situation in which either local people or tourists feel that a place is simply over-visited and is consequentially changing its character, losing its authenticity (mainly for tourists) and causing irritation and annoyance (primarily for residents)” (Capocchi, Vallone, Pierotti, & Amaduzzi, 2019, p. 7). Capocchi et al. mention Barcelona as one of several urban centers of tourism in Europe (together with Venice, Dubrovnik, or Amsterdam) that may have begun to suffer from not just tourist overcrowding but overtourism. David vividly recounted being
morally conflicted about the issue. For example, when he learned that tourist apartments in Barcelona were driving up property prices and forcing some locals to leave their homes and neighborhoods, he recalled staying in an Airbnb with his parents at the beginning of the trip. He said in the post-sojourn interview,

I felt bad for doing certain touristy things in Barcelona, because I was like, am I killing the economy right now? Am I ruining the Catalan culture? <laughs> like, what is my role in all this? <laughing>Is it positive or negative?> (Post-Sojourn Interview)

David concerns are indeed the object of study by human geographers and scholars of tourism working specifically on the case of overtourism in Barcelona (e.g., Àrias Sans & Quaglieri Dominguez, 2016; Hughes, 2018). This new knowledge about the negative as well as positive impact of tourism in an attraction city like Barcelona, combined with David’s growing awareness of the sociopolitics surrounding the Catalan identity and language, and of how race constrained the range of identity options available to him, gave rise to the dilemma of how to present himself in a society that, at times, seemed wary of immigrants and tourists. He knew that, as a visible minority, locals would view him as inescapably foreign and “Other.” The knowledge that one is being seen as different, as a foreigner, was one of the most difficult adjustments mentioned by 83 long-term life-style immigrants to Ecuador, all Caucasian, in the study already cited by Hayes and Carlson (2018). Hayes (2015) specifically focuses on this difficulty as an earned awareness of racialization, not only because of a visibly different ethnicity or phenotype but also dress and other cultural markers. But David was determined to overcome the discomfort of knowing he was being viewed as different and to present himself in a positive light, as a good visitor. One example of his remarkable awareness and strategic resourcefulness can be seen in his account of becoming a regular at a local café.
In the post-sojourn interview, David explained that while in Barcelona, he tried to support locally owned businesses over multinational corporations. He thus made his café of choice a nearby branch of a Catalan-owned franchise (although he wryly confessed that he occasionally went to Starbucks when he was feeling homesick). David studied there often enough so that the staff there recognized and seemed to appreciate him. He recalled, “They were always kind of <smiling>happy to see me.>” David supposed that he was memorable to the café workers due to his pragmatically inappropriate but kind habit of bussing his own dishes, as he was expected to do in cafés back home. He recalled:

The first time I asked them, where do you want me to put these? they responded as if I was an alien or something like that, like, what kind of question did you just ask me? Are you not just gonna leave it there like <laughing>everyone else who comes here?> (Post-Sojourn Interview)

Eventually, David engaged the café staff in conversations that transcended the typical service-client role relations and transaction-oriented dynamics that are characteristic of service encounters by asking them questions about “what it was like to be in Barcelona, um, either in a lens of tourism or in a lens of separatist movements.” Thus, through opting to support local businesses, using kind pragmatics that undid privilege, and demonstrating knowledge and curiosity about timely political topics, David endeared himself to his interlocutors.

Another noteworthy strategy that David employed was the emblematic use of Catalan. David explained in our interview that over the course of the sojourn, he learned a handful of Catalan phrases, such as merci [thank you], bon dia [good morning], and adéu [goodbye] and would sprinkle these into conversations to impress locals (see also Chapter 4, section 4.4). He explained that he regularly initiated interactions by first greeting his interlocutor in Catalan, then
explaining that he did not speak Catalan, and then continuing with the rest of the interaction in Spanish: “I would say, bon dia, yo no sé catalán, pero… and then I would go into everything else.” Through this approach, he said, he could position himself as someone who, while not studying Catalan, was respectful of the language and the culture. He explained, “I made it very clear. I was like, I’m not learning Catalan right now. […] This is not my focus, but this is definitely what I do to keep it alive.” David said that this strategy engendered a positive response from locals: “They were like, oh wait, one of you all actually knows my words, nice! <laughs>” Once, he said, a waitress with whom he used some Catalan ended up giving him a free beer. Thus, Catalan came to represent an affordance that he exploited to negotiate a good visitor identity and enhance his reception by locals.

7.11 Taking Stock of the Study Abroad Experience

In his Week 5 diary, David wrote about an encounter that, in many ways, was the symbolic culmination of his learning experience in Barcelona. The interaction took place one day after the program ended, when David and (serendipitously) Ben and Lucia shared a taxi to the airport and struck up a conversation with the driver, who they learned was an Ecuadorian migrant. He recalled that the driver complimented their Spanish, saying, “Aunque somos estadounidenses, tenemos un nivel claro del control alto de la lengua” [even though we are U.S. Americans, we clearly have a high level in the language]. They also discussed the different roles of Catalan, Spanish, and English in Barcelona. The driver said that he considered Catalan important to know, as it was the regional language and mother language of many people, but that he only spoke Spanish, and no one ever spoke Catalan with him anyway. He considered English to be much more important for someone in his line of work. They discussed the shortcomings of foreign language education in Spain and the United States, which happened to be the topic of a
presentation that David had given in Bilingualism class a few weeks earlier. David’s takeaway from this conversation was that it connected to and expanded on one of the first lessons they had learned in the Bilingualism class about the role of language awareness in bilingual societies:

La primera cosa que nos enseñó en la clase de Bilingüismo era que la sociolingüística no tiene un papel tan grande en las conversaciones cotidianas como en Cataluña, por razones más o menos obvias. Pero, no nos dábamos cuenta de que era el caso también para ellos que no sabían catalán, ni se identificaban como catalán. (Week 5 Diary)

[The first thing that we were taught in the Bilingualism class was that sociolinguistics [i.e., sociolinguistic awareness] does not play such a strong role in everyday conversations as [it does] in Catalonia, for more or less obvious reasons. But we did not realize that this was also the case for those who neither knew Catalan, nor identified as Catalan.]

David’s account of this last encounter suggests that he may have begun to grasp the complexities of Catalan as a language which may be used by some at times as emblematic of their autochthonous identity, perceived by others at other times as a marker of in-group membership, and yet by others on occasion to be emblematic of integration yet less valuable in their lives than English and Spanish.

When asked to look back over the sojourn during our final interview, David said he was completely satisfied with his experience. He had obtained the results that he had hoped for, such as developing his Spanish competence and learning about Catalan politics. He also reported increased personal growth and autonomy through developing skills such as learning how to plan meals and cook for himself. Another unexpected result was his friendship with Amira. He remained in contact with her after the sojourn, and the two chatted regularly in Spanish via
WhatsApp. He said, “She will not respond to me if I message her in English, which I respect, but at the same time, like, I want her to gain from my English ability the same way that I gain from her Spanish.” David told me that before going abroad he sometimes attempted to text in Spanish with some of his university friends who were native speakers of Spanish, and that they told him that he texted like an abuela, a grandma. After the sojourn, David explained that through texting with Amira, he learned how to text in a way that seemed to be more well-received by his native Spanish speaking age peers. For example, instead of typing out que, as he would have before, he now simply typed k. While his friends had not remarked on whether or not he improved, they no longer complained, which David took as a positive sign. It is interesting to see in David a similar awareness to that expressed by Lucia (see section 6.2) of the importance of using a register or speech style that is age congruent. Texting is one venue where young users are particularly willing to innovate, and “textese” has been seen to be made out of several consistent resources across languages, including “disregarded capitalization, accent stylization, letter/number homophones, missing punctuation, contractions, non-standard/phonetic spellings, g clippings, other clippings types, onomatopoeic/exclamatory expressions, shortenings, misspellings, initialisms, semantically unrecoverable words, emoticons, and typographic symbols” (Gómez-Camacho, Hunt-Gómez, & Valverde-Macías, 2018, p. 93). While some of them will transfer helpfully from English to Spanish, many do not, and this was evidently one more area in which the benefits of the sojourn extended beyond the five-week experience for David, thanks to his friendship with Amira.

But the most important effect of participating in the BarSA program, according to David, had been that the experience convinced him that he needed more than one summer abroad:
David: Since I’ve gotten back, the seed has been planted in my head, I need to go back
and do something more,

BT: Mhm

David: I don’t know what that something more is, and for (. ) for a while, even before this
program, I was like, maybe I will go abroad for my master’s degree. (Post-Sojourn
Interview)

At the time of our post-sojourn interview, he had lined up an internship at the U.S. State
Department and was considering several options for foreign service after he graduated,
something which resonates with comments made by the UK sojourners reported on by Mitchell
et al. (2017, pp. 217-219), many of whom reported making arrangements for further study or
work abroad after returning from year-long residence abroad in France or Spain. David’s
summer in Barcelona may thus be only the starting point for a long multilingual and
transnational trajectory.
Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have adopted a qualitative case study approach, combining introspective and ethnographic methodologies to investigate how the multilingualism and transnationalism of SA sojourners and host sites interact to impact opportunities for language use and language learning for bi-/multilingual students of Spanish studying abroad on a U.S.-based summer program in Barcelona, Spain. In this final chapter, I first summarize key findings in Section 8.1 before expanding on major themes in the following four sections. Section 8.2 discusses how ideologies and orientations regarding immersion shape approaches to SA and responses to encountering multilingualism and diversity. Section 8.3 reflects on how identity and intersectionality mediate SA experiences, social interactions, and the negotiation of tensions. Section 8.4 expounds on patterns of social networking and interaction and highlights the crucial role played by friendship. Section 8.5 considers the complexities of the language pledge. Section 8.6 identifies limitations of the current dissertation study as well as directions for future research. Finally, Section 8.7 concludes by considering implications of the findings for the burgeoning domain of SA research.

8.1 Summary of Key Findings

This dissertation explored the following sets of questions:

1. What orientations do sojourners exhibit towards the languages that are available in the SA environment besides Spanish –the learning target, that is, Catalan and any other languages they may encounter? How do such orientations relate to views of multilingualism as an obstacle or an affordance for language learning? Do orientations change over time for any of the sojourners, and what might explain the changes?
2. How do sojourners leverage (or not) their multiple identities as a resource to language learning? What kinds of identity-related obstacles might arise during the SA experience, and how are these challenges approached and resolved (or not) by different sojourners? Under what circumstances do sojourners experience their own identities as transnational / multilingual?

With respect to the first research question, the group findings reported in Chapter 4 illustrated how some of the eight focal sojourners came to see the multilingualism of the city in general, and Catalan in particular, as less of an obstacle, with some perhaps even gradually considering it an affordance by the end of their five-week stay. For other sojourners, however, Catalan became and remained a symbol of their lack of belonging and a scapegoat in interactions where locals did not accommodate their preference for Spanish. With respect to the second research question, the findings revealed how, for learners like Ben (Chapter 5), the feelings of ambivalence caused by identity negotiations and circulating language ideologies can cause them to withdraw from further interaction with hosts. In such cases, new multilingual subject positions may fail to emerge. For other learners, such as Lucia (Chapter 6), no major challenges in need of negotiation appear to come their way. Such learners may have already developed identities as confident and skilled learners and users of the target language and as a result experience relative ease in positioning themselves strategically in the unfamiliar environment, foregrounding and backgrounding certain aspects of their multiple identities in ways that seem appropriate or advantageous. Yet for other transnational sojourners who do encounter unexpected challenges initially, as was the case with David (Chapter 7), positive results may obtain through persistence in engaging with the multilingual host community, and they learn to navigate challenges to their identities successfully and discover more powerful subject positions from which to speak as they
pursue access to language in new and perhaps better ways. In this sense, the findings reported across the four chapters of the dissertation illuminate the forces that structure learning as sojourners add new resources to their linguistic repertoires while also adding new subject positions to their repertoires of identities, and perhaps even renegotiate their language ideologies as they come into contact with local language hierarchies and ideologies, all of which they carry with them into future interactions both abroad and at home. The four chapters together show that, at least for some students in our transnational world, SA is about negotiating successfully (or unsuccessfully) the emergence of new multilingual subject positions—with new multilingual positions being both an outcome of the SA experience in and of itself and a mediating factor influencing, in general, the degree of satisfaction and perceived success and, in particular, how opportunities for language use and learning are created and oriented to, thus impacting linguistic outcomes, as well. The qualitative case study and ethnographic methodological approach that I adopted afforded me a glimpse, if only partial, of the emergence of multilingual subject positions, as participants came to experience themselves as transnational or hybrid, either for the first time or in new ways.

The case studies of Ben, Lucia, and David in particular, reveal how personal biographies, individual trajectories of multilingualism, and envisioned projects of SA shaped the way each approached and lived their SA experience—particularly their activities and social interactions abroad, how each thought others perceived them, how they resolved the tensions that arose, and how they responded to the discoveries they made about themselves and about their learning of Spanish. Ben’s story reveals the conflicts that can arise when monoglossic ideologies of language, language learning, and SA clash with multilingual SA realities. Lucia’s story exemplifies the negotiation, reconstruction, and development of multiple facets of a hybrid
identity across time and space. David’s story illustrates the complex ways in which various elements of a sojourner’s personal biography—race, ethnicity, family migration history, a multilingual outlook, and social justice orientations—interact with aspects of social structure in the SA setting to impact engagement with the environment and social interaction abroad. By telling the stories of Ben, Lucia, and David, my hope has been to bring attention to the qualities of SA experiences through the eyes of these three learners themselves and to interrogate assumptions about SA as a context whose main benefit is immersive access to language.

8.2 Ideologies in Study Abroad: The Impact of Different Orientations Towards Immersion

Many students who go abroad to learn a language expect a monolingual immersion experience that will propel them toward mastery of a foreign language (Kubota, 2016). The notion of SA as monolingual immersion is an ideological construction that is rooted in monoglossic language ideologies. Such ideologies include raciolinguistic ideologies that equate one race with one nation and one language (Flores & Rosa, 2015); the native speaker bias, which positions native competence as superior to other forms of language competence (Ortega, 2014); and ideologies of strict language separation, which see languages as bounded and fixed objects that compete with one another in the minds of speakers and should be used one at a time (García & Tupas, 2019). Such ideologies privilege monolingualism as the universal norm for individuals and societies and portray multilingualism as exceptional or deviant. Such a framework not only distorts reality—multilingualism, not monolingualism, is the more common case among individuals and societies—but in the context of SA it also gives rise to the paradoxical notion that the ideal way to foster bi-/multilingual development is through immersing oneself in a monolingual environment in which one uses only the target language. When monolingual ideologies clash with multilingual realities, many things can happen. Multilingualism may
appear as strange, shocking, or even problematic. Once perceived, multilingualism is not easily avoided by sojourners who long for immersion. In a context like the BarSA program, where multilingualism is inextricably bound up with the identities of both sojourners and hosts, pursuing immersion by resisting multilingualism can result in disengagement and alienation. Likewise, multilingualism may problematize the identities and investments with which students began the SA experience, giving rise to tensions and conflicts. The evolution of individual SA trajectories will vary according to how students interpret and respond to such challenges and whether or not they pursue and exploit or eschew and reject the learning opportunities that arise.

The potential negative impact of the ideology of SA as immersion is most evident in the story of Ben. Ben’s expectations, which were rooted in monoglossic ideologies, clashed with the multilingualism around him. He responded by resisting contact with other languages, but with great complications. This ultimately resulted in his social isolation—from his peers as much as from the locals—and disappointment with the SA experience overall. Ben’s story shows us that when SA is construed as a linguistic and cultural immersion experience, other languages and identities may be perceived as threats. In a region and a program which are inherently multilingual, adherence to a single language can create barriers to social interaction and the formation of relationships within the cohort and beyond. In Ben’s case, even prior to the SA monoglossic ideologies blinded him to opportunities for L2 use at home, and once abroad they amplified his tendency to homogenize diversity among his hosts.

The sociopolitical conflict in Catalonia was one surprising aspect of the environment to all sojourners in this study. For Ben, this conflict interacted with monoglossic and homogenizing ideologies, causing him to perceive the host community and linguistic environment as uniformly hostile to his desire for Spanish immersion and his identity as a learner and user of Spanish. Like
many sojourners in the SA literature who feel that they have encountered adversity when facing unmet expectations, he withdrew from interaction with his hosts. Rather than re-engaging and negotiating the difference between expectations and reality, he persisted in a homogenizing view of Catalans as hostile to those identified with Spanish and consequently concluded that he would have done better in an officially monolingual region. While Ben’s response blinded him to the ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and ideological diversity in his environment, David and Lucia persisted in engaging with their environment and, in different ways, deepened their knowledge of the diversity of regional identities in Spain (Lucia) and sociopolitical identities and stances within Catalan society (David).

In Lucia and David’s stories, we see not only a commitment to using and learning Spanish, but also a broader, more holistic conceptualization of SA and a recognition of its non-linguistic benefits, such as identity development and personal growth (Mitchell et al., 2016), as well as gaining regional awareness (Watson, Siska, & Wolfel, 2013). Lucia and David’s stories reveal ways in which the framework of SA as monolingual immersion was subverted. Both sojourners interacted positively with the multilingualism in their environment and engaged in multilingual practices that enhanced their overall SA experience, albeit in different ways that were shaped by their biographies and prior investments.

In Lucia’s case, the ideology of immersion was arguably less relevant than for the rest of the cohort. She was more interested in expanding her social network, enhancing her academic knowledge, and developing a cosmopolitan identity, a process that was already underway at home. She was already a confident bilingual when she went abroad and did not struggle to find opportunities to interact in Spanish. While she did encounter some mild challenges to her expectations, she adapted easily by recalibrating her outlook and behavior. On the whole, Lucia
represents confident and fluid bilingualism. Both at home and abroad, she exhibited considerable agency in pursuing her desire not only to remain engaged with Spanish but also to expand her linguistic repertoire. However, there were some tensions in her ideological orientations. On the one hand, she exhibited some endorsement of monoglossic ideologies of language learning and aligned with the view that immersion is good, while nevertheless adapting easily when faced with non-immersive conditions. On the other hand, she and her friends resolved tensions between Spanish versus English use (one language at a time) by engaging in translingual practices (translanguaging) (Li Wei, 2018). Finally, Lucia’s story offers us a broad sense of the diversity that sojourners can discover in the host country. Specifically, her story shows the possibility of discovering regional identities and nationalisms that do not correspond to state nationalisms. Through a combination of classroom learning and independent travel, she discovered discourses and material manifestations of diverse regional identities within Spain.

David exhibited a different attitude from both Lucia and Ben. His view of multilingualism was unencumbered by monoglossic ideologies; thus, the multilingual environment was a non-issue. Moreover, his remarkable metalinguistic awareness, social justice orientations, and personal goals made multilingualism into a desirable feature of SA, not just to accept but to embrace. He, too, faced some challenges early on, which he resolved through patience, perseverance, and strategic behavior. David’s story offers a finer-grained perspective on diversity than Lucia’s. David exhibited a local orientation and, unlike most of his peers, did not travel to other Spanish regions. Instead, he invested his resources in Barcelona. He discovered transnational migrants living in Barcelona with hybrid and fluid ethnic identities that may have resonated with his own identities back home. He did not shy away from interpolating these individuals about their experiences and about their language attitudes and practices. Like
Ben, David also experienced non-accommodation to his language choice and challenges to his identity. However, unlike Ben, David contemplated how locals perceived him. He inquired about locals’ attitudes towards foreigners and the sociohistorical bases for these views and was reflective and resourceful in finding ways to endear himself to locals in light of these perspectives.

In sum, three different resonances of the ideology of monoglossic immersion are evident across the three case studies. For Ben, monoglot ideologies gave rise to construal of multilingualism as an obstacle and a homogenizing view of his hosts, whereby cultural, linguistic, and ideological diversity were erased. Because his response was to withdraw from engagement, what little interaction he had merely served to confirm his assumptions. For Lucia, multilingualism was neutral, partly because she was oriented to as a Spanish speaker due to the Cuban side of her Cuban American identity. In Spain, Lucia discovered discourses and manifestations of diverse regional identities. David oriented to multilingualism as an affordance and a tool he could draw on to reconstruct his identity and reposition himself as a savvy international visitor. If Lucia discovered diversity in Spain, then David discovered superdiversity in Barcelona, where he encountered a multiplicity of hybrid, transnational identities.

8.3 Identity in Study Abroad and the Weight of Racialized Identities

SA investments and outcomes can be conceptualized in terms of identity development (Benson et al., 2012; Mitchell et al. 2016). But how SA may nourish identity growth depends on the personal goals that individual learners imagine for their SA experience. Ben wanted to become not just fluent, but a master of Spanish—an outcome that was related to his linguistic self-concept (Benson et al., 2012). Lucia wanted to develop a cosmopolitan Cuban American identity. David wanted to become an agent for social justice by developing language skills that
accommodate world diversity and a deeper understanding of geopolitical conflict. Identities are multiple and relational, with class, gender, race, and other dimensions (Block, 2007a; Kinginger, 2013) contributing to identities that are multifaceted, intersectional, and in flux across time and space (Block & Corona, 2014; Norton, 2013). The three case studies in the present dissertation revealed how identity and intersectionality mediate SA experiences, including the discovery of and orientation towards multilingual local realities. In particular, race emerged as a salient identity dimension impacting sojourners’ experiences. The stories show that passing (or not) as a competent speaker is not just about how one sounds but also how one looks and is perceived, a point made by the scholarship on raciolinguistics (Flores & Rosa, 2015) as well as by other critical educational linguists (García & Tupas, 2019) but rarely raised in the SA literature. In all three stories, racialized identities and raciolinguistic ideologies interacted to impact the language hierarchies that were oriented to in situated one-time encounters with strangers in the public sphere and service encounters. In the case of David, a visible minority with a hyphenated Korean-White American identity, locals ascribed him an Anglophone identity. In the case of Lucia, a visible minority with a hyphenated Hispanic Cuban American identity, locals ascribed her a Spanish-speaking identity. In the case of Ben, a White U.S. American who could pass as someone who had grown up in Spain or Latin American, some locals ascribed him a Catalan-speaking identity. The sojourners exhibited different responses to the need to negotiate self- and other-ascribed racialized identities. Lucia engaged, David re-engaged, and Ben withdrew.

The impact of race was most visible in David’s story. It impacted David’s personal history, his worldview, his approach to SA, and how he believed others perceived him. David’s identity as a mixed-race individual initially felt to him like a handicap. In interactions with autochthonous Catalan hosts, he believed that locals cast him as a depersonalized foreign
“Other.” Like other U.S. minority students in the SA literature (Goldoni, 2017; Riegelhaupt & Carrasco, 2000; Talburt & Stewart, 1999), he experienced microaggressions and hostility (Nadal et al., 2015). But rather than withdrawing from opportunities to interact, he persevered and was able to reconstruct his identity and reposition himself as a likeable and savvy international visitor with social, economic, and cultural capital. In this way, his experience resembles those of Trentman’s (2015) U.S. female sojourners in Egypt, who were resourceful in negotiating among the afforded gendered and racialized identities in order to resist negative gendered experiences and gain access to local social networks and interaction in Arabic.

Not only did David continue to interact with those who he felt were hostile to him; by interacting with other racialized individuals, he learned that it was possible for immigrants to successfully perform Catalan identities, and he paid attention to how they did so. Furthermore, like Anya’s (2017) sojourners in Brazil, who discovered new and surprising interpretations of intersectional racialized identities (ways of “performing Blackness,” in the author’s terms), David learned about locally grounded sociohistories and discourses about race, ethnicity, migration, and nationality through a combination of coursework and extracurricular activities. In particular, he learned that the assumed migrant status and social class associated with being “Asian,” were different from those in the United States. At home, David’s mixed Korean White ethnicity did not preclude identification as an American or as a member of the middle class, whereas in Barcelona, being Asian implied being a first-generation immigrant of a working-class background. While David initially felt that these associations with race constrained his identity options, he found that by drawing strategically on other dimensions of his intersectional identity, he could expand the range of positionings available to him as a visible foreigner. He developed skills for resisting negative stereotypes associated with immigrant and tourist identities and for
portraying himself in a positive light. Of these strategies, his use of some Catalan translanguaging was a prominent one that he learned to leverage resourcefully. Perhaps the reward that he got from doing so was greater than it might have been for a White student, as crossing is highly valued in Barcelona (Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2009, 2015; Woolard, 2013; 2016). Even so, it was his lived experiences at home as a hyphenated Korean-White American that propelled and supported him in his identity negotiations during SA. These negotiations were driven by his desire to accommodate the linguistic preferences of Hispanic immigrants and to develop more nuanced ideas about geopolitical conflicts. When he arrived in Barcelona, he had many questions and held some preconceived ideas about how power operated in the context of Catalan nationalism. His experiences abroad initially seemed to confirm his expectations of xenophobia, but he later found discourses that countered xenophobic ones to be more prominent. Furthermore, he eventually learned that Catalan was not necessarily important for all local identities.

The workings of racialized or ethnicized identities were also evident in Lucia and Ben’s stories, although in more subtle ways. In Lucia’s case, how race and ethnicity affected her interlocutors’ perceptions of her may be interpreted as a privilege. Due to the intersectionality of her race, her Cuban American ethnicity, and her linguistic identity as a Spanish-English bilingual, she received a warm reception, avoided negative stereotyping associated with the American side of her hyphenated identity, and sidestepped the issue of negotiating language choice, as locals always spoke to her in Spanish. But there were also tensions. Due to her racialized appearance and fluency in Spanish, she was denied a neutral or positive American identity, which she reclaimed by negotiating locals’ stereotypes about Americans. Ben’s experience was also impacted by race in ways that were perhaps invisible to him. Because he
passed visibly and aurally as Spanish or Latino, he was at times ascribed a Catalan-speaking identity in interactions with locals. However, due to his ascription to monoglossic ideologies and a lack of reflexivity regarding his positioning, Ben assumed congruence between his self-constructed identity as a U.S. American sojourner who had come to Spain to learn Spanish and the identity ascribed to him by locals who addressed him in Catalan and thus interpreted their persistence in speaking Catalan as rudeness. Ben and Lucia’s experiences contradict discourses found in other studies of “heritage seekers,” that is, ethnolinguistic minority students who choose to study abroad in their ancestral homeland (see Shively, 2016). Studies of sojourners in Mexico (Riegelhaupt & Carrasco, 2000) and China (Du, 2018; Jing-Schmidt et al., 2016) report on heritage seekers who feel discriminated against by locals who expect them to exhibit sociopragmatic mastery and adhere to local cultural norms and linguistic hierarchies, while their White counterparts benefit socially from lower a priori linguistic expectations and relaxed conversational norms of politeness. In these prior studies, passing as a local and being a heritage speaker of the target language were congruent, whereas in the case of Ben and Lucia, this relationship was reversed. This points to the need for greater attention to race and exploration of other intersectional identity dimensions in studies of heritage learners abroad.

Other identity facets that emerged as salient across the three case studies were good student and good sojourner identities, which often entered into conflict with one another. For Ben, performing the identity of a good student on the program conflicted with his ability to become a good sojourner who achieved immersion in the target language and culture. He resolved this tension by withdrawing his investment in performing a good student identity and refocused his efforts on reconstructing himself as a good sojourner. For Lucia, identifying as a good student on the BarSA program was essential to her identity as a good GU student, but this
conflicted with her desire to be a good sojourner. She resolved this tension by transcending the perceived opposition between being a good student and a good sojourner, placing her emphasis on being a good sojourner for the sake of being a good student. David found a similar balance by putting an emphasis on being a good student for the sake of being a good sojourner.

There was nothing salient about gendered and sexualized identities in the three sojourners’ stories. This absence is noteworthy in light of the extensive focus on gender in the SA literature on identity (e.g., Kinginger & Farrell Whitworth, 2004; Polanyi, 1995; Siegal, 1996; Trentman, 2015; Twombly, 1995). It is certainly not the case that gender-related or sexuality-related incidents were absent. During one of the excursions, I witnessed one incident of unmistakable sexual harassment, where one of the Black female students (P17), was groped from behind by a middle-aged man who was speaking Spanish and appeared to be a local. I checked with the student in question to make sure that she was okay. She appeared mildly annoyed rather than shaken by the incident. Neither she nor her colleagues who witnessed the incident wrote about it in their diaries or mentioned it in the interviews. However, P17 and several other colleagues did write about another situation where she felt she was discriminated against by a waiter in a café, who served other White clients before serving her and another female student who was also Black (P08). And another incident surfaced when Lauren mentioned in her post-sojourner interview experiencing catcalling in Madrid (she also volunteered the thought that Madrid guys were more “aggressive” than Catalans because she and her friends experienced catcalling there). This recount was given, however, only as a passing anecdote and not a defining aspect of her experience. David also mentioned one instance of unwelcome flirtation by an older man who worked at the university campus, but he only mentioned it in order to give an example of a situation in which he would switch to speaking English in a way that he believed to be
inaccessible to his interlocutors in order to make covert disparaging remarks about them to his peers. There are some subtle hints of heterosexual masculine identity in Ben’s data. And both of the stories in which he passes as a Latino or is complemented on his Spanish occurred in situations where he strikes up conversations with women in clubs or festivals. Perhaps gender-related incidents were not frequent or salient enough to be experienced, noticed, or remembered by the sojourners. Maybe the sojourners in this cohort were less sensitive to behaviors that other sojourners with different prior lived experiences might have interpreted as harassment. It is also plausible that because I am a heterosexual male who was obviously older than the students, they may have felt less inclined to talk to me in any depth about experiences of sexual harassment, which are often perpetrated by and thus associated with heterosexual males in positions of power.

In sum, the evidence from these three very different sojourners in the BarSA program most strongly revealed the weight of racialized identities during SA. Racialization affected all SA experiences, not only those of visible minorities, and regardless of skin color, phenotype, or identification. And racialization interacted with local ideologies, social capital, agency, and other intersecting dimensions of identity (e.g., migration status, social class, ethnicity, linguistic identity).

**8.4 Problematizing Mechanistic Notions of Social Networking and Interaction: The Role of Friendship**

The findings of the present dissertation study shed unique light on the nature of social network formation during SA and the quality of the interactions that social networks entail, in the target language and beyond. While abroad, students constructed networks of practice and interaction across three main spheres: the cohort of U.S. students, the conversation exchanges,
and service encounters and other brief casual encounters in the public sphere. Each of these spheres was heterogeneous in terms of identities and languages, highlighting the inevitability of superdiversity in today’s world, particularly in large urban contexts (De Fina & Perrino, 2013; De Fina et al., 2017). The U.S. cohort itself was made up of individuals from diverse backgrounds (Section 3.4, Table 7). However, the local students who participated in the conversation exchanges were equally diverse, as they reflected the superdiversity of Barcelona: Some were autochthonous locals of Catalan or Spanish ethnicity, others came from international migrant family backgrounds and varied in terms of national ancestry and generational status. Likewise, the people whom sojourners engaged in commercial establishments and the public sphere included not only autochthonous locals of Catalan or Spanish ethnicity but also international migrants from diverse origins, as well as other sojourners and tourists. Amidst these three spheres of interaction with highly diverse actors, a major discovery was the importance of friendships, which emerged as a salient theme across the three case studies. This is not to say that this factor played out in the same way for all sojourners. One important way in which the sojourners differed is that Lucia and David were able to make new friends both with other members of the U.S. cohort and with their exchange partners, whereas Ben was unable to make friends in either group. Ultimately, however, for all sojourners, friendships drove the patterns of social networking and interaction they were able (or unable) to establish during the five weeks in Barcelona.

All students were seen to desire not only social interaction but also friendship while abroad. This desire was a commonly expressed goal in the predeparture surveys and questionnaires, and it was remembered in the post-sojourn interviews as a strongly felt emotional need while they were abroad. The formation of new friendships required more than common
superficial interests, and sojourners’ rationalizations of why friendships developed or failed to develop were strikingly entangled with prior biographical experiences and self-ascribed identities. Ben longed for an age-peer with whom he shared superficial hobbies (e.g., sports) and mutual personal interest, and who would serve as a good source of Spanish practice. While David valued shared interests as well, he also sought out individuals who shared his multilingual, immigrant family background. Lucia also seems to have formed new friendships along similar affinities as those valued by David. Thus, there was a clear connection between identities and friendship.

Indeed, it can be fair to conclude that identity impacted who was sought out as a friend, who became friends, and how. This was certainly true, in general, of friendships within the cohort. I noticed, for example, that the racial/ethnic minority students tended to cluster together. Friendships among the members of the U.S. peer group were associated with a number of academic, affective, and practical benefits, which often intertwined with the good student and the good foreigner identities mentioned above. The BarSA sojourners studied together and collaborated on joint final projects, they provided one another with emotional support and companionship, and many of them cooked and / or traveled together. While the evidence does not unequivocally demonstrate that friendships with U.S. cohort members were sites of learning, it does indicate that friendships with U.S. peers fostered activities that led to learning. Moreover, Ben’s case was the only one where friendships with multiple other cohort members did not flourish, and this was to his detriment. The ambivalent role of the conational peer group has been discussed frequently in the U.S. SA literature (Coleman, 2013; Doerr, 2015; García Amaya, 2017; Kinginger, 2008; Wilkinson, 1998a). There is a well-documented tendency for students to bond with co-national peers, which can be seen as a double-edged sword. On the one hand,
bonding with the U.S. peer group may yield benefits, including enhanced engagement. On the other, it may threaten social interaction with the host community and the L2. When interacting with other cohort members, students may use the L1 predominantly or exclusively, and this association may intensify as friendships deepen (García-Amaya, 2017). In the present study, however, friendships with the U.S. peers did not automatically imply the use of English: While the U.S. peers used English for some purposes, they all made an effort to use Spanish (I will expand on this point in Section 8.5 on the language pledge). Thus, the desire for meaningful friendships while abroad shaped the social circles that each sojourner was able to form, but these social circles did not determine language use.

That identity impacted who was sought out as a friend, who became friends, and how also seemed to be true of whatever incipient friendships were formed with locals in the short five weeks of the summer, mostly with partners from the BarSA program’s conversation exchange. Conversation exchanges with local students are a common feature of SA programs and have been suggested to enhance immersion and facilitate access to social networks of local same-age peers (Dewey et al., 2013; Marijuan, 2018). They were a core feature the BarSA Program, where they were mandatory and were carried out in Spanish only, with the exchange partners receiving monetary compensation. The exchanges were intended to maximize exposure to opportunities for rich, authentic, meaningful communication in the target language with local age peers and also to foster the development of social networks. However, the evidence showed that the conversation exchanges worked optimally only when friendships were formed; otherwise they came to be viewed as practice sessions that were imposed, stilted, classroom-like, and inauthentic, and thus limited in usefulness. David and Lucia found friends in two of the transnational partners, Amira and Miriam, respectively, and in the data, they offered many moments of recognition of the roles
Amira and Miriam played in their development of both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Ben could not find new friends among the conversation exchange partners, and for him the sessions were disappointing and insufficient to fulfill his SA expectation of immersion. This pattern suggests that it was personal connections and friendships (due to shared biographies, common interests, etc.) that made some of the exchanges into useful sites for learning and personal growth for some sojourners.

It is noteworthy that locals with hybrid identities seemed to be interesting to all the sojourners. The local students working as exchange partners who became friends with the sojourners were all hybrid, hyphenated Catalans/Spaniards. In David and Lucia’s case, this was not a coincidence—they attributed their special bonds with Amira and Miriam, respectively, to shared aspects of their migrant backgrounds and identities. But for other sojourners too, when it comes to the conversation exchange partners, there are countless instances in the data where students spoke highly of conversation partners with transnational identities. Meanwhile there are hardly any instances where they mentioned the others. Sergio, Ben’s college friend from Madrid, was also a hyphenated Spaniard. While they did not bond over shared hybrid identities (Ben did not identify as a hyphenated American), Ben seemed to admire Sergio for being a seamless bilingual and might have held him as a model. This might account for why Ben was drawn to Sergio in the first place.

While the desire for meaningful friendships among peers and with locals seemed to drive much of sojourners’ social networking practices and learning, it would be a mistake to dismiss service exchanges and other brief casual encounters in the public sphere as too brief and superficial to qualify as real learning. In fact, whether one-time or recurrent, these interactions were also important sites of interaction and learning. It was here where students experienced the
shock of having to negotiate identity and language choice, where they were met with hospitality or hostility, where they encountered destabilizing challenges that afforded or hindered learning opportunities, where they learned new things about culture and identity, and where they sometimes developed rapport with their interlocutors when these interactions were recurrent. In these latter cases, they were sometimes able to transcend the rigid interactional dynamics of service encounters. This is illustrated most clearly in David’s accounts of his interactions in cafés, where he habitually turned service encounters into conversations about political and social topics. In these sites, sojourners not only learned the scripts but also how to go off-script and to cope with the contingencies of spontaneous interaction.

Finally, it should be noted that all the patterns of students’ socialization abroad just described were mediated by the design of the SA program, which was sheltered and highly intensive, lasted for just five weeks, and took place during the summer. The U.S. students inevitably spent considerable time together, as they shared housing accommodations and attended tailor-made classes, guided tours and excursions, and other program activities as a cohesive group. Free time was largely concentrated in two weekday afternoons and on the weekends, and socializing (whether with U.S. peer friends or with locals with good potential to become friends) competed with other activities such as doing homework, carrying out routine tasks, and pursuing leisure activities. The twice-weekly mandatory meetings with conversation partners, which were carried in a small group format and only in Spanish, hardly made up for the fact that few local students remained on campus during the summer.

To summarize, the present findings challenge the mechanistic ways that social networking and interaction are often dealt with in the quantitative SA literature on L2 use and social networking and many of the assumptions made about language choice and trajectories in
those studies (e.g., Coleman, 2013; Dewey et al., 2013; García-Amaya, 2017; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006). In the present study, social networking and interaction were far from mechanistic; they were driven by friendships. And language choice was not predetermined by social circles or contexts but was emergent and negotiated in situated interaction. Interactions between the macrosocial context of superdiverse Barcelona and aspects of the SA program design such as the conversational partners structured the social networks to which students had access as well as the interactions that took place within them. In the context of these constraints, students exercised their agency to negotiate affordances made available by the macrosocial environment and the SA program.

8.5 The Complexities of the Language Pledge

Many SA programs, including the BarSA Program feature a language pledge, a contract whereby sojourners commit to communicating only in the target language for the entire duration of the SA program. A language pledge is assumed to enhance target language exposure and use and thus to maximize language gains (e.g., Du, 2013; Xu, 2019). Such a policy is thought to be particularly important for supporting L2 use and linguistic gains among Anglophone students on short-term programs, where sojourners’ target language exposure is constrained by the limited duration of their stay abroad, and they may be confronted with Global English or tempted to use the L1 with their co-national peers. Specifically, a perceived benefit of a language pledge that has been documented is that it can allow sojourners to claim identities as dedicated language learners in the context of English as a global language (Trentman, 2013b). On the BarSA Program, students signed a language pledge, agreeing to communicate only in Spanish for the entirety of their stay and were aware that they would face penalties if they were observed repeatedly violating the pledge.
Before, during, and after SA, students expressed positive attitudes towards the language pledge. Students’ comments reflected a belief that the main benefit of the language pledge is that it would override the social norm of defaulting to English with their co-national peers, for whom English was the dominant language and the de facto lingua franca for communicating with other university peers in the United States. Meanwhile, students expressed little concern about English as a global language before going abroad.

Generally speaking, students’ experiences regarding the impact of the language pledge on language use within the cohort were in line with these positive expectations as well as with their expectations that student would comply with the pledge. Overall, students made an effort to use only Spanish. However, they varied somewhat in terms of how strictly they interpreted the Spanish-only policy. Some, such as Ben, attempted to use only Spanish and only used English when they felt they had no choice. Others, such as David and Lucia, while using mostly Spanish, were less strict and reported frequent codeswitching. When interacting with co-national peers, students generally reported that they tried to use Spanish whenever possible. Only Ben’s account differed somewhat, but even so, he estimated that half of his colleagues interacted in Spanish, even when no members of the program staff were present to enforce the language pledge. Contradicting Ben’s perceptions and concurring with students’ interview comments, my observations also suggested that adherence to the language pledge was high during program activities, that is, when members of the program staff were present. This was not surprising, as students were aware that repeated violations of the language pledge would be punished. However, adherence to the language pledge was also quite high when members of the program staff were not around, at least judging from many comments in most students’ interviews and diaries. This may have been partly due to students’ early fears that their peers would report them
for violating the language pledge, as we see in Lucia’s story. However, as Lucia says, these fears soon subsided once students established rapport with one another and realized that their peers would not report them. Furthermore, it seems that there was an ethos of peers not policing the language pledge or telling on one another; either behavior was taboo. Not even Ben policed the language pledge, despite the fact that he might have wished to, as indicated by his interview comments. And David criticized one of his peers (likely Ben) for putting down others for using some English. Nevertheless, the short period when students were more anxious about sticking to Spanish in the presence of their peers whom they did not know well might have been key to normalizing Spanish use among the peer group. In fact, some students remarked that once the program ended it had been strange to speak English with one another.

Yet, students did encounter some tensions regarding the use of Spanish, and these tended to be resolved with a form of light or selective translanguaging. A salient tension arose only within the peer group. As discussed in Lucia’s story, the sojourners’ English repertoire came more naturally for certain topics and when wishing to perform a youthful communication style among themselves as they would have performed back home. Lucia’s account also shows how relaxing the language pledge and forming and performing friendships with other cohort members seemed to go hand in hand. Once again, the tensions caused by adherence to the language pledge were felt most acutely in the context of forming and maintaining friendships. Translanguaging—in this case, speaking Spanish with resources from English sprinkled in when deemed necessary or desirable—enabled students to perform satisfying identities without abandoning the ethos of using Spanish as their primary means of communication, since they reported using Spanish resources to the greatest extent possible and drawing on English when necessary. Such behaviors amounted to a minor violation of the language pledge that was not oriented to as sanctionable by
the program staff. Ben opted out of these dynamics of selective translanguaging in the performance of youthful identities and friendships, to his detriment. His strict interpretation of language pledge silenced him for much of the time, hindered his social relationships with the other cohort members, and led to feelings of loneliness in the absence of friendship.

Another reported tension arising from the language pledge related to the exchange partners. Specifically, some students perceived a lack of language reciprocity in the conversation exchanges. In the eyes of their interlocutors, the sojourners possessed an assumed perfect competence as native speakers of English, which they recognized as desirable to their local partners, and thus one potential source of social capital. But since the exchanges were carried out only in Spanish, as per the language pledge, they were unable to leverage this capital. This finding is thus reminiscent, although in the opposed direction, of the finding reported by Dewey et al. (2013), where sojourners in Jordan and Morocco were able to accrue new friendships by agreeing to become tutors of English for the locals. It is noteworthy that in virtual exchanges for language learning, research about eTandem (Cziko, 2004) argues for the benefits of the reciprocity that obtains when partners meet (in the case of eTandem, virtually) and exchange the roles of language expert and language novice by conducting half a session in one language and half in the other (Akiyama, 2018; Tudini, 2016). The tension felt by not being able to use the display of expert English identities to entice friendships with the exchange partners was resolved through a form of translanguaging that was even more selective than that among peers, and which was not felt by the students to violate the language pledge. Other types of instances where students sometimes translanguaged despite their overall loyalty to the language pledge actually enhanced their experience: for example, using English among themselves to make covert comments to other U.S. students about the people around them, who were assumed not to
understand English; using English and Spanish to act as linguistic and cultural mediators for U.S. tourists seen in trouble on the street; and, in David’s case, using English to perform an identity as an English language expert and Catalan to undo privilege and perform a savvy international visitor identity.

Tensions aside, the sojourners perceived adherence to the pledge as resulting in several benefits. Many students felt that pledge adherence resulted in a habit of speaking Spanish, to the point that, as mentioned, some said it had felt strange to speak English with one another once the SA program ended. Some students, such as Samantha (in Chapter 4) and Lucia, also reported that using Spanish with U.S. peers resulted in a special community bond. Yet another interesting perceived benefit of the language pledge that was mentioned by Lucia was that speaking only in Spanish in events involving the whole group mitigated other embodied social cues (e.g., mannerisms, style of dress) that might have led locals to ascribe a negative American stereotype to the cohort of sojourners. On the other hand, the present study was silent on some benefits of the pledge attested in past SA studies. Trentman (2012) notes of her Anglophone sojourners in Egypt that they explicitly invoked the language pledge while interacting with locals to perform identities as dedicated language learners and thus gain access to Arabic in situations where speaking English might have seemed more appropriate. No students in the current study reported or were observed explicitly invoking the language pledge for this purpose. When interacting with hosts in brief exchanges, they did report experiencing strong social pressure to accommodate to their interlocutors’ linguistic preferences, and interlocutors sometimes persisted in English, regardless of students’ expressed desire to use Spanish. The language pledge seemed to have been considered by the BarSA students of little avail here and was not invoked as relevant to local interlocutors.
In sum, the language pledge operated as a negotiable affordance in the SA context under investigation. Its relevance and importance and the extent to which it was respected varied according to the sojourner and the situation. These findings point to the fact that language use is not a zero-sum game. This is one way in which target language and non-target language use are not dichotomously opposed or mutually exclusive. Some quantitative studies have suggested that language pledges are beneficial for fostering language gains (e.g., Du, 2015; Xu, 2019). Other qualitative studies such as Trentman (2013b) and Dewey et al. (2013) have revealed a more complex picture in which L1 and other non-target language use impact sojourners’ engagement with the SA context in complex ways. Trentman’s findings suggested that a language pledge can enable English-speaking sojourners to claim identities as dedicated language learners and thus use the L2 in situations where English lingua franca use is viewed as more normal or appropriate. By reverse image, Dewey et al.’s findings also suggested that as English (and other languages) can be leveraged as a source of social capital for gaining access to local communities, a language pledge may hinder students’ access to a valuable affordance. The present qualitative findings about the language pledge do not simply echo these previous ones, as no evidence for either extreme was gleaned in the present data. Rather, they add complexity to any discussion of the language pledge and call for contextualization as an imperative when making sense of the affordances of this programmatic element in SA. While it is likely that fervent attempts at adhering to the language pledge among the BarSA sojourners in this study sometimes resulted in more Spanish use and thus potentially more learning, at other times, using other languages besides Spanish enhanced sojourners’ engagement and their access to language—especially within the context of talk inside the cohort and occasionally in the conversation exchanges. And Ben’s dogged adherence to Spanish-only discourse practices ultimately silenced him in many
situations where he could have spoken Spanish, paradoxically curtailing, at least in theory, his SA learning.

8.6 Limitations and Future Research

As with any study, the limitations that must be acknowledged for this dissertation study cannot be taken lightly. I have strived to present multiple perspectives through triangulation with observational sources, by drawing on the extensive body of sociolinguistic research on Catalonia, as well as my own personal experiences as an insider to both U.S. and Catalan societies. However, I relied mostly on students’ perceptions and did not investigate hosts’ perspectives and their locally grounded interpretations (Kinginger, 2013). A more complete account of how identity conflicts and learning affordances are co-constructed could be achieved through interviews with locals (which I did not collect) or by analyzing interactional data (which I did collect but analyzed only in a few instances).

Even when I circumscribed myself to triangulated reliance on students’ perceptions, I only had time to analyze a limited amount of data and to tell the stories of just three of the eight focal participants. Luckily, the data for the five other focal participants (included as a group in Chapter 4) are collected and rich and thus awaiting opportunities for more analyses in future studies.

It must also be recognized that the thick descriptions and interpretations that I have presented are rather short term, and thus I cannot speak to the longer-term impact of SA on these young people’s lives, which can take significantly different turns, as the very long longitudinal case studies by Mitchell et al. (2016) have shown. Give the availability of time and resources, I would like to undertake a future research program in which a similar case study methodology as
the present one takes a truly longitudinal perspective on multilingual sojourners in the multilingual context of Barcelona.

The main finding of the present dissertation is that multilingual contexts interact with sojourners’ identities, ideologies, and investments in affording and hindering opportunities for learning; these interactions are complex and unpredictable; and that both the affordances and the hindrances will be subject to negotiations driven by the agency and goals that have been shaped for each learner by their biography and milieu prior to the SA experience. The findings, however, should not be used to generalize in terms of saying which type of multilingual SA environment will produce what effects in which type of learner. I have more data (that I have not presented in this dissertation and which await more analyses in future studies) that shows that the experiences for learners of the same “type” differ in remarkable ways.

Another factor delimiting the generalizations that can be drawn from the findings is the advanced level of proficiency expected, required, and exhibited by the students on the BarSA Program. Predeparture proficiency level has been found to impact SA experiences and learning outcomes in complex ways (Issa & Zalbidea, 2018). It is thus important to consider how students advanced Spanish proficiency might have mediated their engagement with the multilingual context and how their experiences may differ from those of students with more modest predeparture proficiency levels. Likewise, it should be noted that learners’ interaction with the multilingual context was mediated by program type and features. The multilingual focus and local cultural orientation of the BarSA Program students’ content courses and interventions not be seen commonly in other SA program designs may have facilitated sojourners’ awareness of diversity and their trajectories of multilingual becoming, as was certainly the case for Lucia and David.
Finally, and related to the caution against overgeneralizations, it should be clear to readers that SA in general is an elite enterprise (Lörz et al., 2016; Twombly et al., 2012), and that the BarSA cohort I studied here, as diverse as it was in other ways, must be considered rather uniformly elite: These sojourners enrolled in a private institution in the United States that is highly selective and financially demanding of family resources. Thus, prior schooling and present academic preparation were likely very strong in all members of the cohort, and their socioeconomic backgrounds were likely to be very privileged. I caution readers, therefore, to consider how privilege might have created affordances for Ben, Lucia, and David that may not fit with other types of learners who go abroad, like those found in many of the extant studies. Certainly, they must be taken as very different from realities more rarely captured in SA research, such as that of sojourner Alice in Kinginger (2004). Future SA investigations of SA are sorely needed targeting a wider range of institutions serving diverse student bodies. In the words of Marijuan and Sanz (2018), “A progressive SA research agenda could benefit greatly from studies that further analyze the impact of the immersive experience on groups like heritage language learners (HLLs) and on Hispanic-serving and adult serving institutions, such as community colleges—areas that are currently underresearched” (p. 187).

8.7 Conclusion

In interrogating assumptions about SA, SA research has often critiqued the purported links between a sojourn abroad, linguistic and cultural immersion, and dramatic language gains. This literature questions the extent to which students who go abroad actually become immersed and exhibit measurable gains, often highlighting barriers to immersion and proposing interventions for helping students avoid or overcome such obstacles. In doing so, SA research reproduces the monoglossic ideology of SA as immersion. The present dissertation critiques the
notion of monolingual immersion as an ideal to strive for, by showing the complexities, ambivalences, and paradoxes that such notion spawns when SA unfolds in a superdiverse and multilingual context. While SA research has sought to identify and remove barriers to immersion, the findings of the present dissertation show how the ideology of SA as immersion itself can be a barrier to multilingual becoming. Multilingualism itself is ambivalent and can be construed as an obstacle or affordance. The present findings contribute to various areas of SA research: beliefs and ideologies, identity, social interaction abroad, and program interventions. They also point to underexplored outcomes and moderating variables, including tolerance of ambiguity and the awareness of the sociopolitics of language. These findings suggest that it is important for learners to claim identities as legitimate speakers of the target language and to push themselves to draw on target language resources whenever appropriate. Multilingual learning in SA is grounded in recurring instances of situated social action and interaction. In these settings, translanguaging through the full repertoire of languages and identities may be advantageous. It is hoped that the present dissertation study has gone some way in showing that the encounter between sojourners and multilingual contexts in SA is worth studying in its own right if the goal is to illuminate the opportunities for language use and, hence, language learning that can arise from SA experiences, revealing the diverse ways in which biography, identity, and ideologies mediate which opportunities are missed and which fulfilled.
Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Email

Hi everyone,

I'm Brandon Tullock, and as Dr. Sanz said in her email, I’m one of the grad students who will be joining up with you in Barcelona this summer.

I'm writing to ask for your help by filling out a brief online questionnaire and agreeing to being interviewed by me about your views on studying abroad before and / or after the program. You can find more details about this project in the attached consent form. After reviewing the form, please reply to this email and indicate whether you do or do not wish to participate.

Below you'll find a link to the online questionnaire, which should only take a few minutes to complete.

Please click here to be taken to the online questionnaire

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions you may have.

I hope to hear from you soon and look forward to getting to know all of you in a few days!

Best,

Brandon

[Attachment: Informed Consent Form for Students]
Appendix B: Language Background and Biographical Questionnaire

Background Questionnaire: Georgetown in Barcelona 2017

Directions

On this questionnaire, you will answer questions about your experiences learning languages, your reasons for studying abroad in Barcelona, and basic biographical information.

Your responses are confidential and will be compiled by myself, Brandon Tullock, a researcher not affiliated with the Barcelona program. Neither the Program Director nor the Assistant Directors will have access to your data during the program. The answers you provide will in no way impact the grades you receive or your relationship with the Program Director and Assistant Directors.

In completing the questionnaire, please do NOT hit the back button in your browser. This will erase your data and you will need to complete the questionnaire from the start. Also, please do not submit more than one response to the questionnaire. If you have any questions, concerns, or problems, please contact Brandon Tullock at bdt28@georgetown.edu.

Basic Demographic Information

1. What is your first and last name?
2. What is your gender? (Female, Male, Prefer not to say, Other)
3. What is your sexual orientation? (Please fill in or write “I prefer not to say.”)
4. What is your ethnicity or race? (Please fill in.)

5. How old are you? (Please fill in.)

6. Where were you born? (Please provide the city and U.S. state or city and country.)

7. What is your legal nationality (Please fill in or write, “I prefer not to say.”)

8. In what city were you living before coming to university?

9. As of spring 2017, what was your class standing? (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)

10. What is your academic major? (Please fill in or write, “I haven’t decided.”)

11. What is your academic minor? (Please fill in or write, “I prefer not to say.”)

12. Which school are you in at Georgetown? (Georgetown College, McDonough School of Business, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Not Applicable, Other)

Language Background and Travel Experience

1. What is your native language, that is, the language you learned as a child at home from your parents? (Check all that apply, English, Spanish, Other)

2. Apart from English, were you exposed to any other languages at home growing up? (Yes, No)

3. If you answered Yes to the previous question, please list each language and briefly describe your experience with it. (E.g., Italian: My grandmother immigrated to the United States from Italy and spoke Italian with me when I was a child. I picked up some words and phrases in Italian from her, but I do not speak the language myself.)

4. Apart from English and Spanish, do you know or have you ever tried to learn another language, even if you did not get very far? (Yes, No)
5. If you answered Yes to the previous question, please list each language and briefly describe where and how you learned or tried to learn it. (E.g., French: I took four years of French in high school and could still have a basic conversation in French.)

6. Please indicate the number of YEARS you spent studying Spanish at the levels listed below. (Elementary School [Grades K – 5], Middle School [Grades 6 – 8], High School [Grades 9 – 12])

7. What is the name of the last Spanish course you took in college?

8. Have you ever traveled outside the United States for more than two weeks at a time? (Yes, No)

9. If you answered Yes to the previous question, please list each country along with how long you were there and the nature of your trip. (E.g., Bangladesh: I regularly travel with my family to Bangladesh for four to six weeks during the summer to visit relatives.)

**Motivation**

1. Please briefly explain why you are learning Spanish.

2. Please briefly explain why you chose to participate in the Georgetown Barcelona Summer Study Abroad Program.

3. Would you be willing to chat with me in the next couple of weeks about your upcoming study abroad experience? (Yes, No)

4. If you answered Yes to the previous question, what is the best way to contact you? (Please provide your preferred medium [e.g., email, facebook, cell, skype, etc.] along with your contact details [e.g., email address, cell #, screen name, etc.])
Appendix C: Predeparture Interview Protocol

Introduction
Thanks for agreeing to talk to me today! I’m doing some research on study abroad, and I’m interested in learning more about study abroad from students’ perspectives. I’ve asked you to talk to me today because I want to understand more about you and your background and what has led you to studying abroad in Barcelona this summer. I expect this to take about 30 minutes. Is that alright?

Before we get started, I need to make sure you’re okay with me recording this. Is that still okay with you? I also wanted to remind you that I’m not part of the program, and I won’t be evaluating you at any time. I’m interested in getting your honest and candid opinions on things. It’s also important for you to know that if for some reason you need a break or need to go, you can stop the interview at any time, and if I were to ask you a question that you’d prefer not to answer, please feel free to say, “I’m sorry, I don’t want to talk about that,” and that’s absolutely fine. Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Interview
Academic, Professional, and Personal Goals

What are you studying and why?

What are your plans after graduation?

Is studying abroad somehow related to your academic or professional goals?

Do you have other more personal reasons for wanting to study abroad?
Family Background and International Travel

Tell me about your family.
What was it like for you growing up?
What was it like coming to college?
Tell me about your international travel experience.

Spanish and Other Known Languages

How would you describe your Spanish language abilities?
How would you describe yourself as a language learner?
How would you describe your classroom experiences learning Spanish?
Have you ever had the opportunity or the need to use Spanish in real life communication?
How do you feel about using Spanish to communicate while abroad?
How do you feel about the language pledge?

Motivations and Attitudes Regarding Study Abroad

Tell me about when you decided to study abroad.
What were your reasons for signing up for this program in particular?
Did you consider other study abroad programs?
How do you feel when you think about your upcoming trip?
What kind of advice have you been given about studying abroad in general or on this particular program? (e.g., by parents, professors, mentors, other students)
Appendix D: Written Reflections Prompt

Queridos estudiantes:

Durante vuestra estancia en Barcelona os pediremos dos tareas. Una que escribáis un diario y otra que consiste en grabaciones de voz mientras os encontráis con vuestros compañeros de intercambio. Para esta última, os mandaremos instrucciones más adelante durante la semana. Os agradecemos mucho vuestra colaboración.

Aquí tenéis los enunciados de los diarios, os pedimos que los leáis con atención. La tarea es que cada semana escribáis una reflexión de unas 500 palabras aproximadamente. Estas son las tres opciones:

1. Cuenta una historia sobre una experiencia significativa que hayas tenido en Barcelona (ej. una interacción que te haya hecho sentir feliz, triste, avergonzado, exitoso, eufórico, frustrado, enfadado, etc.).

2. Haz una reflexión en la cual relaciones tus experiencias en Barcelona con algo que hayas aprendido en tus cursos.

3. Haz una reflexión sobre las estrategias de aprendizaje que usas y las metas que tienes para la próxima semana / para el final del programa.
Cada semana podréis elegir entre una de estas tres opciones. Podéis elegir siempre la misma o cambiar según os apetezca. El hecho de escribir estos diarios es una buena manera para que podáis reflejar mejor vuestras impresiones y nos ayuda a mejorar el programa.

Las entradas de los diarios se entregarán cada viernes, y el jueves recibiréis un correo recordatorio. Las tenéis que mandar en un documento Word a Brandon (bdt28@georgetown.edu). Ningún miembro del programa tendrá acceso a los diarios durante el programa.

Si alguno de vosotros tiene un blog bilingüe o en español sobre su experiencia en Barcelona, puede usarlo en vez de escribir el diario, pero antes debe pedir permiso.
Appendix E: Conversation Exchange Recording Prompt

Grabaciones de Conversaciones

¿Qué te pedimos que hagas? Como eres participante en el programa del proyecto de Barcelona Study Abroad (BarSA), te queremos pedir que hagas una grabación de unos 30 minutos de las conversaciones que tienes con tus parejas de intercambio. Te pediremos que hagas una grabación al principio de tu estancia, una en la mitad, y una al final.

¿Por qué nos interesan estas grabaciones? El objetivo principal del proyecto BarSA es entender mejor el aprendizaje de lenguas en estancias de estudiantes en el extranjero. Una de las maneras más importantes de aprender una lengua es en interacciones con hablantes nativos. Nos gustaría aprender más sobre el carácter de estas interacciones y cómo contribuyen al aprendizaje de la lengua.

¿Quién escuchará estas grabaciones? Durante tu estancia, ni el director del programa, ni los profesores, ni los asistentes del programa tendrán acceso a estas grabaciones. Estas grabaciones no se usarán para controlarte (ej. para saber si hablas en inglés) y no afectarán a tus notas en absoluto. Además, las grabaciones se editarán para que sean anónimas y para que no se pueda identificar a ninguno de los participantes en la conversación.
¿Cómo se usarán estas grabaciones? Los asistentes de investigación, estudiantes de doctorado de Georgetown, escucharán las grabaciones, las transcribirán y codificarán. Podrán usarse en presentaciones de conferencias o en publicaciones.

¿Y si me da vergüenza algo que se ha dicho durante la conversación? ¡No hay problema! Si durante la grabación aparece material sensible que preferirías que quedara excluido del estudio, entonces simplemente dilo durante la grabación (por ej. diciendo “no para la grabación” o “esto que he dicho sobre X no se transcribe,” o “queda fuera del estudio,” etc.), y eliminaremos esta parte de los datos.

¿Sacarás algún beneficio? Creemos que hacer estas grabaciones no sólo nos dará a nosotros, los investigadores y diseñadores de programas, una información muy importante para mejorar futuras experiencias de aprendizaje en el extranjero, sino que también aportará a ti una herramienta muy útil para una autoevaluación y control de tu propio proceso de aprendizaje de lenguas durante el programa, extendiéndose en el futuro. Volver a escuchar estas interacciones fuera de las presiones del tiempo real de la conversación, te puede ayudar a reflexionar sobre áreas en las que has mejorado y sobre aquellas que a lo mejor necesitan atención en el futuro.

Cómo hacer una buena grabación:
La mayoría de los móviles tienen una aplicación de grabadora digital que puede hacer grabaciones de gran calidad. A continuación, tienes algunas recomendaciones para hacer una buena grabación de voz:
- Busca un lugar tranquilo que no tenga mucho ruido de fondo. Evita bares ruidosos o lugares en el aire libre en los cuales de estés moviendo.

- Graba en grupos de 4 – 5 como máximo, incluyendo a la pareja de conversación.

- Coloca la grabadora en un lugar accesible para todos (por ej. en el centro de la mesa).

- Pide, por favor, a cada miembro del grupo que diga su nombre al principio de cada grabación para que sea identificable a la hora de hacer las transcripciones.

Guarda el archivo en un formato .wav o .mp4/.mp3 y mándaselo a Brandon a la dirección de correo bdt28@georgetown.edu
Appendix F: Post-Sojourn Interview Protocol

Part 1: Quickly fill in gaps from questionnaire and predeparture interviews

Part 2: Grand tour of daily life in Barcelona

- Talk me through a typical day in your life while you were in Barcelona.
- Other than the student dormitory and the university, what other places did you visit often, or do you find especially memorable?
- How did your social media use change while you were abroad?
  - How much do you use social media at home? Did that change for you at all while you were in Barcelona?
  - Why do you think that was the case?
  - Did you do that on purpose?
  - Were you aware you were doing that?
  - Did social media and technology contribute anything to your learning experience?

Part 3: The story of the study abroad experience

- Tell me the story of the day that you arrived in Barcelona.
  - Do you remember having a strong emotional reaction to anything at the very beginning? (e.g., Shock? Surprise? Stimulation?)
- Tell me about your interactions with the locals.
  - Was that true from the beginning or did it change over time?
  - Do you feel like your interactions went smoothly? Did you ever struggle?
Did you always speak only Spanish 100% of the time?

In what situations would you not speak Spanish with locals?

How was it using Spanish to communicate with local people?

- When you were out and about interacting with locals, did anything happen to you that was especially memorable, either bad or good?

**Interactions with program peers**

- What were your relationships like with other peers on the program?
- What were your interactions like?
- Was that true from the beginning, or did it change over time?
  - Did you always speak only Spanish? 100%?
  - How was it using Spanish to communicate with your peers?

**Language exchanges**

- Tell me about your experience with the *intercambios*.
  - Do you feel like your interactions went smoothly? Did you ever struggle?
  - Was that true from the beginning, or did it change over time?
    - Did you always speak only Spanish? 100%?
    - How was it using Spanish to communicate with the exchange partners?
- Did anything happen to you that was especially memorable with the exchange partners, either bad or good?
- Was it important to have a language exchange component on this program? Why?
- Do you think your partners gained anything? If so, what?
- Do you keep in touch with any of the exchange partners?
Orientations

• How did you feel about the initial orientations to different parts of the city and to the university?

• What parts did you find especially valuable or helpful?

Classes

• Tell me about your classes.

• Of the courses you took while abroad, which was your favorite? Why?

• What about the other classes?

• Did the content of the courses contribute anything to your experiences out of class?

• Are there aspects of Barcelona that you would have had trouble understanding if it weren’t for the classes?

• Which class projects and assignments did you enjoy the most or find the most beneficial?

• What about the other class projects?

• Did your projects and assignments lead you to any personal discoveries that you might not have made on your own? Tell me about this.

Excursions

• How did you feel about the Tuesday excursions within Barcelona?

• Did they add anything, in your opinion, that you wouldn’t have been able to get from the five weeks without them?

• How did you feel about the Thursday excursions to other parts of the region?

• Was it important to see other places besides Barcelona?

Travel within Spain

• Did you go anywhere on the long weekend?
• If so, what was it like being in a completely different region of Spain?
• Did you talk to people there?
• Did you tell them you were studying in Barcelona? How did they react?
• What did you take away from this experience? Did it change your view of Barcelona in any way when you came back?

Part 4: Language and culture issues

Major challenges

• What were some of the major challenges that you ran into over the course of the program?
• How did they get resolved?
• What would you recommend to others who will do the Barcelona program so they can prepare themselves for those challenges?

Identity issues

• Overall, did you feel like you blended in or stuck out in Barcelona?
• Did you try to do anything to make yourself blend in or stick out?
• What do you think the locals thought of you?
  o Did it bother you or please you that they saw you in that way?
  o Do you think how locals saw you affected how they treated you?
  o Did you use any strategies for dealing with this?
• Did you ever find that you were treated like a tourist? A “typical American”?
  o Could you describe some of these instances?
    ▪ How did you feel in these situations?
• How did you react?

• Did people try to use English with you?
  o Could you describe what happened in some of these instances?
  • How did you feel in these situations?
  • How did you react?

Language pledge

• Looking back, how do you feel about the language pledge?
  o Were there times when you felt thankful for the language pledge?
  o Did you ever feel frustrated by the language pledge?

• Were there ever times when you felt like being able to speak English or another language besides Spanish might have enhanced your experience?

Multilingualism in the SA Environment

• If another friend was considering going to Barcelona next summer and they asked you, what would you tell him or her are some of the good things and bad things about studying abroad in Barcelona as opposed to another place in Spain or Latin America?
  o Did you ever wish that you had gone to study abroad in a smaller town or a place with fewer tourists, instead of Barcelona?
  o Were you ever glad that the program took place in a big city like Barcelona?
  o Did you ever wish that you had gone to study abroad in an officially monolingual part of Spain, like Madrid or Salamanca for instance, instead of Barcelona?
  o Were you ever glad that the program took place in an officially bilingual region?
I ask these questions because some people say that the fact that Barcelona is not the best place to study Spanish abroad. Have you ever heard anyone say this or something similar?

Contact with Catalan

Do you remember the very first time that you saw Catalan written down or heard someone using Catalan? What was your reaction?

Could you describe some of the ways you would encounter Catalan in your daily life in Barcelona?

- written language in public spaces or on the web
- in private businesses (e.g., restaurant menus)
- in overheard conversations
- in conversations in which you were involved (people addressing you or one another in Catalan)

How did you feel when you encountered Catalan in these situations?

- Were you interested? Did it bother you?

How did you react to Catalan when you encountered it?

- Did you pay attention to it? / ignore it? / avoid it?

How easy is it for you to understand Catalan when it’s written down? spoken?

Did you end up learning or using any words or phrases in Catalan?

What did you end up learning about the Catalan language? (e.g., the way it’s used, people’s attitudes towards it and other languages)?

Did anyone ever express to you any strong opinions about the linguistic situation in Catalonia?
• Have you been following the news about the October 1 referendum for independence and the Spanish government’s response? What is your take on the conflict?

• A friend of mine from university who lived in Madrid for a while is moving to Barcelona. She wrote to ask if it’s necessary to learn Catalan or if she can get by with Spanish. What would you tell her?

• After these five weeks, you’ve gotten a taste of Barcelona. Could you see yourself living in Barcelona in the future?

• If you lived in Barcelona, would you learn Catalan?

Part 5: Wrapping up

• Before this summer, what were you hoping or expecting to get out of your study abroad experience?

• Did your Barcelona experience meet all your expectations? How satisfied are you with your experience?

• Anything else you want to tell me about your experience living and studying in Barcelona?
Appendix G: Transcription Conventions

Transcription Conventions (adapted from Tannen, Kendall, & Gordon, 2007, pp. xiii – xiv)

((words)) double parentheses enclose transcrber’s comments in italics

/words/ slashes enclose uncertain transcriptions

– a dash indicates a truncated intonation unit

- a hyphen indicated a truncated word or adjustment within an intonation unit

? a question mark indicates a relatively strong rising intonation

. a period indicates a falling, final intonation

, a comma indicates a continuing intonation

↑ an up arrow indicates high pitch

↓ a down arrow indicates low pitch

(.) a period in parentheses indicates a silent pause

: a colon indicates an elongated sound

words underlined words indicate emphasis

<laughs> angle brackets enclose descriptions of paralinguistic behaviors

<manner>words> angle brackets enclose descriptions of the manner in which an utterance is spoken

«words» double arrows indicate highly accelerated speech where some spoken syllables become deleted
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