Methodology

The present study is situated in the methodological paradigm of phenomenology and in its primary focus on individuals' 'lifeworlds,' that is, on everyday social practices and individuals' perspectives that shape their lives and that concern investigating how human experience is perceived (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). It corresponds to the underlying project's conception of social phenomena as dynamic, evolving, and changing especially in the super-diverse social context encountered at the beginning of the 21st century.

The study follows an interpretivist approach, since multilingualism is constructed by speakers *and observers* as the social reality as a societal phenomenon (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). By observers I mean to include researchers like myself as well. The broader ontological stance adopted here is post-structural or critical realism (Heidegger, 1962). As defined by Heller (2008b) this position "assumes that reality may be socially constructed, but it is constructed on the basis of symbolic and material structural constraints that are empirically observable" (p. 250). Therefore, individuals construct and co-construct the meaning, beliefs, and knowledge of their world with others, but these social practices always depend on "practical conditions" and "cultural frames of meaning" (Heller, 2008b, p. 250). This is important to bear in mind throughout the study since my personal, ontological, and epistemological beliefs influence the selection of the phenomena to be studied, how they will be investigated, and how they are portrayed in the analysis (see also 3.5). I further agree with Heller (2008b) that "researchers are active participants in the construction of knowledge" and that "we therefore have to think about research as a meaningful social activity which can have social, economic, and political consequences" (Heller, 2008b, p. 250). Considering the influence that a researcher has on the study's accuracy, it is important to choose a methodology with which one is comfortable and agrees. Phenomenology incorporates many elements with which I strongly identify and in which I am personally interested. I support van Manen's (2017) understanding of research and the ongoing process of knowledge construction and learning: "Indeed, phenomenological research is often itself a form of deep learning, leading to a transformation of consciousness, heightened perceptiveness, increased thoughtfulness and tact, and so on" (p. 163)

The different instruments employed, such as the questionnaire and interviews with students and teachers in three different cantons and language regions respectively, allows the work to reach a greater variety of individuals' voices and to capture a more multi-faceted representation of the social phenomenon under examination. The following section first presents relevant research in the field conducted previously before elaborating the study's own research questions, research design, protection of human subjects, researcher bias, data collection and analysis, information on the pilot study, data collection/analysis issues, translation, and finally the study's limitations.

3.1 Relevant Research in Phenomenology/Multilingualism

The National Research Program on "Language Diversity and Language Skills in Switzerland" (NRP 56), carried out by the Swiss National Foundation until 2009, advanced the research field immensely to which the current study aims to contribute. Stotz (2009) examined the ways in which AL learning enriches children's and teenagers' identity formation, how it shapes their educational experiences, and what type of multilingualism should be supported and developed by schools. The study's focus is on the language reform introducing 'early English' programs in two primary schools (ten classes) in the cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Zurich. These two cantons were the first ones to start teaching English in grade three and two respectively, thereby including two FLs in the curriculum of primary education. In a first step, discourse about the decision-making process to reform language teaching was analyzed. Semi-structured interviews with the Ministers of Education and several project leaders responsible for the decision were conducted. The data were used to reconstruct the language reform's history. In a second step, demographic as well as language biographic information about students and teachers was collected. Teaching practices were also observed. Teachers as well as students were interviewed to examine their language experiences in- and outside of school. They were also asked to elaborate on their opinions about languages in general and about the language reform in specific. The discourse analysis and the interviews with the Ministers of Education as well as project leaders revealed four principal arguments in favor of English and a simultaneous delegitimization of national languages. Due to their relevance for the current study, they will be presented in detail in what follows:

- Equal opportunities: Public schools must act and provide equal opportunities for learning English for those who cannot afford private classes to balance out the advantage privileged students have, due to their additional, private (and often costly) English tuition.

- Globalization and economization: Schools in the 21st century need to prepare their students for the information and communication society and economy's demands.
- Early language education: Tensions and uncertainties were detected concerning the learning of two FLs in primary school. On the one hand, empirical results are cited and somewhat overgeneralized, but it is believed that children are overwhelmed with two FLs on the other. This argument is often used to discredit national languages since an earlier introduction of French is never discussed.
- English presence: English is said to play a major role in daily Swiss-German language practices; it is also the language of the youth culture and technology, which is why children and teenagers are commonly exposed to it.

The study's findings show a big support for the language reform, which changed the language order from French to English first in both cantons, Appenzell Innerrhoden and Zurich, by teachers and students. It further suggests that the four arguments, cited previously in favor of the language reform, were only used to legitimize the preference of English over French. Furthermore, the study points out that the adaptation of the content as well as the methodological-didactic approach associated with the reform has been neglected. Teaching material and topics treated in class do not relate to the students' interests ("youth culture" as argued above). Stotz (2009) pointed out that students prefer a clear line between school and their spare time. This means that English instruction, which is typically associated with higher motivation, more interesting topics, and a closer connection between students' lifeworlds and school, is neither necessarily perceived nor wanted as such by the students. The argument that teaching English would be equivalent with the integration of the youth culture is far-fetched. The suggestion was made by a student to incorporate socially relevant and intercultural topics into language teaching instead.

Bossart (2011), who collaborated in the study conducted by Stotz (2009) and draws upon the same data in her dissertation, investigated how plurilingual students position themselves within an officially multilingual state. Her findings suggest that students feel at ease in different lifeworlds, based on language and culture. Students from both rural and urban backgrounds embrace pluri- and multilingualism openly and are curious about the changing multilingual reality. A more inclusive approach to language learning was suggested.

Pietikäinen et al. (2008) investigate the lived experience of language for a plurilingual Sami boy, using drawings, interviews, and a sentence completion task. They conclude that the multilingualism, to which he is exposed, is both a precious resource and a barrier. In addition to this, different languages position him differently: Using Finnish makes him part of the majority, speaking Sami puts him in the role of a minority language speaker. The boy consciously chooses English as

a global language, and in so doing, he positions himself within globalization and internationalization processes.

McClain's (2010) study on parental agency in decision-making processes on their child's school curriculum in a Mexican American family draws on van Manen's (1990) phenomenological framework embedded in an ethnographic research design. Through interviews and observations, McClain was able to reconstruct the reflective process of the parents' and child's educational lifeworld in order to better understand (the meaning of) the situation to several actors. Given the insights that she gains through her methodological procedure, she suggests that parents be more actively involved and their voices, especially those of immigrant and low-income families, respected in educational decision making. Hickey's (2012) study investigated the lived experiences of learning English by drawing on the phenomenological approach of Gadamer (2004), Heidegger (1962), and van Manen (1990), to emphasize the learners' own voices and feelings during their learning experiences. Interestingly, she argues that her phenomenological study led herself to re-examine her own linguistic practices and experiences so that she ended up "un-learning to learn" (Hickey, 2012, p. 145). This study is a fascinating example of how phenomenology is also a learning process for the researcher who can experience a transformation to better understand the participants' voices. Kirova and Emme (2006) employed van Manen's (1990) phenomenological methods, emphasizing the children's lived experiences, in an attempt to examine the lifeworld and the consciousness of the position occupied within the lifeworld of immigrant children in school. They contend that the visual representation of the children's experiences and trajectories through *fotonovelas* enriched their phenomenological analysis and allowed for a more profound reflection for participants and readers. They found that the migrant children's interpretation of visual, instead of text-based narratives, allowed for a better reconstruction of their lived experiences in particular, which might have been distorted without phenomenology.

3.2 Research Questions

Using a phenomenological research design, I seek to deepen the understanding of experiences, perspectives, and practices in educational settings, by asking the following research questions:

1. How are students' and teachers' linguistic repertoires constituted and how are they employed so as to position individuals and groups within (restrictive) linguascapes?
2. What are students' and teachers' lived experiences of language?

3. What are students' and teachers' perspectives on Switzerland's multilingualism and its multilingual education?
4. How do students and teachers (de)construct and legitimize (existing) language hierarchies?
5. How do they (de)construct and legitimize (existing) sub-hierarchies within certain languages?

3.3 Research Design

The study's underlying research design is phenomenology. The origins of phenomenology were described almost 80 years ago (Speigelberg, 1960) as a movement toward an individual-centered research methodology to include exploration, meaning, and feelings and to move away from numerical-logical-based studies of control, assessment, and improvement. Phenomenology derives from the Greek verb *phainesthai* (to show itself/to appear) and was first used by Immanuel Kant in 1764 (Heidegger, 1962). It investigates societally and individually important phenomena based on a biographical account of individuals' perceiving, feeling, positioning, and existing. As Heidegger (1962, p. 27) explains, "the meaning of the expression 'phenomenon' is *established as what shows itself in itself*, what is manifest. The *phainomena*, phenomena,' are thus the totality of what lies in the light of day or can be brought to light" [emphasis in original]. According to the literature in the field, phenomenology that draws upon biographical life trajectories of speakers in a multilingual space is a well-established methodology (Treichel, 2004). As a researcher using phenomenology, the aim is to focus on a phenomenon, to help us to understand it in as many of its facets as possible, and to raise awareness of the positive and negative effects it can have on a micro-, meso-, and macro-level. By uncovering daily routines, practices, and habits, which have been internalized and are carried out mainly unconsciously, I follow van Manen (2017, p. 163) when aiming at "new levels of self-awareness, possible changes in life-style, and shifting priorities." Language is a socially and individually important phenomenon because we all use language to express ourselves, to form a representation of ourselves in the world and in relation to other individuals (Jakobson, 1960). Merleau-Ponty (2014), a well-known phenomenologist, supports this position and argues that language is a capacity that comes from the body to express the body and to relate it to the world and other interacting bodies.

Central to phenomenology as a research design is the concept of lifeworld, which was coined by one of the founders of phenomenology,[1] Edmund Husserl (1913; 1970),

1 Zahavi (2008) criticizes the term because almost all phenomenologists after Husserl distanced themselves from him in their argumentation and developed their own methodologi-

and is a translation of the German word *Lebenswelt*.[2] *Lebenswelt* or lifeworld refers to the world of lived experiences. Of particular interest are those phenomena that are taken for granted or that are part of a person's common sense. Their existence is not recognized (anymore) by the people who experience and live them every day, while these phenomena continue to impact their lifeworld unconsciously. According to van Manen (2017), one of the most important contemporary practicing phenomenologists adopting a human science perspective, the lifeworld or the experience lived in one's personal world, "is both the source and the object of phenomenological research" (p. 53). He emphasizes that, unlike in Cartesian dualism, it is concerned with the world as it is lived and experienced by people, not simply with phenomena existing separately from human interaction. Heidegger (1962), drawing on and expanding upon Husserl's work on phenomenology, adapted the term *Lebenswelt* to include not only lived experiences but also modes or ways of being or existing in the world.

According to Christensen, Johnson, and Turner (2014), phenomenology's main goal is to understand given social phenomena or concepts through the eyes of participants who experience these phenomena, that is, their perspectives, and how these shape their everyday lives. It is important for the researcher to understand the connection between the phenomenon to be investigated and the individual's positioning toward it within a certain social space. Meaning, therefore, must be constructed out of the relationship between the two (Merriam, 2015). It is the researcher's task to collect rich, personal data from people who experience a certain phenomenon or concept in their lifeworld, to describe it appropriately, and to compare the data among all of the participants in order to better understand the phenomenon's complexity and what exactly was experienced in what way (Moustakas, 1994). In this study, the phenomenon analyzed is (restrictive) multilingualism from a subjective/individual and educational perspective. Data was collected from social actors (students and teachers) as verbalized perspectives on their lifeworlds and educational practices. Given the focus adopted in phenomenological research on individuals, their experiences, and lifeworlds, it suits the study's underlying research questions and theoretical framework best. As pointed out by Creswell and Poth (2018), a central phenomenon needs to be identified which is relevant both to a group of people within society and to the researcher. It is also crucial for a phenomenological study to examine a social phenomenon of which a more profound and detailed understanding would contribute to a better everyday life in society and higher social justice for all social groups. The study focuses on the lived experiences of language, that is, real-life linguistic practices and the perspectives

cal framework. Phenomenology is therefore said to have "no common method and research program" (p. 661).

2 For additional information on the concept of *Lebenswelt* see Husserl (1970).

that participants have on their personal plurilingualism and on Switzerland's societal multilingualism. Furthermore, a phenomenological study aims to contribute to the amelioration of these experiences through the thorough investigation of these lived experiences, perspectives, and practices. In this study, this can be achieved by recommendations on language policies and practices and by raising critical awareness and recognition of one's own multi-faceted language biography.

Heidegger approaches consciousness as a collection of lived experiences in an effort to uncover the positive and negative impacts that certain phenomena have on people's daily lives and to enhance meaning making in and of the world. These experiences have been collected in the process of socialization and represent the individual's life trajectory or their "'texts' of life" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 77). These lived experiences need to be understood and interpreted since only the capability of interpreting one's surroundings appropriately, and thus to apprehend cultural meanings and expressions, is considered unique to humans (Heidegger, 1962; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). Heidegger further argues that every individual is embedded in sociocultural and historical contexts that shape their understanding and positionality in the world. It therefore follows that reality is not something that exists separately in the world, but is always constructed individually based on (historically) differently shaped backgrounds.

The study's focus on individual perspectives, their bodily and emotionally felt consequences for their language biography, and on the impact on their lifeworlds can be positioned in the existential or hermeneutic phenomenology. More specifically, this study draws more on the Heideggerian phenomenological framework since lived experiences of language are investigated through reliance on the understanding and interpretation of the individuals impacted. In line with Gramsci's (1971) concept of *cultural hegemony*, it is important to recognize the hegemonic processes that influence our positioning in and meaning making of the world. This implies that the study does not follow Husserlian phenomenological philosophy, in which individuals are simply considered pre-existing beings that have a (clear) understanding of their biographical trajectory separate from the world. Instead, it integrates a poststructuralist element that views individuals as subjects who position themselves and are positioned within a given historical-political, power-and-ideology-laden space full of both norms and categorizations (Althusser, 1971; Butler, 1997). Their biographical trajectory and perspectives are, thus, clouded by the position they occupy and are attributed within this space. As Gramsci (1971) noted: "The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory" (p. 324). Another important element taken from the poststructuralist approach to methodology is its focus on disruption, exclusion, and suppression that can be experienced throughout one's life trajectory based on language (Derrida, 1996). Instead of view-

ing the phenomenological and poststructuralist approaches as opposing each other, their strengths should be considered together and should be adapted to each study context accordingly.

Van Manen (2017, p. 30–31), in his seminal work on phenomenology as a research methodology, describes a six-step methodological procedure, which is applied in this study:

1. Turning to a phenomenon that seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
2. Investigating experience as we live it, rather than as we conceptualize it;
3. Reflecting on the essential themes that characterize the phenomenon;
4. Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;
5. Maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;
6. Balancing the research context by considering parts and whole.

The phenomenon at the center of this study are language hierarchies within Switzerland's diverse linguascape and its multilingual education. The phenomenon is of serious interest and relevance to many individuals, educators, and policy makers (Demont-Heinrich, 2005). This investigation is very much based on lived experiences rather than mere conceptualizations or descriptions because it asks individuals how they perceive, experience, negotiate, and (de-)construct language hierarchies within a multilingual country on an everyday basis.

Van Manen's (2017) six-step methodological procedure can be applied to the present study in the following way: first (1) the phenomenon of language hierarchies in a multilingual society was chosen as a research focus. The study wants to find out how these language hierarchies are experienced, (de)constructed, and negotiated by individuals to provide a better understanding and to raise awareness of potentially (unnoticed) inequitable social practices. Second (2), the phenomenon was appropriately and systematically analyzed through scholarly and newspaper articles and in terms of language (education) policies. Third (3), essential themes were detected. These include, for instance, *de jure* language policies such as the LangA that provides equal status to four national languages, *de facto* language policies with Swiss German as the majority language dominating over other national and HLs and the rise of English as a preferred FL to be learned. These themes were first described in their historical and geographical context and are connected to existing empirical research. Fourth (4), the study's contribution to a better understanding of the phenomenon consists of written data (interview transcripts and questionnaires). The detected patterns, codes, and themes were written and rewritten to achieve a fuller picture of the phenomenon under investigation. Fifth (5), the analysis was conducted while bearing the pedagogical implications it would have on multilingual teaching and on individuals' lifeworlds affected by the phenomenon

in mind. Finally (6), the study also takes into consideration that it is embedded in a value-laden research environment in which many actors, including myself, pursue different interests and in which various competing voices need to be integrated to arrive at a more profound and inclusive understanding and learning experience.

3.4 Protection of Human Subjects

In a study drawing on phenomenology, where the focus is on individuals' personal lifeworlds, perspectives, feelings, and their everyday practices, it is hugely important to protect the participants involved. Therefore, participants were recruited on a voluntary basis. They were given the possibility to withdraw from the data collection process at any time. All data were treated confidentially, only by me, and were anonymized. During data collection, I made sure that the participants were as comfortable as possible when talking about their lived experiences of language by providing space for them to talk. I repeatedly informed them that they had the option not to answer any questions that they thought were too intrusive or personal, to rephrase something they said, modify answers they gave in the questionnaire, ask additional questions, or make comments on my interview guide. Since the interviews were all conducted in the participants' preferred language (with the limited choice of Swiss German/German, French, Italian, and English), it was assumed that they could speak freely, aiming at a fair treatment and opportunity of expression for everyone. The audiotapes were deleted after the transcripts were created.

3.5 Researcher Bias

Everyone needs to be aware of their own biases, especially in a qualitative study in which the interaction between researchers and participants is key and where researchers step into the lifeworlds of the study's participants to better understand a certain social phenomenon. For instance, I believe that languages are not neutral. Social constructs such as mono- or multilingualism are not neutral and neither is the act of studying these phenomena (Heller, 2008b). By adopting a phenomenological perspective, I strive to find out which languages are meaningful to them and why, how linguistic (in)security impacts their daily lives by interrogating, and I seek to challenge their perspectives on language hierarchies. Through conversations with them, I wish to give them the space that they deserve and to amplify their voices. In my accounts, I do not want to and cannot simply tell their story as my own. I will share my understanding of, and try to tell, their stories as their own relying on their own words and experiences. This reconstruction is naturally subjective. It is not a depiction of reality as it is, but my (informed) interpretation thereof. As a researcher,

I am aware that I am responsible for thorough and systematic fieldwork as well as for the accurate presentation of participants' accounts. I have taken multiple precautions to document my own biases against and reactions to, all forms of collected data and to record aspects of intersubjectivity through MaxQDA's 'logbook.'

I have expectations of and beliefs about multilingualism and multilingual education because I have an academic background in education and linguistics, being myself a speaker of multiple languages and living as I do in a multilingual environment. I believe that hegemonic processes affect the education system and often hinder its actors from speaking up for themselves to improve their learning practices and experiences. I believe that language hierarchies exist in society and facilitate the accumulation of linguistic capital for the speakers of prestigious languages and that this represents politically and economically dominant social groups. Speakers of heritage and national minority languages, conversely, are disadvantaged due to the low status and value that their L1 is attributed within the linguistic market. I expect these processes to be mirrored in the negotiation of language hierarchies in the classroom with the education system's reproduction and legitimization of the monolingual and monocultural habitus (Gogolin, 2008). Therefore, always being aware of my own stance and inevitable influences when engaging with the participants and analyzing the data is indispensable.

That said, being aware does not mean remaining neutral or objective. I believe that being a researcher who shares aspects of the phenomenon of interest with the participants, and who cares about amplifying their voices and creating more equitable multilingual and educational practices, cannot be completely neutral or objective. I am well aware that I have a great influence on the way in which the study is conducted and how the data are analyzed. Hence, I see myself rather as a participating researcher than as a neutral observer. Denzin (1997) argues that researchers who are (participant) observers in the field can never be objective. This is an important divergence from positivist, quantitative research where criteria such as validity, reliability, and objectivity are deemed necessary. Phenomenological research, on the contrary, calls for more flexible procedures and techniques that depend on the situation, issue, or space to be examined, the participants involved as well as the underlying institutional mechanisms and structures to a significant degree. The researcher's ideology, emotions, experiences, and worldviews are always present and need to be made transparent. In this study, the aim is not to paint a picture of objective reality, but to provide a subjective account based on the participants' voices in a manner influenced by my own positionality.

I rigorously documented my data collection and analysis in order to make my procedures as transparent and comprehensible as possible. Additionally, employing and sticking to a semi-structured interview guide guaranteed a standardized procedure independent of the interviewee and setting. The documentation included meticulous field notes, a digital research journal, audiotapes of the interviews, and

their verbatim transcripts. The research journal served as a vehicle in which to immediately write down my own impressions, feelings, ideas, understanding, and preliminary analyses of my experience. This enabled me to compare the spoken and written data with my personal accounts. Furthermore, I gave participants the opportunity to ask questions before, during, and after the interview and provided my contact information so that they could reach me after data collection was finished. Finally, I offered to provide a copy of my results as well as a summary to the participants personally and even to their institutions if they were interested. I collected personal email addresses from those who were interested in case they would no longer be associated with the participating schools by the time the work was finished.

3.6 Data Collection

The data were collected through in-depth interviews with students and teachers while students also filled in a questionnaire to examine lived experiences of language, practices, and perspectives within the qualitative research paradigm. More precisely, the questionnaire was initially sent out to gather information about the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, their individual language biography, use, and preferences. Based on these results, the sample for the student interviews was selected.

3.6.1 Research Setting

The study took place in three different research settings, given the study's intention to represent as many Swiss language regions as possible and to consider the particularities of each region. I chose the cantons of Grisons (GR) for Romansh, Zurich (ZH) for German, and Fribourg (FR) for French. The canton of Grisons, Switzerland's only official trilingual canton, was the natural selection for Romansh as an official language since it is geographically limited to this region. It has a rich history of multilingualism and has constantly faced challenges in language rights, activism, and policies. The canton of Zurich, an official monolingual canton, was chosen since the canton's former Minister of Education, Ernst Buschor, initiated the first-ever introduction of English before a national language that ought to have been learned at school. In addition to this, Zurich is an economically strong canton and home to many international companies. The canton of Fribourg was chosen due to its long history as an official bilingual canton separating Switzerland's German- and French-speaking populations through a 'language border.'

3.6.2 Site Selection

In line with the research design, the research sites were chosen intentionally and carefully (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Following Marcus (1995) and Hannerz (2003), this study adopts a multi-sited research approach. Focusing on multiple sites, instead of one in-depth case study, the analysis of social processes, movements, and trajectories, which cross different 'educational policyscapes' can provide more valuable knowledge (Carney, 2009; 2011; Gogolin, 2002; Zimmermann, 2017). Looking at the ideological, symbolic, and material representation of languages, it is key, as pointed out by Appadurai (1996), to not only apprehend static sites, but also to capture the fluidity and circulation of either the languages' representations or their speakers. The criterion to be met was the exposure to and the lived experiences of multilingualism in a primarily monolingual school restricted by language education policies.

Students and teachers from this school type were chosen, given the limited research on Swiss upper secondary schools. The schools within these cantons were carefully chosen to make sure that Romansh, French, and German were the official school languages at the corresponding institutions. The school in Zurich was selected based on the only positive response that I received from the requests that I had sent out. The school chosen for French is, in fact, an intercantonal school to which students from the French-only canton of Vaud and students from bilingual Fribourg go, so French is the more dominant language here. This was considered important, given the intention to represent the French-speaking perspectives. In the case of Romansh, there is only one public upper secondary school for the whole canton of Grisons. This implies that students from the entire canton complete their upper secondary education in this school. To complicate matters further, these can be students who are speakers of any of the five different Romansh idioms. The challenge for the school with Romansh as a medium of instruction, therefore, is to either standardize the different idioms into Rumantsch Grischun or to provide separate classes taught by teachers who can switch between them. The image below illustrates this particularity.

Figure 6: Languages and idioms spoken in the canton of Grisons

[Vallader, Putèr, Surmiran, Sutsilvan, Sursilvan, German, Italian; top to bottom]

Importantly, despite the multiple requests to gain access to an upper secondary school in the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino, I did not receive a response from the cantonal authorities. Hence, the fourth Swiss language region is not part of the site selection. Nevertheless, by including and comparing three upper secondary schools in the French-, German-, and Romansh-speaking regions of Switzerland in this study, the aim is to represent the speakers of the three national languages within the educational field and to demonstrate how each of the chosen site copes with different linguistic and cultural realities.

3.6.3 Questionnaires

This section presents the questionnaire, one of the instruments used for data collection, the sample, and the procedure.

3.6.3.1 The Instrument

The questionnaire was primarily employed to collect demographic information on the students' language use, competences, preferences, and perspectives for descriptive statistics. It is a suitable tool to better understand and to describe the study's sample, which can be helpful when providing recommendations for language policies and curricula. Understanding and getting to know the participants and their lifeworlds is an essential element, given the phenomenological nature of the study. The questions on language biography and use are mainly based on the European Language Portfolio for adolescents and young adults, a tool often employed in schools for language testing, biographies, or other exercises in the (foreign) language classroom. Being approved as an official complementary language teaching material in Swiss schools, the portfolio provided a useful reference and framework for the questionnaire regarding the formulation of, and the familiarity with, the topics to be included. In this study, a digital questionnaire with 31 questions (5 demographic and 26 content questions) created through Google Forms was used (see Appendix A). It is divided into six sections and contains information about the person, the participant's linguistic and cultural background, language biography, family languages, school languages, personal language use, and language preferences. The information about the linguistic and cultural background gave more insight into the diverse nature of each linguistic repertoire based on the person's upbringing. To what extent this linguistic repertoire expanded in school, was examined in the next section. Students were asked which languages they learned in school, how much they liked them, and what their grades in the current school year's report were. In addition to this, the questionnaire examined the students' use of languages other than their L1(s). They were asked to determine their competency in FLs based on a scale ranging from 1 (I can introduce myself, understand and use familiar everyday expressions, e.g., where do you live?) to 6 (I can use language for virtually everything in unfamiliar situations). The explanations of the scale were based on the CEFR's language levels from A1-C2. They were further asked to specify where, how, and with whom they learned and used these languages. The last section investigated the students' language preferences starting with two rankings of languages which the students used or would like to use. The first ranking consisted of personal languages, e.g., languages used with family and friends, for leisure, associated with heritage and identity. In the second ranking, languages were to be classified according to their value and utility on a professional level, e.g., studying abroad or working in international companies. Students were also asked to rank how satisfied they were with language teaching at school, whether the learning of English should be prioritized, whether other L1s should be more actively integrated, and whether the cultures and languages represented in class should be more debated on a 5-point Likert-scale. Open-ended questions invited the students to elaborate on whether they would prefer learning English over either French or

German (this question was specified depending on the language region). If the students' L1 was not officially used in school, then they were asked to explain whether they thought it should be more actively included, how so or if not, why not. Finally, they were asked if they wished to drop a language that they were learning in order to introduce or intensify others and explain why. I considered it important to reach as many students as possible through questionnaires to sensitize them to the issue since students' perspectives are often neglected in policy-making decisions, and since they do not often have the chance to openly express their interests themselves.

3.6.3.2 Sample

I was granted permission to send the questionnaire to two classes of students within one school in each of the three cantons. Due to financial reasons and lack of time, the questionnaires were only provided in the school's official language. Since the participating students were all enrolled in upper secondary school, I assumed that they would be able to fill in the questionnaire easily in the local medium of instruction. A total of 94 students filled in the questionnaire: 38 in GR, 36 in ZH, and 20 in FR.

Table 2: Questionnaire sample

Item	ZH	FR	GR
N	36	20	38
Gender	52.8% female 47.2% male	68.4% female 26.3% male 5.3% prefer not to say	54.8% female 45.2% male
Place of birth	91.7% Switzerland 1 Vietnam 1 Germany 1 England	85% Switzerland 1 USA 1 Germany 1 France	100% Switzerland
Year of birth	2000 – 2002	1999 – 2004	2000 – 2004

Nationality/ies **(By passport)**	77.8% Swiss 4 Swiss/German 1 Swiss/Macedonian 1 Swiss/Turkish 1 Swiss/Pakistani 1 Swiss/Italian	50% Swiss 2 Swiss/Italian 1 French/British 1 Swiss/Portuguese 1 Swiss/US 1 Swiss/French 1 Swiss/German 1 Spanish	78.9% Swiss 2 Swiss/German 1 Swiss/Canadian
Age when arrived in Switzerland (if born in a different country)	11 days – 4 years	2 – 8 years	N/A
First language(s)	92% Swiss German and German 8% German *without* Swiss German 22% bilingual German and Bosnian, Vietnamese, Hungarian, Italian, Romansh, Urdu, Turkish, Macedonian, Swahili, Tirolean dialect	70% French 30% bilingual French and Italian English, German, Cantonese, Japanese, Portuguese, Italian	95% bilingual Romans – wiss German/German 1 English and Swiss German 1 Romansh, German, and Dutch
Language proficiency[3] in L1s **(Self-evaluation)**	86.1% very proficient in their first L1 69.2% very proficient in their second L1	70% very proficient in their first L1 20% very proficient in their second L1	85% very proficient in their first L1 82% very proficient in their second L1

The vast majority of the participants were born in Switzerland. This is mirrored in the students' nationalities who all (except for one in Fribourg) are (also) Swiss nationals by passport. Similarly, all students speak the official regional language – German for Zurich, French for Fribourg, and Romansh/German for Grisons. Their second L1s are more varied, however. Almost all students in Grisons are bilingual,

3 Language proficiency here refers to students' reading and writing competences and the options for self-evaluation range from very few words to full texts without any difficulties.

whereas this proportion is 22% in the canton of Zurich and 30% in the canton of Fribourg. That said, students in Grisons almost always have Swiss German/German or Romansh as their L1s, whereas students in the other two cantons speak other HLs such as Urdu, Macedonian, or Cantonese at home. Based on their self-evaluation in language proficiency, it is higher for the first L1 and comes close to the same proficiency for Romansh – Swiss German/German bilinguals. The difference is striking especially in the bilingual canton of Fribourg where only 20% are very proficient in their second L1. Generally, between 70% and 86.1% of students are very proficient in their first L1, which is also the school's official language. This implies that 13.9% to 30% of the upper secondary students perceive their skills as not very proficient, implying difficulties when it comes to reading and writing in school.

3.6.3.3 Procedure

Due to the Covid-19 crisis and school closures, I was unable to be physically present when students filled in the questionnaire. Therefore, the link to the questionnaire was sent to the responsible teachers who forwarded the email or sent directly to the students whenever their email addresses were available. The questionnaire included open-ended questions that would require some (short) sentences of writing. Other formats were multiple choice questions and grids as well as question statements on a five-point Likert-scale. Given that students were aged between 16 and 20, their familiarity with the internet was expected. The teachers were asked to dedicate approximately 15 minutes of their lesson to the completion of the questionnaire in order to guarantee a higher participation than if they were to do it at home. This could be done on the students' smartphones or, in case they did not possess one, they could open the link to the questionnaire on a school computer or at home. If they had questions concerning the questionnaire, they had my contact information and were able to write questions into the comment sections of the questionnaire. Furthermore, they were asked to provide their names for the researcher's use only so that I had the opportunity to contact the students directly to invite them for an interview. Wherever the students' email addresses were not provided, I contacted the teachers again to ask for them.

3.6.4 Interviews

In phenomenology, qualitative interviews are considered an essential and constitutive element of the research design. Since the study focuses on the human, lived experiences of language, their felt consequences, and personal perspectives on important societal issues, actively listening and talking to individuals impacted by these phenomena is crucial (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2010). I wanted to provide a certain freedom and openness to the participants who could share their experiences in whatever way they felt by conducting interviews

that consisted of a biographical and a semi-structured part. As Rubin and Rubin (2005) point out, the interview permits the researcher and the interviewee to have a conversation about personal experiences, to delve into their lives together, and to mutually co- and re-construct important elements. This allows the researcher to better understand a certain phenomenon to which they are not directly exposed themselves, but are keen to investigate to unravel the potential positive or negative impacts on certain individuals or the society as a whole. Qualitative interviews, therefore, help us to uncover individual understandings and interpretations of the world. Additionally, they also reconstruct habitual processes and events, which the participants often undergo unconsciously (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Importantly, especially in a context in which interview questions deal with participants' everyday practices and lifeworlds, "it is a professional interaction, which goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views as in everyday conversation, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge" (Kvale, 2007, p. 7).

Although every interview is unique, two different semi-structured guides for students' and teachers' interviews with questions linked to my research questions were created in order to ensure comparison among the participants and different samples. The questions were derived from the study's theoretical framework and drew on methodological guidelines of how to conduct phenomenological interviews with a focus on pluri- and multilingualism (van Manen, 2017; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Koven, 2001; Pavlenko, 2007; Bourdieu, 1999). These include, among others, being concrete, asking about specific examples, situations, events, persons involved, locations/spaces, times, being patient, being wary of generalizations, being ready to ask questions to make the discourse more concrete, and providing the opportunity or asking interviewees to use several languages and/or translanguaging techniques to capture their entire linguistic identities.

3.6.4.1 Students' Interviews

The guide for students' interviews was designed based on the scholarly literature and was further guided by the questionnaire's results. The answers solicited through the questionnaire were available during the discussion and were used as a starting point or stimuli to render the discussion livelier. This was considered useful and comforting for the students because they might be shyer or intimidated by the somewhat artificial situation (Barbour, 2007). Knowing that they had already spent time on the questionnaire and were, therefore, somewhat familiar with the topic, they might feel more at ease to talk about their language biography with somebody that they did not know.

The discussion served to arrive at a more subjective representation of the students' language biography and their understanding and perspectives on multilingual education. The questions helped to create scenarios in which the students

would describe their lived experiences of language and how they impacted other spheres of their lives. Since this contribution argues that language is inextricably linked to one's identity, this aspect was explored in greater detail during the discussion. Such connections and feelings cannot always be explained on a written basis, in a short answer in the questionnaire, but instead need elaboration in an open space in which their voices are taken seriously and valued. In addition to the identity aspect of language, languages can also take on instrumental functions and therefore incorporate or concern better economic opportunities. This topic was approached in more detail to see which languages students would typically associate with higher personal and professional opportunities. Students in this age group (16–20) and this school type (upper secondary) are more immediately concerned with university, economically higher impact jobs, or other international activities and are, therefore, more likely to be exposed to multiple FLs.

The interview guide (see Appendix A) consisted of 13 questions and covered topics such as students' lived experiences of language, their understanding of language teaching, and their (de)construction and negotiation of language hierarchies on societal, school, and classroom level. Sub-topics examined students' language use in more detail, specifically whether they faced restrictions or censorship or whether they could benefit from their (plurilingual) language repertoire in their daily lives. They were further asked to explain their personal preferences of languages, including their rankings into hierarchies and their favorite language(s). Other questions investigated their perspectives on language and identity, the importance of communicating in multiple languages, CLIL, and language education policies and laws. A total of 14 student interviews were conducted, which lasted 30–45 minutes each: 9 in GR and 5 in ZH. Fribourg students did not respond to my or their teachers' repeated invitation to participate in an interview.

3.6.4.2 Teachers' Interviews

The interview guide for teachers (see Appendix A) draws on the study's theoretical framework of language biography and is meant to provide as much space as possible for the teachers to share and elaborate upon their own language biography, feelings, perspectives, and teaching practices. They were addressed as individual speakers with their own personal lived experiences of language separate from their role as teachers. A total of 20 upper secondary teachers participated in an interview, which lasted between 45 and 90 minutes each: 6 in FR, 5 in GR, and 9 in ZH.

Similar to the students' interviews, the topics covered the teachers' lived experiences of language, their understanding of and perspectives on language teaching, the (de)construction of language hierarchies, and finally the negotiation of these hierarchies in- and outside the classroom. They were asked about their linguistic repertoires, the relationship between language and identity, and language and economic opportunities. The questions further investigated their teaching practices

and whether they were positively or negatively influenced by the curriculum. Other sub-topics were the federal language policy and the EDK's language strategy. They were further invited to comment on sociopolitical debates on language learning, explain their perspectives on the integration of students' HLs into (their) classroom, and give examples of how they (would) implement this. Teachers were then asked about the status of English more specifically, its link to personal and professional opportunities for students, and its importance on a societal level. It was assumed that teachers would feel comfortable to conduct the interview given that they were able to start it off by talking about their personal lived experiences of language, their language biography, general perspectives, and feelings.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedures: Gaining Entry

A request to conduct a study and to collect data in upper secondary schools was sent to the cantonal authorities in Zurich, Grisons, Ticino, Vaud, and Fribourg. The requests and the project description were sent in the official, cantonal language.

First, I wrote a summary of my project, explaining why and how I wanted to collect data in schools. I then sent it to the cantonal authorities (Ministries of Education) along with a permission request to contact individual schools and to ask them to participate in my study. In the case of Ticino, I had to fill in a particular form and questionnaire providing more details concerning my planned data collection. The automatic response that I received after submitting the questionnaire stated that I would be contacted in case it was decided that the study was considered relevant for the Ministry of Education. I quickly received permission from the canton of Zurich to contact six upper secondary schools for which I was provided with a list of contact information. Of the six schools I contacted, three replied. One principal responded and declined, due to my planned data collection, which he considered very time-consuming and because of the high number of requests they received. Another answered similarly, saying that the school did not have the resources to participate in the study. The third answer that I received was positive and we exchanged further information and details about the project. Five months later, I was provided with a list of teachers who were willing to participate in an interview as well as a list of classes to which I could send the questionnaire and select students for interviews. I then contacted each teacher individually to determine a date for classroom observation (see below) and to arrange an interview at their school. All of the teachers who had signed up agreed to an interview. I then asked for permission to contact some of the students who participated in the questionnaire to determine a date for an interview.

I also received a positive response from the cantonal authorities of Fribourg, which granted me access to one upper secondary school. I contacted the school leader, who was willing to support my project and who gave me the possibility to write a letter to teachers to be shared in the school. Teachers could read more

about the project and could sign up if they were interested. After three months, I received a response including seven teachers' email addresses who had signed up to participate. I contacted those to explain my project and data collection further and to, finally, ask for an in-person meeting at their school to conduct classroom observation and interviews. However, only two teachers responded and agreed to meet for an interview. Two other teachers responded and said that they were no longer available. Two of my fellow graduate students personally knew teachers working at the same school so I asked them to encourage other colleagues to participate in the study. Finally, four more teachers contacted me and agreed to participate in an interview. Although I had sent the request in French, since I was interested in speaking to French-speaking teachers and students from the canton of Fribourg, only one interview was conducted in French. All other teachers, who responded to the request, were either German-speaking or bilingual.

The canton of Vaud demanded an interview to present and further explain my research project to the person responsible at the Ministry of Education. After the interview, it was determined that it was too time-consuming for teachers and students given that I already had the permission to conduct my study in a French-speaking environment in the neighboring canton of Fribourg.

The cantonal authorities of Grisons informed me that it was the school leader's decision to participate in the study. I, therefore, contacted the school leader of Grisons' upper secondary school who replied that he would have to discuss the request with colleagues. I followed up again by email after a month to find out whether they had already decided. Three months later, I received a positive answer from the person responsible at the school, who suggested an in-person meeting to first present my project to teachers and students and to discuss the detailed procedure of data collection. A few weeks later, I went to Grisons to present my project and my planned data collection to different classes of students and to teachers. We created a schedule collectively to organize classroom observations and in-person student and teacher interviews.

I waited three weeks after sending the request to the Ministry of Education in Ticino before following up with an email. Since I received no response, I called and was told that they had received my request, but that it was still pending. In the meantime, I contacted two upper secondary schools in Ticino to see if there were school leaders interested in participating in my study, on condition that I receive the approval. Both school leaders responded that they could not decide this on their own, but that the Ministry of Education would have to approve any intervention in the school beforehand. I then recontacted the cantonal authorities by phone and asked whether there was an update regarding my request. I was told that if there had not been a written response to my request it was because the study was not of immediate interest to the canton.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis comprised three main steps. First, I prepared and organized the two different data sets which resulted out of the questionnaires and interviews by classing them and transcribing the data verbatim (see Appendix B for the transcription conventions used). Second, I reduced the data into themes and codes using MaxQDA2020, while paying particular attention to how language itself was both medium and the subject of the data analysis. In a final step, I visually and textually represented the data as findings (Madison, 2012; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Analogous to the study's underlying methodological framework of phenomenology, van Manen's (2014; 2017) phenomenological qualitative data analysis technique was employed for the interviews and the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The details of each analysis procedure are listed below.

3.7.1 Transcription

For the transcription, I listened to each interview at least three times. At first, I listened to the full interview before transcribing it. I then began writing a word-by-word transcription while listening to the recorded audio. In a third step, I listened to the interview again to ensure my transcript's accuracy and grammatical and orthographic correctness. This was considered necessary since the interviews were conducted in German, Swiss German, Italian, and French. Given the specific focus on language, and in order to protect participants' privacy, all interviews were recorded and transcribed by me using MaxQDA, a qualitative data analysis software. In this way, I was able to already engage in the research activity and to start reflecting and pre-coding the transcript (McLellan, MacQueen & Neidig, 2003). In addition to the more personal connection I had with the text by transcribing it myself, I also detected my own researcher biases. While transcribing, I noticed that I had constructed memories of information during the interviews which was not stated as such by the participants, but already involved my own interpretation. By comparing my researcher notes, also stored electronically in form of a 'logbook' on MaxQDA, with the transcript, I could easily track and differentiate these two dimensions of the data. That said, it is also crucial to keep in mind that even the transcript is influenced by the researcher's familiarity with and attitude toward the topic and is, thus, not a neutral account of data (Mero-Jaffe, 2011).

Interviews in which participants spoke Swiss German, for which neither a common orthography nor grammar exist, were partly transcribed in German; this caused the data to lose some authenticity and meaning. This was a challenging and uncomfortable task since I did not want to 'correct' or to change my participants' way of speaking. According to Oliver, Serovich, and Mason (2005), it is crucially

important to critically assess one's power in participants' representation. I tried to be as reflective, transparent, and accurate as possible while considering how my interpretation of the text automatically influences the transcription and the subsequent analysis, all the while remaining aware of my own biases and assumptions during the transcription process (Fairclough, 2015).

3.7.2 Questionnaires

The questionnaire analysis was twofold. The raw data were taken from Google Forms and were converted into an Excel spreadsheet. They were then organized to conduct descriptive statistics. The analysis included measures of central tendency such as mean, median, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum values. These were then transformed into numbers and text and summarized in tables. All of the data in the tables were rescaled and standardized in order to be compatible on the same scale, since some of the data were retrieved through Likert scales (1–5) whereas other questions required a grade scale (1–6) (Mukherjee, Sinha & Chatterjee, 2018). No further quantitative, statistical methods were employed since the sample was rather small (N=94), and is therefore not representative. The open-ended questions, which each resulted in a few sentences of text, were taken as raw data from Google Forms, were converted into a Word file, and were then analyzed using MaxQDA in concert with the answers solicited through the interviews.

3.7.3 Interviews

The interviews and open-ended questions in the questionnaire were analyzed using phenomenological data analysis and the software MaxQDA2020. Several researchers have developed different analysis techniques in phenomenology. The most popular ones were designed by Moustakas (1994), Giorgi (2009), and van Manen (2014; 2017), with the former two being psychologists and the latter focusing on education and pedagogy. This study adopts van Manen's (2014; 2017) approach to phenomenological data analysis. Van Manen (2017, p.79) argues that analyzing phenomenological data "is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure." The process of analyzing, he continues, is a human desire to make sense and meaning of the world. Within these experiences, certain themes become apparent that are an example of something. Van Manen (2017, p. 86) posits that in order to understand the lived experiences through the examples that the participants provide, the right question to ask as a researcher is: "What is this example an example of?" Themes help to organize lived experiences; they are "fasteners, foci, or threads around which the phenomenological description is facilitated" (van Manen, 2017, p. 91).

Within van Manen's (2017) phenomenological data analysis procedure, which he calls "hermeneutic phenomenological reflection," he differentiates among "(1) the wholistic or sententious approach; (2) the selective or highlighting approach; (3) the detailed or line-by-line approach" (p. 92–93). This study employed approach (3) to guarantee a detailed analysis of participants' accounts. This first required a thorough reading of the transcript, in order to obtain an overall impression and to look for key passages. I then began pre-coding significant, i.e., relevant for the study's interest, reoccurring, statements by highlighting and underlining them in MaxQDA. I then read the transcript a second time to pay particular attention to the previously highlighted sections and thereby distinguished more narrow codes. I marked them with different colors and re-read the transcript at least one more time to make notes and to document my preliminary impressions and ideas for data analysis. I then printed the transcripts and repeated the entire process of reading, highlighting, and coding the interviews in order to compare parallels and differences between my two analyses. I considered this to have been useful because I had experienced a different processing of information when reading it on my computer screen and on paper. Furthermore, since I did not have a second person reading and coding my transcripts, I wanted to reduce my bias as much as possible. As an underlying guide for reflection, van Manen (2017) proposes the "fundamental lifeworld themes…*lived space* (spatiality), *lived body* (corporeality), *lived time* (temporality), and *lived human relation* (relationality or communality)" (p. 101). These themes were always considered in relation to the overarching phenomenon of lived experiences of language and language hierarchies and applied to the interview transcripts and the open-ended questions in the questionnaire.

3.7.4 Emerging Themes

I noticed reoccurring codes throughout the process of transcribing, reading, highlighting, and coding. I summarized broader codes in an Excel spreadsheet and compared them with the highlighted sections when re-reading the student and teacher interviews. The list included the following codes:

- Selective or restrictive linguistic diversity;
- Linguistic stereotypes;
- Feelings/attitudes toward heritage and national languages spoken in Switzerland;
- Native speaker ideology/authenticity;
- Confidence with (first/second/heritage) language skills;
- Perspectives on education/visions and dreams for the future linked to English;
- Media;
- Traveling/freedom/agency.

When re-reading the interviews based on the more wide-ranging codes and comparing them to the Excel spreadsheet, I noticed that some of them were present in almost all transcripts (e.g., perspectives on education) while 'media,' i.e., the over- and underrepresentation of different language groups in the media was only mentioned by a few participants. I then created another Excel spreadsheet with more narrow codes that were present in most transcripts and which were essential themes and concerns. The following themes emerged after a final reading of both the digital and printed interview transcripts, and after contrasting the list of themes with the written data:

- Plurilingual identities within restrictive linguistic diversity;
- Monolingual habitus in the education system;
- Language hierarchies;
- Native-speaker and standard-speech ideologies;
- Symbolic violence.

3.8 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted with 13 students at BA level who were enrolled in my class on multilingual education and with doctoral students and colleagues a few months prior to data collection in order to test the instruments. These students were asked to pilot test the questionnaire and the student interview because of the small age difference of about 1–4 years between the BA and the upper secondary students. The students filled in the online questionnaire and provided valuable feedback in the comment sections as well as during our discussion in class. I changed certain formulations and layout settings that were considered unclear based on their comments and questions. The general feedback was that the questions were interesting and that it was a topic that was not commonly covered in either school or university. Students said they wished that they had dealt with this topic during their school time. The student interviews were tested twice. First, the interviews were conducted in a 90-minute class on multilingual education with both students and I switching between the roles of interviewer and interviewee. Second, they were used as a basis for the students' own data collection with other participants chosen by them for their class presentations. Additionally, the interview guide (created specifically for teachers) was tested with two doctoral students and with one colleague. The feedback led me to reduce the number of questions, to slightly paraphrase certain questions, and to plan more time for potential clarifications and explanations between the questions from my part.

3.9 Data Collection/Analysis Issues

I began planning data collection in schools in September 2019. It was scheduled to start in schools in March 2020, during the same time at which the COVID-19 pandemic was transforming the planet, wreaking death and suffering to many people. The whole of society was under lockdown for a few months, in an effort to decrease the virus' spread, and naturally schools were also closed. This situation made it impossible for me to proceed with my data collection as originally planned. My change of plans is rather insignificant when compared to what many people have gone through, and how COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the entire world collectively. Nevertheless, I was no longer able to first conduct classroom observations and second carry out in-person interviews with teachers and students combined with a creative language activity due to school closings in all three of the cantons that I had chosen. Not knowing how long the schools would remain closed for, and how long it would take to find time for teachers and students to re-organize interviews afterward, I decided to ask for virtual interviews. I emailed teachers and students inviting them to an interview by phone, Skype, MS Teams, FaceTime, Zoom, or via any other software program with which they would be comfortable and to which they had access. Given the chaotic and sudden changes in everyone's personal and professional lives, I am very grateful to those many participants who had already agreed to an interview and were still willing to talk to me virtually. That said, it was extremely challenging to reschedule new interviews with many personal and professional constraints, to overcome logistical/technological difficulties in an improvised home office setting, and to make the interviewees feel comfortable in this unusual and artificial situation. Many were unfamiliar with videoconference tools and preferred to talk over the phone. This negatively impacted rapport-building, as well as the voice quality for recording, thereby making transcription more difficult.

3.10 Translation

Regarding data treatment, I translated the Swiss German, German, French, and Italian transcripts into English while the original language was included wherever a translation would have distorted the intended meaning or where it ran the risk of misrepresenting the participants' voices. Due to the translation, it is possible that the meaning and participants' voices are not as identically represented as they would be without a translation, however. That said, it was considered necessary in order to make the results accessible to a greater audience, even among Swiss language regions, and to harmonize the multiple languages examined in this study. As a result, the practical nature of using ELF for academic purposes simultaneously demon-

strates how power is woven into this study, by necessity, and how such a choice in itself contributes to the reproduction of language hierarchies.

3.11 Limitations of the Study

As indicated above, data collection could not be carried out as planned due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I had planned to triangulate the interview and questionnaire data with classroom observations in schools in order to assess whether participants' verbal accounts and LEPs were in fact being implemented as described. This 'policy-practice dilemma' (Cohen, Moffitt, & Goldin, 2007) requires a stronger focus on the social agents who are carrying out policy decisions and on their daily teaching practices. Furthermore, despite my effort and intention to specifically include and to leverage the minority language-speaking groups, the data do not represent the Italian-speaking groups (except for one interview) and only rely on French-speaking students' questionnaire answers to portray student voices in the *Romandie*. The work could be stronger had I managed to obtain access to these language groups. Similarly, although I tried to select as many plurilingual/HL-speaking students as possible for the interviews based on the questionnaire results, I realized throughout data analysis that the voices of HL-speaking students and teachers or those with a migration background would have warranted an even stronger emphasis in my sample selection. Overall, though, the majority language speakers' perspectives are also meaningful (and necessary) to understand the interdependency of both perspectives.