

5.9.5 Conclusion

The evaluation of the questionnaire survey and the interviews has revealed many links of language and identity in linguistic practices and in the assessment of linguistic practices and languages (and their varieties). The point of departure is a twofold construction of linguistic space: on the one hand, a space is constructed via the observed linguistic similarities which transcends the current territorial borders and follows the old Moselle-Franconian dialect continuum; on the other hand, the territorial borders are reflected in a multilingual Luxembourgish language area which is clearly distinct from the neighbouring German language area. The special status of Luxembourgish for the identities of its speakers shows itself in favourable assessments in the semantic differentials and in high approval rates for the statement that Luxembourgish is a language in its own right. One can add to this also the generally more negative assessment of the use of dialects by German speakers in Luxembourg which in comparison to the use of standard German or Luxembourgish is significantly lower. Luxembourgish distinguishes itself from the Moselle-Franconian dialects of the German border area by its language status, its usefulness in communication as well as by the special role it has played in the construction of a national identity (see Fehlen 2011: 571f) and in the subject constitutions of its speakers. For its speakers, it holds a high communicative and symbolic value, which has the effect that speaking a German dialect in Luxembourg is not regarded as appropriate by all speakers, due to its smaller communicative range and lower status.

5.10 CONCLUSIONS

Following the frequently voiced *desiderat*, the case studies of this chapter sought to present empirical research that links current approaches of spatial and identity studies with those of today's subject analysis. The investigation centred on spatial and identity constructions in border regions and the different ways they articulate themselves in subject constitutions. Building on chapter 3, the present chapter focussed on subjectivations, i.e. the question of how norms and significations are actually lived in everyday-cultural practices. Of particular interest here was, on the one hand, the relationship of subjectifications and subjectivations – or the shifts and creative forms of appropriation they reveal – and the relationship of spaces and identities in cross-border contexts, on the other.

Against this background, a number of case studies elaborated and linked processes of subjectification and subjectivation in the framework of specific contexts. For instance, the everyday dietary practices: these were related to social, cultural and institutional aspects and examined for the subjectivations they express regarding sustainability or 'responsible way of eating'. The findings reflect a largely hedonistic subject constitution of the interviewees that is primarily

marked by self-related or health-related subjectivations as well as economic factors rather than general ethical-political subjectivations. The case study has shown that food-related subject constitutions are at the interface of competing subjectification techniques that are appropriated pragmatically and contingently in everyday-cultural practices.

Another case study reconstructed family identities and spatial constructions expressed in practices of commemoration of the dead. The tombstones with their pictorial formulas examined for this purpose represented a visual discourse and the subject constitutions embedded therein. The comparison of Roman pictorial motifs with their local forms of appropriation indicated subjectivations which, while taking up the Roman visual repertoire, negotiate it via differentiated variations and express local identities. Investigation showed, however, that this creative treatment of subjectivations varied in the examined localities, suggesting a social-spatial differentiation of subject constitutions as well as of territorial spaces.

Workers' estates were the subject matter of a study that examined them as a nexus of everyday-cultural practices with a particular interest for material aspects. The subject constitutions revealed here are situated at the interface of entrepreneurial regulation and control and their acceptance or avoidance, with a tendency for a pragmatic adoption of subjectifications. The materialities connected to the location of the workers' estate were not only related to its constitutive practices, but they also possess a strong symbolic relevance for subjectivation processes.

Subject constitutions were also revealed using practices of remembering. This involved making a connection between subjectifications embedded in the commentary on the Second World War in various national newspapers with subjectivations that can be identified from interpretations of meaning and categorizations of individual remembering. The comparison shows an appropriation of the past that frequently runs contrary to that of the print media, even though the coding of victim/perpetrator which they offer is often adopted. The exception here are subject constitutions in the examined German border regions, which are characterized by a diffuse relationship of the perpetrator/victim categories and mark a general faultline in the survey region, dividing past-related attributions and appropriations on either side of the German state border.

The amalgamation of subjectification and subjectivation processes carried out in the case studies has revealed subject constitutions – and thus empirical moments of identity work – that are largely characterized by ambivalent and unpredictable logics of combination. This confirms the creative-processual character of social practices as well as the identity constructions they contain and points to articulations of the 'in-between' which characterize both territorial and categorial border areas. Such border areas and their mechanisms of construction were examined in more detail in further case studies, for instance using subjectivations in connection with gender and space: here the focus was on practical knowledge

from which one can deduce space-related identities and the spatial situatedness of social practices whose interpretations in turn have a genderizing effect. The study examined places of restoration, places of corporality and outdoor places that show that the binary coding of public spaces as female/male has partly dissolved. The identified subjectivations seem to overcome the classical spatializing gender discourse, but in qualitative respects, the emerging 'heterosocial border region' remains wedded to traditional subjectifications.

A further case study reconstructed subjectivations with respect to sub- and periurban spaces. The manner in which these were referred to by the inhabitants shows terminological deviations from the subjectivating discourse of space-related planning and highlights the general problem of characterizing 'the space' between city and country or border areas in clear and non-contradictory terms. Instead, it was possible to identify diffuse – but consistently positively connoted – space-related identities that materialize in everyday-cultural practices of appropriation.

Appropriation processes were examined in a further case study with respect to space-and group-related identity constructions, using subjectivations regarding the 'Greater Region', a spatial entity that extends across a number of borders, and the group of cross-border residential migrants. What became clear here was that there is a significant crossing of borders in the course of everyday-cultural practices, even though this variable does not necessarily lead to homogenous space-and group-related identifications in border regions. The relationship between an empirical 'experience of space' and identification processes is also the topic of the study about subjectivations with regard to language. Using linguistic practices and language-related interpretations, this study reconstructs the interplay of space- and language related criteria, pointing to a connection between the interviewees' region of residence and the languages spoken there. The established subjectivations moreover reflect appropriated 'language areas', which cut across borders but also reinforce them.

The research context of the 'border region' investigated in all of these studies not only acts as a scientific experimental field for 'postmodern questions' but is itself a tool of discipline. For, as explained in chapter 2, investigations in 'cross-border contexts' exclude the supposition of fixed spatial entities, preset identities and subjects that derive their agency from social structures. Instead, the authors saw themselves (time and again) obliged to take a genuinely constructivist-relational perspective on their objects of research which in this chapter manifested itself primarily as a decentration of the subject. Here, the empirical subject is effectively replaced by the concept of the subject as socially constituted and as constituting the social, in brief: the subject as an empirical project. This research perspective – translated to the analytical categories of subjectivation and subjectification – does not only tie in with the approaches of current cultural studies but is a precondition for adequately accessing subjects in the context of the border.