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# Kiezdeutsch as a multiethnolect

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This paper deals with Kiezdeutsch, a way of speaking that emerged among adolescents in multiethnic urban neighbourhoods of Germany. We argue for a view of Kiezdeutsch as a multiethnolect, based on a recognition study that tested the acceptability and evaluation of such features by adolescents from a multiethnic and a monoethnic neighbourhood of Berlin. Our results support a view of Kiezdeutsch as a linguistic system of its own, with features that establish a distinct way of speaking that is associated with multiethnic neighbourhoods, where it cuts across ethnicities, including speakers of non-migrant background.

## 1. Introduction

Kiezdeutsch is a way of speaking that emerged among young people in multiethnic urban areas of Germany and resembles multiethnic linguistic practices found in other European countries, e.g. *Rinkebysvenska* 'Rinkeby-Swedish'[1] in Sweden (Kotsinas 1992, 1998; Fraurud 2003), *straattaal* 'street language' in the Netherlands (Appel 1999; Nortier 2001), or the *københavnsk multietnolekt* 'Copenhagen multiethnolect' in Denmark (cf. Quist 2000, 2008).

In both the academic and the public discussion, a number of alternative terms have been used besides 'Kiezdeutsch', most prominently 'Kanak Sprak', a term that first became popular through political novels and interview collections by Feridun Zaimoğlu (e.g. Zaimoğlu 1995), who intended to reclaim the initially pejorative, xenophobic term 'Kanake'. While it is used in some sociolinguistic investigations as well as in popular accounts of this multiethnolect, this term still carries the pejorative connotations of 'Kanake' (cf. Androutsopoulos 2007 on language ideology aspects of this), and emphasises a 'foreign' association. In

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1. Named after Rinkeby, a Stockholm suburb with a large immigrant community.

contrast to this, 'Kiezdeutsch' (lit. "[neighbour-]hood German") does not carry such associations.

Another reason to prefer 'Kiezdeutsch' is that this term emphasises that this way of speaking belongs to a "Kiez" [kiːts], a *'hood*, it belongs to informal, every-day communication in a (multiethnic) neighbourhood. In this multiethnic setting, it is used independently of the speaker's ethnic background, that is, it is used by adolescents of the majority ethnicity as well as by those with a migrant background. The following quote from an interview on Kiezdeutsch we conducted with Serkan Cetinkaya, the director of the video series "Tiger Kreuzberg", who is a Berliner of Turkish background himself, illustrates this:[2]

> When you look how many Germans in Kreuzberg do not speak German anymore, that is, they speak this Kiezdeutsch, so that, when you do not see them, you think there are Turks or Arabs speaking, but then you turn round, and they are totally normal German kids, then you notice, really amazing, how this has developed.

In this article, we investigate the status of Kiezdeutsch from the perspective of a variety. While most previous studies on Kiezdeutsch have focused on sociolinguistic aspects (cf. Eksner 2006; Androutsopoulos 2007; Keim 2007), a number of investigations have contributed converging evidence for characteristic linguistic features in Kiezdeutsch on lexical and grammatical levels,[3] such as the introduction of lexical material from migrant languages, some characteristic phonetic/phonological changes, inflectional changes affecting gender, case, and number markers, the emergence of new particles, novel distributional options for bare NPs, and new word order patterns:

(1)  Introduction of lexical material:
   a.  isch will  mit  dir  spielen  **lan**
       I    want with you  play      man
       'I want to play with you, man!'
       (Kallmeyer & Keim 2003:33)
   b.  ey  wie  die AUSsieht  **wallah**
       ey  how  she looks      really
       'Ey, how she looks, really!'
       (Wiese et al. 2009/10, transcript MuH9WT)

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**2.**  Wiese (2009:784).

**3.**  Cf. Füglein (2000); Keim & Androutsopoulos (2000); Androutsopoulos (2001a, b); Kallmeyer & Keim (2002, 2003); Auer (2003); Dirim & Auer (2004); Kern & Selting (2006a, b); Wiese (2006, 2009).

(2)  Inflectional changes:
     aber **mein  schwester** hat mich von   klein  an  schon
     but   my     sister      has  me   from  small  on  already
     immer fertig    gemacht.
     always finished  made
     'But even from the time I was little, my sister has always treated me
     badly.'
     (standard German: 'meine_FEM Schwester')
     (Dirim & Auer 2004: 441)

(3)  New particles:
     a.  "so" as a focus marking particle:
         die HÜBschesten  fraun  kommn von  den  schweden
         the most.beautiful women come     from the  Swedes
         also   ich mein  **so**    BLOND **so**
         that.is I   mean  PTCL blonde  PTCL
         'The most beautiful women come from Sweden, I mean, like, blonde.'
         (Paul et al. 2010)
     b.  "musstu" (from "musst du", 'must you') as a particle marking directive
         speech acts:
         **musstu** LAMpe reinmachen
         MUSSTU lamp     in-put_INF
         'You have to put a lamp in.'
         (Wiese 2009: 799)

(4)  Bare NPs:
     a.  gehst du   heute AUCH viktoriapark?
         go    you today also  Viktoriapark
         'Will you also go to the Viktoriapark today?'
         (Wiese 2009: 792)
     b.  hast du  problem?
         have you problem
         'Do you have a problem?'
         (Auer 2003: 258)

(5)  New word order patterns (V1 and Adv SVO alongside V2):
     a.  wollt   ich keine hektik machen
         wanted I   no    hectic make
         'I did not want to cause any hectic.'
         (Dirim & Auer 2004: 207)

    b.   jetz  ich  bin  18
           now  I    am  18
           'Now I am 18.'
           (Auer 2003: 259)

    c.   isch  wusste  GANZ  genau  dass  er   das   verSTEHT
           I     knew    very   exactly  that  he  that  understands
           und  darum    hab  ich  das  auch  gesagt
           and  therefore have I    that  PTCL  said
           aber  jetzt  isch  HASse  ihn
           but   now  I     hate   him
           'I knew absolutely that he understood that, and that's why I said that, but now I hate him!'
           (Wiese et al. 2009/10, transcript MuH2WT)

Similar findings have been reported from linguistic practices in multiethnic neighbourhoods of Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands (cf. Kotsinas 1998; Appel 1999; Nortier 2001; Braak 2002; Cornips 2002, 2004; Quist 2005, 2008), suggesting that what we are seeing here are general – rather than idiosyncratic – linguistic processes that work in similar ways in similar settings.

As we have shown elsewhere (Wiese 2006, 2009; Wiese et al. 2009), the new linguistic developments evident in Kiezdeutsch do not reflect random simplification, but display a systematicity that gives rise to new grammatical forms both through an elaboration and generalisation of options that the linguistic system of German provides, and through an interaction of information-structural preferences with the grammatical characteristics typical for communication in multilingual settings.

This suggests a view of Kiezdeutsch as a systematic linguistic variety, rather than language use that reflects "grammatical mistakes" (as the dominant view in the public discussion would have it): it suggests that what we find in Kiezdeutsch is not so much a set of unrelated phenomena of grammatical reduction, but rather supports the development of new, systematic, patterns evolving from a complex interplay of grammatical and extra-grammatical domains.

The question that arises then is: Do these interactions and the grammatical and lexical developments they support justify speaking of a linguistic system that constitutes Kiezdeutsch as a multiethnolect that stands on its own? That is, is Kiezdeutsch a multiethnolect, and what would that imply?

In what follows, we first make clear what we understand by 'multiethnolect' (Section 2), and then report findings from a study that tested the acceptability and evaluation of Kiezdeutsch features in order to pin down its status as an identifiable, distinct variety (Section 3).

## 2.   What does it mean to be a multiethnolect?

A discussion of this question has to distinguish two aspects: first, one has to have an understanding of what it means to identify a linguistic phenomenon as some kind of *lect*, and second, one needs to make clear what the *multiethnic* character of this lect implies.

### 2.1   Lects

The term "lect" is traditionally closely related to that of a variety (cf. Bailey 1973): by calling a linguistic phenomenon a "lect", one approaches it from the point of view of a variety, that is, one takes a grammatical perspective and expects it to be characterised by linguistic features that establish a system that stands on its own, with some evidence for systematic relations between its linguistic variables. While different varieties will not necessarily be fully discrete, but could rather best be seen as conventionally defined dots of compression on a continuum (Berruto 1987: 265), a variety should display linguistic features that support a characteristic way of speaking. Seen from an ethnographic perspective, these features should be recognised by its speakers and by other members of the larger community and mark it as distinctive (cf. Gumperz 1975). Accordingly, Androutsopoulos (2001b: 324) talks of "new sociolectal varieties" ('neue soziolektale Varietäten'), based on converging evidence from different studies for a core set of characteristic grammatical and lexical features (cf. also Deppermann 2007: 325, who speaks of "a new ethnolectal variety of German", and the characterisation of Rinkebysvenska in Kotsinas 1988: 136 as variety).

   Traditionally, a certain degree of homogeneity within the grammar of a lect has been considered crucial, leading to objections against this term in approaches that emphasise the variability between speakers and even within one speaker's speech (cf. Fraurud & Bijvoet 2004; Jaspers 2008). Against this background, multiethnic ways of speaking are characterised rather as styles or stylistic practices, which emphasises their use as an expressive behaviour that is connected to the social identity of groups and which can be operationalised according to different social situations and conversational practices (Kallmeyer 1994: 30f.; Irvine 2001; Kern & Selting 2006a, b). Social style as a holistic and multilevel phenomenon is considered to be a challenge to a more traditional approach to linguistic variation that focuses on single variables, which is seen as insufficient to account for the linguistic basis of social categorisation (cf. Auer 2007), particularly when we adopt a view that treats identity as a communicated phenomenon allowing for "the possibility of multiple and flexible, inherently contingent selves that only

have coherence from specific points of view and in specific contexts" (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz 2007: 478).

If we want to describe the way of speaking that is involved in a particular style, though, we need to include linguistic variables in our investigation, and accordingly one often finds both concepts, variety and style, used side by side in studies on multiethnic ways of speaking.[4]

In a unified approach combining the concepts of "variety" and "style / stylistic practice" under the label of "multiethnolect", Quist (2008) interprets the use of a "-lect" term as a signal that this phenomenon is not something exotic, but that it shows parallels to other lects (like sociolects, dialects etc.), and she points out the strategic advantages of this terminology and its potential political impact outside academia. She argues that choosing to view multiethnic ways of speaking either as linguistic varieties or as stylistic practices is a question of perspective: studies that take a variety approach aim to provide a formal description of adolescents' speech in relation to other varieties (e.g. the standard national language), while studies that take a style or practice approach focus on the ways in which their speech is used as a resource for self-positioning within a social space. Following this approach, we will understand "multiethno*lect*" as a term that regards multiethnic speech as a phenomenon that involves characteristic linguistic features, without neglecting its social relevance within a complex, heterogeneous setting where its speakers engage in a range of different communities of practice.

## 2.2    Multiethno-lects

Characterising this -lect as "multiethno-" points to the heterogeneous ethnic backgrounds of its speakers. Clyne (2000: 86) defines ethnolects as "varieties of a language that mark speakers as members of ethnic groups who originally used another language or distinctive variety". According to him, a '*multi*ethnolect' is used by "several minority groups [...] collectively to express their minority status and/or as a reaction to that status to upgrade it" (Clyne 2000: 87). While this characterisation initially restricts multiethnolects to minority speakers, he also subsumes developments under this term where members of the dominant ethnic group, especially young people, share this way of speaking in a 'language crossing' situation (cf. Rampton 1995, 1998) that leads to the expression of a new kind of group identity.

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**4.**  Cf. for instance Androutsopoulos (2007: 9), who characterises ethnolects as "bundles of varieties or speech styles with 'family resemblances'" ('Bündel von Varietäten bzw. Sprechstilen mit 'Familienähnlichkeiten'').

It is in this broader sense that we will understand "multiethno-"lects: as ways of speaking that emerge in multiethnic neighbourhoods and, rather than being linked to *one* ethnic group, include speakers of different ethnic backgrounds, including those coming from the country's majority (non-migrant) ethnicity. Hence, as Quist (2008: 58) points out, there is no clear one-to-one correspondence between ethnic background and the use of a multiethnolect.

The "multi-" in "multiethnolect" implies different ethnic backgrounds, but does not make any assumptions about their range. At present, we prefer this weaker term over "*pan*ethnic", since it is not yet clear whether these ways of speaking are emerging across ethnicities in general, or whether they might be restricted to a particular subset, e.g. comprising mainly speakers with a middle-Eastern background (apart from those of the majority ethnicity).

A related term is "ethnolect", when used in a broader sense, as e.g., in Androutsopoulos (2001b, 2007) and Auer (2003). Auer (2003: 256) speaks of a 'new ethnolect of German' that has emerged in 'ghettos' in German cities and is used primarily by male adolescents with Turkish roots, but can be acquired by speakers without a migrant background, too, when they have close social ties with the primary speakers. Such a distinction might account for the early stages of such ways of speaking, although, to our knowledge, there is no empirical evidence showing a diachronic primacy of Turkish-background speakers – as opposed to dominance in terms of quantity and visibility. However, at present, speakers of a multitude of ethnic backgrounds are involved in these linguistic practices and thus contribute to their development. By using the term "multiethnolect", we therefore do not commit ourselves to a distinction of primary and secondary users, and we do not make explicit the contribution of different ethnicities.[5]

## 2.3    Criteria for a multiethnolect

In summary, in order to identify Kiezdeutsch as a multiethnolect, one has to show that it meets the following criteria:

There are linguistic features characteristic of this way of speaking that indicate a system of its own and distinguish it from the standard, from other varieties, and from unsystematic errors (→ *-lect*).

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**5.**   Hence, we do not trace the use of these linguistic practices back to particular ethnic backgrounds, or even solely to ethnic background (cf. Jaspers 2008 for a social constructionist critique of concepts such as ethnolect and ethnicity). However, we do believe that the fact that speakers come from different ethnic backgrounds and contribute to a multilingual context for Kiezdeutsch leads to a particular kind of lect, a 'multiethnolect', which, as we are going to show in what follows, is identified by its speakers and can be distinguished as a system of its own.

Its speakers come from different ethnic backgrounds, and this may include the (non-migrant) majority ethnic group (→ *multiethno-*).

In Section 1, we summarised central grammatical and lexical features that have been reported as characteristic for Kiezdeutsch in the literature, which provide some support for a view of Kiezdeutsch as a lect. This evidence from the linguistic system itself should be complemented by evidence coming from its usage in speech: we have to show that Kiezdeutsch is a distinct way of speaking that can be recognised as such by actual speakers. If the grammatical and lexical characteristics identified for Kiezdeutsch constitute a distinct variety, we should expect speakers from multiethnic neighbourhoods to associate them with linguistic practices of their community, whereas outside speakers from monoethnic neighbourhoods should identify them as a way of speaking from a speech community other than their own, particularly one with a high migrant population. Hence, we should expect speakers from within vs. outside the multiethnic speech community to differ as to whether they associate Kiezdeutsch patterns with their own linguistic practices. At the same time, we should expect both groups to agree in distinguishing Kiezdeutsch both from random grammatical errors and from standard German. Taken together, such patterns would mark Kiezdeutsch as a distinct, identifiable way of speaking not only from the point of view of the linguistic system, but also from the point of view of its actual usage by speakers.

In order to meet the second criterion, we have to show that patterns of identification and association hold across ethnicities in multiethnic neighbourhoods, that is, that Kiezdeutsch characteristics are recognised as part of the local variety in multiethnic neighbourhoods and are associated with speakers' own linguistic practices independently of their ethnic background, including the (non-migrant) majority ethnicity.

In order to investigate these points, we conducted a perception study that employed a core set of Kiezdeutsch features identified in the literature, investigating their recognition, distinction, and evaluation by speakers from both within and outside the expected speech community.


## 3.   The perception of Kiezdeutsch: Recognition, distinction, evaluation

We investigated the acceptability and evaluation of Kiezdeutsch stimuli by asking a two-fold question:

Is Kiezdeutsch a lect, not only from the point of view of the linguistic system, but also from the point of view of its actual usage by speakers? Are these stimuli recognised as familiar within a particular speech community, and do they support

a distinction of Kiezdeutsch both from standard German and from random grammatical errors?

Is Kiezdeutsch multiethno-? Is it recognised and accepted by adolescents of different ethnic backgrounds in multiethnic neighbourhoods, including the majority ethnicity (= German)?

In order to answer these questions, we tested adolescents in a study targeted at a multiethnic and a monoethnic neighbourhood of Berlin, thus allowing us to involve the relation between Kiezdeutsch and multiethnic settings. We investigated possible differences in the acceptability of sentences with typical Kiezdeutsch features in contrast to standard German sentences and random grammatical errors, and compared neighbourhoods as well as ethnic/linguistic backgrounds across neighbourhoods. Differences in responses to Kiezdeutsch compared to the two other kinds of stimuli were taken as a defining factor for its distinctiveness; the defining factors for its multiethnicity are, firstly, a higher acceptability of Kiezdeutsch in the multiethnic neighbourhood compared to a lower one in the monoethnic neighbourhood, and, secondly, the absence of acceptability differences among participants with German vs. non-German background in the multiethnic neighbourhood.

## 3.1    The study

### 3.1.1    *Methods*

We conducted a recognition study that tested the acceptability of linguistic characteristics from Kiezdeutsch in contrast to standard German samples and to random grammatical deviations. The form of an acceptability study offered us a controlled way to elicit judgments that provides a legitimate basis for statistical analysis (Schütze 1996). Given the problem that socially superordinate norms can take precedence over dialects in direct judgments tasks, leading to mismatches between speakers' intuitions and their actual linguistic behaviour (cf. Labov 1996), we employed indirect instead of direct judgments, that is, we asked speakers to tell whether they or their friends might say a sentence like the one we presented, rather than asking them to judge whether it is grammatical. This was done to diminish the effect of explicit, prescriptive notions speakers might have,[6] which is particularly important in the case of a low-status variety, where speakers tend to have a high level of "linguistic insecurity" (Labov 1966), that is, where they consider the form they use themselves as the incorrect form if it deviates from the

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6.    Cornips & Poletto (2005), Cornips (2006). Cf. also Silverstein (1998), who notes the ideological alliance of speakers to the standard register.

standard. Given the general low social status of multiethnic neighbourhoods in Germany (see also data in Section 4.1.2 below), we expect Kiezdeutsch to have a low prestige in line with the general phenomenon that attitudes towards linguistic varieties are tied to those towards their speakers.[7]

The acceptability test was based on a non-graded, binary task that did not elicit relative judgments[8] or magnitude estimations (cf. Sorace & Keller 2005), in order to keep the stimuli list short and to make it possible for participants to handle the task without elaborate instructions and training sessions, thus avoiding long testing sessions that might lead to exhaustion effects (cf. Schütze 1996 on this problem).[9] Testing was done in individual, single-subject sessions, which, together with the comparably short stimuli list, allowed us to complement yes/no responses by free comments on the sentences that participants could give after each response. This way, we combined the advantages gained from a controlled questionnaire method with those of interviews that can give an insight into participants' motivations for their answers and thus help spotting possible problems that arise from judgments based on, e.g., content or on pragmatic considerations rather than on grammatical intuitions (cf. Cornips & Poletto 2005). In addition, participants' comments revealed some of their attitudes towards the stimuli we presented to them. Unlike the common practice in linguistic attitude research,[10]

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7.   Cf. Preston (2002). Similar phenomena have been observed in various studies and across different approaches in sociolinguistic research, such as the findings reported in Preston & Niedzielski (2003), who show that African-American English is judged incorrect by the speakers themselves, who relate this incorrectness to "'laziness', 'low class' or an inability (or unwillingness) to perform otherwise" (ibid.: 131). Kroskrity (2004) observes similar processes in the Puerto Rican community in New York, where the command of two languages, Spanish and English, creates a group identity among bilingual children at first. But later on, "[a]s children become more exposed to the pejorative view of their language skills that is promoted by educational and other dominant bloc institutions […] they display the language-ideological compliance of subordinated groups by accepting, even partially, the negative images of themselves presented by the dominant society" (ibid.: 510). Cf. also Irvine (2001: 33), who notes that "linguistic differences appear to be iconic representations of the social contrasts they index – as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence".

8.   That is, it did not ask, e.g., which of a set of similarly constructed sentences might be most common.

9.   Cf. also the findings in Weskott & Fanselow (2011) that indicate that binary categorical judgments, graded judgments (e.g. involving a 7-point scale) and judgments based on magnitude estimations provide the same amount of information on acceptability, as well as Sorace & Keller (2005: 6), who state that the data elicited using a binary or 7-point scale "correlate well with magnitude estimation data".

10.   For an overview cf. Giles & Coupland (1991).

the focus in this setting was on the perception of linguistic samples directly, rather than the perception of their speakers (via such samples).

The stimuli were presented auditorily, rather than in writing, given that Kiezdeutsch is an informal way of speaking that is generally restricted to spoken language. This further helped avoid prescriptive notions about written standard German to interfere with the judgments. For the oral presentation, the sentences were recorded by a young speaker who would ensure plausibility for the Kiezdeutsch stimuli, given that Kiezdeutsch tends to occur as a youth language in ingroup situations among adolescents. Recording further allowed us to control for a uniform intonation across testing sessions.

### 3.1.2    *Participants*

Participants were adolescents from schools in two different kinds of neighbourhood: (1) a *multiethnic* neighbourhood within the Berlin district of Kreuzberg where 84.4% of the pupils had a home language other than German[11] and 25.3% of under 18 year olds living in the area do not hold a German citizenship, and (2) a *monoethnic* neighbourhood within the Berlin district of Hellersdorf where only 4.8% of the pupils had a non-German home language and only 1.7% of under 18 year olds living in the area do not hold a German citizenship.

Since one aspect we wanted to investigate were possible differences between participants from multi- vs. monoethnic neighbourhoods, we had to make sure that there were no other, external, factors coming into play in this comparison. In the case of non-standard linguistic stimuli, it is especially the social background of speakers that might play such an additional role for the responses. The risk that this will be a confounding factor is particularly pronounced in Germany, where we find a strong correlation between ethnic and social factors: for inhabitants with migrant background compared to those without a background of migration, the statistics give over-all lower educational achievements, higher school drop-out rates (almost 10%, compared to 1.5%), a nearly doubled rate of employment in low-skilled domains (48.5% manual workers compared to 24%), and nearly twice as high unemployment rates (13% compared to 7.5%).[12]

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**11.** This feature (German: 'nicht-deutscher Herkunftssprache') is determined via questionnaires that the Berlin Senate for Education sends out to parents: children count as having a "non-German home language" if parents state that the main language spoken at home is a language other than German (in a dual choice of possible answers "German" and "other than German").

**12.** Sources: German Federal Office for Statistics, Microcensus 2005 on the population with a migrant background in Germany; German Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, Report of the Independent Committee on Immigration.

Accordingly, in order to make sure that the differences we might find would indeed be related to multi- vs. monoethnic neighbourhoods – rather than to aspects of social class – we recruited participants from two state schools of the same educational status (both were "Oberschulen", i.e., general secondary schools) that were located in areas with comparable social indicators (similar unemployment rate, similar percentage of households receiving social benefits), that is, the neighbourhoods differed with respect to multi- vs. monoethnicity, but not with respect to general social factors. That we were able to identify a monoethnic neighbourhood for our study satisfying these criteria is due to an idiosyncrasy of Berlin. While it is generally rare in Western Europe to find predominantly monoethnic urban neighbourhoods with a social profile that is similar to that of a multiethnic inner city neighbourhood, we do find such areas in some Eastern districts of Berlin that still have a very small intake of residents with migrant background (as is the case for Berlin-Hellersdorf, the district we chose as our monoethnic neighbourhood).

Table 1 provides the relevant figures for the two schools and their neighbourhoods.[13]

Altogether 48 adolescents, who were recruited and tested at the two schools, participated in the experiment. All participants were in the 9th grade and were 14 to 17 years old, with an average of 15.2 years for participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood and 15.3 years for those from the monoethnic neighbourhood. Participation in the study was voluntary and took place outside class. Participants represented a random sample in the sense that no conditions were placed on the ethnic background of the pupils to take part in the study. 30 participants (9 female, 21 male) were from the school in the multiethnic neighbourhood, while 18 participants (7 female, 11 male) were from the school in the monoethnic neighbourhood. These figures were chosen as a kind of compromise that would enable us to compare two types of data: first, neighbourhoods as such – mono- vs. multiethnic –, and second, only the participants with German background within both neighbourhoods. While all participants from the monoethnic neighbourhood were of German background, participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood were all born in Germany, but had different ethnic backgrounds and different home languages (Turkish (19), German (6), Arabic (3), Kurdish (1), Polish (1)). "Home language" was determined from a questionnaire that was presented to participants after the study and asked about the language they dominantly spoke at home (with parents and siblings) and with their friends (in addition to background information about age, gender, etc.). In all cases, the language spoken

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**13.**  Data from the Berlin Senate for Education, Science, and Research (= school administration) and the Berlin Senate's Administration for City Development (= demographic monitoring).

**Table 1.**  Ethnic/linguistic and social demographic data for the selected neighbourhoods

|  | pupils nGh | foreigners under 18 | social benefits | social benefits / children | unem-ployment rate | long-term unem-ployed | unem-ployed adoles-cents | develop-mental index |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| multi-ethnic | 84.4% | 25.3% | 25.2% | 59.4% | 14.8% | 6.0% | 10.8% | middle to very low |
| mono-ethnic | 4.8% | 1.7% | 13.3% | 41.7% | 14.3% | 6.9% | 10.2% | middle to very low |

"nGh": 'non-German home language' (according to Berlin Senate for Education);
"foreigners": inhabitants who do not hold a German citizenship (according to Berlin Administration for City Development);
"social benefits": recipients of social benefits;
"social benefits / children": children in households receiving social benefits;
"children": under 15 years old;
"adolescents": 18–25 years old;
"long-term unemployed": people who have been without employment for an uninterrupted period of more than 12 months (after Federal Employment Agency)

with parents was also used with siblings and/or friends – even though it was usually not the only language used in that context.

### 3.1.3    *Materials*

Stimuli consisted of 25 short sentences, each consisting of 4 words, which would diminish parsing difficulties (this can reduce, but under some conditions even increase acceptability; cf. Fanselow & Frisch 2006), and allow us to keep testing sessions short enough for the participants. The sentences were subsumed under three categories: 'kiezdeutsch', 'standard', and 'false'. We were primarily interested in responses to 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli, while 'standard' and 'false' sentences served as fillers, but also provided a basis for comparison against which to determine the distinctness of the 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli. In order to provide a reasonably balanced set for speakers who might perceive 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli as more similar to 'false' ones as well as for speakers for whom they might fall in-between 'false' and 'standard' sentences, we constructed 10 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli, 10 'standard' stimuli, and 5 'false' stimuli (for a complete list see the appendix).

**(a) 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli.** Using spontaneous speech samples from adolescents in multiethnic neighbourhoods as a model, we constructed 10 sentences with features that have consistently been reported as characteristic for Kiezdeutsch in the literature (a complete list of the stimuli is in the appendix). Several examples were chosen for each domain (syntactic, morphological, lexical), with two examples for each of the structures described here:

*syntactic level:* deviations from standard German in the fields of articles (bare objects NPs), prepositions (bare local expressions), and copula (copula-less sentences)

*morphological level*: characteristic inflectional deviations from standard German (gender, case in NPs)

*lexical level:* word borrowings from Arabic and Turkish

**(b) 'standard' stimuli.** 10 sentences that showed no deviations from spoken standard German in informal situations.

**(c) 'false' stimuli.** 5 sentences with deviations from standard German that were of a similar general type as the deviations found in Kiezdeutsch, but have not been attested for Kiezdeutsch in the literature, representing random deviations rather than the systematic deviations found in Kiezdeutsch.

*syntactic level:* wrong word order within the noun phrase (= article in wrong position, vs. Kiezdeutsch: NP without article), double allocation of the subject position, incomplete sentence (vs. Kiezdeutsch: local expression without expansion to PP)

*morphological level:* agreement violation between subject and verb (number, person) (vs. Kiezdeutsch: inflectional deviations in the NP)

*lexical/morphological level:* wrong construction of complex predicate (vs. Kiezdeutsch: sentence without copula)

The sentences were mixed in a semi-random order such that appearances of 'standard', 'kiezdeutsch', and 'false' sentences were balanced, and 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli of the same subcategory – that is, reflecting the same kind of feature – were at least 6 sentences apart.

Sentences were recorded by a male adolescent (24 years old) speaker of German background who was familiar with Kiezdeutsch and was chosen because of his ability to produce a "compromise" form of a salient phonological Kiezdeutsch feature, the coronalisation of [ç]. Since we concentrated on grammatical, rather than phonetic indicators in our study and did not want to prejudice participants in a particular direction, we decided to use an intermediate pronounciation [ɕ] (40/6) in-between [ʃ] (110/9) and standard [ç] for [ç] in all stimuli.

In order to check our stimuli, we conducted a pre-test with 6 participants. Based on the results, we replaced two sentences: (1) "Nee, ich aus Spandau.", a 'kiezdeutsch' sentence with a missing copula, was exchanged because Spandau, a district of Berlin, was not well known by the participants, so that they got sidetracked by the content. (2) "Er ich singt gerne.", a 'false' sentence with double subject allocation, was exchanged because it got corrected in perception, such

that the two adjacent subjects "Er ich" were understood as one constituent, the proper name "Erich".

### 3.1.4    *Procedure*

The mixed set of sentences was presented auditorily to the participants via a dicta-phone with an internal loudspeaker, Olympus DS 2300. Participants were tested individually in a controlled setting in a separate room at their school. Each test-ing session lasted about 20 minutes. Participants were asked to listen to the sen-tences one by one and to give their opinion on them, according to the following instruction:

> "This is not a German test, and you will remain anonymous. We would like to know how you speak in every-day life. We will play 25 sentences to you and want to know your opinion on them. When you hear a sentence that you or your friends might say so, too, say 'yes'. If you think the sentence sounds strange or wrong, say 'no'. After each sentence, you have the opportunity to comment on it. If you want a sentence to be replayed, you can say so."

Two experimenters conducted the experiment; one of them was the main inter-actor with the participants, the other one stayed in the background. Responses were coded by both experimenters: the main interactor took hand-written notes on participants' responses (yes/no) and comments, while the experimenter in the background typed them in on a laptop. Since there were no deviations between the two protocols, all responses were included in the analysis.

### 3.1.5    *Analysis of potential problems*

An exploratory error analysis, based on the free comments and on clarifica-tion requests by participants during the testing sessions, revealed two potential problems:

1.  Participants did not always distinguish between acceptability/grammatical-ity and content. As a result, a slightly old-fashioned proper name like "Kai" in one of the 'kiezdeutsch' sentences was corrected by participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood, who gave comments like "Yes, but with another name. I often hear that." or "Yes, not with "Kai", though, but with another name." Similarly, cycling does not seem to be a part of their every-day life, so the 'kiezdeutsch' sentence "Mein Fahrrad wieder da." ('My bike back again', lack of copula) got corrected, e.g. in "Yes, but I would say "My father back again" ('Mein Vater wieder da.'), not "My bike back again"", or commented upon as in "We actually do not speak about bikes."

2.  There were two sentences that were initially corrected in perception by some participants: "Kauft Katja gleiche Jacke?" ('Does Katja buy same jumper?', 'kiezdeutsch' stimulus, lack of determiner) was interpreted as "Kauft Katja gleich die Jacke?" ('Does Katja buy the jumper right away?', would be standard German), and "Paul kauft Auto das." ('Paul buys car the/that', 'false' stimulus, wrong word order) was interpreted as "Paul kauft Autogas." ('Paul buys car gas', would be standard German). In both cases, participants commented on this and asked for a replay of the sentence, leading to rejections, e.g. for the first sentence "Kauft Katja gleich die Jacke? Can I hear that again?" [sentence replayed] "No. 'kauft gleich *die* Jacke' would be OK.", and for the second sentence "Autogas? Can I hear that again?" [sentence replayed] "No! Not this way!" and "Can I hear that again?" [sentence replayed] "No! Honestly, where did you get this from?"

Hence, free comments and the option of replaying sentences helped avoiding potential problems such that phonetic misunderstandings could be clarified and possible influences of pragmatic considerations or content could be spotted.

### 3.2    Results and discussion

Results were analysed from a quantitative perspective, where we compared acceptance rates, that is, frequencies of yes- (vs. no-) responses to sentences (as the dependent variable), for the different groups of participants and the different categories of stimuli (using Mann-Whitney's U, a common non-parametrical test suited for ordinal scales), and additionally from a qualitative perspective, where we analysed the different evaluations of 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli that became apparent from the free comments provided by participants from the multi- and the monoethnic neighbourhood.

#### 3.2.1    *Quantitative results*
A statistical analysis of yes/no-responses in the acceptability task revealed three main patterns:

**(1) Distinction of 'kiezdeutsch' sentences from 'standard' and 'false' stimuli.** There were highly significant differences between acceptance rates for 'kiezdeutsch' sentences and those for sentences of the other two categories, 'standard' and 'false', across neighbourhoods (cf. Figure 1).[14]

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14. 'kiezdeutsch' vs. 'standard' sentences for all participants: Mann-Whitney's U = 0, Z = −3.835, p = 0.000; for participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood: Mann-Whitney's
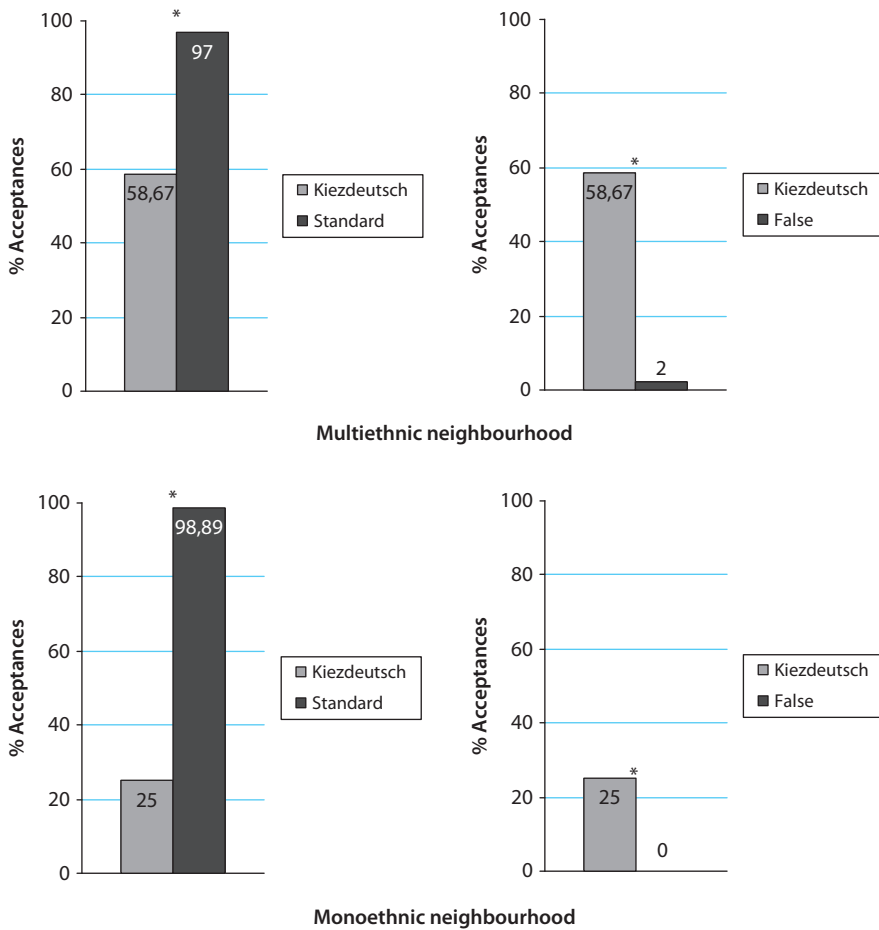
**Figure 1.** Acceptance rates for 'kiezdeutsch' vs. 'false' and 'standard' sentences

This result supports our distinction of the three kinds of stimuli. It shows that the features we selected as Kiezdeutsch characteristics are clearly distinguished from standard German as well as from random grammatical deviations by speakers across neighbourhoods.

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U = 11.5, Z = –2.918, p = 0.003; for participants from the monoethnic neighbourhood: Mann-Whitney's U = 0, Z = –3.916, p = 0.000. 'kiezdeutsch' vs. 'false' sentences for all participants: Mann-Whitney's U = 0, Z = –3.078, p = 0.002; for participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood: Mann-Whitney's U = 0, Z = –3.076, p = 0.002; for participants from the monoethnic neighbourhood: Mann-Whitney's U = 0, Z = –3.136, p = 0.002.
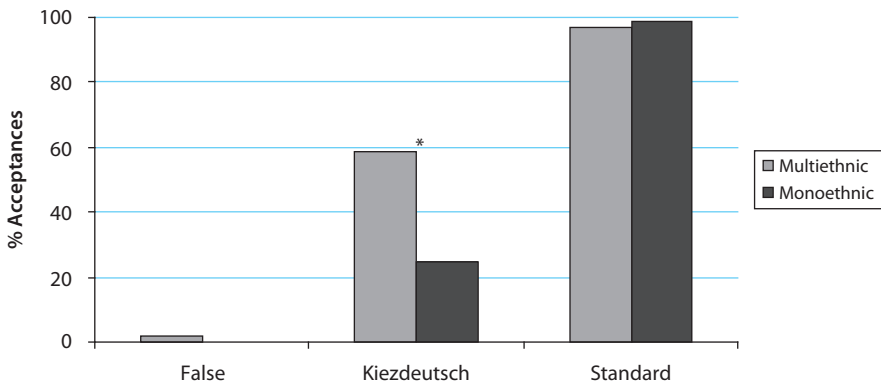
**Figure 2.** Responses from mono- vs. multiethnic neighbourhoods for 'kiezdeutsch' vs. 'false' and 'standard' sentences

**(2) Differences between participants from mono- and multiethnic neighbourhoods only with respect to 'kiezdeutsch' sentences.** There were no significant differences between acceptance rates from participants from mono- vs. multiethnic neighbourhoods with respect to 'standard' and 'false' sentences.[15] In contrast to that, there were highly significant differences between participants from mono- vs. multiethnic neighbourhoods for responses to 'kiezdeutsch' sentences, which were accepted more than twice as often in the multiethnic neighbourhood (59% vs. 25%, see Figure 1 above).[16]

This sets **'kiezdeutsch'** sentences apart from false and standard ones in the comparison of neighbourhoods; it indicates a clear distinction in the acceptability for **'kiezdeutsch'** sentences according to neighbourhoods, but not for sentences with random grammatical errors, which were overall rejected by participants from mono- and multiethnic neighbourhoods alike, and for standard German sentences, which were overall accepted by participants from mono- and multiethnic neighbourhoods alike: it is only for Kiezdeutsch sentences that we find differences, and these differences are in a direction that clearly indicates their association with the multiethnic, rather than the monoethnic neighbourhood.

**(3) Differences between neighbourhoods, not between ethnicities.** On the one hand, there were no significant differences in acceptance rates in the multiethnic neighbourhood between participants of German vs. migrant background,

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**15.** Mann-Whitney's U = 235, Z = −1.098, p = 0.272 for 'false' sentences, U = 243, Z = −1.371, p = 0.170 for 'standard' sentences.

**16.** Mann-Whitney's U = 43.5, Z = −4.884, p = 0.000 for 'kiezdeutsch' sentences. Mann-Whitney's U = 43.5, Z = −4.884, p = 0.000 for 'kiezdeutsch' sentences.
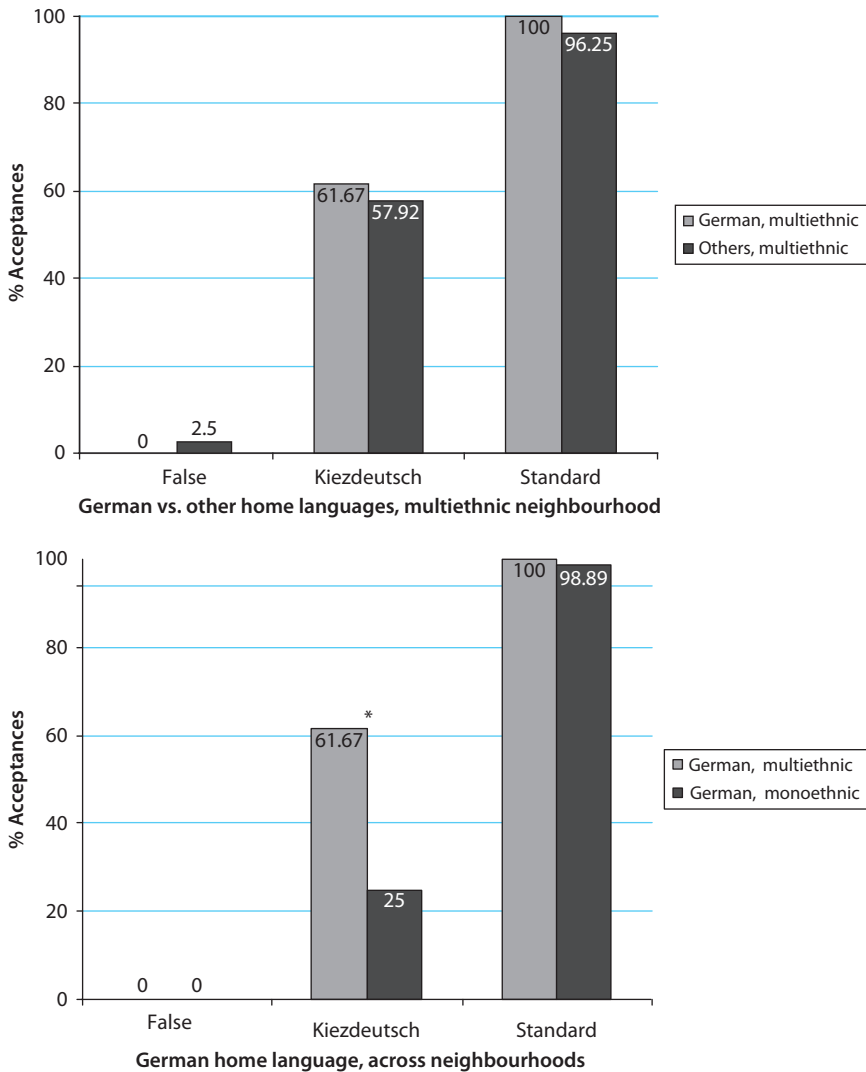
**Figure 3.** Responses from German-background participants from multiethnic neighbourhood compared to migrant participants and to participants from monoethnic neighbourhood

neither in their overall responses in general[17] nor in their responses for 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli in particular.[18] On the other hand, there were highly significant

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**17.** Mann-Whitney's U = 55, Z = −0.9, p = 0.368.

**18.** Mann-Whitney's U = 62.5, Z = −0.506, p = 0.613.

differences between participants from the monoethnic (German) neighbourhood and German-background participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood with respect to the 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli (though not with respect to the 'false' and 'standard' sentences, in line with the general pattern summarised in (2) above).[19]

These figures show that, when it comes to 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli, adolescents with a non-migrant, German background who live in the multiethnic neighbourhood pattern with their migrant peers, rather than with German-background adolescents from the monoethnic neighbourhood: we found a clear distinction between participants from mono- and multiethnic neighbourhoods that goes across linguistic/ethnic boundaries and applies to linguistic samples with grammatical features found in Kiezdeutsch, but not to standard German samples or random deviations.

Taken together, these results support a view of Kiezdeutsch both as "multiethno-" and as a "-lect": they indicate a distinctive variety by showing that the characteristics we employed distinguish Kiezdeutsch from standard German as well as from random grammatical errors in the perception of speakers both from multi- and monoethnic neighbourhoods, and they indicate a multiethnic, rather than an ethnic variety by showing that Kiezdeutsch is accepted more in the multiethnic than in the monoethnic neighbourhood, and that this acceptance is related to the neighbourhood rather than to a particular linguistic background or ethnicity, and specifically not to migrant vs. non-migrant background.

### 3.2.2    *Qualitative assessment*

When we have a look at the free comments participants made on the 'kiezdeutsch' sentences and analyse the attitudes that become apparent from them, we find some interesting patterns that indicate further differences between participants from the monoethnic and the multiethnic group and support a view of Kiezdeutsch as a variety that is associated with multiethnic speech communities.[20]

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**19.** Comparison for 'kiezdeutsch' sentences: Mann-Whitney's U = 6, Z = –3.235, p = 0.001 (for 'false' sentences: Mann-Whitney's U = 54, Z = 0.000, p = 1.000; for 'standard' sentences: Mann-Whitney's U = 48, Z = –0.835, p = 0.404).

**20.** Note that comments were optional, that is, not all sentences were commented upon by each participant. Altogether, participants volunteered comments in 943 out of 1200 possible cases (25 sentences × 48 participants), with participants from the monoethnic neighbourhood providing comments for 82% of the stimuli they heard, and those from the multiethnic neighbourhood in 77% of the cases. Most comments were given for 'kiezdeutsch' sentences (comments on 94%), followed by 'false' sentences (comments on 81%), and 'standard' sentences (comments on 62%). Most participants (= all but three) commented on at least 60% of the sentences, and all but four sentences were commented upon by at least 71% of the participants.

There is a striking contrast between the monoethnic and the multiethnic group with respect to what they focus on in their perception of this association: while the monoethnic group tended to focus on ethnicity, the multiethnic group associated 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli with (multiethnic) neighbourhoods. In this context, participants from the monoethnic group made a 'we' vs. 'they' distinction, with comments like "We don't use it because we are Germans.", and tagged 'kiezdeutsch' sentences as "non-German" or "language of foreigners": 50% referred to "foreigners" at least once, four of the participants specifically mentioned "Turks". In contrast to that, multiethnic participants related 'kiezdeutsch' sentences to their own group, to their friends, school class, or neighbourhood (park, street, etc.), giving comments like "My friends here at school speak like that", "Kreuzberg!", "We speak like that.", or "I am not sure whether I say this, but it is frequently used in my environment."

We interpret this as an indication for a higher degree of familiarity with Kiezdeutsch in the multiethnic group: evaluations in the multiethnic neighbourhood focus less on surface differentiations like 'foreigners' – 'non-foreigners' and more on classifying the variety and oneself within the practicing group and its repertoire, i.e., on categorising oneself as a (non-)user of this specific way of speaking.

Categorisations following the pattern 'language of foreigners' in the monoethnic group were formulated in a way that sometimes revealed strong negative stereotyping, with comments like "wog German" (German original: *Kanakendeutsch*) or "These typical foreigners again." (German original: *wieder die typischen Ausländer*), a formulation that indicates a language-ideological shift from first to second order indexicality in the sense of Silverstein (2003), where instances of speech perceived as characteristic for members of a certain group become associated with *types* of people (cf. also Woolard 1998).

Additional deprecative comments indicating strong negative attitudes towards the speakers of 'kiezdeutsch' samples relate to areas like education ("something for stupid people"; German original: *was für Doofe*) and social class ("prole-like"; German original: *proletenhaft!*). There was also a participant from the monoethnic group, though, who connected the evaluation 'foreigner language' with positive aspects of speech economy: "Foreigner language. Well, I speak like that, too. It's a shortcut. It's better this way. The Germans adopt this from the foreigners."

From language attitude research in general we know that there is a tendency to judge a way of speaking deprecatingly when it is associated with a group of speakers of (alleged) lower status (cf. Preston 2002), and to evaluate their speech as wrong. This holds for the monoethnic neighbourhood, where nearly 20% of the comments on 'kiezdeutsch' sentences explicitly characterised them as 'wrong' or 'bad German'.

To a lesser degree this also holds for participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood, where 10% of the responses involved explicit evaluations as 'wrong German', with comments like "I hear this very often, that's Kreuzberg after all, children are not well educated there with their languages, they keep bad company". This supports findings on 'linguistic insecurity' as mentioned in Section 4.1.1 above, i.e., the observation that lower class speakers might consider the form they use as the incorrect form if it deviates from the standard, leading to potential mismatches between speakers' intuitions in judgment tasks and their actual linguistic behaviour (Labov 1966, 1996).

Note, though, that sentences evaluated as 'wrong' were nevertheless accepted as part of their own speech by 6 participants at least once. Altogether, sentences considered incorrect were accepted in 20.7% of the cases. Furthermore, as reported in the previous section, we found highly significant differences between the acceptability rates for sentences with random grammatical errors ('false' stimuli) and those with Kiezdeutsch features in both neighbourhoods. This suggests that in spite of these attitudes, participants did make a difference between true grammatical errors and Kiezdeutsch sentences. The view that speakers in the multiethnic neighbourhood might make a difference between something like 'wrong, but nevertheless part of our language' and 'just wrong', is supported by the following comment, given by a member of the multiethnic group on a 'kiezdeutsch' sentence he accepted: "Yes, we say that [laughs], although it's not formulated correctly. We say it anyway." This account is also in accordance with findings from a study on attitudes towards Rinkebysvenska conducted by Bijvoet (2003), who reports that some of its speakers "are of the opinion that it is incorrect to speak Rinkeby Swedish, even for peer-peer interaction, but they use the variety anyway."

This further underlines that Kiezdeutsch is distinguished from random grammatical errors, and, as a multiethnolect, forms an identifiable system that is part of a broader linguistic repertoire serving different social functions. This is in line with findings from multiethnic youth languages in other European countries. For the *københavnsk multietnolekt*, Quist (2008) reports "a manifest awareness among the participants of their speech style as a specific 'language' (their words, *et sprog* 'a language'). They formulated opinions and attitudes about its use – by whom and in what situations – and they talked about it as something distinct from 'normal Danish' and also different from the Danish language of their first-generation immigrant parents" (Quist 2008: 48). Similarly, Godin (2005/2006) states for multiethnic linguistic practices in Botkyrka, a suburb of Stockholm, that this youth language serves as "a way of speaking and relaxing among friends, as something to have in common with them" (ibid.: 134), and accordingly is not used outside the peer group, where speakers switch to a more standard form of Swedish. Nevertheless, like in the case of Kiezdeutsch, speakers often regard their

language as "a form of 'bad' or 'improper' language", as "something one grows out of" (ibid.: 135).

Using Kiezdeutsch reflects a choice, a self-positioning of its speaker within a complex multiethnic urban setting. It signals that the speaker belongs to a certain group, and several of the comments show that this multiethnolect is bound to a peer-group, emphasising its status as a youth language, with participants from the multiethnic neighbourhoods volunteering comments like "Sometimes I say this, but not that often, my friends as well. Not to everyone, not to adults, but to my friends I do." This awareness is also reflected in a comment from the monoethnic group, by a participant who commented on a 'kiezdeutsch' sentence: "Typical youth language at a lot of schools.", while distancing himself from such schools, however, and rejecting the sentence.

Taken together, the free comments participants gave on test stimuli support the findings from the acceptance figures: they indicate a marked difference between the multiethnic and the monoethnic neighbourhood and characterise Kiezdeutsch as a variety that is associated with multiethnic speech communities. In addition, they provide further insights into the status of this multiethnolect, namely as a way of speaking that is often considered 'wrong German' and is subjected to negative attitudes, but has its place in a multiethnic community, where it can be used for social positioning in peer-groups. Here is a final quote, a comment from a participant from the multiethnic group, that summarises this nicely: "My friends talk like that, but consciously. We do as if we don't know German. It is not so hip when one speaks fluent German, so we pretend this."[21]

## 4.  Conclusions

In this paper, we have investigated the status of Kiezdeutsch from the point of view of its linguistic characteristics and their perception inside and outside the speech community, and have argued that it is best captured by the notion of 'multiethnolect'. Based on a discussion of what it means to be a 'multiethnolect', we identified two criteria that Kiezdeutsch would have to fulfill: (1) There must be

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**21.** Note that this shows also parallels to adolescent speakers of African-American English, who use this variety consciously among themselves and are also able to switch to some variety closer to the standard, as becomes apparent in the following quote describing a teacher's assessment of her pupils: "They change when they speak to her [the European-American teacher], particularly, she says, 'if they want something'" (Preston & Niedzielski 2003: 132). Similar processes have already been described by Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985) for London Jamaican (cf. also Sebba 1993), who emphasise that such different choices from a linguistic repertoire reflect different acts of identity.

linguistic features characteristic of this way of speaking that indicate a system of its own and distinguish it from the standard, from other varieties, and from unsystematic errors (→ -*lect*), (2) Its speakers must come from different ethnic backgrounds, including the (non-migrant) majority ethnic group (→ *multiethno-*).

In support of the two criteria, we presented evidence from a perception study conducted in a multiethnic and a monoethnic neighbourhood in Berlin that elicited acceptability judgments and free comments on three kinds of linguistic stimuli that (i) reflected characteristic grammatical features reported for Kiezdeutsch in the literature, (ii) came from standard German, or (iii) showed random grammatical errors. We conducted quantitative comparisons of judgments between the different kinds of stimuli and between participants from the multi- vs. monoethnic neighbourhoods, and a qualitative analysis of free comments.

Our results indicate that Kiezdeutsch is a distinct way of speaking, with grammatical characteristics that do not only support systematic interactions on different levels of the linguistic system, but, from the point of view of its actual usage, also support perceptions that distinguish it both from standard German and from random grammatical errors. This way of speaking is, furthermore, linked to multiethnic rather than monoethnic neighbourhoods and crosses ethnic boundaries, including speakers with non-migrant background (who patterned with their migrant peers, not with their ethnic peers from the monoethnic German neighbourhood).

Our data also showed negative attitudes towards Kiezdeutsch, in particular, it is regarded as 'bad' or 'wrong' German, from without, and even to some degree from within, the speech community (in accordance with what we know from attitudes towards low-prestige dialects in general). At the same time, it is part of a larger linguistic repertoire where its choice is an integrated part of social practices that serve to position the speaker in a peer-group context in multiethnic urban settings.

Taken together, these results support a view of Kiezdeutsch as a multiethnolect that, despite its inherent variability, constitutes a linguistic system that distinguishes it from other varieties or dialects, and supports perceptions that pick it out as the speech of a multiethnic urban neighbourhood.

### Acknowledgements

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## Appendix: Stimuli used in the perception study

### 'kiezdeutsch' stimuli

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kauft Katja gleiche Jacke? | 'Does Katja buy same coat?' | [bare object NP] |
| Kai hat andere Meinung. | 'Kai has different opinion.' | [bare object NP] |
| Mein Fahrrad wieder da. | 'My bike back again.' | [lack of copula] |
| München weit weg, Alter! | 'Munich far away, man!' | [lack of copula] |
| Gehst du jetzt Aldi? | 'Do you go Aldi now?' | [bare local expression] |
| Wir sind grade McDonald's. | 'We are McDonald's right now.' | [bare local expression] |
| Ich mag andere Leuten. | 'I like other people$_{DAT}$.' | [inflectional deviation] |
| Meine Vater geht spazieren. | 'My$_{FEM}$ father goes for a walk.' | [inflectional deviation] |
| Wallah, den kenn ich! | 'Wallah, I know that guy!' | [word borrowing] |
| Lan, so geht's nich! | 'Lan, that doesn't work!' | [word borrowing] |

### 'standard' stimuli

| | |
|---|---|
| Komm mal her, Alter. | 'Come here, man.' |
| Das Eis schmeckt gut. | 'The ice cream is tasty.' |
| Ich bin bei Katja. | 'I am at Katja's.' |
| Im Kühlschrank ist Cola. | 'There is cola in the fridge.' |
| Es geht jetzt los. | 'It's about to start.' |
| Echt, der macht das! | 'Honestly, he does that!' |
| Der Akku ist leer. | 'The battery is empty.' |
| Siehst du den Roller? | 'Do you see the scooter?' |
| Ich komm später vorbei. | 'I'll drop by later.' |
| Ich fahre zum Bahnhof. | 'I'm driving to the station.' |

### 'false' stimuli

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Das versucht niemand zu. | 'Nobody tries that to.' | [incomplete sentence] |
| Paul kauft Auto das. | 'Paul buys car the.' | [wrong word order within NP] |
| Ich trinke spazieren gewesen. | 'I drink walking gone.' | [wrong construction of predicate] |
| Wir ich lachst gerne. | 'We I like laughing.' | [double allocation of subject position] |
| Wir gehst ins Kino. | 'We goes to the cinema.' | [agreement violation] |