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Culture as Non-Consensus: Exploring Coherence Among Native Speakers' Perceptions of German Expressions of Affection

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From early in their learning experience, foreign language (FL) learners at American universities explore socio-cultural connotations that, it is argued, are signified by FL words. Textbook authors and teachers follow an implicit canon of difference, a list of iconic words that over time—and without the benefit of empirical evidence—have come to represent essential differences in outlook between their native and the FL culture (Kubota, 2004). Despite the fast progression of the theory of teaching culture in FL learning (Kramsch, 2015; Risager, 2015), large empirical gaps remain. To date, there is little evidence that native speakers (NSs) of the FL perceive their cultural practices, including the cultural contexts in which language is used, homogeneously enough to warrant their status as cultural traits. Using the example of expressions of affection, this exploratory study drew on qualitative and quantitative questionnaire data to investigate whether German NSs' (N=52) accounts of their own and of most fellow Germans' language behavior converged enough to derive a comprehensive and reliable cultural norm. Results indicated a lack of consensus among German NSs' self-reported views, eluding the assumption of a pertinent community-specific norm. Implications for FL teaching and learning, as well as directions for future research, are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

When foreign language (FL) instructors engage learners in “[reflecting] on the world through the lens of another language and culture” (MLA, 2007, p. 237), they face many challenges. One of them lies in the very difficulty of first capturing and then mediating how members of a speech community do, in fact, perceive themselves and the world around them, and if their views converge in a way that would allow for the articulation of shared cultural practices, behaviors, and norms. Teaching about culture, including the social and cultural contexts in which language is used, in the classroom—rather than through life experiences—requires abstraction. Culture needs to be ‘represented’ in a ‘teachable’ form, and idealized FL cultural knowledge has been rendered as part of intercultural competence, which entails “an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (Byram, 1997, p. 63).

From early on in their learning experience, FL learners at American universities are encouraged to explore FL words and expressions that, it is argued, signify essential differences in outlook between their native and the FL culture. Hidden to the learners, however, are the criteria according to which words are tagged first as being socio-culturally connoted and then as deserving of pedagogic attention. Language teachers and textbook authors follow an implicit ‘canon of difference,’ a list of iconic words that over time—and

without the benefit of empirical evidence—have come to represent essential cultural traits (Kubota, 2004). Among these canonical words are expressions of liking and affection, many of which are addressed early on in German language courses, for example when engaging learners in conversations about their families, friends and personal relationships. Many—perhaps all—German textbooks offer explicit culture-specific explanations of expressions, such as those pertaining to feelings of affection.

Despite the fast progression of theory of the language-culture connection in FL learning (e.g., Kramsch, 2015; Risager, 2007, 2015), large empirical gaps remain. For example, there is little evidence about whether the reputed socio-culturally connoted expressions really encapsulate divergences in outlook between cultures, or whether native speakers (NSs) of the FL perceive the use of such expressions homogeneously enough to warrant their status as cultural traits. The current exploratory study seeks to narrow this gap in the research. Using expressions of affection as an example of the symbiotic relationship between national language(s) and culture(s) typically highlighted in FL instruction, the study investigated whether NSs of German from Germany perceive the use of first language (L1) expressions of affection homogeneously enough to infer a pertinent comprehensive, reliable, cultural norm.

CONSENSUS AND COHERENCE IN THEORIES OF CULTURE

The assumption of cultural consensus among members of a sociocultural group is an important component of a number of theories of culture across disciplines. Culture has been defined as both a tradition of knowledge as well as an ongoing practice that is shared across the members of a society and that emphasizes the individuals' knowledge of its sharedness (e.g., Geertz, 1973, 1983; Groh, 2019; Hofstede, 2011; Keesing, 1974; Lederach, 1995; Mead, 1934). A widely used definition of culture was coined by cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973), who described culture as co-constructed among individuals and the sum of collectively held and internalized beliefs, values, and opinions, creating coherence within social groups through “a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in a symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (p. 89). Similar definitions outline culture as “a pattern of perceptions, values, attitudes and behaviors that is accepted and expected” (Singer, 1998, p. 99), and while some emphasize consensus among the members of a cultural community across time, others note that the patterns of cultural perceptions may vary within a society as its members do not always share the same experiences or participate in discursive practices in the same ways (Hinton, 2000).

Over the last two decades, theorists have revisited the sharedness of culture in light of the interconnected, highly mobile, and multicultural nature of many societies today. In his book *Available Light* (2002), Geertz posed the question “What is a culture if it is not a consensus?” Observing that culture no longer means ‘national’ culture as in “what peoples had and held in common, Greeks and Navajos, Maoris, or Puerto Ricans, each its own” (p. 249), he described the contemporary world as fragmented, “growing both more thoroughly interconnected and more intricately partitioned, at the same time” (p. 246)—a “scramble of differences in a field of connections” (p. 250). In turn, he concludes:

The view of culture, a culture, this culture, as a consensus on fundamentals—shared conceptions, shared feelings, shared values—seems hardly viable in the face of so much

dispersion and disassembly; it is the faults and fissures that seem to mark out the landscape of collective selfhood. (p. 250)

Outlining new challenges that FL teachers and learners face in the era of globalization, Kramsch (2002) remarked on a similar note that “culture has become less and less a national consensus but a consensus built on common ethnic, generational, regional, ideological, occupation or gender-related interests, within and across national boundaries” (p. 276). The changing nature of culture itself and the uncertainty about its purported sharedness raise questions about the existence of teachable, definable, community-specific norms and shared ways of thinking and behaving among members of a speech community.

CULTURAL CONSENSUS AND NATIVE SPEAKER COMMUNITIES IN FL TEACHING

The idea that language learning is essentially intertwined with the study of culture and the shared practices and perspectives held by members of sociocultural communities permeates professional standards in FL instruction in the United States. The *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*, promoted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), delineate five goal areas: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. The first of the two Cultures Standards reveals that ‘cultures’ is used to refer to the members of culture groups and the practices and perspectives they share: “Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied” (National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015, p. 1). Approaches to the teaching of FL culture to-date have explicitly or implicitly emphasized communities that are nationally defined and inhabited by native speakers. The complex challenge that FL instructors face when they teach culture lies in teaching an abstract, standard norm as well as the intracultural variation and diversity found within a given speech community—in between teaching culture as the ways of thinking and living shared by a group of people and making the subjective perspectives and values of individuals accessible and relatable.

To-date, second language acquisition (SLA) research has addressed several lines of inquiry related to this important challenge, including the danger of cultural essentialism (e.g., Kubota, 2004) and the illusion of homogenous NS communities in FL teaching materials. Barron (2005), for example, remarked that, “[r]ather than using macro-social variation in language use conventions as a means of addressing the complexities and diversities which exist in society in the foreign language classroom, they are abstracted away, and communities of native speakers are presented as homogeneous wholes” (p. 524). Although SLA researchers have strongly criticized the monolithic NS ideal as an unrealistic goal in FL learning for over thirty years (e.g., Cook, 1999, 2007; Davies, 2003; Dewaele, 2018; Kramsch, 1993, 1997; Kubota, 2004; Leung, Harris & Rampton, 1997; Paikeday, 1985; Scarino & Liddicoat, 2016; Singh, 1998), the NS and ‘imagined’ national communities of NSs (Anderson, 1983) still remain present in FL teaching and textbooks today, as Byram and Wagner (2018) observed recently. The term ‘native speaker’ is both ambiguous and disputed (Davies, 2003) and often still understood as a monolingual/monocultural speaker whose “quasi-mythical maximal competence/proficiency in the L1” (Dewaele, 2019, p. 413) learners are supposed to approximate. This understanding implies the existence of homogenous ‘NS norms’ and fails to recognize learners as legitimate and multi-competent

second language (L2) users regardless of whether they approximate L1 norms (Cook, 2007). Whereas some research has adopted the practice of referring to ‘native speakers’ as ‘L1 users’ (e.g., Dewaele, 2018; Resnik, 2018), the term and concept of the native speaker lives on in the minds and vocabulary of learners (e.g., White, 2016), language programs, and other research (e.g., Barron, 2019; Nguyen, 2019; Ó Murchadha & Flynn, 2018). Because the assumption of cultural consensus and community-specific NS norms is the focus of the current investigation, the term NS is used in this paper, however, not with the intention to validate but rather to interrogate its problematic underpinnings.

Several proposals have been made to abandon the idealized NS in FL instruction, such as moving beyond the transmission of ‘solid’ cultural facts (Dervin, 2016) and the national paradigm (Risager, 2015), teaching sociolinguistic and pragmatic variation in addition to target variety norms (Barron, 2005; Blyth, 2002; Kramsch, 2014), and evidence-based presentation of sociopragmatic information in textbooks (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Tatsuki, 2019). In addition, studies found that including individual NSs’ own accounts of their cultural perspectives and practices can be beneficial for developing L2 learners’ intercultural or pragmatic competence (Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Garrett-Rucks, 2013; Kern, 2014; McBride & Wildner-Bassett, 2008). However, these studies predominantly focused on the L2 learners and not on the NSs’ accounts themselves. For instance, Garrett-Rucks (2013) showed that based on the discussion of video-recorded interviews of four native French speakers who explained their cultural practices (greetings and the French educational system), learners related more to alternative worldviews expressed by the native informants. However, what the study did not address is whether or to what extent these NS accounts were indeed representative of “French culture” or what the term “French informant” itself potentially connotes in terms of NS authenticity and cultural expertise (Garrett-Rucks, 2013, p. 195). Belz and Kinginger (2003) showed how American learners of German successfully approximated pragmatic norms of formal vs. informal address in German through email exchanges with German NSs. Interestingly, upon perceiving a mistake in the learners’ use of address forms in their email correspondences, several German NSs offered explicit advice by stating the respective sociopragmatic norms of their speech community (as they perceived them)—which, on the whole, were “fragmentary and often contradictory” (Belz & Kinginger, 2003, p. 631).

In sum, while learning about the perspectives and practices of members of the cultures associated with the FL plays a pivotal role in FL education in the US and NSs regularly appear as cultural informants in FL teaching, little is known about the degree of consensus and coherence among NSs’ perceptions of their own language behavior when cultural communities are nationally defined.

RESEARCHING CULTURAL CONSENSUS AND NATIVE SPEAKER BASELINES: EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Cultural Consensus Theory

An extensive approach to cultural consensus has been delineated as Cultural Consensus Theory (CCT) in the field of cultural anthropology. This theory and formal mathematical model was first presented in the mid-1980s (Batchelder & Romney, 1986; Romney, Weller, & Batchelder, 1986). Taking an objectivist epistemological stance, the authors define culture

as a “shared and learned information pool” (Romney et al., 1986, p. 314). CCT is hence described as an approach to “information pooling” and “a way of describing and measuring the amount and distribution of cultural knowledge among a group of respondents in an objective way” (p. 313). The goal of the theory is to discover “cultural truth” through “the inference of cultural knowledge from consensus” (p. 315) among informants. The model also measures the competence of each native informant depending on the amount of “correct cultural responses” given relative to the consensus truth: “CCT estimates the culturally correct answers to a series of questions (group beliefs) and simultaneously estimates each respondent’s knowledge or degree of sharing of the answers” (Weller, 2007, p. 339). More recently, Batchelder and Anders (2012) explained that “to infer consensus patterns of cultural truth that represent the informants’ shared cultural knowledge ... CCT consists of cognitive response models, each of which is designed to accommodate a particular testing format (e. g., true/false, multiple choice, ranking, probability estimates)” (p. 316). Thus, CCT employs only discrete answer formats and emphasizes an inherently quantitative approach.

Although studies utilizing this model have done much to explore possible ways of quantifying cultural consensus (e.g., Heshmati et al., 2017; Oravec, Muth, & Vandekerckhove, 2016), CCT did not inform the methodology of the current study for several reasons, most importantly because it does not call into question the existence of cultural consensus itself. Its most basic assumption is the existence of consensus as the basis for inferring cultural truth—including cultural norms of language behavior.

L2 Pragmatics and Native Speaker Norms: Exploring ‘the Point of View of Users’

The field of pragmatics is at the interface of language and culture as it deals with language use in different sociocultural contexts. A number of widely cited definitions of pragmatics emphasize both the subjective perspective of the language user as well as cultural consensus as a basis of sociopragmatic norms. For instance, LoCastro (2012) rendered pragmatics as the study of “social rules of speaking, those expectations about interactional discourse held by members of a speech community as appropriate and ‘normal’ behavior” (p. 159). Accordingly, pragmatic norms are defined as directly “based on some degree of group consensus” (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 12) and refer to “a range of tendencies or conventions for pragmatic language use that are not fixed but are typical or generally preferred in the L2 community” (p. 13).

Most relevant for the methodology of this study is Crystal’s (1997) definition of pragmatics as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication” (p. 240). In light of this widely used definition (e.g., Barron, 2003; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Sykes & Dubreil, 2019), NSs’ perceptions of their L1 use and of community-specific norms have received surprisingly little attention in pragmatics research to-date. Dewaele (2008) underscored that while Crystal’s definition suggests an emic perspective as the epistemological stance (Pike, 1967) in pragmatics research (i.e. examining language use ‘from the point of view of the user’ through eliciting the user’s own views and perceptions), the bulk of L2 pragmatics research has taken an etic perspective (i.e. language use is analyzed from the researcher’s point of view) and the perceptions and views of the speakers

themselves have been given little attention. Possible explanations include the predominant interest of the research in pragmatic production and the analysis of discourse and interactional patterns in naturally occurring data as they “best reveal language use and where two-way communication occurs, interaction and effect on participants as well” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2010, p. 242). In this approach, pragmatic norms emerge from the observed interactional patterns in the data (Reiter & Placencia, 2005).

Because the objective of the current study was not to investigate patterns of actual language use, but rather to explore consensus among German NSs’ own accounts of their first language (L1) behavior, this study concurs with Dewaele’s (2007, 2008) suggestion to add an emic perspective to the investigation of sociocultural and sociopragmatic aspects of language use—not only to gain a richer, broader understanding of language use ‘from the point of view of users’ (here, German NSs), but also to explore the internal coherence of NSs’ accounts of their language behavior. Thus, the study emphasizes the emic perspective in exploring cultural consensus among NSs’ views of L1 use in their speech community through qualitative and quantitative data (i.e. responses to Likert scales and to open-ended items), as explained in the method section.

Over the last decade, several studies have explored multilinguals’ own perceptions of their language behavior. However, the bulk of studies examined the effects of demographic and language-related variables on variation among multilinguals’ perception and verbalization of emotion in their different languages or contrasted perceptions of L1 use among speakers of different variants of a pluricentric language (e.g., Dewaele, 2008, 2010, 2015, 2016; Resnik, 2018). For example, Resnik (2018) examined multilinguals’ perceptions of the emotional weight of the sentence ‘I love you’ in their languages and found that the majority of L1 German participants felt the utterance was the strongest in German. Dewaele (2015) found differences between native British and American English speakers’ self-reported use and perceived offensiveness of several English swearwords. What the study did not explore is whether L1 users’ perceptions converged within each participant group or how participants’ cumulative perceptions of their own L1 use aligned with their perceptions of conventions in their speech community. When respondents rated “how offensive it [the selected swearword/expression] is” (p. 322), it would have been interesting to differentiate between how offensive they personally find each swearword and how they believe the majority of fellow (American or British) English speakers would find it.

To conclude, while numerous studies have examined individual differences in perceived L1 use, to-date no research in SLA has systematically investigated the assumption of cultural, community-specific consensus among NSs’ accounts of their own and most fellow NSs’ L1 behavior. The current study addresses this gap in the research.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were investigated in detail:

RQ1: How do native German speakers perceive the frequency with which they personally and most Germans use L1 expressions of affection, and to what extent do their accounts converge?

RQ2: How do native German speakers describe what words they personally and most Germans use to express affection, and to what extent do their accounts converge?

METHODS

The data presented here are part of larger multi-method study that investigated how the concept of cultural difference is first captured and then mediated through the didactic processes that beginning learners of German engage in at a Midwestern research university (Fichtner, 2015a, 2015b). The data under investigation focus on a subset of the data collected from NSs of German.

Native Speaker Participants and Characteristics of the Sample

A total of 52 NSs of German participated in this study, all of whom were born and raised in Germany. Access to the participants was facilitated through the researcher's contacts in Germany. Much attention was paid to obtaining a cross-section of subjects based on gender, age, geography, and profession. Many of these contacts were located in secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, including students and instructors; other participants represented a wide range of professions related to the service sector (including e.g., nurses, office staff, technicians, social workers, engineers). The participants came from various regions that represent 13 of the 16 German states, thereby ensuring geographical diversity. Twenty-one participants (43%) were male and 30 (57%) female, which also generally approximated recent German census data (49% male and 51% female; Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016, p. 14). Participants ranged in ages from 20–76 years, with an average age of 38.5 ($SD = 16.1$). Forty-three (83%) participants were between 20–64 years old, and nine (17%) were 65 or older. This study sample differed slightly from the age distribution in the most recent German census, which showed that 61% of Germans were between 20–65 years old, 20% were above the age of 65, and 19% of all Germans were between 0–20 years of age (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016, p. 16).

Because this study focused on expressions of affection toward parents, friends, children, and romantic partners, the background section of the questionnaire (described subsequently) asked participants for pertinent personal information. Of the 52 German NSs who completed the entire questionnaire, 35 (67%) participants indicated that they were currently in a relationship. In addition, all of the 41 (79%) German NSs who indicated that their mother is still alive also reported that they speak with her on a regular basis: Eight participants indicated that they speak with their mother every day; 27 Germans stated they talk to their mother once a week; and six participants reported talking to their mother at least once a month. By contrast, of the 38 (73%) participants who reported that their father is still alive, only four indicated that they speak with their father every day and another four reported never talking to their father at all. Nineteen Germans stated they talk to their father once a week, nine explained they talk to their father once a month, and two stated once a year. While all participants learned at least one L2 throughout their secondary education in Germany, they referenced almost exclusively L1 expressions on their questionnaire, which suggests they predominantly use German in their interactions with friends and family. Only one respondent indicated using both English and German with her husband.

Instrument and Data Collection

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected by means of a questionnaire (see Appendix for the subset of questionnaire items considered in this study) that inquired into (1) German

NSs' personal background and (2) their self-reported perception of their own and of most Germans' use of L1 expressions of affection. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the researcher designed the questionnaire for the specific purpose of this investigation. Because the goal of this study was to explore NSs' own accounts of their language use (rather than patterns of actual language behavior) and to what extent consensus among these views allows for the assumption of a shared cultural norm, a questionnaire containing scaled- and open-response items was considered the most suitable method to elicit data. Scaled-response questionnaires are typically used in L2 research to measure pragmatic perception, often involving judgment tasks (see Nguyen, 2019, and Spinner & Gass, 2019, for a review of research in this area). The questionnaire was tested in a pilot study, which led to the addition and refinement of several items (as explained below).

The personal background section contained ten items that addressed the participants' demographic information (e.g., their age, gender, profession) as well as information relevant to the topic of the study (e.g., whether they are currently in a relationship; how frequently they talk with family members). The main section of the questionnaire contained 92 items that inquired into the respondents' perception of the use of L1 expressions of affection and friendship. In particular, this section elicited two native speaker baselines. Participants were first asked to describe their own use of L1 expressions of affection (baseline 1) and, subsequently, how they believe the majority of fellow NSs of German would respond to the same questions (baseline 2). Eliciting these two baselines allowed for an examination of coherence among the NSs' accounts of their language behavior within the group through comparisons of the extent to which the respondents' individual accounts converge or diverge within and between the two baselines, and in turn, of the sensitivity of individuals to the supposed cultural norms that are believed to delineate a speech community. The questionnaire thus ultimately inquired into the very existence of cultural consensus on language-community specific norms related to employing German expressions of affection.

The present study focused on a subset of the data (responses to 24 items). This included responses to two baseline-specific subscales on the Likert scale, each of which contained eight similarly-worded and cross-comparable items inquiring into the self-perceived frequency of (a) expressing affection towards four different addressees and (b) four predetermined expressions of affection. Specifically, these items asked participants to indicate via a 5-point Likert response format (with 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often and 5 = constantly) how frequently they verbalize affection toward a partner, mother, father, and friends. Each Likert item was followed by an open-response question that prompted participants to state in which situations they would express their affection toward these addressees and what words they would use to do so. Subsequently, respondents were asked to indicate on the same scale how frequently they believe most Germans would express affection toward the same addressees and to report what words most Germans would use to express affection. In turn, participants were asked to indicate on the same Likert scale how frequently they use the expressions *Ich hab dich lieb* (I'm fond of you/I love you), *Ich liebe dich* (I love you), *Ich mag dich* (I like you) and *Schön, dass es dich gibt* (I'm glad you're there)¹. The reasons for selecting these expressions were both empirically grounded and textbook-oriented. First, in the pilot study, the expressions *Ich liebe dich*, *Ich hab dich lieb*

¹ While English translations are provided for the German expressions in this study, there are often no direct translation equivalents of emotion expressions in other languages (e.g., Resnik, 2018). The provided translations cannot overcome this basic challenge and only approximately correspond in meaning and use with the German expressions.

and *Schön, dass es dich gibt* emerged as the most commonly stated expressions of affection when respondents answered the addressee-specific questions. In order to increase the content validity of the instrument, questions about these specific expressions were added to the questionnaire so as to have a second set of items that inquires into NSs' perceived use of expressions that the participants were likely to mention in response to the preceding addressee-specific items. Second, the current study is part of a larger investigation of the effects of textbook-based instruction on beginning FL learners' development of intercultural pragmatic competence. The student participants learned about expressions of affection based on the widely used German textbook *Vorsprung* (Lovik, Guy, & Chavez, 2007). Besides *Ich hab dich lieb* and *Ich liebe dich*, the book also introduces the expression *Ich mag dich*, which was thus included in the set of expression-specific questionnaire items.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the quantitative (Likert scales) and qualitative (open-ended responses) data focused on the degree of agreement among German NSs' views of their L1 behavior, in particular to what extent their accounts within and between the two baselines of perceptions converged or diverged. To assess in quantitative terms to what extent there was agreement of views within each baseline, the coefficient of variation (*CV*) was calculated and reported along with each item mean and standard deviation (*SD*) as an additional measure of heterogeneity.

Because of the particular interest of the study in determining the contexts in which the NSs' views aligned, the means of the corresponding items from the two baselines were compared using a dependent samples t-test with the alpha level set at $p < 0.05$. Cohen's *d* was computed as a measure of effect size and the Holm-Bonferroni method of alpha level correction (Holm, 1979) to control the familywise Type 1 error rate. As a visual inspection of the histograms revealed a skewed data distribution in the context of father as an addressee and because outliers can offset the means, the medians of all corresponding items were also compared using a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, which yielded the same patterns of significance as the paired samples t-test (as predicted by de Winter & Doudo, 2010).

Responses to open-ended questions were collated in a spreadsheet to enable categorical analyses. After an initial open coding cycle (Mackey & Gass, 2016), the researcher coded the responses according to emergent categories of expressions using in Vivo coding (Saldaña, 2016), with concrete expressions from the data serving as category names. All categories were discrete and independent of each other. While most categories indeed represented an expression of affection (e.g., *Ich liebe dich*), two categories of speech acts emerged and were labeled "expressions of gratefulness" and "expressions of reliance." Unique expressions that were only stated once were categorized as "other" expressions and emerged in the context of each addressee in both baselines. To be sensitive to the potential for error in the coding, an additional person was trained and coded a subset of responses to two open-ended questions. Cohen's kappa yielded an inter-rater reliability of $\kappa = 0.952$, indicating almost perfect agreement between the two raters.

When reading the results of the study, it is important to keep in mind that cultural consensus was investigated on the national level (rather than subnational or regional level) in order to explore to what extent a comprehensive, country-specific (Germany) norm regarding the use of expressions of affection can be assumed as representations of cultural perspectives and practices in FL teaching materials tend to be community- and country-

specific (Byram & Wagner, 2018). However, the goal of the research was not so much to assess pedagogical approaches that highlight country-specific cultural traits of target communities, but rather to explore cultural perspectives through NSs' views of their own L1 use and of perceived L1 conventions in their speech community. Due to this particular focus, the analytical approach in this study is limited in scope (e.g., it does not explore consensus on the subnational level or how other macro-social factors besides region, such as age or gender, explain variation in the data).

RESULTS

RQ1: How do native German speakers perceive the frequency with which they personally and most Germans use L1 expressions of affection, and to what extent do their accounts converge?

Table 1 shows the means, *SDs*, and *CVs* for the frequency with which German NSs stated they personally (baseline 1, labeled 'self') and most Germans (baseline 2, labeled 'community') express affection toward their partner, friends, mother, and father. The means are ranked and listed in descending order, and the item comparisons that yielded a statistically significant difference were bolded.

Table 1

Means, SDs and CVs of German NSs' Self-Reported Frequency of Verbally Expressing Affection Toward Different Addressees by Baseline

Addressee	<i>n</i>	Self		Community		
		<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>CV</i>
Partner	40	3.53 (0.93)	0.26	40	3.18 (0.68)	0.21
Mother	41	2.63 (0.92)	0.35	41	2.95 (0.68)	0.23
Friends	51	2.59 (0.80)	0.31	51	2.63 (0.64)	0.24
Father	38	1.87 (0.99)	0.53	38	2.32 (0.58)	0.25

Note. Bolded items were significantly different at $p < .05$.

As illustrated in Table 1, German NSs revealed quite different perceptions of their own and most Germans' L1 use, often reporting a lower perceived frequency of expressing affection in the personal ('self') baseline. The table highlights that although the means were

significantly different regarding three out of the four addressees (i.e. partner, mother, father), the rank order of means was the same in both baselines. Only with regard to friends did the participants' perceptions of their own and most Germans' L1 use converge. In addition, it is noteworthy that the *SDs* and *CVs* are consistently lower in the community baseline, indicating that the NSs' individual accounts were more in agreement with regard to their perception of how most Germans express affection (within baseline 2), yet at the same time their perception of most Germans' L1 use diverged significantly from their perception of their own L1 use. It is interesting to note that only with regard to expressing affection toward a partner, Germans' self-reported frequency for their own L1 use ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.93$) was significantly higher than the frequency they reported for most Germans ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.68$); $t(39) = 2.156$, $p = 0.037$, $d = 0.34$. In contrast, regarding their mother, participants reported a significantly lower frequency in the personal baseline ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 0.92$) than in the community baseline ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.68$); $t(39) = -2.054$, $p = 0.047$, $d = 0.32$. Likewise, NSs' self-reported frequency of personally expressing affection toward their father ($M = 1.87$, $SD = 0.99$) was significantly lower than the frequency they reported for most Germans ($M = 2.32$, $SD = 0.58$); $t(36) = -2.665$, $p = 0.011$, $d = 0.44$. Regarding friends, there was no significant difference between the participants' self-reported frequency in the personal ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 0.80$) and the community baseline ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 0.64$); $t(48) = -0.044$, $p = 0.886$, $d = 0.05$.

Turning to the responses to the expression-specific items on the questionnaire, Table 2 shows the means, *SDs* and *CVs* of German NSs' self-reported frequency regarding the use of the four expressions of affection in the personal and community baselines. Item pairs that yielded a statistically significant difference were bolded.

Table 2

Means, SDs and CVs of German NSs' Self-Reported Frequency of Different L1 Expressions of Affection by Baseline

Expression	<i>n</i>	Self		Community		
		<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>CV</i>
<i>Ich hab dich lieb.</i>	50	2.96 (0.95)	0.32	51	3.27 (0.78)	0.23
<i>Ich liebe dich.</i>	49	2.69 (1.10)	0.40	50	3.26 (0.78)	0.24
<i>Ich mag dich.</i>	49	2.31 (0.87)	0.37	51	2.80 (0.80)	0.29
<i>Schön, dass es dich gibt.</i>	50	2.49 (0.79)	0.32	50	2.73 (0.67)	0.24

Note. Bolded items were significantly different at $p < .05$.

Similar to the findings shown in Table 1, the results in Table 2 reveal that there was a significant difference between participants' perception of their own and most Germans' L1 use regarding all four expressions. In particular, the comparisons revealed that the frequency with which respondents reported using *Ich hab dich lieb* ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.95$) was significantly lower than their reported frequency for most Germans ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.78$); $t(49) = -2.419$, $p = 0.019$, $d = 0.34$. Likewise, German NSs' self-reported frequency of personally using *Ich liebe dich* ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.10$) was significantly lower than their perceived frequency for most Germans ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.78$); $t(47) = -4.013$, $p = 0.001$, $d = 0.58$. Respondents' self-reported frequency of personally using *Ich mag dich* ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 0.87$) was significantly lower than their perceived use for most Germans ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.80$); $t(47) = -3.174$, $p = 0.003$, $d = 0.46$, and their perception of personally using *Schön, dass es dich gibt* was significantly lower ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 0.79$) than their perception of the community using it ($M = 2.73$, $SD = 0.66$); $t(48) = -2.588$, $p = 0.13$, $d = 0.33$.

RQ2: How do native German speakers describe what words they personally and most Germans use to express affection, and to what extent do their accounts converge?

Table 3 shows the results of categorical analyses of the responses that German NSs' gave when asked what words they would personally use to express their affection toward their partner, mother, father, and friends, and what words they believe the majority of Germans would use. With regard to each addressee, the table shows the expressions of affection that emerged in the personal ('self') and the 'community' baseline and the percentage of respondents who referenced them. Due to the open-ended format of the question, participants frequently provided multiple expressions of affection regarding each of the four addressees, thus the total percentage of respondents exceeds 100% in the context of addressee.

As illustrated in Table 3, German NSs reported a large variety of expressions when assessing their own and most Germans' language use. The participants' responses converged between the two baselines only with respect to two formulaic phrases: *Ich liebe dich* emerged as the expression most frequently stated toward a partner both in terms of the NSs' own L1 use (mentioned by 50%) and their reported group use (75.56%). *Ich hab dich lieb* emerged as the most commonly mentioned expression toward a mother (mentioned by 46.88% regarding reported self use and by 55% regarding projected community use) and a father (mentioned by 41.67% regarding personal use and by 44.44% regarding community use).

A large discrete category of "other" expressions of affection, i.e. expressions that were mentioned only once, emerged in the context of all four addressees. Within both baselines, this "other" category of unique expressions ranked among the top two response categories for each addressee but was consistently larger in the personal baseline, indicating a higher degree of variation in perceived individual use.

The table highlights another striking discrepancy between the two baselines: several response categories emerged in the personal baseline that did not at all appear in the community baseline, and vice versa. The total number of such baseline-specific categories ranged between two (for mother) and five (for partner). For example, respondents indicated that they personally display their affection toward their father nonverbally (12.5%), yet no respondent believed that most Germans might do the same. In fact, 19.44% of respondents stated that most Germans would use *Schön, dass es dich gibt* with their father, an expression

that no respondent reported actually using personally. In turn, with respect to expressing affection toward a father, a total of four categories of expressions did not overlap between reported personal and projected group use. Similarly, 18.18% of respondents reported that most Germans would use *Du bist ein toller Freund* (You're a great friend) to verbally express their affection toward a friend, yet not a single respondent reported personally using it.

Table 3

German NNS' Self-Reported Verbalization of Affection Towards Different Addressees (in Percentage of Respondents per Expression) by Baseline

Addressee	Expression	Self (in %)	Community (in %)
Partner	<i>Ich liebe dich.</i>	50.00	75.56
	Other	42.11	26.67
	<i>Ich hab dich lieb.</i>	34.21	24.44
	<i>Schön, dass es dich gibt.</i>	5.00	0.00
	<i>Du bist mir wichtig.</i>	5.00	0.00
	<i>Ich bin froh, dass ich dich hab.</i>	0.00	6.67
	<i>Ich brauche dich.</i>	0.00	6.67
	<i>Ich hab dich gern.</i>	0.00	6.67
Friends	Other	70.45	36.36
	Expressions of reliance	22.73	18.18
	<i>Ich hab dich lieb.</i>	11.36	11.36
	<i>Ich mag dich.</i>	9.10	15.91
	<i>Schön, dass es dich gibt.</i>	9.10	20.45
	<i>Du bist mir wichtig.</i>	9.10	0.00
	<i>Du bist ein toller Freund.</i>	0.00	18.18
Mother	<i>Ich hab dich lieb.</i>	46.88	55.00
	Other	43.75	20.00
	Expressions of gratefulness	18.75	5.00
	Nonverbal	12.50	2.50
	<i>Schön, dass es dich gibt.</i>	0.00	12.50
	<i>Du bist die Beste.</i>	0.00	17.50
Father	<i>Ich hab dich lieb.</i>	41.67	44.44
	Other	37.50	22.22
	Nonverbal	12.50	0.00
	<i>Ich hab dich gern.</i>	0.00	8.33
	<i>Du bist der Beste.</i>	0.00	13.89
	<i>Schön, dass es dich gibt.</i>	0.00	19.44

Note. Approximate English translations of the German expressions: *Ich liebe dich* – I love you; *Ich hab dich lieb* – I love you (not romantically); *Schön, dass es dich gibt* – I'm glad you're there; *Ich mag dich* – I like you; *Du bist der/ die Beste* – You're the best; *Du bist mir wichtig* – You're important to me; *Ich hab dich gern* – I like you; *Ich bin froh, dass ich dich hab* – I'm glad to have you in my life; *Du bist ein toller Freund* – You're a great friend.

DISCUSSION

Lack of Consensus Defied the Assumption of a Comprehensive Norm

The main objective of this study was to explore to what extent German NSs' accounts of the use of German expressions of affection within their speech community allow for the assumption of cultural consensus. Results revealed a large degree of intracultural variation among German NSs' self-reported L1 behavior and, more surprisingly, a significant misalignment of German NSs' perceptions of their personal and most Germans' practices. In particular, Tables 1 and 2 revealed that the frequency with which Germans perceived their personal and most Germans' L1 use differed significantly, while at the same time, NSs' cumulative views of how frequently most Germans use expressions of affection indicated a higher degree of agreement than their perceptions of their own L1 use. What is more, German NSs' perceptions of what most Germans say to express affection towards the four addressees included multiple expressions that no respondent stated actually using personally. The observed divergence in qualitative and quantitative data indicates a lack of consensus among German NSs' views that defies the assumption of a pertinent reliable, comprehensive, community-specific norm.

Assuming Cultural Non-Consensus

Hence, the findings of the study counter the long-held assumption that cultural consensus exists (e.g., Romney et al., 1986) and suggest the need for a *non-consensus hypothesis* when it comes to at least some areas of culture. In addition, while some degree of consensus has traditionally been considered a dimension of culture (Geertz, 1973, 1983; Lederach, 1995; Singer, 1998), the findings concur with Geertz's (2002) observation that 'culture as a consensus' may indeed not (or no longer) be a viable means of conceiving of culture. This observation prompts Geertz (2002) to conclude: "If the general is to be grasped at all, and new unities uncovered, it must, it seems, be grasped not directly, all at once, but via instances, differences, variations, particularities—piece-meal, case by case. In a splintered world, we must address the splinters" (p. 221). In the context of the current study, the observed degree of intracultural variation and lack of a comprehensive norm bring into focus the complexity of such 'splinters' of 'culture' (here, the example of expressing affection) when seen through the lens of the individuals who participate in it.

Thus, while the present study is limited in its analytical approach and its particular interest in exploring the existence of a culture-specific consensus and comprehensive norm, additional analyses of the data could shed light on how macrosocial factors such as age, gender, region, education, socio-economic background—variables typically explored in the still relatively young field of variational pragmatics (Barron, 2005; Kasper, 1995; Schneider, 2010)—might explain the variation in the data and whether a 'fragmentary' consensus can be found on these microlevels.

One Population, Two Native Speaker Baselines: Researching Norms in L2 Pragmatics

The most intriguing finding of the study was that German NSs' perceptions of their own L1 behavior and of the conventions in their speech community diverged considerably in

quantitative and qualitative terms. The findings outline important questions for future research in SLA, in particular with regard to defining and researching norms in L2 pragmatics. The data at hand suggest that NS baselines are more complex when the ‘point of view of users’ is considered. Thus, the findings underscore the importance of moving towards new methodologies that combine both emic and etic perspectives in L2 pragmatics research (Dewaele, 2010). An emic perspective affords a more complex, differentiated view of community members’ perceptions and judgments of L1 behavior—which may not only deviate from their actual L1 use patterns (Kasper, 1997) but, in fact, reveal multiple, distinct levels of perceptions or expectations of ‘normal’ language behavior in a given speech community. Future research in L2 pragmatics will thus need to consider whether differences between NSs’ baselines exist in a given area and discern which of these baselines (if any) NSs draw on in pragmatic judgment tasks. An elicitation of two NS baselines of perception (self and community-specific) would give way to a more multifaceted appraisal of the “expectations about interactional discourse held by members of a speech community as appropriate and ‘normal’ behavior” (LoCastro, 2012, p. 159).

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is important to keep in mind that this study investigated NSs’ self-reported perceptions of language use rather than actual language behavior and the interactional patterns that can be directly observed through naturalistic data. This method was chosen (a) in light of the lack of research on NSs’ perceptions of their linguaculture vis-à-vis the importance of understanding how people from other cultures view the (their) world, themselves, and others in FL education (e.g., as emphasized by the 2015 World-Readiness Standards), and (b) to allow for the particular focus on cultural consensus to inquire into the existence of community-specific (national) NS norms. Future research is needed to investigate how NSs’ perceptions of their own and the speech community’s L1 use compare with NSs’ interactional patterns in natural data. This would place the NSs’ perceptions in the context of their actual L1 behavior, and it would be particularly interesting to explore whether NSs’ perceptions of their own or of most NSs align more with patterns observed in interactional data (or whether there is any convergence at all).

With regard to the validity and reliability of the study instrument, a future investigation could employ a similarly designed questionnaire regarding a different sociocultural/sociopragmatic aspect of language use relevant in L2 instruction (for instance, the use of formal vs. informal address in German) to investigate whether the non-consensus finding in this study was an effect of the particular topic of expressions of affection or whether the finding would be replicated. The results of such an investigation would shed light on the extent to which non-consensus is community-specific, and in turn, whether the degree of consensus itself needs to be considered in intercultural comparisons of pragmatic norms (for instance, in contrastive studies in the fields of intercultural and variational pragmatics). Furthermore, the questionnaire data could be triangulated with metapragmatic (individual or group) follow-up interviews to elicit participants’ explanations regarding the (non-)consensus findings and to examine whether participants view their own behavior as a conscious deviation from a perceived norm in their speech community and whether a misalignment of self and group perception indexes, for instance, cultural ‘looseness’ as ‘loose’ cultures have weak social norms and a high tolerance for deviant behavior (Gelfand, Raver, Nishii, Leslie, & Lun, 2011).

CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Native Speaker Accounts of Cultural Practices in FL Teaching

This study provided empirical evidence of how or in what ways individual NSs' perceptions of their cultural practices meet the theoretical assumption and pedagogical need for a firm, comprehensive and teachable NS norm specific to a given NS community (here, NSs of German in Germany). In particular, the findings of the study outline some limitations on the use of individual NSs' accounts of cultural practices when teaching about foreign-language culture. The results suggest that it can indeed not be assumed that NSs essentially agree in their perceptions of their cultural practices, nor can it be assumed that they possess the cultural sensitivity to accurately perceive the cultural practices of their fellow NSs. In this way, the outcomes of this study further underscore the vital need for research-based representation of cultural practices in teaching materials (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Cohen & Sykes, 2013; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010; Kasper, 1997; Tatsuki, 2019). At the same time, the findings do not imply that including NSs' diverse perspectives on their culture is less valuable in the teaching of FL culture. As previous research has shown, engaging learners with individual NSs' perspectives can indeed afford learners opportunities to relate to alternative worldviews (Garrett-Rucks, 2013) and encourage them to make cross-cultural connections through personal interactions with members of the target culture (Kern, 2014). However, the results of this study show that NSs may (collectively) perceive their own cultural practices as significantly different from those of their fellow NSs—at least in their imagination of the practices of the community as a whole.

Non-Consensus and Critical Cultural Awareness

The analysis of the data at hand revealed that no clearly discernable comprehensive, reliable norm emerged from the NSs' own perceptions of their language behavior. Thus, it is important that FL teachers help learners develop an awareness of the, at least to some degree, “destabilized” nature of norms in a given area as they work towards developing a critical cultural awareness (as delineated in Byram, 1997). Instructors can aim to increase FL learners' awareness of the intracultural variation among NSs' views of their cultural practices. As Kramersch (2015) noted, the challenge that FL teachers face today is “how to seize the moment to move the students from the security of the stereotype to its exhilarating but risky variations, and how to engage them with the differences in world-views indexed by these variations” (p. 414). The large pragmalinguistic variety of expressions reported by NSs and the divergence in NSs' perceptions of self and community practices underscores that FL teachers should indeed give a greater role not only to diversifying their teaching by presenting sociolinguistic and pragmatic variation and to metapragmatic awareness and reflexivity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011), but also to the careful reflection on the assumption of cultural consensus when addressing cultural divergences in outlook, for instance when language teaching materials highlight cultural perspectives as uniquely defined in a given national speech community.

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APPENDIX

German Native Speaker Questionnaire Items Considered in the Study

I. Persönliche Angaben

1. Ihr Geschlecht:

2. Ihr Alter:

3. Ihr Beruf:
4. Ihre Ausbildung:
5. Wo in Deutschland haben Sie bisher gelebt? Bitte geben Sie jeweils den Ortsnamen an, das Bundesland und Ihr Alter zu dem Zeitpunkt, an dem Sie da gelebt haben. Z.B. "Dresden, Sachsen, Alter 0-12".
6. Haben Sie einmal für längere Zeit im Ausland gelebt? Wenn ja, bitte geben Sie den Ort/das Land an und Ihr Alter zu diesem Zeitpunkt. (New York, USA, 21-23 Jahre)
- 7.a. Sind Sie zurzeit in einer festen Beziehung? ___Ja ___ Nein
- 7.b. Wenn ja, wie lange kennen Sie Ihren Partner/Ihre Partnerin schon?
- 8.a. Leben Ihre Eltern noch?
Ihre Mutter ___Ja ___Nein Ihr Vater ___Ja ___Nein
- 8.b. Wenn ja, wie oft sprechen Sie mit ihnen?
Ihrer Mutter _____ Ihrem Vater _____

II. Zuneigung

9. Wie oft drücken Sie den folgenden Personen gegenüber Ihre Zuneigung *in Worten* aus? (Bitte freilassen, falls nicht zutreffend.)

a) Ihrem Partner (Freund/Freundin, Ehemann/Ehefrau etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was genau sagen Sie, um Ihre Zuneigung für diese Person zum Ausdruck zu bringen?
Unter welchen Umständen sagen Sie das?

b) Ihren Freunden

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was genau sagen Sie, um Ihre Zuneigung für diese Person zum Ausdruck zu bringen?
Unter welchen Umständen sagen Sie das?

c) Ihrer Mutter

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was genau sagen Sie, um Ihre Zuneigung für sie zum Ausdruck zu bringen?
Unter welchen Umständen sagen Sie das?

d) Ihrem Vater

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was genau sagen Sie, um Ihre Zuneigung für sie zum Ausdruck zu bringen?

Unter welchen Umständen sagen Sie das?

10. Wie verstehen Sie persönlich die Bedeutung und Verwendung der folgenden Ausdrücke? Bitte schätzen Sie jeweils ein, mit wem und wie häufig Sie den Ausdruck verwenden, und ob Sie diesen Ausdruck eher im Privaten/allein mit der Person oder öffentlich/vor anderen verwenden.

a) „Ich hab dich lieb.“

Zu wem würden Sie das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden Sie den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

b) „Ich liebe dich.“

Zu wem würden Sie das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden Sie den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

c) „Ich mag dich.“

Zu wem würden Sie das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden Sie den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

d) „Schön, dass es dich gibt.“

Zu wem würden Sie das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden Sie den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

11. Bitte bewerten Sie noch einmal anhand derselben Kriterien wie unter 10., wie *die meisten Deutschen* wohl die Bedeutung und Verwendung dieser Ausdrücke wohl verstehen und verwenden.

a) „Ich hab dich lieb.“

Zu wem würden die meisten Deutschen das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden die meisten Deutschen den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

b) „Ich liebe dich.“

Zu wem würden die meisten Deutschen das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden die meisten Deutschen den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

c) „Ich mag dich.“

Zu wem würden die meisten Deutschen das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden die meisten Deutschen den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

d) „Schön, dass es dich gibt.“

Zu wem würden die meisten Deutschen das sagen?

Wie häufig verwenden die meisten Deutschen den Ausdruck wahrscheinlich?

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

12. Wie häufig drücken die meisten Deutschen wohl ihre Zuneigung aus für

a) Ihren Partner (Freund/Freundin, Ehemann/Ehefrau etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was würden die meisten Deutschen vermutlich sagen?

b) Ihre Freunde

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was würden die meisten Deutschen vermutlich sagen?

c) Ihre Mutter

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was würden die meisten Deutschen vermutlich sagen?

d) Ihren Vater

1	2	3	4	5
nie	selten	manchmal	oft	ständig

Was würden die meisten Deutschen vermutlich sagen?

English translation

I. Personal Background

1. Your gender:
2. Your age:
3. Your profession:
4. Your educational background:
5. Where in the USA have you lived? Please provide for each the name of the city or town, the state, and your age/s when you lived there, e.g., "Dresden, Sachsen, age 0-6."
6. Have you ever lived abroad for a longer period of time? If yes, please indicate the town/country and your age at the time you lived there, e.g., "Berlin, Germany, age 17-18."
- 7.a. Are you currently in a romantic relationship? ___ Yes ___ No
- b. If yes, for how long have you known your partner?
- 8.a. Are your parents still living?
Your mother ___ Yes ___ No Your father ___ Yes ___ No
- b. If yes, how often do you talk to them?
Your mother _____ Your father _____

II. Expressions of Affection

9. How frequently do you tell the following people of your affection? (*Please write NA if not applicable.*)

a) Your significant other, i.e., your boyfriend/girlfriend, or husband/wife, etc.

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would you say to tell them of your affection?

In which situations would you say this?

b) your friends

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would you say to tell them of your affection?

In which situations would you say this?

c) your mother

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would you say to tell her of your affection?
In which situations would you say this?

d) your father

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would you say to tell him of your affection?
In which situations would you say this?

10. How do you understand the meaning and use of the following expressions? Please explain for each example below.

a) „Ich hab dich lieb.“

To whom would you probably say this?
How often do you use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

b) „Ich liebe dich.“

To whom would you probably say this?
How often do you use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

c) „Ich mag dich.“

To whom would you probably say this?
How often do you use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

d) „Schön, dass es dich gibt.“

To whom would you probably say this?
How often do you use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

11. How do you think most Germans understand the meaning and usage of the following expressions?

a) „Ich hab dich lieb.“

To whom would most Germans probably say this?

How often do they probably use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

b) „Ich liebe dich“

How often do most Germans probably use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

c) „Ich mag dich.“

To whom would most Germans probably say this?

How often do most Germans probably use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

d) „Schön, dass es dich gibt.“

To whom would most Germans probably say this?

How often do most Germans probably use this expression?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

12. How frequently do you believe *most Germans* tell the following people of their affection?

a) their significant other, i.e., their boyfriend/girlfriend, or husband/wife, etc.

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would they say to tell them of their affection?

In which situations would they say this?

b) their friends

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would they say to tell them of their affection?

In which situations would they say this?

c) their mother

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would they say to tell her of their affection?

In which situations would they say this?

d) their father

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	constantly

What would they say to tell him of their affection?

In which situations would they say this?