

The Interaction of Students' Reported Personal Connections to German and Their
Experiences in the German Foreign Language Classroom

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I dedicate this work to my parents, without whom I would never have achieved this goal.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	What it Stands for
AMTB	Attitude Motivation Test Battery
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CAS	Classroom Anxiety Scale
CCA	Canonical Correlation Analysis
CCS	Classroom Community Scale
CoC	Categories of Connection
CoI	Community of Inquiry
CoP	Community of Practice
FL	Foreign Language
FLCAS	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
L1	First/Native Language
L2	Second/Non-Native Language
LCTL	Less Commonly Taught Language
RQ	Research Question
SA	Study Abroad
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SP	Study Participant
WTC	Willingness to Communicate

1.0 Rationale

My dissertation seeks to explore a method of examining student motivation and identity in the foreign language (FL) classroom that is a complementary alternative to current theories, such as those put forth by Norton and Dörnyei. It will examine personal connections with speakers of German, the German language, and affiliated cultures and compare the number and types of reported connections with learners' perceptions of and affective response to the classroom community.

The impetus for this study stemmed from my personal experiences as an instructor of German. I was struck by how students in my classroom differed from each other in a variety of respects. Students who had a strong connection to someone who spoke German or who had a specific goal for their language skills seemed to engage more deeply in class, ask probing questions, and speak at length about using German outside the classroom. For example, I had a student who had a girlfriend who lived in Germany. He would consistently ask me questions about phrases his girlfriend had used in conversation with him and paid incredibly close attention to all pronunciation exercises in order to improve his ability to speak to her in German. Another student was pursuing a research position in Germany and she seemed to light up when we talked about areas of culture that she felt would help her navigate the cultural differences in her new working environment. I also had students who were taking German to fulfill university requirements, but they, at least, had chosen to study German out of the 60 available FLs at the university. I found myself wondering if the "effects" of the personal connections that I perceived my students to have would provide a suitable frame for study of the FL classroom as a community.

Motivation and identity have long been areas of study by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers. Researchers such as Bonny Norton and Zoltán Dörnyei have shown that a student's motivation and identity as a language learner are closely linked. However, as I investigated research on motivation and identity, it became apparent that students' personal connections to speakers of the target language, to the culture(s), and to the language itself has not been thoroughly explored to date.

My study can help researchers gain insight into student perceptions of the classroom community, as well as why students may choose German over other languages, and can also serve as a complement to the motivational and identity theories that exist in SLA research today.

2.0 Literature Review

This study looks at different kinds of connections that students of German may have with speakers of German, the language itself, and its associated cultures. In order to approach student behavior and background in the FL classroom, it is important to consider what previous studies have found on motivation and related concepts, such as identity, student anxiety, and the classroom community. There are two overarching themes in this review of the literature. First, I will explore learner identity in context, including motivation, anxiety, and willingness to communicate (2.1). The second theme explores context and connectedness, with a strong focus on concepts that relate to community (2.2). I will summarize previous literature (2.3) before discussing my research themes and questions (2.4).

2.1 Learner identity in context: motivation, anxiety, and willingness to communicate

2.1.1 Identity in SLA

The concept of identity in SLA has been debated at length and has evolved greatly over the years. Block (2007b) discussed the “Rise of Identity in SLA Research” and described how Bonny Norton (now one of the most well-known names in identity research in SLA) “lamented” in 1995 that researchers in SLA had not “developed a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context (p. 12)” (as cited in Block, 2007b, p. 866). However, since the time of Norton’s lamentation, it seems that many researchers have taken up the call to explore identities, including subsequent studies by Norton herself. Norton was the first to apply the sociological construct of “investment” to complement the psychological construct of motivation. Without the addition of concepts like “investment,” she was concerned that “most psychological theories of language learning motivation did not do justice to the complex identities of language learners, and the often inequitable relations of power they negotiated in different sites” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 215). This complexity is not static. Rather, language learners’ identities are in a constant state of flux. Through each interaction, they are “constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world” (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 75). Norton (2000) said that identity can be defined as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5). Norton and her colleagues did not specifically focus on educational settings at the beginning of their research on identity, but

it is important to understand that issues of learner identity (or identities) extend to the classroom. Pomerantz (2008) discussed the negotiation of classroom identities in relation to ideologies of language and language learning. She emphasized the importance of the learning environment in mediating how students were perceived. Dumas (2008) affirmed that the concept of identity has been acknowledged as more complex than previous researchers may have recognized, with current researchers speaking “of learner identities in the plural rather than learner identity in the singular” (p. 1). He emphasized that identities are not a constant, static thing, stating that identities “are about *becoming* rather than *being*” (p. 2, emphasis in original). Block (2007a) also defined identities as “complex and multi-layered” (p. 27). Similarly, Norton & McKinney (2011) argued that identity is “multiple and non-unitary” and that speakers can “reframe their relationship with their interlocutor and reclaim alternative, more powerful identities” (p. 74). People can negotiate their identity through positioning (Farnsworth, 2010), through various language ideologies (Lowther Pereira, 2010), and their own cultural background (Showstack, 2012). Harklau (2000) also found that a student’s background affects identities and attitudes. Identity maintenance and change was discussed in Rambo’s 2004 dissertation. In the FL classroom, students are faced with new cultural information along with language acquisition. Rambo’s study examined the interplay between this acculturation, the language, and the students’ own identity. The concept of multiple and evolving identities supplements other ideas explored in SLA, such as motivation and investment.

Another theoretical approach to the study of identity in education – including in L2 learning environments – has been that of figured worlds, developed by Holland et al. (1998). As Urrieta (2007) described, “[p]eople ‘figure’ who they are through the activities

and in relation to the social types that populate these figured worlds and in social relationships with the people who perform these worlds. People develop new identities in figured worlds” (p. 108). Among several other frameworks, the work of Vygotsky and Bakhtin (discussed below in section 2.2.1) also influenced the development of this theory of figured worlds, which has many similar claims to community theories such as Lave and Wenger’s (1991) Community of Practice (discussed below in section 2.2.2).

My dissertation focuses on how students’ classroom identities, including their own behaviors in the classroom, and how they perceive the classroom community, intersect with identities that they have developed, maintain, and negotiate outside the classroom – their personal connections.

2.1.2 Studies about student motivation

Motivation is inherently personal in nature. Each student approaches language learning in his or her own way. The way in which each student experiences the language classroom is also highly dependent on the individual. The concepts of identity and motivation in the FL classroom are closely linked.

The field of motivation studies in relationship to FL learning was pioneered by Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972, *inter alia*), who began to construct a socio-psychological theory of FL learning. They claimed that a “successful learner of a second language must be psychologically prepared to adopt various aspects of behavior which characterize members of another linguistic-cultural group” (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 3). They identified two orientations toward language learning that determine how successful a student might be in

their endeavor, namely *integrative* and *instrumental orientations*. Gardner and Lambert (1959) originally defined *integrative orientation* as an aim “to learn more about the language group, or to meet more and different people” whereas *instrumental orientation* reflects “the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement,” such as learning a language to obtain a better job (p. 267). To this day, many scholars continue to examine this utilitarian value of language achievement. For example, Chavez (2010) posited, “Perhaps whether a language has some use in one's profession was an important consideration when learners of German chose German [...]. As such, career applications may be important as students choose German - or justify the choice to themselves - but not decisive by themselves.” However, the distinction between *instrumental* and *integrative orientation* as diametrically opposed characteristics has been challenged and has even been expanded upon by Gardner himself in the development of his socio-educational model (see Gardner, 1982 and Gardner, 2010), which has been developed over the years. The model initially included student aptitude and motivation, and subsequently developed to include measures of “external factors” such as the student environment. He also developed the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) to evaluate students' integrativeness, attitude toward learning situation, motivation, and language anxiety.

Several theories of motivation in FL learning have expanded on Gardner and Lambert's seminal work. Clement and Dörnyei (2001), for example, consider the L2 community, attitudes toward the L2 speakers and community, cultural interest, linguistic self-confidence, and milieu (social influences including family and friends). Deci and Ryan (1985) created the *Self-Determination Theory* to outline learner motivation, which they claimed stems out of three needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Researchers

such as Noels (2005) used multiple theories to examine student motivations. She stated that a portion of the *Self-Determination Theory* that “distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic orientations” can be viewed as a “complementary approach to understanding orientations [such as discussed in Gardner and Lambert]” (p. 286). She further observed that “intrinsic motivation is the form of motivation by which ‘a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures, or rewards’ (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 56)” (p. 286), whereas extrinsic motivation falls along a continuum of self-determination, including external, introjected, and identified regulation. Noels explained that although there is “a similarity in the definitions of instrumental orientation and less self-determined extrinsic motivation (especially external regulation), the integrative orientation should not be equated with intrinsic or more self-determined orientations” (p. 288).

Students’ motivation and attitudes toward others in the classroom environment or in the broader L2 community relates to their perception of self as a language learner. Zoltán Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009) *L2 Motivational Self System* unites views of others and the self in theoretical terms. Dörnyei (2009) problematized the concept of *integrative orientation*, calling it limiting, and identified developments in motivational psychology that necessitated a new theoretical framework for motivational research. The *L2 Motivational Self System* consists of three components, namely, the *Ideal L2 Self*, i.e., the person a learner might like to become, such as a wish to become a competent speaker or be able to write an essay; the *Ought-to Self*, i.e., different characteristics that students believe they are expected to possess in order to succeed and avoid any negative results, such as speaking in class so

as to not incur a deduction in the participation grade; and the *L2 Learning Experience*, i.e., the learning environment, including peers and the instructor.

A study by Kormos et al. in 2011 tested structural equation models based off of Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* and Yashima's (2002) idea of international posture, or a student's attitude toward the international community. Their results confirmed that "self-related beliefs play a highly important role in L2-learning motivation" (p. 513), and their model highlighted the fact that motivation is "strongly influenced by social and contextual factors" (p. 497).

More recent studies involving Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* have focused on the idea of "vision." Muir and Dörnyei (2013) spoke about vision as a way to understand and "inspire motivated action" and that the idea of vision encapsulates the selves that Dörnyei discussed in the *L2 Motivational Self System*, including the *Ideal Self* (p. 358). Muir and Dörnyei claimed that an imagined reality or visions, which are different from a daydream in that a vision has a behavioral sequence to accompany it, could create motivation to accomplish different tasks. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) postulated that vision is one of the "highest-order motivational forces" that students experience and is a "predictor of their long term intended effort" (p. 9, as quoted in Muir & Dörnyei, 2013, p. 359).

While researchers in SLA essentially want to be able to understand and describe how FLs are learned, motivational researchers in SLA specifically pursue the question of the "why." They ask, for example, "Why do students choose particular foreign languages to study?" Or, "Why do students act the way they do in class?" Studies on motivation that span from Gardner and Lambert to more recent studies by Dörnyei have inspired many parts of

this study: A modified version of the aforementioned AMTB was included as part of the research instrument and Dörnyei's emphasis on the learning environment validated my own desire to examine the classroom experience closely.

2.1.3 Anxiety and the intersection of motivation and anxiety

A student's anxiety in the FL classroom can have a great impact on their experience in the FL classroom including, for instance, on student achievement (e.g., MacIntyre, Noels & Clement, 1997; Horwitz, 2001; Liu, 2006; Tóth, 2007). Elaine Horwitz, one of the most well-known researchers on FL anxiety, has explored the relationship between language anxiety and aspects of language learning, such as motivation and the classroom community. For example, she found that students who have a fear of negative evaluation may be hesitant to speak in front of peers or the instructor for fear of being evaluated as "stupid" (Horwitz et al., 2010, p. 96 & 100). According to Horwitz, willingness to communicate (WTC; see below in section 2.1.3) is also influenced by FL anxiety; anxiety may decrease a student's WTC in a FL, even if they may be willing to communicate in the same situation in their native language (*ibid.*, 100). Bailey (1983) determined that students were competitive with one another and compared their successes and trials to those of other students. She analyzed student diaries and remarked that for one student, "whether or not this anxiety affected her language learning is open to debate. It is clear that she felt it did" (p. 86). Phillips (1990) showed that classroom anxiety had a strong "inverse relationship with achievement measures" (p. viii). Papi (2010) tested a theoretical model based on Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System*, and found that students reported higher anxiety when they

considered their *Ought-to Self*, but experienced decreased anxiety when they thought about their *Ideal L2 Self* and the *L2 Learning Experience*.

Other researchers have striven to develop instruments that can measure possible internal influences on student behavior, such as motivation, attitude, and anxiety. Inspired by Gardner et al.'s (1979, 1981) development of the AMTB, Elaine Horwitz and her fellow researchers developed the seminal Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which has since been applied in FL research spanning a variety of languages and institutions, from learners of English in Taiwan (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004), to Spanish L2 reading comprehension (Sellers, 2000). As Horwitz et al. (1986) explained, anxiety in the FL classroom affects students in many ways: Students may resort to different communication strategies than they would otherwise use (p. 126), their anxiety may prevent them from understanding what is spoken in the classroom (p. 127), and/or they may experience the same physiological effects as "specific" anxiety, such as sweating, feelings of dread, or even palpitations (p. 126). The study found that many students experience at least some anxiety in the classroom. The authors suggested that teachers can mitigate anxiety by acknowledging it and seeking to make the "learning context less stressful" (p. 131). Researchers such as Khodadady and Khajavy (2013), who have explicitly studied the relationship between anxiety and motivation, found that "various types of FL motivation are significantly correlated to FL anxiety" (p. 280).

Foreign language anxiety has been shown to impact student experiences of learning a FL. As such, FL anxiety is considered in this study as part of the student experience in the classroom. A modified anxiety scale, which was based on the FLCAS developed by Horwitz et al. in 1986, was used in this study.

2.1.3 Willingness to communicate

Willingness to communicate is also part of theoretical constructs of motivated student behavior. A trait disposition toward communicative engagement has been captured by James McCroskey, who stated that “willingness to communicate is the most basic orientation toward communication” (n.d.). McCroskey developed an instrument for measuring willingness to communicate (WTC), which has since been adapted for the FL classroom by researchers such as MacIntyre (2007). A student’s WTC in his or her native/first language (L1) is dependent on many factors, including anxiety and motivation (MacIntyre, Babin, & Clément, 1999; MacIntyre et al., 2002), and these factors also affect WTC in the second/foreign language (L2) (MacIntyre & Clément, 1999). De Saint Léger and Storch (2009) showed that students’ perceptions of themselves affected their WTC in the classroom. As briefly mentioned earlier, Yashima (2002) examined the relationship between Japanese students’ WTC in English and certain variables, including international posture. These concepts highlight the connection between students’ beliefs about the culture(s) that they are studying and their performance in the language classroom.

The participants in this study were students at an institution that values a communicative approach to language teaching, in which speaking in the target language is expected in class. Research has shown that WTC in a FL is closely connected with many other variables considered in this study, such as anxiety and motivation. Therefore, the present study draws on the concept of WTC through the lens of a modified WTC classroom scale (based on MacIntyre, 2007) and behavior that demonstrates WTC in the classroom.

2.2 Context and connectedness

Each student brings his or her own goals, personalities, and backgrounds with them into the FL classroom. Within the classroom community, these factors come together in a complex interplay. Part of this study examines the intersection of classroom community and student beliefs, so it is important to examine concepts of community and interaction, and to then also consider communities that extend beyond the classroom.

2.2.1 Vygotsky and Bakhtin

One must consider relationships with and perceptions of others in order to understand properly both the ecology in which individuals are situated and the role that individuals perceive for themselves and others. The Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin believed that identity is “dialogic,” especially when considering interaction between speaker and listener. He states that speakers need to orient themselves “toward a specific conceptual horizon, toward the specific world of the listener” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 282). Only by considering these possible orientations is one able to understand the “other.” Indeed, it is difficult to understand the concept of “self” if there is no “other” with which to compare or contrast. In the FL classroom, students compare themselves not only to their interlocutors there, but the natural course of language study continually points students toward “real-world” examples of the language being spoken outside of the classroom.

The Social Development Theory created by Lev Vygotsky constitutes a landmark in studies in social interaction and has been used in designing many models of education and community. Vygotsky (1978) claimed that social interaction is vital in human development.

He also described the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which encompasses the tasks that learners can accomplish with scaffolding or guidance, as compared to what they would be able to accomplish on their own. This guidance can come from teachers or peers. This model of learning emphasizes the importance of those who surround the learners.

Vygotsky and Bakhtin are frequently compared. Some scholars (Matusov, 2011; White, 2011) argue that there are fundamental similarities between the two, for example, that both Vygotsky and Bakhtin argue that social interactions influence individual identity. However, those scholars seem to agree that social interaction and the social nature of experience is where the similarities end given Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's different approaches to learning (dialectic vs. dialogic). Bakhtin argued that dialogue with others is what brings about meaning, whereas Vygotsky believed that self-reflection can achieve meaning (White, 2011, p. 6). For the purposes of this study, I align my views firmly in their shared philosophy that social interaction influences identity. I do not find that the diverging Vygotskian and Bakhtinian approaches are at odds in my study; students dialogue with the teacher and peers to learn language and understand themselves as language learners, but they also reflect upon their own identity and engage in the activity-based approaches to construct meaning in the classroom.

2.2.2 General theories of community

Lave and Wenger's idea of Communities of Practice (CoP) falls in line with the Vygotskian/Bakhtinian idea of a social construction of community that shapes an individual's experiences. While CoP draws on Vygotskian theory to develop an

understanding of learning, CoP challenges the premise that learning is solely a transmission of information from teacher to student. Instead, “communities of practice moves away from ‘Vygotskian roots’ and draws on a broader background, including anthropology and aspects of social theory” (Barton & Tusting, 2005, p. 5). The theoretical framework of CoP was initially created to describe the interactions of professional groups, such as tailors or navy quartermasters (Lave & Wenger, 1991), but has since been applied to many other areas. More recently, CoP has also been applied to FL classrooms, although, as Haneda (2006) described, the application of CoP to L2 classrooms has limitations. She explained that multiple factors may influence participation in this community, including the physical space or an individual’s own emotional concerns. She encouraged researchers to enrich the term community “by consideration of who its members are as individuals, with particular dispositions shaped by their life trajectories – past, present, and envisioned future” (p. 815). Her argumentation bears striking similarities with concepts that are represented in *L2 Motivational Self System* and the *Self-Determination Theory*. Embracing CoP in the context of a FL classroom in a manner that reaches beyond the classroom’s boundaries allows the researcher to consider the personal connections with the language or culture that students bring with them. The present study examines exactly those connections, which could range from possessing a familial connection to the language to a desire to study abroad. The connections that students report to possess are important to an examination of the ecology of the classroom community. Murphey, Jin, and Li-Chi (2004) found that learners invest more time and effort into a community they would like to be a part of. As Haneda also suggested, CoP can be useful in the L2 setting with some “analytical

unpacking” (p. 815). With this in mind, I will define what I understand by “Community of Practice” as it applies to the FL classroom.

The importance of the interaction of students and teacher as well as between a student and his or her peers in the conceptualization of the FL classroom as a community, cannot be understated. As such, class size is an important consideration. For classes in a relatively popular FL such as German, it is not uncommon to have more than 20 students per class, which, unfortunately, does not allow the instructor to have much one-on-one time with the students. The teacher can explain broader concepts and guide practice activities, but in the classroom, learning is socially constructed. That is, learning occurs both when new information is presented by the teacher, as well as through interactions with peers in this social environment. As Wenger stated on his personal website, “[c]ommunities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.” Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner¹ (2015), identified three crucial characteristics of a CoP (emphasis mine):

1. “**The domain**... has identity defined by a shared domain of interest.”
2. “**The community**” is characterized by members who “engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other; they care about their standing with each other... Having the same job or the same title does not make for a community of practice unless members interact and learn together.”

¹ Etienne Wenger married Beverly Trayner and they now refer to themselves with the last name “Wenger-Trayner.” I will refer to him as “Wenger” when I reference publications that pre-date his name change.

3. **“The practice”** which means that “members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories... in short a shared practice.” (p. 2)

The students in a FL classroom embody both the aspects of Wenger’s definition by interacting on a regular basis as well as the three characteristic of CoP:

1. Their shared domain of interest is the FL that they study.
2. They form a community, if only for a semester. They perceive each other’s abilities in the classroom and share information with each other by engaging in dialogue. These students most definitely “interact and learn together” multiple days per week.
3. Any teacher can tell you that their classes all have a different “feel” – even in different sections of the same course. The students get into a rhythm and, along with the teacher, engage in sharing “experiences and stories” with one another, which makes their community’s practice unique.

In considering the framework of CoP, we must reflect upon how a student’s own “location” in the social world affects their interactions within the community. While the students form their own CoP in the classroom, students can also perceive themselves as members of different groups within the larger community, or they can be members of multiple communities. Wenger discussed membership in multiple communities in his 1999 book *Communities of Practice*, in which he stated that a person can be part of more than one group, perhaps even fulfilling central and peripheral roles in different groups. In the present study, the “members” of the community are students, the main CoP that is examined is the classroom, and we can view the various kinds of connections that the

students report to possess as part of the phenomenon of students holding memberships in multiple communities.

A different but complementary theoretical framework is the Community of Inquiry (CoI; Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000), which discusses the cognitive, social, and teaching presence as three essential elements of the educational experience. The cognitive element involves constructing meaning, the social element deals with students as individuals, including their personal characteristics, and the teaching presence includes the design and facilitation of the classroom (CoI, n.d.). Indeed, the social state of the classroom community encompasses not just one student's interactions, but the entire class of students and the instructor(s). The individuals that make up that community have a great influence on the feel of the classroom each semester. As the teaching presence element of CoI implies, teachers can exert an influence over the environment of the classroom. Campbell, Verenikina, and Herrington (2009), for example, found that the authority figure in such a community "greatly impacts the learning that occurs" (p. 655). Studies such as Kubanyiova (2015) highlight the importance of how teachers engage in meaningful discourse with their students. Despite the influence teachers have in the classroom, there is no question that much of a student's experience depends upon the individual students: the way that they interact, the relationships that they form, and what the students take away from the classroom.

2.2.3 Theories of community and the classroom

Rogoff (1994) proposed the concept of Communities of Learners, in which all members of the community take an active role in learning, no matter the difference in age

or skill. The practice of the community is conceived as a shared endeavor, even if the roles may be asymmetrical, i.e., the more mature or knowledgeable members of the community may be able to guide the process, while those who are younger or less knowledgeable on the subject invest in their own learning and manage their involvement in activities (p. 213). In the classroom, all members can participate and the teacher can guide the process of learning while empowering students to take an active role in their language learning.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) measured the sense of community outside of a classroom setting in neighborhoods and, from doing so, developed a theory they call "Sense of Community." They claimed that "sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (p. 9). Like Lave and Wenger's concept of communities of practice, McMillan and Chavis focused on the idea of membership, one of the key tenets of their theory. They argued that "membership has five attributes: boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment, and a common symbol system" (p. 11).

Wenger (1999) stated that the concept of membership in various communities can also be applied to "imagined communities." Bonny Norton (2001) applied this concept to SLA to examine the intersection of imagined communities and imagined identities. Just as motivational studies touch on the "imagined self" (*Ideal/Ought-To Selves*, as discussed in the sections above), students can imagine themselves connecting with certain communities (for example, interacting on a study abroad experience with native speakers of German in Germany) and actively pursue these opportunities. As Norton continued her research into the student experience, she touched on the importance of examining both the classroom

community and the student, not just one or the other (see Norton & McKinney, 2011). Environmental factors in any given classroom (a classroom which could be, for example, perceived as “racist, sexist, elitist, or homophobic”) could cause a learner to be excluded or “positioned as a ‘poor’ or unmotivated language learner” (p. 76). Busse and Walter (2013) examined the role that the language learning environment played in changes in perceived motivation (p. 438). They found that students focused on certain parts of the language learning environment, including the instructors, as factors in their (dis)motivation. These studies further solidify the view that motivation, self/identity, and the classroom community are inextricably linked when considering students’ experiences in the FL classroom.

The theories of community referenced above (CoP, CoI, Communities of Learners, and Sense of Community) all show how a community (or, more specific to this study, the classroom community) can impact its members. For the present study, the classroom community is vital to understanding students’ experiences in the classroom. However, eliciting student perceptions of the classroom lends itself to more qualitative measures, such as interviews, descriptive prompts, etc. In order to be able to analyze the classroom community with some quantitative measures, Alfred Rovai (2002) developed and tested the “Classroom Community Scale” and found that it was a “valid and reliable measure of classroom community and that [it] yields two interpretable factors, connectedness and learning” (p. 197). Rovai’s Classroom Community Scale has been used in many other studies (a recent Google Scholar search found that it was cited in close to 700 studies since its publication), including studies related to the evaluation of both CoI and CoP frameworks (Minor & Swanson, 2014; Lord & Harrington, 2013; *inter alia*). This instrument is a

valuable addition to this study, as it provides a quantitative measure of how the student feels in the classroom community, the results of which can then be interpreted in conjunction with additional qualitative measures.

2.2.4 Communities beyond the classroom

2.2.4a Affiliation

It is important to acknowledge the different terms that researchers who investigate student identity have defined, researched, and used in their work. One such term, *affiliation*, is important for understanding several nuances of the connections that students possess. The Oxford English Dictionary defines *affiliation* as a “connection with an organization or other body; esp. connection with a larger or more established group or organization, often as a branch or subsidiary part,” whereas “affiliative” is defined as “characterized by a desire to form relationships and associations with others.” Alternative definitions of these words in the OED include words like “relationships,” “links,” and even the familial term “kinship.” More specific to the study, researchers such as MacIntyre, Clément, and Dörnyei (1998) had previously discussed *affiliation* in the FL education context, where *affiliation* was “the desire to establish or maintain a rapport with a member of another group precisely because of different group memberships” (p. 551). For example, this interpretation of *affiliation* could include someone who is a non-native speaker of German who would like to affiliate her/himself with a native speaker of German.

2.2.4b Ancestry as affiliation

Gatbonton and Trofimovich (2008) used the term *affiliation* specifically with regard to a person's ethnic group, using the phrase "ethnic group affiliation" which they stated "entails both a desire to identify or be identified with an ethnic group (ethnic group identification) and an emotional attachment to this group, characterised, for example, by feelings of pride and loyalty (ethnic group loyalty)" (p. 230). Gatbonton et al. (2005) emphasized that ethnic group affiliation was a concept worthy of investigation, as "virtually everyone has this sense of belonging", but despite its quiet existence, it is "not subjected to much discussion or questioning" (p. 492). While Gatbonton et al.'s research investigated connection to an ethnic group, Rampton (1990) discussed *affiliation* in terms of language and distinguished between the idea of *inheritance* and *affiliation*. She explained that

"[t]he crucial difference between them is that affiliation refers to a connection between people and groups that are considered to be separate or different, whereas inheritance is concerned with the continuity between people and groups who are felt to be closely linked. Inheritance occurs within social boundaries, while affiliation takes place across them." (p. 99)

It makes sense to consider multiple definitions of *affiliation* when describing a FL learning situation. Students could desire to connect with different groups, but the heritage or *inheritance* interpretation of *affiliation* is particularly relevant for German, as census data has shown that German is the largest ancestry group claimed by Americans. Thus, it is not unexpected that some students would have some kind of connection through their heritage. A distinction is made in the literature between those who might feel a connection to German because of ancestry and those who might be called heritage language learners

(HLLs). However, there is not widespread agreement on who might be called a HLL. Polinsky and Kagan (2007) only considered someone a HLL if they are “raised in a home where one language is spoken” and who “subsequently switch to another dominant language” (p. 368). There exist broader interpretations of the term, such as in Noels (2005), who defines a German HLL as anyone who may have had German spoken in their family, including families in which German “may or may not currently be used regularly in the home and community” (p. 289). Chavez (2010, 2011, 2013) showed that learners, both those of German and those of other FLs, perceive students of German as more likely than students of other languages to have a heritage connection to the language of their choice. In the same vein, Polinsky and Kagan asserted that these familial connections are indeed “important impetuses for learning a language,” but they also claimed that such a broad definition of “heritage” when conducting research is “not sufficient to characterize linguistic knowledge properly, and do not provide operational criteria for identifying heritage speakers” (p. 369). In short, while “heritage” may indeed be a connection that many students report to possess, it is important to note that this study allowed students to give their own connections without presenting any definition of terms and, as such, cannot necessarily be compared to all studies using similar terms.

Affiliation specifically addresses student identity and background while simultaneously encompassing several aspects of motivation. However, it does not specifically address all connections that students may have with German speakers or the language and culture, and is more affect-laden than other connections may be. Thus, *affiliation* is only part of the concept of “connections” used in this study. Considering the multiple definitions of *affiliation* in conjunction with other research on identity, motivation,

and student selves provides a much more complete picture of the connectedness of a student.

2.2.4c Study Abroad

A study abroad experience in a German-speaking country can foster connections to the German language, speakers, and culture(s) beyond the walls of the FL classroom. In many FL programs, students are encouraged to participate in study abroad (SA) programs, but it is important to understand why students participate in SA and what the gains of SA can be. The bulk of SA research that focuses on students after their SA experience appears to examine linguistic gains (see Cubillos, Chieffo & Fan, 2008; Hernandez, 2010; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Lindseth, 2010; Magnan & Back, 2007; Martinsen, 2010, Kinginger, 2009b) or culture shock upon return to the home country (see, Gaw, 2000; Rogers & Ward, 1993; Ryan & Twibell, 2000; Thompson & Christofi, 2006). There are considerable gaps in the research on the student experience in the classroom after a study abroad experience (Heidrich, 2012, 2013) and the classroom experience of students who plan to study abroad². Students who intend to study abroad or have already studied abroad and returned may have a different perception of the FL classroom than those who do not desire to do so.

This study takes into account the previous experience of students who have traveled to and/or studied abroad in a German-speaking country, considers whether students wish or plan to study abroad, and also examines students' decisions to study abroad (or not). Unlike those born with a connection to the language, a connection with study abroad is an

² There are a few studies, such as Salisbury et al. (2009), which examined factors that influenced decisions to study abroad.

aspirational connection, one that any student could “add” to their own connections with the language.

2.3 Summary of Previous Literature

Students can establish connections to a language in many different ways. Students may connect with a language through their heritage (Gatbonton et al., 2005; Gatbonton & Trofimovich, 2008; Rampton, 1990), but they may also desire to connect with others with whom they do not already identify (MacIntyre, Clément, and Dörnyei, 1998) or aspire to use their language in a job or on a study abroad experience. This study looks at the connections that the students have or would like to have to the German language, its speakers, and its associated cultures, and compares it with the experiences that students have in the German FL classroom.

The theories of community discussed in this literature review, such as Community of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and Community of Learners (Rogoff, 1994), indicate that a student’s classroom experience is not only affected by the student’s motivation, but rather it is also heavily influenced by other members of the classroom community. Researchers such as Norton and Toohey (2011) have emphasized the need to consider the classroom when investigating the experiences of students in a FL setting. Rovai’s 2002 Classroom Community Scale gives this study a valuable quantitative measure of classroom community. However, one cannot ignore what each individual student brings with them into this classroom environment. As previous research has shown, there is no one way of looking at student behavior in the classroom that encompasses all aspects of how a student interacts in the classroom. Each study, from Gardner and Lambert’s seminal work on

integrative versus instrumental orientations to Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System, contributes to our understanding about how we can best instruct our students in the FL classroom. The various aspects of student motivation (which also include student identity, affect, and WTC), do not fully explore the student experience in the classroom. One must simultaneously consider anxiety in the classroom, as various researchers (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, 2001; Horwitz et al., 2010; MacIntyre, Noels & Clement, 1997) have shown that anxiety affects student achievement and interaction in the classroom. Student behavior, perception of the classroom community, and classroom anxiety are all examined as part of the classroom experience in this study.

2.4 Research Questions

This study encompasses three overarching research themes: First, there is an examination of the personal connections that students in this study can imagine. Salient examples mentioned were used to create seven umbrella types of connections, called "Categories of Connection." Second, I wanted to see how these categories were represented in this student population by looking at which and how many Categories of Connection students reported to possess. Finally, I examined how the Categories of Connection interacted with the students' experiences in the classroom. Each of these themes has subquestions in order to fully develop each overarching theme.

Research Theme 1: What personal connections can exist according to students in this study?

1a: What types of personal connections to the German language and its associated cultures did students in this study report, either in terms of connections that they

themselves had or in terms of examples of connections that other learners of the language might have?

1b: How frequently did respondents in this study mention each of the seven emerging umbrella types of personal connections to the German language and its associated cultures?

Research Theme 2: How do the Categories of Connection relate to the participants in this study?

2a: Which Categories of Connection did students in this study report to possess?

2b: How many Categories of Connection did students in this study report to possess?

Research Theme 3: How did the Categories of Connection interact with their sense of classroom community, anxiety, and behaviors in the classroom?

3a: How did students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' responses on *each item* of a 20-item Classroom Community Scale?

3b: How did students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' *composite scores* on the 20-item Classroom Community Scale?

3c: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' responses on *each item* of a 22-item Classroom Anxiety Scale?

3d: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' *composite scores* on the Classroom Anxiety Scale?

3e: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community in consideration of adjectives that students provided to describe both the classroom atmosphere and their personal feelings in the classroom?

3f: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with self-reported behaviors in the German classroom?

3.0 Participants and Methodology

In this section, I will describe the participants in this study (Section 3.1), followed by the instrument design (3.2), and then I will give an overview of the data collection procedure (3.3).

3.1 Participants in the Dissertation Study

First, the participant demographics of all who participated in the study (i.e., the questionnaire) will be discussed (3.1.1) and then the participants in follow-up interviews will be described (3.1.2), followed by a table that summarizes participant information.

3.1.1 Participants

As will be explained in the instrument design (Section 3.2, below), the primary instrument in this study was a questionnaire. According to the study's approved IRB protocol (University of Wisconsin-Madison Institutional Review Board Protocol SBS-2013-1066; approval letter located in Appendix A), I asked instructors of courses in first- through third-year German if I could come to a class meeting in order to explain my study and distribute questionnaires to students and, then, at a later date, return to class to pick up the questionnaires. Students earned \$2 for a completed questionnaire and were given the option to enter in a drawing for \$50.

In the fall semester of 2013, the questionnaire was distributed in intermediate-level (third-year) German courses and in spring 2014, to beginning-level (first- through fourth-semester) German courses. The program under investigation, at the time of the study, offered a total of 14 sections of beginning-level German (279 total students) and 10 sections of intermediate-level German (181 total students).

I received permission to visit 9 sections (162 students) of beginning-level German and 8 sections (148 students) of intermediate-level German. The final participation rate in this study was 20.37% for beginning-level courses and 16.21% for intermediate-level German, for a total participation rate of 18.39%.

Table 1, below, shows the participants in this study and includes a breakdown by gender, age, native language, major, and certificate³ (minor). A total of 33 participants were enrolled in beginning-level German classes and 24 participants were enrolled in

³ The university offers "certificates" and "concentrations" rather than "minors" that students can declare. For all intents and purposes, they are treated the same as a minor.

intermediate-level German. There were 27 male and 30 female participants; and their ages ranged from 18 to 32, with an average age of 20.3. The participants were largely native English speakers (47 participants, or 82.4%), followed by native speakers of Chinese (7 participants, 12.3%), and one speaker each (1.7%) of Malay, Spanish, and Portuguese. A total of 28 participants (49.1%) listed German as either a major or as a certificate (minor).

3.1.2 Interview Participants

As described in 3.2.2 (below) there were two interview components for this study: an individual face-to-face interview and a small face-to-face group interview. All students who completed the questionnaire could indicate their interest to participate in one or both of the two types of follow-up interviews. Students who participated in individual interviews were compensated \$10, small group participants were compensated \$5. As my IRB protocol only allowed up to six individual interviews per round and up to 12 participants in the small group interview, I selected participants according to several criteria, including a variety of class sections, ages, and majors.

A total of eight students (or approximately 14% of all study participants) participated in individual interviews, four males and four females with an average age of 20.12. The interview participants are denoted in Table 1 with an “X” in the “Interview Participant” column. Seven of the eight individual interview participants either had declared or intended to declare a major or pursue a certificate in German.

There were three separate group interviews conducted with groups of four, two, and two for a total of eight students. Data gathered in group interviews will not be used in this study. Therefore, the participants in this component of the study will not be introduced here.

Table 1: <i>Participants in Present Study</i>					
Gender	Age	Native language	Major	Certificate	Interview Participant
Participants from beginning-level courses, n = 33 (first through fourth semester German)					
Female	18	English	Biology	None	
Female	19	Chinese	Pre-business	None	
Female	19	Chinese	Psychology, Human Development	Criminal Justice	
Female	19	English	Unsure	Unsure	
Female	19	English	Unsure	Unsure	
Female	19	English	Engineering	German	X
Female	20	Chinese	Electrical Engineering, Computer Science	None	
Female	20	English	Legal Studies	Criminal Justice	
Female	20	English	Psychology	None	
Female	22	English	Animal Science	None	
Female	23	Malay	Biochemistry, Food Science	None	
Female	24	Portuguese	Industrial Engineering	Business	
Female	27	English	Philosophy	Unsure	X
Female	28	English	Spanish and ESL Teaching License	None	
Female	32	Spanish	Anthropology	Archaeology, German	
Male	18	English	Engineering Mechanics	German, Math, International Engineering	
Male	18	English	Physics	German, Math	X
Male	18	English	Biomedical Engineering	German	

Male	18	English	Biochemistry	German	
Male	19	Chinese	Computer Engineering, Computer Science	None	
Male	19	English	Chemical Engineering	International Engineering	
Male	19	English	Mathematics	Computer Science	
Male	19	English	Biology	Business	X
Male	19	English	French, History	None	
Male	20	English	Computer Science	None	
Male	20	English	Economics, History	None	
Male	21	Chinese	Math	None	
Male	21	Chinese	Material Engineering	None	
Male	21	English	Psychology	None	
Male	21	English	Computer Science	None	
Male	23	English	Music Theory	None	
Male	26	English	Astronomy, Physics	None	
Male	28	English	Psychology	Unsure	
Participants from intermediate-level courses, n = 24 (third year German)					
Female	18	English	Zoology	Legal studies, criminal justice	
Female	18	English	Legal studies	General business	
Female	18	English	Undecided	German	
Female	18	English	Retail	German	
Female	18	English	Chemistry	German	
Female	18	English	Biology	German	
Female	19	English	Linguistics	German, Middle East studies	
Female	19	English	Biology, German	None	

Female	19	English	Biology	German	
Female	19	English	Political science, German	Environmental studies	X
Female	20	Chinese	Real estate, German	None	
Female	20	English	Medical microbiology and immunology	Global health, German	
Female	20	English	Nursing	German	X
Female	21	English	Communicative disorders	German	
Female	21	English	Economics, international studies	German	
Male	18	English	Electrical engineering, mathematics	German	
Male	18	English	Chemistry, German	German	
Male	18	English	Biology	German	
Male	18	English	Computer science, computer engineering	German	
Male	18	English	Undecided	Global studies, German, Portuguese	
Male	19	English	Chemical engineering	German	X
Male	20	English	History, political science	European studies, German	
Male	20	English	History and Scandinavian studies	German	X
Male	26	English	International studies	German	

3.2 Research Instruments

The research protocol⁴ for this study was submitted to and approved by the Institutional Review Board in early 2013 (see Appendix A for approval letter).

The approved study had multiple components, some of which were based on materials that were initially piloted in the 2012-2013 academic year⁵. Figure 1, below, shows the study components and denotes (with a dotted line) the parts of the data collection that were not examined as part of this dissertation study.

This section will discuss the instrument design for the dissertation study in more detail, beginning with the questionnaire (Section 3.2.1) and then the interview protocol (3.2.2).

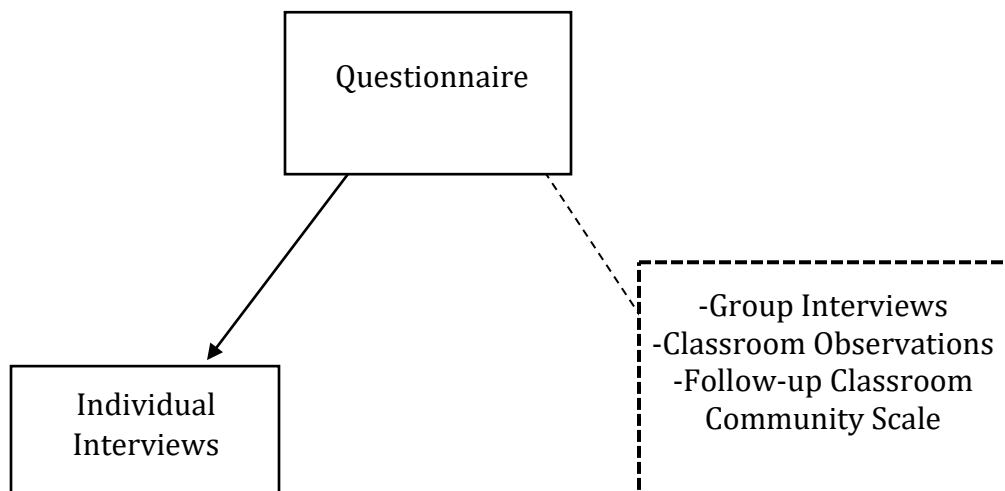


Figure 1. Research study components.

⁴ University of Wisconsin-Madison Institutional Review Board Protocol SBS-2013-1066

⁵ The piloted materials were approved by University of Wisconsin-Madison Institutional Review Board Protocol (SBS-2012-0855, approval letter in Appendix B).

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is attached in Appendix C. As shown in Table 2, below, only certain portions of the questionnaire were analyzed for this study. With the consent pages (2 in total – 1 front/back page), the questionnaire was 14 pages long. The consent form can be viewed in the appendix with the questionnaire. The completed consent pages were removed from the questionnaires and destroyed after data collection, according to the IRB protocol.

When starting the questionnaire, students created a code that was unique to them (a combination of letters from the town in which they were born as well as two digits each from their birth month and telephone number) which could be reproduced in different parts of the study if necessary. Student data was all coded according to their unique code.

The questionnaire had a total of 40 open-ended items and 242 closed-ended items. Table 2 outlines only the sections of the questionnaire that were analyzed for this study, and includes a description of the section, the response type, and scale. It also denotes the research questions that are addressed by the data from each section. Below the table, there is a description of each of the different sections that are analyzed in the present study, including a reference to any model(s) for the sections/items.

Part of the Questionnaire	Description of Section or Task	Response Type	Description of Scale	Which RQ?
Section 1	Demographics	Fill in the blank	N/A	RQ1
Section 2.1	Personal Connections to German	Fill in the blank	N/A	RQ1, RQ2
	Personal Connections to German	Percentages	(1) 0% - 100% (0% = not at all; 100% = you possess this motivation, resource, personal attribute as much as one possibly could); (2) % of students in class that possess each connection as much/less/more than they do	RQ1, RQ2
Section 2.2	Motivations, Objectives, and Resources of Study Abroad Students	Fill in the blank	N/A	RQ2
	Motivations, Objectives, and Resources of Study Abroad Students	Percentages	Same as 2.1	RQ2
Section 3.1	List of Countries where Students Have Been	Fill in the blank	N/A	RQ2
Section 3.2	Language Learning Orientation	Likert Scale	1 = totally disagree to 6 = totally agree	None*
Section 4	German Class in Images (Metaphors/Adjectives)	Fill in the blank	N/A	RQ3
Section 5	Behavior in Class	Percentages	(1-3) 0% (never) to 100% (always) it describes indicated person (4) % of students in class that engage in that behavior as much/less/more than they do	RQ3
Section 8b	Willingness to Communicate in German Class	Percentages	0% (never) to 100% (always)	RQ3
Section 9a	Classroom Anxiety Scale	Percentages	0% (never) to 100% (always)	RQ3
Section 9b	Classroom Community Scale	Percentages	0% (never) to 100% (always)	RQ3
* Touched on briefly in discussion, not analyzed for an RQ				

Section 1 - Demographics

The demographic section is loosely based off of the “Background Information” part of the Language Contact Profile found in Freed et. al’s 2004 article on the Language Contact Profile.

Section 2 – Views of Language Learning

The section titled “Views of Language Learning” consisted of ten subsections, of which only two were analyzed for this dissertation, Question 2.1 and 2.2.

The first subsection, Question 2.1, asked students to describe personal connections that they could imagine students in general may possess. Then, they had to indicate how much they possessed particular connections. They also had to evaluate their fellow classmates and how much they think the students in their classroom possessed that connection. The connections listed in this category were analyzed using Grounded Theory Methods, which will be discussed in the Results (Chapter 4). Students were coded as possessing or not possessing certain connections as well.

The second subsection, Question 2.2, asked students to think about students who choose to study abroad in a German-speaking country, specifically, the (1) motivations and objectives, (2) resources, and (3) the personal attributes such students may have. Similar to the personal connections question (Question 2.1), students were asked to list how much they and their classmates possessed each of the examples in the categories listed.

Section 3 – Experience and Objectives

Part 1 of Section 3 asked for all of the countries that participants had been to (including the USA), and why they had visited or were there. This would help to understand if students had lived in any German-speaking countries. If they traveled to a different country to “visit family,” it provided additional insight into the student’s personal connections.

Section 4 – German class in images

In general, when people are asked to describe something, most respondents would use adjectives before metaphors, as most “descriptions” we see in the real world use adjectives. However, to coax students out of this instinctive impulse to first use adjectives, this section intentionally asked students to first produce metaphors and later to provide adjectives⁶. Since the metaphors prompted students to think about their role in the classroom and how they fit in it, they were envisioning their feelings in the classroom and the classroom itself. To tap into that, the students were then instructed to list three adjectives that generally described how they felt in class and three adjectives that described their classroom atmosphere. The adjectives provided by the students were examined for this study.

⁶ I was inspired by Lakoff & Johnson’s 1980 book *Metaphors We Live By*, and their assertion that metaphor provides a way for humans to conceptualize our experiences (p. 41).

Section 5 – Behaviors in German class

This section was developed to examine the different types of behaviors that students display while in the classroom. The behaviors encompass a variety of productive behaviors, such as speaking (“Emphasizing the right syllables and words when speaking”) and writing (“Not needing a dictionary while writing”), as well as receptive behaviors like listening (“Understanding everything the instructor says”) and reading (“Having no difficulties reading texts for class”). There are also several measures that look at how students present these behaviors (inquisitiveness, confidence) and what sort of knowledge of the language and culture are reflected in these behaviors.

(Sections 6 and 7 not evaluated in this study)

Section 8 – How talkative are you in German?

Section 8 asked students to fill out their willingness to communicate (WTC) in German. The students imagined themselves in their German classroom and they wrote the percentage of time they would choose to use German in each classroom situation. This measure was adapted from a study by MacIntyre et. al (2001), which examined WTC in the classroom. (Section 8a was not examined.)

Section 9 – Feelings about the German Language Classroom

Section 9 was comprised of two parts: Classroom Anxiety (9a) and Classroom Community (9b). The measure of classroom anxiety, henceforth called the “Classroom Anxiety Scale,” was based on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. in 1986. I reduced the number of overall items and changed the

language to be specific to the German FL classroom. The items in this section are worded so that students would give percentage ratings on statements pertaining to low anxiety in the classroom (e.g., “I am usually at ease during tests in my German class.”) or high anxiety (e.g., “I worry about making mistakes in my German class.”).

The measure of classroom community, henceforth called the “Classroom Community Scale,” was taken from Rovai’s 2002 study, in which he developed an instrument to measure classroom community. His original study evaluated statements on a five-point Likert scale. However, I wanted to keep as many sections of the dissertation as similar as possible to streamline instructions and increase user-friendliness for the participants. Instead of a Likert scale to measure agreement to individual statements as in Rovai’s original measure, I used the 0-100% scale that would match many other sections (such as sections 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9a), but still allow me to generate a score. In line with Rovai (2002), I kept items worded both positively and negatively.

3.2.2 Interview Protocol

The questionnaire asked students to express their interest in participating in “an individual face-to-face interview about the questionnaire and some related topics” and/or in a “focus group discussion” (groups of up to 6 people each – also called the “group interview”) on “the questionnaire and related topics.” For both the individual and group interviews, participants were interviewed in a private conference room. Students were given a consent form (located in Appendix D) and given an opportunity to ask questions before the interview began. The individual interviews are used in this study to give

additional examples or depth to the results and discussion. The interviews themselves were not coded/analyzed for the present study.

According to my IRB protocol, I accepted up to six individual participants during each round of data collection (fall and spring). I had their questionnaires with me in the interview and had made sure to look through it ahead of time, noting any sections that I wanted to discuss in detail. For example, if there was a vague answer on one of the questions, I would make sure to clarify that answer with the student as we went through the interview protocol. The interview protocol generally led them through the questionnaire, section by section, with some additional questions about the study, like how they would describe the goal of the questionnaire if they were asked about it.

3.3 Data collection process

Data for the present study were collected over the course of one academic year. The breakdown of participants and compensation for each portion of the study can be found in Table 3, below.

Instrument	Time of Administration	Number of Participants	Compensation to Students
Questionnaire	Fall 2013	24	\$2 + entered in drawing to win \$50 ⁷
Questionnaire	Spring 2014	33	\$2 + entered in drawing to win \$50
Individual Interviews	Fall 2013	4	\$10
Individual Interviews	Spring 2014	4	\$10
Group Interviews	Fall 2013	3	\$5
Group Interviews	Spring 2014	5	\$5

⁷ The cash prizes were assigned via a random number generator among the students who elected to participate in the cash drawing.

In the fall semester of 2013, the questionnaire was distributed in intermediate-level German courses and in spring 2014, to beginning-level German courses. Individual interviews were audio recorded and lasted approximately one hour. Individual interview participants reviewed their answers to and reflected upon the questionnaire, explaining selected answers in detail and discussing themes that surfaced throughout this process. Of the approximately 300 questionnaires distributed over the course of the data collection period, a total of 59 questionnaires were returned, 57 of which were usable.

4.0 Results

This chapter presents the results for the Research Themes and its related research questions (RQs) that were outlined in at the end of the Literature Review, with each Theme/RQ addressed in turn. In order to give proper context, the discussion of results for each RQ briefly reviews pertinent data collection and analytic methods.

To preview, Research Theme 1 established what types (categories) of connections to the German language and its associated cultures students described when they reported their own connections or the examples of connections that other students may possess. Research Theme 1 was divided into two parts, i.e., RQ1a concerned itself with what the categories were; whereas RQ1b dealt with how frequently each category was mentioned. RQ2 described how frequently students in this study reported to possess each of the Categories of Connection themselves, as established in RQ1. RQ2, too, was broken down into two components: RQ2a explored the percentage of students that reported to possess each type of connection; RQ2b examined how many different types of connections students reported to have themselves. Finally, RQ3 juxtaposed students' reports of the connections

that they reported to possess with (a) perceptions classroom community as determined by their responses to individual items from the Classroom Community Scale and (b) the composite Classroom Community Scale score; (c) their anxiety in class as determined by their responses to individual items from the Classroom Anxiety Scale and (d) the composite Classroom Anxiety Scale score; and (e) students' feelings about the classroom as revealed in the adjectives that students chose to describe their feelings in the classroom and the classroom atmosphere; and (f) students' self-reported behaviors in the classroom. In other words, the RQs for Theme 1 provide the categorical framework that feeds into subsequent Research Themes.

4.1 Research Theme 1

4.1.1 RQ1a: What types of personal connections to the German language and its associated cultures did students in this study report, either in terms of connections that they themselves had or in terms of examples of connections that other learners of the language might have?

RQ1, most basically, explored what came to students' minds when they thought of connections to the German language and its associated cultures in multiple contexts (past and current reasons for language study; study abroad; examples of possible personal connections). Specifically, four questions in the questionnaire, distributed over two sections, permitted students to name types of personal connections, regardless of whether or not they claimed to possess those connections. RQ1 will be answered based on an analysis of students' responses to all four questions taken together. Table 4 provides an

overview of the sources from which data in response to RQ1 was drawn, as well as the location of tables that display the results of pertinent intermediate analyses. Explanations of how each set of data, with each set corresponding to a question in the questionnaire, was obtained and analyzed follow Table 4.

<i>Table 4: Four Sources of Data and the Location of Tables that Display the Results of Intermediate Analyses that Were Used to Answer RQ1</i>			
Data Sources	Tables that Show Results of Intermediate Analyses	Table Themes	Table Locations
Section 1, Question 11	Table E2	Original reason for studying German	Appendix E
Section 1, Question 12	Table E3	Current reason for studying German	
Section 1, Question 14	Table E4	Connections listed in terms of study abroad plans	
Section 2, Question 1	Table E1	Examples of personal connections	

Each of the four data sets was analyzed according to principles of the Grounded Theory Approach (e.g., Holton, 2007), in which the researcher first codes the data and then checks for emerging categories. For each data set (each set corresponding to a question in the questionnaire), I started the process by looking at raw data (students' responses) piece by piece (open coding) and comparing them to each other so as to determine and evaluate emerging categories (axial coding). As Holton (2007) states:

“Line-by-line coding forces the researcher to verify and saturate categories, minimizes missing an important category, and ensures relevance by generating codes with emergent fit to the substantive area under study. It also ensures relevance of the emerging theory by enabling the researcher to see which direction to take in theoretically sampling before becoming too selective and focused on a particular problem... The researcher codes for as many categories as fit successive, different incidents. New categories emerge and new incidents fit into existing categories” (p. 273).

Once both levels of open and axial coding were well underway, I used selective coding to develop themes. As Cohen & Crabtree (2006) explain, in selective coding, “the comparative process continues until the researcher reaches saturation - the point at which there are no new ideas and insights emerging from the data. Instead, the researcher sees strong repetition in the themes he or she has already observed and articulated” (*The Grounded Theory Approach* section, para. 7). Results of each set of analyses are presented in intermediate tables, as described in Table 4. As is elucidated in those intermediary tables, the phrase “personal connections” was operationalized in this study as a way that a person could relate to the language, culture(s), and/or speakers. It was not defined for the students. Once the four sets of intermediate analyses had been completed, I compared the categories against a somewhat related section of the questionnaire (Section 2, Question 2), which had students think about “learners of German who choose to study abroad in a German-speaking country.” This section did not expressly mention personal connections students may have had with German, but rather, asked about students who might choose to study abroad in a German-speaking country. Most answers in this section related solely to a

hypothetical study abroad experience, with answers such as “wanting good grades” under the motivation category or “money” as an example of a resource. However, some students did list personal connections such as “family in Germany” as a resource that students who choose to study abroad may have. In light of these types of responses, Section 2, Question 2 was examined to make sure all emergent categories had been considered, but no new categories resulted from this section. I again applied principles of Grounded Theory to establish the final categories, to be used in subsequent analyses that pertained to RQ2 and RQ3. Seven Categories of Connection (CoC) resulted. Each category is named, described, and exemplified in Table 5, below.

Table 5: *Categories of Connections to the German Language and Its Associated Cultures, Described and Exemplified*

Category of Connection	Description of Category	Examples of Responses for this Category
Ancestry/Family	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through ancestry/family	“Relatives in Germany” “I have German family” “family” “I am related to Holocaust survivors”
Friends/Non-family	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through German speakers who are not family (e.g., former exchange students, friends, significant others).	“Friends who live in Germany” “German-speaking family/friends” “German exchange students” “Significant other”
German-American Culture	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through cultural experiences related to German-Americans	“Come from German Area, ie MKE [Milwaukee]” “Involvement in German-American cultural activities (e.g. Oktoberfest)” “Live in Wisconsin” “Hometown culture”
German Cultures/ Language	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through personal affinity for the cultures or language itself.	“Interest in language learning” “An interest in culture led me to German” “Interest in History/Prehistory” “German auto companies”
Previous Schoolwork	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through the study of German prior to the respondent’s current university course.	“Childhood language use (elementary school)” “German in high school” “Formal (university) study of language”
Travel	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through travel to or life in in a German-speaking country without any mention of an academic focus.	“I lived in Germany” “I have traveled to Germany” “I’ve been there”
Future Ambition	A connection to the German language and associated cultures through a desire to use German in the future, largely for professional or academic purposes.	“Plan to get a certificate” “Career options” “Study abroad” “Better education in engineering”

4.1.2 RQ1b: How frequently did respondents in this study mention each of the seven emerging umbrella types of personal connections to the German language and its associated cultures?

Table 6 shows the number and percentage of students who mentioned each category at least once in any of the four intermediate data sets (see Table 4).

Category of Connection	Number of Participants who Mentioned this Category at Least Once	% of Participants (N=57)
Ancestry/Family	47	82.5%
Future Ambition	33	57.9%
German Cultures/Language	30	52.6%
Friends/Non-family	21	36.8%
Previous Schoolwork	13	22.8%
Travel	13	22.8%
German-American Culture	5	8.8%

Students were most likely to mention personal connections through *Ancestry/Family*; only 10 of 57 participants did not mention this as a personal connection in their questionnaire. At least half of the students gave at least one answer that fell into the categories of *German Cultures/Language* and *Future Ambition*. Please note that students' responses shown with regard to RQ1 concerned examples of connections that could exist in themselves and/or others. RQ2 will focus specifically on what connections students reported to actually possess themselves.

4.2 Research Theme 2

As explained above, RQ2 was divided into two subquestions, the first of which examined the types of connections that students reported that they actually had; and the second of which explored how many types of connections students reported to possess.

4.2.1 RQ2a: Which Categories of Connection did students in this study report to possess?

To answer RQ2a, the Categories of Connection (CoC) established in answer to RQ1 were compared to the responses of each participant in four components of the questionnaire, as detailed below.

First, the most crucial section of the questionnaire was Section 2, Question 1, which explicitly asked students to list examples of personal connections they may have to German (as seen in Table 4). However, this question *also* elicited how much students felt they possessed a particular connection by providing a percentage from “0% = not at all” to “100% = you possess this [...] as much as one possibly could.” Any percentage greater than zero was counted as indicative of the respondent “possessing” a given connection even though the specific degree (percentage) was not considered in further analysis.

Second, students’ responses to Section 2, Question 2 of the questionnaire were also consulted. There, participants had been asked to think about “learners of German who choose to study abroad in a German-speaking country” and list the type of motivations, objectives, resources, and personal attributes such students might possess. Of particular relevance here, respondents were also asked if they themselves possessed any of those

motivations, objectives, or resources. While most responses (objectives such as “good grades” or resources such as “money”) were not personal connections, as mentioned in RQ1, some answers emerged such as “family in Germany,” which is a personal connection to German. For many respondents, the connections mentioned here replicated responses they had already given in Section 2, Question 1. However, for a few participants, consulting Section 2, Question 2 resulted in new insights into their personal connections. For example, in the instance of respondent NI0953 (a 19-year-old female in beginning-level German), who did not fill out the personal connections section (Section 2, Question 1), Section 2, Question 2 showed that she had family members in Germany, a personal connection which would not have otherwise been captured for analysis. None of the responses fell outside of the categories that had already emerged in the Grounded Theory analysis.

Third, Section 1 of the questionnaire was titled “Your background” and allowed students to provide information about their demographic and language learning background. Questions 11 and 12 specifically asked students to describe their original and current reasons for studying German. For example, one student listed “I have relatives who live in Austria” as a reason for studying German, so they were coded as “possessing” the connection *Ancestry/Family*.

Fourth, Section 1, Question 13 asked if students planned to study abroad in a German-speaking country (Yes/No/Unsure). Of the 57 participants, 22 (38.6%) responded that they intended to study abroad in a German-speaking country, while 16 (28.1%) said that they did not intend to do so. The 22 respondents who responded positively were included among those having the connection *Future Ambition*.

Table 7 provides a contrastive overview of the questionnaire sections that were used to answer RQ1a and RQ2a. As explained earlier, the Categories of Connection (CoC) displayed in Table 5 in response to RQ1a were replicated across a number of questionnaire sections but entered into Tables 5 and 6 only once. In contrast, additional questionnaire sections could be analyzed to see whether the student reported to possess one of the CoC. Therefore, the number of questionnaire sections/questions that contributed to answering RQ1a was smaller than the number of questionnaire sections/questions that helped with responding to RQ2a.

<i>Table 7: Overview of Questionnaire Sections Used to Answer RQ1a (see farther above) and RQ2a (see just above)</i>			
Section, Question	Theme	Used to Answer RQ1a	Used to Answer RQ2a
Section 2, Question 1	Examples of Personal Connections	Yes	Yes
Section 2, Question 2	Resources that students who choose to study abroad in a German-speaking country may have	No*	Yes
Section 1, Question 11	Original reason for studying German	Yes	Yes
Section 1, Question 12	Current reason for studying German	Yes	Yes
Section 1, Question 13	Intention to study abroad in a German-speaking country	No	Yes
Section 1, Question 14	Connections listed in terms of Study Abroad plans	Yes	Yes
*considered, but no new Categories of Connection resulted from this section			

Table 8 shows the number and percentages of all participants that reported they possess each connection. It also replicates – for contrastive purposes – a column from Table 6, namely, information about how many participants had mentioned the connection at all, regardless of whether they themselves possessed it.

Category of Connection	Number of Participants who Mentioned this Category at Least Once (from Table 6)	Number of Participants that Report to Possess the Connection	% of Participants that Report to Possess the Connection (N=57)
Ancestry/Family	47	42	73.7%
Future Ambition	33	32	56.1%
German Cultures/Language	30	29	50.9%
Friends/Non-family	21	21	36.8%
Previous Schoolwork	13	12	21.1%
Travel	13	11	19.3%
German-American Culture	5	5	8.8%

The connection that was most frequently mentioned among “possessed connections” was *Ancestry/Family*, with 42 of the 57 participants (73.7%) claiming an ancestry or family connection with German speakers. The second most frequently mentioned connection was *Future Ambition*, with over half of participants indicating some sort of intent to use the fruits of their language study for future academic or professional purposes.

4.2.2 RQ2b: How many Categories of Connection did students in this study report to possess?

If a student reported to possess at least one connection in a category, the student was counted as “possessing” this type of connection. The number of connections in each category was not further considered. As there were seven CoCs in total, each participant could have a minimum of zero and a maximum of seven types of connections. Table 9 separates participants by the number of connection types that they reported to possess and shows the percentage of total participants who reported to have a given number of connection types.

Number of Connection Types Reported	By Number of Participants	By % of Participants (N=57)
0	0	0%
1	7	12.3%
2	20	35.1%
3	20	35.1%
4	5	8.8%
5	5	8.8%
6	0	0%
7	0	0%

All respondents reported to possess at least one connection type/Category of Connection, and 87.7% of participants reported two or more connection types. No student reported more than five connection types. The average number of reported connection types per participant was 2.67.

In order to examine the popularity of certain connection types, Table 10 shows the frequency with which each connection type occurred among learners who had reported a given number of connection types, i.e., ranging from students who had reported one

connection type to students who had reported the maximally occurring five connection types. Frequencies (percentages) were calculated by taking the number of students who had reported the given number of connection types (1-5) as 100% that then were distributed over all connection types that occurred in a respondent group. The numbers shown in the shaded box in Table 10, for example, can be read as follows: *Of the seven participants who reported to possess only one connection, five (or 71.4%) claimed Ancestry/Family as the connection.*

Table 10: Frequency of Occurrence of Connection Types Among Students in Each of Five Groups that are Defined by the Number of Connection Types (1-5) that Students Reported

Number of Reported Connection Types per Participant	Number of Participants in Group	Number and Percentage of Participants in Group						
		Ancestry/Family	Friends/Non-family	German-American Culture	German Cultures/Language	Previous Schoolwork	Travel	Future Ambition
1	7	5 (71.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (28.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
2	20	15 (75.0%)	5 (25.0%)	1 (5.0%)	8 (40.0%)	2 (10.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (45.0%)
3	20	15 (75.0%)	9 (45.0%)	3 (15.0%)	9 (45.0%)	5 (25.0%)	5 (25.0%)	14 (70.0%)
4	5	3 (60.0%)	2 (40.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (100.0%)	4 (80.0%)	2 (40.0%)	4 (80.0%)
5	5	4 (80.0%)	5 (100.0%)	1 (20.0%)	5 (100.0%)	1 (20.0%)	4 (80.0%)	5 (100.0%)

Several trends can be noted in Table 10. First, all students whose connections were limited to a single category named either *Ancestry/Family* or *German Cultures/Language*. That is, no other connection type, including the overall second-most common connection *Future Ambition* (as can be seen in Table 8), were mentioned by students with only one connection type. Second, among the 10 students who possessed 4 or 5 connection types (17.6% of participants), all affiliated themselves with *German Cultures/Language*, and all of those students except one also had *Future Ambition* as a connection. In addition, all students with five connection types had listed *Friends/Non-family* as a connection. As the number of total reported connection types increased, participants were more likely to say that they possessed connections that corresponded to the categories of *Travel*, *Future Ambition*, and *German Cultures/Language*. The most evenly distributed connection type across all respondent groups (as they were defined by the number of connection types reported) was *Ancestry/Family*. Over 60% of students in each of the respective numbers of connection types reported that they possessed this connection.

4.3 Research Theme 3

As explained earlier, to investigate all of the subquestions in Research Theme 3, I juxtaposed the types of CoC that students report to possess with their perceptions of the classroom community (RQ3a, RQ3b), their classroom anxiety (RQ3c, RQ3d), the adjectives that they used to describe their experience in the classroom (RQ3e), and their self-reported behaviors in the classroom (RQ3f).

4.3.1 RQ3a: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' responses on each item of a 20-item Classroom Community Scale?

To explore RQ3a, I compiled responses to the so-called Classroom Community Scale (CCS) that used 20 statements taken from Rovai's (2002) instrument and asked students to apply a scale that I had created. An example of a statement is, "I feel that the students in the course care about each other." The students were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement by filling in a percentage from 0% (completely disagree) to 100% (completely agree). (Appendix C, Section 9b)

Linear regression was used to determine if variation of responses to any of the 20 questionnaire items can be explained by reporting to possess a particular CoC and, if so, how much possessing that CoC affects the particular response.

Three levels of significance were applied: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; and $p < 0.05$ *. In addition, as a result of the small participant number and the exploratory nature of the study, I accepted a level of marginal significance, which was $p < 0.08$ and in the table is indicated in the table with an asterisk in parentheses (*).

Results are reported below in Table 12. Even though all 20 items of the CCS were analyzed, only the ten items that showed statistical significance or marginal statistical significance are included in the table.

The items from the CCS that did not result in a statistically significant interaction with the CoC are shown in Table 11 directly below.

Table 11: <i>Items from the Classroom Community Scale that Did Not Result in Statistically Significant Interaction with the Categories of Connection</i>	
Original Item Number in Questionnaire	Item from the Classroom Community Scale (CCS)
2	I feel that I am encouraged to ask questions
6	I feel that I receive timely feedback
8	I feel uneasy exposing gaps in my understanding
9	I feel isolated in this course
10	I feel reluctant to speak openly
11	I trust others in this course
16	I feel that I am given ample opportunities to learn
18	I feel that my educational needs are not being met
19	I feel confident that others will support me
20	I feel that this course does not promote a desire to learn

In order to show nuances in the data in Table 12, several symbols are used. As described above, the participants rated the items on the CCS on a 0-100% scale. A “+” indicates that the percentage given by the student for the item in question was higher on average for participants who reported to possess this connection as opposed to participants who did not report to possess this connection. The symbol “-” indicates that students who reported to possess this connection had a lower average percentage response to the classroom community item than students who do not report to possess this particular connection. (Any instances of “+” or “-” that appear in the table without any indication of significance are only included in order to accurately display the measure of variance.) The CoC are abbreviated as follows: *Ancestry/Family* – A/F; *Travel* – Tra; *German-American Culture* – GAC; *Future Ambition* – FA; *Previous Schoolwork* – PS; *Friends/Non-family* – Fr/NF; and *German Cultures/ Language*– GC/L.

To help with the comprehension of Table 12, I will explain how each row is to be read, using the first row as an example, i.e., the one that refers to the CCS item, “I feel that

students in this course care about each other.”: Students who reported the connection of *Previous Schoolwork* gave a statistically significantly lower average percentage as a response to this measure (indicated by the “-”) than students who did not report this connection. Students who reported either the connection of *Ancestry/Family* and/or the connection of *Friends/Non-Family* noted a lower average percentage, but these were not statistically significant (indicated by a lack of significance markers) and were only included in this table to accurately show the measure of variance. Together, these three types of connections explained 16.71% of the variance in the item from the CCS, “I feel that students in this course care about each other”.

Some of the columns which display the CoC in Table 12 at first glance may seem to contain contradictory symbols (i.e., “+” co-occurring with “-“), but the items from the CCS were both positively and negatively worded. Examples of positively worded items include: “I feel that students in this course care about each other” and “I feel connected to others in this course.” Examples of negatively worded statements include “I do not feel a spirit of community” and “I feel uncertain about others in this course.”

Table 12: Relationships between Scores of Items on the Classroom Community Scale and the Categories of Connection								
Items from Classroom Community Scale	Categories of Connection							Variance
	A/F	Fr/NF	GAC	GC/L	PS	Tra	FA	
I feel that students in this course care about each other	-	+			- *			16.71 %
I feel connected to others in this course					- *			11.22 %
I feel that it is hard to get help when I have a question				+ (*)	- (*)			9.139 %
I do not feel a spirit of community					+ *			7.212 %
I feel that this course is like a family		+			- **			17.19 %
I feel isolated in this course				+ *	- (*)		- (*)	15.5 %
I feel that this course results in only modest learning		- *						8.224 %
I feel that I can rely on others in this course		+ *			-			13.52 %
I feel that members of this course depend on me	+ **			+ (*)				12.8 %
I feel uncertain about others in this course	+			+ *				12.46 %
<p>“+” indicates higher average percentage in student responses, “-” indicates lower average percentage in student responses Levels of significance: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.05$ *; $p < 0.08$ (*) “+” or “-” without a marker of significance: this is included to accurately represent the calculation of variance</p>								
<p><i>Ancestry/Family – A/F; Travel – Tra; German-American Culture – GAC; Future Ambition – FA; Previous Schoolwork – PS; Friends/Non-family – Fr/NF; and German Cultures/ Language– GC/L.</i></p>								

Out of the total of 20 items on the CCS, only ten items were associated with statistically significant interactions with students’ reports in at least one CoC at the minimal level of (including, marginal) significance of $p < .08$ and were therefore include in Table 12.

Similarly, of the seven CoCs, only four were associated with at least one significant ($p < .05$) interaction with an item on the CCS, as can be seen by empty columns (or nearly empty, as in the case of *Future Ambition*, which had only one marginally significant result) in Table 12. CoCs that failed to be associated with statistically significant interactions were *Future Ambition*, *German-American Culture*, and *Travel*.

There were a total of nine instances of statistically significant interactions between students' reporting a type of personal connection and an item on the CCS and a total of five instances of marginally significant ($p < .08$) interactions. Participants with the connection *Friends/Non-family* showed a stronger sense of classroom community, as they showed lesser agreement with the notion that "I feel that this course results in only modest learning" and stronger agreement with the proposition that "I feel that I can rely on others in this course." The connection *Previous Schoolwork* was consistent with a lower overall sense of classroom community. For example, the students who had reported this connection showed a lower average percentage response to the statements "I feel that students in this course care about each other" ($p < .05$), "I feel that this course is like a family" ($p < .01$), "I feel connected to others in this course" ($p < .05$), and higher scores on the suggestion that "I do not feel a spirit of community" ($p < .05$). Despite this, the students with *Previous Schoolwork* were even less inclined than their peers to feel "isolated," or to believe it that it was "hard to get help when I have a question."

4.3.2 RQ3b: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' composite scores on the 20-item Classroom Community Scale?

The items on the CCS were intended to represent a single concept. Therefore, a composite mean score, taken to represent an overall perception of classroom community, was calculated by the difference of the averages of the positive (from positively-worded statements) and negative (negatively-worded) scores on the CCS. For example, if the average of the positive was 65% and the average of the negative score was 22%, the composite mean score would be 43. Participants' composite mean scores ranged from -15.8 to 90.

Table 13 shows the relationship between students' reports of possessing each of the seven Categories of Connection and their composite mean scores on the CCS. A two-tailed difference of means t-test was used to see if the mean score of students who reported to possess a given connection differed significantly from the mean score of those who did not. As in the previous table, the alpha level of significance was set at $p < .05$. As before, three levels of significance were set: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.05$ * and, in addition, $p < .08$ (*), was designated as marginally significant. To explain how Table 13 is to be read, a look at the first row, *Ancestry/Family*, suggests the following interpretation: *The average composite mean score of those participants who reported to possess the CoC Ancestry/Family is 42.26. The t-statistic is -0.82 and the p-value is 0.422. Since the t-statistic is negative, it means that students who did not report to possess this connection had, on average, a lower composite mean score than those who did. The p-value tells us that in repeated sampling we expect similar results (if the means were equal) 42.2% of the time. Thus, we cannot state that the*

possession or lack of the connection Ancestry/Family interacts with a student's composite community scores.

Category of Connection	Average Composite Mean Composite Score on the Classroom Community Scale of Participants who Reported the Connection	Average Composite Mean Composite Score on the Classroom Community Scale of Participants who Did NOT Report the Connection	t-statistic	p-value
Ancestry/Family	42.26	35.81	-0.82	0.422
Future Ambition	46.79	39.07	-0.82	0.414
German Cultures/Language	48.60	39.79	0.63	0.529
Friends/Non-family	43.02	37.41	-1.51	0.138
Previous Schoolwork	31.49	42.98	1.43	0.171
Travel	47.14	36.72	-0.84	0.419
German-American Culture	38.45	42.75	-0.70	0.523

Levels of significance: p < 0.001 ***; p < 0.01 **; p < 0.05 *; p < 0.08 (*)

As shown in Table 13, the mean composite score on the CCS proved to be independent of any of the seven CoC. However, the repeated use of t-tests⁸ only investigated possible differences between student who reported possessing a given connection and those who did not one CoC at a time. In order to consider the interaction of the mean composite classroom community score with all of the seven possible connections at once, a General Linear Model Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was performed. The General Linear Model ANOVA test gives multiple regression coefficients, which indicate the increase in the mean

⁸ Because of the small sample size in this study, I did not apply a Bonferroni correction to the repeated t-tests.

composite community score when all other connections are held constant. Table 14 shows the results to this General Linear Model ANOVA. The alpha level ($\alpha=.05$) and markers of significance are identical to the previous table. Multiple regression coefficients indicate whether there is an increase in the mean composite community score (indicating a more positive view of the classroom community) when all other connections are held constant. For example, if students possess the connection *Ancestry/Family*, they will have a greater average response (by 1.82) to the mean composite community score than their peers who do not report this connection when possession of all other CoCs are held constant. However, this increase is not statistically significant.

Category of Connection	Multiple regression coefficient	t-value	p-value
Ancestry/Family	1.82	0.19	0.852
Future Ambition	3.26	0.45	0.655
German Cultures/Language	-0.44	-0.05	0.958
Friends/Non-family	8.78	1.20	0.237
Previous Schoolwork	-9.4	-0.91	0.367
Travel	8.37	0.89	0.379
German-American Culture	7.3	0.58	0.565

Levels of significance: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.05$ *; $p < 0.08$ (*)

The results of the General Linear Model Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) show that none of the reports in any of the seven CoCs had a statistically significant effect on the composite mean classroom community score.

4.3.3 RQ3c: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' responses on each item of a 22-item Classroom Anxiety Scale?

Similarly structured to the CCS, students' classroom anxiety was measured on the Classroom Anxiety Scale (see Appendix C, Section 9a). The Classroom Anxiety Scale (CAS) had 22 statements that were modified versions of some items on the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). Examples include, "I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am." The students in the present study were asked to indicate how frequently they experienced a given feeling in the language classroom, from 0% (never) to 100% (always).

So as to situate classroom anxiety against the backdrop of students' levels of sense of classroom community, I took the mean composite classroom community score and the mean composite classroom anxiety score and separated those composite scores into different levels. Table 15 shows how the strength of perceived classroom community (as calculated by the mean composite score on the CCS) corresponded with different levels of anxiety among the current study participants.

		Level of Anxiety				
		Very Low	Low	Middle	High	Very High
Strength of Perceived Classroom Community	Very High	13	14	8	3	1
	High	4	1	2	1	1
	Middle	2	1	1	1	3
	Low	0	0	0	1	0
	Very Low	0	0	0	0	0

Among the participants in this study, a very high score on the CCS was correlated with lower levels of anxiety. None of the students in the study scored “very low” on the CCS, and the one student who scored “low” on the CCS also had high anxiety.

I applied linear regression analyses to the intersection between classroom anxiety and the reported possession of each of seven Categories of Connection. Results are reported in Table 17, which is structured identically to Table 12 with an alpha level of significance was set at .05, three levels of significance: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.05$ *, and a level of marginal significance at $p < 0.08$ (*).

Table 17 only shows the items from the CAS that resulted in a statistically significant interaction with the CoC. The items that did not result in a statistically significant interaction are listed directly below in Table 16.

Original Item Number in Questionnaire	Item from the Classroom Anxiety Scale
1	I feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my German class.
2	I worry about making mistakes in my German class.
4	It makes me nervous when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in German.
8	I don't understand why some people get so anxious in German classes.
11	I am intimidated by my teacher.
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my German class.
14	I feel more tense and nervous in my German class than I do in my other classes.
16	I feel very self-conscious about speaking German in front of other students.
18	I am intimidated by the other students in the classroom.
19	Even if I am well prepared for my German class, I feel anxious about it.
21	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak German.

Again, to assist with comprehension, I will explain how rows of Table 17 are to be read by using the second row as an example, i.e., the row that refers to the item “I keep thinking that other students are better at German than I am”: *Students who reported to possess the connection Previous Schoolwork noted a statistically significant higher score on the proposition that “I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am.” Those who reported the connection Future Ambition will also show lower average responses, but this was not statistically significant and was only included in this table to accurately show the measure of variance (indicated by a lack of significance markers). In contrast, students who reported to possess the connection German Cultures/ Language, however, will have a statistically significant higher score. Taken together, these three Categories of Connection account for 16.41% of the variance for this item on the CAS.*

Classroom Anxiety Scale	Categories of Connection							Variance
	A/F	Fr/N F	GAC	GC/L	PS	Tra	FA	
I am confident when I know that I'm going to be called on in my German class.				+ *				11.89%
I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am.				- *	+ *		-	16.41%
I am usually at ease during tests in my German class.	+ (*)						+ (*)	11.33%
I am extremely uncomfortable when I have to speak without preparation in my German class.		- (*)		- *			-	20.66%
In my German class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.							- *	11.57%
I am afraid that my German teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.		- *		+ (*)	-			11.99%
I would be nervous speaking German with native speakers.		- (*)						6.663%
I feel that I speak German better than the other students.		+		+		+ *		20.44%
My German class moves so quickly that I worry about getting behind.	- **	- (*)					- **	31.87%
I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak German.							- *	7.937%
The more I study for a German test, the more confused I become	-	- *		+			- ***	33.39%
<p>“+” indicates higher average percentage in student responses, “-” indicates lower average percentage in student responses p< 0.001 ***, p< 0.01**, p< 0.05 *, p< 0.08(*) “+” or “-” without a marker of significance: this is included to accurately represent the calculation of variance</p>								
<p><i>Ancestry/Family – A/F; Travel – Tra; German-American Culture – GAC; Future Ambition – FA; Previous Schoolwork – PS; Friends/Non-family – Fr/NF; and German Cultures/ Language– GC/L</i></p>								

Out of the total of 22 items on the CAS, only eleven items were associated with statistically significant interactions with students' reports in at least one CoC at the minimal level of (including, marginal) significance of $p < .08$. Similarly, of the seven CoCs, only *German-American Culture* was not associated with at least one statistically significant interaction with an item on the CCS, as can be seen by empty column.

There were a total of 12 instances of statistically significant interactions between students' reporting a type of personal connection and an item on the CAS and a total of six instances of marginally significant ($p < .08$) interactions.

The connections *Ancestry/Family*, *Travel*, *Future Ambition*, *Friends/Non-Family* were consistent with a lower level of classroom anxiety. This trend seemed particularly strong with the CoC *Future Ambition*, as there were four items on the CAS which all indicated significantly lower anxiety or increased confidence in those that reported to possess this CoC.

Those students with the connection *Previous Schoolwork* show somewhat higher anxiety when they assigned higher average scores to the proposition, "I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am."

4.3.4 RQ3d: How do students' reported Categories of Connection interact with their perceptions of the classroom community as determined by students' *composite scores on the Classroom Anxiety Scale*?

Similar to the CCS, the CAS in the questionnaire had both positively and negatively-worded items. Unlike the mean classroom community scores, a greater positive mean composite anxiety score was indicative of a lower level of anxiety, which means the

interpretation of the t-statistic values are inverted from Table 13. The same methods used to create Table 13, which explores the mean composite classroom community scores, were used to compare the CoC and mean classroom anxiety scores, as shown in Table 18. The alpha level ($\alpha=.05$) and markers of significance are identical to the previous table. The first row (“Ancestry/Family”) of the table can be read as follows: *The average composite mean score of those participants who reported to possess the CoC Ancestry/Family is 15.33. The t-statistic is 0.16 and the p-value is 0.874. Since the t-statistic is positive, it means that students who reported to possess this connection had a higher anxiety level than those who did not report to possess this connection. The p-value tells us that we expect similar results (if the means were equal) as we obtained using repeated sampling 87.4% of the time. Thus, we cannot state that the connection Ancestry/Family has an effect on mean composite anxiety scores.*

Category of Connection	Average composite mean score of those reporting the connection	Average composite mean score of those not reporting the connection	t-statistic	p-value
Ancestry/Family	15.33	16.88	0.16	0.874
Future Ambition	27.35	12.96	-2.04	0.047*
German Cultures/Language	20.98	10.31	-1.28	0.208
Friends/ Non-family	23.40	5.94	-1.85	0.072(*)
Previous Schoolwork	14.08	16.18	0.17	0.867
Travel	25.91	9.81	-1.89	0.070(*)
German-American Culture	6.91	16.59	0.81	0.456

p< 0.001 ***, p< 0.01**, p< 0.05 *, p< 0.08(*)

Table 18 shows that the connection *Future Ambition* does have a statistically significant effect on mean composite anxiety scores, with a p-value of 0.047. The negative t-statistic indicates that students who report to possess the connection *Future Ambition* have a lower anxiety level than those who did not. Even though *Future Ambition* is the only connection which had a statistically significant effect on mean composite anxiety scores at a $p < .05$ level, some of the p-values in this table show what a marginal level of statistical significance, at a level of $p < .08$. Both *Friends/Non-family* and *Travel* showed that students who report to possess these connections also report a lower average anxiety level.

As with the classroom community scores, the General Linear Model ANOVA was run to evaluate the strength of each connection's effect on the mean classroom anxiety score. The results of this test are shown in Table 19. The alpha level ($\alpha = .05$) and markers of significance are identical to the previous table. The coefficients in Table 19 indicate the increase in the mean composite anxiety score (which indicates a lower level of anxiety) when all other connections are held constant.

The ANOVA results show that no p-values were less than 0.05. When all CoCs are

Category of Connection	Multiple regression coefficient	t-statistic	p-value
Ancestry/Family	6.5	0.56	0.575
Future Ambition	16.22	1.88	0.066(*)
German Cultures/Language	13.06	1.32	0.193
Friends/ Non-family	13.89	1.59	0.118
Previous Schoolwork	-4.3	-0.35	0.728
Travel	7.2	0.64	0.524
German-American Culture	-7.8	-0.52	0.605

p < 0.001 ***, p < 0.01**, p < 0.05 *, p < 0.08(*)

considered, we can no longer conclude that any connection has a statistically significant

effect on the mean classroom anxiety score. However, the results shown in Table 19 confirm that *Future Ambition* has the largest effect on the mean composite classroom anxiety score at a level of marginal significance ($p < .08$). Factors affecting anxiety cannot be determined solely by this model, as it only accounts for 17.99% of the variance of mean composite anxiety scores.

4.3.5 RQ3e: How do students' reported connections interact with the perception of classroom community in consideration of adjectives that students provided to describe both the classroom atmosphere and their personal feelings in the classroom?

RQ3e focuses on the responses to portions of Section 4 ("German class in images") of the questionnaire in which the students were asked provide "Three adjectives that generally describe how I feel in class" (referred to as "personal adjectives" in analysis) and "Three adjectives that I would use to describe the atmosphere in my classroom" ("classroom adjectives"). This is the only way in the questionnaire in which I asked students to describe their feelings about the classroom in an open-ended manner (i.e., they provided their own words as opposed to percentages that were found in many other sections of the questionnaire).

In order to make any trends visually salient in the analysis of the data, I used a method of color-coding each adjective that participants provided into the broad categories of "positive," "negative," and "ambiguous," which could be either positive or negative, depending on the student's perspective. "Positive" adjectives about the classroom included items like "accepting" and "enjoyable," whereas positive personal feelings would be

“excited” or “content.” Examples of “negative” personal adjectives would be “shy” and “nervous,” and adjectives about the classroom atmosphere which were deemed “negative” included “forced” and “unresponsive.” I categorized items as “ambiguous” when I could not determine whether the student intended a more positive or negative meaning. For example, if they felt that the course was “fast-paced”, yet their other responses were positive, it could be referring to a positive aspect of the class (the pace keeps the student engaged and he/she enjoys that) or a possible drawback to the class (too fast for his/her liking). If the class is “quiet,” is it too quiet to achieve the goals of a communicative classroom, or is it highlighting the fact that students are not being rambunctious or domineering? If a student felt “concentrated,” is that referring to the content of the course feeling condensed or are the students focused on their work on a regular basis? Is a student energized by a “competitive” atmosphere, or is he/she intimidated by it?

Table 20 shows the distribution of the “positive,” “ambiguous,” and “negative” classroom adjectives and personal adjectives as compared to the CoCs. It shows the number of responses in each category as well as a percentage of the responses from that connection and adjectival category. For example, for the connection *Ancestry/Family*, the percentages of “positive,” “ambiguous,” and “negative” personal adjectives equal 100%, as do the percentages for the classroom adjectives in the same row.

Category of Connection	Personal Adjectives			Classroom Adjectives		
	# of responses (% of responses for category)					
	Positive	Ambiguous	Negative	Positive	Ambiguous	Negative
Ancestry/Family	67 (54.5%)	11 (8.9%)	45 (36.6%)	83 (66.9%)	26 (21%)	15 (12.1%)
Future Ambition	62 (64.6%)	9 (9.4%)	25 (26.0%)	65 (67.7%)	22 (22.9%)	9 (9.4%)
German Cultures/Language	60 (69.0%)	9 (10.3%)	18 (20.7%)	56 (64.4%)	24 (27.6%)	7 (8.0%)
Friends/Non-family	40 (63.5%)	3 (4.8%)	20 (31.7%)	40 (63.5%)	18 (28.6%)	5 (7.9%)
Previous Schoolwork	19 (52.8%)	7 (19.4%)	10 (27.8%)	18 (50.0%)	13 (36.1%)	5 (13.9%)
Travel	19 (57.6%)	4 (12.1%)	10 (30.3%)	26 (78.8%)	5 (15.2%)	2 (6.1%)
German-American Culture	10 (66.7%)	2 (13.3%)	3 (20.0%)	11 (73.3%)	3 (20%)	1 (6.7%)

When one compares the percentage of “positive” adjectives among the both the personal and classroom adjectives, the connection *Previous Schoolwork* has the lowest percentage in both categories. Among the personal adjectives, *Previous Schoolwork* has less than 2% difference to the next lowest percentage, but in the classroom adjectives, the next lowest percentage is 13.5% higher than *Previous Schoolwork*. That connection also has the highest percentage of “negative” adjectives among the classroom adjectives, but not in the personal adjectives. *Ancestry/Family* has the highest percentage of “negative” personal adjectives.

The percentage of all “positive” adjectives, for both personal and classroom, is 50% or above, meaning that students themselves generally feel good in the classroom and they feel that the classroom is a positive place to be. However, the percentage of “negative” personal adjectives is substantially higher on average than those for the classroom

community. This supports the results from the correlation of composite classroom community scores and composite classroom anxiety scores as seen in Table 15, which showed a trend toward higher scores on the CCS and lower levels of anxiety: the students' personal feelings are more widely distributed than their feelings about the classroom, which trend toward the positive.

4.3.6 RQ3f: How do students' reported connections interact with self-reported behaviors in the German classroom?

The data to address RQ3f comes from several sections of the questionnaire, including sections which examine behaviors in German class and Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in German class on the questionnaire (Appendix C, Sections 5 and 8b, respectively). I will first closely examine individual item variation within the items regarding student behaviors. Then, student WTC in the classroom will be examined.

The tables used to describe results to RQ3f follow the same format as Table 12 and Table 17 used in Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.3, above. Once again, the alpha level ($\alpha=.05$) and markers of significance (three levels of significance: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.05$ *, and a level of marginal significance at $p < 0.08$ (**)) are identical to those previous tables.

The behaviors examined in Table 21 are from "Behaviors in German class" (Appendix C, Section 5), which had a mix of 14 productive and receptive behaviors as well as aspects of student personality. Students had to give a percentage that represented how frequently the listed behavior described themselves from 0% (never) to 100% (always).

Again, to help with interpretation of Table 21, I will provide a sample interpretation of the first row, i.e., the behavior “Speaking up frequently in class.” *Students who reported the connection of German Cultures/Language noted a statistically significant greater response to the student behavior, “Speaking up frequently in class”. The connection German Cultures/ Language accounts for 22.86% of the variance of the response for this behavior.*

Behaviors in the Classroom	Categories of Connection							Variance
	A/F	Fr/NF	GAC	GC/L	PS	Tra	FA	
Speaking up frequently in class				+ ***				22.86 %
Emphasizing the right syllables and words when speaking				+ (*)	-	+		11.57 %
Seeming confident				+ *				11.24 %
Understanding everything the instructor says	+ (*)	+				+ (*)		16.86 %
Finding the right words while writing			+ *			+ *		13.96 %
Not needing a dictionary while writing						+ *		8.817 %
Finding the right words while speaking				+			+ *	12.41 %
Being inquisitive		+ *			+ *			14.93 %
“+” indicates higher average percentage in student responses, “-” indicates lower average percentage in student responses p< 0.001 ***; p< 0.01**; p< 0.05 *; p< 0.08(*) “+” or “-” without a marker of significance: this is included to accurately represent the calculation of variance								
<i>Ancestry/Family – A/F; Travel – Tra; German-American Culture – GAC; Future Ambition – FA; Previous Schoolwork – PS; Friends/Non-family – Fr/NF; and German Cultures/ Language– GC/L</i>								

Out of the total of 14 items in the section about behaviors in the German classroom, only 8 items were associated with statistically significant interactions with students’

reports in at least one CoC at the minimal level of (including, marginal) significance of $p < .08$.

Similarly, of the seven CoCs, only *Ancestry/Family* was not associated with at least one significant ($p < .05$) interaction with an item in the behavior section of the questionnaire, but it did have one marginally significant result.

There are a total of eight instances of statistically significant interactions between students' reporting a type of personal connection and an item on the behavior section of the questionnaire and a total of three instances of marginally significant ($p < .08$) interactions.

The productive behaviors of speaking and writing both had statistically significant results. Table 21 shows that the connection *German Cultures/Language* is associated with an increase in three measures of speaking. The measure "Speaking up frequently in class" showed a statistically significant increase at the $p < 0.001$ level. The connection *Future Ambition* also showed a statistically significant increase in the measure "Finding the right words while speaking," at the $p < 0.05$ level. Students who reported to possess the connection *Travel* were significantly more likely to "find the right words while writing" and "not need a dictionary while writing."

The receptive behavior "Understanding everything the instructor says" showed an increase at the $p < 0.08$ level for the connections *Ancestry/Family* and *Travel*.

Measures of the appearance of confidence, as well as student inquisitiveness, are aspects of student personality that are on display in the classroom. Students who reported to possess the connection *German Cultures/Language* showed a statistically significant increase in the appearance of confidence in the classroom. Those who report to possess the

connections *Friends/Non-Family* or *Previous Schoolwork* have a statistically significant increase in the measure “Being inquisitive.”

As discussed in the literature review, classroom behavior is influenced by a student’s WTC. A Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA) was run to examine if there was a relationship between students’ reported behaviors in the German classroom and his/her reported WTC. CCA allows researchers to examine the relationship between two sets of variables – in this instance, “Behaviors in German Class” and “WTC in German class” (see Appendix C, sections 5 and 8b, respectively). The CCA on these two sets of variables showed a statistically significant dimension most strongly influenced by Behavior M (“Having knowledge about current events in German-speaking countries”; -.0318) and was correlated with WTC.Gb14 (the percentage of time students would use German to “write a newspaper article in German class”; -.0225). This had a canonical correlation of .90 and was statistically significant ($p = .0036$). This shows that in order to gain a more complete picture of the interaction of the CoC on student behavior in the classroom, WTC in the classroom should be considered as well.

There were 16 total items on the WTC in the German classroom (see Appendix C, Section 8b) with items such as, “Speak in a small group about a recent vacation.” Students were asked to “write the percentage of time (from 0% (never) to 100% (always))” that they “would choose to use German in each classroom situation.”

While the previous table showed behaviors in the classroom, Table 22 shows the reported WTC in the German classroom as compared to the CoC. Table 22 is structured identically to the previous table (alpha level ($\alpha=.05$); markers of significance: $p < 0.001$ ***; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.05$ *; marginal significance: $p < 0.08$ (*)).

Table 22: <i>Relationship Between Willingness to Communicate in the German Classroom and the Categories of Connection</i>								
Measures of WTC in the German Classroom	Categories of Connection							Variance
	A/F	Fr/NF	GAC	GC/L	PS	Tra	FA	
Speak in a small group about a recent vacation					-	+ (*)		9.942 %
Speak to your teacher about your homework assignment		+	+ (*)	+		+ *		21.76 %
Describe the rules of your favorite game				+ (*)	-	+ *		15.17 %
Write a letter to a friend		+ *						8.635 %
Write a newspaper article					-		+ (*)	11.07 %
Ask a fellow student for instructions/clarification						+ *		10.94 %
<p>“+” indicates higher average percentage in student responses, “-” indicates lower average percentage in student responses Levels of significance: $p < 0.001$ ***, $p < 0.01$ **, $p < 0.05$ *, $p < 0.08$ (*) “+” or “-” without a marker of significance: this is included to accurately represent the calculation of variance <i>Ancestry/Family</i> – A/F; <i>Travel</i> – Tra; <i>German-American Culture</i> – GAC; <i>Future Ambition</i> – FA; <i>Previous Schoolwork</i> – PS; <i>Friends/Non-family</i> – Fr/NF; and <i>German Cultures/ Language</i>– GC/L</p>								

Out of the total of 16 items in the WTC in the classroom section, only 6 items were associated with statistically significant interactions with students' reports in at least one category of connection at the minimal level of (including, marginal) significance of $p < .08$.

Similarly, of the seven CoC, only two (*Friends/Non-Family* and *Travel*) were associated with at least one statistically significant interaction with an item from WTC in the German classroom. CoCs that failed to be associated with statistically significant interactions were *Ancestry/Family*, *German-American Culture*, *German Cultures/Language*, *Previous Schoolwork*, and *Future Ambition*. However, the categories *German-American Culture*, *German Cultures/Language*, and *Future Ambition* had marginally significant results.

There are a total of four instances of statistically significant interactions between students' reporting a type of personal connection and an item from WTC in the German classroom and a total of four instances of marginally significant interactions.

The connections *Travel*, *German-American Culture*, *Future Ambition*, *Friends/Non-Family*, and *German Cultures/Language* were consistent with an increase in WTC in the classroom. This trend seemed particularly strong with the connection *Travel*, as there were four of the six statistically significant WTC in the classroom items in this category.

5.0 Discussion, Future Research, and Implications for Teaching

The structure of this chapter will be organized around themes that emerged in the results. The first discussion theme deals with the students' focus on the classroom community versus their focus on self (5.1). Theme 2 deals with personal connections as an impetus for students to choose German over other foreign languages (FL) (5.2). The third theme examines the concept of personal connections as an enhancement to existing research on motivation in FL learning (5.3). In each theme, I will touch on future research avenues and will also outline implications for teaching. In order to elucidate tentative conclusions that may be reached based on the quantitative data presented in the results chapter, I will introduce additional quantitative data as well as draw on interviews that were conducted with select study participants after they completed the questionnaire.

5.1 Theme 1: A focus on classroom community versus a focus on self

Results from the present study showed that the number and types of Categories of Connection (COC) reported by students interact with how they situate themselves in the classroom community, both in terms of how strong they believed the classroom community to be (as measured in their scores on the Classroom Community Scale [CCS]) and the amount of anxiety that they felt in class (as measured in their scores on the Classroom Anxiety Scale [CAS]). This finding corresponds with previous research on motivation and the FL classroom that showed that the classroom community is an important factor in the student experience of FL learning (Haneda, 2006; Busse & Walter, 2013; Norton & McKinney, 2011).

I will first review the interaction of the number types of CoCs reported by students with their CCS and CAS scores; specifically, I will point to associations between the number of types of CoCs and students' CCS and CAS composite score ranges, respectively (5.1.1), and the adjectival descriptors that students employed to describe themselves and their environment in German class (5.1.2). In doing so, I will introduce supplemental data that had not been presented in Results. I will then highlight the fact that not all of the CoC's are alike (5.1.3), with a specific focus on the CoC *Previous Schoolwork*, which, unlike the other CoCs, was associated with a more negative outlook on the classroom. Implications for future research (5.1.4) and teaching (5.1.5) will follow.

5.1.1 The number of types of reported CoCs as a predictor of experiences in the classroom

The analysis of the CoCs as compared to the sense of classroom community (Table 13: *Interaction between Each of Seven Categories of Connection and Mean Composite Classroom Community Scores – T-Test*, and Table 14: *Interaction between Each of Seven Categories of Connection and Mean Composite Classroom Community Scores – ANOVA*), showed that the mean composite score on the CCS was independent of the seven CoCs when taken together. Similarly, ANOVA test results for anxiety showed no interactions with the CoCs, also when taken together (Table 19: *Interaction between Each of Seven Categories of Connection and Mean Composite Classroom Anxiety Scores – ANOVA*).

However, individual CoCs did show statistically significant interactions with both the CCS and anxiety scores. Table 18 (*Interaction between Each of Seven Categories of Connection and Mean Composite Classroom Anxiety Scores – T-Test*) showed an interaction between the CoC *Future Ambition* and anxiety. Specifically, those who reported this CoC were significantly less anxious than those who did not say they possessed this CoC.

Furthermore, Table 12 (*Relationships between Scores of Items on the Classroom Community Scale and the Categories of Connection*) and Table 17 (*Relationship between Classroom Anxiety and Categories of Connection*) showed that there were certain aspects about classroom community or classroom anxiety that interacted strongly with the CoCs. In a similar vein, Table 15 (*Distribution of Strength of Perceived Classroom Community as Compared with Reported Anxiety Level*) had shown that there was a correspondence between a strong feeling of classroom community and lower levels of classroom anxiety. This correspondence was not unexpected, as students with high classroom anxiety have

been found to also have lower grades (Horwitz, 2001). Likewise, MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997) found that anxiety had a negative impact on students' beliefs about their own language proficiency, while other researchers showed anxiety's negative effect on student behavior in the classroom (Bailey, 1983). No studies, to my knowledge, have yet specifically compared the CCS with student anxiety.

Table 9 (*Total Number of Connection Types Reported by Participants*) showed that the participants in this study reported to possess anywhere from 1 to 5 connections. Therefore, to further explore the relationship between classroom community, classroom anxiety, and reported CoCs, I applied analyses that juxtaposed score ranges (rather than absolute scores) for the CCS and for CAS, respectively, with the number of different types of CoC reported. An additional analysis of the number of connection types that students reported to possess relative to their mean classroom community score⁹ (Table 23, below) and their mean classroom anxiety score (Table 24, below) were conducted. The insights that derived from these additional analyses will be discussed below each table.

⁹ The mean classroom community scores and mean classroom anxiety scores were calculated by taking the difference of the average of positively-worded statements and the average of negatively-worded statements, as described before Table 13 in the Results chapter.

Number of Types of Reported CoCs ↓	Strength of Perceived Classroom Community					Number of Students ↓
	Very Low (Mean Score < -30)	Low (Mean Score Range -30- -10)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10-10)	High (Mean Score Range 10-30)	Very High (Mean Score > 30)	
1	0	0	2 (25%)	1 (11.11%)	4 (10.26%)	7
2	0	1 (100%)	3 (37.5%)	2 (22.22%)	14 (35.9%)	20
3	0	0	1 (12.5%)	5 (55.56%)	14 (35.9%)	20
4	0	0	0	1 (11.11%)	4 (10.26%)	5
5	0	0	2 (25%)	0	3 (7.7%)	5
Number of Students →	0	1	8	9	39	

The majority of students in the study scored “very high” on the CCS with this category almost mirroring the general distribution of students within the number of CoCs. Students who scored “high” on the CCS were most likely to have three reported types of CoCs, whereas those who scored in the “mid” and “low” range were more likely to have two. Students with four reported CoCs scored either “high” or “very high” on the CCS, with the majority of these students scoring “very high”. However, those with five types of reported CoCs either scored “mid” or “very high” – no students had both five CoCs and also scored “high” on the CCS. Table 24 shows the distribution of CoC by classroom anxiety level.

Number of Types of Reported CoCs ↓	Level of Classroom Anxiety					Number of Students ↓
	Very Low (Mean Score Range >30)	Low (Mean Score Range 10-30)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10-10)	High (Mean Score Range -10-30)	Very High (Mean Score < -30)	
1	2 (11.11%)	1 (6.25%)	2 (16.67%)	0	2 (40%)	7
2	5 (27.78%)	7 (43.75%)	3 (25%)	3 (50%)	2 (40%)	20
3	5 (27.78%)	4 (25%)	7 (58.33%)	3 (50%)	1 (20%)	20
4	3 (16.67%)	2 (12.5%)	0	0	0	5
5	3 (16.67%)	2 (12.5%)	0	0	0	5
Number of Students →	18	16	12	6	5	

Evidently, with an increase in the number of CoCs, progressively fewer students' classroom anxiety scores fell into the higher ranges. Those who reported a high number (4 or 5) of CoCs, in contrast, had "very low" or "low" classroom anxiety levels. Conversely, those who reported "very high" anxiety levels were more likely to have reported only one or two CoCs.

The examination of the concepts of classroom community and classroom anxiety in conjunction with the CoCs showed that the classroom was perceived as a very positive place to be; there were many people who scored highly on the CCS and few people who were highly anxious in the classroom.

5.1.2 Personal adjectives, classroom adjectives, and the classroom experience

Just as the CCS and CAS showed that the classroom was a positive place to be, the adjectives that were analyzed in RQ3e showed that for each CoC, more than 50% of the adjectives that respondents provided about the classroom atmosphere and students'

personal feelings in the classroom were categorized as “positive”. RQ3e specifically had examined the distribution of adjectives as compared to specific CoCs in Table 20 (*Distribution of “Positive”, “Ambiguous”, and “Negative” Personal and Classroom Adjectives by Category of Connection*). As a reminder, students were asked to provide “three adjectives that generally describe how I feel in class” (henceforth called “personal adjectives”) and “three adjectives that I would use to describe the atmosphere in my classroom” (“classroom adjectives”). There were three classifications of adjectives: positive, negative, and ambiguous (neither clearly positive nor clearly negative). Because of their ambiguity, ‘ambiguous’ adjectives were omitted from further analysis.

RQ3e also showed that students’ personal adjectives were not as uniformly positive as the classroom adjectives. To further compare the adjectives provided by the students with their experience in the classroom, additional analyses were conducted to examine the ratio of positive to negative adjectives provided by students relative to their mean composite classroom community scores and their mean composite classroom anxiety scores, respectively (see Tables 25 and 26, below). The breakdown of the individual ratios can be found in the intermediary tables (see Appendix F) that ultimately led to Tables 25 and 26.

Analysis of these intermediary tables shows that students who reported a combination of three positive personal adjectives and two or three positive classroom adjectives scored “very high” on the CCS. The clear majority of respondents (43 students or 75.4%) mentioned not a single negative adjective to describe the classroom atmosphere. No student reported three negative classroom adjectives, while 12 students (21%) mentioned one and two students (3.5%) cited two negative classroom adjectives.

Conversely, out of the three classroom adjectives, 40 students (70%) had either two or three positive adjectives (21 students/36.8% and 19 students/33.3%, respectively). Students' personal adjectives were somewhat less positive. Less than half of all students (24 students or 42.1% of respondents) used no negative adjectives at all when they described how they felt in class; another 18 students (or 31.6%) gave one negative personal adjective. Four students (7.01%) gave three negative adjectives about how they feel in the classroom (personal adjectives), but none of these students reported a negative view of the classroom atmosphere; in fact, the student who gave the negative adjectives "confused, frustrated, embarrassed" as to their own feelings in the classroom, described the classroom atmosphere as "friendly, joking, encouraging." A total of 37 students (64.9%) had either two or three positive personal adjectives (24 students/42.1% and 13 students/22.8%, respectively).

Table 25 shows the ratio of the number of negative to positive adjectives in students' reported personal adjectives to the number applied to the classroom adjectives, broken down by participant groups that reflect different ranges of composite mean scores on the CCS. The ratio "Personal = Classroom" under the "negative" header means that the students mentioned the same number of negative personal adjectives as negative classroom adjectives (0 of each, 1 of each, 2 of each, etc.) The ratio "Personal > Classroom" under the "negative" header means that the students gave more negative personal adjectives than negative classroom adjectives (including 1 negative personal:0 negative classroom, 2:1, 3:2, etc.). The percentages reflect the percentage of students each "level" of classroom community by each ratio category, with all percentages in one "level" of classroom community equaling 100.

Table 25: Number and Percentage of Participants By Response Ratio of Personal versus Classroom Adjectives and Classroom Community Score Mean Ranges

Ratio, Number of Negative Personal Adjectives / Number of Negative Classroom Adjectives ↓	Strength of Perceived Classroom Community					Number of students in each ratio level ↓
	Very Low (Mean Score Range < -30)	Low (Mean Score Range -30- -10)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10- 10)	High (Mean Score Range 10- 30)	Very High (Mean Score > 30)	
Personal = Classroom	0	0	1 (12.5 %)	4 (44.44%)	21 (53.85%)	26
Personal > Classroom	0	1 (100%)	6 (75%)	4 (44.44%)	16 (41.03%)	27
Classroom > Personal	0	0	1 (12.5 %)	1 (11.11%)	2 (5.13%)	4
Total Number of Students in Each Level →	0	1	8	9	39	
Ratio, Number of Positive Personal Adjectives/ Number of Positive Classroom Adjectives ↓	Very Low (Mean Score Range < -30)	Low (Mean Score Range -30- -10)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10- 10)	High (Mean Score Range 10- 30)	Very High (Mean Score > 30)	Number of students in each ratio level ↓
Personal = Classroom	0	0	2 (25%)	5 (55.5%)	13 (33.33%)	20
Personal > Classroom	0	1 (100%)	3 (37.5%)	1 (11.11%)	9 (23.08%)	14
Classroom > Personal	0	0	3 (37.5%)	3 (33.33%)	17 (43.59%)	23
Total Number of Students in Each Level →	0	1	8	9	39	

The higher up the CCS (far right column of Table 25) a student's responses fell, the more likely the student was to name a balanced ratio of negative adjectives pertaining to self and negative adjectives pertaining to the classroom. Among some such students, the negative personal adjectives outweighed negative classroom adjectives.

Response patterns for the positive adjectives were not an inverse of the patterns found for negative adjectives; those respondents who scored higher on the CCS were more likely to have either an equal ratio of positive personal/classroom adjectives or more positive classroom adjectives than personal adjectives. The type of ratio in which classroom adjectives outnumbered personal adjectives was consistently the smallest category when looking at negative adjectives, but not when looking at personal adjectives.

On the whole, students were more likely to name negative adjectives about themselves and positive adjectives about the classroom. However, for students who scored lower on the CCS, this trend was not as strong. They were no more likely to use positive adjectives to describe the classroom than to describe themselves.

Similarly structured to Table 25, Table 26 shows the distribution of negative adjectives by participants broken down by their respective levels of classroom anxiety.

Table 26: Number and Percentage of Participants By Response Ratios of Personal versus Classroom Adjectives and Classroom Anxiety Score Mean Ranges

Ratio, Number of Negative Personal Adjectives/ Number of Negative Classroom Adjectives ↓	Level of Classroom Anxiety					Number of students in each ratio level ↓
	Very Low (Mean Score Range >30)	Low (Mean Score Range 10-30)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10-10)	High (Mean Score Range -10-30)	Very High (Mean Score < -30)	
Personal = Classroom	7 (38.89%)	12 (75%)	4 (33.33%)	2 (33.33%)	1 (20%)	26
Personal > Classroom	9 (50%)	4 (25%)	6 (50%)	4 (66.67%)	4 (80%)	27
Classroom > Personal	2 (11.11%)	0	2 (16.67%)	0	0	4
Total Number of Students in Each Level →	18	16	12	6	5	
Ratio, Number of Positive Personal Adjectives/ Number of Positive Classroom Adjectives ↓	Very Low (Mean Score Range >30)	Low (Mean Score Range 10-30)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10-10)	High (Mean Score Range -10-30)	Very High (Mean Score < -30)	Number of students in each ratio level ↓
Personal = Classroom	5 (27.78%)	7 (43.75%)	3 (25%)	2 (33.33%)	3 (60%)	20
Personal > Classroom	7 (38.89%)	1 (6.25%)	3 (25%)	2 (33.33%)	1 (20%)	14
Classroom > Personal	6 (33.33%)	8 (50%)	6 (50%)	2 (33.33%)	1 (20%)	23
Total Number of Students in Each Level →	18	16	12	6	5	

Table 26 confirms that, on the whole, students were more likely to provide negative adjectives about themselves than the classroom. However, there were some differences between different ranges of anxiety. Students with “high” or “very high” levels of anxiety (toward the right side of the table) were more likely to name more negative adjectives about themselves than about the classroom (66.67% and 80%, respectively), while students with “low” anxiety were more likely to name as many negative adjectives about themselves as about the classroom. In fact, this balance was largely attributable to students with “very low” and “low” anxiety reporting no negative personal or classroom adjectives at all (not shown directly in Table 26, but rather in Intermediate Table A for Table 26 in Appendix F). It is interesting to note that only two students with “very low” anxiety mentioned not a single positive personal adjective, while all students who had three positive personal and three positive classroom adjectives reported “very low” to no more than “mid” levels of anxiety.

In terms of positive adjectives, students with “low” and “mid” levels of classroom anxiety named more positive classroom adjectives than personal adjectives. For both students with “very low” and those with a “high” level of classroom anxiety, a fairly even distribution of positive adjectives between all three ratios existed. However, those with “very high” anxiety were likely to report a balance of positive classroom and personal adjectives.

Both Table 25 and Table 26 show that when negative adjectives were examined, more students named negative adjectives about themselves than about the classroom; very few students (4 students or 7.02% of all students) mentioned more negative adjectives about the classroom than about themselves. When positive adjectives were examined, the

opposite was true. In other words, it appears that overall, students had a more positive impression of the classroom than themselves.

Students who were least likely to provide negative adjectives about both themselves and the classroom were students with “very high” scores on the CCS and students with lower scores on the CAS.

5.1.3 Not all CoCs are created alike

Even as the number of types of CoCs that a student reported appeared to interact with their CCS and CAS scores (see just above), it appears that the specific type of CoC also matters. Two types of CoCs stand out in particular: (1) the CoC of *Previous Schoolwork*, which was associated with a particularly negative outlook on the German classroom; and (2) CoCs that were associated with a positive outlook on the German classroom (especially lower levels of classroom anxiety), namely the CoCs of *Ancestry/Family*, *German Cultures/Language*, *Travel*, *Future Ambition*, *Friends/Non-Family*.

In Chapter 4, the exploration of RQ3a (Table 12) had shown that students who reported the connection of *Previous Schoolwork* had several statistically significant instances of lower average percentage responses to measures on the CCS than those students who did not report that connection. For example, students who had reported *Previous Schoolwork*, on average, showed a lower score on the statements, “I feel that students in this course care about each other” and “I feel that this course is like a family” and higher scores on the suggestion that “I do not feel a spirit of community.” Students who had reported *Previous Schoolwork* as a CoC also were significantly more likely than other

students to agree with the CAS-proposition that, “I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am.” Students with the connection *Previous Schoolwork* was associated with somewhat higher anxiety, specifically a higher response to the CAS statement, “I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am.” Such students also gave a substantially lower percentage of positive classroom adjectives than students who reported any other type of CoC, i.e., 13.5% fewer “good/positive” adjectives about the classroom environment.

In conclusion, it appears that while students are generally happy about the classroom community, their feelings about their personal situation in it may be more complicated. This is shown not only in the respective balance of positive and negative adjectives that students applied to the classroom and themselves, respectively, but it also comes through in scores achieved on the CCS and CAS. When their sense of classroom community and classroom anxiety was examined in the context of the number of types of CoCs reported, those who reported fewer CoC types were likely to have higher levels of anxiety and a lesser sense of classroom community.

5.1.4 Implications for future research

There are several other ways of examining the classroom community. As this study showed, classroom community and anxiety are closely linked. However, not all aspects of how students interact in the classroom were examined in the context of anxiety and community. Bailey (1983) examined several aspects of anxiety in the classroom, including competitiveness. She found that students actively compared themselves to other students,

and if they perceived that they were less proficient than other students, they had a greater level of anxiety. Results of the present study revealed the tension between classroom anxiety, self-regard, and competitiveness, but did not specifically focus on perceptions of language proficiency, either as achieved by the student him/herself or as achieved by other students. It is also possible that this sense of competitiveness in the classroom maybe connected to how strongly connected students feel to the classroom community. The students did have to elaborate upon what percentage of students in their class possessed certain connections more/less than they did and they also described other students (including the other students' expectations of them in the classroom) in the "German class in images" section with metaphors and images, so analysis of these sections of the questionnaire could prove useful to how their perception of other students interacts with their connections in the classroom.

Lave & Wenger's concept of Community of Practice (CoP) showed that students do not need to feel like they are members of only one group (the classroom community), but can feel a sense of membership in multiple communities. They may, for example, feel that their multiple connections, in fact, connote multiple current (e.g., identifying themselves as a "student of German ancestry") or future (e.g., identifying themselves as a future study abroad student) memberships. However, this study did not investigate all possible CoPs with which students may engage. For example, this study did not consider gender as a criterion around which community membership can organize even as previous research has documented the importance of gender in FL classrooms (e.g., Chavez, 2001; Rovai, 2001; Kissau, 2006; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013; Park & French, 2013; Dewaele, et al., 2016). Specifically, Dewaele et al. (2016) found that there are statistically significant differences in

the anxiety that men and women feel in the FL classroom. Of similar relevance to the present study, Rovai (2001) ascertained that females feel a stronger sense of community than males. Murphy and Lee (in preparation) and other studies, such as Chavez (2001), mention that there are more females than males studying certain FLs. Murphy and Lee (in preparation) found that the prevalence of females among students was not as pronounced in German (55.1% female/44.9% male) as it was in some other FLs, such as French (78.1% female), Spanish (75.3% female), and Italian (71.1% female). It would be interesting to add gender as a variable in this study to see if CoCs interact in some way with the stronger male enrollment numbers in German.

Specifically with regard to the outlier CoC *Previous Schoolwork*, more work could be done to see if this connection is consistently associated with higher anxiety and a lower sense of classroom community. It is possible that as a result of the connections being self-identified, there was a subgroup of students who felt particularly connected to their previous studies, which prompted them to list it as a connection. Perhaps those students were particularly happy with their high school German course or teacher and disappointed with their college course or instructor. They might also have been frustrated with a perceived lack of proficiency or fluency after a certain amount of previous study. Further investigation could be done to see if any of these hypotheses regarding *Previous Schoolwork* prove to be accurate for other students.

The overall positive sense of classroom community could be attributed to the particularly strong German program at this university. Subsequent research could also incorporate end of semester course evaluations to confirm the attitude of students toward the classroom community both at this institution and other institutions to see if there is

any institutional difference not only within German programs, but also across other language programs.

5.1.5 Implications for Teaching

The very impetus for many studies regarding motivation in FL learning ultimately is to address the question, “How can instructors make the classroom experience more engaging for their students?” As Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner (2015) describe, in order to have a CoP, there must be a shared practice. Students and teacher share with each other over the course of a semester, but the CoP that is naturally formed in the classroom may be strengthened by attuning to the various components of the community. Indeed, the present study underscored the complex nature of how individual students experience the classroom community. Specifically, variables, such as personal connections to the language and culture and classroom anxiety mediate how students view the class as a whole and situate themselves in the classroom community.

Awareness of pedagogical goals (such as language proficiency goals through can-do statements) has been shown to improve students’ own self-assessment of language (VanPatten, Trego, & Hopkins, 2015). As such, discussing the role of classroom community and empowering the students to pay attention to their shared responsibility for learning could foster a greater sense of community among the students. A multi-pronged approach could be used to increase the sense of classroom community. If we focus on the items that Rovai included in his CCS, we see that several aspects of the classroom community are examined: Do the students support/care about each other? Can they trust other students? Are students encouraged to participate and ask questions? Do they get timely feedback?

Some instructors may not realize that the timing of feedback can impact a student's sense of classroom community. The teachers can first focus on the parts of the CCS over which they have direct control (timing of feedback, encouraging students to ask questions, being available to students when they have questions, etc.) and then create activities for the class which give the students opportunities to work together and learn about one another. This, in turn, likely will help students feel less isolated and more connected. This study showed that a positive sense of classroom community and lower anxiety were correlated, so an increase in classroom community may also lessen anxiety. As Horwitz et al. (2010) mentioned, students may have anxiety when "performing" in front of others and fear being perceived as stupid. This may be mitigated if the students feel that they can rely on one another and feel supported by their classmates.

Instructors should also consider the effect that the role of the instructor has on the classroom community. In heavily student-centered classrooms as opposed to teacher-centered classrooms, other students could become a benchmark for achievement. This is especially important in upper-level courses, where the traditional "culture" courses, including the study of literature, are generally more focused on student discussion. Instructors should take care to design activities at this level that also focus on community-building within the classroom.

5.2 Theme 2: Personal connections as impetus to choose German over other foreign languages

This theme examines how personal connections may have been the impetus for students to study German (5.2.1). I will then discuss implications for future research (5.2.2) and teaching (5.2.3).

5.2.1 Students “probably have some reason” for studying German

“If someone is a German speaker, they probably have some reason for being a German speaker. They have some background that made that happen.” This quote from an interview participant (an 18-year-old male in a beginning-level German course) highlights a theme that was present throughout the majority of responses in the questionnaires: All students reported at least one connection with German. The university does have a FL requirement for graduation, but with the exception of the music performance program, which requires that their students enroll in particular languages for reading/pronunciation competency, no other program at the university requires that a student specifically choose German. The CoCs reported by students in this study can contribute to an explanation of why some students chose to take German as opposed to other languages.

Table E2 (located in Appendix E), which served as an intermediary table for Table 4 (*Sources of Data and the Location of Tables that Display the Results of Intermediate Analyses that Were Used to Answer RQ1*) showed that that less than 23% of participants listed their school/university requirements as a reason for taking a German class and only two participants (3.5%) listed requirements as the sole reason that they *originally* had started to study German. In other words, for the vast majority of learners, the original desire to study German was influenced by some type of connection other than a requirement. However, even the students who had listed the fulfillment of requirements as the reason for studying German must have had a reason why they chose German instead of any of many other FLs that are offered at the institution.

There have been some studies that have examined why students may choose a particular language over another. As mentioned in the literature review, Chavez (2010,

2011, 2013) showed that students of various languages are likely to think that students of German will have some kind of connection through their heritage, which may influence their language choice. Murphy et al.'s 2009 article discussed reasons that students enroll in commonly taught and less-commonly taught language courses. The authors stated that students of Spanish "are more equally divided between utilitarian and humanistic reasons for language study" than students of German or French, who are drawn to the study of those languages by humanistic reasons (p. 46). One of the questionnaire sections that was not evaluated in-depth for this study asked participants to evaluate their beliefs about the perceived personal and professional value of German studies, some aspirational statements, and their own experience in the classroom on a six-point Likert scale ("Totally disagree" [1] to "Totally agree" [6]). Ratings of one statement clearly provide evidence that, by and large respondents were taking courses in German for "some reason" other than requirements: "I am only taking German because it is required by my program." received the lowest average rating, mode, and median (1.807, 1, and 1, respectively) of all items included in this measure. Only seven of the 57 participants agreed with the above statement to *any* degree (and only one "totally agreed").

5.2.2 Implications for future research

The present study only included students who were currently enrolled in a university-level German class and did not consider students of other FLs. However, it remains to be seen whether the types and number of personal connections students report to possess differ among student of different FLs. Specifically, students' reported personal

connections could be evaluated based on the distinction between the humanistic and the utilitarian view of language learning as described by Murphy et al. (2009).

A related objective would be to contrast the personal connections reported by students of more commonly taught languages, such as German, with students of less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Such an investigation could examine Murphy et al.'s statement that "heritage affiliation with the language and culture is particularly important as a reason for language study for many students" of LCTLs (p. 45). Among those who study LCTLs, previous coursework may not be a relevant connection, as many LCTLs are not offered in high school programs, so the distribution of connections may be quite different than the student population from this study. In addition, LCTL programs are generally much smaller than programs of commonly taught languages like German, which could affect the sense of classroom community.

This study attested to the role of personal connections in students' choice of German. However, beyond the initial choice, personal connections may also vary according to a student's year of instruction. A preliminary analysis of the data at hand suggests that further investigations by the level of study may yield important information. Of the participants in this study, 33 were drawn from beginning levels of German (Years 1 and 2 of study) and 24 were gleaned from the intermediate level of German (Year 3). Table 27 shows the distribution of number types of CoCs by the students' level of enrollment.

Number of Reported Types of CoC per Participant	By Number of Participants	Percentage and Number of Respondents from Beginning-Level Study	Percentage and Number of Respondents from Intermediate-Level Study
1	7	18.18%(6)	4.17% (1)
2	20	42.42% (14)	25% (6)
3	20	27.27% (9)	45.83% (11)
4	5	9.09% (3)	8.33% (2)
5	5	3.03% (1)	16.67% (4)
Total →	57	100% (33)	100% (24)

The data in Table 27 show promise for future research on CoCs among different levels of university language learners. Just over seventy percent of intermediate language learners (17 students) had 3 or more reported personal connections, as compared to only 39.3% of beginning-level language learners (13 students). Pertinent questions include whether students with a greater number of CoCs are more likely to persist in their language studies (and continue to higher levels); and whether students develop additional CoCs over the course of their language studies. A much larger sample taken from a greater variety of levels of language study should be examined. In addition, a longitudinal study would help with attributing causality and/effect in the relationship between CoCs and progression through a sequence of language courses.

5.2.3 Implications for teaching

It seems that enrollments in language classrooms are a perpetual source of concern for language instructors and departments, as there have long been publications about recruiting and retaining students for FL study, especially for study of language at higher levels (e.g., Handelsman, 1979). As language programs across the country worry more

about declining enrollments in FL classes overall (see Goldberg, Looney, & Lusin, 2015 for recent numbers about enrollments in the United States), it may be beneficial to look to at more than promoting the “usefulness” (instrumental use) of the language when encouraging students to take a particular language.¹⁰ In addition to this, Hennig (2010) found that student perceptions of a culture – a form of CoC - influence their decision to study German. Discussing and/or promoting the various cultures that exist within German-speaking countries may impact whether students recognize this as a connection and, as such, may positively affect enrollment. For German in particular, some universities acknowledge that German ancestry influences the enrollment in their German courses,¹¹ but it is not known to which extent this is used in recruitment across institutions. Would an advertisement highlighting a student discussing his/her German family or friends influence others to consider the connections they possess to speakers of German? Not many students mentioned German-American culture as a connection, despite the fact that many of the students were from areas that celebrate a strong German heritage. Students may not realize that traditions they have experienced in their communities have uniquely German features, even if they themselves do not have a heritage connection. If these traditions were highlighted, students may choose to learn more about that cultural connection through exploration of the language. It is important to note that a sizeable number of international students were also enrolled in these courses, so a focus on culture(s) should be incorporated in such a way so as to not exclude those who do not claim to possess any kind

¹⁰ <http://german.dartmouth.edu/undergraduate/why-study-german>
<http://www.goethe.de/lrn/prj/zgd/en867247.htm>

¹¹ <https://gns.wisc.edu/languages/german/>

of heritage connection. In this way, German courses can cater to those that have more varied cultural backgrounds.

5.3 Theme 3: Personal Connections as an Enhancement to Motivational Research

This theme examines the idea of using personal connections or CoC as an enhancement to field of motivational research in Second Language Acquisition that has come before this study. In particular, I discuss how the CoC relates to the seminal work of Gardner and Lambert (5.3.1), to Dörnyei's Motivational Self-System (5.3.2), and to previous work that defines student identity and affiliation (5.3.3). I will then discuss implications for future research (5.3.4) and teaching (5.3.5).

5.3.1 Categories of Connection and Gardner/Lambert

Gardner and Lambert's early work on motivation in language learning (1959, 1972) defined two types of orientations: *integrative orientation*, which is an aim "to learn more about the language group, or to meet more and different people" and *instrumental orientation*, which reflects "the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement," such as learning a language to obtain a better job (1959: 267).

The use of CoC rather than the binary division into *integrative* and *instrumental orientations* as a method of examining a student's attachment to the language and its speakers allows the researcher to simultaneously consider multiple and co-occurring orientations. CoC expands the future-oriented idea of integrative orientation, moving beyond "learning more about a language group," examining how students might already be connected to the language through their own connections with speakers or the

culture/language. CoC also captures aspects about the utilitarian view of the language (*instrumental orientation*), by examining how students report that they plan to use the language in the future. In this study, most participant responses of this type were assigned to the category of connection *Future Ambition (FA)*. Just over half of students (56.1%) reported that they possessed *FA*, the second most common category of connection, but no students named *FA* as their only connection. Table 10 (*Frequency of Occurrence of Connection Types Among Students in Each of Five Groups that are Defined by the Number of Connection Types (1-5) that Students Reported*) showed that, proportionally, the more connections students reported to have, the more likely they were to also claim the connection *FA*. This study's results as they pertain to the category *Future Ambition* highlighted the fact that looking at how a student might "use" a language can reveal integral parts of students' goals and intentions in their language study, but that it cannot provide a complete picture of motivated student behavior. For some students, their language learning experience may include goals that are simultaneously instrumental and integrative: A student's desire to learn more about "German auto companies" may be fed by a simultaneous desire to learn more about or get to know the people who build the cars or are enthusiastic about them and by a desire to get a job in the industry. CoC attempts to capture both of these.

5.3.2 Categories of Connection and Motivational Self System

As mentioned in the review of the literature, Dörnyei (2009) created the theoretical framework of the *L2 Motivational Self System*, which has three components: the *Ideal L2 Self* (the person a learner might like to become, such as a wish to become a competent speaker),

the *Ought-to Self* (different characteristic students are expected to possess in order to succeed and avoid any negative results, such as speaking in class to not have a deduction in a participation grade), and the *L2 Learning Experience* (the learning environment, including peers and the instructor). Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* connects several parts of this study. The *Ideal L2 Self* includes the student's language learning goals or could include their idealized Self communicating with speakers in a foreign country during a future study abroad experience, such as would be captured by the *CoC Future Ambition*.

Additional components of the current study align with the remaining two components of the *L2 Motivational Self-System*. The *Ought-to Self* and the *L2 Learning Experience* are evaluated when the Categories of Connection are examined in connection with the score on the CCS, with the level of student anxiety in the classroom, and in the section where the students provided adjectives. For example, the student may reveal aspects of what they feel they are expected to do (*Ought-to*) when evaluating how they feel the class functions as a whole or what pressures they feel in the class. Students elaborate on the experience in the classroom (*L2 Learning Experience*) by evaluating the sense of classroom community as well as by elaborating on the classroom atmosphere with classroom adjectives. In addition, as was shown in the results, and discussed briefly above in section 5.1.3, the unique status of *CoC Previous Schoolwork* appears to interact with the *L2 Learning Experience*, when it was associated with a decrease in the sense of classroom community and an increase in classroom anxiety.

5.3.3 Categories of Connection, identity, and affiliation

A large majority (73.7%) of participants in this study claimed to possess the CoC *Ancestry/Family*; and of the 15 of students who did not report to possess that trait, eight were international students. This statistic, combined with the fact that many in the state where the university is located claim German ancestry, leads one to consider the term “ethnic affiliation.” As mentioned in the literature review, the term *affiliation* has been used to define a close association or an identity with a particular ethnic group, but has also been used as a term that shows that an individual is reaching across boundaries, to interact with a group to which they do not currently – but could possibly - belong.

It is also helpful to revisit the concept of the student identity (or identities) in terms of both a model of Community of Practice and the CoCs explored in the present study. As was mentioned in the review of the literature, CoP has three crucial characteristics: (1) the **domain**, (2) the **community**, and (3) the **practice**. As students progress through an academic semester, they are continually engaging in dialogue with one another; they not only build relationships with one another, but also negotiate and renegotiate their identities in the classroom (e.g., Farnsworth, 2010; Norton & McKinney, 2011; Rambo, 2004). If identity can be defined as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2000, p. 5), then the CoC may well help explain a student’s shifting identities in the classroom. Students may identify with different CoCs over the course of their language study. While certain CoCs are non-negotiable (e.g., you either have German ancestry/family members or you don’t), others can be altered, added, or discarded over time.

5.3.4 Implications for future research

While the degree to which students perceived that they possessed certain connections was not considered for this iteration of the study, future research could address the degree to which students identify with certain CoC and whether the degree interacts with their experience in the classroom. As one intermediate-level, 19-year-old, male student described in an interview, “The plurality of my heritage is German... It’s definitely a strong cultural connection in my family.” However, he also stated he does not “define [him]self explicitly by [his] German heritage” in German class. If a student feels a strong connection or defines his/her identity by a particular personal connection, it may have more influence on their classroom identity or feelings in the classroom than any other personal connection which they may report to possess, but with which they do not strongly identify. As mentioned above in 5.3.3, students may possess non-negotiable CoCs and may develop or discard other CoCs as time goes on. There is also a chance that they may feel “closer” to certain CoCs or identify more strongly with them at different times. In light of this, a longitudinal study on CoCs in FL students would be very useful to better understand changes that may occur over time.

In addition to the degree to which students report to possess certain connections, research could explore students’ beliefs about what certain CoCs mean in terms of their language learning. For example, one could ask students to describe behavioral or attitudinal characteristics of those who possess certain connections, such as *Ancestry/Family* or *Previous Schoolwork*.

5.3.5 Implications for teaching

In the interviews conducted for this study, I asked participants if the process of filling out the questionnaire made them think about matters that they had not considered before. One interview participant (intermediate-level, 20-year-old male) had never thought about the reasons *other* people would take German. When we consider that building a CoP constitutes understanding and interacting with members of that community as individuals, we can see that a student who understands what his/her fellow classmate brings to the table as far as background and connections can help develop that community. In a discussion about identity negotiation in the classroom, Rambo (2004) observed that teachers can facilitate student awareness of the process of learning a new language. Why, then, could teachers not also facilitate an awareness of students' connections with the language and the connections that their classmates might have? As explained above in Section 5.1.5, awareness-raising activities can have a positive impact on the classroom and, perhaps, increase students' sense of classroom community. In the same vein, there may be promise in increasing student awareness of connections and the connections of their fellow classmates. As an example, students could engage in a discussion with their classmates about personal connections to the language and how they see those connections interplay with their own language learning. Instructors could develop activities to try to encourage students to develop those CoCs that are negotiable or to deepen the connection that students feel with non-negotiable CoCs. For example, students with German ancestry could research their ancestry, interview a family member, etc. For those who do not have German ancestry (*Ancestry/Family*), teachers could let students explore an area of the language or

culture that engages the student in an attempt to encourage development of the connection of *German Cultures/Language*.

6.0 Limitations of the Present Study

As with all empirical studies, there are limitations to the study which impact the findings of this dissertation. The discussion of the results, proposed future research avenues, and the implications for teaching in the previous chapter must all be considered with the research limitations in mind. I will first discuss the limitations that pertain to the participants (6.1) and instrument (6.2) and then, limitations that pertain to data analysis (6.3).

6.1 Limitations that pertain to participants

Participants in the study were only guaranteed¹² a small remuneration (a \$2 bill) for completion of the questionnaire. The relatively small reward for completion contrasted with the demands of the study. Including the description of the study and consent page, the questionnaire was 14 pages long. The length of the questionnaire may have enervated the study participants and students may not have given their full attention to particular sections, but rather rushed through sections in order to complete the full questionnaire for the remuneration.

The questionnaire had several sections with detailed instructions. Not reading the instructions carefully could have led to less than accurate answers. In examining the raw data on the questionnaire, it was clear that the sections with some percentages were

¹² They were also given the opportunity to enter a drawing for larger cash prizes.

misunderstood. For example, some participants tried to make certain rows or columns add up to 100%, when instructions said those cells should have been considered individually.

As described in Section 3.1.1, students were recruited from 17 intact German classes. As the researcher, I was allowed to make presentations before the beginning of their class periods (so as not to take up class time) and then return at a later date to collect their questionnaires. This personal appeal was my only method to recruit students to my study. Participation was completely voluntary and had no bearing on the students' standing or grade in the German course in which they were enrolled. This bears consideration of the question: If participation was not mandatory, what led the students to participate in this study? Some possibilities could be that the students were motivated by the hope of winning one of the larger cash prizes in the drawing, they could have wanted to help a graduate student in her research, or they may have had a particular connection to German that made them want to fill out the questionnaire. As the results showed, all students had at least one personal connection to German, so it is possible that those who self-selected to participate were not representative of the German language program students as a whole.

No intact classes completed the questionnaire, so although many questions from this questionnaire gave insight to the classroom community, this study cannot provide this insight from all student perspectives without their responses.

The fact that students were only recruited from German classes does restrict the applicability of the study's finding to other populations. Indeed, learners of different languages have been found to have very different backgrounds and, as such, the relationships between students' backgrounds and experiences in the classroom must also be expected to vary. Murphy and Lee (in preparation) showed that of bachelor's degrees

conferred from 2010-2014, German had the lowest diversity and the highest percentage of white students of the top ten languages other than English. In addition to racial homogeneity, the institution where this study was conducted has a student body that is relatively homogenous in terms of age, country of origin, and socio-economic status. However, without additional data on students of other languages at this institution it is unclear whether (and, if so, how) students of German – generally or at this particular institution – are different from learners of other languages or from learners of German at other institutions.

6.2 Limitations that pertain to the research instrument

This questionnaire asked participants to self-report their behavior. Self-report is inherently limited as it represents reported experiences rather than observed behaviors. Participants' accounts may bear no or only a tentative relationship between how others experience the same setting (the classroom) and may not correspond directly with observable criteria.

Students' self-reports may also be influenced by temporary positive or negative conditions, such as feeling stress and doubt from particularly difficult assignments, or perhaps the joy and pride of succeeding on a test or exam. This could influence their feelings about their own abilities and their relationship to the classroom on a day-to-day basis so that the results of this study probably are based on snapshots in time rather than typical, average, or stable perceptions.

How the data were elicited may also have influenced results. Self-report studies most typically present closed lists of answers for respondents to choose from or require

respondents to provide their own answers. Whereas the former approach can be suggestive and limiting, the latter approach needs to rely on respondents' ability to consider and then accept or reject all possible answers. This study took the latter approach and incurred corresponding limitations. As described in RQ1a in the results, Section 2, Question 1 of the questionnaire asked students to identify possible connections to German. As this section was a free-response section, the onus was on the participants to come up with any possible connections. These responses, in addition to some other limited sections that asked for particular information (such as intent to study abroad – see Table 4 in the chapter of results for the full list), were used to determine the CoC. It is very likely that the participants in this study possessed more connections than were named. For example, many of the students who attend this institution come from areas of a state that has strong German-American heritage. While only five students mentioned German-American Culture as a personal connection that students could have to German, the data might have been different if this were a pre-determined category from which students could choose.

The theme of this study, i.e., students' experiences in the classroom, is essentially ecologically situated. Researchers Norton and McKinney (2011) identified the importance of examining the classroom community when looking at student identity and motivation: "A learner may be a highly motivated language learner, but may nevertheless have little investment in the language practices of a given classroom, which may, for example, be racist, sexist, elitist, or homophobic" (p. 76). However, as noted above, the composition of participants as well as the study's self-report design did not permit a type of analyses that acknowledged the respondents' specific environment. Whereas this study did seek to measure the sense of classroom community that students felt, its design did not account for

no-doubt varying practices among the instructors of each of the classes from which students had been recruited.

6.3 Limitations that pertain to data analysis

This study examined what connections to the study of German students reported to possess. The study did not examine to what degree they believed to possess a given connection. This decision was conscious and carefully considered for this particular iteration of the study. In components of the original study, students did indeed report the extent to which they believed they possessed each connection. However, due to the inclusion of information from other sections of the questionnaire to create the CoC and determine which CoC the students reported to possess, it was necessary to omit reports of the extent to which students reported each personal connection in analysis. Instead, any personal connection that was reported to be possessed at a rate of greater than zero was included.

The sample size as compared to the number of variables considered in analysis precluded the use of several statistical tests that could have proven useful in examining student responses, for example, Principal Component Analysis (PCA). PCA would have enabled insights into patterned responses as well as reduced the number of tests that, in this study had to be carried out, quite inefficiently, on individual items. As determined in consultation with a statistician, PCA could not be applied to the present data as the number of variables to be examined was greater than the sample size of participants. Instead, a combination of linear regressions and Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA) were used to evaluate cross-covariance.

7.0 Conclusion

Even though the data from this study must be considered with the aforementioned limitations in mind, the results discussed in this study should encourage researchers to continue to expand the notion of what it means to be a student in a FL classroom. The connections that students form to a language, its speakers, and its associated cultures impacts many aspects of their FL experience, from their initial decision to study – or continue to study – a specific language to their feelings about the classroom community and, even more so, about themselves.

This study showed that students who reported a greater variety of Categories of Connection also tended toward a lesser sense of anxiety in the classroom. While most students felt positively about their classroom community, their feelings about themselves in the classroom varied widely. Many Categories of Connection (*Ancestry/Family*, *Friends/Non-family*, *German Cultures/Language*, and *Future Ambition*) were associated with positive perceptions of the classroom community and lesser anxiety, but the connection *Previous Schoolwork* stood out as it showed increased anxiety and more negative perceptions of the classroom community.

Students in this study chose to study German out of more than 60 languages offered at the institution. Considering that less than 25% of participants indicated that university requirements were a reason they were taking German (with only two students listing it as the sole reason), the connections that students have can help to explain why some students selected the German language in particular.

This study suggests that several topics warrant further investigation, including the appearance and disappearance of Categories of Connection across the course of a student's

language study; the role that Categories of Connection play in students' initial motivation to choose to study a specific language; and the specific degree to which students perceive to possess certain connections.

Implications for teaching outlined in this study center around awareness-raising activities and community building. They include how teachers can encourage or guide the development of Categories of Connection. If instructors and researchers understand the influences that affect FL students in and outside the classroom more comprehensively, then this knowledge can be leveraged to improve learning experiences and outcomes.

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**Social and Behavioral Sciences IRB**

8/7/2013

Submission ID number: [2013-1066](#)**Title:** Perceptions of self and others in the German language classroom**Principal Investigator:** JEANNE SCHUELLER**Point-of-contact:** EMILY HEIDRICH, JEANNE SCHUELLER**IRB Staff Reviewer:** LEE ALLIET

A designated SBS IRB member conducted an expedited review of the above-referenced initial application. The study was approved by the IRB member for the period of 12 months with the expiration date of 7/29/2014. The study qualified for expedited review pursuant to 45 CFR 46.110 and, if applicable, 21 CFR 56.110 and 38 CFR 16.110 in that the study presents no more than minimal risk and involves:

Category 6: Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes

Category 7: Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

To access the materials approved by the IRB, including any stamped consent forms, recruitment materials and the approved protocol, if applicable, please log in to your ARROW account and view the documents tab in the submission's workspace.

If you requested a HIPAA waiver of authorization, altered authorization and/or partial authorization, please log in to your ARROW account and view the history tab in the submission's workspace for approval details.

Prior to starting research activities, please review the Investigator Responsibilities guidance (<http://go.wisc.edu/m0lovn>), which includes a description of IRB requirements for submitting continuing review progress reports, changes of protocol and reportable events.

**Social and Behavioral Sciences IRB**

11/26/2012

Submission ID number: [2012-0855](#)**Title:** German and the German Language Classroom: Student Perceptions and Beliefs**Principal Investigator:** JEANNE SCHUELLER**Point-of-contact:****IRB Staff Reviewer:** LILLIAN LARSON

A designated SBS IRB member conducted an expedited review of the above-referenced initial application. The study was approved by the IRB member for the period of 12 months with the expiration date of 11/25/2013. The study qualified for expedited review pursuant to 45 CFR 46.110 and, if applicable, 21 CFR 56.110 and 38 CFR 16.110 in that the study presents no more than minimal risk and involves:

Category 6: Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes

Category 7: Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. The IRB has waived the documentation of written consent per 45 CFR, 46.117 (c)(2) for questionnaires that are not administered face-to-face. An alternative consent document has been provided. Written consent will be obtained for face-to-face interviews.

To access the materials approved by the IRB, including any stamped consent forms, recruitment materials and the approved protocol, if applicable, please log in to your ARROW account and view the documents tab in the submission's workspace.

If you requested a HIPAA waiver of authorization, altered authorization and/or partial authorization, please log in to your ARROW account and view the history tab in the submission's workspace for approval details.

Prior to starting research activities, please review the Investigator Responsibilities

guidance (<http://go.wisc.edu/m0lovn>.), which includes a description of IRB requirements for submitting continuing review progress reports, changes of protocol and reportable events.

Please contact the appropriate IRB office with general questions: Health Sciences IRBs at 608-263-2362 or Education Research and Social & Behavioral Science IRBs at 608-263-2320. For questions related to this submission, contact the assigned staff reviewer.

Dear German Language Student,

My name is Emily Heidrich and I am a Ph.D. student in the Department of German. For my doctoral research, I would like to explore student thoughts about various aspects of the German language classroom environment. I am asking for your participation in my research.

Please give me your frank and unedited opinions/assessment of your experiences in your German language classrooms. There are no correct or incorrect answers. As part of my research, I will also ask about your background. This information will be used to group responses for analysis.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to create a personal code (see next page). It would contain components whose meanings are known only to you. However, because they are meaningful to you, you would be able to recreate the code later on. This code would be used to connect your questionnaire responses with future responses without compromising your identity, should you choose to participate in additional components of the study.

If you are in possession of this questionnaire, it means that your instructor has allowed me to distribute it to you. However, **your participation is voluntary** and has no bearing on your grade or standing in this course. You can withdraw from the study any time. If you have any questions, please email me (eheidrich@wisc.edu), or the Principal Investigator and co-advisor of my dissertation, Jeanne Schueller (jmschuel@wisc.edu).

Please note: You **must be 18 years or older** to participate in this study.

Are there any risks to me?

You will be asked to reflect upon your attitudes toward your German use and classroom, which could produce emotional responses. Also, if your demographic background is unique, a juxtaposition of background information may permit the researchers to make educated guesses about your identity. However, no attempts will be made to identify individual students who respond to this survey and confidentiality will be preserved, with only members of the research team having access to raw data (the responses that you write).

Are there any benefits to me?

There are no direct benefits to you.

Will I be compensated for participating in this study?

Yes, you will receive \$2 for completion of this questionnaire. There will also be a drawing for **five (5) cash prizes of \$50** which will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2014. Please note that participants receiving any payment will have to sign a form and provide a Wisconsin ID number for record-keeping purposes. That form will NOT be linked to any responses and will only be available to the researcher. In the event of an audit or university inquiry in to the use of funds, that form may need to be shown to parties involved in that process.

Guidelines for cash prize drawing: To enter in the cash prize drawing, students will have to submit a valid email address. In order to protect your privacy, the first (double-sided) page of this questionnaire with your email address will be destroyed once all prizes have been distributed, ensuring that your data is not linked with that email address. Each participant who indicates that they are interested in the larger cash prize drawings will be assigned a number. At the end of the study period, I will select numbers using a random number generator (random.org) and contact the winners. If the winner(s) cannot be contacted (for example, if an invalid email address was provided), another winner(s) will be chosen. If the winner(s) do not reply to me and make arrangements for delivery of payment within fourteen (14) days of contact, the winner forfeits the prize and the researcher will select another number. The odds of winning depend on the number of people who participate in the study. All first- through third-year German classes are being invited to participate.

Yes! I am interested in entering the drawing for one of the five cash prizes of \$50. I have read the guidelines above.

Email address for entry: _____

No, I am not interested in entering the drawing. I understand I will still receive \$2 for completion of this questionnaire.

If you agree to complete this questionnaire, you can choose from one of several ways of returning the completed questionnaire to me:

- Give it directly to me if I am able to come to your classroom to collect questionnaires. I will give you your \$2 directly at this time. I will send an email reminder a few days before I come to collect questionnaires.
- Place it in my mailbox in the German department - Van Hise 818 – My mailbox is one of the wooden mailboxes inside the main office, choose the box labeled “Heidrich.” Keep in mind the office is open only from 8:30 am-12pm and from 1-4pm. (You will need to provide your email address or other method of contact so that I can arrange payment of your \$2.)
- If you filled out an electronic version of this questionnaire, you can email it to me at ehedrich@wisc.edu. (I will respond to you to arrange payment of your \$2.)
- Email me at ehedrich@wisc.edu to arrange a time where you can drop off the questionnaire directly with me.

Until which date can I return the questionnaire?

To participate in the drawing for the cash prizes, please return the questionnaire to me by Tuesday, March 25, 2014.

Further components of the study

I am looking for up to 18 people to participate in one or both of two additional components of the study: (1) up to six people to participate in an individual face-to-face interview about the questionnaire and some related topics; and (2) up to 12 people to participate in a focus group discussion (2 groups of up to 6 people each) on the questionnaire and related topics. Participants in the individual interviews will receive \$10 each; participants in the focus group will receive \$5 each. I will contact everyone who responds, however, participation will be limited and I cannot guarantee that everyone who wishes to participate in these components will be able to do so.

	<p>Yes! I am interested in participating in further components of this study! I am interested in:</p>	<p>If you responded yes, please provide your contact information (email address is preferred):</p>
	<p>Interview only [\$10]</p>	
	<p>Focus group only [\$5]</p>	
	<p>Either the interview [\$10] OR focus group [\$5]</p>	
	<p>Both the interview AND the focus group [\$15]</p>	
	<p>No, I am not interested in further components of this study</p>	

There will also be a 20-question follow-up questionnaire toward the end of the semester. It is also completely voluntary and will take less than 5 minutes to complete.

You are NOT obliged to participate just because you gave me permission to contact you, and you can withdraw from the study at any time. Please contact me with any questions at ehedrich@wisc.edu.

Thank you!

Emily Heidrich

Section 2: Your Views of Language Learning

1. Students who study a given foreign language may have a personal connection to this language. (a) List examples of personal connections TO GERMAN AND indicate (b) how much YOU possess each; use percentages: 0% - 100% (0% = not at all; 100% = you possess this motivation, resource, personal attribute as much as one possibly could); and WHAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS you think, possess each of these connections (c) **as much/little as you**; (d) **less** than you; and (e) **more** than you. **Note that the percentages in columns (c), (d), and (e) need to add up to 100%.**

(a) List examples of personal connections TO GERMAN ↓	(1b) How much do YOU possess each type of personal connection (0-100%)?	What % of students in your class do you think possess each type of personal connection ...		
		(1c) as much/as little as you do?	(1d) less than you do?	(1e) more than you do?
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%

2. Learners of German who choose to study abroad in a German-speaking country may have a variety of motivations and objectives, resources, and personal attributes. The table below is split into three components: (1) motivations & objectives, (2) resources, and (3) personal attributes. Please (a) give as many examples of each as you can think of; (b) indicate how much YOU possess each (use percentages: 0% - 100% (0% = not at all; 100% = you possess each motivation, resource, personal attribute as much as one possibly could); and WHAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS you think, possess each (c) **as much/little as you do**; (d) **less** than you do; and (e) **more** than you do. **Note that the percentages in columns (c), (d), and (e) need to add up to 100%.**

List examples of...				
(1a) motivations and objectives ↓	(1b) How much do YOU possess each motivation/ objective? (0-100%)	What % of students in your class do you think possess each motivation/objective ...		
		(1c) as much/as little as you do?	(1d) less than you do?	(1e) more than you do?
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
(2a) resources ↓	(2b) How much do YOU possess each resource? (0-100%)	What % of students in your class do you think possess each resource ...		
		(2c) as much/as little as you do?	(2d) less than you do?	(2e) more than you do?
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%

(3a) personal attributes ↓	(3b) How much do YOU possess each attribute? (0-100%)	What % of students in your class do you think possess each attribute ...		
		(3c) as much/as little as you do?	(3d) less than you do?	(3e) more than you do?
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%

4. When students return from study abroad, ...
- ... how might they feel when they find themselves in German class again?
 - ... how might they feel when they find themselves on campus again?
 - ... how might they feel when they find themselves in the U.S. again?

5. Researchers in language pedagogy use a term called “heritage language learner.”

a. Have you heard of the term “heritage language learner”? Yes No

b. Different researchers have used the term “heritage learner” to describe different learner groups. In the table below, (a) try to imagine to which DIFFERENT GROUPS of learners the term “heritage learner” may be applied; (b) indicate how well YOU believe the term “heritage learner” really describes EACH group – assign a percentage from 0% (does not apply at all) to 100% (applies perfectly); (c) indicate how YOU fit into each heritage learner (of German) group; indicate what percentage of STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS you believe fall into each heritage learner (of German) group (d) **as much/as little** as you do; (e) **less** than you do; and (f) **more** than you do. Please note that the percentages of (d), (e), and (f) need to add up to 100%.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU AS WELL AS OTHER STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS CAN BELONG TO MORE THAN ONE LEARNER GROUP.

(a) What different groups could be defined as “heritage language learners”?	(b) How well does the term ‘heritage learner’ really describe EACH group ? (0-100%)	(c) How well do YOU fit into each heritage learner of German group (0-100%)?	What % (0-100%) of students in your class fall into each heritage learner of German group ...		
			(d) as much/as little as you do?	(e) less than you do?	(f) more than you do?
	%	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%	%

8. What differences might there be between a “heritage language learner” and a “native speaker”...

- a. in terms of WHAT they know about German?

- b. in terms of HOW WELL they know German?

- c. in terms of how they might feel in a German language class on campus?

- d. in terms of what they might learn in a German language class on campus?

- e. in terms of how they might behave in a German language class?

9. If you were describe yourself as a **heritage learner** of one or several languages (including but not limited to German), which ones would these be – and why? Please list the languages and explain why you might consider these your heritage languages.

What could be considered YOUR heritage language(s)?	Why this language?

10. What language/s are you a NATIVE SPEAKER of? Please list it/them and explain by which criteria you think so.

What language/s are you a native speaker of?	By what criteria?

Section 3: Your experience and objectives

1. Please list the countries that you have been to (including the U.S.A.). Explain why you were there, how many times you have been there, and the duration of your longest single stay. For the country where you were born, please state “born there” in Column B.

(a) Countries	(b) Why there?	(c) How many times?	(d) Longest single stay
U . S . A .			

2. Please write a number next to each statement that indicates how strongly you agree/disagree with each statement.

1 = Totally disagree

3 = Slightly disagree

5 = Strongly agree

2 = Strongly disagree

4 = Slightly agree

6 = Totally agree

a. I would like to meet some German-speaking people.	
b. I will need German for my career in the future.	
c. German will help with my future studies.	
d. I would like to be friends with some German-speaking people.	
e. I would like to go to a German-speaking country.	
f. Knowing German will help me be successful in my career.	
g. German will make me a more knowledgeable person.	
h. Learning German will help me connect with my heritage.	
i. Knowing German will enable me to make friends more easily among German-speaking people.	
j. I think it is important to be able to communicate in a language other than my native language.	

k. Learning German will help me learn about myself.	
l. Learning German is enjoyable.	
m. German will help me if I travel.	
n. Learning German will help me acquire new ideas and broaden my outlook.	
o. I get high grades in German.	
p. I am only taking German because it is required by my program.	
q. Learning German gives me a better education.	
r. Learning German will help me get good grades.	
s. Knowing German will help me understand German-speaking people and their way of life.	
t. Knowing German will help me get into better schools later in life if I choose to continue my schooling.	

Section 4: German class in images

Think about the different roles that students may play in the classroom while interacting with each other and the teacher. With this in mind, please complete the following statements. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers!

1. If I were to choose a profession that represents the role I usually play in class, it would be a/an _____
because _____.
2. If I were to choose an animal that represents the role I usually play in class, it would be a/an _____
because _____.
3. If I were to choose an animal that represents the role of the teacher in class, it would be a/an _____
because _____.
4. If I were to choose an animal that represents the role of the best student in class, it would be a/an _____
because _____.
5. If I were to choose an animal that represents the classroom community, it would be a/an _____
because _____.
6. Three adjectives that generally describe how I feel in class:
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
7. Three adjectives that I would use to describe the atmosphere in my classroom:
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
8. The role I think I usually play in class is _____
9. The role I would *like* to usually play in class would be _____
10. The role that I think other students see me usually play in class is _____
11. The role that I think other students would *like* me to usually play in class would be _____
12. The role that I think the teacher usually sees me play in class is _____
13. The role that I think the teacher would *like* me to usually play in class would be _____

The table below shows different behaviors students can have. For each, indicate how frequently (from 0% (never) to 100% (always)) it describes: (1) yourself, (2) students who have studied abroad in a German-speaking country, and (3) students who have a family connection with German. For column 4, indicate WHAT PERCENTAGE OF students in your class engage in each behavior (a) **as much/as little** as you do (b) **more** than you do; and (c) **less** than you do. **Please note that the percentages of (a), (b), and (c) need to add up to 100%.**

How frequently do these people engage in each of these behaviors?	1) You?	2) Students who have studied abroad?	3) Students who have a family connection with German?	4) What % of students in your class engage in this behavior ...		
				(a) as much/as little as you do?	(b) more than you do?	(c) less than you do?
a. Speaking up frequently in class	%	%	%	%	%	%
b. Emphasizing the right syllables and words when speaking	%	%	%	%	%	%
c. Seeming confident	%	%	%	%	%	%
d. Understanding everything the instructor says	%	%	%	%	%	%
e. Finding the right words while writing	%	%	%	%	%	%
f. Finding alternate ways to explain a concept when a word is forgotten	%	%	%	%	%	%
g. Being confident	%	%	%	%	%	%
h. Not needing a dictionary while writing	%	%	%	%	%	%
i. Having knowledge of how native speakers use German in everyday conversation	%	%	%	%	%	%
j. Finding the right words while speaking	%	%	%	%	%	%
k. Being inquisitive	%	%	%	%	%	%
l. Pronouncing the sounds in words correctly	%	%	%	%	%	%
m. Having knowledge about current events in German-speaking countries	%	%	%	%	%	%
n. Having no difficulties reading texts for class	%	%	%	%	%	%

Section 6: Comparisons

Please assess your German ability relative to (a) the best student in your class; (b) your teacher; and (c) an educated native speaker of German. **If you feel you have the exact same proficiency, mark 100%.** Use percentages smaller than 100% to indicate that your own language proficiency or knowledge is less (e.g., 80% means your proficiency is at 80% of that of the best student in the class/the teacher/an educated native speaker).

	1) Your ability relative to the best student in the class. (0-100%)	2) Your ability relative to the teacher. (0-100%)	3) Your ability relative to an educated native speaker of German. (0-100%)
a. Overall speaking ability	%	%	%
b. Overall reading ability	%	%	%
c. Overall writing ability	%	%	%
d. Overall listening ability	%	%	%
e. Overall knowledge of the culture	%	%	%

Do you think your teacher a native speaker of German?

Yes

No

Section 7: How talkative are you in your native language?

Below are 16 situations in which a person might choose to talk or not to talk. Presume you have completely free choice. Write the percentage of time (from 0% (never) to 100% (always)) that you would choose to talk in each type of situation ***in your native country and in your native language.***

1. Give a presentation to a group of strangers	%	9. Talk in a large group of acquaintances	%
2. Talk with an acquaintance while standing in line	%	10. Talk with a stranger while standing in line	%
3. Talk with a salesperson in a store	%	11. Talk with a secretary while waiting to meet with someone	%
4. Talk in a large group of friends	%	12. Give a presentation to a group of friends	%
5. Talk in a small group of strangers	%	13. Talk in a small group of acquaintances	%
6. Talk with a friend while standing in line	%	14. Talk in a small group of friends	%
7. Talk with a waiter/waitress in a restaurant	%	15. Give a presentation to a group of acquaintances	%
8. Talk in a large group of strangers	%	16. Talk with girlfriend/boyfriend (or spouse)	%

Section 8: How talkative are you in German?

a. Imagine you are in a German-speaking country. Write the percentage of time (from 0% (never) to 100% (always)) you think would choose to use German in each type of situation.

1. Talk with a salesperson in a store	%	9. Talk with girlfriend/boyfriend (or spouse)	%
2. Talk with a waiter/waitress in a restaurant	%	10. Give a presentation to a group of friends	%
3. Talk in a large group of friends	%	11. Give a presentation to a group of strangers	%
4. Talk with an acquaintance while standing in line	%	12. Talk in a small group of friends	%
5. Talk in a small group of strangers	%	13. Talk with a secretary while waiting to meet with someone	%
6. Give a presentation to a group of acquaintances	%	14. Talk in a large group of strangers	%
7. Talk in a large group of acquaintances	%	15. Talk with a friend while standing in line	%
8. Talk in a small group of acquaintances	%	16. Talk with a stranger while standing in line	%

b. Imagine you are in your German class. Write the percentage of time (from 0% (never) to 100% (always)) you would choose to use German in each classroom situation.

1. Speak in a small group about a recent vacation	%	9. Write down the instructions for your favorite hobby	%
2. Write an advertisement to sell a bike	%	10. Volunteer to read aloud	%
3. Speak to your teacher about your homework assignment	%	11. Talk to a friend while waiting for instructions	%
4. Write down a list of things you must do tomorrow	%	12. Write a story	%
5. Ask the teacher for instructions/clarification	%	13. Write a letter to a friend	%
6. Play a game in German, for example Monopoly	%	14. Write a newspaper article	%
7. Describe the rules of your favorite game	%	15. Talk to a new student who just entered the room	%
8. Complete an activity in the book with a small group	%	16. Ask a fellow student for instructions/clarification	%

Section 9: Feelings about the German Language Classroom

- a. The following are statements about your feelings about your German class. Please indicate how frequently it describes you, from 0% (never) to 100% (always).

1. I feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my German class.	%	12. I would be nervous speaking German with native speakers.	%
2. I worry about making mistakes in my German class.	%	13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my German class.	%
3. I am confident when I know that I'm going to be called on in my German class.	%	14. I feel more tense and nervous in my German class than I do in my other classes.	%
4. It makes me nervous when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in German.	%	15. I feel that I speak German better than the other students.	%
5. I keep thinking that the other students are better at German than I am.	%	16. I feel very self-conscious about speaking German in front of other students.	%
6. I am usually at ease during tests in my German class.	%	17. My German class moves so quickly that I worry about getting behind.	%
7. I am extremely uncomfortable when I have to speak without preparation in my German class.	%	18. I am intimidated by the other students in the classroom.	%
8. I don't understand why some people get so anxious in German classes.	%	19. Even if I am well prepared for my German class, I feel anxious about it.	%
9. In my German class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.	%	20. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak German.	%
10. I am afraid that my German teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	%	21. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak German.	%
11. I am intimidated by my teacher.	%	22. The more I study for a German test, the more confused I become	%

- b. The following are statements about your feelings about your German class. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by filling in a percentage from 0% (completely disagree) to 100% (completely agree).

1. I feel that students in this course care about each other	%	11. I trust others in this course	%
2. I feel that I am encouraged to ask questions	%	12. I feel that this course results in only modest learning	%
3. I feel connected to others in this course	%	13. I feel that I can rely on others in this course	%
4. I feel that it is hard to get help when I have a question	%	14. I feel that other students do not help me learn	%
5. I do not feel a spirit of community	%	15. I feel that members of this course depend on me	%
6. I feel that I receive timely feedback	%	16. I feel that I am given ample opportunities to learn	%
7. I feel that this course is like a family	%	17. I feel uncertain about others in this course	%
8. I feel uneasy exposing gaps in my understanding	%	18. I feel that my educational needs are not being met	%
9. I feel isolated in this course	%	19. I feel confident that others will support me	%
10. I feel reluctant to speak openly	%	20. I feel that this course does not promote a desire to learn.	%

Appendix D - Interview Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON Research Participant Information and Consent Form

Title of the Study: Perceptions of self and others in the German language classroom

Principal Investigator: Jeanne Schueller (email: jmschuel@wisc.edu)

Student Researcher: Emily Heidrich (email: eheidrich@wisc.edu)

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

You are invited to participate in a research study about student beliefs and attitudes toward the German language classroom and student affiliations with the German language and native speakers.

You have been asked to participate because you are in an intermediate-level German course. The purpose of the research is to evaluate student affiliations with the German language and native speakers and to examine its effect on the classroom environment.

This portion of the study will include an interview, which will be conducted in a quiet room on campus. An audio recording will be made of your participation. The researchers will be the only ones who will listen to the recordings. The recordings will be kept indefinitely.

WHAT WILL MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

If you decide to participate in this research you will be asked to talk over the questionnaire(s) you previously completed in a different part of this project and to answer further questions about your German language learning experience.

The length of the interview is dependent on how much we discuss, but it is anticipated that the interview will last between 40 minutes and just over an hour.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO ME?

There are no anticipated risks except perhaps some discomfort when discussing your opinions about the classroom.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO ME?

There are no direct benefits to participants in this study.

WILL I BE COMPENSATED FOR MY PARTICIPATION?

You will receive \$10 for participating in this study. If you do withdraw prior to the end of the study, you will not receive monetary compensation.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE PROTECTED?

Your name will not be recorded with your data, but your answers on the written questionnaire(s) will be reviewed in the interview. Your personal code, which you have used on the questionnaire(s), will be used to link your questionnaires and interview recording.

If you participate in this study, we would like to be able to quote you directly without using your name. If you agree to allow us to quote you in publications, please initial the statement at the bottom of this form.

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research after you leave today you should contact the student researcher, Emily Heidrich by email (eheidrich@wisc.edu). You may also contact the Principal Investigator Jeanne Schueller.

If you are not satisfied with response of research team, have more questions, or want to talk with someone about your rights as a research participant, you should contact the Education Research and Social & Behavioral Science IRB Office at 608-263-2320.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate or to withdraw from the study it will have no effect on your grade in any class.

Your signature indicates that you have read this consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about your participation in this research and voluntarily consent to participate. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

Name of Participant (please print): _____

Signature

Date

_____ I give my permission to be quoted directly in publications without using my name. (Please initial if you give this permission.)

Appendix E – Intermediary Tables to the Creation of the Categories of Connection

This appendix contains information pertaining to the creation of the CoC. Table 4 in the Chapter 4 (Results) referred to these intermediary tables as a crucial step toward the creation of the CoC. Appendix E contains the following tables:

Table Number	Table Theme	Section
E1	Imagined Personal Connections	Appendix E.1
E2	Original choice to study German	Appendix E.2
E3	Current reason for studying German	Appendix E.2
E4	Connections listed in terms of Study Abroad plans	Appendix E.3

Appendix E.1 – Imagined Personal Connections to German

In Section 2, Question 1 of the general questionnaire (Appendix C), students were asked to imagine personal connections to German that a student of German might have. Students did not need to possess these connections in order to imagine possible connections. For example, there were students who participated in the study who were not native English speakers (such as students of Chinese, Malaysian, and Brazilian descent). One such student listed that “having family history” could be a personal connection to German that students possessed, but she herself did not possess this trait. Thus, the data that were used to determine what kind of connections that the study participants felt could exist was not dependent on whether or not they themselves reported to possess them or

not. In this question, students could provide any type of personal connection they could think of that they or another student could have to German.

During the coding process (based in Grounded Theory, as discussed in the Results chapter), it was noted that the large majority of imagined personal connections fell into two broad categories: (1) interaction with people: “German family,” “German friends,” and “host exchange student” and (2) aspects of the German language itself or aspects of the culture: “Love of the culture,” “German music,” and “Interest in German language publications or other information.” While most of the individual data pieces fell into these two broad categories, other responses fell outside of these broad categories, which necessitated the creation of more nuanced categories in order to examine all of the themes that occurred in the imagined personal connections. Table E1 shows the categories that emerged from the imagined personal connections listed by students and gives several select responses for each category. Some of the responses that students gave were similar enough that they were coded into the same category. For example, participant DU0587 listed both “family members from Germany” and “German ancestry” as possible connections to German, but both of these were coded in the category *Ancestry/Family*. In order to seed future comparisons, Table E1 shows the number of respondents who mentioned each category, not the number of times the category was mentioned.

Broad Category	Number and (Percentage) of Respondents who Gave a Response in Each Category (N=57)	Example Responses in Category
Ancestry/Family	47 (82.5%)	“German heritage” “German-speaking parent” “having family history”
Interest in the culture/language	21 (36.8%)	“interest in learning language” “interested in culture and done work about them”
Friends/Non-family	21 (36.8%)	“German friends” “Friends in Germany”
Travel(ed)/Live(d) in Europe	13 (22.8%)	“I have traveled to Germany” “been to Germany”
Previous Schoolwork	13 (22.8%)	“Childhood language use (elementary school)” “German in high school” “Formal (university) study of language”
Future Ambition	12 (21%)	“want to study there” “future ambitions” “employer from Germany”
German-American Culture	5 (8.8%)	“Come from German Area, ie MKE [Milwaukee]” “Involvement in German-American cultural activities (e.g. Oktoberfest),” “Hometown culture”

Appendix E.2 - Reasons for studying German

In Section 1, Q11 & 12 of the questionnaire, students were asked to describe their original and current reasons for studying German (See Appendix C [Section 1, Q11 & 12, respectively]). Table E2 and Table E3, both below, show categorized responses to Questions 11 and 12, respectively. Response categories in both tables are listed in the order of the frequency of mentions in each.

Table E2 shows six response categories that were taken as representatives of different types of students' connections to the study of German. For each category select responses are included for illustrative purposes.

Broad Category	Number and (Percentage) of Respondents who Gave a Response in Each Category (N=57)	Example Responses in Category ¹³
Ancestry/Family	19 (33.3%)	<p>"because I'm half German"</p> <p>"I have relatives who live in Austria"</p> <p>"My siblings all took German and my family has strong German heritage"</p>
Interest in the Culture/Language	19 (33.3%)	<p>"interested in German language"</p> <p>"I was curious about the language"</p> <p>"I like the culture"</p>
School/University Requirement	13 (22.8%)	<p>"I went to an elementary school which required that all students take German and French (and later, Spanish)"</p> <p>"It is a requirement for a BA"</p> <p>"Music students need to pass a translation exam in 2 of German, French, and Italian"</p> <p>"I didn't want to study Spanish in high school."</p>
Future Ambition	9 (15.8%)	<p>"To be better prepared for an engineering career"</p> <p>"I would like to improve my German so that I can either study or work there"</p>
Travel(ed)/Live(d) in Europe	8 (14%)	<p>"Interested in studying in Europe and traveling at some point in my life"</p> <p>"we plan on traveling in Europe"</p>
Friends/Non-family	6 (10.5%)	<p>"One of my best friends is German"</p> <p>"I was dating someone from Germany"</p>

¹³ Excerpts from student responses are presented verbatim, including punctuation (or lack thereof).

Two categories showed the highest frequency of mentions, each at 33.3% of respondents, i.e., (a) German ancestry and/or some family connection to the language (which is abbreviated as *Ancestry/Family* in this table) and (b) students who had an interest in German culture or the language itself (abbreviated as *Interest in the culture/language*). Out of the 19 respondents (33.3%) whose responses mentioned *Ancestry/Family*, 12 (63.16% of *Ancestry/Family* (A/F), 21% of all study participants (SP)) listed this as their sole reason for originally deciding to study German. Of the seven participants who had given responses in addition to *Ancestry/Family*, five (26.3% of A/F, 8.8% of SP) mentioned an interest in the culture or language, and two (10.5% of A/F, 3.5% of SP) mentioned previous travel to German-speaking countries.

The responses that fit into the category of *Interest in the culture/language* varied in terms of specificity. Some participants merely mentioned that the German language “looked interesting,” while others named certain aspects of the culture that interested them, such as “engineering technology,” German history, or cultural figures such as “Nietzsche, Kafka, Grimm” or “Goethe.”

Responses under the category *School/university requirement* had several themes. A total of 12 respondents indicated that they were taking a language because of requirements from their school (elementary, middle, or high school) or the university. However, the exact types of responses differed. Several of the respondents referred to a language other than German as an alternative while talking about fulfilling their requirements. For example, two students said that they had taken German because it was not Spanish, while two other students indicated that they had wanted to study a language other than German, but that those languages (Spanish, Polish) had been “unavailable.” Other responses in this category

were less elaborate, such as “the university is making me take a language” or, simply, “language requirements.”

The nine responses that indicated that the participant had intentions to use his/her German outside of the classroom for future professional or academic purposes were categorized into *Future Ambition*. Six of these nine students (66.6% of *Future Ambition* (FA), 10.5% of SP) indicated that they wished to use their German for academic purposes such as study abroad, to continue their studies in Germany after graduation, or to read original texts from their discipline of choice (math, philosophy) in German. Two of the nine students specifically mentioned hopes of bettering their chances in the field of engineering, while another hoped to establish business relationships in Germany. Of the nine total responses, five (55.5% of FA, 8.8% of SP) stood alone as the sole reason for studying German.

Travel or longer stays in Germany were additional reasons for studying German, although none of the eight participants (14%) who listed it gave this as their sole reason.

Six of the 57 participants (10.5%) specifically mentioned that a friend or non-family member was the reason they had originally taken German. Of these, three (50% of *Friends/Non-Family*, 5.2% of SP) mentioned that a “friend” or “best friend” was the impetus for learning language, and two mentioned that they were dating someone who was German or had a close relation who was German. One participant had a particularly inspiring teacher who encouraged him to take German.

Table E3 shows eight response categories; the number and percentage of respondents in each; and example responses for each category that had been solicited in Section 1, Question 12: “Why are you currently taking German?”

Broad Category	Number and (Percentage) of Respondents who Gave a Response in Each Category (N=57)	Example Responses in Category
Interest in the Culture/Language	17 (29.8%)	"Because I have grown to love the language and culture"
Future Ambition	16 (28.1%)	"It will be important to my future profession and goals" "I would like to continue my studies so I can eventually study abroad in Berlin"
University Requirement	13 (22.8%)	"3 semesters of a language is required for my degree" "it will count toward my elective credits"
Future Ambition subset: Goal of improving language skills (fluency level)	13 (22.8%)	"I truly wish to become fluent" "I want to master the language" "I want to keep improving my German and learning more"
Pursuing Major or Certificate (Minor)	8 (14%)	"I'm seeking a certificate" "I would like to get a certificate/major"
Travel	2 (3.5%)	"I will be going back to Germany this summer" "We plan on going to Europe"
Friends/Non-family	1 (1.8%)	"I have friends in Germany so I want to be able to talk to them in their language"
Ancestry/Family	1 (1.8%)	"I have German ancestors"

The most common reason for a participant's current enrollment in German was an interest in the language or the culture itself, with 17 of 57 respondents (29.8%). Eight of these 17 participants simply mentioned their enjoyment of the learning the language, others mentioned (or reiterated) their fondness for the language or culture ("I enjoy the language, culture, and country.").

Of the 16 students (28.1% of all study participants (SP)) who indicated their intention to use German in a future academic or professional setting (*Future Ambition - FA*), nine students (56.3% of *FA*, 15.8% of SP) specifically elucidated an intention to study abroad. Three participants (18.75% of *FA*, 5.2% of SP) specifically mentioned a goal to work in the engineering field.

In analysis of responses to this question using the Grounded Theory Approach, goals for a particular level of language achievement or progress were categorized with *Future Ambition*. While the responses ultimately fit into this category, goals in achieving fluency or for progress are separated out as a subset of *Future Ambition* in Table E3 in order to highlight the fact that the students did *not* have these types of responses as an original impetus to study German. A total of 13 students (or 22.8% of SP) of students mentioned *Goal of improving language skills (fluency level)* as a reason for currently taking German. The desire to achieve fluency or mastery over the language was mentioned five times. Other students hoped to “better all of [their] German language skills” or reiterated the importance of having capabilities in a FL.

Over 22% of participants mentioned university requirements as a reason for currently taking a German course. Participants either wanted to fulfill the requirements of their degree or they wanted “retroactive credits” which allows students to gain credits in recognition of previous language study. Seven of the 13 students in this category (53.8% of *University Requirement*, 12.3% of SP) listed university requirements as the sole reason they were currently taking German. Since this response could indicate an intention to stop their German studies upon fulfillment of those requirements, the eight students (14% of SP) who specifically mentioned in Question 12 that they were trying to earn a certificate (minor) or

a major in German were given a separate category in Table E3. (It should be noted here that are more than eight students who have declared [or intend to declare] a major or certificate in German, but this question only counted who listed this as the reason that they were currently studying German.)

Appendix E.3 – Connections in Relation to Study Abroad

Regardless of a positive or negative answer to the question which asked whether students intended to study abroad in German-speaking country, students were asked to respond to Question 14 (a free-response question): “Which considerations play a role for you in making the decision to study abroad or not?” Table E4 shows broad categories that emerged from the responses of students regarding a potential study abroad experience in a German-speaking country and gives several select responses for each category. Table E4 is constructed with the same principles of Tables E2 and E3. Some broad categories contained responses that were later used in analysis of the categories of connection, but also contained some responses which were not considered relevant to the eventual creation of the CoCs: these categories are marked with a “(#)” .

Table E 4: <i>Considerations Provided by Participants for Studying Abroad (or Not), Categorized</i>		
Broad Category	Number and (percentage) of respondents who gave a response in each category (N=57)	Example Responses in Category
Personal Goal	8 (14%)	“Because I want to, as simple as that” “wanting to experience the culture and practice the language”
Family (#)	5 (8.8%)	“I’m married” “family responsibilities”
Impact on current/future career (#)	5 (8.8%)	“Resume relevance” “How it will affect my career” “I have a job”
Language skills	4 (7%)	“my ability to speak fluently in a classroom setting” “how well I learn the language”

Some students gave detailed responses to this question, such as participant NI0953. She was an international student from China and, as such, she didn’t think that she would pursue a study abroad experience in Germany. However, after stating this, she elaborated, “But I might travel there. I think language is very important. I will first make sure I can understand most common life conversation first.” Another student explained that the study abroad experience in a German-speaking country was important to her because her father was from Germany and she wanted to learn more about it. Due to the open-ended nature of Question 14, some of the information provided by participants in this question was able to provide greater insight to their responses from other sections of the questionnaire.

Appendix F - Intermediary tables used to create Table 25 and Table 26

Table F 1: Intermediary Table A for Table 25						
	Number of Participants By Response Ratio and Classroom Community Score Mean Range					
Ratio, Number of Negative Personal Adjectives/ Number of Negative Classroom Adjectives	Very Low (Mean Score Range < -30)	Low (Mean Score Range -30- -10)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10- 10)	High (Mean Score Range 10- 30)	Very High (Mean Score > 30)	Number of Students in Each Ratio
0/0	0	0	1 (12.5%)	2 (22.22%)	19 (48.72%)	22
0/1	0	0	1 (12.5%)	0	1 (2.56%)	2
1/0	0	1 (100%)	2 (25%)	2 (22.22%)	8 (20.51%)	12
1/1	0	0	0	2 (22.22%)	2 (5.13%)	4
1/2	0	0	0	1 (11.11%)	1 (2.56%)	2
2/0	0	0	1 (12.5%)	1 (11.11%)	5 (12.82%)	7
2/1	0	0	2 (25%)	1 (11.11%)	1 (2.56%)	4
3/0	0	0	1 (12.5%)	0	1 (2.56%)	2
3/1	0	0	1 (12.5%)	0	1 (2.56%)	2
Total Number of Students in Each Level	0	1	8	9	39	

Table F 2: Intermediary Table B for Table 25

Ratio, Number of Positive Personal Adjectives/ Number of Positive Classroom Adjectives	Number of Participants By Response Ratio and Classroom Community Score Mean Range					Number of Students in Each Ratio
	Very Low (Mean Score Range < -30)	Low (Mean Score Range -30- -10)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10- 10)	High (Mean Score Range 10- 30)	Very High (Mean Score > 30)	
0/0			2 (25%)			2
0/1				1 (11.11%)	1 (2.56%)	2
0/2			2 (25%)		1 (2.56%)	3
0/3					1 (2.56%)	1
1/0			1 (12.5%)			1
1/1				1 (11.11%)	1 (2.56%)	2
1/2				1 (11.11%)	6 (15.38%)	7
1/3					2 (5.13%)	2
2/0				1 (11.11%)	1 (2.56%)	2
2/1		1 (100%)			5 (12.82%)	6
2/2				4 (44.44%)	4 (10.26%)	8
2/3			1 (12.5%)	1 (11.11%)	6 (15.38%)	8
3/1			2 (25%)			2
3/2					3 (7.69%)	3
3/3					8 (20.51%)	8
Total Number of Students in Each Level	0	1	8	9	39	

Number of Negative Personal Adjectives/ Number of Negative Classroom Adjectives	Number of Participants with each Composite "Level" of Classroom Anxiety					Number of Students in Each Ratio
	Very Low (Mean Score Range >30)	Low (Mean Score Range 10-30)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10-10)	High (Mean Score Range -10--30)	Very High (Mean Score < -30)	
0/0	7 (38.89%)	10 (62.5%)	3 (25%)	2 (33.33%)	0	22
0/1	1 (5.56%)	0	1 (8.33%)	0	0	2
1/0	5 (27.78%)	2 (12.5%)	2 (16.67%)	2 (33.33%)	1 (20%)	12
1/1	0	2 (12.5%)	1 (8.33%)	0	1 (20%)	4
1/2	1 (5.56%)	0	1 (8.33%)	0	0	2
2/0	1 (5.56%)	2 (12.5%)	3 (25%)	0	1 (20%)	7
2/1	2 (11.11%)	0	0	1 (16.67%)	1 (20%)	4
3/0	0	0	0	1 (16.67%)	1 (20%)	2
3/1	1 (5.56%)	0	1 (8.33%)	0	0	2
Total Number of Students in Each Level	18	16	12	6	5	

Table F 4: Intermediary Table B for Table 26

Number of Positive Personal Adjectives/ Number of Positive Classroom Adjectives	Number of Participants with each Composite "Level" of Classroom Anxiety					Number of Students in Each Ratio
	Very Low (Mean Score Range >30)	Low (Mean Score Range 10-30)	Mid (Mean Score Range -10-10)	High (Mean Score Range -10-30)	Very High (Mean Score < -30)	
0/0	1 (5.56%)	0	0	0	1 (20%)	2
0/1	1 (5.56%)	0	1 (8.33%)	0	0	2
0/2	0	0	0	2 (33.33%)	1 (20%)	3
0/3	0	1 (6.25%)	0	0	0	1
1/0	0	0	0	0	1 (20%)	1
1/1	0	1 (6.25%)	0	0	1 (20%)	2
1/2	2 (11.11%)	3 (18.75%)	2 (16.67%)	0	0	7
1/3	0	1 (6.25%)	1 (8.33%)	0	0	2
2/0	2 (11.11%)	0	0	0	0	2
2/1	2 (11.11%)	1 (6.25%)	2 (16.67%)	1 (16.67%)	0	6
2/2	2 (11.11%)	2 (12.5%)	1 (8.33%)	2 (33.33%)	1 (20%)	8
2/3	3 (16.67%)	3 (18.75%)	2 (16.67%)	0	0	8
3/1	1 (5.56%)	0	1 (8.33%)	0	0	2
3/2	2 (11.11%)	0	0	1 (16.67%)	0	3
3/3	2 (11.11%)	4 (25%)	2 (16.67%)	0	0	8
Total Number of Students in Each Level	18	16	12	6	5	

Comments on Intermediary Tables

Analysis of the intermediary tables for Table 25 shows that students who had a combination of both three positive personal adjectives and two or three positive classroom adjectives had a “very high” level of classroom community. Also, students with a “very high” level of classroom community were less likely to provide negative adjectives overall, but when they did, it was more likely that the negative adjectives were personal adjectives, not classroom adjectives.

Analysis of the intermediary tables for Table 26 shows that students with lower levels of anxiety were less likely to give negative adjectives both about the classroom and about how they feel in the classroom. For those with “low” or “very low” anxiety, 17 students had no negative personal or classroom adjectives, while 27 (47.36%) students have no negative adjectives about the classroom whatsoever. All students who had very high anxiety had at least one negative personal adjective, whereas 24 of their fellow participants had no negative personal adjectives.