

Mobile Communication

- Where is it? -

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Mobile Communication

- Where is it? Or: How it bears social codes and changes lifestyle -

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Abstract: This paper tries to explain the different ways of communication of young people via mobile devices. We focus on cell phone usage particularly text messaging. The paper relies on two interviews and a survey. We analyze the gained material in terms of youth usage in different places and how they create new social orders and challenge previous social norms. Moreover, we compare our results with prior research.

Keywords: Mobile communication, sms, text message, youth, virtual co-presence, text-chat

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I. Preface

While looking for a suitable theme we struggled: it should be interesting, topical and demanding. There are hundred of possibilities. Above all, every one of us is experiencing a rather new “playground” for his personality here in Poland. First of all, we were put under a cold shower confronted with a complete different language. To say nothing of the Polish culture which everyone had to adapt to. Polish people don’t make it too difficult. Their hostility overcame quickly old-fashioned stereotypes. Besides, we were faced with a lot of new students from all over Europe, not to forget from Mexico and the United States. There was a lot about communication. Nevertheless, questions arose: How to contact others? How to keep these contacts? How to meet? There was a way we already used in our home countries: the mobile phone. Never has it been so important for preparing pleasant nights full of parties. After a while almost everyone possessed a pre-paid Polish SIM card. However, Mr Nicolas Querci, an Erasmus student, gives us the necessary exception of having no mobile. The cheap charges made it to the dominant medium for arranging gatherings and to coordinate the movements inside Kraków. I don’t know how often we asked for the right room, but it was more than the number of fingers on our hands. So, the little chaos in Polish schedules had something positive about. The impact mobiles played is the core object we try to explore with this paper. We want to thank all our participants for their patience and honest answers. In addition, we are grateful for the help of Kasia, Mariusz and Beate for our survey in the streets of Kraków.

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II. Abbreviations

This list contains of terms used in the paper which are either unknown or not common.

Keitai	Japanese term for mobile phones and cell phones in general
mobile(s)	term used by us for any mobile cell phone which is considered as “Handy” in Germany or “cellulare” in Italy
(mobile) email	all sort of text messages, pictures etc. send via mobiles
MMS	(Multimedia Messaging Service) extension of SMS that include longer text, graphics, photos, audio and video clips
MT	mobile terminated charging for upgrading the credit or any other paid service
pager	old device to send very short text messages
UMTS	(Universal Mobile Telecommunications System) new third generation of mobiles with faster connection to up to 2 megabits per second
silent mode	function of mobile phones that switches off any sound, but enable a vibration mode to “feel” the ringing
SIM card	(Subscriber Identity Module card) a small printed circuit board that must be inserted in any GSM-based mobile phone (Telestial)
SMIL	new software function for MMS to create a small multimedia “slideshow”
sms	(Short-Text-Message) a term for the most commonly used type of text messaging, here: as alternative term for text message
TOMP	world’s first translation service via text messaging by sending the raw messages to 88800. Unlike any other mobile phone translation tools currently available, no registration nor additional software is required to access the TOMP service
young people	the term refers to ages between 18 and 25 (27) years

III. Paper

1. Introduction

Just walk around the city of Kraków and you will see them: mobile users. You can observe them quickly typing a text message staring at the display while walking along the street. Or they talk loudly in a corner of a Café. Apart from that, one carries that device all day.

There is still heavy criticism about the fact that mobiles disrupt existing norms of propriety, social manners and boundaries (Ito 2003b: 1). Moreover, the new technology is blamed for declining morals, eroding prior values as well as creating a superficial generation. Although, mobiles provides the opportunity to be available at any time, anywhere, this modern way of communication is regarded as troublemaker especially by older people.

In contrary, youth tend to “see mobile phones as liberating and expressive personal technologies” (Ito 2003a: 3).

This paper should show that mobiles provide youth a powerful tool to resist old-fashioned communicative limitations in regulated places such as public space, restaurants or universities. We carried out interviews to compare these results with previous research findings. Our methods are presented in the chapter “Our research”. After that, we will discuss our results regarding the use of mobiles in different places, the different types of communication and the establishment of new rules focussing on text messaging. A cross-culture comparison between our home countries, Italy and Germany, will follow this. Eventually, we conclude our findings.

2. Our Research

We knew that our time to make interviews was limited. Moreover, we didn't want to bore our interviewees to death with an extremely long questionnaire in the beginning. Else, we would have got some unmotivated results. However, we extended our list of questions due to new literature and further knowledge and developed a second interview. Both interviews tried to capture the usage patterns of individuals. In addition, we used some previous existing research of various scientists to gain some more relevant information. We were particularly fascinated by some surveys of two Japanese, Mizuko Ito and Okabe Daisuke. Their work was based on second-hand accounting: they were asking ten teenagers to record the length, location, time, content and recipient (or sender) of all text messages for seven days. This is by far more detailed and delivered more precise results than our interviews. Therefore, we will compare their findings with our results. Indeed, there are numerous projects about young people and mobile phone in many countries. All of them seem to find similar developments: mobile phones are a widespread way of communicating among young people.

The following interviews were done by each of us. We have conducted the two for the mentioned reasons. We split the interviews as follows: one interview (a) was carried out among friends and family members, another (b) extended one among Erasmus and other students via email. Apart from this, we were asking people on the street in Kraków about their possession of mobiles (c).

a. Interview among friends and family members (Qu1)

We were asking friends – German and Italian – in order to gain some general knowledge about their stereotypes and attitude towards the other culture. In addition, we tried to gather information about their use of mobile phones especially their use of Short-Message-Service (SMS). We need to add that in case of the latter topic it represented our first interview without the knowledge of the some of our literature. Therefore, we conducted it relatively unspecific. However, we kept the results because of their certain significance.

It was carried out either in a written form via email or orally. We are aware that both methods realize biased results what is discussed in the Chapter “limitations”.

The questions and results are attached as Appendix 1.

b. Extended interview among students (Qu2)

This interview was undertaken among mainly Erasmus students in Kraków and friends at home. The 16 students aged between 21 and 27 were asked via email. The gender split was equal. These students definitely possess a mobile phone and use text messages. The interview contained questions about their daily use of mobiles. It focussed on ethical and social questions. We were particularly interested in possible situations where they would avoid using mobiles to match a social expectation. We conducted this questionnaire after reading some more literature. So, we were interested whether we could give proof or not of similar patterns in our interviewees' behaviour.

The questions and results are attached as Appendix 2.

c. Survey among people on the street (Qu3)

We were asking anonymous people by stopping them on the street or cafes in Kraków. We got help from Polish friends to avoid misunderstandings due to our poor Polish language skills. The very short survey contained only questions whether they own a mobile, how old they are and what profession they practice. We split the people into age groups to analyze the possession of mobiles. We weren't interested in gender disparities.

The questions and results are attached as Appendix 3.

d. Limitations

We are fully aware that our samples are very small – too small to generalize the results. Otherwise, our data collection in form of an interview implies biasing factors such as reactivity (dishonest response due to social expectation) as well as the language capability of the interviewees. We also dealt with mistakes in translation. In addition, we focus on a very specific group of people – students – who doesn't represent the whole population. Nevertheless, we found comparable results to recent studies on behalf of mobile phone usage. One can criticize our cautiously approach to the matter (that we have done two interviews at different stages of knowledge), but it shows also our progress during the writing. However, we could observe some assumptions in a surprisingly fascinating clear way.

3. Our observations: mobile phone usage

a. Young people and mobiles

One could look everywhere: there is an apparent hype of mobile information technologies. In particular, mobile phones were becoming more and more popular. Since the late nineties, the number of mobile phone users has grown rapidly (Cell1, Destatis1). There are currently 1.52 billion mobile users who sent 135 billion sms' in the first Quarter of 2004 (Cell2). The distribution depends on the users' financial power as well as their age. The youth market is the core focus with an estimated \$200 billion discretionary income per year at their disposal (W2forum: 1). As far as we could see in our survey (Qu3), young people have a higher mobile phone possession. We found similar results compared with official statistics of other countries (W2forum: 2-4, 7) with 40% of youth between 10 and 15-years-old having a mobile here in Kraków. The percentage is even higher among students older than 15 years (80 and 88.9% in our survey, Qu3).

What does it mean for young people to have a mobile phone? In contrary to adults, young people see the new technology as a way to socialize and to express themselves. The Norwegians Richard Ling and Birgitte Yttri (2002) termed this as "hyper-coordination" among young mobile users. The older generation regards mobile phones more as instrumental tools – doing business, arranging meetings and calling in case of emergencies (Destatis2). They often take it as opportunity to check where their kids are. There is even a funny example of a mother waking her daughter up by writing a text message (Ito 2003a: 13). So, they support at least indirectly the spreading of the new technology. Moreover, concerned parents present mobile phones as gifts and provide their sons and daughters with these devices. Besides, the interviewed parents of Mizuko's and Okabe's paper felt a "sense of unease and curiosity about their children's mobile communications" (Ito 2003a: 13).

Young people are not only better equipped, but use it also more frequent (W2forum, Ito 2003b: 7). They respond quicker and check more constantly there emails (almost all of our interviewees constantly check their emails, Qu2: II 9). They send more text messages per day (not backed by our interviews due to no comparison towards adults). We cannot describe the majority of our interviewees as absolutely heavy users, but we could put at least half of them (56%) in such a category of regular users writing more than 5 sms per day (Qu2: II 28).

Young people are advantaged in handling mobile phones in that sense as they can relatively easily adapt to such a new technology. Some of our interviewees (Luca and Michael) are in so far already used to text messages as they used former technologies such as pagers (Qu2: II 24). As far as we observed, young people are also more aware of the newest models. They often play with the idea buying the latest mobile phone. Antonio, an Erasmus student in Kraków, is a good example: he is always checking the magazines for the up-to-date trends. In the beginning of the semester, he bought a new mobile, of course. Younger kids only need to convince their financial backers. For these reasons, the youth is a common target for ads or commercials. Big companies like Vodafone tempt with easygoing lifestyle and headlines. These brands focus their marketing efforts not only on heavy business users, but in particular on this yielding youth market (Macro: 12).

Kids as well as students may lose control over their expenses once possessing a mobile. This is additionally forced by various horrendous offers for logos, ring tones, pictures which they can easily access anonymously via a text message (W2forum). As a result, families have to cope with financial problems from time to time. Even the heavy use of mobile is still quite expensive, though a fall in call charges (Destatis2). Voices for external control are rising especially among parents (Cormie 2003, Kokubu 2003).

b. Youth in different places

Young people have plenty of time to fill with leisure time, but in most cases they lack of a strong social position (Ito 2003a: 3) and the financial resources (in contrary: W2forum: 1, 5). The youth is embedded in a power-constellation that Doreen Massey (1993) described as “power-geometry of space-time compression”. Because of that, they have to follow basic rules governed by adults. There are very restricted places such as churches as well as places without official regulations. Partly greater differences between the countries regarding the prohibition of mobile phones in public space can be found especially when comparing Asians and Europeans (e.g. homes are more restricted). Nevertheless, even friends shape one’s communications. Peers together with adults regulate the control of communicative (Green after Ito 2003a: 7). The mobile phone can thereby be seen as reasonable for managing this control. Young people got a tool to circumvent old established limitations of “power-geometries”. It enables young people via text messaging to hide their communication and to break bans. The mobile phone offers the opportunity of permanent connectivity. Switching off

their mobiles is not an option considered by the youth. We got partly direct comments asking what they think in case of a low-running battery. It reaches from “fuck”, “shit”, “cazzo” to “I eat my finger” (Qu2: II 20). Otherwise, they could also be asked by their peer fellows why to carry a mobile without being online. Indeed, the new technology’s idea is to be “available at any time, anywhere” (Ito 2003a: 3). Even if people are sometimes disturbed by their own mobile (Qu2: II 18), they keep online to be polite and stay in contact. The very sense of having a mobile phone is not “reach people and call when you need” but “being reachable and available” (Caron 2003: 18). Above all, we followed the structure of the Japanese paper and made the distinction between: mobile phone usage at university (school), at home, on the street or in public space, at work and abroad as Erasmus student in Poland.

i. At university (school)

What we discovered is that though there is an official ban of mobile phones during lectures, students tend to ignore the prohibition. The most part would avoid calling. They would commonly put it into silent mode, but they would keep their mobile “on” (Qu2: I 1-5, Doering 2004: 7). Although, professors (or teachers) would state in the beginning that it is not allowed, they are quite lazy and tolerant with regard to the usage of text messages. As far as we have experienced, there need to be a constant ringing during the lecture to bring the Professor “on the scene”. There are current efforts in Germany in order to educate pupils and their teachers in the 5th and 8th classes for a reasonable usage of mobiles (IMZFa). Students use almost only sms’. Text messages are regarded as optimal way of sending information such as “I am fucking tired” or “It’s boring”. So, they keep in touch among each other beside the restriction of distance and silence during a lecture. Therefore, mobiles even expand the communication channels: students ask for help, ask for lecture notes or try to fix meetings for the end of the class. It “challenges the communication hierarchy of a traditional lecture.” (Ito 2003a: 16)

ii. At home

We were rather surprised reading the observations of the Japanese authors (Ito 2003a, 2003b). We as Europeans seem to accept basic rules at home as well, but the respect paid to our parents absolutely varies among each individually and might be generally lower compared to Japanese. We can support the observation to hide the content of calls and emails due to own

experience. However, we two, as authors as well as representatives of Italian and German culture, don't care much about the situation that one of our parents is at home regarding the question to call or not. Our parents even pass the calls on to us. In general, we go then in our room and close the door. It was already a revolution with mobile receivers for the fixed-line phones. One could have a completely private chat in one's room. At least, in terms of the current phone call. The bill on the other hand could be taken as method of surveillance. Nowadays, the control of parents is rather limited. Young people have their own budget (W2forum: 1, 5) and the potential to recharge the pre-paid mobiles' credit per MT. A text message is written without a sound. So, it's not drawing attention to the parents. The friends direct their call to the mobile phone not the fixed-line. Only when people are certain that one is at home they call to the fixed-line network because it's still cheaper. Close friends or couples speak then quite long (Qu1: I 12). In addition, young people feel more independent from the financial consequences of the current call using the parents' or even own fixed-line.

iii. On the street / in public space

Public space is the favourite for communicating via mobile phones. Our interview shows that an overwhelming majority (87.5 %, Qu2: I 6) of the commuters prefers it. Walking on the street, waiting at the bus stop or sitting on a bench is a "gap" between two occasions to meet other people you know (not the strangers at the bus stop). It's an ideal time to be filled writing a text message or to get in contact with a close friend or the partner. These recipients are the most chosen ones according to our interview (named by 100% as common receiver, Qu1: I 13, Qu2: II 15-16).

One finds only a very few places where it's directly forbidden to use the mobile. Our interviewees tend to accept these prohibitions in case of voice calls (about 80%, Qu2: I 3). The majority (about 90%) would never use their mobile in sacred places such as churches or cemeteries. There are only slight differences among our interviewees (Qu2: I 3). People sometimes ignore bans in less ethically, but officially restricted areas. However, most of our interviewees use in these occasions the "silent mode" (about 80%, Qu2: II 10) with vibration or just write sms (almost 100%). Text messaging seems to be as an ideal way to send discrete information. Young people pay so attention to the sensitivity of their environment, but stay in contact with their peers.

In opposite to the widespread prejudice that the use of mobiles leads to an “elbow society” without any rules and respect, young people are aware of their audience. Most of them try to keep the potential disturbance as low as possible, but they don’t want to forgo the status “available” at the same time (Qu2: I 2 and II 10). So, even calling in public places implies a feeling for social consequences that other people (even the recipient) might be disturbed. On the other side, there are users just showing their mobiles. To give an example:

“Isabelle: Yes, but it’s not always positive... The image they try to present of themselves... The guy who wants to show off... It’s like the guy who is on the bus and who talks on his mobile and it rings. You know, it was t u r n e d off and it was just to say: ‘Look at me!’” (Caron 2003: 9)

It’s regarded as rude and impolite not only among the “user’s community”, but especially among non-users (Doering 2004: 3). Nevertheless, there are also supporters of such a superficial “coolness”. Mobile phones clearly shape one’s personality. The colour, the form, the size – everything creates an identity. Mobiles are a visible part unless one doesn’t want to show it. There are practical difficulties especially for young woman preparing for a disco. Where should they put a mobile phone if they wear a short skirt and a shorter top? The mobile becomes a part of oneself. Therefore, much attention is paid to choose the right model of a mobile phone when buying it.

Apart from that, it’s not only the way of behaving “with” a mobile, but also “by using” it. It always “depends” – on the time, the place, the audience around, the atmosphere... Only heavy users would call in a romantic atmosphere of a face-to-face diner with candles, live music and good food, but it’s common in crowded, loud restaurants. Most of our interviewees would also put their mobiles in silent mode when in company of their close friends, again. However, there are differences between Italians and Germans. The latter ones seem to be keener on silence (Qu2: I 1-5).

It’s also significant that people in Germany tolerate the prohibition of mobiles while driving a car more than Italians. It’s not allowed to use them without hands-free car kits in both countries. In fact, the risk of having an accident is four times bigger of using one’s mobile phone while driving a car (Macro: 23) There are even fines from 40 Euro in Germany up to 200 Euro in Italy. Nevertheless, a lot of people take eventually the call if it rings. Instead, our interviewees seem to contradict it with a majority of about 80% saying “no” (Qu2: I 7). Fortunately, new technical devices and higher convenience of hands-free car kits should help overcoming that dangerous potential of accidents.

By walking through the streets, one could also see users entirely absorbed by their mobile phones. One thinks with a smile about that situation and is suddenly caught by a ringing mobile: one tries to find his own, looking probably in any pocket, checking the display. In the end, it was another's phone. How often has that happened? The neighbour's mobile played a game. There is an extract of an interview of a group of friends undertaken by Dr. A. H. Caron:

"(...) I don't mind that it rings in public places, it's even funny because everyone checks if it's not theirs. (...) They're like idiots! 'Damn, damn, where is it?'"

(Caron 2003: 12)

This inspired us for our title "Mobile communication - where is it?"

iv. At work

It's not a core subject of our research due to focus on students. They contact with that place only during occasions like internships or temporary jobs. We observe a generally greater sense of unease using the mobile at work. That's why, the youth would avoid having a ringing mobile in the office. Indeed, it depends mainly on the company's rules and profession. Or have you ever seen a "manager" without their cute mobile? So, it might vary tremendously. Additionally, they tend to use alternative technologies such as laptops with wireless LAN due to the bigger amount of data.

v. Abroad in Kraków

Adolescent tend to build quickly new social groups in new situations. Mobiles enable them to this fast adaptation which is sometimes criticized as superficial via a flexible way of arranging gatherings. What we have observed among Erasmus students and ourselves is a sharp increase in mobile use during our time in Kraków. In the beginning, we had to exchange the phone numbers, but then we were deeply surprised writing ten and more sms' per day. We tried to fix meetings – time and places – in most cases. So, it was used to coordinate face-to-face gatherings. Therefore, we join the argument of Ito and Daisuke that the use of mobiles doesn't diminish physical contact. In contrary, it gives young people the possibility to "micro-coordinate" (Ling and Yttri after Ito 2003a: 23) their individual and collective movements through a city. It enables young people to gather around. The new city of Kraków even forced us for communicating more due to the problems of lacking geographical knowledge. Questions such as "where is it", "may you spell it Polish" or "may you explain the way"

arose. Often, we fixed a meeting at a well-known place like the “Empik” to start our evening together. Our increasing use was possible because the Polish charges for a minute are far cheaper than in our home countries. Problems occurred only in case of a running out credit. So, we bought the next time the bigger credit to avoid. Nothing is worse than having a mobile at hand without credit or battery (Qu2: II 20-21).

c. Different types of communication

We observed different types of users. Not everybody is a heavy user: a lot of people make relatively few calls. Whereas, some keep a mobile just for their partner, there are others establishing a small “community” of friends eager on permanent contact. We observed active leaders in every social group. As Massey (Ito 2003a: 6) states: there are people providing more information and initiating flows as well as the ones who receive more. Andrea can be quoted: “In my impression, Italian boys are writing more. Girls are receiving more.” Of course, it’s not only divided by the gender, but individually developed.

In contrary to the mentioned critics of a lost anarchic culture that seeks low achievement and pleasure, young people establish new rules for their communication. In fact, mobile users feel a belonging or a “sense of group membership” (Ling and Yttri after Ito 2003a: 5).

Therefore, we focus on three different kinds of communication enabled by mobile phones: the mobile text-chat, mobile meeting arrangements and the so-called virtual co-presence. We will examine the “new rules and social orders” in the identical chapter.

i. Text chat

Young people use this way of communication with closer friends mostly to fill “gaps” between their daily movement patterns. It can be described as quite “lightweight” (Ito 2003a: 10). Young people might outline their day, bridge moments of boredom or send a brainwave. Problems as mentioned in our interviews (Qu2: II 13) are shared among closer friends. However, we were also having a mobile chat with other Erasmus students at a time we weren’t so close. We conducted this communicative way writing about stories at various parties, people’s behaviour or anything crossing our minds. What characterizes the mobile text-chat: the users may suddenly come to an end leaving the chat. There are no rules forcing

one to stay. The majority of our interviewees would either pretexts “stupid” excuses such as “I have to go” and “I still need to prepare something” or indicate it a bit clearer (Qu2: II 11).

ii. Meeting arrangements

It refers to a more traditional “adult” way of communicating. In particular, it has importance in a new town with new acquaintance. In most cases, young people tend to write a sms to coordinate gatherings (75%, Qu2: II 23).

The sms is regarded as optimal because it is “a unique way of saying something without saying too much” (Macro: 22). One can precisely name a place and a date with the advantage of understanding even foreign street names. The recipient is able to re-read the message. That might enable him to get help for guiding in unknown foreign terrain. He or she just needs to show the street name on the display. Italians tend to prefer the voice call to discuss an arrangement (50% compared to 20% of their German counterparts’, Qu2: II 23).

Often, an initial suggestion results in a stream of sms’. About 30% name an arrangement as potential for writing more than three sms’ (Qu2: II 13 and 23). Other friends get involved in the decision by spreading the original message or its meaning.

Young people enjoy their relative independence of movements throughout their mobile knowing that an excuse for being late will be in most cases accepted (100% of our interviewees, Qu2: II 26). Therefore, mobile phone usage creates a mass of spontaneous changes in meeting places, times and partners.

iii. Virtual co-presence

We use this term of Ito and Daisuke (Ito 2003b: 2) because we didn’t find a better, more concise word. It refers to a permanent connectivity of heavy users. The latter ones are people sending more than 10 sms per day. They build up this “co-presence” among a few close friends who have similar usage patterns. Our interviewees described such a way only towards their partners (Qu2: II 14, 15 and 28). As an experienced user, I can describe it as a constant flow of sms’ mostly culminating in a voice call. One gives the other one the feeling of being close to him. Of course, it is not physical, but at least emotional – virtual. There are phrases like “I just woke up thinking of you...” or “I saw your smile :-)”. It’s more important for temporarily separated couples who use it as possibility to share their time virtually. It is also carried out via MSN (Microsoft Network Messenger), ICQ and other applications.

d. New rules and orders

Young mobile phone users establish a set of norms as we have shown in the previous chapters. To sum our findings up: these values are not written, but users are aware of their existing. They are shaped by a membership feeling. This builds a form of social control among the mobile community itself. Young people know about the potential disturbance using a mobile in each of the observed place (Qu2: I 2-5). They feel a form of politeness not only towards the current audience, but also the recipient (Caron 2003: 16, Qu2: I 2-5 and 8). It is expected to stay in connectivity. They even feel “insecure” without their mobile (W2forum: 6). Almost all of our interviewees carry their mobiles with them and would even ask for another mobile in case of a low battery (Qu2: II 17, 20-23). Moreover, being “online” means responding quickly. We can see great differences between heavier users and others in their attitude towards acceptable times for an answer (it varies from 5 to 60 minutes, Qu2: II 3 and 5). Mobile phones contribute additionally to a young’s identity. They personalize their users: on the one hand as visible element or “material load” (Caron 2003: 22). On another, their use expresses a way of one’s behaviour.

Professor Caron analyzed the whole process of social thinking as a joined game of four dimensions: an ethic (how it affect the “other”), an etiquette (the need to act politely), an aesthetic (the mobile as visible element within own appearance) and an identity making dimension (creating social identity and membership). (Caron 2003: 14)

It’s rather interesting that the youth establishes this new list of measures by trying to circumvent prior limitations of the adult world for their communications. Every step in their usage of mobiles underlies certain, more or less restricting boundaries. Each individual’s response to them differs. However, these values are more flexible and are not so strictly handled.

4. Italians and Germans in comparison

There are differences in the mobile usage between the two nations. In particular, Italians could be described as heavier means more frequent, more experienced and more expressive users. The mobile is more often regarded as “status symbol” or in extreme cases as a “limb” (Andrea). The possession starts at a pretty early stage: Italian mothers can be regarded as quite possessive which leads to a widespread distribution of mobile phones among very young Italians to obtain surveillance. The generally higher appreciation of their family is implemented in higher amounts of familiar calls. We also found correspondence for existing literature on behalf of the high context culture and listening habits. Italians use more gestures even while phoning, are more interruptive, but politely and tend to put more weight on symbols as well as their appearance. The Italian boy on the crowded street just showing his mobile phone in use could be seen as an example. Mobile phones serve for attraction. Our interviewees also indicated that Italians are more likely to ignore public prohibitions than their European neighbours. There is another Italian curiosity: the way of just ringing your partner’s mobile phone to avoid paying the high charges especially abroad with the home SIM card. He or she then knows that their love is in safety. The Italians prefer to give a call for arranging a meeting instead of a majority of Germans using sms for that purpose (Qu2: II 23).

In opposite, Germans are more careful with their surrounding environment. In particular, they tend to switch at least into silent mode where mobile phones are forbidden. They could be seen as more discrete. That’s why, the sms is a popular way of communication “being somewhere between making a call, sending an email and making no contact at all (Macro 2004: 22).” However, more important issues are preferable conducted via a voice call. There is additionally a partly big difference in the perception of time. Germans are punctual and wish to receive the same respect from their fellows. An appointment is regarded as late with an average of 11 minutes compared to around 26 for the Italian interviewees (Qu2: II 25). The interview regarding stereotypes underlines this finding where 58% characterize Germans as punctual or reliable. Italians are described as easygoing, having delays or unpunctual by 42% (Qu1: II 4-5). Germans are more likely to see the instrumental function of a mobile e.g. to make a call in case of an emergency (IMZFb). The average German is price-occupied. In contrary, our interviewees denied with almost 100% the question whether their usage depended on charge costs. Nevertheless, the relatively high call charges in Germany might have a negative influence on mobile phones’ use.

Above all, the common prejudice of cold and silent Germans (emphasized by the historic meaning of “niemiec”) can not stand our observations. There is even such a high equipment with mobile phones among Germans (as well as in Italy) that the market is already saturated (Destatis2). There are more mobile than fixed-line phones in use (115 compared to 108 phones among 100 households).

The impact of our own stereotypes on the research can not be drawn as unimportant. We tried to be as objective as possible, but we are aware that it might have resulted in biased interviews and interpretation.

5. Conclusions

The paper has backed prior research. In spite of cultural differences, young people in Italy and Germany show similarities in their mobile phone usage. Only the extreme positions of each country differ significantly. Moreover, these patterns are shared by young people all over the world. It is described as “global”. We have seen that youth “rebel” with mobile phones against old-fashioned communication hierarchies in highly regulated places such as public space, at home and universities. This development crosses borders. Mobile phones seem to “join other cultural artefacts and ways of life” like literature, films, music, fashion and electronic media “as part of a shared universe.” (Caron 2003: 25)

The outcome is a youth that is not only creating a new social group culture with its own rules, but also a great dependence: on mobile phones. 63.5% of our interviewees denied making it one day without their mobile (Qu2: II 27). This figure can be compared to 58% of Indians reporting the same status (Macro: 24) as well as other research (W2forum: 6, 8).

Above all, we personally enjoy the way of communicating via mobile phones. We have already reached a maturity level where a reasonable use provides a powerful tool. One to help us following our path by expressing our needs.

However, one has to consider: it is a drug one has to control!!!

IV. Footnotes

CellularOnline (Cell1), *Mobile subscribers in Western Europe reach 342.43 million*
http://cellular.co.za/news_2004/aug/082204-mobile_subscribers_in_western_eu.htm
 from August 02 2004 downloaded January 05 2005

“Mobile subscribers reached a total of 342.43 million as of 01 August 2004, up 8.54 percent from 315.50 million a year earlier, for a penetration rate of 87.63 percent, says Mobile Communications.

T-Mobile Germany 27.18 million
 TIM Italy with 25.74 million,
 Vodafone Germany with 23.83 million;
 Orange France with 19.30 million;
 Vodafone Italy with 19.70 million;
 Telefonica Moviles Spain with 18.69 million;
 T-Mobile UK with 15.06 million;
 Orange UK with 13.75 million;
 O2 UK with 13.60 million;
 Vodafone UK in 10th place with 12.98 million subscribers “

CellularOnline (Cell2), *press release*
<http://www.cellular.co.za/>
 from December 2004 downloaded January 05 2005

[12/2004]

Global Mobile Users	1.52 billion
Analogue Users	34m
US Mobile users	140m
Global GSM users	1.25 billion
Global CDMA Users	202m
Global TDMA users	120m
Total European users	342.43
Total African users	53m
Total 3G users	130m
Total South African users	19m
#1 Mobile Country	China (300m)
#1 GSM Country	China (282m)
#1 in Handsets 2Q04	Nokia (35.5%)
#1 Network In Africa	Vodacom(11m)
#1 Network In Asia	Unicom (153m)
#1 Network In Japan	DoCoMo
#1 Network In Europe	T-Mobil (28m)
#1 In Infrastructure	Ericsson
Global monthly SMS	36/user
SMS Sent Global 1Q04	135 billion
SMS sent in UK 3/2004	2.1 billion

Federal Statistical Office (Destatis2), Germany, press release, translation
<http://www.destatis.de/presse/deutsch/pm2004/p5400024.htm>
 from December 21 2004 downloaded December 23 2004

“(…) a saturation of mobile phones’ distribution can be observed. The level of equipment stagnated at about 72% after partly high annual growth rates in preceding years. Though, there are more mobile than fixed-line phones in German households nowadays. (...) 108 fixed-line versus 115 mobile phones in 100 households in 2004.”

Federal Statistical Office (Destatis1), Germany, press release
<http://www.destatis.de/presse/englisch/pm2005/p0040051.htm>
from January 05 2004 downloaded January 05 2005

“Consumer prices for telecommunication services 2004: -0.4% on the preceding year WIESBADEN – As reported by the Federal Statistical Office, in 2004, the consumer price index for telecommunication services was down 0.4% from the preceding year. In December 2004, consumer prices for telecommunication services decreased 1.4% on December 2003. From November to December 2004 the index fell by 0.3%”

Informationszentrum Mobilfunk (IZMFb), *Studien und Umfragen zum Thema Mobiles Leben*
<http://www.izmf.de/html/de/6318.html>
from August 01 2004 downloaded December 23 2004

„corresponding to a survey of EMNID: (...) 73% of the German users feel safer with their mobile phones and would use it to call for help in case of an emergency”

Wireless world forum (W2forum), *press releases*
<http://www.w2forum.com/>
from various dates downloaded December 23 2004

[1] Calling youth market

"With more than \$200 billion a year in discretionary income at their disposal, 14- to 24-year-olds are the holy grail of the wireless telephone market. They're the fastest-growing segment of the busine..."

[2] 89% of teens have mobiles: survey

"September 28, 2004Newspoll: 89 per cent of teenagers aged between 13 and 19 in Sydney and Melbourne have mobile phones. The survey of 600 teenagers found that 68 per cent of them admitted they did not..."

[3] Fifty percent of 10-year-olds own a mobile phone

"4th October 2004 (Norway) Telenor: Fifty percent of 10-year-olds in Oslo and Akershus have a mobilephone 25 per cent of the eight-year-olds have one. By the time they are 12 years old, 90 per..."

[4] Mobile Ownership and Sophistication Growing Fast in US

"23rd August 2004 (USA) Enpocket: The fastest growing media downloads are Java and BREW games, which show a 75% increase quarter over quarter. In Q2 there were 4.4 million adults downloading games to ..."

[5] College Students Tote \$122 Billion in Spending Power Back to Campus This Year

"Wednesday August 18 (USA) 360 Youth College Explorer reveals new data on students' (ages 18-24) sources and uses of income: 70% of 18 to 24 year old college students use their cell phone for playing ..."

[6] Youths 'insecure' without mobile

"8 October 2004 Online study of 300 Singaporeans aged between 17 and 30. The study was commissioned by Wap community portal myGamma to investigate how young adults here spend their free time. ..."

[7] 100% of Norwegian teens have a mobile phone

"Emily Turrettini: In Norway, all teenagers between 16 and 19 years of age have a cell phone. When teens say that "everyone has a cell phone" it's..."

[8] Youngsters Find Life Unbearable Without A Mobile

"Three quarters of youngsters cannot bear to be without their mobile phone and many use texting for everything from chatting to ending relationships, a survey revealed today. The study by the Nestle S..."

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http://www.cellular.co.za/news_2003/120303-youth_to_drive_mobile_messaging.htm
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<http://www.destatis.de/presse/englisch/pm2005/p0040051.htm>
from January 05 2004 downloaded January 05 2005

Federal Statistical Office (Destatis2), Germany, *press release*, translation

<http://www.destatis.de/presse/deutsch/pm2004/p5400024.htm>

from December 21 2004 downloaded December 23 2004

Informationszentrum Mobilfunk (IMZFa), *Schulprojekt Mobilfunk*

<http://www.schulprojekt-mobilfunk.de/>

from August 01 2004 downloaded December 23 2004

Informationszentrum Mobilfunk (IMZFb), *Studien und Umfragen zum Thema Mobiles Leben*

<http://www.izmf.de/html/de/6318.html>

from August 01 2004 downloaded December 23 2004

Telestial Inc. (Telestial), *glossary*

<http://www.telestial.com/glossary.htm#simcard>

from August 01 2004 downloaded January 05 2005

Wireless world forum (W2forum), *press releases*

<http://www.w2forum.com/>

from various dates downloaded December 23 2004

Questionnaire (Qu1), *Interview among friends and family members*

Questionnaire (Qu2), *Extended interview among students*

Questionnaire (Qu3), *Survey among people on the street*

* I, II and III in the text refer to the different parts

* 1, 2, 3 ... refer to the questions

VI. Appendix

Appendix 1

“Interview among friends and family members”

Questions

Part I: Mobile phone use

1. Do you use the Short-Message-Service (SMS) function?
2. Why?
3. Why don't you use a phone call?
4. How often (per day): once, twice up to five times or more than five times?
5.
 - a. Do you use a standard phrase in the beginning?
 - b. Do you use a standard phrase in the ending?
6. Do you usually ask something like “how are you”?
7. Do you use abbreviations or shorthand?
8. Do you have problems with understanding (by using these abbreviations)?
9. In which language do you write?
10.
 - a. Do you use “T9” (automatic service for spelling) or do you do it by yourself?
 - b. Are you happy with this function?
11. Does money (costs) play a role for the use of SMS?
12. How long (in minutes) does a call last usually with
 - a. an acquaintance,
 - b. a family member,
 - c. a close friend?
13. Who do you send your SMS in general?

Part II: Italian – German culture

1. Please, name 3 Italian (German) things which cross your mind by hearing “Italy” (“Germany”)!
2. Please, name 3 Italian (German) persons – known or unknown!
3. Please, name 3 Italian (German) words!
4. Please, name 3 Italian (German) typical characteristics!
5. Please, name 3 German (Italian) typical characteristics!
6.
 - a. How would you describe the way of phoning in Italy (Germany)?
 - b. Are there any differences?
7.
 - a. How would you describe a greeting in Italy (Germany)?
 - b. How would you describe a dismissal in Italy (Germany)?
8. May you name two situations, things or habits you experienced which is connected with Italy (Germany)?
9. How would you characterize the use of gestures, mimics and body language in Italy (Germany)?
10. How do Italians (Germans) appreciate their family?
11. Anything else to add?

Part III: Standard statistic questions

1.
 - a. Have you been in Italy (Germany)?
 - b. How often?
 - c. What for?
2. Do you speak Italian (German)?
3. Do you have a frequent contact with Italians (Germans)?
4. Your sex?
5. Your age?
6. Your profession?

Interviewees

We asked 12 friends – 7 Germans and 5 Italians (41.6%). The gender split was 58.4% compared to 41.6% in favour of men.

Antje	German, feminine, 22, student of Psychology
Judith1	German, feminine, 22, student of Psychology
Judith2	German, feminine, 22, student of Psychology
Julia	German, feminine, 23, student of Psychology
David	German, masculine, 23, student of Medicine
Eric	German, masculine, 22, student of engineering
Konrad	German, masculine, 23, in education of Medical assistant
Linda	Italian, feminine, 22, hair dresser
Enrico	Italian, masculine, 23, student of engineering
Gorgio	Italian, masculine, 22, engineer at Bosch
Masso	Italian, masculine, 22, student of art history
Mike	Italian, masculine, 27, employed in Max-Planck-Institute for aeronautics

Results

See Excel-file “interview_first.xls”

Appendix 2

“Extended interview among students”

Questions

Part I: mobiles' use in different places

1. Where do you use your mobile:
 - a. Restaurants or cafes,
 - b. on the street,
 - c. in public transport,
 - d. at university,
 - e. at your workplace (internship),
 - f. at home?
2. Where would you avoid using voice calls? In a sacred place?
3. Text messages as well?
4. Do you prefer text messages or a voice call in public space? Why?
5. Any situation when you would prefer writing text messages?
6. Where do you write more sms? In restaurants or cafes, on the street (on the way), in public transport, at university, at your workplace or at home?
7. Do you ignore prohibition of mobiles in public space?
In cars? (No / Seldom / Sometimes / Often / Always / I don't have one)
In cinemas? (No / Seldom / Sometimes / Often / Always) Why?
8. How do you feel if someone carries his mobile even on occasion like group meetings in restaurants?
On a date (girl- or boyfriend)?

Part II: how to use a mobile

1. Do you ask people via a text message whether they are available for a call?
(No, never / sometimes / often / always)
2. Do you ask during a call whether the other could pay attention?
(No, never / sometimes / often / yes, always)
3. Do you reply immediately?
(No, never / seldom / sometimes / often / always)
4. How do you know that you should reply quicker?
5. Is there an acceptable time for responding? (in min)
Explain perhaps differentiations!
6. Do you mind if someone answers quite late (in cases with necessary response)?
7. Do you apologize for delays?
8. Is there an excuse for delays?
9. Do you check your emails constantly?
10. Do you use the “silent mode” (with vibration)?
(No, never / Seldom / Sometimes / Often / Always)
Where or when? At home?
11. How do you indicate that you want to leave a chat?
12. Does it bother others?
13. Do you send sometimes more than 3 sms in a row to just one recipient? What is that chat about?
14. Who do you send your SMS in general?
15. How much of your usage is directed towards your partner only?
(More than 50% / about 50 % / about 33% / 30 % and less / I don't have one)
16. How much of your usage is directed towards “family” only?
(More than 50% / between 50 to 30 % / 30% and less / none)
17. Do you carry your mobile always with you?
18. Do you feel sometimes interrupted by your own mobile?
19. Do you cut calls? When?
20. What crosses your mind when your mobile runs low battery?
21. At a place where you cannot recharge it?
22. Did you ever use another mobile in such a case when your mobile was off, but you had to call?

23. How do you make an appointment?
24. How did you arrange it in former times (without mobiles)? Advantages?
25. What do you consider as late for an appointment?
26. Is a text message an appropriate apology for being late?
27. Can you do it without your mobile for a day?
(Yes / No) Why?
28. How many text messages do you write per day?
(none / 1 / 2 to 5 / over 5)

Part III: Standard statistic questions

1. Your sex? (1=f / 0=m)
2. Your age?
3. Your profession?
4. Your nationality (1=Italian / 0=German)?

Interviewees

All in all, 16 students participated. The gender and nationality split was equal (50%).

German students

Dana	22, feminine, student of teaching profession for primary schools
Franziska	24, feminine, student of traffic science
Katrin	23, feminine, student of politics
Mellanie	22, feminine, student of art history
Joern	23, masculine, student of computer science
Michael	27, masculine, student of finance & accounting
Martin	22, masculine, student of European economics studies
Rainer	23, masculine, student of business computer science

Italian students

Alessandra	24, feminine, student of marketing
Clarissa	23, feminine, student of managerial engineering
Elisa	24, feminine, student of psychology
Valentina	23, feminine, student of marketing
Andrea	23, masculine, student of architecture
Antonio	23, masculine, student of international relation
Enzo	23, masculine, student of finance and accounting
Luca	23, masculine, student of business administration

Results

See Excel-file "interview_extended.xls"

Appendix 3

“Survey among people on the street”

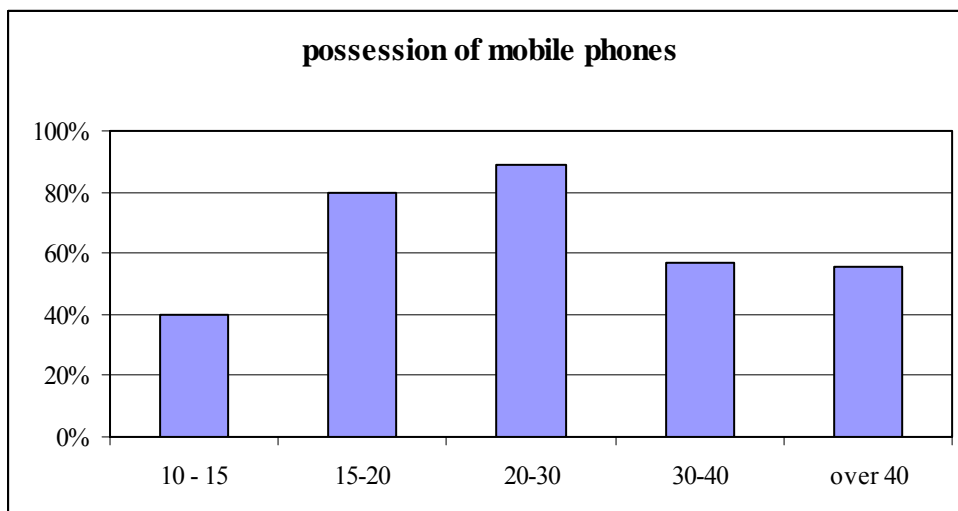
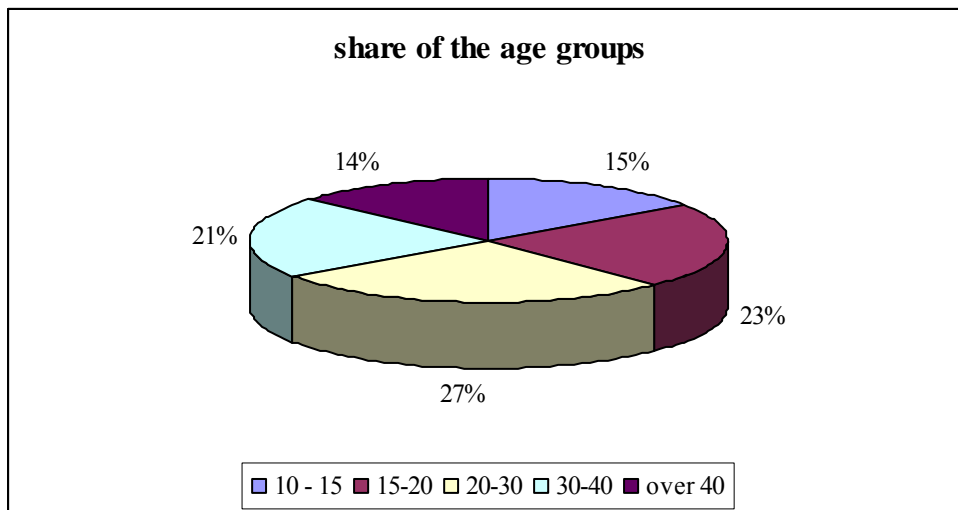
Questions

1. Do you own a mobile (yes or no)?
2. How old are you?
3. What profession do you have?

Interviewees

66 people on the street in Kraków. It is split on the age groups as follows: 15% between 10 and 15, 23% between 15 and 20, 27% between 20 and 30, 21% between 30 and 40 and 14% over 40 years-old.

Results



Appendix 1: "Interview among friends and family members"

Question / Name	Antje	Judith1	Judith2	Julia	David	Eric	Konrad	Mike	Enrico	Masso	Linda	Gorgio
<i>Part one: Mobile phone use</i>												
1. Do you use the Short-Message-Service (SMS) function?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
2. Why?	to spread information, to fill freetime	compact information	to communicate	not available no resistance offered	fast, discreet, "without" contact so to avoid longer chat	a short information	to send information	to communicate	to send a short information	to communicate	to express me feelings in case of being alone, to communicate	to send a message in prohibited places
3. Why don't you use a phone call?	cheaper	availability discreet	cheaper shorter doesn't feel like calling	to avoid forgetting to write only these words (no time) avoiding a longer chat	does not feel like a call availability time to think about	cheaper to write email addresses (exact spellings) to get and send a smile	prefers to talk	more practical cheaper shorter (time)	cheaper			
4. How often (per day): once, twice up to five times or more than five times?	up to five times	once	up to five	up to five times	up to five times	once or twice (it differs extremely)	once	more than five	more than five	more than five	more than five	up to five times
5. a. Do you use a standard phrase in the beginning?	depends on the one I write to	no	"Liebe / Lieber" (dear)	"huhu"	no	"hallo" (hello)	no	"mittico" (comedian's say)	"giorno"	no		
5. b. Do you use a standard phrase in the ending?	own name	no	"Deine Judith" (your Judith)	"bussi" (kiss), "drücker" (hug), "hdl" (I love you)	no	"Grüß Eric" (Greetings Eric)	no	no sometimes "..."	"ciao Enrico"	no		no, sometimes "ciao"
6. Do you usually ask something like "how are you"?	no	no	no	never	no	no	yes	yes, always	no	sometimes	often	sometimes
7. Do you use abbreviations or stenographics?	yes, but little e.g. "WE" to shorten the whole sms	yes, but little e.g. "WG, WE"	no	yes, but seldom e.g. "hdl"	yes, but little e.g. "io"	no	no	yes, a lot	yes, e.g.	yes, e.g.	no	no
8. Do you have problems with understanding (by using these abbreviations)?	no	no	no	yes, I ignore these sms and wait for another	yes by other's sms	rare, then phone	no	no	no	no	no	no
9. In which language do you write?	German, Spanish	German	German, English	German	German	German, English	German	Italian, German, French	Italian	Italian, Spanish	Italian	Italian
10. a. Do you use "T9" (automatic service for spelling) or do you do it by yourself (for all languages)?	yes (for all)	yes	yes (for all)	yes	yes	yes (for all)	yes	yes	yes	yes (both)	yes	yes
10. b. Are you happy with this function?	yes	yes	yes	yes, but small memory for own words	yes	yes, but sometimes it doesn't know common words	yes	doesn't like Siemens' T9	yes	yes	yes	yes
11. Does money (costs) play a role for the use of SMS?	no, I have some free sms, it's enough	no, but time	yes	no	yes	no, but yes in foreign countries	no	no	no, but I had times when I had to fight with my parents	no	no, only when I used the mobile too much	no, it has priority
12. a. How long (in minutes) does a call last usually with an acquaintance,	15	3	10	30	1	12.5	3	4	4	3	10	5
12. b. a family member,	30	6	10	15	5	20	3	10	15	10	12	10
12. c. a close friend?	20	6	20	60 and longer	10	60	60	20 up to 60	20	15	30 up to 60	20
13. Who do you send your SMS in general?	boyfriend friends some family members	boyfriend (only)	boyfriend (only)	boyfriend close friends	girlfriend friends	girlfriend flatmates friends	girlfriend (only)	girlfriend brother	girlfriend sister and brother friends	friends brother	boyfriend close friends mama	close friends
<i>Part two: Italian - German culture</i>												
1. Please, name 3 Italian (German) things which cross your mind by hearing "Italy" ("Germany")!	Toscana football wine	Espresso Tiramisu pizza	Tiramisu Lasagne Rom	Elba pizza strawberry icecream	boot pizza Mama	Südtirol (Southern Tirol) Venice pizza	Fiat Totti Ramazzotti	punctuality cars beer	Mercedes Schuhmacher hard work	"Oktoberfest" castle of Neuschwanstein Volkswagen	Berlin beer "Oktoberfest"	Bosch "Zündkerze" Mercedes
2. Please, name 3 Italian (German) persons – known or unknown!	Giovannotti Eros Ramazzotti Mike	Berlusconi The Pope Mike	Ramazzotti The Pope Mike	Mussolini Van Gogh The Pope Berlusconi	Berlusconi del Piero Totti	Berlusconi, Silvio Barosso (!) Butiglione (a politician?)	Mussolini Ramazzotti Eros Ramazzotti	Schuhmacher Antje (girlfriend) Schröder	Schuhmacher Goethe Rammstein	Schuhmacher Peter (acquaintance) Hitler	Schröder Schröder Schröder	Hitler Schröder Goebbels
3. Please, name 3 Italian (German) words!	baccio (kiss) delamita (nice life) princepsia (princess)	si buono ciao	gelati (icecream) senora (woman) ciao	ciao bella mile	Cappuccino ciao Mama	pizza bambino frizzante (mineral water)	il conta bravor	Kartoffel genau doch	bitte schnell auto	los geht's anschnallen bitte	"tschüß" ein eis bitte hallo	bier auto München
4. Please, name 3 Italian (German) typical characteristics!	loud passionate easygoing (frank)	chatty familiar untidy	impulsive quick-tempered fiery	Macho / conceited (m / f) chatty / arrogant funny / affected	fiery easygoing chatty	like Germans / zippy (North / South) hostile / full of the joys of life domesticated / chirpy	unpunctual polite talk a lot	punctual slowly (business) to make easy things more complicated	punctual hard working drink a lot	pessimistic punctual strong (girls)	shy always busy slow	polite hard working purposeful
5. Please, name 3 German (Italian) typical characteristics!	reliable tidy purposeful	narrow-minded pessimistic tidy	booring tidy to think logically	pigheaded / superficial (old / young) disappointed / thirsty for adventure nasty / aimlessly	punctual tidy straight	punctual staid like to work	tidy systematic punctual	fiery slowly (in the office) = easygoing want to have fun	having delays fancy affable	funny focus on food braggart	undecided fiery loud	narrow-minded traditional hostile
6. a. How would you describe the way of phoning Italy (Germany)?	more frequent, but not longer,	more, longer, louder, faster	loud, expressive	more often, at weird places (almost everywhere)	no clue, but the cliché is loud, very lively, quick-tempered	no clue	more, louder	less	silently, discreet, without movement	serious	makes an angry face	quite during the call
6. b. Are there any differences?	Germans: not so often, but longer	more, longer, louder, faster	more gestures, louder, but same frequency			more with their family		Italians can't live without mobiles				
7. a. How would you describe a greeting in Italy (Germany)?	kisses, body contact	nothing	kiss	kisses	kiss, hug	"ciao"	warm	"Servus", "Grüß dich" distance	as friendly as possible	handshake	hand	"Guten Tag"
7. b. How would you describe a dismissal in Italy (Germany)?	kisses, body contact	long, "ciao"	kiss	kisses	"blue eye"	"ciao"	"ciao"	"Tschüss"	hand, try to go off with highest sympathy	handshake	hand "Auf Wiedersehen!"	"Tschüss"
8. May you name two situations, things or habits you experienced which is connected with Italy (Germany)?	Food: dishes are celebrated	business life: bargaining, frank food: more focussed on national dishes, always together in a group	Food: all dishes the way of caring for people is warmer	to sit endlessly in a Cafe to focus more on clothes than their flat	met his girlfriend to ski in the Alps	nothing	barrage of honking mofa riding	drink habits: on the street without bad feelings (regarded as alcoholic in Italy), Italians drink less: don't drive when they drink	organisation: structure is in their DNA lifestyle: more quiet, but will not do things	beer drinking: incredible much fancy about their car: cleaning	pessimism: everything is black sense of taste: passionate feeling	wurst: they eat a lot of that with "Senf"
9. How would you characterize the use of gestures, mimics and body language in Italy (Germany)?	more intensive, more very expressive	more, a lot of hand use	more, more intensive	sweeping gestures, close distance	more intensive, more very expressive, more gestures	not different	more intensive	less, but gestures like "Wischwasch", "Vogelzeig" (indicate with finger at the front that s.o. has a screw loose)	less, quite	quite	the are very controlled	less movements and gestures
10. How do Italians (Germans) appreciate their family?	very important, but similar to Germany	important, especially kids, a lot of generations under one roof	more than Germans	high	high	very high	closer than Germans	close, but tend to gain more independence from family (flat...)	they don't phone each other often	leave the possibility for their kids to do what they like	more independence for their kids	I don't know

11. Anything else to add?	I do that later (she never did)		I am giving "cliche" answers, I see only differences in your questions, but there are similarities like a common European style	I love them	I love their food	difference between North and South "tre gusti" (three balls of ice-cream)		commercials for cigarettes are still permitted in Germany; also: censorship in German films are stricter		the differences don't create a barrier for a friendship, maybe this attract each other			
<i>Part three: Standard statistic questions</i>													
1. a. Have you been in Italy (Germany)?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	
1. b. How often?	twice	eight times	once (but a lot of cities)	eight times	eight times	three times	six times	once (for one year)	-	twice	once	-	
1. c. What for?	tourism culture & pleasure	tourism culture & pleasure	tourism culture	tourism culture & pleasure	tourism pleasure	tourism culture & pleasure	tourism pleasure	job	-	family visit	tourism pleasure	-	
2. Do you speak Italian (German)?	yes, fluently	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	just a bit	no	no	
3. Do you have a frequent contact with Italians (Germans)?	yes (boyfriend)	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes (girlfriend)	no	yes	no	no	
4. Your sex? (1=f / 0=m)	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
5. Your age?	22	22	22	23	23	22	22	23	27	23	22	24	
6. Your profession?	student	student	student	student	student	student	student	in second education	engineer in Max-Planck-Institute	student	student	hair dresser	engineer at Bosch

Appendix 2: "Extended interview among students"

Question / Name	Diana	Frankiska	Katrin	Melanie	Inon	Michael	Martina	Rainer	Alessandra	Cherissa	Elisa	Valentina	Andrea	Antonio	Enzo	Lara	
<i>Part one: mobiles' use in different places</i>																	
1. Where do you use your mobile: a. restaurants or cafes, b. in the street, c. in public transport d. at an university, e. at your workplace (internship), f. at home?	everywhere	everywhere, but I switch it off in places where you are neither able to write or to call.	everywhere	only at university and on the street (seldom at home)	everywhere except at work	no yes yes	everywhere in silent	everywhere	yes yes yes no (breaks perhaps) never only "dankendlich"	yes yes yes no (breaks perhaps) yes in vibration mode	no yes yes no (breaks perhaps) yes in vibration mode	yes yes yes no (breaks perhaps) yes in vibration mode	no yes yes no (breaks perhaps) yes in vibration mode	no yes yes just in vibration mode yes in vibration mode	no yes yes no (breaks perhaps) yes in vibration mode	no yes yes no (breaks perhaps) yes in vibration mode	yes yes yes worker during the break
2. Where would you avoid using voice calls? In a sacred place?	in all places where you would be too loud yes	at any quiet place, churches, ceremonies as well as banks, theatres, cinemas yes	serenities, sad environments in general, family meetings, at my grandma's place yes	especially in restaurants (I hate to be disturbed by a mobile) yes	in any public place where it would be regarded as rude (cinema, theatre...) yes	with my girl-friend, work, family meetings, conferences, cinema, theatre... yes	in every public space where it's prohibited or regarded as rude (cinema, theatre...) yes	at university, at family meetings, at work, in a restaurant yes	where it is forbidden yes	during private meetings in public spaces	when I am with my boy, in a relax situation yes	nowhere yes	in public yes	where it is forbidden yes	I haven't a particular place in mind not on cemeteries	at work, in bathroom not on cemeteries	
3. Text messages as well?	no	no, always stable	no, it's more discreet	no, it's silent	no, it's more discreet	no, it's more discreet	no, everywhere possible sms	yes	I would always write no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
4. Do you prefer text messages or a voice call in public space? Why?	depends on the issue, let's say sms	no, sms, it's discreet	depends on the situation, if I need a call I call	text messages	sms, but I would call if necessary	text messages	only in restricted areas, otherwise, I would always call if necessary	no	I don't take care where I am, I do what I want	no	text messages	I prefer to receive a call	text message	yes	call	doesn't matter, I'm indifferent	
5. Any situation when you would prefer writing text messages?	yeah, old fashioned places	look above	if I can explain my request or wish in only some words (one sms) then in a lot of cases, but I would always prefer a call or meeting for friends for deeper conversation	at university	no	no	in most, I like sms, but I would always call for a long chat with friends, family, girl-friend	no	mmhh... I don't know	where I cannot use the mobile	when I cannot call	really, I don't know	when I don't want to talk with him/her	when I want to be shortness	when I want that none watches out to me	during a conversation, drinking a beer, at the bathroom	
6. Where do you write more sms? In restaurants or cafes, on the street (on the way), in public transport, at university, at your workplace or at home?	at university and on the street	on the street if it means somewhere outside	on the street	in public transport, outside (in parks or on the street)	street and university are equal	on the street (in a corner)	in public transport, on the way	at home	in cafes	in cafes	in cafes	on the street	in public transport	on the street	on the street	in public (on the street)	
7. Do you ignore prohibition of mobiles in public space? In cars? (No / Seldom / Sometimes / Often / Always / I don't have one) In cinemas? (No / Seldom / Sometimes / Often / Always) Why?	no	no, never money, rule, I "care" for others	no It's a rule to avoid disturbing others, but sometimes... weird	no, never disturbing and it's dangerous to drive and call	yes, to be available, even in cars, but I don't want to disturb others	never, it's an expected rule	no, only without awareness never no, I switch it off, social expectation	seldom yes, I risk a fine no, disturbing	sometimes happen, everywhere no yes (silent mode)	I try to respect it	sometimes	sometimes happen	no sometimes just in vibration mode it's more strong than me	yes, I haven't particular reasons	yes, everywhere, because don't importune		
8. How do you feel if someone carries his mobile even on occasion like group meetings in restaurants? On a date (girl- or boyfriend)?	okay	it depends, but it could be o.k. if he has in it silent and doesn't pay attention to the ones at the table	it's okay if the one doesn't play with it all time; on a date: on a new awful, otherwise o.k.	disturbing (both)	it's not polite if he doesn't ask	incomfortable, couldn't he/she leave it at home, I wanna eat silently	it's a bit impolite, if he/she doesn't disturb others with a loud voice call or even playing in conversation	it's o.k. as long as he or she doesn't disturb others with a loud voice call or even playing in conversation	I don't take particular attention	doesn't matter	I don't take it attention	I don't take particular attention	it's a bit impolite, if he/she doesn't excuse when it's ringing and he/she's disturbing other's conversation	it's a bit impolite, if he/she doesn't excuse when it's ringing and he/she's disturbing other's conversation	I don't take particular attention	I don't take care, if it is not my girlfriend's mobile!	
<i>Part two: how to use a mobile</i>																	
1. Do you ask people via a text message whether they are available for a call? (No, never / sometimes / often / always)	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	never	never	no	never	no	no	no	never	never	
2. Do you ask during a call whether the other could pay attention? (No, never / sometimes / often / yes, always)	no	no	very rare	no	very seldom	sometimes	yes, sometimes	no	never	never	never	never	no	sometimes (rarely)	never	no	
3. Do you reply immediately? (No, never / seldom / sometimes / often / always)	yes	yes	yes I try	to be honest that can last	no, not always, but in urgent cases I try to answer as fast	I try	I try, but sometimes I don't notice a received sms	yes if necessary	often, when I can	no, yes, if possible	often, I try	often, as far as I can	no	sometimes, I try	yes, always	often, when I can	
4. How do you know that you should reply quicker?	I read the sms, if a feeling	it's written	experience and a feeling for the lines between the written ones	he or he would mention it	just read	if he asks me something or I would expect in the others position a fast answer	questions, meeting confirmations, emotional downfalls...	if it seems to be urgent	general rule of trying to guess the other's wish	it's implied	what?	it's a normal expectation	I judge the message and the user's behaviour	I "read"	I don't think of that, just reply	experience... just I know	
5. Is there an acceptable time for responding? (in min) Explain perhaps differentiations!	15 min	10 min, but for meetings next day longer	20 min, for important requests or time fixed meetings smaller	1 hour, but sometimes shorter	30 - 45 min	10 to 15 min	20 min	10 - 30 min depends on content, urgency	15 min	10 min	20min	5 min	20 min	10 min	10 min	15 min	
6. Do you mind if someone answers quite late (in cases with necessary response)?	yes	yes	if it's too late: yes	not really, or it was an urgent question	yeah, of course, if it's urgent	yes, if no excuse	yes	yes	yes, especially if it's important	yes, depends on person, issue (meeting long in advance)	no	yes, especially if it's important	yes	yes, especially if I called a girl!	yes, but I don't take it too serious	yes but just for this	
7. Do you apologize for delays?	yes, family or...	yes, but I respond quickly	yes if too long (20 min)	seldom, they know...	yes	yes	yes	never	yes	yes	sometimes	never	yes	yes	never	yes	
8. Is there an excuse for delays?	sleeping, on a date, abroad	no, ah, yes; sleeping	if you didn't have it with you, at loud parties where you cannot hear it	if he explains, but sleeping e.g. or if he's on a trip, in a lecture at university	if he/she was busy, at work	yes, any, if he/she excuses later	yes, any if explained	yes, any if explained	depend to the person and to the measure of the delay	no	I don't care	depend to the person and to the measure of the delay	everyone	it has to be reasonable	no	yes/less	
9. Do you check your emails constantly?	yes	yes	yes	yes	I try at least	yes	no	yes, but I should notice every received sms via ringing	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	I haven't it	no	
10. Do you use the "silent mode" (with vibration)? (No, never / Seldom / Sometimes / Often / Always) Where or when? At home?	often	seldom at home? What? No	I prefer sounds, but in places where mobiles are forbidden...	yes, I prefer that at home: I use normally the fixed line	in any place I mentioned before where it's restricted; not at home	yes, mostly out of my home	yes, mostly (especially in public spaces), not in a loud environment	in all places where mobiles are forbidden, at home?	at work and at cine	in any place, in prohibited places and public	often, at work or when I cannot make noise	yes when it is strictly necessary	yes, mostly (especially in public spaces), not in a loud environment	yes, when is forbidden or in loud place (with vibration)	at work and at cine	seldom, cinema,	
11. How do you indicate that you want to leave a chat?	via soft words	with some nice words	indirectly with nice words people will understand	I don't chat, then I call via fixed line or meet her/him	I write it quite direct, but still polite	I don't chat, but I would do it discreetly, indirectly	I rather tell clear end sentence, but sometimes people don't want to stop...	I chat more via email, seldom via sms, a bye phrase	I don't like the chats	a stupid excuse (I have to do...)	no	just with a "ciao, ci vediamo"	I cut it	I use apologies	I don't chat via sms	I don't chat	
12. Does it bother others?	no	no	no, they accept	-	no, because it's just a talk	I hope not	yes, if they want to carry on	no, why?	yes	no	I hope not	yes	no	no	sometime	no	
13. Do you send sometimes more than 3 sms in a row to just one recipient? What is that chat about?	no	seldom, stories, rumours	seldom, about tid and int, emotional talk	never	seldom, mostly about status check or small-talk	no	yes, about feelings, status, trying to fix a meeting (then I call)	I try not, but sometimes happens	yes, often... problems, boys, school, "shopping"	yes, often... problems, boys	yes, often... problems, boys	I try to avoid it, but it happens from time to time especially for meetings	no, I prefer to call	yes, when I don't realize the meaning of the message	never, I don't like it	in case of a possible chat I prefer to call	
14. Who do you send your SMS in general?	friends on close range, others	boy-friend, friends	my best friend, friends	friends, my cousin	friends	my girl-friend, close friends, acquaintances of university	my girl-friend, friends, flatmate, new acquaintances	friends, other students	boyfriend friends cousin	boyfriend sister, mama	close friends	boyfriend friends cousin, sister	brother friends in general	girlfriend my friends	girlfriend friends		
15. How much of your usage is directed towards your partner only? (More than 50% / about 50 % / about 33% / 30 % and less / I don't have one)	about 50%	about 50%	I don't have	I don't have	30 % and less	about 33%	30% and less	about 50%	about 50%	about 50%	I don't have one	about 33%	30% and less	I don't have one	about 33%	about 33%	
16. How much of your usage is directed towards "family" only? (More than 50% / between 50 to 30 % / 30% and less / none)	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	about 33%	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	30% and less	none (very few)	
17. Do you carry your mobile always with you?	yes	yes	yes (not at night at home)	no	no, if I want to have my time off	yes	mostly, but if I want to be on my own: no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes, it's a bit mad, but even in dreams, too	yes	yes	
18. Do you feel sometimes interrupted by your own mobile?	no	no	not really, I could switch it off if	no	yes, therefore I leave it at home sometimes	seldom, but yes	no	mmhh... rarely	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
19. Do you cut calls? When?	no	no	seldom, if it's impossible, but I would apologize shortly afterwards	no, but I just don't grasp it	no, only once in a car	yes, when I am in a business meeting, with girl-friend, but I excuse myself afterwards	yes, if I want to indicate that I am not available	yes, if it's not a good moment	depend to who is more important between caller and interlocutor	rarely	yes, when I am in a business meeting, with girl-friend	depend to with who I'm speaking	depend to who is more important between caller and interlocutor	depend to with who I'm speaking	I try to speak with both	never	
20. What crosses your mind when your mobile runs low battery?	may happens but why me	fuck off	"shit"	never happens	not so bad, but I should think about recharging next time	I forgot to recharge it	"shit, I forgot to recharge" is there a place to recharge or another mobile for my SIM-card to put in for urgent cases	"shit"	nothing	no	no	never happens	"shit, I forgot to recharge"	nothing, I go to recharge it	no	various implications	
21. At a place where you cannot recharge it?	why here	fuck off	stray I thought we are in Germany	-	no way, shit happens	"Must" I am stupid!	"sorry for the others"	even bigger	I eat me the finger	sazzo	"Must" I am stupid!	I ask to somebody if I can use his mobile just for a sms	ma por....	I eat me the finger	ma dio...	can I borrow your cellular?	
22. Did you ever use another mobile in such a case when your mobile was off, but you had to call?	yes, good	yes, once, it worked well	yes, once when I had to call my best friend	no	yes, it's fascinating how easy it is	no, I wouldn't ask anyway	yes, I had to call my girl-friend to get her to a place, but quite friendly people helped me, I put my sim card in their mobile	no	yes, sometimes from my best friend	no, never	yes, quite often	no, I wouldn't give mine as well (except emergency)	yeah, once I had an accident...	no	yes, if I am not on recharge		

Appendix 3: "Survey among people on the street"

Question / Age group	10 - 15	15-20	20-30	30-40	over 40
<i>Questions about possession?</i>					
Do you own a mobile (yes or no)?	40%	80%	89%	57%	56%
<i>Standards</i>					
How old are you?	10 - 15	15-20	20-30	30-40	over 40
What profession do you have?	pupils	profil-lyzeum, univerty's students, other students, workers, unemployed	university's students, other students, workers, unemployed	workers, in education, unemployed	workers, unemployed, pensioners
<i>how many people</i>	10	15	18	14	9
splitted in to professions (absolute)	10	2 / 7 / 3 / 2 / 1	7 / 4 / 5 / 2	10 / 3 / 1	3 / 2 / 4
splitted in to professions (relative) in %	100%	13.3 / 46.7 / 20.0 / 13.3 / 6.7 %	38.9 / 22.2 / 27.8 / 11.1 %	71.4 / 21.4 / 7.2 %	33.3 / 22.2 / 44.5 %
profession's possession (absolute)	4	2 / 7 / 2 / 1 / 0	6 / 4 / 5 / 1	6 / 2 / 0	2 / 1 / 2
profession's possession (relative) in %	40%	100 / 100 / 66.7 / 50 / 0 %	85.7 / 100 / 100 / 50 %	60 / 66.7 / 0 %	66.7 / 50 / 50 %