

**An Examination of Students' Values Reflected in
Their Language Use in a Blended Learning
Environment**

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ABSTRACT

Values show who we are as individuals, the beliefs we uphold, and the principles we defend for they influence our thoughts and actions. The values portrayed through thoughts are not only translated in the form of actions but also through the language we use to communicate with one another. As such, there is a fundamental need to investigate if values are reflected in one's choice of language use. The role of language in communication is imperative because the 'how' and 'why' a word is used are significant and presents more sense than the meaning of the word alone.

This study examined students' values in their language use in two different modes of communication, which is spoken and written in a blended learning environment. The spoken sessions were face-to-face and the written sessions were through the online forum discussions. Any emerging values that the participants exhibited in their language use were based on Schwartz' Basic Human Values which consists of 19 values.

The study was a qualitative one that employed purposeful sampling and the data was collected through classroom observations, online forum entries, and interviews. The face-to face tutorial sessions presented data for classroom observation while the postings the participants wrote on the forum board furnished data for online forum entries and emerging values were clarified through interviews. The data was analysed using discourse analysis, and thematic analysis to facilitate the identification of the values and the reasons for using a particular word/phrase that reflected values. Since

the interpretation of values is subjective, 2 stages of blind inter-rating were conducted using Cohen's Kappa Statistics for reliability.

Based on the findings, a list of values revealed in the participants' language use showed that some participants exhibited similar values like politeness and tolerance while others displayed different ones like caring and humility. Some were aware of these values while others were not. The findings also showed that values highlighting social focus are not the only emerging ones during a social interaction. The presence of personal values played an equally vital role in establishing communication in a social context.

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*“Your beliefs become your thoughts,
Your thoughts become your words,
Your words become your actions,
Your actions become your habits,
Your habits become your values,
Your values become your destiny.”*

Mahatma Gandhi

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ABBREVIATION

NHESP	National Higher Education Strategic Plan's
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
SVS	Schwartz Value Survey
PVQ	Portrait Values Questionnaire
FIRO	Fundamental interpersonal relations orientation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Communication is an essential need for human beings to relay their thoughts, feelings and intentions. Wilbur Schramm (1954) viewed it as a relationship where information is shared between speakers and listeners. It is only successful if the listener understands the message, as Aristotle pointed out, the one at the end of the communication process ‘holds the key to whether or not communication takes place’ (Oyero, 2010).

Communication encompasses a broad sense of information transference that involves written, spoken, music, pictorial arts, theatre, ballet and all human behaviour (Shannon & Weaver, 1964) but the most common means of communication is language. Language determines the level of communication that connects the different factions of a society in the human race (Losonsky, 1999). The choice of words whether plentiful or minimal, appropriate or inappropriate, literal or indirect, relevant or irrelevant, in context or not has an impact on what the speaker meant to say and what the listener understood it as (Grundy, 1995).

1.2 Background to the Study

Social aspect is important in one's life as it helps to integrate the individual in a socially constructed reality requiring simplest form of interaction. Communicative interaction; whether it is real or virtual, provides dynamics for learning in every community (Britez, 2007). The interaction within a community, real or virtual, involves a mixture of subject matters, beliefs, perceptions, values, and language. Among all language is the dominant component for interaction (Stark, 2009) for it is the means to communicate all intentions and beliefs. Language constitutes five structural components: morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics and these make it possible for us to share ideas, feelings and comments to understand one another (Brandone, Salkind, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek 2006).

The role that any language plays is a vital one for it consistently espouses ideas, reflects on the world, makes sense of what is on each other's minds, and share feelings (Brandone, Salkind, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2006). This makes language a trademark that differentiates humans from animals (Berko-Gleason, 1997). Basically, the main function of language is to express thoughts which are formulated in the mind and are communicated primarily through language before they are translated into the form of actions (Vygotsky, 1986). The language used to express these thoughts is representative of people's values systems. This notion is supported through the findings by Casasanto et al. (2004), which conclude that any specific spoken language could influence people's reasons for speaking as well as how they perceive the world around them and these intentions may be influenced by their value system.

Language is the an essential component communication because it is the medium to convey thoughts and feelings. In the process of interacting beliefs, ideas and emotions a person's language use can be indicative of their values systems like being polite or being supportive. This could be the result of various factors from upbringing to education particularly related to the social aspect (Krauss & Chiu, 1998). These factors affect one's language use in different circumstances thus, making variation in language a prevalent feature and at times even creating ambiguity. Trask and Mayblin (2005) supported this claim that at times language might have the ability to express meanings that are not really there based on how they are perceived by individuals in in different circumstances.

There is also the emotive value of a word that may change the semantics. Both Geeraerts (2010) and Roth (2014), believe that a socio-semantic approach to interaction, facilitates a sociological interpretation of the context and a communicative approach, presents a pragmatic interpretation, which will express the meaning for that particular circumstance.

One particular circumstance would be how values are depicted and perceived in the course of communication and interaction. Values are important in people's lives and many of them have different values with varying degrees of importance that act as the guiding principles in their lives (Schwartz et al., 2012, p. 664). Since language is the central element in communication, the vocabulary knowledge presents profound affective aspects of the word meaning, which is central to value-laden words (Corrigan, 2007).

The evolution of human language is a necessity for the development of human morality (Poulshock, 2006). Since language is the medium of expressing meaning, the production and perception of the language are most important (Langendoen, 1998). In agreement with Langendoen, Burke (1966) claimed that the study of language explains about the world: specifically the manner human beings communicate, the reasons for communication and the topic of communication.

1.2.1 Language as a Tool for Communication

What is language for? It acts as a mode to transfer thoughts, ideas, feelings, and opinions into words from one person to another and this translates into communication. Harman (1975), claimed words are used to communicate thoughts and language is a “vehicle for communication” (pp. 273). It is necessary for thoughts to be communicated for a society to thrive (Locke, 2017, p. 146). Communication creates the social element for any community and language is used for the purpose of socialising. As such, language is a vital social feature because the community is primarily linguistic (Searle, 2006). Aristotle suggested that by nature, man is a social animal (as cited in Vinciarelli et al., 2012) and interpersonal communication is paramount to establish and build relationships with one another (Wood, 2010). Language provides the tools to construct this social reality.

The importance of language was depicted by Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s quote, “language is the armory of the human mind, and at once contains the trophies of its past and the weapons of its future conquests” (as cited in Maurer, 1989) for it reveals language as a powerful instrument that determines one’s life, the future of a society

and culture. Benjamin Whorf (1970) believed that one's entire life is controlled by the language one uses even when thinking. However, this reasoning would imply that people who speak in a different language have different thoughts. It would be impossible, for it would mean that people who speak the same language do not differ in view points or those who speak the same language share the same views in all areas of politics, values, religion and all other beliefs (Wang, 2017). This notion has been debated by many and it is possible that there is no one answer to this issue because just as there is opposition to Whorf's thoughts, language does exert some influence on one's thought process as well as identify and reinforce a particular manner of presenting certain beliefs and principles (Wang, 2017; Asoulin, 2016). Nevertheless, language is fundamental to human experience and how one relates to another becomes the mode for communication.

A language is valuable for the sole purpose of communication but it differs according to the functions prescribed to it. Though, functional language consists of many values like practical value, cultural value, an epistemic value or an aesthetic value (Lehmann, 2006), the practical value is the most fundamental one for every day communication. The very reason for using language is for its practical purpose so that people can understand each other. It is seen as a vehicle of thought (Finegan, 2012). The nature of communication is to influence the 'others' of one's thoughts and these thoughts consist of beliefs, ideas, opinions, and values. Words are used to relate these thoughts, thus making the choice of words an important element in communication.

1.2.2 Language as a Tool in Face-to-face Communication

Edward Sapir (1929) believed that human beings do not live alone in this world and they are “at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society” (p. 209). Language has to be understood for communication to take place. In face-to-face communication both speaker and listener share a common language in order to convey and understand any topic or belief (Nordby, 2006). It is to be noted that norms related to the language like common knowledge of the phonological system and syntax, allows for the comprehension of the utterances. Based on this factor, the language that is used in face-to-face communication has a conversational fluency compared to writing (Snow, 2007); whereby both speaker and listener converse in a familiar language. Whereas, written communication emphasises the writer’s style which may or may not be understood by the reader.

Bhatia (2000), highlighted that language permits human beings to express their experiences in a meaningful manner. Face-to-face communication is an interactive and a complex communicative act (Dohen, Schwartz & Bailly, 2010) because the language used is not only influenced by substance and content during this interaction, but is also expressive and emotional.

A face-to-face communicative process encompasses more than a mere exchange of words in an interaction. It consists of the exchange of gestures, behavioural acts, poses, and even the act of being silent. In recent years, even the role of silence has changed from one that is lacking in value to one that could play a purposeful medium to produce a communicative act (Penna, Mocci, & Sechi, 2009, p. 30).

1.2.3 Language as a Tool in Online Communication

Communication assumes many forms and with every new technological breakthrough, it points to new and different means of expression (Feldstein, 2009). The introduction of technology and Internet allows people to be connected through time and space. With the presence of technology, people insist on emailing even though they are in the very next room, and cyber space as well as Internet chatting has substituted the real world presence (Marcello, 2006, p. 67).

The use of emails, Internet chats, and online discussions in online communication show that silence does not play a role as it does in face-to-face session. On the contrary, language has played crucial role and has been the sole communicative mode for some time in an online communication. However in recent times, the emergence of emoticons in the online written mode, contributes to the portrayal of human feelings in the form of symbols or emojis (Stark & Crawford, 2015). The presence of these emoticons and symbols, indicate the manner in which meaning is conveyed is constantly changing and language per se, is not the only mode of interaction.

One of the important constant elements that keep synchronous and asynchronous communication alive is language. As such, language is vital for online communication for it is used to relay messages and yet, there can be delays in online interactions especially in asynchronous communication. The delays could be because of the human factor, whereby time is taken to formulate the speaker's thought or issues with the technological systems. These delays may or may not impact the interaction, depending on people involved or the subject matter that is being discussed.

Schoenenberg (2014) believes that delays in online interactions creates a similar effect to awkward silence or long pauses in face-to-face interactions.

Just as in face-to-face communication, language also conveys thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and values in online communication. However, Feldstein (2009) claims that it is probable for conversations among online communities to contain substantially more content than face-to-face communities. Language plays an important role as a communication mode to relay this content, but the question is: what else is conveyed through language other than content and meaning? Are values revealed in the language used?

1.2.4 The Use of Linguistics and Pragmatics

Language is the medium for communication whereby one can convey thoughts linguistically (Hamann, 2007). This indicates that one cannot be divorced from one's thought when he/she speaks as individuals shape language to express their personal thoughts, feelings, beliefs and opinions (Beek, 2004). Wittgenstein (1953) drew a clear distinction between linguistic meaning and pragmatics claiming the former as semantics and the latter as language use. Semantics is based on literal meaning like replying 'yes' to the question 'can you pass the sugar?'; whereas the pragmatic response would be to pass the sugar. This was expounded further by Brown and Levinson (1983) in their Theory of Politeness. Pragmatics covers a broad area which among others includes computer-mediated communication and linguistics (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2012). It is relevant to this study as it helps in providing answers to not only

the meanings of the words but also, to why these words were chosen in their language use during an interaction.

1.2.5 Non-Verbal Language as a Tool in Communication

Non-verbal language provides information beyond the actual words used in a conversation (Snow, 2007). It is said that body language reflects 55% of what is said whereas tone reveals 38%, and finally, words only 7% (Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967; O'Connor & Seymour, 1993). Mehrabin (1971, p. 134) asserted that there is a key difference between action and speech. Limited expressions convey feelings and attitudes but what is conveyed is easier to understand. In addition, body posture is equally vital because it shows the intention of an action though the facial expressions show the mental state (Sinke, Kret, & de Gelder, 2011).

The non-verbal language in face-to-face communication consists of facial expressions, tones and gestures. Nordy (2006), believes face-to-face interaction to be primarily holistic as speakers can use both verbal and non-verbal means to communicate their intentions and values. According to Tiwari (2015), non-verbal communication is less structured, unplanned, has an intent and blends with speech thus, should not be ignored as they relay vital information.

However, online communication does not reflect body language. It basically hinges on the choice of words and the speaker's intended desire to express the intended message. In these cases, it is paramount to understand the values that these words exhibit in the case of online interactions. Nevertheless, people have developed ways

to make up for the lack of non-verbal cues online through the use of emoticons or typographic symbols often facial expressions like :) to show a smile (Snow, 2007).

Fahlman (1982) invented a graphic sign of a smiley face :-) in his computer science forum discussion and since then, thousands of signs have been created. These were developed with the intentions to mimic facial expressions (Dresner & Herring, 2010). Kralji, Smailovic, Sluban and Mozetic (2015) consider an emoticon as a shorthand indicating a facial expression that allows people to express their feelings, moods and emotions in written messages. This expression in the written texts displays non-verbal features.

1.3 Values

What are values? Where do they come from? Do values have any influence in the choices people make in life? These questions have been pivotal to the understanding of people's intentions and their ability to make decisions since the times of Socrates who believed that a good life is valued more than life itself (Rachels, 1993).

Values are viewed as a guide to behaviour rather than an achievable goal (Levin, 1952) and Levin claimed that "the individual does not try to 'reach' the value of fairness, but fairness is 'guiding' his behavior" (p. 41). Morris (1956) on the other hand, believed values reflect ways to live. Rokeach in his 'The Nature of Human Values' (1973) regarded values as something that gives meaning to actions. Though, Schwartz basically agreed with Rokeach's definition for values, he worked on it further and defined it as "desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity" (1994, p. 21).

Values are personal and subjective for they represent individual beliefs, principles, thoughts, and perceptions (Nirmal, 2011). People relate to values that are important to them and those that resonate with them. These values differ not only in levels of importance, but also from person to person according to their principles of life. Solis (2014) views values as something exclusive to a person. What makes human beings humans and not machines or animals is the ability to subscribe to a set of values that serve as the guiding principles to live his/her life (Nirmal, 2011). Since values act as an individual's philosophy, thought and action, the language used to communicate and express them is value laden.

Values reveal a person's beliefs. They are relative and each person subscribes to his/her own values based on his/her situations, intentions and perceptions. In view of this, Wendover (2005) claimed that generations are identified by the different values they hold close to them but this does not mean their values are right or wrong.

Though values are rooted in basic human needs, they also have societal demands (Prabhu, 2011). This is in line with the American existential psychologist, Rollo May, (1998), who thinks communication will lead to a sense of community, that is, understanding, affectionate and possess a sense of mutual valuing of one another. In a society, there are values like care and respect among others, which are seen through interpersonal relationship, that help individuals understand each other in a community.

1.3.1 Values in Language

Language is not only a means for communication, however it is also an avenue to identify with one's own values (Gallagher-Brett, 2004, p. 2) because one's values are embedded in the language, which at times are unconsciously. This in turn plays a notable role in one's decisions and behaviours (Jackendoff, 2006). The notion of being helpful begins with an idea and translates to the 'other' through the choice of words used in a language when communicating. A research by Einolf (2011, p. 451), suggested that people learn the value of helping through conversational language, which in turn helps them embody these values into the own identity.

Poulshock (2006) is of the opinion that language contributes to a human moral system and his study focused specifically on altruism. There are an infinite number of things, events, and people that can be moralized about in language use because there will be a never-ending list of sentences in any language. Poulshock also claimed that there is a strong relationship between human language especially universal grammar and morality. For example the use of 'if' clause provides one with choice and the phrase 'I think' allows for a thought process and this differentiates man from animal. As such, moral systems could transform and be in line with the linguistic systems of any time and this study hopes to identify more values than altruism.

According to Wendover (2005), today's generation is impacted by the use of technology like radio, television, computers, cell phones, instant messaging, the World Wide Web, and digital communication that use language as their main medium in communication. The influences of these technologies and the language used in them help shape the value systems of the present generation and others to come.

1.4 Changes in the Higher Education Arena

Digital literacy means having the ability or skills to operate some form of software or to navigate a website, find files, upload files among the few (Buckingham, 2006; Cordell, 2013). The use of technology in today's digital culture has metamorphosed higher education institutions' capabilities in the manner courses are being taught (Md Amin & Gerbic, 2010). Technology enhanced learning and digital literacy is becoming a common phenomenon. Carr-Chellman (2005), claimed that eLearning is 'breaking down the elitist walls of the ivory tower' (p. 1). This is because higher education institutes are moving towards technology in the form of blended learning and this is leveling the plane.

The higher education arena is constantly changing due to technology not only in Malaysia but worldwide. There is no longer the need for academics to carry piles of books or print their hand-outs because all they need to do is upload all the materials like their lectures, notes and assignments. They mark assignments and give feedback online. University and college students no longer need to be physically present to renew books in the library, download eBooks and articles from online journals, and even upload assignments (Chew, 2009). Therefore, neither the teachers nor the students viewed education from the same perspective. The foundation may have been sown in schools but tertiary education plays an equally important role in the final outcome of students' life experiences thus, contributing to the type of human capital needed as the workforce in the country. An article in New Sunday Times on 15 February 2015 states that National Higher Education Strategic Plan's (NHESP) 'holistic and outcome-driven' blueprint hopes to produce learned, value-driven talent in line with its vision (Nasa, 2015 p.5). This indicates that any change in higher

education considers the importance of values in a society as fundamental to the progress to the country.

1.5 Blended Learning

With the technological readiness (Ling, Rahman, Ariffin, Lai, & Mohd Hamzah, 2011, p. 55), a digital classroom might play equal importance in the future of education as a physical classroom. Both classroom settings will provide an avenue for values to emerge because values act in to guide behaviour (Levin, 1952). They also provide meaning to an action (Rokeach, 1973). In a blended learning approach, part of the behaviour and action can be seen through the face-to-face sessions. However, in the online sessions, these values will only be identified through the use of language since there is no physical contact among members of this community. Language use is the only common factor in both these sessions and as such, a study on values is significant.

The education landscape in the teaching and learning field is constantly shifting (McAleese et al., 2013). New pedagogy and technological advancements provide new opportunities for teaching and learning and at the same time impact the lives of students who belong to both the physical community as well as the virtual community. One such pedagogical approach is blended learning, which is a blend between face-to-face and online sessions. Definitions of blended learning vary based on percentage of web to traditional instruction (Allen, Seaman, & Garrett, 2007). When 30-79% of content is delivered online, it constitutes as a blended learning approach. Further explanation on this will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Online learning is fast becoming the current mode of learning. Countries around the

world are fast adopting online teaching and learning with India leading the way in self-paced eLearning growth rate followed by China and Malaysia (Pappas, 2015). According to Pappas (2015), Malaysia came in at the third spot on the top 10 growth rates by country for online teaching and learning. For a small country like Malaysia, coming in third means the education system in Malaysia has embraced the technological changes and advancements. Among the new technological advancements in higher education institutes is the presence of blended learning. Blended learning requires a set of different skills in students that otherwise would not be possible in exclusive face-to-face instruction like digital citizenship and collaboration skills (Radhikaashree, 2003). With Malaysia moving up fast in self-paced eLearning, the majority of the higher learning institutions in Malaysia are ready with regards to facilities and they are being supported by stakeholders and government policies to implement blended learning mode (Ling, Rahman, Ariffin, Lai, & Mohd Hamzah, 2011, p. 55).

The emergence of blended learning is creating a new classroom community in higher learning institutes, which is the online community. With the presence of this online community, values play an important role in fostering digital citizenship, which in turn encourages virtuous online behaviour (Braunstein, 2014). Digital citizenship is like a ‘membership’ in the digital community and it helps the students (the members) to develop a sense of ownership and personal responsibility (Microsoft, 2015, p. 3). This creates a more complementary avenue for teaching via blended learning approach.

1.5.1 Blended Learning in Malaysia

Malaysia has a high growth rate for online learning (Pappas, 2015) with a number of courses being offered in many universities and colleges. It shows that blended learning has been identified in some universities as a significant feature (Md Amin & Gerbic, 2010). They also claim that blended learning is regarded as an important public university strategy (p. 1783). According to Norazah, Mohamed Amin, and Zaidan (2011) and Haron, Abbas, and Abd Rahman (2011) many public universities are moving towards adopting blended learning as a pedagogical approach. Bunyarit's (2006) study concurred with their findings even when Shih's (2010) claimed that lecturers were apprehensive about using blended learning as a mode of teaching. In 2013 however, it was noted that many higher learning institutes had already begun incorporating blended learning (Jaryani et al., 2013). This indicates the prospects of blended learning being considered as a pedagogical approach in both private and public universities in Malaysia as promising.

Malaysia's higher education institutions have adopted blended learning approach in teaching their courses (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). In their study, Embi, Mohd Nordin, and Panah (2014) conclude that the future of blended learning in Malaysia is promising, allowing students a self-paced learning modality on a 24x7 basis in addition to fostering online interaction. In their article 'Blended Learning Readiness in Malaysia', Embi, Mohd Nordin, and Panah (2014) reported on their findings that Malaysian teacher trainees have an acceptable level of readiness towards the actual use of blended learning and are ready to adopt this approach. Hence, their advice is that the higher education division in the Ministry of Education needs to

relook at the steps to encourage higher education institutions to embrace blended learning.

There have been many studies conducted on blended learning in Malaysia. At present researchers in Malaysia are more inclined to study the information and service qualities affecting students. Among these studies are students and academics readiness, relationship between students' satisfaction and their final grades, the benefits and problems of using blended learning in higher learning institutions (Bunyarit, 2006; Ling, Rahman, Ariffin, Lai, & Mohd Hamzah, 2011; Tahar et al., 2013; Haron, Abbas, & Abd Rahman, 2011; Chew, 2009; Embi, Mohd Nordin, & Panah, 2014).

Though, there have been many studies conducted in Malaysia pertaining to the readiness of blended learning, yet no studies have been carried out regarding the values seen in the language use online. If Malaysia is progressing forward with blended learning in higher learning institutions, there is a need to review whether it is at the expense of social values which emerge during interactions, or it contributes as an avenue for social values to emerge.

1.6 Statement of Problem

The values ingrained in a human being contribute to the development of a whole person and they serve as a set of guiding principles (Friedman, Kahn, & Borning, 2006). These values manifest as part of the behaviour in a person and are apparent in one's actions (Marte & Marte, 2005). The Malaysian curriculum claims to develop the 'whole person' (Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, 2012) in every aspect and one who has the social skills through language use to be interconnected to the society. Mohamed, Sidek, Kudus and Abu Hassan's (2017) study showed the importance of morals and values for a student to be a 'whole person'. Language is the prevalent feature for social inter-connectivity and essential for communication. Values, on the other hand, play a significant role and yet, there are no studies on examining the values in students' language use. This study hopes to examine the values reflected in the language use, which in turn might reveal one's values. This new knowledge will be useful to the educationists as they help shape the students they teach.

There are two means in which students exhibit values; through actions and the language they use. When people demonstrate their values through action, it can be seen because actions speak for themselves (Schwartz, 1992; 2012). Schwartz has investigated a person's values by employing quantitative methodology using Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) (Schwartz, 1992) or Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). An example of a descriptor in the PVQ would be like 'Being very successful is important to him. He likes to impress other people' and the respondent would indicate one out of six scales between very much like me to not like me at all. This manner of testing is more towards a quantitative finding. Over the years other

researchers (as discussed in Chapter 2) have also used SVS and PVQ in their studies. There is a lack of qualitative studies using Schwartz' Theory and this study will contribute to more in-depth findings by employing a qualitative method. Moreover, there has been no study using Schwartz' Theory on language use. As such, this in-depth study will contribute valuable knowledge in the method of identifying values.

Language allows for assumptions and multiple interpretations that influence the thinking capacities and behaviourism (Berman, 1969). With assumption, comes ambiguity and this leads to uncertainty in the speaker's intended meaning. The language used identifies a speaker's ideas of values on the subject matter (Carroll, 1978) but this is only possible if the intended meaning is known. Though many studies on values have been conducted, studies on values reflected in language use have been neglected. Since people think in the language they communicate (Vicente & Martínez-Manrique, 2008), this study on values reflected in language use is relevant.

According to O'Connor and Seymour (1993), though values relate to one's identity, they are unconscious and seldom explored in a clear manner. However, both Nirmal (2011) and Solis (2014) claim that values are personal for they are individuals' beliefs and perceptions and as such, individuals are aware of their values thus, contradicting O'Connor and Seymour's views. There is a need for this study to explore if individuals are aware of their values. This study will be an indicator of the possibility of values being studied in an objective manner. There is a need to study if individuals are indeed aware of their values or are they unconscious of them (values). Examining the values through one's language use in this study is one way to clarify this issue.

Interactions using language reveal one's awareness of social values (Gallagher-Brett, 2004) and these interactions are laced with politeness linked to social behaviours and speaker appropriateness (Vilki, 2006). Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness strategies have proven to be useful during interactions. There is a need to examine if politeness strategies are in the centre of interactions both during face-to-face and written sessions. Therefore examining students' awareness of how their language use reflects their values during their communication with their course mates is important, as it helps to discover themselves.

With Internet readily available, students from schools to universities are fast becoming a technologically driven society. Sellen, Rogers, Harper, and Rodden (2009) claimed that people do not just use technology; they live it and as such, it has become an integral part of their lives. The classroom is often seen as a community within a larger community thus generating a stronger sense of community among students. A blended environment, has two different settings for communication; online and face-to-face. It changes the nature of socialisation and the only common feature between them is the use of language. This change may have an impact on an individual's language choice when interacting in face-to-face and written sessions. A study is required to understand if individuals participating in a blended learning environment exhibit different or similar values as reflected in their language use in the two different modes of interactions. Presently, there are no studies on values that emerge in the students' language use during online and face-to-face interactions. This study provided an avenue for one to explore and detect the values in oneself. The emerging values could reveal who they are as one interacts with others.

An interaction takes place in a social context. The Theory of Communication by Schutz's (1958) fundamental interpersonal relations orientation (FIRO) sets the background in this study for what and why something is said in the social context. Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham's (1955) Johari Window model was chosen for this study as it sets the background to show how much the speaker knows of himself/herself and/or the listener (see 2.7.1 & 2.7.2). Communication does not take place in a vacuum for it is always with someone and about something. The communication theory and model above will provide valuable information about both the speaker and the listener. While communicating, does a person's use of language demonstrate different values in the spoken form if compared to the written? Will the language used in face-to-face and online interactions emphasise any values and if so, are they similar or different? Are values assumed in communication? The lack of answers creates a gap in understanding what values emerge in a communication in this technologically driven society. In addressing this issue, it allows for some insights to the presence of values in the language use when one interacts in different modes like face-to-face and online.

To date, there has been no published studies that explore students' use of language in relation to values in a blended learning environment. This study is a multi-disciplinary one that encompasses values, language and linguistics, communication and education technology. Though, the focus is on values and language use, the findings in this study will contribute some knowledge in all the other areas as well. This research will be useful to future planners and educators on how to shape the future of education in this digital age from the guidelines and insights provided in the research or the least

understand the values that the students subscribe to when they use language to communicate in a blended learning environment.

1.7 Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine a group of students' language use in their communication in both face-to-face interactions and online forum discussions. It will also explore how their language use impacts their interpersonal communication and how this could reflect students' value systems. This study aims to examine if there are any differences in students' language use in the two modes of communication while studying a literature module. Specifically, this study focuses on four objectives:

1. to identify the choice of words and phrases used in establishing communication in both online and face-to-face interactions which relate to values in a blended learning environment,
2. to explore the reasons for students' use of words and phrases that relate to values in their communication,
3. to compare and contrast the consistency of the values depicted in both online and face-to-face interactions, and
4. to understand the influential role of values as a contributing factor that impacts students' communication in a blended learning environment.

1.8 Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to explore the language use regarding values among students and how the description and analysis of values represented leads to the development of a value-coded framework on students' communication in a blended learning environment. The study aims to examine if there are any differences in students' language use in the two modes of communication while studying a literature module. These are achieved through the following research questions:

1. Which words and phrases reflect values in the students' written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?
2. Why did the students use these words and phrases that express their values in these modes of communication?
3. Were the students aware of any of their values while interacting in these modes of communication?
4. How do the students' values influence the language used in written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?

1.9 Methodology

This study intends to have an in-depth understanding of the students' values that are reflected in their language use. As this research hopes to facilitate the understanding of values in language usage, it will employ a qualitative approach of using case study. A qualitative method to study students' values in their language use will provide 'thick' description (Denzin, 1989) on the students' lived experiences, events and situations.

A case study is selected as it allows the researcher to explore in depth one or more individuals (Creswell, 2003) and in this study it is to investigate the values in 5 students' language use. The study is in line with Stake's (1995) claim, whereby the individuals are restrained by time and activity. This allows the researcher to obtain comprehensive details using different types of data collection procedures over a sustained time period. The time period for this study is 8 weeks, which is equivalent to one semester, and the activity is face-to-face and online interactions. The case study, data collection and data analysis for this research will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The instruments used for the data collection process consist of participant observations, online forum postings and semi-structured interviews which will be further explained in Chapter 3. The participant observation and online forum postings will provide answers to Research Question 1. The semi-structured interviews will contribute justifications for Research Questions 2 and 3. Finally, Research Question 4 will validate the findings of Research Questions 1, 2 and 3.

1.10 Scope of Study

This research looks at university students' use of language in communication on face-to-face and online interactions. The scope of this study will be related to two key elements in this study. The focus will be on the main aspects of:

- i. values represented in online language use
- ii. values represented in face-to-face language use
- iii. differences, if any, in the values presented in the two modes of communication.

The sample comprises five participants and purposeful sampling was employed which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The participants involved in this study are first year students who are enrolled in an English Literature course in a private university in Malaysia. The study was conducted in one of their English Literature modules. Hake (2001), is of the opinion that literature looks at life and language complements it. Thus, the human experience allowed for plenty of room for opinions and critical discussions using English Language as the mode of communication.

The language use studied in this study is the everyday language that conceives everyday meaning within a society (Read, 2015; DeCapua, 2017). In day-to-day interactions society uses simple, ordinary and taken-for-granted language (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2007). These simple, ordinary words and phrases used in this interaction was the focus of this study. As such, the study will refrain from using data (words and phrases) that discusses the content of the Literature topic.

The lecturer was part of the social construct in a classroom but he/she was not directly involved in the study, as this study focused on the students' values in their language use. It is pertinent to note that only the students' language was examined and not the lecturer's and the tutor's. However, if the need arose, the lecturer was consulted regarding classroom instructions and feedback to facilitate this research.

Individuals subscribe to values that they have acquired through their early interactions with parents and family, as well as socialisation with friends and the society at large (Hebel, 1999 p. 255). This research will focus on the values that students in higher institutions subscribe to through only their language use online and face-to face. The

similarities and differences, if any, will contribute to the useful knowledge on values subscribed to by these students. The framework of this study is bound by the Theory of Basic Human Values expounded by Schwartz (1992) and Schwartz et al. (2012), Theory of Politeness as explained by Brown and Levinson (1987), Theory of Communication by Schutz's (1958) fundamental interpersonal relations orientation (FIRO) and Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham's (1955) Johari Window model. These theories and models will be defined and discussed in Chapter 2.

1.11 Significance of Study

Values are very important as they (values) define who a person is (Scott, 2014). The language used is the yardstick to show who these individuals are, their beliefs, their ideas, their desires, and most importantly their values (Quine, 1960; Davidson, 1986; Licht, 2011; Scott, 2014). It is paramount for this study to understand the values in the language use in context and in real life situations. It is not the intention of this study to be prescriptive of any values, for values are based on individual perceptions and beliefs and are subjective to an individual (Pratt, 2005).

The context in this study is a class using blended learning as a teaching and learning mode. This context allows the researcher to study how language is used in two different modes of communication by the same individuals thus, shedding some light on the individual's consistency in subscribing their values as seen in their language use in both face-face and online interactions.

Blended learning is an approach that is on the rise where a significant amount of time in the classroom is replaced online activities that involve students in meeting course objectives (Glazer, 2012). At present, many educational philosophies in public and private institutions at primary, secondary, and university levels strive to provide their notion of the best education but, times are changing and education requires desperate demands to keep up with it. There is a need for constant update of pedagogical tools in education whereby technology is the main player in this digital age and education institutes will have to hit the reset button to weave the use of technology if they wish to lead the way in this arena. As the education philosophies highlight the social and affective aspects in addition to the cognitive, it is paramount to explore how students' language use impacts their interpersonal communication.

Blended learning is said to help students towards meaningful learning through technology in educational settings. The idea of blending online and face-to-face session is considered an upcoming design in teaching approach (Jaryani et al., 2013) whereby the use of online tools and social communication tools provide for collaborative learning. In examining the similarities and differences in the students' language use between these two modes of communication, educators are able to identify values that contribute towards fostering social well-being among their students.

This study focuses on values and language use. However, it is set against the background of other disciplines like communication and education technology. As such, it is an interdisciplinary study that can yield valuable knowledge in all these areas.

The findings of this study on students' use of language in relations to values in a blended learning environment, hope to facilitate to greater understanding towards values reflected in language use. There is lack of research in identifying values in language use. Presently, there are no published studies that explore this particular feature in a blended learning environment. As higher learning institutes are entrusted with the task of nurturing students to meet the challenges of the work force, the role of communication must be addressed. The findings provide an opportunity to examine students' language use with regards to values. Understanding values emerging from language used in a blended learning environment is crucial so as to provide an environment for meaningful interaction among students. Future educators and planners in all fields concerning communication will find this study useful in framing the future of education and communication in this digital age based on the guidelines and insights provided in the research. Specifically, this study hopes to at least understand the values the students subscribe to when they use language to communicate in a blended learning environment.

1.12 Operational Definitions of the Terms Used in This Study

For the purpose of this study, the following key terms are defined as follows.

1.12.1 Values and Values Systems

Values and value systems relate to people's behaviours, which point to what is important in their lives. The perception of values in this study will be based on Schwartz's universal basic individual values theory, which has 19 values that are

recognised in all societies (Schwartz et al., 2012). Specifically, the focus will be on values pertaining to social aspect like tolerance, nature, concern, dependability, rules, caring, humility, interpersonal, tradition, societal security (Schwartz et al., 2012). The values and value systems noted would be those that emerge through their use of language.

1.12.2 Language

Language use in this research refers to the language used in both written as well as spoken forms to convey intentions and meanings during an interaction (Chomsky, 1965). The students' language use in the written form will be based on the postings in the online forum discussion whereas the language use in the spoken form will be based on their classroom interaction and interviews. The lecturer's classroom instructions and feedbacks will only be used as a point of reference and for clarification purposes in this study if the need arises.

1.12.3 Blended Learning

Blended learning is a hybrid pedagogical tool, which consists of two modes of teaching and learning scenarios that is traditional face-to-face and online teaching and learning (Collis and Moonen, 2001; Thorne, 2003; Garrison and Kanuka, 2004; Garrison and Vaughan, 2008). In a blended learning environment, students are exposed to digital experience of a combination of digital instruction and in-person teaching (Public Impact, 2013). Online teaching and learning includes e-learning

platforms, virtual lectures or classrooms, online activities among others whereby the lecturer does not have to be present in person.

In this study, the term online aspect of the blended learning describes lessons that are only through the Internet. It does not consist of any physical learning materials issued to students or actual face-to-face contact (Paulsen, 2002). The other aspect is the usual face-to-face session in a classroom setting. For the purpose of this study, blended learning provides both face-to-face which is oral and online which is written. It provides two modes of communication for student discussions and participations and two different avenues to study their values in language use.

1.12.4 Online Forum

Online forum is an asynchronous learning platform where communication exchanges transpire in lapsed time between two or more people. These forums take place in online spaces considered as open public spaces with no geographical and temporal limitations (Janssen & Kies, 2004). Participants will have the freedom to express their opinions, comment, or even raise questions. Online forum is part of the Learning Management System and is one of the data collection instrument. It provides the necessary data for language use in the written form.

1.12.5 Face-to-face Sessions

Face-to-face sessions refer to the traditional brick and mortar teaching and learning situation. The brick and mortar serves as connective fabric for communities (Public

Impact, 2013). In the traditional face-to-face session, both the lecturer and students are in a synchronous learning environment that is in the same geographical place at the same time (Redmond, 2011). According to Penny and Coe (2004, p. 245) face-to-face comprises of active involvement of teachers in the learning process and there is sufficient time for interactions with peers and teachers in-person. These face-to-face sessions are pertinent to this study as they provide vital data in the oral form which is transcribed.

1.13 Limitations of the Study

This study is based on the values seen in the language use by a small group of students in a tertiary institution. The limitations will be that these students will be from one particular class. They will be students who could be Malaysians or non-Malaysians depending on the criteria for sampling which will be discussed in Chapter 3. In view of the small number of students from one class who participated in this study, no generalisation could be made. It only enables understanding these students who were strictly engaged in this study.

The responses in language use are from their online forum discussions, classroom discussions during lessons. The study does not take into account the students' language outside the classroom. Their language use and responses are limited to a specific context which is the blended learning environment and therefore, might not reflect all their values.

The data gathered will be based on a qualitative design and it is solely based on the individual's language use as seen in the online forum discussions, observations, and interviews. Therefore, the usage of the language is limited only to the individuals' choice of lexis, syntax and semantics. As such, no broad generalisation can be made based on the findings in this study. The discussions in this study will highlight the values emerging in only the participants' based on their own language use, thus providing an indepth understanding of their value system.

This study is to explore the values seen in the language use of the respondents both online and during face-to-face sessions. As values are subjective and act as personal guiding principles, this study is meant to understand a particular social reality with a particular group of people, in a particular situation, which is the blended learning environment. As such, only discussions can emerge and no generalisations can be made from this study, as these values reflect only these participants.

This study is a qualitative one, and adopts the participatory inquiry paradigm where, the researcher plays an active role. This research is set in a society that is using blended learning as a pedagogical tool and the researcher will be part of this society for the duration of this study. The researcher will be involved in this socially constructed reality and the researcher's values in language use might play a role during the interview sessions. Nevertheless, care will be taken by the researcher so as not to influence the participants with her values.

1.14 Summary

This chapter sets the background for this study by highlighting the role of language in an interaction as well as the values reflected in the students' language use. It also showed the upward trend of blended learning approach in this technological era to cater to students' educational needs.

The objectives of this study are to explore the values reflected in the students' language use in both face-to-face and online settings. The study is aimed to examine what these values might be, based on the language used in these interactions. In addition, the study also identifies the difference in values, if any, between the language use in the two modes communication. The role of blended learning is to provide the setting for the two modes of communication, which is face-to-face and online in a social context.

This study is expected to reveal the values in the language used by the students when communicating in both in spoken and written manners. In doing so, this study will indicate if the values identified in the students, had any influence on the students' choice of language use.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the importance of language in communication. It also explores the presence of values when communication is conducted through face-to-face and online modes.

In presenting the theoretical framework for this research study and the rationale for it, a number of pertinent theories and contributing models are treated thoroughly. The first section deals with all aspects of language, its role and the language theories used to frame this study. The second section is on communication which is face-to-face and online, the roles they play and the theories as well as models that are used in this study. The third section explains values, its reflection in language and a comprehensive overview of Schwartz' Basic Human Value theory which is the foundation on which the theoretical framework was built upon. The last section reviews blended learning, how it is perceived and the role language plays in this approach.

2.1.1 The Need for Theories

Theories play an important role for they stand as the base for any research. They systematically organise the thoughts, induce explanations, and enhance the understanding of a particular field (Hambrick, 2007). However, Suddaby (2014) is of the opinion that the reason for theories in a study is more than just to extract and organise the knowledge that is needed. It is evident from the foundations on which this knowledge stands erected, whereby each researcher refers to theories that contribute to “creating, maintaining and shaping” (Suddaby, 2014, p. 407) in his/her research. This kind of knowledge provides the bedrock in the respective fields and that becomes the basis for each researcher to refer to theories in their studies. There will be a few theories specifically on language, values, and communication that will form the foundation in this study.

2.2 Theories on Language

Different stages in time contributed different elements to language as a whole, from Saussurian times to Vygotsky times. In pre-Chomskyan times, particularly in Europe, the Saussurian notion of language (Ferdinand Saussure’s thoughts on language) was predominantly influenced by which words are most important (Saussure 1916). He examined the relationship between speech and language and viewed language as a system of signs which is words. However, Saussure (1916) also claimed that socio-cultural realities shaped the development of language.

Then, Chomsky (1957) introduced the importance of grammar for semantic interpretation whereby he believed that a child has the ability to learn language and

that he or she is born with the linguistic faculty. He claimed that learning language is biologically programmed in a human brain which is innate to mankind (Chomsky, 1965, p.8).

Bruner, on the other hand, was of the opinion that a child is born into a culture (1966, p. 6) and as such is provided with a 'toolkit' for communicating and sense-making (1966, p. 3). According to him, the culture in the environment the child is born into provides a set of values, skills and ways of life that he terms as toolkit. It is his belief that the language a child uses is based on this toolkit. Later, according to Vygotsky (1986), speech is rooted in social origins and as the child develops it becomes a verbal thought. He perceived it as a relationship between consciousness and words.

The theories on language have evolved from the focus placed on words and signs to the importance of grammar for semantic meaning to language that is set in cultural origins to one that is set in social origins. What if all of these influenced language at one point or other? Perhaps the pragmatic view of language addressed later in this chapter (see 2.4), is the most sensible and logical one at present.

2.2.1 Definition of Language

The many definitions of language converge to one point, that it is formulated in the mind and used for communication purposes. Language is viewed as the basic currency for social interactions (Pennebaker & Chung, 2012). Language is used in communication; it sets humans apart from other species. All levels of thinking are dependent on language (Carroll, 1978) but, no one has an idea how language has

evolved or what sort of cognitive ability man had as a basis for language to develop (Searle, 2006). According to Vygotsky, thoughts are the crux of consciousness and are made possible through the use of language. Without language, human development will remain primitive with no comprehension of social function (Alpay, 2001).

One aspect of language to be noted is, it does not only represent thoughts and feelings but also provides the latitude for misinterpretation and distortion. This fact changes or interferes with the intended meaning especially, when there are cultural differences (Dixon & O'Hara, 2008, p. 7). Hence, it will be taken into account in this study.

2.2.2 Role of Language

Not everything that is said is understood as it is meant to be originally by the speaker. Language consists of two crucial aspects, the first is the production of it which states how it is used to convey a particular meaning and the second, being the perception of it, which explains the determining of the meaning of what is heard (Langendoen, 1998). The nature of language cannot be separated from its functions and uses in the many situations people face. Situations are important because they allow for a constructed meaning of an idea, value, or belief to emerge and the words that are used will influence their usage, thus creating a convention (Drobnak, 2013).

Ramaraju (2012) discussed communicative behaviour concerning language, behaviour, and interpersonal communication in his paper. These elements create a complex network in the communication process. The communicative behaviour that

he referred to is when the responder processes and interprets information which he receives through language and the encoding and decoding of the language used allows him to make 'qualitative judgments' (p. 72).

Language acts as a tool of culture and permits interaction in a society, which in turn is the basis for behaviours and attitudes. In his research, Bhatia (2000) has identified language usage in a symbolic manner to allow human beings to express their experiences in a meaningful way. He viewed language that is used in every day cultural discourse as crucial especially in a family setting, as values are passed down during the course of conversation. This means children would come to understand what it means to be human beings (Bhatia, 2000). It is these values in one's language use which are the focus of this study.

In addition, language determines the level of communication thus, allowing the users to make assumptions that influence thinking capacities and behaviourism (Berman, 1969). Austin (1962) agreed that language plays many roles which have the linguistic feature of stating a fact. He claimed that, sometimes 'to say something, is to do exactly that something', but this only works at certain times because there are other times when something that is said may not be what is meant, thus giving rise to assumptions and ambiguities. Therefore, having the knowledge of language allows one to have the ability to understand deep and surface structures attached to semantic interpretation (Chomsky, 2006).

Language is termed according to its usage like everyday language, scientific and metaphysical based on Read's (2015) reviews on Wittgenstein's thoughts on

language. Everyday language is used to establish everyday meaning in social reality (Beach, 1982; Wardhaugh, 2006; Chung & Pennebaker, 2008; DeCapua, 2017). It is also considered as simple, ordinary and taken-for-granted language (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2007) that society uses in day-to-day interactions and the words/phrases used in this language are the focus of this study to examine the values reflected in them.

2.2.3 Language in the Digital Age

The ubiquitous nature of digital age at the turn of the century displayed a high volume of interaction (Prensky, 2001). According to Prensky, students think and process differently from their predecessors, which makes them digital natives and the rest digital immigrants who speak an out-dated language to a society that speaks a completely ‘new language’.

The English that is on the web is called English 2.0. It is the unofficial language of the internet as dubbed by The British Council (2013). The rules of the English 2.0 are relaxed; it is to allow for flexibility, openness to change, and the loan of new words which are put to immediate use. This language is being heard, seen, read, and understood by far more people than ever before. English 2.0 presents a more concise use of language in comparison to standard English due to technology and online presence. An example is the word ‘selfie’, whereby in standard English it would refer to self-taking of photos by oneself.

Language constantly changes because it is dynamic and the same goes with technology. With electronic communication on the rise, the structure of language in

electronic discourse has produced a type of semi-speech, a hybrid between speech and writing; one that is similar to face-to-face conversation as far as interactivity is concerned (AbuSa'aleek, 2015). According to AbuSa'aleek too, electronic discourse has the following linguistic patterns: shortening, clippings and contractions, unconventional spellings, word-letter replacement, word-digits replacement, word combination, use of initials and emoticons. Stark and Crawford (2015) claimed that emoticons humanise a written text by providing a set of emojis that portray human emotions. Bamberg (1997) referred to these as emotional language; a language without words.

This research is situated in a blended learning environment where language plays a vital role in communication. Language has the ability to generate messages that can refer to the present, past or future time and to other locations for the purpose of communicating (Das, 2006) for it takes a community to set up relations between any particular messages. These communities can either constitute of members in a physical classroom or in an online one. The contribution of language during online activities is instrumental to the collaborative knowledge building (Singh, Hawkins, & Whymark, 2007) with the emphasis on cooperation and teamwork which has to do with the well being of a community.

2.2.4 Informal Language

Language does only refer to formal or grammatically correct words. It encompasses slang and swear words. Eble (1997) claimed that the existence of slang in language promotes sociability as people communicate. This indicates that people do not resort

to politically correct language all the time in order to socialise with each other. The manner people socialise is ever changing especially when media plays an essential role at present (Namvar & Ibrahim, 2014). The media is always attempting to reach out to the public and as such has a great influence over the kind of language it uses.

Both swearwords (like *shit* and *screw this*) and slang (like *cool*, *pretty* and *stuff*) have their own functions; the former to express intense emotions, while the latter establishes an egalitarian ideology (Moore, 2012). Most of these words if not all register an actual meaning in the dictionary, for example *shit* as a noun would mean faeces while in verb form it means to expel faeces from the body but as Moore (2012) has indicated it is also used to express excessive emotions. Language is constantly changing and new words are coined and accepted into the Oxford English Dictionary annually because of its continual usage. Izmaylova, Zamaletdinova and Zholshayeva (2017) were of the opinion that slang in a language expresses thoughts and is clear to youths. This could be because to the present generation some words used by the older generations are deemed archaic. Language for today's youths is like fashion; out with the old and in with the new.

Anti-language was the term used by a particular social group that prevented others from outside the group from comprehending it and was formed within a language as a conscious alternative (Halliday, 1978, p. 164). The presence of anti-language, a concept first created by Halliday (1976) justifies the close relationship between language and society. Shi and Li (2017) concur with Halliday that it mirrors as well as establishes new social identities especially among the internet community. Halliday (2001) considered language as a type of social semiotic which means that language is

not constant or fixed and is understood in its usage which is set against a cultural background. Therefore, some swearwords and slang fall into the anti-language category as they consist of words and phrases that depict certain meanings only known to them. Although Halliday's anti-language is associated with a particular society, Tseng (1997) claimed that anti-language can be used to elucidate mystical writing during the Zen period whereby generalisations can be made in discursal rather than the language's lexical and grammatical terms. The functional similarity between Halliday's anti-language and the one used during the Zen period is that both were used by a social group of a particular time and its usage was comprehended by that society.

2.2.5 Choice of Language in this Study

English Language is the choice of language in this study. According to (British Council, 2013) English is the dominant international language of the 21st century and by 2020 it is forecasted that about two billion people will be using or learning to use it and as such it is considered as the global common language. It is also the dominant language in Internet communication (Goodman & Graddol, 1996) thus making English the primary language for online discourse. Another important reason for the choice of this language is the data will be collected from the students of a private university in Malaysia where the medium of instruction is English. However, it is important to be noted that in Malaysia, English Language is considered as the second language but, it does not hold any bearings in this study as the research is concerned if the choice of words reflects any of the students' values.

2.3 Linguistic Theory

The aims of linguistic theory are to identify answers for the question, “what is language” (Langendoen, 1998, p. 235). He is of the opinion that language is a system used for communicating a speaker’s intentions, beliefs, and desires. However, these intentions, beliefs and desires are not merely influenced by the speakers themselves but also by external factors like media, friends or the society they belong to.

The theory of language in the past is as important as the present or the future. Language and thoughts are interwoven and bound to each other. During the Enlightenment period, language and thought were viewed as two distinctive processes whereby thought was the predominant element because ideas were conceived in the mind (Beek, 2004), thus making language secondary to thoughts. The notion of language as the medium used to convey thoughts is only for humans because animals rely on chemical and physical signals as a mode of communication (Frings, 2006) which at times are also employed by humans in the form of eye contact or gestures (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1998).

Predominantly, language functions to facilitate interactions and to relate to others. In concurring with this notion, Hamann (2007) highlighted that language is the means to communicate one’s thought and to understand the thought of others. He also stressed that a person can only think if he has a language because he can only think what he can convey linguistically (p. 17). This idea however, did not take into consideration the non-verbal aspect of human communication and the ability to relay/understand one’s thoughts through body language (Pease & Pease, 2004).

On the other hand, Kant (2017) had dual opinions. The first was the causal dependence of a human's thoughts and concepts on language which would refer to the use of syntax and semantics to relay thoughts. The other viewpoint was 'aesthetic ideas' whereby basic meaning was impossible to be contained in words or language (Forster, 2012) as these thoughts were a set of abstract principles concerned with abstract thoughts like nature, truth or appreciation of beauty and as such were considered metaphorical and introspective (Boot, 2010).

Chomsky (2006) reported the following claims in his book 'Language and Mind': that according to Descartes, language belongs to one species distinctively – humans and it is innovative, stimulus free, and coherent. Chomsky was also in agreement with William Dwight Whitney who viewed "language in the concrete sense . . . is the sum of words and phrases by which any man expresses his thoughts" (p. 18). Since humans have the sole ownership of language, thoughts are expressed through language. However, some thoughts can also be expressed through non-verbal means (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1998). It is also significant to note that language is not the only prominent element to reflect thought process; before humans began expressing thoughts through language, they expressed them through visual depictions (Tversky, 2011).

Be it written, spoken, visual or body language, individuals have the ability to shape language in order to express their personal feelings (Wilhelm von Humboldt, 1999). This is the premise that influenced Sapir and Whorf with their study which claims that language does profoundly shape the manner one thinks which in turn affects the manner one lives one's life (Beek, 2004; Boroditsky, 2014). However, this has been

refuted by claims that a single language does not determine or shape an entire society's world view (Wang, 2017). According to Beek too, Whorf viewed the fact that though language changes slowly, it affects the speakers in a serious manner, especially one's behaviour and actions. Humboldt's concluded claiming that languages used in different cultures are crucial for a communication theory which recognises the possibility of independent everyday communicative action (McLuskie, 2003) and this only reinforces the fact that language is an essential element in any culture for communication. Thus, language does play a vital role in shaping different cultures which in turn has an impact on the individual in that society.

Likewise, according to Griffin (2008b), Count Alfred Korzybski believed that the ability to communicate is the core of being human. As such, humans have the moral imperatives to use the language. Korzybski supported Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis which claimed language frames thoughts and he was of the opinion that words do not necessarily mean things rather it is the people who always do. That was the reason he worked towards the speaker's and listener's consciousness of faulty assumptions (Griffin, 2008). Claims of languages or other elements influencing thoughts have a possibility of some reflective nature of internal experiences (Slezak, 2002) thus leaving the door open to more future debates. The concept of language and its relationship is never simple, however intentions matter in any language use and these intentions may reflect one's values as this study hopes to reveal.

2.4 Pragmatics

Until the first half of the 20th century, the philosophy of language was more interested in the linguistic meaning than the language use (Bach, 2006). In the second half Wittgenstein (1953) suggested that one should not enquire the meaning, but the use of the language and he distinguished between the theory of linguistic meaning which is semantics and theory of language use which is pragmatics. Pragmatics is essential to the theoretical framework of this study as it is about students' own language use.

“We often mean more than what we say” according to Potts (2014) in his chapter on *Pragmatics*. This is supported by Hovy (1990), claiming that at present, people alter the form and content of their text to express more information than what is presented in the literal sense. Pragmatics and semantics are different disciplines (Kracht, 2014); semantics points to the question of meaning while pragmatics points to the question of use. It is similar to Jucker's (2012) belief that the paradigm shift of speaker's competence to the use of language explains the pragmatics use of language.

The framework for early pragmatics development comes from the theory of speech acts which includes non-verbal behaviours (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Eslami-Rasekh (2005) agreed with Austin and Searle that pragmatic competence is based on the knowledge of speech acts and the functions. Furthermore, Eslami-Rasekh (2005) also claimed that second language speakers may develop a new inter-language and a new identity based on their values and beliefs with the speech acts.

The definition of pragmatics is the study of language use (Levinson, 1983, p. 5). However, Gonzalez-Lloret (2012) claimed the definition as one which barely explains

what the field really embodies as the perimeters of pragmatics have criss-crossed other disciplines like computer-mediated communication, linguistics, sociology, discourse analysis, conversation analysis among the few. Antaki (2013) supported this when he presented a paper on how conversation analysis shows different shades of meaning when social action is attained through conversation. Meaning making is a complex concept as it involves different levels of comprehension from both the speaker and the listener as it is not only bound to language but also to the existence of communicative empathy (Lindblom, 2009).

In an interaction, one utters words, phrases and sentences for various reasons and this study hopes to explore if one's values are among these reasons. Hovy (1990) discussed 'how' and 'why' people say the same things differently to different people or at times to the same people but during different circumstances. In his study he highlights the pragmatic aspect of the speaker's intentions coupled with the personal interrelationships in communication and the linguistic aspect about the content of the language. Pragmatics is described through different lens and view points. The setting for this study is in a blended learning environment in the digital age. Thus, this study will focus on the language use at the present time and how it is used in the face-to-face and online forum sessions. It will also show if values have any influence over language use.

2.5 Theory of Politeness

Politeness exists as a product of interaction and it prevails because people perform this function to various degrees as they communicate. The meaning of politeness provided by dictionaries is behaviour that is respectful and considerate of others, tactful, showing deference and courtesy. Eelen (1999) termed it as common sense ideology of politeness that has a set of specifications to what is deemed as polite and impolite in everyday interactions. Interactions implies that there is the presence of a social group or at least more than one and as such politeness is seen as a social action (Goodwin, 2000; Kadar, 2017). However, the interpretation of politeness in relation to behaviour varies for it can be viewed as an opinion based on behaviour, not the behaviour itself and these decisions are derived through expectations achieved through interactions (Haugh, 2007). People do not have the same expectations and since politeness according to Haugh is based on expectations, people do not always agree about evaluations of behaviour as polite, impolite, overpolite and so on (p. 313).

The theory of linguistic is connected to the theory of pragmatics, but there is a difference: the semantic meaning is displayed by the linguistic items themselves, the pragmatic meaning is achieved by the act of uttering them which indicates politeness (Bach, 2006; Brown & Levinson, 1987). These utterances have to be examined if they represent valid claims of politeness and as Eelen (1999) puts it 'to see what exactly is going on beneath the surface' (p. 172) because politeness is one of the most prominent areas of pragmatics (Culpeper, 2011); reason being it is guided by the definitions provided by the participants and not the researchers.

When participants express something, it is based on the intent to say it and as such the idea of intentions permeates social behaviour (Malle & Knobe, 1997). Since there is an intent, it would mean thought processes are involved and as such these social behaviours are linked to values and moral considerations. Adams and Steadman (2004) believe that the connection between an intentional action and moral concerns is likely to be pragmatic and not semantic.

Politeness is seen in both linguistic and non linguistic behaviours indicating that people consider the others' feelings when they interact both through oral and written manner. Moreover, when speakers interact, the basic social role of politeness is viewed in their social interactions which in turn is interpreted as politeness linked to social behaviours and appropriateness of the speaker's utterance (Vilkki, 2006). Minding 'p's and 'q's, having good manners or social etiquettes constitute to having values as it is civil, polite and respectful in a socio-cultural context (Culpeper, 2011), however little is known of the state of politeness in a blended learning environment and this study will highlight if there is any.

Politeness does not take place in a vacuum and there are many factors that affect not only the degree of politeness but also the manner of it. In 1987 Brown and Levinson expanded on their 1978 theory by including the notion of 'face' into politeness and they also concentrated on social factors like power, social distance and degree of imposition which affect interactions. Leech (1983) argued that Brown and Levinson's theory was too Western biased and not applicable to Eastern cultures in agreement with Matsumoto's (1989) claim though his own theory was notably Western biased. However, much later, Leech argued in favour of Brown and Levinson's notion of

‘face’ in politeness and claimed that there was no East-West divide in politeness despite the differences (Leech, 2005). Politeness is an essential element in all cultures and societies, West and East, to preserve a meaningful relationship and also for face saving (Al-Duleimi, Md Rashid & Abdullah, 2016). There is a similarity in the notion of face saving between Brown and Levinson and Schwartz’s Basic Human Values (2012) where Schwartz also claimed ‘face’ as a value and this is one major consideration for using Brown and Levinson’s (1989) Theory of Politeness in this study.

Brown and Levinson’s typology of linguistic politeness strategies divides politeness into two categories: positive politeness and negative politeness. Positive politeness recognises the listener’s wishes and wants to be accepted socially. Among the strategies are, being friendly, seeking agreement and avoiding disagreement, giving compliments, being optimistic or even offering something. Negative politeness on the other hand addresses the listener’s need for some form of freedom in making his/her decisions. Examples of negative strategies would be like being indirect, hedging, being pessimistic in request, be in deference or even begin a request with an apology. As this study is on values, Brown and Levinson’s (1987) both positive and negative politeness strategies might play an essential role in directing the impact of politeness.

Politeness strategies do not have the same effect on different social groups that participate in any interaction. This was highlighted in Burke and Kraut’s (2008) which showed how both politeness and rudeness affected the experiences that online communities experienced in some social groups. On the other hand Bell, Arnold and Haddock (2009), believed that positive politeness is a critical element for rapport-

building in communication. This suggests that the social groups involved in the interaction affect the nature and degree of politeness that surfaces. However, Carlo and Yoo (2007) found significantly more negative and fewer positive politeness strategies online than in face-to-face transactions. This was by comparing transcripts from face-to-face and online chat sessions between reference librarians and students. Though Bell, Arnold and Haddock (2009), claimed positive politeness was crucial for rapport-building communication, it is evident that Carlo and Yoo's study pointed out that negative strategies also contributed to the communication process. As this study is set within a communicative sphere of a classroom group discussion, both strategies will contribute to the interactions.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory highlights two parts: one is concerning the nature of politeness and how it functions in interaction; the other is a list of 'politeness' strategies from three different languages – English, Tzeltal, and Tamil. In all fairness there is ground for contention as 3 languages can hardly be claimed as universal (Vilkkil, 2006). However, Rieger (2018) is of the opinion that second language learners (L2) are able to express their views and judgments to establish polite or impolite behaviour within a group. All the participants in this study are L2 where by English is the second language. It is for this reason that the study employs Brown and Levinson's theory. Language may reflect culture as claimed by Brown and Levinson, however as this study focuses on values reflected in language use, it will be interesting to see if culture influences values through the use of words.

Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987) is seen as the bedrock in the field of politeness whereby many arguments for and against it has emerged since. Though

it is considered as the pillar that provides valuable insights towards human behaviour (Locher & Watts, 2005), it is not free of debate. There is an argument that one has to pay attention to hostile behaviours like impoliteness for it contributes to the dynamics of the communicative process as a whole and as such should be considered as complementary to politeness (Kasper, 1990). An important consideration is that the politeness strategies do not only cover limited type of interactions geared towards a predetermined goal as identified by Kitamura (2001). In his study, Kitamura applied Brown and Levinson's theory to prove that single utterances that are meaningless or repetition play a large role in an exchange during both a goal orientated as well a non-goal orientated interaction. Repetition may represent the impression that something is uttered over and over because the speaker lacks the vocabulary but on the contrary, it may also be an approach to buy some time to correct oneself as Rieger (2003) termed, a self-repair strategy.

There have been other criticisms of the Brown and Levinson model like the two Burke and Kraut (2008) identified. First, the strategies used are ambiguous and have different levels of communication from syntactic to pragmatic. The second is the focus is always placed on the speaker's perception of politeness and not the listener's. These two perceptions may not be congruent because the listener may exhibit impolite mannerism through body language even when the speaker is being polite and vice versa. However, using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies Najeeb, Maros, and Mohd Nor (2012) presented in their study how the Arab students used the strategies to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the emails, thus improving on their pragmatic awareness. There will always be instances when the politeness strategies reveal the intended outcome and there might be times when they

do not.

In her essay Gilks (2010) explored many aspects of Brown and Levinson's theory that have been examined, applied, challenged, or modified since 1987 and concluded that, while the model remains in contention, it continues to be useful and influential in the research world. The conclusion by Gilks together with the other studies in support of this theory, offers the reason for using Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness as part of the theoretical framework for this study.

2.6 Communication

Language and communication are not the same thing as language is a tool used for communication (Krauss & Chiu, 1998). Neither communication nor human beings are considered as passive because humans interpret and react to meanings accordingly whereas communications is said to be an active process influenced by human behaviours (Dixon & O'Hara, 2008). Clappitt (2005) viewed communication as "we actively construct meanings within a unique vortex that includes the words used, the context of the utterances, and the people involved" (p. 8).

Another salient feature in communication is technology. Just as how cultural, economic, and political forces have impacted social changes so have communication technologies, because communication is no longer confined by man-made boundaries. Thus, it influences the discourse structure of society from the perspective of family, work and socio-culture (Lin 2012).

2.6.1 Modes of Communication

The modes of communication and socialization channels today have changed. At present, the older generations prefer to communicate face-to-face but the Y-Gen or the Millennials (those born between early 1980s and early 2000s) favour online interaction (Schrum & Kevin, 2009). The use of emails, online and instant messaging are common forms of communication today (Jonas-Dwyer & Pospisil, 2004).

In online communication, there are two categories to interpersonal dialogue communication according to Gorsky and Caspi (2005). The first is social dialogue where participants present themselves socially and emotionally; and the second is the subject matter oriented dialogue that is more towards the cognitive domain. In this study both the online and face-to-face communication involve three domains; social, affective, and cognitive.

2.6.2 Language in Communication

Any communication is deemed successful if the listener establishes the speaker's intention in the way it is intended (Bach, 2006). Berman (1969) claims that problems surface due to people's lack of ability to express to someone what they mean and both parties, the speakers and listeners, unconsciously assume that they understand each other. Words bear meanings, which are influenced by an individual's own experience, beliefs, and values. Therefore words in the language may not carry the same meaning to all. Vicente & Martínez-Manrique (2008) agree with Berman for they claim that though language is the vehicle of thought, it also gives rise to ambiguity.

Linguistic meaning at times tends to undermine a message that is conveyed or understood as there might be another meaning implied to an utterance other than its literal one (Widiana, 2014; Wang, 2011). Speakers communicate with an intention in mind but the meaning is not always translated as it is meant to be because of the tone, intonation or the stress on a particular syllable, and this provides an avenue for another meaning to be implied; This is termed as implicature (Grice, 1967). Implicature allows for the speaker's meaning to comprise an aspect that is meant in a speaker's utterance without it being actually said (Horn, 2006). However, the speaker's utterance has a conventional meaning first and foremost before an implicature can be prompted (Davies, 2000). Horn (2006) also believes that a speaker's intention in the actual communication process is far richer than what comes out of his/her expressions, for expressions might contribute to an implied meaning. Context also matters in identifying the actual content of an utterance and Levinson (2000) viewed it as pragmatic inference. Moreover, the interpretation of politeness hinges on whether one accepts the speaker's or the listener's perspective (Holtgraves, 2005). The notion of implicature might surface in this study as some utterances may mean more than just the literal meaning and that may imply a value and it is for this reason the study will also look into the speaker's reasons for the choice of words/phrases.

Words have multiple meanings depending on the situations they are employed. In 'The Meaning of Meaning', I.A. Richards associates words to chameleons. Words have no inherent meaning. Just as chameleons that adapt to the environment by changing their colours, words take on the meaning of a particular context which a person encounters (Griffin, 2008c, p. 58). Richards defines context as a cluster of

events that happen at the same time by which he means it does not refer to a sentence or a situation in which the word is spoken. He claims that context is the whole field of experience that can be connected with the event including thoughts of events.

2.6.3 Values Reflected in Communication

At times, the values people subscribe to may determine the course of this communication and it may not be the intended course (Richardson, 1991). Communication imparts or exchanges thoughts, information, opinions or feelings through speech, writings or signs whether its course is intended or not. Therefore, it plays a very important role to humans. In human beings' daily lives, interpersonal communication is a crucial element because they count on each other to care about what is happening to them and so, communication serves the purpose to develop identities and build relationships to cater to this need (Borman, 2010, p. 10). Wideman (2000) suggested the following analogy to describe communication within a group, but it could also refer to communication between any two individuals;

Communication is like engine oil: it needs to be applied to the machinery or the machinery will not start or, if it does, it will quickly falter and grind to a halt. And the oil, like communication, needs to be continuously recycled and regularly replaced with new oil as the old becomes no longer usable. But what of the quality of the oil? Too little or too thin and it is not effective; too thick or too much and everything just gets gummed up. (para. 2)

A conventional value of restrain from hurting others is a necessity and is required for any interaction (online or face-to-face) to progress smoothly (Schwartz, 2005). It is only through effective communication that one understands and makes sense of basic values, intentions and assumptions of another (Dixon & O'Hara, 2008, p. 7).

Establishing an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust to enable students to voice their views without risking verbal abuse creates a value by itself and supports value formation (Pratt, 2005). Creating an avenue for an online discussion forum is a platform to allow for these values to surface. Gilroy (2008) believes that there are concerns about the civility and potential clashes with individual's rights to exercise freedom of speech when groups begin to meet and online platforms are no exception.

Marshal Rosenberg (2003) champions non-violent communication in the attempt to provide a more life-enriching human connection which comprises of three characteristics. First, there is the presence of an empathical connection amongst people. Second, people are aware of the inter-dependent nature of the relationships to each other and value the other's needs. Third, people take care of themselves and others for the main purpose of enriching each other's lives. The characteristics involved in non-violent communication overlap the values seen in social interactions and relationships.

2.6.4 Non-Verbal Communication

Communication is not only restricted through the use of verbal means, as there are many channels of non-verbal communication that includes facial expression, eye gaze, bodily movements, gestures, and vocal cues (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1998). Non-

verbal communication cannot be shut down like linguistics means of communication, for it is futile to refrain behaving non-verbally as the body continues to transmit cues both consciously and sub-consciously (Tiwari, 2015).

2.7 Communication Models Used in This Study

Wilbur Schramm is considered the father of communication. Schramm's model shows how the source, which is the mind sends a message through encoder (the speaker) to the decoder (the listener) who decodes and converts the ideas that have been received (Wallace & Roberson, 2009, p. 36). It indicates how every person who has a field experience in a particular interaction session controls both encoding and decoding of information in order to arrive at the 'intended' meaning (Schramm, 1954). The theory and model that will be used in this research are Schutz' FIRO Theory of Needs and JOHARI Window model. FIRO and JOHARI window to some extent complement each other as FIRO shows why people communicate with each other and what drives them to accomplish their interpersonal needs. On the other hand JOHARI window indicates what is known or unknown about the particular person who is communicating. It is vital to know that JOHARI window is not seen as an extension of FIRO but rather, as completely different model that helps to understand those involved in an interaction. FIRO and JOHARI window are not the focus of this study and will not be highlighted in the findings. They only serve the purpose of setting the background for communication to take place in this study.

2.7.1 Schutz' FIRO

The reason for people to communicate is to fulfil their interpersonal needs during interactions. William Schutz (1958) developed the fundamental interpersonal relations orientation (FIRO) based on the premise that people gravitate towards others based on inclusion, control and affection. This explains the 'what and why' of a person's actions towards others (Griffin, 2008a, p. 93).

According to Schutz (1958) people have three interpersonal needs. The first is the need for inclusion whereby the individual is either in or out of the entire communicative process. Inclusion can be negotiated in two different manners; one may want inclusion from others or the person may reach out to others so that they are not friendless and lonely.

Second is the need for control, which has to do with either being on top or at the bottom in a relationship. Control is also seen in two different manners; some wish to be dominant and in control of others while others wish to be dependent on others. The latter will be seen as more trusting, respectful and willing to serve.

Originally, the last need is for affection and that has to do with being close or far. Affection is also seen in two different manners; that some may want to receive affection but do not reciprocate in giving it to others by displaying being distant. However, Schutz later revised by removing affection as a dimension and replacing it with openness (1984) which is also taken in two contrasting aspects; that some may want others to be open but are not being open themselves.

FIRO was widely used in many studies for different reasons because the one common factor that links to the use of FIRO is basis need for communication. A study by Forrester, Taschian and Shore (2016) on business students using FIRO, revealed that when students agree, they expressed affection and formed close relationships and avoided domineering behaviours. Schutz' FIRO was employed for mentoring and coaching medical students to adjust to their school life by making them aware of their interpersonal orientations (Hur, Cho, Huh & Kim, 2017). Ahmetoglu, Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham's (2010) study on managers using FIRO-B (a tool to measure interactions between two people) showed that control predicted their managerial level rather than their intelligence. In a study on virtual communities using FIRO, Li and Lai (2007), asserted that theories like FIRO was effective in explaining the purposes for virtual community participations.

Though, Schutz' FIRO has simple characteristics as shown in the table below, Youngs (2013) believed that it represents a crucial breakthrough on interpersonal personality models by using interpersonal interactions as a base.

Table 2.1: Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO)

	Inclusion	Control	Affection/Openness
Wants from others	Acceptance	Guidance	Closeness
Express to others	Interest	Leadership	Liking

During a communicative process, these three needs are essential and they reflect certain values both by the speakers and listeners. People's tendency to create and maintain relationships depends how well they meet these three Schutz' needs (Borman, 2010).

FIRO was developed in 1958 but it is still used at present to identify the needs for communication, based on the studies conducted as of recent (Forrester, Taschian & Shore, 2016; Hur, Cho, Huh & Kim, 2017)). There is no doubt that communication theories have moved on from 1958, but FIRO is one that deals with the need for interpersonal communication. As the focus in any interpersonal communication is always on what is expressed and what is expected in return, this theory is apt. This study is on values in students' language use during interaction and Schutz' FIRO theory of needs, will cater to the pragmatic needs of communication among the students which may explain the reasons for their language use. Since the premise for Schutz' FIRO is that people align themselves with others, it is useful to have FIRO in the background of this study to provide a sense of direction and understanding of the entire communicative process.

2.7.2 JOHARI Window

Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham (1955) created a communication model called the JOHARI Window that is used in interpersonal communication. It is a tool to show the interaction between what is known/unknown to oneself and others. It has four 'window panes' and each has distinctive characteristics representing the basic area of knowledge or information as shown in the figure below.

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to others	Free area I	Blind area II
Not known to others	Hidden area III	Unknown area IV

Figure 2.1: The Johari Window

The four-part figure mirrors the interaction between two origins of information: one being self, and the other being others. The square area symbolises the interpersonal space, divided into four smaller areas, each displaying the quality of the relationships ranging from mutual understanding to an area where either self or others know about. The goal of having JOHARI Window is to establish the importance of open communication in a group and that is the reason for using it in this study.

JOHARI Window was used in many studies involving interpersonal interactions. Wallace and Roberson, (2009) utilised this model on a study of managers but, claimed it can be used on anyone who is involved in interpersonal interaction (p. 32), which was also concurred by Nair and Naik (2010) in their study. In a group discussion there is constant giving and receiving feedbacks, which can be used even in a military training session (Beganu & Nitán, 2006). In the field of business, Hamzah, Othman, Hassan, Abdul Razak & Mohammad Yunus (2016) adopted JOHARI Window to discover employees' ability to comprehend customer knowledge. This model was also claimed to be a helpful tool in offering improvement of general communication patterns in dialogues among religious groups (Shamoa-Nir, 2017).

JOHARI Window is essential to understand the dynamics of the interaction that takes places in this study. It provides an avenue for participants to see themselves from different perspectives and to understand the values reflected by their own language use in both online and face-to-face interactions. Newstrom and Rubenfield (1983) concluded that JOHARI Window serves a purpose to people, as there is always a need to be aware of the self and to what degree others know them. This study has opted to

refer to this model to understand the essences of communication and in the process, furnish answers to why they communicated in the manner that they did.

2.8 Definition of Values

Hebel (1999) claimed that values are like “heirlooms” (p. 255) something that is passed down through time and that could be the reason for individuals, groups, and societies to cling on to the values acclaimed by past philosophers and forefathers, and redefine them. In supporting Hebel’s views Debbarma (2014), emphasised the importance of human values which can be recognised from the childhood of a person and that value education starts from families as they are the first source of information.

Values are different from personality because values are cognitive embodiment of people’s motivation which is required to correlate to the behaviours whereas personality traits are based on pattern of the behaviours (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994). The cognitive aspect prevails in values because one thinks about his/her motivation to say or act in a manner and this thought process highlights the cognitive process. However, there has been a recent study by Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi (2015) which proposes a strong correlation between personality traits and personal values, especially openness to experience indicating self-direction and stimulation values based on Schwartz’ personal values (see Figure 2.2). This is indicative that though values are different from personality traits, they might be an influencing factor for some traits like being confident, opinionated or focused among a few.

Values are defined according to individual perceptions and beliefs and certain values are more important to some but not so to others. People decide for themselves what are the desirable values for them to live by (Pratt, 2005) and that is why values are considered subjective to the individual. This is further expanded and explained by Prabhu (2011) that values are embedded in basic human needs and also in societal demands.

Initially, Rokeach (1973) viewed values as ethics or morals since values are considered as life-orientating principles. Later Rokeach, defined values as the “defining characteristics of a social institution” (1979; p.51). Schwartz (2005) supported this by claiming that values intertwine with culture but differ in meaning, priority, and their importance are based on the culture, time, and place that is being analysed.

It is believed that values in the real world are independent concepts to people and so, the important question is not what are values but rather, how do people conceptualise values especially unconsciously and how these values play a significant part in people’s judgments and behaviours (Jackendoff, 2006). According to Jackendoff (2006) values are being approached in terms of their cognitive aspects rather than the affective and one of the reasons for this is a distinct connection between the value systems and the linguistic expression. Rokeach (1973) claimed that values act as cognitive representations of needs and humans are the only animals that have the ability for such representations and this makes human beings base their lives on values.

Why are values considered important in one's life? Friedman, Kahn, & Borning (2006) defined values as something that a person or a group of people consider important enough that accounts as a principle in their life. Values function as markers, standards for daily conduct, and guiding principles that may be of moral, aesthetic, religious, philosophical, economic, or socio-cultural standings (Scott, 2014). Schwartz (2005) defined values as trans-situational goals of varying importance that act as fundamental code of ethics that guide people's lives and since values are seen as a guiding principle in a person's life, it is deemed important.

Values have received much attention in recent times. Licht (2011) views values as a set of guiding tools that select, explain, evaluate or justify actions, people or events. Values are "man-made instruments" (Zaki, 2008 p.17) that function to challenge and transform human relationships. These values can only be understood in reference to their manifestations in the said relationships. Zaki insists that values are meant as a system in communities through which they can identify and differentiate members. Sergiovanni (1994) believed that people are bonded to one another as a consequence of their mutual bindings to shared values, traditions, ideals, and ideas, something that is also agreed by Rosenberg (2003b). With all these, the ability to make judgments is ingrained in everyone for it is an essential element for survival. However, Rosenberg (2003a) claims that he differentiates life-serving judgments as one that meets one's needs from moralistic judgments that imply what is right and wrong. The line that differentiates these two judgements is a fine one because the judgment that meets one's need can overlap with his/her moral standings and vice versa. Furthermore, what is right and wrong in the realm of morality is subjective and is based on one's own guiding principle (Pratt, 2005).

2.8.1 Language Reflecting Values

Language use is indicative of a person's values and the principles that he or she lives by. According to Whorf, language influences one's life and the perception of reality (Carroll, 1978). It is the primary means of communication and is present in all social contexts (Amberg & Vause, 2009). The language people use points to who they are, to their beliefs, ideas, values, and desires (Quine, 1960; Davidson, 1986). Values are seen as concepts that socially appealing and in social interaction vocabulary is used to express these values (Schwartz, 2006). When a speaker speaks, the language that is used defines the speaker's intent, which in turn is bound by the speaker's moral and ethical concerns (Haugh, 2013). This suggests that a real world interaction session takes place within the perimeters of both language and values. In addition, Chung and Pennebaker (2014) claim that value-laden language is ubiquitous in daily life.

Boroditsky (2001) promoted the idea of value as an abstract notion. She claimed that to shape abstract thoughts language is seen as a powerful tool since it defines how the speakers think. In agreeing with Boroditsky, Levinson (2003), stated that the manner someone thinks will be seen in the way the person speaks or communicates. Languages vary in semantics, thus affecting the person's thoughts and what is said will be perceived differently. That is why the speaker's perspective is crucial and has to be investigated so as to give some form of context thus, having a real sense of values perceived by the speaker at that point in time.

As language and values are interlinked, one always plays a significant role on the other. It is said to be "deeply entangled with the spiritual evolution of mankind" and that is why it is closely associated to character formation because language exposes

human nature (Humboldt, 1988). Whether it is social perception, personal identity, social interaction or attitude change, language is implicated because it strongly affects social life as social life is inherent in the manner language is used (Krauss & Chiu, 1998).

Morality of language exists essentially in the use of the language and not entirely in its content as argued by Dhillon (2003). Her paper focused on the moral use of the language: that is, an utterance is good if it is meant well and so, it depends on the speaker's perspective. Another point she noted is that when one speaks, one cannot grasp the moral status of one's own use of language but is more easily and more ready to judge that of others. That is why this study required the speaker to give reasons for some of the word choices, that may reveal his/her own values.

2.8.2 Emergence of Values in Online Communication

Values are present in any interaction because it involves people and it is not exclusive to only face-to-face communication. Online communication is fast becoming another mode to interact. A research by Pereira, Baranauskas and Da Silva (2013) presented a literature review on values on online communication that is social softwares and educational technology. They identified a list of values like trust, identity, and affection among others as the first step in the direction of a value based and culturally informed approach to the design of technology aimed to encourage learning through social interaction.

Pereira, Baranauskas and Da Silva (2013) are of the opinion that computer systems affect the behaviours that are intrinsically related to the individuals and the complex

culture, in which they are using it, depends on the way the system is designed. This would explain the many systems incorporated in the online aspect of blended learning that are in place for interaction to take place.

Being cooperative is a value and in Motschnig-Pitrik and Mallich's (2004) study on blended learning, they discovered that there was a constructive mode of sharing as well as cooperative learning, which was more rapid if compared to completely face-to-face or online setting.

Values show us who we are as human beings (Scott, 2014), and according to (Singh, 1996) the technology that is around today has tremendous potential to spread global values and foster a more caring, compassionate and respectful human beings beginning with a micro level in a classroom. The preferred learning strategies shown by the present students (Y-Gen), among others are teamwork and the use of technology (Oblinger, 2003). To address this issue, according to (Howe & Strauss, 2000) friendship and the duty to help others should be emphasized to showcase teamwork, which in turn helps with community building.

If values indicate who we are as human beings and culture plays a role in determining the values in a society, what part does the Internet play in looking at ourselves?

Federman (2003) has the following to say about the Internet:

“What is the culture of a place that is everywhere and nowhere, that is at once global but renders the globe obsolete that globalizes the individual yet strips our individuality? The place to which I am referring is the Internet, and these questions represent the intriguing paradox that the Internet presents to us, one that requires us to look beyond what we can easily see or hear or touch.” (p. 2)

The idea of Internet playing a major role in defining the growth of communication thus, defining individuals and society as well as their values and beliefs is an enigma to Federman.

A research by Swaminathan and Mulvihill (2013) indicates that students view equality, safety, and comfort as something that they experienced during their online communication session. These attributes to the societal values that Schwartz has defined. This is in an agreement with a survey by Lilly and Schwartz (2009) where they found that students were claiming moral values as important to them personally, both in life directions and collegiate experiences. Societal values promote a sense of security and promotes harmonious social relations and having an online communication session fostered a meaningful relationship.

The language that people use online also represents the values that are important to them. As mentioned by Littlejohn and Pegler (2007), there are issues relating to students' code of conduct especially the etiquette or 'netiquette' when communicating in an online learning community because at present students enter education with prior experience of online behaviour which may not have the necessary formality. Netiquette is a word coined from Internet and etiquette and among the values that netiquette upholds are mutual courtesy and politeness (Averianova, 2007). The future of content does not only comprise of digital and technological but rather the ethics, sociology, and languages and other things that go with them (Prensky, 2001). Chen, Hsieh, Mahmud and Nichols (2014) in the research confirmed that word usage in social media which is an online platform can be considered as a potential predictor of the user's values. This study hopes to examine if values influence word use in a

blended learning environment.

On the other hand, Britez (2007) differed in opinion by stating the reason individuals in virtual communities take part in collective activities is not because of shared values but due to common interests. He also claimed that this lack of common values will give rise to the lack of a stable set of rules pertaining social interaction, which the community unconsciously acquires and practices, especially if the interaction is online. People gravitate towards each other because they have common interest or they have something to say and that is the basis for social interaction; not because of common values (Chen, Hsieh, Mahmud & Nichols, 2014). This study hopes to reveal if in the course of online communication, participants reveal similar or opposing values to the ones during the face-to-face conversations.

Just as every society in the world has its own social norms and values, so does the Internet community and these values are referred to as netiquette. Presently, the use of signs and emoticons are also considered as acceptable social behaviours. Stark and Crawford (2015) assert that these emoticons humanize the platform they are being used on and are the representation of feelings, especially happiness. This is because language is transparent and it reflects emotions (Bamberg, 1997). In their research, Tchokni, Se'aghdha and Quercia (2014) found the use of emoticons as an effective reader of social status and that those who use them, especially the positive emoticons, are likely to be popular.

2.8.3 Values in a Community

In an interview, Rosenberg asserts that the survival of human species depends on everyone's ability to recognise the fact that the well-being of every individual is one and the same (Rosenberg, 2003). The existence of a community is vital and according to Sergiovanni's 'Building Community in Schools', the community is seen as a basic human need (Lynch, 2013).

An increasing number of studies relate to the importance of values to behaviours and social roles. A recent study on Malaysian university students showed that the development of values pertaining professionalism and ethics is vital for the development of the nation (Mohamed, Sidek, Kudus & Abu Hassan, 2017). As research on values continues, it becomes apparent that the decisions people make and the behaviours they exhibit are consistent with their take on values (Licht, 2011). Green (1979) is of the opinion that the 'survival and maintenance' of a society relies on the transference of crucial value patterns to people joining in the existing circle of network. This was the outcome of his study in a rural setting whereby the students, their peers, and teachers subscribe to similar value patterns indicative of mutual acceptance of each other's values.

In the tourism community, Weeden (2011) revealed the presence of a wide range of values consisting of respect, responsibility, sharing, and connecting with people were some of the values related to social aspect. These were identified in her research on tourists. According to Weeden (2011) too, these values convey the fact that a responsible tourist tends to show respect for local people and their customs. They exhibit a desire to build relationships with others. If tourists are considered as a

community and can exhibit some values, can the student community also exhibit values through language use in a blended learning environment? Hence, this study is relevant to note if the student community shows consistency in the values through language use through two modes of communications.

Based on their study using Schwartz's (1992) typology, Ben-Nun Bloom and Bagno-Moldavsky (2014) explained how being socially diverse contributes to tolerance when people are more open-minded and have high regards for other people's opinions. On the other hand Meeussen, Delvaux, & Phalet (2014) claimed that personal values like achievement can influence group identities. As such, it shows that not only social values determine social relationship, but also personal values like self-direction of thoughts, dominance, and achievement among others.

The values ingrained in people play important roles in their lives. They (values) identify who these people are, their beliefs and what they stand for. There is also a distinct relationship between personal values and personality traits (Parks-Leduc, Feldman, & Bardi, 2015) and the nature of this relationship contributes to one's overall actions towards the other. Since Schwartz's basic human values theory (Schwartz et al., 2012) covers the values that are recognised in all societies and has identifies 10 values pertaining to the social aspect, it will form the base upon which the study will be conducted. However, any emergence of the 9 personal values will be addressed accordingly.

On the other hand, not all researches on values with regards to social aspect disclose positive results. Anxieties about peer judgement and the fear that others may steal

their ideas or data are factors that generate highly intrinsic individual values rather than social values. This is based on a comparative study on values regarding the reasons for scholars to conduct and disseminate research (Trotter, 2014).

In addition to the notion of values in a community, Jackendoff (2006) has wrapped up the idea that the basic parameters for the logic of values in an individual to a certain degree is universal. Similarly, Prabhu (2011) insisted that in the 21st century people have to tap the universal values in order to reconnect with their values and relook at what is important in their life.

2.8.4 Values Identified in Communication

Universally, one aspect that is reflected in linguistic form is politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1978) and being polite is a value in all cultures. The manner in which a person speaks will indicate his or her identity (Brown & Levinson, 1978) and will act as a marker which in turn will highlight the guiding principles of that particular person.

Respect is another universal value and how the language is used denotes the level of respect. The language used to describe people can be a strong and powerful form of respecting or disrespecting them as individuals based on an action research conducted by Elwell (1999) on inclusive communities and she provides a list of vocabulary establishing respectful language and disrespectful language.

In addition to this, Rosenberg (2003) described his nonviolent communication as a language of compassion and a tool for social change. Nonviolent communication is an

integration of thoughts and language outlined to serve a specific intention, which is to create quality relationship with other people allowing compassionate giving to take place. Rosenberg was of the view that certain words and phrases in our communicative manner will reconnect us to our compassionate nature.

It is said that making sense of an account in a discourse highlights a sense of communicative process. It gives a satisfactory personal moral explanation, which is a real life moral task. That is the reason dialogues make it possible; for one acquires and negotiates the outlines to view and value one's experience (Haste & Abrahams, 2008).

Sulkunen and Torronen (1997) supported that discourse features communicative process in their study. The analysis of values in textual structures involves the overlapping of three essential elements: representations of social reality in discourse, the identities of the speaker and emotions based on the values present (Sulkunen & Torronen, 1997). This is because a discourse text consists of language and is seen to represent values that are ingrained with ideas and attitudes.

Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs in mankind places self-actualization at the highest level. The category of needs at this level calls for meta-needs which is synonym to B-values (being values) or meta-values (Harper & Guilbault, 2008). The notion for this need to develop one's potential and identify one's purpose in life, leads to fulfilment. Non-violent communication emphasises on what is alive in an individual. What is alive in a person is this need; an individual's feelings are the manifestation of what is taking place with these needs (Rosenberg 2003). Among the B-values that are universal in self-actualising people, in relation to social interaction, include the value

for truth, goodness, wholeness, and honesty (Harper & Guilbault, 2008). These values overlap with Schwartz's basic human values. Still, not all values have immediate effect on behaviours. Eyal, Sagristano, Trope, Liberman, and Chaiken (2009) claimed that values better predict one's behavioural intentions in the distant future rather near future situations. This study hopes to reveal if these values are reflected in their language use and if the participants are aware of their values.

2.9 Theories on Values

People relate to values that are important to them and those that resonate with them. These values differ in not only in levels of importance but also from person to person according to their principles of life.

Values contribute to the action that is being conducted, thus making it important for that particular person (Schwartz, 1992; 2012). As far as people are concerned, serving their needs is crucial and one concept that they use to prioritise their needs is shared values because families and cultures teach and abide by a set of personal values that demonstrate the emotional and intelligent needs accordingly (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

How people think about the nature of human values has been to a great extent influenced by the work of Milton Rokeach (1973; 1979) whereby his value system identified two kinds of values. One was instrumental, referring to conduct and reflecting characteristics that are socially desirable while the other as terminal, referring to the end states of living that have been idealised. Rokeach furnished a comprehensive coverage of values that reduced the vast number of values to 36 values

ranging from personal to social values and moral to competence values (Rokeach, 1973).

2.9.1 Schwartz' Basic Human Values Theory

Schwartz built on Rokeach's work to provide a theory of value types (Schwartz, 1992; 1994). According to Schwartz (1992, 2012), the conception of basic values are based on the following six main features. These six features differentiate values from other concepts like needs and attitudes, thus making it possible to deduce that security and independence are values while, hunger, thirst, and a preference for black shoes are not.

The theory of basic human values by Schwartz (1992), deals with ten basic values which was later revised to nineteen values (Schwartz et al., 2012) related to attitude, opinions, behaviours, personality, and characteristics. These are seen in all societies, differing in importance, as some values may be essential and meaningful to one person but not to another. Schwartz also categorised his 19 values as either social focus or personal focus that where within the dimensions of hedonism, self-transcendence versus self-enhancement and conversation versus openness-to-change which will be elaborated later in the chapter (see 2.9.2).

Schwartz used SVS or PVQ questionnaires to identify these values based on his theory. Potts (2015), who reviewed Schwartz' (2012), claimed that benevolence reflected the main element of family in a person's harmonious relations, social networks and the evolution of all other values. This is congruent with the findings of Rosario, Carmen and Biagio's (2014) that show benevolence and universalism values

as the main values for the success of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. A study on Arab teachers in Israel also displayed social values particularly benevolence and conformity values (Cohen, 2010). There are 10 social values and the presence of 3 values are predominant in the studies above but there are other social values in Schwartz' basic human values theory which might emerge in this study.

On the other hand, studies using Schwartz' SVS or PVQ also presented inconclusive findings. Karppinen and Korhonen (2013) conducted a study on forest owners and found the relationship between values and their behaviour ambiguous though they exhibited values like benevolence, security and conformity. Similarly, Pilch and Baran's (2013) findings were inconclusive on the values that contribute to voters' preference. On the other hand Piscicelli, Cooper, and Fisher's (2014) results indicated that individual values might hinder business models signifying that individual are free to exhibit solely personal values.

Many of the studies that employed Schwartz' basic human values theory used large samples and quantitative method using PVQ or SVS questionnaires. The table below highlights a few studies based on data collected using these questionnaires.

Table 2.2: Studies on values using Schwatz' PVQ or SVS questionnaires

Year	Author/s	Title	Sample and data collection	Findings
2009	Tal Eyal Michael D. Sagristano Yaacov Trope Nira Liberman Shelly Chaiken	When values matter: Expressing values in behavioral intentions for the near vs. distant future	71 participants used SVS questionnaire	Values better predicts behavioural intentions of distant future that near future situations

2010	Aaron Cohen	Values and commitment: A test of Schwartz's Human Values Theory among Arab teachers in Israel	369 participants used PVQ questionnaire	Findings support the fact that Arabs represent more communal values like conformity and benevolence
2013	Irena Pilch Lidia Baran	Personal values, perceptions of unfairness in social exchange and happiness among young voters and non-voters in Poland	562 participants used PVQ questionnaire	Value findings were inconclusive to indicate voters' preference
2013	Heimo Karppinen Mika Korhonen	Do forest owners share the public's values? An application of Schwartz's value theory	1000 participants used SVS questionnaire	General values in society are reflected in forest owners but with differences in priorities
2014	Laura Piscicelli Tim Cooper Tom Fisher	The role of values in collaborative consumption: Insights from a product-service system for lending and borrowing in the UK	2340 participants used PVQ questionnaire	Individual values are partly the cause of failure in the acceptance of collaborative consumption
2014	González-Rodríguez Ma Rosario Díaz-Fernández Ma Carmen Simonetti Biagio	Values and corporate social initiative: An approach through Schwartz theory	1,060 participants used PVQ questionnaire	Identified the influence of values on perception of success of corporate social initiatives
2014	Loes Meeussen Ellen Delvaux Karen Phalet	Becoming a group: Value convergence and emergent work group identities	295 participants used SVS questionnaire	Achievement values influence group identities
2014	Jilin Chen Gary Hsieh Jalal Mahmud Jeffrey Nichols	Understanding Individuals' Personal Values from Social Media Word Use	1305 social media users used PVQ questionnaire	Confirmed word use in social media as a potential predictor of people's values
2015	Laura Parks-Leduc Gilad Feldman Anat Bardi	Personality traits and personal values: A meta-analysis	Based on 88 studies used PVQ questionnaire	Understand relationship between personal traits and personal values

Table 2.2 shows a few studies that used Schwartz' PVQ or SVS questionnaires which indicate that these studies were conducted in a quantitative manner and highlight both social and personal values. This research however will employ a qualitative method to study the emerging values reflected in language use and though the focus is on social values, it will address all the values that emerge during two modes of interactions, spoken and written.

Schwartz' values are based on how values are conceptualised. These values are underpinned by 6 features for the conception of values. These will indicate the reasons or motivations for any value to emerge or how the values are conceived. These features do not claim values as social or personal values for they can be either one. The table below gives a brief description on the conception of Schwartz' basic values.

Table 2.3: Conception of basic values based on the six main features (Schwartz; 1992, 2012; p.3)

	Conception of basic values	Descriptions
1.	Values are beliefs that are linked inextricably to affect	When values are activated, they become infused with feeling.
2.	Values refer to desirable goals that motivate action.	People for whom social order, justice, and helpfulness are important values are motivated to promote these goals.
3.	Values transcend specific actions and situations.	Obedience and honesty, for example, are values that may be relevant at work or in school, in sports, business, and politics, with family, friends, or strangers. This feature distinguishes values from narrower concepts like norms and attitudes that usually refer to specific actions, objects or situations.
4.	Values serve as standards or criteria.	Values guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events. People decide what is good or bad, justified or illegitimate, worth doing or avoiding, by considering the effects on attaining their cherished values.
5.	Values are ordered by importance relative to one another.	The ordered set of values forms a system of value priorities. Societies and individuals can be characterised by their systems of value priorities. This hierarchical

		feature also distinguishes values from norms and attitudes.
6.	The relative importance of multiple values guided actions.	Any attitude or behaviour typically has implications for more than one value. For example, attending religious teachings might express and promote tradition, conformity, and security values for a person at the expense of hedonism and stimulation values. The trade-off among relevant, competing values is what guides attitudes and behaviours.

According to Schwartz (1992), values represent the goal of identifying meaning in life and in referring to basic types of human values. It is crucial that these values are distinguished in all cultural groups, thus making a study on values across cultures critical to a theory. Schwartz conducted surveys in many countries to corroborate his theory of basic human values. The choice of 20 countries in 1992, 44 countries in 1994 and 10 countries in 2012 (Schwartz, 1992; 1994; 2012; Schwartz et al., 2001) expounds the idea of values seen across cultures from USA, Canada, Bolivia, Venezuela, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, Indonesia, Singapore, India, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Greece, Denmark, Italy, England, Israel, Slovakia, and even Malaysia to name a few. Schwartz' Basic Human Value Theory has spanned over a period of time across the different continents in the world, thus fortifying the underpinning reason to employ this theory in this study.

2.9.2 Schwartz Circular Motivational Continuum

Schwartz created a circular structure to portray how the values are in relation to each other; that is, are they in conflict or in congruence with one another. The structure also indicates social focus values and personal focus values and the association between them as shown in the Figure 2.2.



Figure 2.2: Proposed circular motivational continuum of 19 values (Schwartz et al., 2012)

The circular motivational continuum structure is essential to the theory of basic human values for two reasons. First, it recognises a systematic pattern in relation to all the values. Values next to each other in the inner circle are expected to react in a similar fashion and those that are opposite sides of the circle display contradicting affiliation. Schwartz' circular structure shows the relations of values being in congruence and conflict. All the values are within the 4 value dimensions which are self-transcendence and conservation and they encompass values that are more towards social focus; while openness-to-change and self-enhancement embody values that are inclined towards personal focus.

Second, it represents the dynamic foundation of the relations of values to one another. Adjacent values reflect more compatibility to each other' motivations, while the opposing values reflect conflicting motivations. Values on the right side of the circle

are responsible for expressing personal interests and characteristics. These values are self-direction thought and action, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power in dominance and resource, face, and personal security. The values on the left side are indicative of how one relates socially to others. These values are universalism in tolerance, nature and concern, benevolence in dependability and caring, humility, conformity in interpersonal and rules, tradition, and societal security. The manner in which these values emerge is elaborated in sub-section 2.9.3.

2.9.3 Schwartz' Values

Schwartz' Basic Human Values is based on the revised 19 values (Schwartz et al., 2012) though he started with the basic 10 values (Schwartz, 1992). This study employs Schwartz' values as the underpinning theory as they are related to attitudes, behaviours, opinions, personality and characteristics. All of these can be seen in the language people use during interaction and as such is very relevant to this study.

Schwartz argued that Rokeach had too many values in his theory and he went on to defined values in the broad goal they express (1992, 1996, 2012). His conception of values theory is built upon other studies and theories from Bandura, Deci, Freud, Parsons, Allport, Kluckhohn, Maslow, Williams, and Lonner (Schwartz, 2012).

Licht (2011) believes that Schwartz's theory on basic human values is comprehensive and one that depicts universal requirements of human existence which includes personal needs, social interaction and group functioning as motivational goals for living.

A brief description of Schwartz' 19 values are provided below. These definitions and explanations are relevant to this study as they are the basis for the discussion for the findings in Chapter 4. Based on Schwartz' (2012) Circular Motivational Continuum the 19 values will be explained in clockwise beginning with the personal values.

The first among the personal values is self-direction values. The definition of self-direction values involves choosing, creating and exploring. Self-direction values are seen in two different aspects; thoughts and actions. These are driven by the need to control and reflect self-respect, intelligence, creativity, curiosity and independence.

Beside self-direction is another personal value of stimulation. It is defined by the goal of excitement and challenges in life. To Schwartz, it is something positive instead of a threat and it relates to an exciting life or presents an idea of daring.

Next to stimulation is a value referring to pleasure. The goal of pleasure or gratification of oneself is associated with satisfying oneself like enjoying life, being self-indulgent or having pleasure. This value in the circular motivational continuum structure is termed as hedonism. This value is also of a personal nature.

Achievement is viewed as a value by Schwartz. Schwartz referred to achievement as personal success one achieves by showing one's competence by social standards and as such obtaining social approval. This points to one seeking social recognition and self-respect, often reflecting ambitious, successful, capable and intelligent individuals. Achievement value is a personal value next to hedonism.

Power is treated as a value by Schwartz as its goal is to have dominance over people and/or resources in order to attain social status and prestige. Schwartz believed that self-esteem is the focus of both power and achievement values. However, power values like wealth and authority, hold a dominant position in the social system whereas, achievement values like being ambitious, place the emphasis on the active show of competence in social interaction.

Next to power value is another personal value called face value. Face is considered as a value as it concerns maintaining one's public image which ensures avoiding any form of humiliation or shame. It is related to power in the sense of having control through prestige and that is the reason this value is next to power.

Another value identified by Schwartz is the value of security which is seen as security for personal and/or societal. Having a sense of social order, family security, national security, sense of belonging, and being moderate are Schwartz' perception of security values. These values are motivated by the notion of safety, harmony, stability of self, relationships and society. His security value is divided into personal value which is about the stability of self and social value which denotes society. This is the only Schwartz' value that has one aspect in personal and the other in social.

Next to the societal security value is the value of conformity which is a social value. Conformity is viewed as a value which embodies two aspects; interpersonal and rules. The definition of Schwartz' conformity value is one's emphasis on self-restraint in day-to-day interactions. This is identified when one is obedient, self-disciplined, responsible, loyal, honours the elders, and shows politeness.

Beside conformity is the social value of tradition. Schwartz' value in tradition derives from the respect, commitment, and acceptance of other cultures, religions, customs and ideas. This would symbolise solidarity within the group thus, ensuring its continuous survival. Conformity and tradition values share similar goals and that is the reason they are next to each other in Schwartz' circular motivational continuum structure. The difference is, conformity involves frequent interaction among people while tradition involves more abstract matters like customs, culture and religion.

Next to the value of tradition is humility which is also a social value. This is because humility consists of some aspects from both interpersonal values in conformity and caring values in benevolence.

Similar values overlap humility and benevolence and that is the reason benevolence comes next. Benevolence is another value which looks at dependability and/or caring. Benevolence values focus on concern for others by being helpful, honest, responsible, being cooperative, loyal and forgiving which promotes social relations. Schwartz has placed benevolence and conformity side by side in his circular motivational continuum structure which means they promote similar goals pertaining to enhancing the welfare of those who come in-contact with others. However, conformity advocates cooperation to avoid negative outcomes for oneself whereas, benevolence boosts internalised motivating in oneself.

The last value in Schwartz' circular motivational continuum structure is universalism values. It categorises three different aspects; tolerance, concern and nature. This value deals with tolerance, understanding and appreciation of not only people but also of

nature. This value is a social value as it incorporates concerns for the welfare of people in the larger society and for nature thus dealing with inner harmony and spiritual life.

As this study is based on interactions the focus will be on the social aspect. Therefore, it will examine values in the language use in the communication that highlights social focus like tolerance, nature, concern, dependability, caring, humility, interpersonal, regard for rules, upholding traditions, and societal values. However, personal values emerging during the interaction will also be addressed. Each value has its own individual, motivational goal based on Schwartz's definition. A summary of the definitions for these values are as follows.

Table 2.4: The 19 values in the Refined Basic Value Theory, each defined in terms of its motivational goal (Schwartz, et al., 2012)

No.	Value	Conceptual definitions in terms of motivational goals
1.	Self-direction–thought	Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities
2.	Self-direction–action	Freedom to determine one's own actions
3.	Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and change
4.	Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification
5.	Achievement	Success according to social standards
6.	Power–dominance	Power through exercising control over people
7.	Power–resources	Power through control of material and social resources
8.	Face	Security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation
9.	Security–personal	Safety in one's immediate environment
10.	Security–societal	Safety and stability in the wider society
11.	Tradition	Maintaining and preserving cultural, family, or religious traditions
12.	Conformity–rules	Compliance with rules, laws, and formal obligations

13.	Conformity–interpersonal	Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people
14.	Humility	Recognizing one’s insignificance in the larger scheme of things
15.	Benevolence–dependability	Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the ingroup
16.	Benevolence–caring	Devotion to the welfare of ingroup members
17.	Universalism–concern	Commitment to equality, justice, and protection for all people
18.	Universalism–nature	Preservation of the natural environment
19.	Universalism–tolerance	Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself

2.10 Blended Learning

Based on results of a survey conducted by European University Association in 38 European countries involving 249 higher education institutions, a staggering 91% of the universities employ blended learning and two thirds of them use it for language teaching (Gaebel, Kupriyanova, Morais, & Colucci, 2014). Though, no recent data is available on the percentage of blended learning use in this country, based on the data from European University Association, one can say that blended learning approach is on the rise.

A report on the ‘Impact of Information Technology on the Future of the Research University’ claimed that technology will change universities’ limitations on time and space. This will therefore, transform them into higher institutions that are more organised because blended learning uses a pedagogical approach that integrates effectiveness and socialization by increasing the interaction between student-lecturer and student-student (Dziuban, Hartman, & Moskal, 2004).

Table 2.5: Percentage of web to traditional instruction as presented in *Blending In: The Extent and Promise of Blended Learning in the United States* by Allen, Seaman, and Garrett (2007)

Proportion of content delivered online	Type of course	Typical description
0%	Traditional	Courses with no online technology used. Content delivered in writing or orally.
1-29%	Web facilitated	Courses which uses web-based technology to facilitate what is essentially a face-to-face course. Used to post syllabus and assignments.
30-79%	Blended/hybrid	Course that blends online and face-to-face delivery. Substantial amount of content is delivered online. Typically uses online discussions and has face-to-face meetings.
80%-100%	online	A course where most or all of the content is delivered online. Typically have no face-face meetings

Based on the table above any institute that delivers its content ranging 30% – 79% online is considered as using the blended learning approach. As long as 30% of the content is online, it would be treated as blended learning and this would explain the reason for the overwhelming 91% of Europe using blended learning approach (Gaebel, Kupriyanova, Morais, & Colucci, 2014).

2.10.1 Perception on Blended Learning

According to Sellen, Rogers, Harper, & Rodden (2009) people no longer use technology, but rather they live with them. This is because emotions, sociability, human values, issues dealing with security and performance have changed the nature of interaction between people and computers. Online life is becoming a social

location for projection and self-exploration (Turkle, 2005).

Blended Learning is an approach whereby both face-to-face and online mode of teaching and learning enhances both classroom experience and student engagement (Watson, 2008; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Though blended learning is also defined as an integration of multiple approaches to pedagogy, specifically it refers to a combination of e-learning and other educational resources (Trapp, 2006). The one thing that remains elusive is the actual definition of blended learning (Torrissi-Steele, G, 2011).

Today, educators are inclined to agree that blended learning is a hybrid of traditional face-to-face and online teaching (Collis & Moonen, 2001; Thorne, 2003; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). This blended approach combines the best of online and face-to-face learning and is likely to emerge as the predominant model of the future (Watson, 2008).

Communicative interactions are the basis for learning in all communities, virtual or physical presence (Britez, 2007, p. 97). Blended learning allows for interaction in ways previously unimagined either synchronously or asynchronously (Littlejohn & Pegler, 2007). Javaloy, Espelt and Cornejo (2001) concluded in their study that ICT contributes to boosting social awareness and social values through communication. Rodriguez (2012) agrees with them that online social network plays a compelling role in present day lives and the fact is education has to embrace this reality.

The role of education is to address the key issues of globalization whereby knowledge and socialization play a crucial part. The blended learning environment caters to this through the online and face-to-face sessions which deal not only at the cognitive level but also the affective (Muresan & Radu, 2010). Prabhu (2011) asserts in his paper that the education system must yearn for a vision for the good of the society and continue to pervade with values leading human beings for a better tomorrow in the midst of the science and technology advancement.

2.10.2 Function of Blended Learning in Communication

Blended learning provides more edge to the social aspect as it increases communication, engages in the traditional face-to-face communication, presents a sense of community, allows for collaborative tasks and feedback, contributes to active participation and provides help (Tayebinik & Puteh, 2012). Students claim that blended learning is more compatible to their lifestyles (Dziuban, Hartman, & Moskal, 2004).

Among the many functions of blended learning is one that allows students to stay in contact with course mates away from class through instant messaging and other ‘social computing’ means (Littlejohn & Pegler, 2007). Social computing refers to interactive behaviour between computer users for the purposes of interaction. Among the mediums they use to interact are social media sites, blogs, and multiplayer games.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) provided the definition for a sense of community as “feeling of belonging, making a difference in a group, sharing emotional connection,

and knowing that the needs of the members in the group will be met through commitment” (p. 9). There is a greater sense of community in blended learning and it provides an avenue for interactions among students as well as with the lecturer. The discourse that takes place does not only increase the construction of knowledge but also the level of socialization thus, creating a deep-seated sense of connection to one another (Rovai & Jordan, 2004).

Trapp (2006) is of the opinion that blended learning draws the best from both worlds as far as communication is concerned. This is because in the traditional classroom social interaction is bound to take place, whereas on the online front virtual groups are formed. When there is a group of any kind, there will be communication. In a blended learning environment students belong to two different groups or communities: the face-to-face group as well as the virtual group.

Face-to-face provides an avenue for students to participate in discussions because they are physically there but the blended learning context also provides a platform for students continue meeting and discussing with their classmates at a different level that is virtually (Tayebinik & Puteh, 2012) transcending time and space.

Feldstein (2009) claimed that it is pivotal to identify with the sense of commonality that members of the online community feel for each other so much so it makes them a close knit group dependent on each other for a common purpose. In a study on in-service teachers’ pattern of participation in online interaction, Sing and Khine (2006) discovered that the teachers were well-connected and shared problems which means some form of trust was established. Similarly, both Keshtiaray and Akbarian (2012)

as well as Ziegler, Paulus and Woodside (2006) revealed that the online communities in their studies shared experiences and this created a communal bond in them. This bond indicates that members interacting in this online community created an identity for themselves as they fostered a trusting relationship (Pereira, De Miranda, Buchdid, & C. Baranauskas, 2013).

Students' participation and interaction in a blended learning environment is instrumental to the transformation and empowerment of learning experience based on a study by Soeiro, De Figueiredo, & Gomes Ferreira (2012) on a class of students inclusive of able-bodied and deaf students. This is because on the online aspect of the blended learning environment, the plain is leveled for interaction and communication as it depends solely on the language used. Soeiro, De Figueiredo, & Gomes Ferreira (2012) believed that the technology-supported context in blended learning helps people learn together with normal students by listening to 'their hearts' (p. 348).

In their research, Rovai and Jordan (2004), drew attention to the reasons for a stronger sense of community in the blended course compared to the traditional course. One reason is in the brick and mortar classroom, vocal students take centre stage whereby discussions may be artificial, impulsive, and limited, which may dishearten students who are more introverted. This shows the importance communication plays in a blended learning environment in promoting a strong sense of community among learners.

It is highly impossible that there is one pedagogical tool for teaching and learning that works for all the students all the time. Rodriguez (2012) in his study found that men

rather than women believed in weblogs facilitating peer-to-peer and student-teacher communication. Likewise, he also claimed there is a possibility that blended learning might suffer a similar fate where it does not help in communication as expected all the time with everyone.

On the contrary, some studies claim that online interaction does not reflect any values. One such study is by Malik and Khurshed (2011) who believed the sole online teacher-student interaction lacks practical life experiences because it is remote and virtual and as such, moral and social values are not given the rightful consideration in the teaching and learning process. According to them, students learn social moral values through physical interaction both with students and teachers where they relate to real life experiences.

Over the years, many studies on blended learning were conducted and published. These studies indicate interaction as a key element both online and face-to-face, but not many identify the type of values exhibited during the interaction. Table 2.6 lists the findings and the values seen based on a few reported studies. The table also indicates the method used to obtain the findings.

Table 2.6: List of some studies on blended learning and their findings of the values identified in the online interaction

Year	Author/s	Title	Findings (Method used to obtain findings)	Values identified in online interaction
2004	Alfred P. Rovai Hope M. Jordan	Blended Learning and Sense of Community: A comparative analysis with traditional and fully online graduate courses	The blended course possessed a significantly higher adjusted mean connectedness score than either the traditional or online courses with a large effect size. Method: quantitative using questionnaire	Sense of community
2004	Renate Motschnig-Pitrik Katharina Mallich	Effects of Person-Centered Attitudes on Professional and Social Competence in a Blended Learning Paradigm	Shows that a blended learning paradigm in which there is room for social and personal processes lead to improved learning. Method: quantitative using questionnaire	Collegial cooperation with peers mentioned but not in-depth
2006	Chai Ching Sing Myint Swe Khine	An Analysis of Interaction and Participation Patterns in Online Community	The pre-service teachers are well connected with each other indicating that the community is fairly well established. Method: quantitative using content analysis	Sharing and trust
2006	Mary F. Ziegler Trena M. Paulus Marianne Woodside	“This Course is Helping Us All Arrive at New Viewpoints, Isn’t It?” Making Meaning Through Dialogue in a Blended Environment	Four aspects of meaning making through dialogue emerged: noticing, reinterpreting, theorizing about, and questioning assumptions. Method: qualitative using phenomenological thematic analysis and discourse analysis	Sharing experiences.
2007	Gurparkash Singh Louise Hawkins Greg Whymark	An Integrated Model of Collaborative Knowledge Building	In group interactions co-creation of knowledge in the form of an outcome. Method: qualitative using analysis of a self reflective case study	Collaboration and cooperation
2009	Raafat George Saadé	Meaningful Learning in Discussion Forums:	It was possible to better understand whether	Sharing thoughts

	Qiong Huang	Towards Discourse Analysis	learning did occur and holistic behaviour of students. Method: qualitative case study approach	
2011	Sufiana Khatoon Malik Fauzia Khurshed	Nature Of Teacher-Students' Interaction In Electronic Learning And Traditional Courses Of Higher Education- A Review	E-learning definitely deprived students from practical life experiences. Theoretical review of available literature.	No clear value stated
2012	Narges Keshtiaray Akram Akbarian	Internet Users Lived Experiences of Cultural (Values, Norms and Verbal Symbols) Changes in Iran Higher Education: Ethics and Philosophy topics	Internet changes beliefs and religious beliefs, which are usually considered as community values, and ethics of its users. Method: qualitative study of phenomenological	Community values and sharing
2012	Dina Soeiro António Dias de Figueiredo Joaquim Armando Gomes Ferreira	Mediating Diversity and Affection in Blended Learning: a Story With a Happy Ending	Illustrates how deaf students who do not want to expose themselves can benefit from the experience of community learning afforded by pedagogical strategies and tools that could never exist face-to-face. Method: qualitative using content analysis of online discussions and interviews	Sharing Respect
2013	Raji Swaminathan Thalia M Mulvihill	Graduate students' Perceptions of Online Discussion: Implications for Instructors	Study revealed that students' experiences of participating in online discussions varied over the course of the semester. Method: qualitative using interviews	Equality Safety and comfort
2013	Roberto Pereira Leonardo Cunha de Miranda Samuel B. Buchdid M. Cecilia C. Baranauskas	Paying Attention to Values and Culture: An Artifact to Support the Evaluation of Interactive Systems	Values and culture must be explicitly considered during all the design stages, from the problem clarification to the system development, deployment, and usage. Method: qualitative using case study	Identity Trust Relationship

Table 2.6 shows only a few studies conducted on blended learning. Most of them seem to advocate online communication and stress the importance of building a community. The values reported in the studies were similar such as sharing, cooperation, and collaboration which can be seen in communities. Building an online community means, to having the same values as in a physical community and this study will address the issue in addition to identifying other values.

2.10.3 Blended Learning and Educational Technology in the Past

In early 1980s, when computers made their presence in education especially in higher education they were not as ‘user-friendly’ as the present; the role of computers and Internet has evolved and so has education (Littlejohn & Pegler, 2007).

Discussion forums came into existence in the mid 1980s as a form of asynchronous electronic communication, which acted as a channel for people to share their thoughts and ideas virtually and where relationships can be built (Saadé & Huang, 2009). If on face-to-face session oral speech is the mode of interaction, then ‘write-talk’ is the mode of interaction during the online discourse sessions (Davis & Brewer, 1997).

2.10.4 Blended Learning at Present

According to her article in The Guardian, Tickle (2014) reported that the number of universities using blended learning on degree courses is on the rise and that some academics predict that it might be the model of the future. In the same article, Jared Stein, the vice president from an e-learning platform company, Canvas, claimed that

“technology shouldn’t be used in teaching simply because it’s there: it should be used when it can offer something different and better” like to enhance interaction between people (Tickle, 2014).

A study by Geçer and Dağ (2012) indicates that students view blended learning environment as important, for it provides them with not only the necessary information of the course but also an avenue where they are able to follow course content and exchange ideas and opinions between lecturer-student and student-student regardless of space and time. In addition, the study also claims to have helped students to express themselves better.

It is worth noting that though internet and online teaching is on the rise, most students are in agreement that the Internet cannot replace the teacher (Rodriguez, 2012) and that is why blended learning is fast filling the ‘void’ as it caters to face-to-face communication with the teachers.

2.10.5 Future of Blended Learning

Educators today are facing a dilemma to predict and identify the changes which will be required to cater to a new technologically savvy generation of students, while still fulfilling their educational expectations with more traditional requirements (Jonas-Dwyer & Pospisil, 2004). A favourable solution for this dilemma points to a need for a creative revolution in the education system (Singh, 1996). The steady growth of the ICT and Internet has changed how we see ourselves, and our relationships. Blended learning is one pedagogical approach that is technologically innovative (Department

of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2012).

Discussions conducted online encourage reflection whereas face-to-face time can be optimized to enhance connections between what they are learning and what they already know (Turkle, 2005). This is exactly the place where the language used reflects open, honest, and respectful communication; where differences between people are appreciated (Forbes, 2003) and face-to-face contact facilitates knowledge that is not written, but gained only through experience (Griffith, Sawyer & Neale, 2003). Online communities are all about sharing of opinions, experiences, stories, and advice thus, it is imperative to understand how one feels about the other (Feldstein, 2009).

2.11 Theoretical Framework

Communication is the primary means by which people interact with each other and language plays a pivotal role. In fact, though language is important, communication is considered a complex and multidisciplinary concept (Krauss & Fussell, 1996). It is also multi-dimensional as it promotes moral values (Waner & Winter, 1993). In this study, students' communication is in a blended learning environment where the interaction takes place both via online as well as face-to-face. It is to study if the students' values are reflected in their language use in both modes of interaction, oral as well as written. Figure 2.3 is a representation of the theoretical aspects that will be taken into account for this study and is designed to help answer research questions 1 till 4 as stated in Chapter 1 sub-section 1.8.

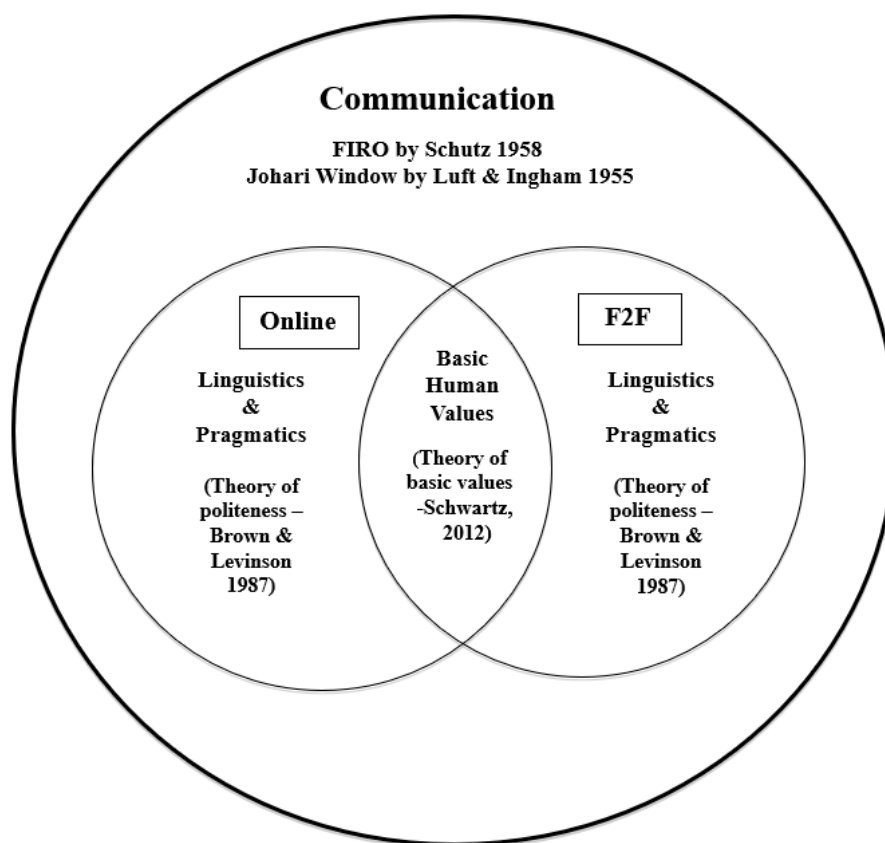


Figure 2.3: Theoretical Framework – Values in the language use in a blended learning environment

If values are seen as guiding principles which are essential in one's life, the communication is equally important to relay information that bridges individuals and language is what that binds these two together.

The parameters of this study include a number of aspects. This study is on values reflected in language use and the overall backdrop setting is communication because both face-to-face and online forum discussion are forms of communication. The setting for the study is in a blended learning environment where interactions take place through face-to-face sessions where students will be able to physically be present as well as online sessions where the same students communicate virtually by

writing a post in an online forum. The communication that takes place face-to-face will be through oral mode while the online session will be through written mode.

The qualitative data collected will be used to investigate the area of intersection between communication, linguistics, pragmatics, and basic human values which will highlight the presence of values in the language used both in online and face-to-face communication. Discourse analysis will be employed to analyse the face-to-face and online communication data to examine if the language use reflect values.

2.12 Summary

This study is designed to explore the values students subscribe to as found in their language use both in the oral as well as in the written forms. The review of literature pertaining to language, linguistics, pragmatics, values, Schwartz' Basic Human Value Theory, communication theory and models, as well as blended learning was discussed thoroughly to set the parameters for the theoretical framework. Main theories like Schwartz' Basic Human Values theory and Levinson and Brown's Politeness theory have been discussed. Different models of communications like Schutz's FIRO as well as Luft and Ingham's Johari Window and certain aspects of language and linguistics have also been discussed to provide a backdrop for this study.

The different sections on language in this chapter portrays the importance placed on language as this study is on students' language use both in the oral as well as written forms. The language seen in the oral form is taken from the transcribed conversations

in the face-to-face sessions. On the other hand, the language in the written form is from their online forum postings.

The data will be investigated to explore the values that the students subscribe to knowingly or unknowingly. Discourse analysis will be used for analysing online interactions, while conversation analysis will be used for analysing face-to-face interactions.

The importance of blended learning approach was sufficiently addressed in this chapter, as this entire study is situated in a blended learning environment that is online and face-to-face interactions. The discussion was to enable one to understand the role blended learning plays in communication as a whole.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The discussion in this chapter is related to the methodical examination as well as reflection of the research design, and rationale for the approach adopted for this study, which is about students' values reflected in their language use in a blended learning environment. In relation to this study, the choice of research paradigm is presented in this chapter. The sample selection, the setting for the study, the methods used for data collection, and procedures involved in the analysis of data are justified.

This study explored the value systems of students in their language use, in both online and face-to-face interactions in a blended learning environment. Their values were based on the data collected on their language used in their online forums, participant observations, oral transcripts and interviews. In exploring their language use, the values that the students subscribed to were revealed.

This chapter also explains the role of the researcher as an instrument in this research. Since values are subjective, issues pertaining ethical consideration, inter-rater reliability, and trustworthiness of the study were addressed in depth.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Guba and Lincoln (1994) in their article on *Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research*, discussed four paradigms from positivism to constructivism. However, their commitment was towards constructivism which they earlier referred to as naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and their focus was on ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Heron and Reason (1997) extended Guba and Lincoln's framework to include a quality of the participative worldview, which became the participatory paradigm.

Participatory paradigm is open-ended and flexible; one that proposes people to interpret thoughts and experiences from their viewpoints (Heron & Reason, 1997; Tadevosyan & Schoenhuth, 2011). It is people-centred based on the principles of participation and self-development and as such, it regards people as research participants rather than research subjects (Tadevosyan & Schoenhuth, 2011). The inclusion of axiology into Heron and Reason's paradigm was an important contribution, as it is about the values of being and about valuing knowledge itself (p. 288). This study is on students' values reflected in their language use, and by adopting the participatory inquiry paradigm by Heron and Reason (1997), it allows for participants to interpret their views on language use pertaining to their own values.

The ontology in this participatory paradigm is the acceptance of the fact that there would be multiple realities and in this case the multiple values that emerge during communication. The present study will reveal that every participant would have his or her reality and sometimes each of them would have multiple realities depending on

the situations, thus, giving rise to multiple subjectivities. This means they might have their own set of values based on a particular situation or moment, and in the course of a conversation there were many ‘moments’ resulting in multiple subjectivities. These realities might be conflicting or in agreement. The stance was that, the mind participated actively with nature or environment, and in this study the environment was the social communication in a class taught using blended learning, whereby the communication took form in two modes: online and face-to-face and that itself indicated two different realities.

The epistemology was to investigate the objectives stated in the study from a participatory inquiry perspective. The basis of this paradigm was that all human beings are able and competent of creating their own realities whatever they may be through their experience, imagination, intuitions, thoughts, and actions (Heron, 1992). The background knowledge and the belief they bring to their experiences differ from one to another and this in turn influences how these experiences produce new beliefs (Audi, 1998) in us, the respondents as well as the researcher. As values are said to be the guiding principles of individuals, and different people subscribe to different values because of their individual beliefs, this paradigm was an apt choice for this study, which is on the values used in their language as they communicate with one another.

The epistemology in this paradigm involves the awareness of four manner of knowing; experiential, presentational, propositional and practical. All these would contribute to at least four dimensions of communication that is, the cognitive, affective, aesthetic and social, but in this study, the focus was on the social aspect which encompasses how something was communicated and the value connotation it had. These dimensions

translated to meaning, expression, and context that the participants communicated which were studied in this research. As such, this paradigm was a perfect fit.

According to Torbert (1991), this is a holistic and inclusive inquiry paradigm. The subjectivity was fixated in the grounds of inductive to deductive and vice versa. One could begin with experiential knowing and move towards presentational, propositional and came to practical perfecting oneself or the vice versa (as shown in the diagram below) to validate the truth. In doing this, one would be previewed to a wider and deeper sense of understanding of the values that they subscribed in their language.

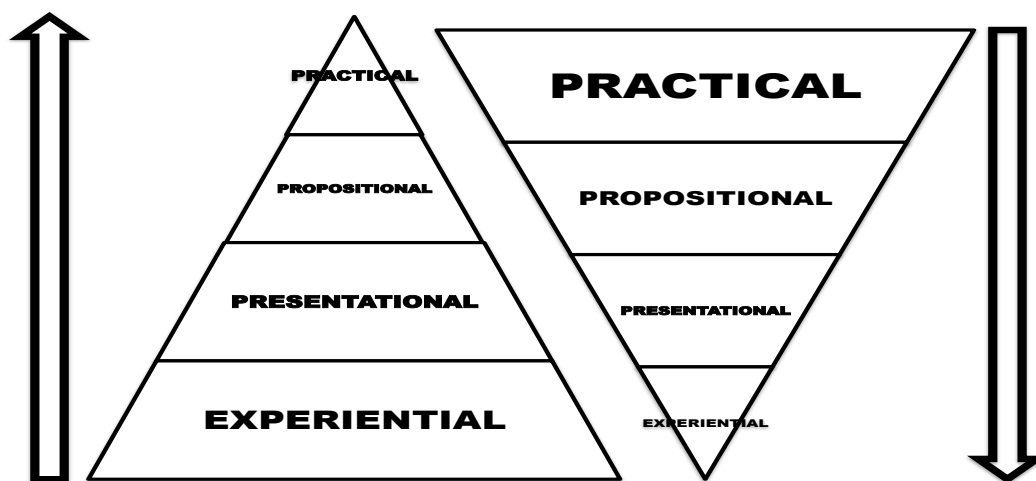


Figure 3.1: Holistic and inclusive inquiry by Heron & Reason (1997, p. 281)

Experiential knowing presents a certain objectivity to the knower. There are also times when it presents subjectivity to the knower, depending on the situations. In this case, the values were part of the knower's life experience or way of life. The participants met the reality of communicating and interacting by engaging in an experiential manner. It was through face-to-face meetings with others and this in turn allowed the participant to become aware to the shaping of his/her world (Heron &

Reason 1997) which involves his/her values and use of language. Experiential knowing deals with having direct encounters or feelings. In this study it was experienced through participation, empathic and reflections. Participants' interactions via online and face-to face paved the way for direct encounters in both oral and written manner. This knowing provided answers for Research Question 1: Which words and phrases show values in the students' written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?

Presentational knowing stemmed from experiential knowing and was presented in different forms thus explaining how the values were presented and the choice of words or phrases used. This knowing also answered Research Question 2: Why did the students use these words and phrases that express their values in these modes of communication?

Propositional knowing was the knowing of the conceptual terms, the reason for using them and describing them. In this study, the participants' awareness of the values was seen in their language use that explained this particular knowing in them. This knowing provided answers for Research Question 3: Were the students aware of any of their values while interacting in these modes of communication?

Practical knowing is the knowing of how something is done which was manifested in a skill. For example in this study it was how and when something should be said both orally as well as in written form. This is because thoughts and actions are inseparable and knowing the impact of communicative skills in a blended learning environment using value-laden language served as the practical knowing. This knowing answered

Research Question 4: How do the students' values influence the language used in written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?

The inquiry methodology employed in the participative perspective helped to complement the epistemology. The best form of inquiry was collaborative whereby the researcher and subjects engaged in dialogues especially during participant observation and the interview sessions. This methodology led to exploration, application, experiencing, and representing the subject of values in the language use in this case. The choice of methodology was qualitative and the method used was case study. This was the choice as, the study was based on one particular social group that was involved in a blended learning environment and how the communication amongst them led to unveil the values in their use of language. The reason for choosing the case study methodology is explained in detail in 3.4.

Axiology is related to the evaluation of the researcher's own value at all stages of the research process. The fourth aspect in this paradigm is the axiology which is about values and ethics (Mingers, 2003) and it deals with values of being in term of human flourishing. Human flourishing is seen as a process of social participation whereby there is mutual balance within and between people which would help with decision making in every social context (Heron, 1996, p. 11). This research is value bound and the researcher is very much involved in the research (see 3.13) and as such cannot be separated from the research thus giving rise to subjectivity. To counter the matter of subjectivity, two rounds of blind inter-rating process were included (see 3.13.2) to provide reliability and credibility. Since this study is on values in language use, axiology plays a vital role, thus making this participatory paradigm the paradigm of

choice.

3.3 Rationale for a Qualitative Design

Qualitative research covers a range of subject matters and is a field of inquiry in its own right (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008 p. 3). According to them, qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and it pursues to make sense of the meaning people bring. This study is on students' values reflected in their language use in a blended learning environment and, in analysing and discussing the findings, the researcher hopes to make sense of the values subscribed by the participants. Since the study is in a blended learning environment, it is conducted in a higher learning institute which is a natural setting for the participants.

According to Crotty (1998), identifying the methodology and methods used in the study and justifying it is very important. The methodology chosen was essential, for it had to be in accordance to what one was trying to investigate. This study employed a qualitative case study approach driven by the participatory inquiry paradigm (Heron & Reason, 1997) to research this topic. In conducting this qualitative research, data was collected through online forum discussion boards, classroom observation, and semi-structured interviews. The researcher also categorised and analysed words as well as images in order to have a more significant understanding of the research that was conducted (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative approach allows for a complex and detailed understanding of something (Creswell, 2007). In this study in-depth understanding of the subject matter was researched, and it was a set of values subscribed to by the participants. Values are subjective and personal to every

individual hence justifying the reason for using qualitative approach to understand this subject matter.

3.4 Rationale for a case study

Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) characterised case studies as a type of research design and analysis that is a “most widely used approach to qualitative research in education” (p. 433). Merriam (1988) asserted that a case study made sense of the data through comprehensive and holistic analysis of single social unit. Miles and Huberman (1994) claimed a case study is a ‘phenomenon’ in a bounded context. In this case, the single social unit was the class that was using blended learning as a pedagogical tool. A qualitative case study values multiple perspective, and they were obtained from the respondents through observations in natural setting and contextual interpretation (Simmons, 2009).

Case studies provide varied meanings for different people in different fields and in this study it was to explore values subscribed to in the language usage both in online and face-to-face communication. Stake (1995) categorised case studies into three types: an intrinsic case study is exploratory in nature whereby the researcher is guided by his or her interest in the case itself rather than seeking to extend a theory or generalising something. An instrumental case study places the case as secondary to understanding a particular phenomenon. The focus is most likely known beforehand and the design is centred around a theory. It is not about the case, but the purpose of the study. A collective case study deals with the investigations of multiple instrumental case studies. The exploratory nature of this case study makes it an

intrinsic one (Grandy, 2014) because the study was based on a distinct subject matter, namely values. Since the topic of values is subjective and personal to each individual whereby each one subscribes to a set of values that they adhere to for some reason, the study has to be exploratory and in depth.

As Yin (2004) said “the strength of the case study is in its ability to examine, in-depth, a ‘case’ within its ‘real-life’ context” in comparison to other methods. Values must be studied in-depth to ascertain a clear understanding why different people subscribe to different values in one situation. The main reason for a case study method is to investigate the originality and detailed description of one particular case (Simmons, 2009) and in this study it was the values seen in the language use. The case study provided insights to the questions of ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ regarding contemporary events and values as well as language are contemporaneous in communication and everyday life.

3.5 Research Procedure

This study involved two modes of communication: online and face-to-face. In the online communication, participants responded by writing their entries in the online discussion forum. It was an asynchronous communication and did not take place in real time. On the other hand in face-to-face communication, participants provided verbal responses and it was a synchronous communication in real time.

During the online forum, the lecturer/tutor posted a discussion topic (see Appendix A). Once the tutor posted the topic and the students participated by posting their

responses. The responses were in the form of comments, opinions, suggestions, clarifications, arguments or even just asking questions. This online posting was the primary data for the written form of language use which was analysed for values in the language used almost immediately to enable the researcher to begin with the collection of primary data through interviews to validate the writer's intentions.

The classroom discussions provided another form of primary data which was the spoken form of the language that showed the values in the language use in real time communication. The classroom discussions were recorded and transcribed. The tutorial classes were divided into groups and a voice recorder was placed in the middle of each group so as to record everything that was been said in that group within the tutorial time of 1 hour. These recordings were later transcribed manually by a transcriber. There was also another set of primary data which was obtained through interviews to validate the speaker's intentions. These interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. This meant that the data from both the online and classroom discussions was verified through interviews.

Classroom observations were carried out by the researcher. This was done to take note of the group dynamics so that the researcher would understand the group better. The researcher used an observation checklist (see Appendix B) to make brief notations of all 8 tutorial sessions.

Data were also obtained through interview sessions with the participants. The interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix C) and they were recorded and transcribed. The interview reached a point of saturation when the respondents

repeated their answers and their reasons.

All data were coded and documented to study the values that the participants subscribed to both in written and oral forms. When the need arose, for clarifications from the lecturer/tutor, the researcher sought explanation from the him/her in-person. However, the lecturer's/tutor's values in his or her language use was not recorded as data. The diagrammatic representation of the research process is as follows and it will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

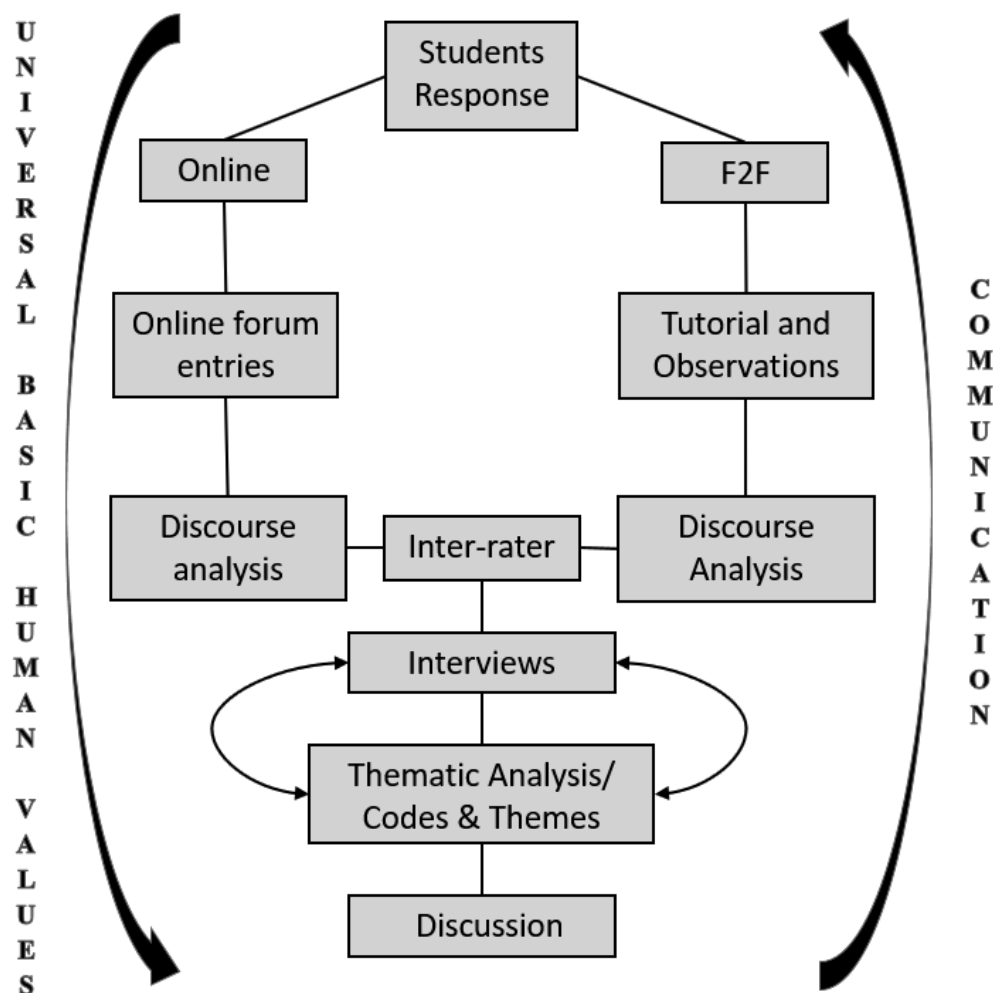


Figure 3.2: Research process to identify students' values in the language use in a blended learning environment

Figure 3.2 shows that the research process began with the data collected through online forum postings (written) and tutorials (oral). Discourse analysis was used to analyse the forum postings which is further discussed in section 3.11.2. Discourse analysis was also used to analyse tutorial recordings which were transcribed and this is further explained in section 3.11.1. Interviews were conducted with the participants to understand reasons for their choice of words and phrases. The preliminary codes for values then underwent rigorous peer-checking process by 2 inter-raters after which thematic analysis was used to derive at the values that they subscribed.

3.6 Sampling Procedure

When sampling in a study such as this one, there was less emphasis on generalising from sample to population and more attention placed on the sample itself (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling is a non-probability sample that was chosen based on certain characteristics of a group and the objective of this study (Cole & Crossman, 2017). In this study it was used to identify the participants and the location for this research. The reason for this sampling was to unveil rich information, which allowed for the emergence of a comprehensive insight to the research topic (Patton, 1990). To develop an in-depth understanding of the research purposeful sampling provided the much needed valuable information that revealed answers to the research questions as well as give voice to silenced people (Creswell, 2014).

3.7 Selection of Participants

As for sampling, Patton (1990) had pointed out a small number of respondents was most suitable for a study that sought the depth, which was rich and valuable information. Values are subjective and personal. Any study would require time to understand in-depth an individual's value system as it would always be subjective to his or her own reality. Since this study was based on a blended environment consisting of two different settings: face-to-face and online a small number of respondents was sufficient to provide this rich and valuable information.

Five participants were involved in this study and they were chosen from a class of 45 students. All of them were from the same class, attended the same lectures and were in the tutorial sessions. However, the following criteria were instrumental for the choice of five participants. First was their attendance; that they were present for most of the tutorial sessions as it was recorded. Second was based on the online forum postings. Not many students posted every week and this was one factor that influenced the choice of the five participants. Finally, the participants were identified through their active participation in the classroom discussions which was seen through the transcripts. As the study was on value reflected in language use during interaction both online and face-to-face, the choice of participants were made based on their active participation. Though, only five participants were identified for the study, consent was obtained from all 45 students in the class to enable for contextual discussions.

The five participants were identified based on another criteria. They had to obtain either one of the following grades: 'A' in their Form 5 SPM examination or had taken foundation English in the university. This is to ensure that their language fluency and ability would not be an issue when participating in the online forums and face-to-face discussions and therefore would not hinder the research. It was a prerequisite that they had access to computers and Internet so that they were able to participate in the online forums.

The cohort of participants were from an English Literature course taught in the university. The reason for choosing this particular course was because literature is about life and it provided ample scope for discussions using English language as the mode of communication, thus allowing for an insight into the values that these participants subscribed to.

As this research was a case study on the values seen in the language use, the sample size was five participants from one class. All the data were obtained from one class that was using the blended learning approach for one entire semester. The lecturer/tutor who was teaching the course for the whole semester had to be familiar with the blended learning approach, which is face-to-face, and online teaching and learning. Constant discussions between the lecturer, tutor, and researcher throughout the semester helped in weeding out minor issues as the semester progressed. The tutor was given sufficient training on how to post and reply to questions (if the need arose) on Moodle which is the online platform.

The participants, lecturer and tutor were informed in detail of the research objectives before reaching any agreement. They were briefed of the procedures and the timeline involved. The briefing included their participation in online postings, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. However, the lecturer's and tutor's postings were not analysed. The tutor only had to post the question online and not reply to any of the participants' responses. This was because the study was aimed at social focus, that is the participants' interaction with each other both online and face-to-face. It also allowed participants to participate of their own accord. The postings were also not graded or evaluated to eliminate any form of pressure. This allowed the participants to have peer discussions on their own without any comments from the tutor. With this information, the selected participants were well-informed of what was required from them for this study and were required to sign a consent form. All the participants had pseudonyms and codes to ensure their anonymity and all information obtained from the online posting, observations, and interviews was treated with complete discretion so the participants' names were not revealed. The selected participants and lecturer/tutor were asked to sign a consent form, which entailed the details of the procedure.

3.8 Research Site

This study was carried out in one of the private universities in Malaysia whereby blended learning was used in teaching a course. The class was a literature course offered in the university. The lecturer conducted a once a week lesson on a variety of prose written by different writers. Lessons were conducted in lecture style and at times there were class discussion that dealt with content, style, intention and tone on

the particular topic for the week.

There were two venues for this class because it constituted of a lecture session and a tutorial. The first was conducted for all 45 students in a large seminar room by the lecturer for an hour and the seating was in a lecture manner. As for the second, it was divided into two groups, each having almost equal number of students, in a smaller seminar room. The two tutorial sessions took place consecutively for an hour and was conducted by the tutor. The seating arrangement in the classroom during the tutorial session was in groups so that the tutor was able to optimise the lesson through classroom discussion. Classroom observations were carried out by the researcher during tutorial sessions and participants' discussions were recorded as data.

3.9 Data Collection

As this was a qualitative study, the approach was one that required the analysis of the data based on multiple meanings of individual experiences and perspectives (Creswell, 2003). These experiences and perspectives were collected through the following means; analysing the texts, participatory observations of the use of verbal and non-verbal language, and interviews with the respondents. The identification of research objectives, the formulation of research questions, supported by the relevant review of literature and conceptual framework were pertinent.

The research objectives and questions were essential when designing the case study because they identified the context, the case study methods were used for analysing, time frame and the sampling strategies. The following steps were carried out to ensure

the collection of data protocol:

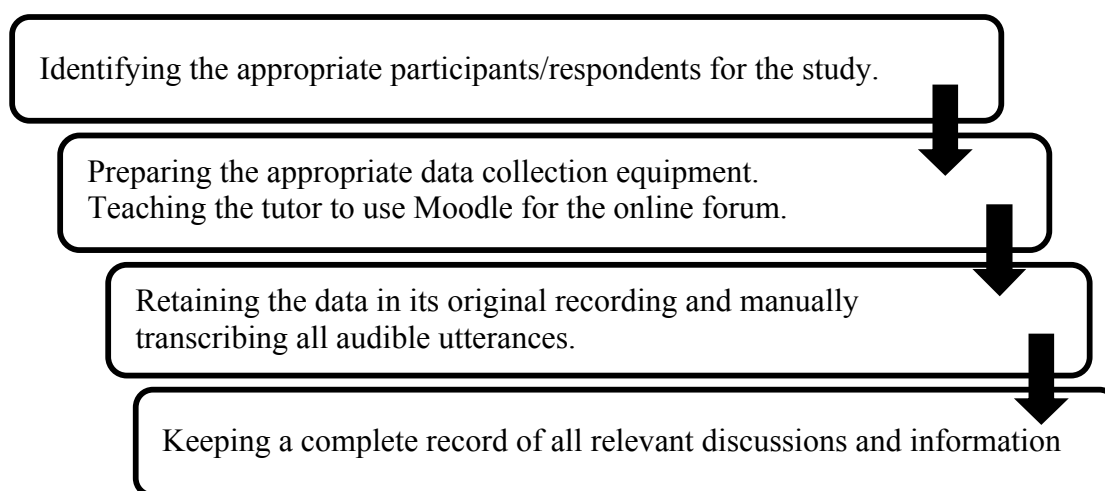


Figure 3.3: Steps to ensure accurate data collection

The lecturer/tutor whose class was identified for this study taught the participants the Literature Course and had the knowledge of using blended learning as a pedagogical tool. An initial interview was also conducted to check the lecturer's/tutor's readiness to use blended learning as a tool in his or her present classroom when conducting lessons. There were a couple of discussions involving the researcher, the lecturer, tutor and the university IT department to ensure that the researcher would be registered on the Moodle platform to assess the online forum postings. This was done two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester so that data could be collected from the first week of class.

The means used for data collection were recording tutorials, interviews and participant observations. For this lengthy and in-depth process of data collection, audio recorders were required to record interviews and classroom discussions. Each group discussion used the same audio recorder for the entire course so that the

students were familiar to having it during their discussions. A secondary recorder was prepared and in the possession of the researcher in case the primary one encountered some technical issues. The recordings of tutorial sessions and interviews were manually transcribed for verbal content and all audible utterances.

The data collected was transcribed and cross-checked multiple times with the recording. The primary data was the online forum discussion for the written form of the language while the transcripts from tutorial sessions were the primary data for the oral form of the language. Another primary data was the transcripts from the interviews, which were carried out for clarification. The data was examined as they were being collected and checked by the participants so that, its credibility was validated by the respondents to establish dependability.

A complete and detailed record of all transcribed interviews (see Appendix D) and tutorials (see Appendix E) were kept as reference for discussion. This included the online forums (see Appendix F) which were downloaded onto word documents, voice recordings saved as audio files and all transcripts from both tutorials and interviews for verification of the values perceived by the participants. A folder containing classroom observation checklists for all 8 tutorial groups spanning all 8 tutorial sessions was also safely stored.

3.10 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection tools employed in this study were participant observations and semi-structured interviews. These instruments were used during the face-to-face

sessions in the blended learning environment. Since this study was based on a blended learning mode, the data from the online forum entries was of equal importance to data from face-to-face sessions, semi-structured interviews were used as an instrument for clarification. Interviews were held close to the end of the semester. This was because there was a need to identify the participants first and foremost as stated in section 3.7. The participants were allowed to refer to the transcribed audio recording and the online forum postings at any time during the interview session to refresh their memory.

The function of the interview was to consolidate views and experiences expressed by participants in their entries in their online forums and tutorial discussions. Interviews in this case were also important because behaviours, feelings, thoughts, and intentions were hard to be interpreted (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, the interviews were useful in providing another dimension of information to interpret findings that were based on the discourse analysis. In this study, semi-structured interview was used as it placed focus on the participants' purpose while giving room for further exploration if new information surfaced. Before the interview was conducted, the researcher explained the intentions and carried out the interview based on the interview protocol for this study (see Appendix G).

The classroom observation sheet (see Appendix B) was used to note visible verbal and non-verbal behaviours exhibited (like being very noisy, excessive use of slang words aloud, or being silent) during the classroom discussions. The setting was also included in the classroom observation so as to give a holistic view on how the participants reacted to each other as they interacted face-to-face throughout the entire

tutorial session. These were crucial when choosing the respondents/participants for this study. Observations helped to clarify the ethos when interpreting the meaning of the data, as well as providing a sense of setting, and furnished descriptions that offered another manner of expressing the experiences, which were used to cross check the data from the interviews (Simmons, 2009).

3.10.1 Semi Structured Interview

In-depth interviews provided data that enabled me to relate to what was in and on someone's mind (Patton, 1990). It allowed for active engagement that aided in analysing the issues researched, enabled one to probe deeper into a response which led to uncovering of feelings and events that were not usually seen. Simmons (2009) agreed with Patton (1990) that there was no single correct manner of interviewing which was apt and could be used in all contexts.

The interviews were oral, on a one-to-one basis and carried out face-to-face. This enabled the researcher to clarify details and questions stemming from the participant observation as well as their forum discussions. The interviews were conducted in a semi structured manner so that the researcher could cover a list of topics in a particular order based on the participants' language use in the tutorials and forum entries. These interviews were also audio recorded and all audible utterances were manually transcribed.

Words and phrases that expressed the content were not taken for clarification because the meaning would be reflective of the content of the lesson which in this case was

literature. Every day or casual language was the priority in this study. Communication is fragile (Beckner et al., 2008, p. 5) because one does not know what is in another's mind. Linguistic conventions are not ironclad (Croft, 2000) for a speaker can choose words and phrases to communicate a situation based on prior usage in similar situations known to him or her. The listener on the other hand did the same except that his or her prior knowledge of the usage was not the same as the speaker's. This study hoped to reveal this aspect based on certain words and phrases used in this study in an attempt to answer Research Question 2 and Research Question 3.

Thus, for this study, the researcher had to establish rapport with the respondents, be an active listener, be more focused in questioning, and be aware that interviews were time consuming. The interviews were carried out after all the tutorials and forums because that was when the participants were chosen. These interviews were also audio recorded. During the interviews, they were allowed to look at the tutorial transcripts and forum postings to refresh their memory. Throughout the interview, the researcher made notes based on the respondents' answers so that follow-up questions could be asked.

3.10.2 Participant Observation

Creswell (2014) defined observation as the process of gathering first-hand information by observing the researched participants in their natural surrounding for the study. The information obtained was vital to study the individual participant's linguistics as well as para linguistics in relation to values in language usage during the face-to-face classroom sessions. This enabled the researcher to have a wider range of

valuable data for an in-depth understanding of the context. This process was useful as it uncovered complex inter-connections in social relationships.

As the study was situated in a participatory inquiry paradigm, the role played by the researcher was that of a participant observer and it provided the required circumstances and opportunities to understand the participants and their experiences. A checklist on classroom observation (see Appendix B) was prepared by the researcher to observe every group discussions for 8 weeks. The items observed ranged from how participants interacted with each other to unusual group behaviours and equipment problems. Other than recording information during these sessions, this also allowed the researcher to have a “comfortable” role to clarify information in the actual social setting. It was for this reason that the words and phrases from the voice recording transcripts was chosen solely by the researcher to better understand the participants.

Participant observation was most natural in this study because some information needed immediate clarification and in that manner the researcher was involved in the actual social setting where the study was taking place. Guest, Namey, and Mitchell (2013) claimed that there are three important elements for participant observation which are embedded in the actual social context. These three elements were the location of the study, in which this case, was situated which was in the classroom; building rapport with the participants, as they needed to trust the researcher as the data was on the their values; and spending sufficient time interacting with the participants to collect data which was personal to the participants as they ultimately defined their guiding principles. In the beginning of the first class, the participants

were conscious not only off the researcher but also the tutors as well as their classmates who were new. This could be seen in the many awkward moments of silence. However, as the class progressed to the subsequent weeks, the participants exhibited a casual and comfortable attitude which signalled their ease to familiarity and this facilitated discussions during the 1 hour tutorial sessions.

My role of participant observer was only assumed after seeking permission from the participants and great care was taken so as not to be involved in the actual face-to-face discussion sessions. Trust was pivotal because I was present in the natural setting and was privileged to firsthand experience with the participants. Two methods of recording the data was utilised; using an audio recorder and note taking was employed with complete discretion. The duration of this observation was limited to the face-to-face sessions only between the students and students, and students and the lecturer in the classroom setting.

3.10.3 Online Forum Postings

Online forum postings for this study is one of the three primary data collected. At the end of every tutorial (8 in total) after the oral discussions, the tutor would post a question on the Moodle – the online forum platform, as a follow-up topic. There was one week (week 9), when there was no tutorial class however a question was still posted on the Moodle for discussion. The groups in the forum were the same ones as the groups in the tutorial class. This allowed for the tutorial class group dynamics to be carried onto the online forum platform thus facilitating more casual discussions the participants were already familiar with each other. All the participants would carry on

discussion by writing their comments, opinions, and suggestions in the forum at their wish and pace without any external pressure. This forum was an avenue for those participants who wished to continue discussions without physically being present. Participants had one week to express their views, agree or disagree with the members of their groups and give their reasons for their stand. The discussions were also not evaluated or commented upon by the tutor as it was an opportunity for them to present their thoughts freely without any external pressure from the faculty. This resulted in a variety of responding manner from the participants – ranging from consistently every week to only few throughout the semester to none at all. The length of the responses also varied.

3.11 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in a literature class to ascertain the if there were any language use that highlighted the values students supposedly subscribed to. By administrating the pilot study in this class, it facilitated in identifying words which were not related to the content of the lesson. An example of language use identified during the pilot study was the pronouns, ‘we and I’. A brief interview with 3 participants on the reasons for using these words in their presentation revealed certain values of themselves in a social setting and how they viewed their social group.

Pilot studies refer to feasibility studies conducted to fine tune research instruments and fulfil a range of important functions as well as provide valuable insights to the researcher (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The reasons for a pilot study for this research were to assess if the research procedure was realistic and workable and also

to identify logistical problems which might surface in using the instruments.

For this research, a pilot study was conducted to identify the preliminary values that the respondents adhered or subscribed to and the choice of words they used in their language that exhibited them. The respondents for the pilot study were not the same ones for the actual study. They were students who were not in the same class as the actual participants for this study. This was done primarily through classroom observation. It was an unobtrusive participant observation session whereby the researcher became part of a group in order to record the language used in that group during the classroom discussion on a topic given by the lecturer. The researcher's role was only to observe without participating or interrupting and she focused solely on the language that was used for social interaction by the participants in their discussion. The language used to discuss the content of the lesson proper was not taken into account. Two or three group discussions were recorded during a two hour lesson.

The pilot study showed that the researcher needed to be equipped with at least four audio recorders in order to obtain a comprehensive recording of the session in class. There were also a couple of participants who were silent throughout the entire discussion and the researcher had to pay particular attention to the role of silence in face-to-face discussions in case it surfaced during the actual data collection.

Based on the classroom observation, a semi-structured interview was conducted to identify if the respondents were conscious of any values that they subscribed to during the discussion sessions which were pertaining to social interaction. The interview also provided the reasons for the choice of a particular word or phrase that were indicative

of certain values with regards to society. Each interview lasted for about 5 minutes and the interviews were analysed. The pilot study was to identify the students' basic inclination towards certain values and it was pertinent as the researcher was able to see some aspects of the value codes that the participants subscribed to and as such was be able to understand which words and phrases to look out for from the respondents during the actual data collection sessions.

3.12 Data Analysis

There was a need to analyse data as it was being collected in this study to facilitate findings for more in depth information (Yin, 2004; 2009). The whole process of data collection as well as its analysis was recursive (Merriam, 1998), providing a more intense analysis. The primary data was collected from classroom participation through audio recording, which was transcribed. This data was analysed using discourse analysis to explore values in the language used in the participants' conversation during the classroom discussions. This was supported through discourse analysis from the another primary data obtained from the the online forum entries. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the primary data which was obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews. These interviews were conducted with the participants to clarify the participants' stance, and choice of words or phrases that were indicative of values based on transcriptions and online forum entries. All findings that surfaced on the participants' values based on their language use are discussed in Chapter 4.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), coding is analyzing and it requires one to distinguish, integrate, and reflect the data that has been collected. Codes could be

linked to any number of words in a sentence and could either have a direct meaning or a complex one. As this study was about values, the meanings of the words and phrases mattered significantly for it showed the guiding principle of the individual respondent. The data gathered for this study was from online forum entries, transcripts from participant observation, and interviews.

As there was ample data gathered, there was a need to document all utterances and forum entries for easy referencing. This study used data from three different sources – tutorials, online forum postings and interviews. Descriptive codes were used during the preliminary stage to facilitate the identification of the words and phrases from the face-to-face tutorial transcriptions and online forum posts that attributed to values. Examples of the codes given for all the utterances and forum entries are explained in detail in the following table.

Table 3.1: Codes and their interpretation

Codes	What the codes stand for
N/O/T1/3	N - the participant's name Nadia (a pseudonym) O - transcribed oral utterances during the tutorial sessions T1 - tutorial week 1 3 - the utterance number
N/I/10	N - the participant's name Nadia (a pseudonym) I - transcribed oral utterances during the interview sessions 10 - the utterance number
N/W/F1/2	N - the participant's name Nadia (a pseudonym) W - written entries from the online forum F1 - Forum week 1 2 - the written entry sentence number
N/S/BI	N - the participant's name Nadia (a pseudonym) S - summary of the participant's background information BI - background information provided by participant Nadia

Participants were given pseudonyms and tutorial sessions as well as forum sessions were indicated by the week. Codes were given to indicate if it was an oral tutorial session, an interview session or a written session. The utterances in the oral sessions and sentences in the written session were numbered.

3.12.1 Discourse Analysis

When using language, the speaker or writer would look at a particular viewpoint of what the world was like in relation to what was normal, acceptable, right, real, and possible or otherwise (Gee, 1999). According to Gee (1999) and Muto-Humphrey, (2018), analysing using discourse analysis contributes to the explanation of how and why language works thus, looking at language as a whole, fused with all the elements that were involved in a social practice (like feelings, acts, beliefs, and technology) rather than just analysing and describing specific data in the language. Examining participants' interpretations of reality with the use of language which may be influenced by their values, can be made possible through discourse analysis (Adjei, 2013). When language is analysed, there is a need to look beyond from the traditional meaning of a word to the functions performed by the utterance and sentences (Stubbs, 1983). Hence, discourse analysis was employed as it was suitable for both types of data in this study; the oral tutorial transcriptions and the written forum entries.

Parker (1992), stated that discourse analysis could be seen in a text and it is related to other discourses as well as. This was reflective in one's manners of speaking and writing all of which were seen in the online forum entries and the tutorial sessions. Fairclough (1989) looked at how vocabulary played a role in providing expressive

values, which allowed for an insight into social identities. He also claimed that relational values may point to social relationships. Using discourse analysis for both face-to-face tutorials and online forum entries, provided answers for Research Question 1 while the indepth interviews shed light on Research Question 2.

3.12.1.1 Analysis of the Face-to-face Oral Tutorial Transcriptions

In analysing the transcripts from the audio recording, words and phrases that were indicative of any values from the listener's (researcher) perspective were identified. Since the research was set in a participatory inquiry paradigm, the researcher was placed in a natural setting thus, allowing her to adopt the role of the listener. As a listener, one crucial role was to identify words/phrases used in the group discussions during the interactions that were suggestive of any values. The focus was only on choice of words/phrases in line with Research Question 1. As such, only words/phrases related to simple, ordinary everyday language (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2007, p. 30) was examined. Language pertaining to the content matter was omitted. Table 3.2 shows examples of words selected from the face-to-face tutorial transcriptions that had a connotation of a value. The values were listed as a connotation because it was a preliminary identification of the values perceived based on the researcher's understanding of the context.

Table 3.2: Examples of word selection that connote values during the tutorial session

Words and phrases	Value connotations	Contextual evidence from the utterances
Sorry...	Being polite	Sorry , what did you say? [N/O/T1/4]
You go girl.	To encourage	You go girl . [K/O/T1/59]
...we ...	Being inclusive	No. wait! we are done! This is the story. [L/O/T4/29]

Language in interaction was used as a means to accomplish social actions and not just as a transmitter of information (Wooffitt, 2005) and this study hopes to reveal values seen in the language use. Discourse analysis in this study was used to investigate simple, ordinary, taken-for-granted language competencies (see examples in Table 3.2) through which the respondents achieved sociality (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2007, p. 30). All the data were treated with care, analysed and given a preliminary code for values. However, if there was a need to clarify a word/phrase it was verified by checking with the the participants. Table 3.3 details the steps involved in the discourse analysis process of the oral tutorial sessions which were recorded and manually transcribed.

Table 3.3: Sequential analysis of the face-to-face tutorial data

Processing	Convert raw primary audio recorded data into transcripts manually.
Examining	Read, re-read the tutorial transcripts and make notes on the language addressing content and normal, everyday conversation.
Reflecting	Examine the pattern emerging based on the notes made.
Labelling	Highlight the words/phrases that relate to values and label the values. Use Schwartz' basic human values list as a guide
Analysing	Analyse the words/phrases based on context.
Seek clarification	Check with the participants if there were any doubts over a particular use of words/phrases.
Preliminary coding	Create codes, sub-codes or categories for the values based on both the researcher's perspective of values and Schwartz' values.

Based on Table 3.3, discourse analysis was used to analyse the data using the steps stated above. First, during the processing stage all the recordings on the tutorial group discussions were manually transcribed. After transcribing, it was cross-checked with

the audio file to ascertain there was no omission of words/phrases in the transcriptions. The second stage was examining by reading and re-reading the transcripts and making all the necessary notes pertaining to potential values. These notes were made solely by the researcher. During the third stage of reflecting, the notes were read again to identify for emerging patterns regarding values. Then, at the labelling stage, values were highlighted and similar values were grouped. Next during the analysing stage, attention was paid to contextual evidence to make sense of the words/phrases that reflect values. At seeking clarification stage, the researcher only requested for explanation from the participants if she wanted confirmation over the use of any particular word/phrase. This was to aid to confirm the participants' values that were reflected in their language use. Finally, during the preliminary coding, codes for the categories of values were created based on the researcher's perspective on values as well as Schwartz' values as a guide to identify the words and phrases that relate to values.

3.12.1.2 Analysis of the Online Written Forum Entries

Online forum discussion in this study was an interaction between two or more people using a computer whereby the participants typed messages to each other. It was considered a trendy notion that computer-mediated language was lesser in terms of language accuracy, complexity, and formal in comparison to the standard written language (Herring, 2003). The presence of emoticons, symbols and other non-standard features of language that emerged in the online discussion posts were considered part of the interaction. They were also analysed using discourse analysis to identify if these contributed in any manner to the words or phrases that reflected

values of the writers (participants).

According to Wooffitt (2005), discourse analysis has its origin in linguistics and sociolinguistics as it analyses the way people use language for different reasons. By using discourse analysis, it was not only helpful in identifying words/phrases that showed values in the face-to-face oral discussion but also in the online forum postings which were written. Table 3.4 shows examples of words selected from the online forum postings.

Table 3.4: Examples of word selection that connote values on the forum posting

Words and phrases	Value connotations	Contextual evidence from the forum posts
Hello	Being courteous	Hello beautiful people! [F/W/F4/3]
...you guys	Being inclusive	What do you guys think? (J/W/F4/11)
I agree	To agree	I agree with ... to collect and buy. [F/W/F9/8]

In this study, words and phrases chosen evolved around the values seen in the language use. The online posting data were downloaded, saved, analysed, clarified with the participants and finally coded based on Schwartz' Basic Human Values Theory. However, in the beginning stage the values were identified based on the researcher's perspective. Table 3.5 details the steps involved in the discourse analysis process.

Table 3.5: Sequential analysis of the online forum posting data

Processing	Remove raw primary data from the forum discussion board onto a word file.
Examining	Read, re-read the forum postings and differentiate language pertaining to content from simple, everyday language.
Reflecting	Identify if they was a pattern emerging based on simple everyday language based on the notes.
Labelling	Highlight the words/phrases that relate to values. Look for recurring usage. Use Schwartz' basic human values list as a guide
Analysing	Analyse all highlighted words/phrases and emoticons or symbols to see if they complement each other.
Seek clarification	Check with the participants if the need arises.
Preliminary coding	Create codes, sub-codes or categories for the values based on the researcher's perspective of values and Schwartz' list of values.

Based on Table 3.5, discourse analysis was used to analyse the data using the steps stated above. First during the processing stage, all the forum postings were removed from the online forum discussion board and saved on a word file. The second stage was examining by reading and re-reading the forum postings. The preliminary reading was done to identify everyday or casual language in the postings. Language that was used to explain the literature content was excluded. During the third stage of reflecting, the notes were read again to identify emerging patterns regarding values. Words and phrases that surfaced which pointed to some form of values were then analysed. Then, at the labelling stage, identifications were made if there were recurring words/phrases that indicated some form of values. Next during the analysing stage, attention was paid to all written aspects and emoticons or use of symbols seen in the forum postings that reflect values. The purpose at this stage is to see if these complement each other. At the seeking clarification stage, the researcher confirmed with the participants about the values reflected in their language use, especially the

meaning of the emoticons and symbols used. Finally, there was a need to use a coding system to analyse words and phrases for all the values. This was done during the preliminary coding, where codes for the categories of values were created for the values based on both the researcher's perspective of values as well as Schwartz' basic human values.

3.12.2 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was used during the second level of analysis to draw out all the values and categorise them in major themes. Themes seize crucial elements of the data in association to the research question that depict 'some level of patterned response or meaning within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). These themes emerge from the data gathered and are not dictated by the researcher. This analysis undertook a few phases as stated in the Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Phases of thematic analysis adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006)

	Phase	Description
1.	Familiarization with the data	Noting down initial ideas after reading the data both transcribed audio recording and online forum posts.
2.	Generating and identifying initial codes	Interesting and relevant features related to this study are given simple codes based on preliminary identification of values.
3.	Exploring for themes	Examine for themes based on the preliminary identification of values and group them if necessary.
4.	Reviewing the themes	The value themes underwent 2 rounds of blind inter-rating. Discussed with the raters if the need arises.
5.	Defining and naming the themes	Analysing and generating clear themes providing names and definitions for them based on Schwartz' basic human values and note if any other values arise after the in depth interviews.
6.	Writing up the report	Write the findings based on selection of extracts relating back to the analysis to answer the Research Questions.
7.	Verifying with the participants	Authenticate the findings with the participants by allowing them to read the findings about them.

Table 3.6 lists the phases for thematic analysis. Familiarizing with the data was crucial as there were two sets of primary data. It was done through reading and re-reading the transcribed audio recording of the tutorial and the online written posts. Notations were made on the transcripts to indicate instances that related to values. The data which were downloaded (online forum posts) and transcribed (tutorial discussions) were read carefully, line-by-line, and meaningful segments were systematically reduced to smaller chunks of meaning relating to values. Open-coding was employed because there were no pre-set codes; codes were developed and modified through the coding process (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This began with the preliminary identification of values from the researcher's perspective as the researcher was considered as an instrument in this study (see 3.13).

The data was managed by using NVivo software. Memos were created interview transcripts and a coding strategy was developed. First, broad value themes were identified for each participant based on the the audio transcripts and the written online forum posts. Values like being thoughtful, caring, to be polite, were among the few basic values listed as codes and evidences from the transcriptions as well as the forum posts were organised under these codes. Later sub-codes or nodes were created based on the preliminary value codes. For example, saying thank you, sorry and excuse me came under the purview of being polite and this led to some values being merged based on the contextual evidence. All these data were also manually crossed-checked and stored safely to pay particular attention to the ethics compliance.

Based on their reasons and justifications for choosing the words and phrases, the analysis of the in-depth interview transcripts provided insights into the values

subscribed by the participants. The initial value codes were generated based on the researcher's perception which were either altered or corroborated by the participants' own admission in the interview sessions as shown in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Example of data and initial codes for values

Data extracted from the tutorial/forum post	Initial code for values based on researcher's perception	Data from participant's interview	Value coded based on the participant's point of view
Sorry , what did you say? [N/O/T1/4]	To be polite	But I think what I'm trying to do was be more diplomatic stance here. That's why I said sorry...[N/I/13]	To be cordial
What do you guys think? [F/W/F3/6]	To be inclusive	To prompt the discussion. [F/I/213]	To include others

Table 3.7 shows how the researcher explored for initial value themes based on the interviews with the participants. These themes were generated from the researcher's understanding of values from the participants' points of views based on their interviews. It was imperative to identify the values based on the reasons presented by the participants because the analysis conducted was inductive in nature. Other values flagged as codes would be like being considerate, kind, helpful, encouraging, open-minded, cooperative, and being direct, just to mention a few.

After the initial codes were identified, the value codes were organised to correspond as themes based on Schwartz's values. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there is no particular rule on what makes a theme because it is characterised by its significance. In this study, the themes are formed based on the values taken from

Schwartz' Basic Human Values Theory (refer to Table 2.4 and Figure 2.2). Many values are embodied in one comprehensive value. For example interpersonal value emphasises self-restraint in day-to-day interaction and as such values like responsibility, showing politeness, and honouring others would highlight Schwartz' interpersonal value.

Table 3.8: Example of the process from initial codes to final themes

Data extracted from the tutorial/forum post	Initial code for values based on researcher's perception	Value coded based on the participant's point of view	Value coded based on Schwartz' Basic Human Values Theory
Sorry , what did you say? [N/O/T1/4]	To be polite	To be cordial	Interpersonal value
What do you guys think? [F/W/F3/6]	To be inclusive	To include others	Tolerance value

Values are subjective and this study is not prescriptive towards any values. It was examining individuals' subscriptions to values. Based on Table 3.8 the researcher identified words and phrases like *sorry* and *you guys* to values like being polite and to be inclusive based on context. To expunge any forms of biasness, there was a need to corroborate with inter-raters. For the purposes of validating the codes and themes pertaining to values, two stages of blind inter-rater analysis were conducted with three different inter-raters (see 3.13.2). Next, the participants clarified the reasons for using these words/phrases (see Table 3.7) and based on their reasons the coding for the values were adjusted. Finally, these values were matched to Schwartz' values by reasons of association. For example, *sorry* would be an interpersonal value because in this context it indicates self-restraint in everyday interaction and highlights politeness. The use of *you guys* by itself does not connote a value, but in context it implies

inclusion of others which indicates being broadminded and this points to the universalism value of tolerance. As such context is a vital element for value identification. This study is on language use thus context plays an important role. However, if culture emerges as a factor in determining the language use, it will also be reported in the findings.

The transcripts from the interview helped to clarify the exact motivation or reason for the participants to use a particular choice of words/phrases in their communication. These motivations (refer to Table 2.3), established the conception of the values in the participants when interacting with each other. For example, the word *sorry* was said for different reasons reflecting different values such as an apology or politeness. This was further corroborated through two stages of inter-ratering. Clear indications of their reasons and justifications enabled the researcher to match them to the codes or in some cases, create new value codes. Interpretive codes gave insight to some values like being polite, being respectful, being inclusive, being encouraging and so on. These were embedded in the language in a direct or indirect manner and this type of coding played an important basis during the interview session, thus answering Research Question 2 and Research Question 3. That was how these values were mapped on to Schwartz' values. The second kind of code was pattern code which was more inferential and explanatory in nature. It surfaced towards the end of the data collection and this provided insights to Research Question 4.

The reporting of the values subscribed to, commenced in a linear manner whereby individual values for individual participants were reported and discussed. Once, all the participants' findings were disclosed, there was a discussion based on comparison as

the focus of this study is on the values reflected in the language use during communication. Since values were the premise for this study both values pertaining to social focus and personal focus were highlighted.

This study examined the values reflected in the students' language use in a blended learning environment. It is a salient factor that values are subjective and they are pertinent to the participants, who subscribed to them because these values show them who they are as human beings and represents the motivations that drive them towards the conception of the values. However, the preliminary identification of values that was seen in the participants were determined based on the researcher's perspective before seeking the participants' thoughts through interview (see Table 3.7 and Table 3.8). Since the researcher was a necessary tool in this study, it was only appropriate for the participants to authenticate the findings as this study is about them and their values. This is in line with Heron and Reason (2001), who claimed that a good research is conducted with people rather than on people. The findings were verified by the participants and further clarifications were made accordingly.

3.13 Researcher as Instrument

This study was conducted as a qualitative research, and it involved both the researcher as well as the participants. This research was on values, and each of us (participants and researcher) subscribed to different values at different time and space. Since the researcher identified, witnessed and queried the participants' feelings, perceptions, and actions in order to have a greater understanding, the researcher was very much part of the whole research process. The epistemology stance which is what can be

known of the values reflected in the language used and how it can be known was stretched out with the notion of subjective-objective. Here, participants (or knowers) participated in at least four independent manners: experiential, presentational, propositional, and practical as explained in sub-section 3.2. The experiential knower (or the participants) shapes perceptually what is there (Heron & Reason, 1997). These four forms of knowing diversify our subjectivity. This epistemology was what the research required, as it showed participants as knowers, an interesting developmental challenge of who they are and the values they subscribe to. Furthermore, to study values, I needed to study the interaction among them and to study this, at first I needed to interact with them.

The subjects fully participated in designing the research to acquire the knowledge about them because it was their basic right. Here, I was also the co-subject. This meant the research was carried out with each other and not by me on other people. Unlike physical objects, we, human beings, and our behaviour cannot be understood without reference to meanings and purposes attached by them in our activities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). My research was about people as well as with people and their use of language in their own social setting. It was a socially constructed reality throughout the period of my research and I was a part of this reality.

Human beings are always thinking and the mind is ever active. This paradigm paved the way for me to be part and parcel of this process and it was important for me to be reflective through the whole study. Both learning and growing took place even while the study was being conducted and not only at the end of it. Every individual including myself, as the researcher enhanced at a different pace for a different reason

and it allowed us to accept the reasons and perceptions as they are. Knowing and accepting this was fundamental for me to understand human perceptions, thoughts, actions, and in this case, most importantly how certain language use was perceived to have a certain value.

3.13.1 Trustworthiness of the Study

Education research according to Gage (1989) has its moral obligations and this study's was to identify and accept the growth of the participants at that time. As this study was being conducted, it only pointed us towards the direction of the truth at that particular space and time but not to the truth itself because truth is subjective just as one's value.

Creswell (2003) affirmed eight important validation strategies that were used by qualitative researchers. This research used these strategies to ensure that the four criteria of trustworthiness were satisfied.

The first strategy was prolonged engagement and constant observation in the field so as to build the trust with the participants and to check for misinformation. This was because distortions could have happened as the researcher being human might interpret some data differently than what was intended by the participants. Consistent checking with the participants eradicated this issue.

The second strategy was triangulation, whereby the researcher used multiple and different sources to collect data and to corroborate the data. There were two sets of

primary data; one was the online forum postings which were written and the second was recorded face-to-face tutorial sessions which were transcribed. Another primary data was the face-to-face indepth interview sessions which were audio recorded and later transcribed manually. Discourse analysis was used to analyse both the face-to-face tutorial transcriptions as well as the online written forum entries. Then, thematic analysis was used to generate the themes for the values based on Schwartz' values.

The use of peer review or peer examination was the third strategy and this helped to keep the researcher honest and constantly asked difficult questions on the meanings, or interpretations. The peer had to be in agreement with the categorisation of the themes. In this study inter-raters played a vital role by inter-rating 2 out of 5 participants in this study which was validated through Kappa Statistics (see 3.13.2). Only 2 students were picked for Kappa Statistics as it was close to 50% of the sample.

The fourth strategy involved the member-checking the findings whereby the conclusions were given back to the participants. Individual meetings with the participants allowed them to view findings of themselves. Each participant was met separately to enable them to read through the findings of their values based on their language use. Each session took about an hour for them to read and all 5 participants agreed with the researcher's findings. This strategy was to make sure that the very people who participated in the study judged the accuracy and credibility of the findings. These first four strategies addressed the criteria of credibility in this study.

Negative case analysis, the fifth strategy, allowed the researcher to report, discuss, and revise the themes in a bid to eliminate all exceptions. This was done in the initial

stage of analysis where the value codes went through many revisions after multiple readings of the data. The role played by the inter-raters was eminent as it provided an avenue to validate the researcher's value codes. The participant, Francis, had an almost agreement of 0.818 while Nadia's agreement was significant with 0.735 based on stage 2 of Cohen's Kappa Statistics (see Appendix H). The two stages of inter-rating were rigorous to weed out incidences of negative cases.

The sixth strategy was the rich, thick description, which consisted of 8 weeks of classroom observations and transcribed tutorial recordings. Each tutorial session was for 1 hour. The online forum posting were also for 8 weeks. Finally, the interview session with each participant took about 1.5 to 2 hours. This rich, thick description contributed to the findings and enabled the readers to understand the setting, as well as the participants and their responses. In reporting and discussing some common shared value among the participants, they provided sufficient information which enabled the readers to decide if the findings were transferred because of 'shared characteristics'. These strategies (five and six) dealt with the criteria of transferability.

The seventh strategy was to clarify the researcher's bias in this study and this was essential so that the reader would understand the researcher's position. In a qualitative study such as this, the researcher was seen as the primary instrument for data collection and data analysing (Merriam, 1998). As a human instrument, I was prone to limitations of being a human at times but Merriam (1998) said that human instruments were flawed just like any other research instruments. The fact that there were two stages of inter-raters (who did not know each other) mitigated the idea of biasness. As

the researcher, I had to exercise my values of tolerance and perseverance and was able to adapt to multiple situations and realities in pursuit of meaning and knowledge. I also had to be sensitive to all the information gathered, and had an ardent sense of timing of knowing when enough was said or observed.

The eighth strategy was concerned with external audits. By consulting external audits who were the inter-raters to examine the process and the findings, there was an agreement on the accuracy of the study. Furthermore, there were two stages of blind inter-ratering whereby these inter-raters did not know each other and as such individual meetings them were held with them. This will be discussed in detail in the subsequent section that follows. Both these strategies (seven and eight) identified with the criteria of dependability and confirmability. Having these external audits and the researcher's ability to take all necessary precautions provide the element of trustworthiness and rigour to this study.

3.13.2 Inter-rater reliability

For stage one the data and the descriptors were handed over to two inter-raters who are lecturers from a private University and have been involved in qualitative research. The consensus on the values reflected in the language use from the first stage was handed over to another inter-rater, a public school teacher, who has been involved in qualitative research. The bio-data of these inter-raters are included in Appendix I.

The descriptors for the coding were discussed with them individually. Then, they were presented with 8 weeks of tutorials that were transcribed and copies of all the

forum entries for the 2 participants they were inter-rating. The inter-raters took about 2-3 months to complete the process. As this study was on values, which is a subjective subject matter, the inter-raters had some differences in opinions on the codes assigned to the data. The researcher and the inter-raters had to come to consensus after a few discussions. There was a second stage of inter-rating by another inter-rater who was from a public school. The results obtained from the first stage was inter-rated in the second stage. The only common factor is the fact that all three inter-raters have done their PhD research using qualitative methods and as such were familiar with codings and drawing themes. Table 3.9 shows the two stages of inter-rating.

Table 3.9: The two stages of inter-rating and the Kappa Statistics value

Stage	Inter-rater	Types of data	Purpose of exercise	Kappa statistics value
Stage 1	Inter-rater 1	The words and phrases	To check the reliability of the researcher's coding of the identified words and phrases	Francis: 0.828
	Inter-rater 2	The connoted values		Nadia: 0.793
Stage 2	Inter-rater 3	The words and phrases The connoted values	To validate the reliability of researcher's coding of the identified words and phrases after Stage 1	Francis: 0.818 Nadia: 0.735

It was important to note that since there was more than one person looking at the data related to this study, there may be a possibility whereby at times, agreement or disagreement regarding the interpretation of the data which can simply be attributed to chance (Viera & Garrett, 2005, p. 360). For this reason, Kappa statistics was used for two out of five participants in this study. This further entailed inter-rater reliability. The table above shows the use of Cohen's Kappa statistics to calculate the reliability

between stage 1 and stage 2 inter-raters where it was found that Francis had an almost agreement of 0.818 while Nadia's was substantial with 0.735 (see Appendix H) based on Cohen's suggested Kappa results (McHugh, 2012).

3.13.3 Audit Trail

This research employed an audit trail (see Appendix J) to enhance the confirmability and credibility of this study on participants' values reflected in their language use. The rationale for an audit trail is to address claims regarding lack of control, validity as well as bias (Cutcliffe & McKenna, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) believed that an audit trail is "one principal method for establishing the 'confirmability' of qualitative findings" (p. 318).

Shenton (2004) claimed that a detailed methodological description allows the reader to establish how far the data and constructs emerging from it can be recognised (p. 72). The audit trail permitted the reader to monitor the progress of this study step-by-step through the decisions made and procedures described. It depicted in a comprehensive manner, the way data was collected, categorised and how decisions were made in the course of this study.

3.14 Ethics

Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were of utmost importance. The values that the respondents exhibited remained confidential. Their responses concerning values were quoted using only pseudonyms. Participants were informed

that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point. They also had the right to enquire about the findings and participated in verifying them.

All the necessary permissions and consents were obtained in accordance to the Faculty Ethics Committee of the university where the study took place. In order to attain the clearance (see Appendix K) from the Ethics Committee, the researcher furnished them with all the necessary details pertaining to this study. After obtaining the approval from the Ethics Committee, all the participants were briefed about the study. They were also provided the details of the study: an overview, the aims and rationale, and the research questions. All the participants signed the consent form though, only a selected few would be chosen for the study. This is so that all tutorial discussions and forum posting could be contextualised.

Extreme care was taken so as not to impose the researcher's own values in any manner at any point during this study. Upholding the ethics of accepting the participants' values regardless what they were, and at the same time ensuring the participants confidentiality and anonymity was the researcher's highest priority.

The security of all data was a vital concern as was its safe keeping as it involves the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. In line with this, all data obtained was stored in a protected manner.

3.15 Summary

This study was a qualitative study on the values seen in the language use in a blended learning environment. The paradigm used as a backdrop for this study as well as the rationale for the choice of case study were explained. The data collected for this study came from the responses from the online forum entries, participant observations, and interviews. Communication took place in both synchronous and asynchronous manner.

The data collected was analysed through two different methods. Discourse analysis was used to analyse both the face-to-face oral sessions and the online written forum postings. Later, thematic analysis was used as a second level analysis to draw all the values and to categorise them into major themes. All strategies pertaining to the trustworthiness of this study and all questions pertaining to ethics were addressed prior to data collection.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and analyses the data collected from the participants in this study on students' values as reflected in their language use in a blended learning environment. The data were obtained with the intention to answer the four research questions in this study. The research questions are:

1. Which words and phrases show values in the students' written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?
2. Why did the students use these words and phrases that express their values in these modes of communication?
3. Were the students aware of any of their values while interacting in these modes of communication?
4. How do the students' values influence their language use in written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?

In this study, the data from the participants' tutorial transcripts, the online forum entries and the semi-structured interview transcripts were analysed. As this study examines the values reflected in language use, the participants' own language seen in both oral (tutorial transcripts) and written (online forum entries) was the focus of the data analysis. The data obtained indicated the preliminary perception of what constitutes as values to them. The semi-structured interviews clarified, corroborated,

and justified the findings about the students based on their language use. These findings surfaced from the analysis of the tutorial transcripts and the forum entries.

The representation of the findings and discussions are arranged in four different sections according to the research questions. Each section answers one Research Question and within that there are sub-sections on individual findings of each participant.

The first section identifies words and phrases from the tutorial transcripts and forum entries that indicated values in the participants' language use which answer Research Question 1: Which words and phrases show values in the students' written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions? The second section answers Research Question 2 and it furnishes the participants' reasons for using the words and phrases (from the first section) and this in turn depicts the themes that indicate the participants' values. The third section answers Research Question 3 and it reflects the participants' awareness of their values that were represented in their communication and their perception of other emerging values in relation to communication within a social context. The fourth section answers Research Question 4 and it illustrates the influence of the students' values over their language use in both the written (online) and spoken (face-to-face) modes of communication.

All participants were given pseudonyms for the tutorial transcripts, forum entries, and interview transcripts. This is in compliance with the research ethics and the participants' identities were not revealed in reporting the findings. All utterances in the transcripts and forum entries were coded (see Table 3.4).

4.2 Findings for Research Question 1: Identification of Values

The findings presented in this section answers Research Question 1 which identifies words and phrases that show values in the participants' oral and written modes of communication. Since this study was set in a participatory inquiry paradigm the researcher played a role in the observation of the participants, and this provided the opportunity to understand the participants and their experiences. This opportunity allowed for the selection of words/phrases from both the transcripts and forum entries, to be made solely by the researcher in relation to her perspective on values. The values identified through the researcher's perspective, were then either altered or corroborated after interviewing the participants, and finally matched to Schwartz' values (see Tables 3.7 and 3.8). As the study and data were subjective, two rounds of blind inter-rating were included with regards to the interpretation of the data (see Chapter 3, section 3.14.2).

Vocabulary has a role in determining values which provides insights into social interactions (Parker, 1992; Fairclough, 1989). Vocabulary is essential for it not only makes sense of the utterances but is also a means to perform social actions (Wooffitt, 2005), and simple, ordinary, taken-for-granted language (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2007; Chung & Pennebaker, 2008) was the focus of this study. Values in this study were seen in the context of the particular interactions and not seen plainly in words/phrases.

The discourse analysis of the transcriptions of the tutorial sessions and online forum entries only focused on one aspect and that is the word selection as it would to answer

Research Question 1. However, the presence of emoticon, symbols and other non-standard features of language were also addressed using discourse analysis to identify the values reflected by the participants. This was further clarified through in-depth interviews with the participants.

4.2.1 Recognising words and phrases that indicated values

The findings of the words and phrases are presented in the following manner. First, a short background information is given about each participant. This is then followed by the findings of words/phrases that indicate values in a tabulated form followed by a brief explanation. These words/phrases were identified by the researcher and the values were seen in context. However, the tabulated form will only indicate the immediate contextual evidence for the word/phrase and not the complete context. These values were inter-rated for validation by inter-raters who had the access to the complete context, thus giving credibility to the following findings.

4.2.2 Background Information on Participant 1: Nadia

Nadia is a third generation Malaysian who comes from a mixed heritage; her father is South Indian Malayalee Catholic whose roots go back to Kerala and who converted to Islam soon after meeting her mother, who is a Punjabi Pakistani. She has one younger sister and many relatives from both maternal and paternal sides. The language used by her is predominantly English, with a mix of Malay, Punjabi and at times Urdu. Nadia claims she comes from a family that is liberal in terms of beliefs and ideology and considers themselves as progressive Muslims who view religion as a moral compass. According to Nadia, her value system which is instilled by her family is rooted in

religion and Malaysian culture. She believes in generally doing good like being kind to others, avoiding hurting others, respecting elders, seeing the good in others and being true to oneself [N/S/BI].

Out of 8 tutorial sessions, Nadia was present for 6 and participated in 5 online forums. The following table shows the choice of the words and phrases that relate to values from these sessions. They were obtained by analysing the sources which were the tutorial transcripts and forum entries and seen in context.

Table 4.1: Examples of words/phrases used by Nadia that relate to values

No	Words/phrases	Value connotations	Values according to Schwartz' Basic Human Values	Contextual evidence
1.	Sorry...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	Sorry , what did you say? [N/O/T1/4]
2.	Sorry...	To show humility	Humility value	Sorry , I'm just really bad with names. I am just not good with names. I recognize faces but like....[N/O/T1/25]
3.	...give it a shot...	To encourage	Caring value	So, are you guys gonna give it a shot ? [N/O/T3/10]
4.	...give it a shot...	Being assertive	Dominance value	No, just give it a shot . [N/O/T3/9]
5.	... we ...	Being inclusive	Social security value	So we can say he becomes more empathetic. [N/O/T3/56]
6.	Oh, yeah.	To agree	Interpersonal value	Oh, yeah . [N/O/T3/17]
7.	... kind of ...	Being respectful	Interpersonal value	I don't know. But you kind of see what's going on. [N/O/T6/33]
8.	... in a sense...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	... So in a sense is that what you can gather from this text like there is one message...[N/O/T1/46]
9.	I think...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	I think these examples are easier. [N/O/T5/22]

10.	Damn...	Use of slang	Tradition value	1905. It says here go to sleep already damn[N/O/T2/37]
11.	...shines upon the possibility...	To show self-satisfaction	Hedonism value	It shines upon the possibility of Artificial Intelligence learning and applying meaning to words and ideas 'it' conveys. [N/W/F3/2]
12.	...hard to wrap my head ...	capability	Achievement value	I find it hard to wrap my head around the idea that the story ...[N/W/F2/1]

Based on the preliminary examination, the value connotations that appeared most in Nadia's utterances were being polite, being agreeable, being inclusive, and being encouraging. Even when Nadia was being careful or not imposing, being helpful, and showing concern there were indications of Nadia's values inclining towards being polite. She used the word "sorry" a total of 13 times when communicating in her 6 tutorial sessions. This was the most frequently used word, which carried different value connotations like an apology or just being polite when read in context which is consistent with Korzybski's (1991) findings.

Nadia used the phrase "give it a shot" in 4 different instances in just one tutorial session but they ascribed to two different values which were being encouraging and being dominant. Table 4.1 shows the words and phrases that have some relations to the values which were seen in the transcriptions of the tutorial sessions (representing oral communication) and her online posts (representing written communication). When seen in context, Nadia's values were more apparent with her choice of words/phrases in her oral sessions than her written form.

4.2.3 Background Information on Participant 2: Francis

Francis is a Malaysian Chinese and he speaks mainly in Mandarin to his parents and 3 elder sisters but in English to his younger brother. According to him, he is closer to his parents and his second sister. Francis is a Buddhist but claims that his parents are not very religious and seldom practise it at home. As kids, he and his siblings were exposed to Taoist-Buddhist aspects, mostly by the extended family. With regards to values, during the interview Francis tried to evade the topic by claiming that it was ‘a very broad term’ and tried ‘to recall anything of note’. However, he claimed his parents encouraged him to be reasonable, to be able to think for himself, be independent, to take responsibility for his own decisions, and to be helpful. Although, both his parents instilled the above values, he professed that his father was particular about one value - be respectful [F/S/BI].

Out of 8 tutorial sessions, Francis was present for all 8 and participated in 8 online forums. The value connotations that surfaced the most in Francis’ utterances were being polite, agreeing with others, being inclusive and being direct. Though having humility or not being imposing and encouraging did not appear in the face-to-face sessions, these values emerged in the online written form. This highlights that there is a difference in how he speaks and writes and the different values that emerge in these two modes of communication. Table 4.2 shows the choice of the words and phrases that related to values from these sessions.

Table 4.2: Examples of words and phrases used by Francis that relate to values

No	Words/phrases	Value connotations	Values according to Schwartz' Basic Human Values	Contextual evidence
1.	But then ... Sorry Thank you	Being polite	Interpersonal value	But then , there will be no smell. [F/O/T1/32] Hi, so sorry for the late reply. [F/W/F2/1] Yes, I do think all of the examples you provided are Indirect Speech. Thanks Geraldine.
2.	Yeah, yeah I agree...	To agree	Interpersonal value	Yeah yeah. [F/O/T1/40] I agree with ... to collect and buy. [F/W/F9/8]
3.	... pretty solid point.	To encourage	Caring value	That's a pretty solid point. [F/W/F3/8]
4.	I think ... However ...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	I think she hated it is also a reported narrative act. [F/O/T4/20] However , there are certain points...[F/W/F3/10]
5.	...we...	Being inclusive	Social security value	Okay ,okay, okay, we keep that in mind, and we move to the function first. [F/O/T1/10]
6.	...hell... ...shit...	Use of slang	Tradition value	How the hell would she know... [F/O/T7/53] He looked shit ...[F/O/T7/59]
7.	I think.../I don't feel...	Being assertive	Dominance value	I think , I think, it's very symbolic. [F/O/T1/2]
8.	Hello...	Being courteous	Interpersonal value	Hello beautiful people! [F/W/F4/3]

Francis used the phrase *but then* both in oral and written form of communication. During oral communication he used it many times but only once in the written communication. When using it orally, he did so for politeness but in the written form, he showed some restraint by not imposing his thoughts while communicating as indicated in *but then again, that's my own reading*. Other vocabulary that showed

Francis being polite are *sorry* and *thank you*. The findings also indicated that this participant preferred the choice of word *but* as it appeared in all 8 tutorials for a total of 20 times where it showed a degree of politeness especially when he was about to disagree.

The words *okay* and *yeah* appeared throughout the 8 tutorials Francis had participated in. These words, at times were used as independent words and at other times were used in a phrase. At both times, these words represented the fact that Francis was in agreement with someone over what was being discussed. In the written forum postings, Francis used the phrase *I agree* to be more direct in showing his agreement.

Throughout the oral and written communication sessions, the Francis used the pronoun *we* or *you guys* when trying to put forth his ideas or thoughts. This signalled that he wanted to be inclusive by including others even though the thoughts and opinions were solely his. The participant was consistent in wanting to be inclusive as this was found to be the case in 7 out of 8 tutorial sessions (oral) and 4 out of 9 forum sessions (written). *I think* was used both in the tutorial sessions and forum entries and it revealed 2 different values; being polite and being assertive.

4.2.4 Background Information on Participant 3: Lara

Lara comes from a Malaysian Chinese family that stresses on the importance of speaking the mother tongue which is Mandarin. She has 2 other older brothers. Although more emphasis was given to the mastering of the Mandarin language, growing up, she spoke mainly English to her father and her brother. She took the

initiative to master Sarawakian dialects and basic Japanese and Korean vocabulary in order to communicate with her friends. She continues to further her ability to speak in Mandarin so that she can remain close to her mother who mainly speaks in a few Chinese dialects. According to Lara, knowing how to communicate in so many languages has taught her to be humble, respectful and helpful as no language is superior to the other [L/S/BI].

Lara was present for all 8 tutorial sessions and participated in 5 online forums. The findings revealed a few value connotations in some of the words and phrases used by Lara both in oral and written forms. Namely, the values identified were being polite, encouraging, being assertive, being inclusive, agreeing and being insistent through repetition. Table 4.3 shows the choice of the words and phrases that relate to values from these sessions.

Table 4.3: Examples of words and phrases used by Lara that relate to values

No	Words/phrases	Value connotations	Values according to Schwartz' Basic Human Values	Contextual evidence
1.	... kind of like... ...thank you sorry... I think...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	You can find it everywhere... I guess it's kind of like ...you may not see your ears but they will be there. [L/O/T1/7] Yay~ thank you ~ I successfully detach myself. My Chinese *laughs*, any of you guys wanna speak? Oh goodness me what did you do? [L/O/T3/112] Sorry? [L/O/T3/76] I think like they just naturally co-dependant on each other. [L/O/T7/124]
2.	... That's good...	Encourage	Caring value	There you go. That's good that's good. You will say it then. Good job Amy! [L/O/T3/22]

3.	I think...	Being assertive	Dominance value	Erm, I think it wouldn't be hard but I think with the assistance of the imagery it made it easier to relate with it [L/O/T6/111]
4.	... same same same same... ... really really really...	Use of repetition for persistence	Self-direction of thought value	oh~ same same same same I cry too. Sometimes. It's like..*acting out her crying scene*, I don't get like really really angry like violence; angry or I'll cry. But I've been trying to be like not being violent, so that's why I was like super chill about everything. Yea, so so I was like hate when I get like that. It's like a different person, it's so scary right? [L/O/T4/88]
5.	True... Right ...	To agree	Interpersonal value	Oh true true true [L/O/T6/26] Right ~ ok. So we move on to the second one?...[L/O/T5/76]
6.	...we you guys...	Being inclusive	Social security value	No. wait! we are done! This is the story. [L/O/T4/29] What did you guys find? [L/O/T6/21]
7.	Cool...	Use of slang	Interpersonal value	Alright~ that's cool . [L/O/T5/84]

It is to be noted that Lara was being polite in all her oral and written sessions but was encouraging only in a few oral sessions. Her use of *thank you* and *sorry* were direct manner of being polite whereas phrases like *just like*, *like have* and *I think* showed the connotations of being polite and they were seen in both her oral and written forms. But, there were instances when she used *I think* to show her assertiveness depending on the situation.

Lara exhibited her agreement with the rest of the group member many times throughout all 8 tutorial sessions but none in her forum postings. She used a variety of words and phrases like *ya*, *cool*, *true*, *right*, *ok* and *me too* to relate that she agreed with someone or something that was said. But, all these agreeing was only seen in her

face-to-face oral sessions and in her online written post, she did not agree with anyone.

Throughout the entire oral and written forms of communications, Lara used *we* and *you guys* in trying to express being inclusive. In 5 out of 8 tutorial sessions there were many instances but she only used these words once in only 2 forum entries, indicating that she is more inclusive of others in face-to-face sessions compared to written sessions.

4.2.5 Background Information on Participant 4: Kimmy

Kimmy hails from a loving family of mixed parentage; a Ceylonese father and a Chinese mother. She is grateful for everything she has in her life. She has 2 brothers whom she is close to, and it is from them that she learned the value of independence and respect. Growing up, she has been exposed to both cultures and racial beliefs. The main language that she uses for communication is English and occasionally in Cantonese or Mandarin specially when her mother insists. According to Kimmy, the key value instilled in her by her parents is the notion that one can have independence but it comes responsibilities and respect. She claims her parents brought her up drumming that there will always be a consequence to all her actions [K/S/BI].

Out of 8 tutorial sessions, Kimmy was present for 7 and participated in 6 online forums. Based on the data collected on Kimmy's language use, it was noted that she used *you guys* in all her 7 tutorials that she attended but did not use it in her written forum entries. The use of *you guys* suggested the value connotation of being inclusive.

Another choice of word that Kimmy used to express being inclusive is *we* in all her 7 tutorial sessions and in 2 out 6 written forum entries. This signifies Kimmy's willingness to be inclusive in face-toface sessions rather than written sessions. Table 4.4 shows the choice of the words and phrases that relate to her values from these sessions.

Table 4.4: Examples of words and phrases used by Kimmy that relate to values

No	Words/phrases	Value connotations	Values according to Schwartz' Basic Human Values	Contextual evidence
1.	Okay	To agree	Interpersonal value	Okay tell them about the sweets! [K/O/T5/59]
2.	Sorry Thank you	Being polite	Interpersonal value	I am so sorry that the transcribers have to hear these. Deal with us every single week! [K/O/T7/27] That's a good try Ben, thank you so much *laugh* [K/O/T3/58]
3.	I guess ...	Being respectful	Interpersonal value	Okay. I guess we can look into it later, so we move on to the next story la. [K/O/T2/34]
4.	We are ...	Being inclusive	Social security value	Okay. I guess we can look into it later, so we move on to the next story la. [K/O/T2/34]
5.	You guys...	Being inclusive	Social security value	Ok you guys take turns talking. [K/O/T1/56]
6.	You go girl.	To encourage	Caring value	You go girl. [K/O/T1/59]
7.	...pretty... ... stuff	Use of slang	Tradition value	I think that's pretty straight forward. [K/O/T2/53] help guys we just need help in clarifying like some stuffs for us.. [K/O/T4/38]
8.	I think ...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	I think it's the same thing...it's just that there's no... [K/O/T4/28]
9.	weird	To boost one's self-esteem by using a filler	Achievement value	But this is weird you know cos the character I mean the main character itself, it's like you say the memory of the mom died after the father...that means... [K/O/T2/6]

10.	Different verb forms eg. I considered I grew I advocate	To boost self-confidence	Achievement value	I considered that another plausible...[K/W/F1/2] ...first but I grew to understand...[K/W/F2/2] I advocate that there is no static tone...[K/W/F3/1]
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The findings showed Kimmy using the phrase *I guess* in 5 out of 7 oral sessions but none in the written form. Kimmy used the phrase *I guess* when putting forth her thoughts because she was not sure and did not wish to portray as if she knew everything. The connotation of being polite was also shown through the word *sorry* and *thank you*; both of which she used in 4 of the 7 oral sessions. She also used the phrase *I think* which was identified many times in all her 7 tutorial sessions to indicate that she was being polite. She also employed the word *pretty* together with *I think* in the same sentence to indicate a sense of intensity for being assertive and this was seen in 3 of her tutorial sessions.

The use of the word *okay* in the beginning of the utterance was identified in 4 out of 7 tutorials. Kimmy's use of *okay* presented the connotation that she wanted to begin with some form of agreement. Kimmy used the phrase *you go girl* to encourage her friends. It was found that Kimmy was inclined to use the word *stuff* in 3 out of 7 tutorial sessions which was meant to indicate something but did not use it in the written form.

4.2.6 Background Information on Participant 5: Julie

Julie comes from a family of 7, whereby her mother is Malaysian Malay and her father is Iraqi. Coming from a mixed parentage, everyone predominantly spoke in English. Due to the fact that she shared her room with her sisters, she is closer to her sisters rather than her parents. Although, Julie is closer to her mother than her father, she insists that they have nothing in common with her. This, according to her, is because their beliefs are completely opposite to hers. Julie claims that being fluent in English has helped her in many ways; it allowed her to read and learn from many sources, especially from the internet. Julie believes that her values and beliefs differ from those of her parents mainly because of the liberal and moderate school of thought that she was exposed to, especially through the media [J/S/BI].

Out of 8 tutorial sessions, Julie was present for 7 and participated in all 8 online forums. The following table shows the choice of the words and phrases that relate to values from these sessions.

Table 4.5: Examples of words and phrases used by Julie that relate to values

No	Words/phrases	Value connotations	Values according to Schwartz' Basic Human Values	Contextual evidence
1.	...you guys ... we...	Being inclusive	Social security value	What do you guys think? (J/W/F4/11) Should we write down? [J/O/T1/11]
2.	Hello all	Being courteous	Interpersonal value	Hello all! Hope the day has treated everyone well :D [J/W/F9/1]
3.	I think... I guess	Being polite	Interpersonal value	Yeah, I think we can change the sentence. [J/O/T3/7]

				I guess you can say that he got things to look forward to? [J/O/T8/38]
4.	...like...	Being polite	Interpersonal value	But is it like no problem. [J/O/T2/22]
5.	...hell ... shit ... screw this	Use of slang	Tradition value	This is super funny. What the hell [J/O/T8/9] What he said was really shit . [J/O/T7/78] I am not as existential as the old waiter. I think of things but I don't go like, screw this . What is the point of life? [J/O/T8/121]
6.	Sorry	To apologise	Humility value	We're sorry , we're not talking about literature. We're talking about something else. [J/O/T7/82]
7.	I agree ... / I disagree...	Being assertive	Self-direction of thought value	I agree with Frances, in that I disagree with the statement. [J/W/F7/1]
8.	why, why, why...	Use of repetition	Self-direction of thought value	Why lah? Why why why is it such a tall order? [J/O/T7/54]

The data collected from Julie's transcriptions and forum entries revealed that she used *we* and *you guys* both her tutorial sessions and written modes of the communication to show inclusiveness. *We* and *you guys* were identified in all the tutorial sessions and 6 out of 8 forum entries indicating that she is consistent about being inclusive of others in both modes of communication.

The phrases *I agree* and *I disagree* were detected in 4 out of 8 written forum entries, but they were not used by Julie even once in any of her oral sessions. It showed that it is easy for Julie to use these phrases (*I agree* and *I disagree*) in the written mode of communication. Words like *hello*, *sorry* and *thanks* were used by Julie in her forum entries but not in oral sessions except for *sorry* which she used only once out of 7 oral sessions. These words (*hello*, *sorry* and *thanks*) reflect the idea of being courteous and

being polite as a value was mainly seen in the forum entries that is the written form of communication. Words like *hello*, *sorry* and *thanks* were used by Julie in her forum entries and she only used 'sorry' in 1 out of 7 in her oral sessions.

Towards the last two tutorial sessions, Julie had the tendency to repeat words and phrases for example *no, no* or *alright, alright, alright* or *why, why, why, why*. These were only seen in her oral sessions and not in the forum entries. The phrase *I think, like* and *but* surfaced as a pattern in all of Julie's 7 tutorial sessions giving the connotation of presenting something politely. There were also swear words like *hell, shit and screw this* while words like *deep* and *pretty* that signified usage of slang words in her oral sessions.

4.3 Recognition of values

The discussion in this section is based on the findings for Research Question 1 and is focused on the students' choice of words and phrases in relation to their beliefs and values based on the similarities and differences. The participants' language use was motivated because of how they thought and their vocabulary expressed their thoughts. The motivations for these values helped to provide perspectives thus contributing to a greater comprehension of the values the students subscribed to in this social context. For this purpose, the values identified in the findings were tabulated to compare if the participants had the tendency to use the similar words/phrase that connote a particular value. The similarities for the language use was drawn based on the individual participant's examples of words/phrases used that related to values. These values were listed based on everyday language.

After 8 weeks of oral tutorial sessions which were face-to-face and 9 weeks of written forum entries which were online, the following list of words and phrases connoting values was compiled. There were some similarities and differences among the 5 participants on the words and phrases which represented values. These values seen in the language use in Table 4.6 have gone through a rigorous blind inter-rating process whereby all 3 inter-raters verified the values reflected in the language use of 2 out of 5 participants and the following list of words/phrases reflect the corresponding values.

Table 4.6: List of words and and phrases signifying values by the participants

Words / Phrases	Values identified	Nadia	Francis	Kimmy	Lara	Julie
Sorry ...	Being polite	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
But then...	Being polite		✓			✓
I think...	Being polite	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Just like...	Being polite				✓	✓
Thank you	Being polite	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sorry ...	To show humility	✓		✓		
Sorry...	Being courteous	✓				
...kind of...	Being respectful	✓			✓	
I guess...	Respect / tolerant			✓		✓
Hello	Being courteous		✓			✓
Give it a shot	To encourage	✓				
Pretty solid point/ Pretty good	To encourage		✓		✓	
that's good/good job/good/nice	To encourage				✓	
You go girl	To encourage			✓		

...we...	Being inclusive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
...you guys...	Being inclusive		✓	✓	✓	✓
I think...	Being assertive		✓		✓	
I agree ...	Being assertive					✓
I don't feel...	Being assertive		✓			
Are you...	Being assertive		✓			
Give it a shot	Being assertive	✓				
same,same,same/ cool,cool,cool	Show persistent/to emphasise/fillers	✓		✓	✓	✓
True...	To agree				✓	
Right...	To agree				✓	
Okay	To agree		✓	✓	✓	
Cool	To agree				✓	
Me too	To agree				✓	
...yeah...	To agree	✓	✓	✓		✓
I agree	To agree		✓			
...pretty...	To use slang			✓		✓
...stuff	To use slang			✓		
Hell/shit/oh my God/damn	To use slang	✓	✓			✓
Cool	To use slang				✓	

4.3.1 Being Polite/Being Courteous

All the participants used the word *sorry* which connoted the value of being polite in their interactions either in their oral or written. Similar to Kitao and Kitao's (2013) findings, *sorry* was the most common performative in apologies in this study and it is seen in Table 4.7. below.

Table 4.7: The number of times the word *sorry* was used by the participants

	Tutorial weeks (oral interactions)								
Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Nadia	3	4	2	1	2	1	Absent	Absent	13
Francis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lara	1	0	1	2	4	2	0	0	10
Kimmy	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	Absent	5
Julie	0	0	0	0	0	Absent	3	0	3
	Forum weeks (written interactions)								
Nadia	0	0	0	0	0	0	Absent	Absent	0
Francis	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kimmy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Absent	0
Julie	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1

Table 4.7 shows Nadia using *sorry* the most and the only weeks she did not use them was when she was absent for tutorial. This was followed by Lara, Kimmy and Julie. In all of Francis' 8 tutorial sessions, *sorry* was not communicated but it was used once in his written forum entries. Julie too used it once in her written interaction. However,

the rest of the 3 participants used *sorry* only in their oral setting but never once in their written suggesting their individual preferences.

Other phrases like *I think*, *just like* and *but then* were also used in an attempt to be polite. It is to be noted that Francis is the only one who used *but then* to be polite when he tried to disagree. Being polite was also expressed by *thank you* and *like*. These were uttered repeatedly by all the participants except Francis.

The words *sorry* and *hello* also connote the value of being courteous to others. *Hello* was used only by two participants, Francis and Julie but it was not used in their oral communication. Rather, it was present in their written communication. Nadia on the other hand was the only one to use *sorry* as a form of being courteous. Politeness and courtesy are interchangeable as being courteous is an act that reflects a polite behaviour (Bengsch, 2010; Cobb, 2015) and words/phrases listed in this section reflected this value when seen in context.

4.3.2 To Encourage

Being encouraging appears to be one value that all the participants subscribed to. Every participant used different phrases of their choice to reflect being encouraging either during the oral sessions or in the written forum entries. These phrases were like *give it a shot*, *pretty solid point or pretty good*, *that's good or good job*, and *you go girl*. But, 2 out of the 5 participants; Francis and Lara said the exact same phrase as an encouragement which was *pretty solid point or pretty good* whereby they used informal word *pretty* to indicate a degree to the encouragement. Peer encouragement

as indicated in the findings paved the way for cooperative learning and all the participants encouraged others in their respective groups using words/phrases that they were comfortable with, thus improving task engagement (Bossert, 1988).

4.3.3 Being Inclusive

The use of the plural form of first person pronoun *we* was used by all five participants to express being inclusive. This was common in both oral and written modes of communication depicting a similarity in their choice of word to express inclusiveness. There was also a phrase *you guys*, that was used to connote a similar value of being inclusive by all the participants except for Nadia. The notion of using the pronoun ‘we’ indicates the exclusion of self and the inclusion of others in their interactions supporting Sharndama’s (2016) findings.

4.3.4 To Agree

There were a variety of words used like *true*, *right*, *okay*, *me too*, *cool* and *yeah* to signal to be in agreement but Nadia and Julie showed a preference to using only one type of utterance *yeah*. It was a different case though for Francis and Kimmy, who used two different types of words (*okay* and *yeah*) to express agreement. However, Lara used 5 different words and phrases. It is to be noted that *yeah* appeared to be the common word to express agreement because four participants used it; only, Lara opted not to. She used five other words meaning the same, to be in agreement, except *yeah*. Francis specifically used the phrase *I agree* repeatedly in his written online forum posts to express being in agreement to other people’s opinions. The

words/phrases the participants chose to reflect their agreement show a level of approval which also exhibit some form of moral praise (Scanlon Jr., 1986).

4.3.5 Being Assertive

Except for Kimmy all the 4 participants used phrases that showed the value of being assertive. Phrases like *I think* was used by Francis and Lara. On top of the phrase *I think*, Francis also used other phrases like *I don't feel*, and *are you* at different instances to express assertiveness. These phrases were seen in both their oral and written modes of communication. On the other hand, Nadia was assertive only once, in her face-to-face session. She used the phrase *give it a shot*, the same phrase she used for encouraging but, her tone was assertive in this instance hence exhibiting her assertive value. Julie opted to use *I agree/I disagree* to show her assertiveness and it was only in her written forum entries. A show of assertiveness displays an individual's personal potential and according to Peneva and Mavrodiev (2013) is a prerequisite for self-actualization. On the other hand a lack of assertiveness is an indicator of having low self-esteem (Sarkova et. al., 2013) as seen in Kimmy (see 4.6.5)

4.3.6 To Use Slang

All five participants used swear words and phrases like *hell*, *shit*, *screw this*, as well as slang words like *cool*, *pretty*, *stuff*, *damn* and the phrase *Oh my God*. The use of slang words or anti-language (Halliday, 1978) connoted the idea that these participants were comfortable with a specific choice of words/phrases to express their

thoughts. All these words/phrases have literal meanings but to the participants these words/phrases imply other meanings which at times only the speakers and listeners understand.

4.3.7 Being Respectful

Being respectful was portrayed by Nadia, Kimmy, Lara and Francis but was unclear in Julie's language use. Nadia and Lara expressed being respectful through the phrase *kind of* whereas, Kimmy and Lara used the phrase *I guess*. Both these phrases were only seen in their oral communication. These phrases were identified as respectful based on their contextual usage (see 4.) and had a role in fulfilling vital social concerns (De Cremer & Mulder, 2007). The notion of respect and being polite is closely associated with each other because one cannot be respectful if one is impolite and vice versa, and as such both are needed for successful and meaningful interactions.

4.3.8 To Show Humility

Only one participant, Nadia, clearly showed humility and this is reflected in the context when she used the word *sorry*. It was used in her oral communication but not in her written communication. This value was not clear in the others when they said *sorry*, as the context did not reflect one of humility. This was because *sorry* was used for a variety of reasons (see 4.6.1.1)

4.3.9 To Be Persistent

Four participants chose to utter a word/phrase repeatedly twice, thrice or even four times like *same, same, same* or *cool, cool, cool*. Saying a word/phrase repeatedly was an intentional attempt to make sure that the speakers managed to get their ideas/thoughts across and this portrayed the value of being persistent. In a manner being persistent can at times be viewed as being assertive but the consistent repetition of a single word classifies it as an act of persistence. Julie, Nadia, Kimmy and Lara depicted the tendency to show persistence on their part by uttering a phrase/word many times. Francis was the only participant who did not display persistence by repeating words.

4.4 Other Emerging Features Indicating Values

The presence of words and phrases that reflected the participants' values can be seen from the list (see Table 4.6). However, other features reflecting participants' values also emerged in the findings.

4.4.1 Use of P/S and Signature

Since this study is on students' language use that reflects their values, words in any form from their face-to-face session and online forum entries that connote values are identified. One participant, Julie, used P/S and signature in her forum entries. Though her name was on top of the forum entry, she still signed off to personally identify herself.

4.4.2 Use of Emoticons

The focus of study is on the students' values reflected in their language use but the emergence of the use of emoticons was prevalent in all the 5 students. As such, there was a need to report this findings as these also reflected the students' values. These findings will be discussed later in this chapter. Table 4.7 indicates the meanings for the emoticon symbols used all the participants except Nadia.

Table 4.8: Emoticon symbols in the online forum entries and their respective meaning

Symbols	Participant	Function
:D	Lara	Big Grin
=]	Kimmy	Smiley or happy face
:P	Julie	Teasing –tongue sticking out
:D	Julie	Big Grin
=)	Francis	Smiley or happy face
=D	Francis	Big Grin

Julie and Francis used emoticons twice in 8 weeks of forum entry whereas Lara and Kimmy only used it once and Table 4.8 indicates the ones that they used. Although the usage of emoticons are not frequent, the notion that these 4 participants used them in their written communication implies that they depended on symbols in addition to words to get their message across. All the emoticons in the forum entries displayed some manner of smile and this indicates that the participants were in a happy mood or expressed their cheerfulness during their online written interactions.

4.4.3 Non-Verbal Communication

The focus of this study is on words and phrases but there were a few non-verbal aspects present in the oral transcriptions and as such required attention. For this reason, they were examined in relation to their significance to language and their contribution to values is discussed later in this chapter.

4.5 Findings for Research Question 2: Justifications for using value-based vocabulary

This section answers Research Question 2 which is the reason for the students' use of words and phrases identified in the two different modes of communication. There is no single meaning for words and phrases uttered in a conversation (Korzybski, 1991, p. 50). The words and phrases contribute to different meanings to different speakers as well as listeners. As such, in-depth interviews were conducted to seek clarifications over their choice of words and phrases so as to report the speaker's intentions.

4.5.1 Individual participant's rationale for the choice of vocabulary

This section answers Research Question 2 with each sub-heading detailing each participant's reasons for his or her choice of words and phrases that reflected certain value traits of themselves. These reasons were obtained through face-to-face interviews with the participants.

4.5.1.1 Nadia

Nadia explained and clarified her use for the word *sorry* which she uttered 13 times in all the 6 tutorial sessions she was present but never once wrote it in any of her 5 forum entries. The findings revealed that she used the same word *sorry* but meant it for different reasons, reinforcing Korzybski (1991) that there are multiple meanings for words and phrases used in a conversation. The following shows that Nadia's choice of the word *sorry* was used for conveying apology.

Nadia: No, no, no. I'm sorry like maybe I made the person repeat more than they need to repeat. You know some person needed more time to grasp certain points. I am one of those people. When I get it right. But I need time to really well understand it. I mean I know sometimes it may be a little bit taxing for someone to explain it to me. But she shouldn't exactly have to but she did. So that's why I was apologizing. [N/I/28]

Nadia: Yeah, I'm apologizing. [N/I/188]

Nadia: It's because I lost my train of thought and I can't remember so I'm apologizing...[N/I/193]

N/I/28 showed that Nadia apologised to the other members in her group because she did not really understand a certain point which in turn, required a group member to halt the on-going discussion to explain to her what she did not comprehend. N/I/187 and N/I/188 explained the fact that she was not paying attention to the discussion and therefore, apologised to the group members. When Nadia said, *Ok ok ok, thank you so much, I'm sorry [N/O/T2/27]*, she appreciated the other person for taking the time to explain and thanked that person for being so helpful even though she said sorry to her for taking so long to understand. In this instance, her apology and her gratitude acted to complement each other in the same utterance.

Similarly, in N/I/193 Nadia apologised to the group because she could not remember what she was going to say on a particular subject. Nadia's values reflect a criteria that

guides actions (Schwartz; 1992, 2012). One of Schwartz' values that Nadia exhibited was humility. When she realised that her actions justified an apology, she showed humility.

Nadia: Oh, okay, I was just correcting myself. [N/I/32]

Nadia: Yeah, out loud. You know when you stop yourself and you know. [N/I/34]

Based on N/I/32 and N/I/34, Nadia's use of *sorry* was not meant as an apology but as an interruption marker. She interrupted her own thought process when she used this word. This *sorry* was more for a personal focus and not social because it was not meant as an apology to the others in the group. This value is related to self-directed thoughts and in line with personal focus. Eventhough it was heard by the others, no one responded to her *sorry*. In a social context, there seems to be an underlining common reasoning for the use of a word *sorry* without any explanation by both the speaker and listener or as Penna, Mocci and Sechi (2009, p. 30) claim, silence could play a purposeful medium to produce a communicative act. In these contexts, people would understand when the word *sorry* is not meant for them or meant as an apology or rather as an interruption marker by the speaker. This acknowledgement bridges the link between the personal focus and social focus and when others did not respond to Nadia it did exactly as claimed by Penna, Mocci and Sechi.

In the utterances N/I/13, N/I/77, N/I/78, N/I/79 and N/I/132, Nadia revealed that when she said *sorry*, it was meant to be polite and to have some courtesy. The reason for being courteous and polite, is to avoid upsetting other people, as Nadia puts it she was trying to take a *diplomatic stance* [N/I/143]. Tactfulness is pertinent when interacting with one another and that is the reason for Nadia to be diplomatic when

communicating. Being courteous, tactful and polite are part of the interpersonal aspect in universalism values and is central to social focus (Schwartz et al., 2012) (see Figure 2.1).

Nadia: Yeah, they really do. They really do. But I think what I'm trying to do was be more diplomatic stance here. That's why I said sorry. I think to some extent there seemed to be a conflict to another, to what another person said about the text. So, instead of standing by my point because I myself am not very sure, I just backed down. [N/I/13]

Nadia: Politeness. [N/I/77]

Nadia: You know how some people say come again. [N/I/78]

Nadia: Yeah, excuse me, so that's like sorry, didn't hear you. [N/I/79]

Nadia: Pardon me. [N/I/132]

The findings above show that Nadia subscribed to the value of being polite and it was supported by her own statements and thoughts about the importance of these values. In her view, being polite mattered especially when one is communicating with others in a social context. The following lines explained Nadia's thoughts on politeness and why they were important to her.

Nadia: Yeah, it stands from there. And then I feel like, people do, I suppose, like me because of.... How polite am.... I guess..... (laughs) [N/I/148]

Nadia: No, I mean it's not.. It doesn't go hand in hand particularly but it's a bonus. And to a certain extent I do take pride in my politeness I suppose. I know when I need to be assertive and I know when I need to not be. Because imagine like no! This is my opinion and then this opinion matters the most. It is always important to listen to what other people has to say. [N/I/149]

The utterances above have reinforced the reasons to be polite and to exhibit interpersonal qualities while interacting with others. The need to be polite was also explained to show its importance as it allows one to listen more to the other party or parties that are involved in the interaction. Nadia claimed that being polite gets one to be liked by another which lays the basis for communication in a society. Nadia's emphasis on being polite was evident when she also used the phrases like *kind of*, *in a*

sense and *I think* whereby she did not wish to impose her opinion. These phrases were only used in the oral sessions where interaction among group members was not dominated by Nadia's opinions. She was accommodating to others which indicated her interpersonal values as seen in the below.

Nadia: I supposed when I say that in the sense, what I am referring to is like, I guess I am not entirely sure how to gather my thoughts, so instead of making a bold statement, I choose to say in the sense, you know in this certain way, you know? So instead of saying something and sticking with it, because I am not so confident about it, I think it's also to remain politically correct. [N/I/239]

Nadia: It's more like outwardly express that this is my own personal opinion and I am not speaking for everyone as a group and I am not expecting everyone to have the same opinion as me. [N/I/259]

Nadia's use of the phrase *give it a shot* also had multiple interpretations that provided an insight into the values she subscribed to. Nadia used this phrase a few times to a few people but for different reasons.

The findings showed that she used it in "*give it a shot? [N/O/T3/1]*" and it was directed to only one person and that was Student A. Not wanting Student A to feel excluded and left out, Nadia displayed the value of caring for someone and this portrayed in the line N/I/40. Caring is recognised as part of benevolence (see Figure 3.1) and it is one of Schwartz' basic human values that can be found in social interactions.

Nadia: Yeah because no one really listens to her. Not no one's ever listen to Student A but sometimes she gets lost amidst... She has to take everything in. If everyone is going to cut each other off, she's not going to have enough time to say what she has to say. So, I didn't want to make her feel left out. [N/I/40]

Korzybski (1991) asserted that there are multiple meanings for words and this is seen when Nadia used the same phrase *give it a shot [N/O/T3/5]* for another reason on another person. Upon realising that Student A was feeling a little uncomfortable and

shy to voice her thoughts, Nadia immediately offered Student B to speak. Nadia used the same phrase she used on Student A, *give it a shot*. Nadia admitted that she was concerned for Student A in N/I/44. In this instance, both Nadia's actions and words showed concern for someone.

Nadia: Because she (Student A) didn't look very well. And she didn't feel very comfortable with the audio. So I don't want to put her in the spot right? [N/I/44]

Another value that was seen in Nadia in this study was being supportive and providing encouragement. It was seen in the following, whereby she used the same phrase, *give it a shot* in the utterance *So, are you guys gonna give it a shot?* [N/O/T3/10].

Nadia: No, yeah, okay, we're talking about the dinosaur right? Student A gave it a shot and Student B tried to convey, we were going one by one to see who has the best option and we're going to vote on it right? But they're like naaah, we're not gonna do it. I mean like, it's a tutorial, you're meant to participate. So... That's why I was like are you... Are you going to... Why not? I was trying to be the supportive one. And the reason why I said you guys are so shy is because you can tell that they're feeling like uncomfortable or not really comfortable doing something like that. [N/I/49]

Being supportive and encouraging are essential when someone wants to help and these signify the value of caring (Schwartz; 1992, 2012). Nadia offered encouragement and support in her response as in N/I/49 above, which showed that she read the situation and she cared enough to encourage others which is a value (Schwartz, 2012).

Another value that surfaced in Nadia was her personal values like assertiveness and dominance. In her utterance, she said '*No, just give it a shot* [N/O/T3/9]' to Student B. Though Nadia said the same phrase *give it a shot*, she was forceful with her

intentions, and insisting that Student B do something. Nadia being forceful in this instance, presented her assertive and dominance self.

Nadia: I was trying to be assertive. I mean like, this girl, she wanted to do it. And then she don't want do it. I was just being confused by it. Just try. I mean like, she seemed like the best option to do what she wanted to do. But then she backed away like she wanted me to do. Because she liked the attention on herself. I'm not sure. [N/I/47]

Nadia in N/I/47 acknowledged that she was assertive because she assumed that the other girl was seeking attention which did not resonate with her (Nadia). Nadia's assertive and dominant nature within a social context stemmed from what she liked and she did not in a social context. This indicates one's personal feelings during a social interaction can manifest into values because these feelings are driven by intentions.

There were more value connoted words and phrases in Nadia's speech rather than in the written form in the forum entries. This participant used simple, ordinary, taken-for-granted language (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2007) in her conversation while restricting herself to answering the forum questions in a formal manner. However, her writing style in her forum entry also displayed a personal style of expressing something. There were 2 phrases that emerged in a distinct manner which indicated value connotations. The phrases *hard to wrap my head*, in the posting N/W/F2/1.

I find it **hard to wrap my head** around the idea that the story Reading the Signs has feminist "undertones" when it strikes me as a story written for the sole purpose of creating awareness towards the unequal and mistreatment of women that lives on till today in certain societies. [N/W/F2/1]

A personal value showing humility due to a lack of achievement was being presented when Nadia used the above phrase in her post. She used this phrase to figuratively under-play the fact the she did not understand something as seen in the following

utterances.

Nadia: It's like figuratively. [N/I/199]

Nadia: As opposed to anything else? Because I just didn't get it. Because I find it hard to understand umm... [N/I/200]

Nadia: Oh okay, Because the tutor said has feminist undertone. Implying the whole feminist undertones, undertone lies like it's not clearly written out for you so, what I'm saying is I don't understand what is undertone because to me it sounds so plain, loud and clear that...[N/I/201]

Based on the utterances above, Nadia admitted that she camouflaged something that she did not understand. Her intention in doing so exhibited her desire to achieve something though she did not understand, and her way was through stating her thoughts in a figurative manner. This value is in Schwartz's circular motivational continuum of 19 values (Schwartz et al., 2012) which puts achievement under self-enhancement and as a value. Her admission for the lack of understanding showed humility but her choice of words reflected a preference for positive over negative self views and as such, maintained her self-esteem and this shows achievement value in her.

Another personal value that emerged in Nadia's choice of words in her written forum entries was personal gratification termed as hedonism (Schwartz et al., 2012). The participant's choice of phrase, *shines upon the possibility* was in her forum posting, '**It shines upon the possibility** of Artificial Intelligence learning and applying meaning to words and ideas 'it' conveys. [N/W/F3/2]'. It reflected her personal feelings of self-satisfaction because it sounded *cool* and *nice* to her and had nothing to do with interacting with others as verified below.

Nadia: Shines upon the possibility. Shines upon the possibility.
(Pause) I have no idea, it sounded cool. (Laughs) [N/I/211]

Nadia: It sounds nice. (Laughs) [N/I/212]

The willingness to include others in the face-to-face interaction was another value that was seen in Nadia. Being inclusive of others during a face-to-face interaction is one Schwartz' (1992; 2012) values pointing towards social focus. The use of the pronoun *we* when one is speaking shows that the speaker exhibited a sense of togetherness by including everyone during a presentation as Nadia claimed below.

Nadia: Mostly because I think that we work in groups, there always has be a representative but just because I am the representative doesn't mean that I am speaking for myself, I am speaking for the entire group so it makes sense to use the pronoun "we" instead of... "I" [N/I/233]

Nadia showed that when she agrees with someone she verbalises it with the word *yeah*. Expressing *yeah* showed that Nadia concurred with others and acknowledged others' views in a conversation and it allowed for an amicable dialogue session to take place. This value is part of Schwartz' interpersonal value focusing on social. The words and phrases Nadia used, displayed more social values than personal values.

4.5.1.2 Francis

The findings showed that there were words and phrases that Francis used repeatedly in all the 8 tutorial sessions. He used *okay* or *yeah* in all his 8 tutorials but not once in his forum postings. The following utterances were among the many identified throughout his oral sessions:

Francis: **Yeah yeah**. [F/O/T1/40]

Francis: **Yeah**. [F/O/T2/23]

Francis: **Yeah**, it's narrative. [F/O/T4/34]

Francis: **Yeah yeah yeah**. [F/O/T5/36]

Francis: **Yeah**, buy a farm. [F/O/T7/40]

Francis: **Yeah**, they just happen to be in different positions. [F/O/T8/26]

Francis: **Okay okay okay**, we keep that in mind, and we move to the function first. [F/O/T1/10]

Francis: **I agree** that the use of imagery is often for the purpose of allowing the readers to better perceive the setting and understand the characters. [F/W/F5/2]

He appeared to constantly use *yeah* in his face-to-face session and *I agree* in his online sessions to express agreement and he clarified it in the interview session as shown below.

Francis: It is to show in agreement to something said. (F/I/250)

Verbally agreeing with his peers showed that Francis was exercising his social skills in a discussion setting. By agreeing with his group members, he encouraged them to expound their points and in this manner, he was seen as facilitating and generating more discussions.

Francis: Yes I think so! In order to encourage the other speaker to continue with their points, to foster discussion and build upon someone else's points. [F/I/256]

Based on the classroom observation, there were group members who chose to agree in non-verbal manner like nodding the heads but Francis chose to agree verbally with the word *yeah*. It is to be noted that he only used *yeah* in his oral communication and the phrase *I agree* in his online forum posts to literally agree with others. The findings also indicated that at times he used *yeah* once, twice and even thrice. Francis claimed that using *yeah* once or twice showed that it was just an agreement but using it thrice indicated passionate agreement to a particular point that was been made.

Francis: One or two 'yeahs' could indicate that 'I agree but I'm still thinking about it' or just plain agreement, three 'yeahs' usually mean more enthusiastic agreement, and those with context is usually to show my agreement is directed at a certain point. [F/I/257]

The phrase *I think* or *I don't think* was frequently used in 7 out of 8 of his tutorials and in 3 forum entries. The constant utilisation of this phrase implied Francis'

preference for one particular phrase in his language use in a social context.

Francis: **I think** this is when they first met right? [F/O/T6/16]

Francis: **I don't think** he tried to kill himself. [F/O/T8/24]

Francis: **I think** the tone of the story is, on the whole, an impersonal one. [F/W/F3/2]

Francis: **I think** everyone thus far has raised the points in the same strand of thought, which I agree with. [F/W/F9/1]

The use of phrase *I think* is present in Francis' language use when he was very sure of his thoughts and the repetition of the phrase shows his certainty as seen in the line ***I think, I think, it's very symbolic.*** [F/O/T1/2].

Francis' use of *I think* also indicated another value which was identified in both oral as well as written forms. It showed that he was putting forth his thoughts in a polite manner for he understood that there could be others with different opinions and to encourage their participation. Although, he stood by his opinions, he was also open to others; accommodating to other people's ideas and this was clarified in his interview.

Francis: Well, putting it in this way recognizes that what we are putting out there are only our personal opinions, not facts; a way of hedging to encourage discussion, I guess? (F/I/246)

The above response can be attributed to tolerance or acceptance and understanding of others which is vital in a social interaction. Values of tolerance and acceptance are part of a major value in the social focus of Schwartz' value called universalism. This value incorporates concerns for the welfare of the society. In this instance, Francis exhibited tolerance for his society which happens to be his group in this study.

Francis displayed a value of being polite everytime he began his speech with *but then* for example in ***But then, there will be no smell*** [F/O/T1/32] in his oral session and ***But then again, that's my own reading. What about the rest of you?*** => [F/W/F1/12]

in his written session. This was because although he disagreed with others, he wanted to relay his thoughts in a polite and respectful manner and not in a direct manner a value that was instilled in him by his father.

Similarly, Francis used discourse markers like *however* and *anyway* in his online written forum postings to signal a more polite tone when he was about to contradict or disagree with someone's opinion. He used *however* most frequently in all his weekly postings. Examples of these posts are as follows:

However, I'd think that this is not essentially the 'true' moral of the story, or rather, the main moral that the author is trying to convey, for a number of reasons. [F/W/F1/2]

Anyway, our group was supposed to look for Indirect Speech and Indirect Thought. [F/W/F4/5]

In all his 8 sessions, Francis used the pronoun *we* constantly even though he was stating his opinions. The word *we* was seen both in oral and written forms as seen in the following examples.

Francis: Okay okay okay, **we** keep that in mind, and we move to the function first. [F/O/T1/10]

Francis: Are **we** going with years? [F/O/T2/18]

Francis: How about **we** say, my dinosaur. [F/O/T3/8]

Francis: I don't think that **we** can get her. [F/O/T4/23]

Francis: **We**'re done right? [F/O/T7/44]

I wouldn't exactly say that I disagree with the Cat's moral of the story- it is true that in trying to understand things (or texts), our framework of perspective (or imagination) would influence the way **we** interpret them, as Julie said. [F/W/F1/1]

Utterances [F/O/T1/10], [F/O/T2/18], [F/O/T3/8], [F/O/T4/23] and [F/O/T7/44] were found in his oral speech while [F/W/F1/1] was one of the few found in the written postings. All the above utterances reflected Francis' thoughts but his explanation in F/I/241 showed his willingness to be a team player so that every member could come

to an agreement at the end of the discussion, indicating another value present in social interactions which is being inclusive. Francis' thoughts and reasons for being inclusive is indicated below.

Francis: I think that, because it was a group discussion and we usually have to present our findings as a group as well, I tend to use 'we' to sort of make sure that everyone is in agreement as well as establish a form of consensus. (F/I/241)

Though, Francis showed the willingness to be inclusive, there was an undertone that portrayed an overall assertive value because he had a motive which was to steer the group to some form an agreement. Getting others to arrive at a consensus was vital for Francis and because of that he demonstrated his readiness to work as a group. Motivating others is a social values, but when Francis exhibited his ability and intention to push for a group decision, he also portrayed a personal value of power and dominance to get others to do what he wanted.

Francis: 'We' on the other hand is to address possible directions that the group could take in addressing the question, and then I would continue with 'I' to clarify my stance regarding that particular direction. (F/I/253)

The utterance above implied that Francis used the pronoun *we* in a subtle manner to show that he was being inclusive but in actual fact he was trying to ascertain his stand. He was assertive while being inclusive and this showed his strong independent nature in a respectful manner.

Francis displayed courtesy but it was only found in the written forum entries and not in the spoken session when he address everyone by saying *hello* before proceeding to writing his thoughts on the topic. In all his 8 face-to-face oral sessions, he did not begin the session with *hello* or any similar greetings. Likewise, his value of being encouraging towards others for example by complimenting on a point as *pretty solid*

point was also noted in the written communication and not in the spoken sessions.

The findings showed that Francis was bold to use the words *hell* and *shit* openly in one of his tutorial sessions *How the **hell** would she know...* [F/O/T7/53] and *He looked **shit**...*[F/O/T7/59] respectively. The usage of these words was exclusive only in his spoken and not in his written communication. He claimed he was unaware that he was using the word and he blurted it out of excitement as mentioned in F/I/143 below.

Francis: ... I would say excited because we are getting into the topic.
How the hell would she know. How the hell would she know that he
was trying to feel her dress. (Pause) I think I was using how the hell
unconsciously. I think it was just. [F/I/147]

The words and phrases that Francis used, reflected a few social values and a few personal values based on his reasons for using them as well as the context.

4.5.1.3 Lara

Lara displayed the value of being encouraging. The findings indicated that many words and phrases expressing encouragement were repeated during all of 8 tutorials sessions Lara attended but this was not the case in the written form. It revealed that Lara encouraged and complimented others in her group by saying *no worries, good job, good, nice, pretty good* and *that's good*. Her reasons for praising others were because they deserved it and also as a form of support to get them to be open-minded. Her social interaction is rooted in open-minded conversations whereby she was receptive and tolerant to others' point of views. The following utterances justify these reasons.

Lara: (laugh) took me a long time. But yeah encouraging people, like you know, you did a good job and you deserve a compliment. [L/I/60]

Lara: Right. Because especially with Amy, she gives a lot of good opinions, so I would like to encourage her to think that it is a safe place where she can tell whatever she has on her mind. [L/I/61]

Lara: Cos chris makes a lot of puns. So like that's one of the good puns. [L/I/70]

Lara: I was impressed. [L/I/71]

Being polite was another value that surfaced in the findings for Lara. Words and phrases that signified politeness were identified in all 8 tutorials and forum postings signalling that she was polite in all forms of communications that took place in the class for that Literature module class during the study. There were recurring patterns of words and phrases that she used in which she portrayed being polite. Among them were *thank you*, *sorry*, *kind of like*, *just like*, *like do we*, and *I think*. The use of *thank you* was to express appreciation to someone but Lara said *sorry* only twice in her entire her oral communication and it meant politely asking someone to repeat as seen in her explanation below.

Lara: I think is my version of pardon, can you repeat that something like that. [L/I/82]

Lara: Yeah cos I think I didn't catch it, that's why I ask. [L/I/83]

Lara used *I think* to be assertive and direct about her thoughts. Being assertive by using *I think* was only present when Lara begins her speech by contradicting or making her stand first before using the phrase *I think*. This is seen in the utterance below:

Lara: Erm, **I think** it wouldn't be hard but **I think** with the assistance of the imagery it made it easier to relate with it [L/O/T6/111]

The findings also showed that when the phrase *I think* was used in the beginning of the utterances both in oral and written forms, Lara was attempting to be polite. She

was trying to politely establish that the thoughts put forth was entirely her own whereby no agreement is needed by others and they are free to have opinions of their own.

Lara: I guess if I have to really find a reason for it, it would have to be that it acts as a disclaimer- that what I'm saying after this are my thoughts and mine alone. I supposed it's a form of heading! [L/I/258]

Based on the findings Lara was in agreement with her fellow group members many times. This showed her openness to accept others' opinions and views. All the words and phrases that pointed to this came from her oral form of communication. Most of the time she used *yeah, right, true, okay*, and *I think so* but there were many instances when she also used the word *cool, that's cool, so cool, it's cool* or *I'm cool*. The preference for the word *cool* was because it meant agreeing to something in a trendy and fashionable manner and it implied that Lara was conforming to the social norms of her time and chose to use words that were contemporary when communicating at present times as she explains in the interview response below.

Lara: I believe, at that time, I was very influenced with the American TV series, 'Community' where one of the characters, Abed, has a catch phrase where he says, "Cool, cool, cool." [L/I/250]

Lara: Not only that, I really like the adjective "cool" because of the edgy but calm connotation it has. When I think of cool, I think of people like the celebrity, Joaquin Phoenix. [L/I/251]

Lara: It is one of my favourite adjectives to compliment others and to receive. I still use it a lot now! [L/I/252]

Lara had the tendency to give instructions and be direct, but she was also inclusive of others when she was doing it. In all 8 tutorial sessions and in 3 out of 5 forum postings, she included everyone in the group with the words *we* in her utterances or posting as in [L/O/T4/29], [L/O/T6/53] and [L/W/F1/5]. *We are done!* and *Do we have multiple motives?* are examples of Lara's directness where as, in *we must be aware and open-minded to what others has to say*; Lara's instructive manner is

sensed and this is seen in the following utterances:

Lara: No. wait! **we** are done! This is the story. [L/O/T4/29]

Lara: Uhm~, like do **we** multiple motives or just one? Do **we** have multiple motives? [L/O/T6/53]

So, although **we** all have our own opinion on something, **we** must be aware and open-minded to what others has to say. [L/W/F1/5]

Although it reflects her mannerism of being instructive and direct, she does not use the pronoun *I*. This indicates that she wants to be inclusive because she is aware that it is social interaction involving her group. As such, she did not want to appear to make decisions on her own. Lara also used the pronoun *we* in an attempt to show some form of collective agreement as well as to acknowledge others for their thoughts and opinions as seen in utterance L/I/245 and L/I/246.

Lara: I believe anytime I used “we” is an attempt to be inclusive. Especially in a forum, it is important that the group have a general consensus. [L/I/245]

Lara: Not only that, I used “we” so that everyone feels appreciated as I believe everyone have contributed one way or another. [L/I/246]

Other than the use of *we* to show inclusiveness of others in her group, Lara also displayed a sense of informality with her frequent use of *you guys* both in oral and written communication. Examples of the phrase *you guys* are seen in the following utterances and posting below:

Lara: Do you have do **you guys** have like an example? Maybe **you guys** can say it la. It doesn't has to be me right just because I took the...*laugh* [L/O/T3/15]

Lara: Yea **you guys** are so cool~ so fab~ [L/O/T4/14]

What do **you guys** think? [L/W/F8/1]

Both the formal and informal manner of being inclusive depicted her willingness to involve others and value their contributions. Lara attempts to motivate others to share their thoughts and opinions through her informal language use of the phrase *you guys*.

In her interview, Lara explained her stance for using *you guys* as seen below.

Lara: However, I also do not want to assume that everyone has the same view. Hence, I will use “you guys” to see if there are other people who think otherwise. [L/I/247]

Lara: Furthermore, I think the other times I used “you guys”, is after I have shared my point of view and am prompting others to talk. I appreciate quick and active participation when it comes to discussions so to not waste anyone’s time and to complete the task. [L/I/248]

Lara: Moreover, I like letting people I know I noticed them and their efforts so I sometimes go out of my way to point people out. [L/I/249]

The findings revealed that Lara had the tendency to repeat words occasionally during her social interactions. There was no pattern for a specific choice of word or phrase that indicated Lara’s preference for repetition of words. On the contrary, it was the number of times a word or phrase was being uttered repeatedly that showed Lara was trying to emphasise a point.

Lara: **How, how, how** does that contribute to the story? [L/O/T2/31]

Lara: **Cool! Cool! Cool cool cool!** [L/O/T4/13]

Lara: **So sad, so sad** [L/O/T4/27]

Lara: Ya, it’s just like oh my God! No **chill, chill**, unless you stab my family, I’ll **chill**, *burst out laughing* **chill**. [L/O/T4/89]

In the utterances above words like *how*, *cool*, *chill* and the phrase *so sad* were repeated twice, thrice, four times or five times. This manner of repetition showed how Lara emphasised what she thought by persistently using the same word or phrases over and over.

Lara: I also think, linguistically, anytime anything is repeated, it is to create emphasis. I think that me using the same word more than once is me believing in what I’m saying. So when I say “cool” 5 times, I must have thought what happened/what is said was really cool. [L/I/255]

Emphasis was not the only reason for Lara to repeat a word or phrase multiple times in a sentence. She also liked how it sounded which demonstrated her style. She was

not concerned of how it might look or sound to the others except that it sounded nice to her. However, this feature was only identified in her oral sessions and not in her written entries; indicating a clear distinction between the manner she spoke and wrote; her two modes of communication.

Lara: I feel like I say it just because of how it rolls off my tongue- as in rhythmically. [L/I/254]

Lara has revealed a few values through her language use in her spoken and written. Though, the interactions were in a social context, some of Lara's values indicated social focus while others were personal focus.

4.5.1.4 Kimmy

Kimmy also used the word *sorry* in her interactions. The use of the word *sorry* portrayed different values in different contexts. At one instance it was used to express the need to push on ahead as there was a time limitation as her interview response below indicated.

Kimmy: Hmmm.... I believe that, I think in terms of context, we were mingling on that particular topic for too long and perhaps, I was probably hogging the attention about the time that we needed to discuss other questions. So sorry, I think we should move on? Perhaps.. [K/I/26]

In another situation, the word *sorry* meant to apologise to someone as a mark of respect for not allowing others to speak or for confusing them. For Kimmy apologising meant having good manners.

Kimmy: Oh okay. It could just mean like, on a very surface level thing, it could just mean very well-mean that I may have wanted to say something but I notice someone was saying something and I was just like sorry. Like manners... apologising. [K/I/69]

Kimmy: I think I may have like confused them that's why I am apologizing. [K/I/294]

The findings revealed that Kimmy preferred to use the phrases *I think* and *I guess* because first, she did not want to sound overbearing as being respectful was essential to her. Second, she did not have the confidence in herself that her thoughts and opinions were correct. It was like a precursor to inform the listeners that her thoughts could either be correct or wrong and it provided *a sense of uncertainty* (K/I/436) as the responses below suggest below.

Kimmy: I believe that you know, guess kinda just makes me feel like as though I am not entirely bossing over. Like if I said, let's move on to the next page, I guess we can move on to the next page. Which is more authoritative? It's like I don't wanna put myself there. I had experiences with authority, well it was quite fun I had the chance, but I realized from that experience that you know, everyone is different, you shouldn't be too harsh cos you want order, respect and stuffs like that. [K/I/32]

Kimmy: From what I notice, I guess I could make a deduction that "guess" just translate my low esteem or my low confidence in projecting my ideas or hold up myself and stuff. [K/I/150]

Kimmy: Because I believe that although I do have something to share, I am not entirely sure of its more specified details and perhaps to put forth a disclaimer should I actually do get my facts wrong. [K/I/457]

Kimmy's also used *I guess* in an attempt to conceal her low self-esteem. This was because she was unsure if her thoughts and ideas were any good. The uncertainty she felt gave rise to low self-confidence in herself and in an interaction she was able to mask this by using *I guess* before putting forth her thoughts. Kimmy acknowledged this in the interview utterance K/I/150.

Kimmy: From what I notice, I guess I could make a deduction that "guess" just translate my low esteem or my low confidence in projecting my ideas or hold up myself and stuff. [K/I/150]

Slang words played a significant role in Kimmy's tutorials showing that during some social interactions, some words have multiple meanings. Kimmy's use of the word *pretty* surfaced in her tutorial sessions. In all instances, the word *pretty* meant 'considerable or somewhat' and Kimmy used *pretty* to infer this meaning in her

interactions. Kimmy also used words like *stuff* which she claimed is a ‘lingo’ as seen in *I think stuff like that is a lingo* [K/I/195]. The meaning of ‘lingo’ (2018) according to Dictionary.com is language or speech belonging to a particular group. In Kimmy’s social context, words like *pretty* and *stuff* had a definite meaning which only her social group understood. The repetitive use of these words registered a sense of informality when speaking to her friends.

Kimmy: Yeah lingo, definitely a lingo. It’s pretty cool, ahh it’s pretty nice, it’s pretty awesome. [K/I/158]

Kimmy: An influence from talking to friends back home. I do speak like this with my friends back home to increase familiarity as I have been pointed out on multiple instances when I use more formal colloquial as per my normal speech. [K/I/468]

Kimmy also used another phrase *you go girl* which is another socially accepted phrase within her group with the intention to encourage someone. She used it repeatedly in her oral interactions to boost one’s confidence. Boosting someone’s confidence is important to her because it signals that she is there for her friend. Another phrase that Kimmy used a few times which carried similar intention and value was *good try*.

Kimmy: I do believe that if it could resonate with the person that the sentiment is directed to and underline my intention of being supportive, I would happily oblige to use it frequently. [K/I/465]

Using the pronoun *we* in her speech, showed that Kimmy wanted to be inclusive and to foster a sense of togetherness. She demonstrated respect for all in the group and through the use of the pronoun *we*, she hoped to create a bond. The use of *we* in Kimmy’s tutorial conversations was apparent and offered an insight to Kimmy’s values system. When she spoke, Kimmy constantly used the pronoun *we* which signified speaking in an inclusive manner. The idea of togetherness indicated that the

notion of including everyone was vital to Kimmy as seen in the following quote.

Kimmy: To build rapport and foster a sense of camaraderie amongst group members. Might also be unintentional to remind group members that the discussion is a collaborative effort and that I shouldn't be the only one that constantly adds to the discussion all the time. [K/I/459]

Kimmy thought that if she showed qualities of bringing everyone together, there was a possibility that it could help to gain some respect from her peers. She demonstrated respect for all in the group and through the use of *we*, she hoped to create a bond of mutual respect. Respect as a value was vital for Kimmy and her choice of words and phrases revolved around it. She also believed that respect had to be earned and not demanded as the quotes below shows.

Kimmy: Building rapport is important because it demonstrates support and understanding of others and personally speaking, a team exercise should be inclusive by nature. [K/I/460]

Kimmy: Perhaps on a grander scheme of things, I would like to earn my colleagues respect through earnest rapport-building rather than demanding it. [K/I/462]

When Kimmy used *you guys* instead of *we*, she placed the emphasis on the others and not her. In her opinion she thought that she was being domineering during the conversation thus, wanted to give others an opportunity. Her choice of phrase showed her stepping back, so that others could take the centre stage as noted in the following quotes.

Kimmy: Essentially, by choosing to say 'you guys', I am excluding myself from the collaborative discussion as I believe I have already gave adequate input on the particular topic and need to take a break from possibly dominating the conversation. [K/I/463]

Kimmy: I believe that everyone should have a try despite how right or wrong an opinion can seem and that everyone should at least try to pull their own weight. [K/I/464]

The above quotes suggest that her choice to use the pronoun *we* was not only to signify the need to cooperate for the purpose of collaboration. She presumed that if

she said something that bonded them, her group members would respect her more. Respect was the basis that highlighted what she wanted to say and how to say it which in turn directed Kimmy to the use of particular words and phrases.

Kimmy used *okay* in her spoken utterances with the intention to build a rapport with her group members with just a word. At the same time the use of this word acted as a discourse marker signalling that she was about to speak.

Kimmy: The use of *okay* could have stemmed from its frequent usage by friends/familiar faces as a signifier to garner attention in a non-aggressive manner. [K/I/450]

Kimmy: I opted to use *okay* to ease my rapport building with other participants of the group without my actions reflecting such qualities onto myself. [K/I/453]

The findings also revealed that some words used by Kimmy act as fillers to boost her self-esteem. Among the words, one is *weird* which was not used for its actual meaning but as a filler. Below are some utterances from Kimmy's oral session with the word *weird*.

Kimmy: So it's really **weird**... [K/O/T1/31]

Kimmy: but this is **weird** you know cos the character I mean the main character itself, its like you say the memory of the mom died after the father...that means... [K/O/T2/6]

Kimmy: yea so this is just **weird** [K/O/T2/7]

Kimmy only used the word *weird* in her first two tutorial sessions and not for remaining 5. The utterances above also show that when Kimmy did not know what to say or how to express her thoughts, she refused to allow her sentences to hang. Instead, she spontaneously used *weird* as a filler as the quote below states.

Kimmy: Conversation filler. It's like weird is the only word that came to my mind. It's like oh no I want something better than weird. [K/I/134]

There was a pattern in the kind of words and phrases Kimmy used in the face-to-face sessions. However, in the online written postings, this pattern was missing. Kimmy's forum entries portrayed a more thoughtful side of her as she avoided repetition of words. She used a variety of action verbs to describe her thoughts in comparison to her spoken session where there were many instances of repetition. Among the words she used to begin her sentences in her forum entries were *I like, I agree, I considered, I wish, I advocate, I felt, I see, I drew, and I believe*. Her reasons were, unlike during the oral sessions, she had the time to consciously be selective of the phrases she wanted to use in her forum entries. She was hoping that her variety of action verbs will make her writing more appealing, hence boosting her self-confidence and giving her a sense of achievement.

Kimmy: It is easier to avoid repetition in writing than it is when speaking and makes an argument sound more appealing. [K/I/470]

Kimmy: I do find myself repeating many phrases when speaking because speech is more spontaneous than writing. I feel that when it comes to writing, it is easier to consciously select different words to produce a more eloquent piece of writing whereas where speech is concern, it is more easier to revert to a register of words that one has already been using in the beginning of the conversation. [K/I/471]

Based on the quotes above, Kimmy gives a compelling reason for beginning sentences differently in written communication compared to oral communication. Time too played a role because Kimmy claimed that she faced time constraints to decide on her choice of words during oral communication as it was spontaneous. On the other hand, she had the time to think about her choice of words in her written communication.

4.5.1.5 Julie

The use of the pronoun *we* was seen in all the oral tutorial transcriptions and in 4 out of 8 written forum entries where it was used with the intention of including everyone. Julie was aware that the use of *we* would generate and promote a sense of cooperation and teamwork through more group deliberations and with this knowledge she purposely used *we* to steer the discussions.

Julie: At that point I thought, it would probably be a push. We didn't have any answer yet and we have to decide. But I can't decide alone and I need you guys to decide with me. Yeah. [J/I/158]

Julie: It's to include others in the conversation, so I can imagine myself saying this in a facilitating manner. [J/I/463]

Julie: Using **we** tends to get people involved in the discussion, because it builds a sort of team image in that they are represented in the speech, even if there is only one person talking. [J/I/465]

In addition, *we* was also used to promote a sense of togetherness in a polite manner as Julie expressed in J/I/248. According to Julie, the use of *we* could be used as an ice-breaker to bring people closer in order to begin a conversation. Hence, the use of *we* reflects her ability in using the interpersonal skills.

Julie: I think it was a nicer way to say let's start. Because everyone was sitting quietly. And we were just sitting, looking at each other. So, are we supposed to sit here or discuss with each other? That kind of thing. Yeah. [J/I/248]

Other than *we*, to show inclusiveness, the emergence of *you guys*, both in her oral and written communication echoed her willingness to be open to other people's opinions and not be in control of the direction the discussion was heading.

Julie: I use it when I'm trying to separate myself from the topic. So I would say something like "what do you guys think?", probably after I've just talked about my opinion on the discussion, to open up the floor and take myself out. At this point it's probably because I've already said quite a bit, so I'm removing myself to allow others to speak up. [J/I/466]

The word *like* was present in all 7 tutorial sessions that she attended. It was used independently or in the phrase *kind of like*. Julie's *like* acted as a filler in order to acquire some time for her to think what or how to present her thoughts.

Julie: I think like has been a filler. [J/I/69]

Julie: I use it as filler I use uhh, I use so, I use like. [J/I/70]

Another reason for using *like* was when she tried to clarify a matter by giving an example whereby she was receptive to the idea that she might be wrong and welcomed others in the group to improve on her answers. According to Julie, her personal nature of being open-minded in a social setting with the use of *like* was revealed in the interview response.

Julie: I'm trying to understand/clarify what someone before me said by illustrating it in an example. Then in turn, if I'm understanding it wrong, they have a chance to correct me. [J/I/470]

Her use of *like* also allowed for others to complete their thoughts based on their own interpretations of what she had said. This collaboration aligns with her broad-mindedness.

Julie: I think, sometimes when the idea flow, like I said it before, or it's obvious that I didn't finish my sentence. Like you'd know. I like coffee. I would drink it. You could come to the conclusion on your own. So I don't have to say it out. [J/I/152]

I think and *I guess* were two other phrases used by Julie in only her tutorial sessions and not in the forum entries. To Julie the use of these two phrases reflected her core value of being open-minded and they signified her receptiveness and acceptance of other people's views.

Julie: I'm just putting out my opinion. If you don't agree with me it's fine. It's like the hedging thing. [J/I/182]

Julie: It's a hedge word. It's to explicitly state that whatever I'm saying is my opinion and that I could be wrong, that the rest of the group is welcome to disagree. [J/I/468]

Julie: I use the phrase "I guess..." as a hedge word. Possibly to show

that what I'm saying might not necessarily be true, and therefore opening up what I'm saying to possible rebuttals or disputing opinions. [J/I/462]

Although in the oral sessions Julie used *I think* and *I guess* to signal tolerance and openness to other ideas and opinions, it was completely different in her written communication. These values of tolerance and being broad minded are prominent features of social focus which emerge in social interactions. In contrast, her forum entries showed her stance which she took regardless of other people's opinions, when she used the phrases *I agree* and *I disagree*. These phrases showed that Julie was being assertive and explicit of her intentions which identifies with Schwartz' personal focus value of self-direction of thought as this represents the freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities.

Julie: It's because I want to make my stance clear coming into the discussion, to make it easier for people who are reading to understand my position. It's important to be clear of where your points stand. [J/I/473]

Politeness through the following words and phrase *thank you, sorry, and hello* prevailed throughout Julie's written communication but not in her oral sessions. She referred to *hello* as the *opening line* [J/I/428] and as *normal thing you would say* [J/I/439] in the forum entry and the purpose of it was for informality and fun.

Julie: Keeping it light again. Because it's supposed, it's kind of informal, because I couldn't say these things in essay. So you know, who wants to write a formal essay when you can make it fun? [J/I/401]

These words or phrase presented a formal language for Julie which explained her reasons for using them in her written entries rather than her oral sessions. Her oral utterances consisted of informal words.

Julie: I think there's an inherent informality in conducting group discussions, so formal phrases like the above aren't the first to come to mind. I would use shortened phrases like "hi", "thanks" or other more informal phrases. [J/I/474]

Affiliation to informality has led Julie to adopt slang words and phrases in her speech and this was apparent with her constant usage of the phrases *oh my God*, *what the hell*, *screw you* and words like *shit*, *hell*, *yeah* and *pretty*. These emerged in the oral and not in the written form of communication. It was apparent that these words and phrases had their own interpretations and their influence was a salient feature that the present generation has adopted these slang words from society and the internet.

Julie: Yeah., I don't care about it anymore. Because screw you is like, do what you want to do. I don't care. You're not important anymore. You're not part of my life anymore. That kind of thing. [J/I/342]

Julie: Yeah, if you think about it. Yeah. It's also become a young people phrase. To screw this, screw you, screw that. [J/I/343]

Julie: New slang. Yeah.. It's the internet. It's all the internet. (laughs) [J/I/344]

The abovementioned slang words are associated with feelings and emotions that reflect a level of indifference and exhibit similar sentiments for her use of *shit* as seen in J/I/294.

Julie: Again, it shows the emotion that I feel. It is something that I really didn't agree with him. It is something that I don't understand how people can think that way. It's my limit. It really shows to me that your values are shit. It really don't deserve to be talked about. You know your shit is like trash. [J/I/294]

In comparison to the two slang words used above, *yeah* and *pretty* were casual social lingo that reflected socially accepted meaning of okay and somewhat respectively. On the other hand, the phrases *oh my God* and *what the hell* were responses that echo the question of what had happened, a sense of disorientation or even uttered for fun which is shown in the quotes below.

Julie: What the hell? I think that's it, there's no other way to show my total confusion. [J/I/139]

Julie: No. (laughs) But it was not like I was cursing or anything. I think it's okay if you heard it, you're thinking the same thing as well. [J/I/147]

Julie: I think again what the hell is a phrase. Just to like show how you feel. it probably didn't make sense. I was laughing a lot so what the hell? What just happened? It was funny but it's just the kind of thing that you say. [J/I/319]

Repetition was something that was displayed in Julie's oral communication but not in her written postings. This language feature was not exclusive for any particular word or phrase choice whereby some were repeated twice, thrice or four times. Her justification for this ranged from showing a sense of seriousness to disappointment as well as to acknowledge a fact. The compelling rationale that surfaced from this repetition was that it was always based on a situation which involved social interaction because it was an indication of the presence of the other in order to be persistent about something.

Julie: I think. I use it when I'm frustrated or when I'm really like why. Why why why. Really explain to me why. Because I need to know. To show that urgency. [J/I/269]

Julie: I'm still thinking of what to say next/organising my thoughts, so I repeat myself instead of using fillers like "um". I could also still be processing what the person before me said, but I also want to show that I agree with what I already understand. [J/I/469]

It is noted that Julie used *sorry* in her oral communication but it was not directed to anyone in the group. Rather, it was said to the tape recorder and was meant as an apology to the person who would be transcribing the conversation. Although, Julie did not express sorry to the group members, her expressing sorry to the recorder reflected the sub-conscious thoughtfulness she had for someone she would never meet. Julie's quotes from the interview session below are the evidence of her thoughtful nature.

Julie: Because we knew someone would be listening to us after this. Transcribing. And we were so off topic. It wasn't something we were supposed to discuss in class so we were like, we're sorry we're not on topic. So yeah. Because we knew someone would be listening to this. Yeah. [J/I/298]

Julie: Yeah. It's because I feel, it's not because I felt guilty about what I was saying. But that I was making your job harder, and we're talking about something that completely unrelated. What if you have to read about something we read about in literature class, outside. So I'm

sorry if this doesn't relate to you. Bla bla bla. Imposing our views on you. You don't have to hear it but not you do. So Yeah.. [J/I/301]

Based on Julie's explanation above, a sense of empathy for the transcriber is evident. She emphasised that they, the group members, should not impose their opinions which are unrelated to the topic onto the person who is going to transcribe their recording. This is because it would probably increase the transcriber's workload. It is for this reason that Julie apologised to the transcriber whom she does not know.

4.6 Values Reflected in Students' Language Use

This section contributes to the discussion pertaining Research Question 2: Why did the students use these words and phrases that express their values in these modes of communication? All the words/phrases identified were seen in context and not independently. There are many reasons for the students' use of some words and phrases and these reasons act as motivations that indicate their values. Some participants in this study share similar reasons for their choice of the words and phrases. Some on the other hand, have indicated different reasons; all of which are discussed in this section.

4.6.1 Words/Phrases Showing Being Polite, Being Respectful, To Show Humility and Being Courteous

Based on the findings, it was apparent that all the 5 students in this study exhibited the values of being polite, respectful or courteous which corresponds to Schwartz' interpersonal values, either in their face-to-face sessions, online written forum postings or both. However at times, their choice of words and phrases representing

these values indicated only some similarities. There were differences too in their choice of vocabulary reflecting these values.

4.6.1.1 Use of *Sorry*

The word *sorry* was used by all the participants in all the 8 oral sessions except by Francis. Francis only used *sorry* once in all 8 weeks and it was in one forum entry. The 4 students; Nadia, Lara, Kimmy and Julie, used *sorry* orally for a variety of reasons, supporting Korzybski (1991) that there are multiple meanings for a word in a conversation. Nadia meant it as an apology just as Kimmy and Julie and apologies play a vital role in maintaining human relationships (Kitao & Kitao, 2013). But, there were times when both Nadia and Lara used *sorry* instead of saying ‘excuse me’. In both these instances the intentions displayed politeness of minding their etiquettes which is considered as an interpersonal value. Saying *sorry* also suggested humility on the part of Nadia and Kimmy when they realised that they had made a mistake and acknowledged it which also pointed to interpersonal value which is essential for social interaction. Being humble allows for more effective communication (Ruberton et al., 2016) and apologising allows oneself to be humbled.

Most research on apologies are about repairing human relationship by accepting a level of responsibility for any offence committed (Kitao & Kitao, 2013) so that the goal of maintaining harmony in a relationship is achieved. Besides apologising to her group members, Julie also said *sorry* to an inanimate thing – the recorder; thus sub-consciously apologising to the transcriber whom she will never meet for going off

topic during the group discussion. This apology indicates that she is conscious of her intention and not wanting to upset anyone points to Schwartz' interpersonal value.

This interpersonal value is part of conformity value and it emphasizes on smooth interactions among people (Schwartz, 2012). Smooth interaction is only possible if individuals restrain their impulses from uttering words or phrases that are likely to upset others. For all the different reasons the word *sorry* is used in this study, the single common intention for its usage was to avoid upsetting others and is based on Schwartz's values (Schwartz, 2012).

As mentioned above, the word *sorry* was uttered by 4 participants in the face-to-face tutorial sessions; Nadia, Lara, Kimmy and Julie, and they are females. The only one who did not say sorry in any of the 8 tutorial sessions was Francis and he is the sole male participant. Although vocabulary based on gender was not the focus in this study, it is to be noted that Francis was the only one who did not vocalise the word *sorry*, rather he used it in the written form. It is indicative that when communicating, people exercise their preferences not only in their choice of words but also the mode of communication.

Every participant in this study had their reasons for using *sorry* and they reflected social values. As such, the findings in this study do not support Barr and Gillberry's (2010) claims that the use of *sorry* was to grab one's attention or avoid a potential problem. A possible reason for this could be their study was on Canadians and this study was on Asians and therefore culture could be an instrumental factor for the reasons to use *sorry*.

4.6.1.2 Use of *Hello* and *Thank You*

The use of *hello* and *thank you* portray a sense of being courteous and polite. All the participants used the positive politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987) and uttered *thank you* during their course of communication. *Thank you* was mentioned by both Nadia and Kimmy only in the oral sessions but not in the written sessions. In Julie's case *thank you* was not uttered in any of the spoken sessions but she used it a few times in her written forum entries. Only Francis and Lara said *thank you* in both face-to-face tutorial and online forum sessions. All of them thanked someone in this study to show their appreciation and gratitude but they showed it through their choice of communicative mode; oral, written or both.

Saying 'hello' is the first utterance in a social engagement and according to Sommers (2012) it makes a difference in social interaction. He claimed that saying *hello* has similar effects to smiling, that is one smile reciprocates another. People, being the social creature they are, create incentives to communicate (Golman, 2016) and the use of *hello* was an incentive to begin an interaction. But in this study, none of participants said *hello* during the tutorial sessions. *Hello* was used by only Francis and Julie in their written forum entries as a salutation showing politeness and being courteous but it was not reciprocated by the other group members.

Compared to the use of *thank you*, *hello* was never mentioned during the tutorial sessions. However, the students could have greeted each other outside the class before the commencement of the tutorial sessions. *Thank you* signifies a polite phrase that could be used at any time during the class but the function of *hello* is only at the beginning as a greeting indicating social etiquettes.

4.6.1.3 Use of *But Then*

Francis and Julie used *but then* at the start of their sentences when they wanted to contradict someone politely and with respect. Differences in opinions during their face-to-face group discussions were politely managed with respect and without hurting any feelings. Their use of *but then* in politely disagreeing reveals their interpersonal values.

4.6.1.4 Use of *I Think*

The phrase *I think* was used frequently by all the 5 participants in the oral sessions but only Francis used it in his written forum entries. All of them used it with the intention of putting forth their thoughts in a polite manner to respect other people's opinion. Their willingness to listen to others' opinions suggest open-mindedness on their part.

Vethamani, Abdul Manaf and Akbari (2008) explained the function of *I think* as a modal, congruent with the concept of an action that may or may not happen thus presenting a possibility or a probability. However, the use of *I think* in this study showed that although, all the 5 participants were sure of their stand, they chose to downplay it in order for others to put forth their thoughts highlighting their value of being considerate. The choice these participants made by using this phrase, is indicative of their values. They were open-minded and respected other people's thoughts.

4.6.1.5 Use of *Kind of* or *Just Like*

Nadia, Lara and Julie resorted to using the phrases *kind of* or *just like* in their oral sessions before presenting their views in a toned down manner so that it is respectful and polite. They were sure of what they said and meant but decided against a domineering stand thus, opting to use phrases like *kind of* and *just like*. In a social dynamics using politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987) presents more interactions. The values exhibited by Nadia, Lara and Julie point towards interpersonal values.

4.6.1.6 Use of *I Guess*

The phrase *I guess* was the preferred phrase by Kimmy because she claimed there was always a possibility she could be mistaken in her opinions. This can be seen as Kimmy being uncertain or lacking in confidence but she chose to acknowledge it and be open-minded that she might be wrong. Being broadminded, reflects universalism values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012) which includes tolerance and consideration for the welfare of others. Kimmy's intentions displays broadmindedness with the use of *I guess*.

It is crucial to note that all the 5 participants used different words and phrases to exhibit their values of being polite, respectful, and courteous for various reasons but the motivation was the same that is to symbolise socially desirable goals mentally and to have the vocabulary to express them in social interactions (Schwartz, 2012). All these values are motivated by a certain criteria in themselves (Schwartz, 2012) that guided them to what they perceived as best for interaction in a group. The use of

phrases like *but then, kind of, I think* and *I guess* represented values like being polite, being respectful, and being open-minded towards others.

4.6.2 Words/Phrases Showing Being Inclusive

Being inclusive appears to be a value that all 5 participants subscribed to. It is an integral component as it contributes to a sense of equality when there is social inclusion based on a report by The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNESCO, 2007).

4.6.2.1 Use of *We*

The use of the first person pronoun *we* was seen in all 5 participants. The participants used the pronoun *we* in the conversations when they were putting forth an idea. Lara and Nadia claimed that it was to acknowledge others for their opinions; for Kimmy it was to foster a sense of togetherness; for Julie it gave her a sense of unity; and for Francis it showed his willingness to be a team player. This is in line with the findings of Sharndama's (2016) research where the pronoun *we* created the *feeling of belonging and unity of purpose* (p. 22). The pronoun *we* is an essential component to strengthen their ability to act as a group and have a sense of unity and this is in line with Schwartz' (2012) societal values which is vital for social interaction.

The use of the pronoun *we* signified being inclusive which qualifies as Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness. Bell, Arnold and Haddock (2009) concur that *we* is a strategy used for positive politeness based on their research. By using the

pronoun *we*, the participants in this study viewed the whole group as a single unit and by doing so was building a rapport for a smooth interaction. The presence of positive politeness is vital to having a good relationship in a group and it exhibits the existence of values for social purposes.

Notably, there was a difference in Francis' case. Though, he used the pronoun *we* to show inclusive of all and his willingness to be a team player, his actual motivation was to steer the group in a particular direction. Steering the discussion mattered to him so in order for the whole group to come to an agreement on the subject matter that was been discussed. This supports Sharndama's (2016) claim that language can be manipulated and he believes in the power relations that exist known as 'hidden agenda' (Rahimi & Riasati, 2011). By using *we*, Francis attempted get the remaining group members to agree with him in a subtle manner. By purposely switching from singular pronoun *I* to a plural *we* makes one shift focus from self to others making one more aware of the needs of others thus, invoking a sense of leadership (Burkus, 2015). Getting others to agree with him, revealed Francis' ability to lead. In this instance, Francis exhibited his power of dominance and resource (Schwartz, 2012) to get others to follow.

Schwartz Circular Motivational Continuum (see Figure 2.1) shows societal security and dominance in power situated close to each other. Francis displayed his societal security value when he was being inclusive of everyone even though it was his opinion. He also showed his dominance in power value when implied that everyone shared his opinion by using the pronoun *we* to include them. Schwartz (2012) claimed that values close to each other are expected to react in similar manner. The close

proximity of power and societal values as seen in Figure 2.1 indicates their similarities of their underlying motivations (Schwartz, 1992) which manifested his assertiveness while being inclusive.

4.6.2.2 Use of *You Guys*

The phrase *you guys* was also used with the intention of being inclusive and it was adopted by all the participants except Nadia. *You guys* would literally mean you all however, by using this phrase the participants provide a hint of informality in language use (Eble, 1997). The use of *you guys*, indicates that the speaker has removed himself/herself when addressing the group. This was an attempt by Francis, Lara, Kimmy and Julie to accord others the opportunity to view their thoughts freely. This would facilitate more social interactions among the other members in the group.

By not using the phrase *you guys* meant Nadia preferred not to use informal language. It did not mean that she was not being inclusive because she was with the use of the pronoun *we*.

4.6.3 Words/Phrases Showing To Encourage

Four out of the five participants expressed encouragement towards others in the group through their language use except Julie. Every participant had his/her own encouraging phrases, like Nadia used *give it a shot*; Francis said *pretty solid point* or *pretty good*; Lara used *that's good*, *good job*, *nice job* or just the word *good*; Kimmy said *you go girl*. All the 4 participants used the same phrases mentioned to encourage

others throughout the study, indicating their inclination to repeat the same phrases to exhibit this value.

It is an individual's prerogative to decide when and how to encourage others. Nadia, Lara and Kimmy used their encouraging phrases in only their oral communication but Francis used words and phrases to encourage in both his oral sessions and written entries. It is to be noted that Francis was the only participant present for all 8 tutorial sessions and to participate in all 8 weeks of forum postings. This implies that he was committed to both forms of interactions. In this study he was encouraging other members to state their views to keep the interaction going and that was his motivation for using encouraging phrases in his forum entries. In a blended learning environment, people need to key in their responses and this could be time consuming and as such an encouraging word or two might help to keep the communication going as encouragement is ubiquitous in everyday social life (Wong, 2015).

In the oral sessions, Francis also used the word *yeah* to show encouragement. He clarified that if one agrees with something said by others, the speakers would *continue with their points, to foster discussion [F/I/256]* and this would lead to interaction among group members (Howe & Strauss, 2000). In addition, Francis also used *yeah* to express agreement which will be discussed in sub-section 4.5.4 and it supports Griffin's (2008c, P. 58) claim that words take on meaning of a particular context just like chameleons adapting to the environment.

According to Howe and Strauss (2000), friendship and the duty to help others are likely to showcase teamwork, which in turn helps with community building.

Encouraging one is helping to be do better in something, thus helps build the community and in this study the community would be the group members. To encourage shows a sense of care for others and is a selfless value devoted to the welfare of the group members (Schwartz, 2012). In social interactions such a value is crucial to highlight mutual support for each other. This value is reflected in this study when the participants encourage others through their language with the intention to have more interactions.

4.6.4 Words/Phrases Showing To Agree

Verbalising one's agreement with another in a social discourse is indicative of one's attentiveness in communication (Dixon & O'Hara, 2008). In this study all 5 participants voiced their agreement to matters discussed by using words which shows one aspect of their communicative skills.

Nadia and Julie preferred to use only one word to show that they were in agreement with the others and that was *yeah*. They only used it in their oral communication. Francis and Kimmy had the tendency to use 2 different words to show agreement though no particular pattern of their usage was identified. These words were *okay* and *yeah*. Lara on the other hand, had 5 different ways of showing in agreement which were *true*, *right*, *okay*, *cool/that's cool* and *me too*. Except for Lara, the other 4 participants used *yeah* during numerous occasions in their face-to-face sessions implying that *yeah* was a common word used for agreeing or acknowledging a matter. This supports Drummond and Hopper (2010) who referred to *yeah* as the current state of the art in acknowledgement (p. 1) in their article 'Some Uses of Yeah'.

The difference between Lara and the others was Lara had the tendency to use different words and phrases during different oral sessions. Lara chose different words and phrases like *true, right, okay, cool/that's cool* and *me too* based on her preference at that point of time. This concurs with Humboldt's (1999) views that individuals shape language to express his/her feeling and Lara's words and phrases expresses agreement or acknowledgement. Lara's agreement differs from the others because her intentions, her manner of communicating and her linguistics aspect differed from the others (Hovy, 1990).

Verbalising their agreements during social interactions displayed their tolerant nature that is to acknowledge, accept and understand others who are different from themselves (Schwartz, 2012). This value fundamentally fosters a frictionless relationship in a social context. The desirable goal here was to come to an agreement and that was the reason that motivated the action of uttering the above words verbally. This points to the interpersonal value because there is a need to promote a smooth relationship among the group members.

4.6.5 Words/Phrases Showing Being Assertive

Being assertive in a social context indicates a personal focus rather than a social focus as the motivation is specifically intrinsic by nature (Schwartz 1992). Ames (2009) defined assertiveness as *a dimension in everyday perceptions reflecting an individual's interpersonal willingness to stand up and speak out for their own interests* (p. 113).

The participants in this study expressed their assertiveness with their choice of phrases like *I think/I don't think, I agree/I disagree, I don't feel, are you* and *give it a shot*. Every one used phrases that he/she was comfortable with to demonstrate his/her assertiveness during the study for the entire semester. Nadia, Lara and Julie only used a singular phrase to express assertiveness but Francis used 3 different phrases during the same period.

The phrase Nadia used to show her assertiveness was *give it a shot* and it was the same phrase that she used for being encouraging. Utterances N/O/T3/1, N/O/T3/5 and N/O/T3/10 below show Nadia's use of the phrase *give it a shot* in an encouraging manner based on the whole utterance.

Nadia: We'll pick like the best. Student A, do you want to **give it a shot**? [N/O/T3/1]

Nadia: You wanna **give it a shot**? [N/O/T3/5]

Nadia: So, are you guys gonna **give it a shot**? [N/O/T3/10]

Whereas, utterance N/O/T3/9 shows Nadia being assertive by starting her sentence with a *no* as in *No, just give it a shot*. Nadia was in a situation that frustrated her enough to be assertive. Her frustration is implied in her explanation below.

Nadia: I was trying to be assertive. I mean like, this girl, she wanted to do it. And then she don't want do it. I was just being confused by it. Just try. I mean like, she seemed like the best option to do what she wanted to do. But then she backed away like she wanted me to do. Because she liked the attention on herself. I'm not sure. [N/I/47]

Nadia exerted her assertiveness only once in the study, during a tutorial session because she did not like this particular person as seen in her quote below.

Nadia: I think it's clear here umm... **I don't really like Student B**. (Laughs) So if I say I'm being accommodative I'd be lying because **I don't really like her** and she's beating around the bush. She's going on and on about her own stories and she's not letting anyone talk. So I'm like oh god. And me and Student C is always looking at each other. And Student C is passive so she wouldn't say anything so I'll end up being the one like.. (Laughs) [N/I/155]

The phrase *I don't really like ...* in the above quote is indicative of her feelings for this person and her unfinished sentence, *...so I'll end up being the one like...* implies she was the assertive one compared to Student C. This motivation for Nadia was personal. She *was trying to be assertive [N/I/47]* as a last resort because the actions of the other prompted her to so. The confusion created by the student B, motivated Nadia to be assertive through self-direction of thoughts and actions (Schwartz, 2012), as she took control of the situation. She used the same phrase *give it a shot* but in an assertive tone intentionally. As such, it was the tone that was assertive and not the chosen phrase; supporting Ambady and Rosenthal (1998) who asserted that communication is not restricted to verbal means. Nadia's tone presented a different perception; one of assertiveness though, her choice of utterance was the same even when she was supportive. This confirms a study by Laplante and Ambady (2003) that not all tones are alike and their intensity has an effect on the verbal statements.

Similarly, Lara used the phrase *I think* for assertiveness which at times was also used for being polite indicating that some phrases reflect dual values based on context and situation. In her utterance below, Lara's double use of the phrase *I think* in one utterance showed her assertive nature.

Lara: *Erm, **I think** it wouldn't be hard but **I think** with the assistance of the imagery it made it easier to relate with it [L/O/T6/111],*

Lara's motivation to be assertive was for her group to reach the end goal of coming to an agreement in the oral sessions which indicates self-direction in terms of thought; which is a personal value (Schwartz, 2012). Her intention to reach an agreement is seen in her explanation below:

Lara: *I think I like to follow structure cos I think at that time it was already at the end of discussion time so I thought alright, let us, you*

know, make a substantial answer so that we can answer the tutor.
[L/I/26]

Lara was assertive because she was motivated to reach an answer and in doing so, she had expectancies for her group. These expectancies played a vital role in her to ascertain a level of assertiveness (Ames, 2008).

Julie on the other hand, had the tendency to repeat *I agree/I don't agree* when she wanted to be assertive. In Julie's case her assertiveness emerged in both her written and oral communication using the phrase mentioned above. Her reason for being assertive in her oral communication is to be clear with her intentions as explained in J/I/35, *I think the intention was if I don't agree with you. I don't agree with what you're saying.*

In her written communication, Julie responded to other post in an assertive manner. Examples of some of the posts are as below:

Student E, I have **to disagree**... [J/W/F2/8]
I agree with Frances, in that **I disagree** with the statement. [J/W/F7/1]
In conclusion, **I disagree** with the statement. [J/W/F7/12]

The manner in which Julie responded in her posts shows how she acknowledges a situation in which her position could be in conflict with others (Ames, 2009). She claimed that making a stance played a vital role in that situation and her assertiveness made her position clear and this is explained in her interview response below.

Julie: It's because I want to make my stance clear coming into the discussion, to make it easier for people who are reading to understand my position. It's important to be clear of where your points stand, and getting into the explanation I can be a little more informal/comfortable. [J/I/473]

Francis was different from all the other participants because he frequently used different phrases like *I think, I don't feel* and *are you* to exert his assertiveness. The

examples of those are in the utterances below.

Francis: **Are you** single? [F/O/T8/1]

Francis: **I don't** feel left out. [F/O/T7/50]

Francis: **I don't think** that we can get her. [F/O/T4/23]

The phrases used above reveal a high level of certainty which also highlight a sense of authority as the people directing the discussions (Muto-Humphrey, 2018). The question beginning with *are you* was repeated thrice with the same intention in the same tutorial session and this persistent manner of asking reflected Francis' assertiveness in seeking the answer.

Francis was assertive in both his oral and written communication sessions which indicates he showed his power or dominance in seeking answers or directing a discussion during both modes of interactions. His values are associated inevitably to his beliefs which were to make his views known or obtain answers, and this made him assertive.

The motivations for all of them to be assertive were different and this was because the individual's intentions (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994). This was reflective in all 4 participants except in Kimmy. Kimmy was the only participant who did not show any form of assertiveness through her language use. There were instances when she tried but her assertiveness did not actualise. Kimmy's interview response explains this notion.

Kimmy: I guess I felt like I was interjecting at uhm, I wanted to put my ideas forward but I was interjecting someone who is already talking, so I just throw it off and... I thought it went unnoticed but (laugh) [K/I/43]

Assertiveness indicates that a person is standing up for something. In a face-to-face scenario, it would be difficult to always give in for everything just as in Kimmy's case.

Although she was unable to exhibit her assertiveness, probably because of low self-esteem, she still tried.

4.6.6 Repetition of Words/Phrases That Reflect Values

Lara, Kimmy and Julie, showed a different kind of value when they repeated words intentionally for a reason. Their use of repetition was motivated by three reasons. First, it functioned as fillers; second was because it sounded rhythmic; and third was to emphasise something. The words and phrases were random but they were indicative of a pattern in which these words were repeated twice, thrice or four times and only during the oral communication sessions.

Clark and Wasow (1998), claim that spontaneous speech have disfluencies and among them are repeated words like in Lara's, Julie's and Kimmy's. This reflects their planning stage problems where they might face issues formulating their thoughts in a complete utterance and may resort to fillers before going on (Clark & Wasow, 1998). Repetition of certain words acting as fillers were necessary in order for the participants to self-repair their speech (Pillai, 2003). Lara's motivation to use repetition as fillers is as mentioned in *How, how, how does that contribute to the story?* [L/O/T2/31]. Her explanation for using fillers is in her response L/I/253 *I think sometimes I do it to fill up the silence*. Likewise Julie also opted to use repetition like in this utterance: *Why lah? Why why why is it such a tall order?* [J/O/T7/54]. This functioned as a filler for her to organise her thoughts and formulate her question. Her interview response *I'm still thinking of what to say next/organising my thoughts, so I repeat myself instead of using fillers like "um"* [J/I/469] verifies that she used

repetition as a filler. These show that both of them are happy to say something rather than pausing their speech. In this case, the portrayal of value is of a personal nature one that gives pleasure or happiness only to themselves and it is hedonism whereby they are happy with the fact that they were instrumental in having no pauses in their speech.

However, Kimmy's reason is different compared to Lara and Julie, because Kimmy was dealing with low self-esteem issues but the other two were not. Word repetition acts as fillers and enables speakers to reduce silent pauses (Howell & Sackin, 2001). There are no specific words that are considered as fillers in speech. Kimmy used swear or slang words like *damn it* and *weird* as fillers so that she could overcome her low self-esteem by not halting her flow of ideas. This was a motivation for a personal value as she found a way to deal with her low self-esteem during an oral interaction by using fillers (Howell & Sackin, 2001).

According to Margulis (2013), when speech is repeated, it is dramatically musicalized and this corroborates Lara's use of repetition for *I say it just because of how it rolls off my tongue- as in rhythmically [L/I/254]*. This reveals that Lara derived a sense of pleasure because the repetition of words provided a rhythmic sound for her. However it did not break into a song as claimed by Deutsch, Henthorn, and Lapidis (2011). Repetition presents a rhythmic effect only for Lara and not for others and this element relates to personal gratification thus, showing hedonism, a personal value.

Lara also used repetition for emphasis in a creative manner for example *same same same same I cry too. Sometimes. It's like...*acting out her crying scene*,...*

[L/O/T4/88] to express her emotions which is not the case with Julie. The use of repetition can be for emphasis (Wolf, Sidtis, & Sidtis, 2014), and this supports Lara's perception; as seen in her interview response L/I/255 *I also think, linguistically, anytime anything is repeated, it is to create emphasis*. It showed her own technique of choosing and creating a form of repetition that emphasised her thoughts linguistically and this showed self-direction both in thought and action which is a personal value.

According to Wolf, Sidtis, and Sidtis (2014), the primary function of repetition in a conversational setting is to maintain a conversational form or to reinforce the content matter but rarely used for socialisation. 3 out of the 5 participants used repetition and the other 2 did not use any form of repetition for the whole duration of the study which was for 8 weeks. This shows that not everyone in the the same environment resort to repetition in their course of communication.

4.6.7 Words/Phrases Showing To Conform to a Group

All 5 participants expressed their emotions using either slang words or swearwords. These words/phrases have multiple meanings however, based on the findings these words imply swear or slang words. They knew these words and the meanings and chose them over normal words used to express emotions. Their ability to make sense of this language use, binds them to a social group that is accustomed to understanding these words.

The participants used 'slang' words or swearwords in their communication during their oral sessions. Words like *pretty, cool, stuff, hell, shit, damn* and the phrase *screw*

this and *oh my God* were identified in the utterances. Kimmy uttered *shit*, *stuff*, and *pretty*; Lara mentioned *cool*; Nadia blurted *damn*; Francis uttered *hell* and Julie used *shit*, *hell* and *pretty* in their respective oral sessions and Julie also used *hell* in her forum entry as a *hell of a week* (J/W/F6/1) and in her interview she claimed to use that word because she was expressing *a crazy week* (J/I/409).

According to Izmaylova, Zamaletdinova and Zholshayeva (2017), slang is a type of speech variety that unites a social and demographic group that encompasses age, social status, or youth culture and a product of social culture (Halliday, 1978) and in this study the participants are of the same age group. Namvar and Ibrahim (2014) claim that the slang words are related to social identity and this is reflected when all 5 participants in this study resorted to using them.

The participants used slang words for a variety of reasons; Kimmy used *shit* to express her emotions of frustrations as the quotes below express.

Kimmy: It's sort of in the same grouping as damn in. it's like frustrated. [K/I/262]

Kimmy: Frustration. Social lingo that is mainly based on frustration. [K/I/265]

Based on Kimmy's explanation, the use of the slang word constitutes to having a form of emotional experience. However, she insisted that her use of slang words like *stuff* and *pretty* was *an influence from talking to friends back home...* [K/I/468]. This concurs with the findings of Izmaylova, Zamaletdinova, & Zholshayeva (2017) that influence of peer group is one reason for using slang words.

Julie's use of *shit* was also to express her emotions that ranged from total confusion to something she really disagreed and this is presented in her interview quote below.

Julie: Again, it shows the emotion that I feel. It is something that I really didn't agree with him. It is something that I don't understand how people can think that way. It's my limit. It really shows to me that your values are shit. It really don't deserve to be talked about. You know your shit is like trash. [J/I/294]

Other than language used with peers, another reasons for using slang and swear words is the influence of media (Izmaylova, Zamaletdinova, & Zholshayeva, 2017). Julie claimed in her background (see 4.2.6; [J/S/BI]) that the media has a great influence over her values and beliefs and that could be her reason for using slang words. Lara used *cool* as her slang word because she too was influenced by TV series or celebrities and she used it to compliment others as explained in her interview.

Lara: Not only that, I really like the adjective "cool" because of the edgy but calm connotation it has. When I think of cool, I think of people like the celebrity, Joaquin Phoenix. [L/I/251]

Lara: It is one of my favourite adjectives to compliment others and to receive. I still use it a lot now! [L/I/252]

Francis used *hell* to show his excitement which is another form of emotion as mentioned in [F/I/147] *...I would say excited because we are getting into the topic... .* Emotions were expressed through the use of slang words by 3 students: Julie, Kimmy and Francis, indicative of a common manner of showing their emotions through slang words.

Though, all the participants belong to the same age group and freely used swear and slang words, Nadia was shocked that she used it too and could not recall the reason because it was *so hard* for her to utter it as seen in her interview response.

Nadia: ...It's **so hard** for me because I don't really use the word. It **just came out like that**. I think it was just damn it, that would make a lot of sense [N/I/266].

All the participants used slang words. Except for Nadia, the other 4 were aware that they used it consciously. Nadia, on the other hand used it unconsciously but for her to declare that *it just came out like that* implies that she used it unwittingly. Halliday (1978) referred to people using slang words as a product of social culture. The value that is highlighted with the use of slang and swear words is tradition values as they symbolise group solidarity. Schwartz (2012) believes groups develop practices that represent their shared experiences, just as how Francis, Kimmy and Julie share the use of slang words to express their different emotions. Similarly, Julie and Lara are influenced by the media to use these words. All of them are in a social and demographic group of a particular age that use a certain speech variety like slang words (Izmaylova, Zamaletdinova & Zholshayeva, 2017).

4.6.8 Use of sarcasm/banter during interaction

This study revealed the use of sarcasm in the interaction as part of a normal conversation one would have in a conversation. The emergence of sarcasm in the findings portrays that language plays many roles which have the linguistic feature of stating a fact (Austin, 1962). The normalcy was apparent in two situations; one was to have fun and the other was to indicate close relationships. The sarcasm used in both these instances was possible due to one feeling positive and confident about their relationship as well as having tolerance for one another.

A situation that permits the materialisation of a value, belief or idea is influenced by the usage of the words (Drobnak, 2013). Out of 5 participants in this study only 2 of them resorted to the use of sarcasm and they were Lara and Francis. Lara was

sarcastic with the intention of having fun but she only used positive words. Her sarcasm was not meant to attack anyone and the utterances below show it.

Lara: Maybe because I don't like to use negative words. So even if I am being sarcastic I will try to use like positive words. But because I am trying to show that I am not trying to attack that person or anything, it's just a fun thing. [L/I/98]

Lara: I think it was sarcasm because I think like she was trying to play really cool so I said you should see this. Cos she was doing for the sake of the recorder. But that's nothing serious. [L/I/104]

Based on the utterances above, the phrases *use like positive words*, *not trying to attack that person*, *just a fun thing* and *nothing serious* show that her purpose for using sarcasm presented a light moment and to have a good time. L/I/98 was her response in reference to the word *cool* that she used in utterance L/O/T3/47 *if you say something cool like that Chris, you have to look cool, like the whole time* while L/I/104 was in reference to the phrase *great job Chris*. Lara's motivation was to have fun with her sarcasm, and that goal was achieved the value of stimulation because it promotes a sense of excitement (Schwartz, 2010).

Francis used more sarcasm than Lara throughout the 8 tutorial sessions and his reason for it was, one can only be sarcastic to someone close who will be able to take it or put up with it.

Francis: Because you know if I'm sarcastic to you I know you can take it and we're close enough to do that. [F/I/119]

The above utterance shows Francis' intention to be sarcastic to those he knows well because he viewed close friendship as possessing a level of tolerance to tolerate sarcasm. On one hand Francis' motivation derived from being secure with himself which is a personal value of security but on the other he was motivated by respect for the other.

Francis: Why sarcasm. I guess sarcasm for me is really strong signifier of a solid relationship. Because you're both secure in your own self and you respect the other person's self-esteem to know that they will not be affected by such insult that is sarcasm. So for me it is sort of a sight of respect lah. [F/I/117]

In this instance Francis used sarcasm as a marker to foster a good relationship. This was revealed through the 2 motivations in Francis: one is to feel personally secured and the other is to have respect for the other person. Although, these 2 motivations are on the different sides of the Schwartz' circular motivational continuum of 19 values (Schwartz et al., 2012) (see Figure 2.1) indicating conflicting values, still it seemed to achieve Francis' intentions of fostering a friendship. The findings in this study has shown that these 2 motivations can result in a friendship which is based on mutual respect for each other. In the case of Francis, he has shown that values influence behaviour as there is a compromise between these 2 conflicting values (Schwartz, 2010).

Francis also claimed that he likes to banter with his friend because he thinks *...bantering is not really a traditional positive thing but I think in our context, it could be...*[F/I/239]. He views bantering as a positive element in friendship and this is seen in his response below.

Interviewer: And why do you like to banter so much?

Francis: I think we started becoming friends, that was the basis of our communication. [F/I/30]

Francis: Banter. Insult each other. (Laughs) [F/I/31]

Francis: Not insult but sort of make fun...[F/I/32]

Although he is aware that bantering is not a *positive thing* for social interaction, it was the basis for his friendship with the other and he was sure that his friendship will withstand it and this again displayed a personal focus value - his confidence. To

Francis, insulting one another is considered fun and this seems to parallel Richet's (2012) claim that *social interaction leads to the use of insults*. As such, Francis displayed a sense of harmony in the relationship which is part of conformity values (Schwartz, 2012) but he does not follow Schwartz' criteria for that value of restraining of impulses that are likely to harm others or violate social expectations. Conformity value calls for politeness which is contradictory to Francis' bantering.

4.6.9 Use of Short, Direct Questions/Statements During Interaction

The use of short, direct questions or statements in an interaction suggests the notion of one being precise and direct, so as to eradicate ambiguity. This would lead to a clear understanding of what was being said.

In Lara's oral sessions, she was very exact and direct in her questions. Although her questions did not show a pattern in a particular choice of words or phrases used, the pattern that emerged was the presence of questions or statements that were short and instructive in nature. Examples of her being direct are as follows.

Lara: Nevermind nevermind, let's go to the third point [L/O/T2/16]

Lara: That's nasty is it? [L/O/T3/3]

Lara: Oh Kathy, don't say that~ [L/O/T3/16]

Her justification for being short, precise, direct and instructive was because she was a stickler for structure and insisted on some form of order in her group. Although, the manner she put forth her ideas was direct and instructive, it was not because she wanted to lead, for she did not like the responsibilities that came with the post as seen in the utterances below.

Lara: I feel that if there is no structure I would do the structuring because I think at that moment no one wants to be the leader. I don't

like to be the leader either, cos I don't like responsibilities but if I think at that moment , it's needed. I'll just you know, hey guys, try to make it, something like that. [L/1/27]

Her actions, motivations and values seem contradictory because if one is directing others to follow a structure, that person has assumed the responsibility of leading the group discussion. In Lara's case, she might be unaware that she exhibits dominance, and is responsible for the the outcome which she takes seriously.

4.6.10 Values Reflected Through Students' Use of Emoticons

It is to be noted that the research was conducted on language pertaining to words and phrases. But, other aspects like emoticons and symbols were present in the forum entries and as such require attention. For this reason, they were examined in relation to their significance to language and contribution to values.

The presence of emoticons and symbols in the participants' is seen only in the forum entries and it contributed meaning to the overall language use that reflected values. Emoticons contribute to the humanising (Stark & Crawford, 2015) of the written text in the forum entries whereby at the end of sentence, the participant inserts a graphic emoticon or a symbol and this symbol humanises the sentence by expressing an emotion. Communication in social context cannot avoid emotional language because language is laced with emotions (Bamberg, 1997).

The findings in this study identified 4 out of 5 participants using some form of emoticons in the online written interactions but all the emoticons depicted a perky and

happy sense. This presented the perception that the participants wanted to end the written forum entries with an upbeat mood.

The emoticons (see Table 4.7) were all found in the forum entries. All the participants used symbols in their written communication except Nadia. Lara and Kimmy both used one; a smiley face whereas Julie and Francis both used two different kinds of symbols. Julie used one for teasing and a big grin, while Francis used two different symbols to show the same emotion; a happy face.

Based on N/I/230, Nadia clearly expressed her preference for not to use any emoticons because she did not like to exhibit her feeling using any symbols. She preferred to write her feelings in words and this was seen in the following sentence.

Nadia: Yeah, pretty much. And uh, I like to be uh, very in touch with myself. You know it's not that easy to talk about myself. So what better way to do it then to write it down. [N/I/230]

Lara had emoticons in the forum posting which was a smiley face which she used both when she expressed *sorry* and *thank you* because positive emoticons are more popular (Tchokni, Sé'aghdha, & Quercia, 2014). It served as an attempt to reach out in a friendly disposition manner which indicates her interpersonal skills and this was seen in the line below.

Lara: Because I didn't contribute anything (laugh) so I thought smiley face would like... you know, sorry. But thank you because I was giving her the credit. [L/I/234]

The choice of emoticon for Kimmy was one particular smiley face and it was found in the forum posting and she used the same one all the time because of familiarity.

Kimmy: Smiley face. [K/I/404]

Kimmy: I don't know. I think I have been using that for quite a long time. So to suddenly use something different is just not used to it. [K/I/407]

There was a need to express her disagreement but the fact that it was not a serious matter warranted Julie to use a winky face with the tongue sticking out. Although there were some contradictions and arguments in their interactions, it is noted that she was determined to keep the mood fun.

Julie: Trying to keep the tone light. [J/I/388]

Julie: Yeah. because you know, it's not a life or death matter. It's a discussion. (laughs) [J/I/389]

The choice to have a more sociable disposition was a matter of preference to Julie. For this reason she chose a smiley face with the mouth open and that was solely because of that option presented a more cordial look to her.

Julie: When you do a smiley face with a closed mouth, it doesn't look very nice. I prefer with the open mouth smiley. It looks friendlier. [J/I/435]

Julie: Yeah.. I don't like the normal, it doesn't look very... [J/I/436]

The symbols above depicted a happy, cheeky and friendly representation of the participants in the written forum entries indicating a friendly disposition which points to Schwartz's (2012) social focus value of interpersonal because the motivation for placing all these symbols was not to upset the others' social expectations.

4.6.11 Values Reflected Through Non-Verbal Communication

This study involved 2 modes of communication; face-to-face oral tutorial and online written forum postings. Non-verbal communication is only possible in face-to-face sessions. It works in agreement with oral communication by either complementing or

supplementing it (Knapp & Hall, 2006; Gregersen, 2007). Non-verbal communication was detected in 3 out of 5 participants' tutorials and their use was verified in the interviews. Francis and Kimmy were the only 2 who either did not use or did not clearly indicate non-verbal communication in their face-to-face sessions.

The use of non-verbal communication in this study revealed that 3 participants found that language use alone was insufficient to communicate their intentions. They resorted to non-verbal aspects of communication like tone, eye contact and facial expressions to either relay a message or perceive an intention. These gestures and facial expressions were revealed by the participants themselves during the interview sessions.

Nadia felt conscious of herself when people made *eye contact* with her for continuously speaking. Though, it was in a social setting, the phrase, *lost in my own world* in her interview response below explained how she carried on until someone signalled her non-verbally.

Nadia: Yeah. Because that's how I am in presentation. Because I'll be yapping away and then suddenly I realize that people would be making **eye contact** with me and I'd be like, ohhh, godd.... Sometimes I get **lost in my own world** and I don't really realized. And then I realized then I'm self-conscious. [N/I/95]

The response above explains how Nadia did not pay much attention to anything when she was self-absorbed in presenting her own thoughts until she made eye contact with others. She placed herself in an inward looking situation which highlighted a personal value rather than a social value. The action here explained that she became more conscious of her own actions after making eye-contact, suggesting that non-verbal

communication plays a vital role. In this case, Nadia's highlights her self-direction values of thought (Schwartz, 2012) as she became more self-conscious of the situation.

In addition, non-verbal communication in line N/I/156 indicated that Nadia noted certain instances when eye contact hinted to what she was about to communicate. In this case non-verbal communication complemented her choice of language use.

Nadia: I think it's clear here umm... I don't really like Student B. (Laughs) So if I say I'm being accommodative I'd be lying because I don't really like her and she's beating around the bush. She's going on and on about her own stories and she's not letting anyone talk. So I'm like oh god. And me and Student C is always looking at each other. And Student C is passive so she wouldn't say anything so I'll end up being the one like.. (Laughs) [N/I/155]

Interviewer: You say that you and Student C are always looking at each other. But if she's not talking then how do you know what she feels?

Nadia: Eye contact. And we usually talk about it after class. [N/I/156]

This scenario stated in N/I/155 took place in a social context and it noted Nadia's personal feelings when she said *I don't really like her*. The non-verbal communication of eye contact in *looking at each other* was in a face-to-face social setting. The eye contact segment directed Nadia's next step and it was an indication of the value subscribed by Nadia, which is being dominant whereby she exerted her power either for her own personal reason or for the benefit of someone else. In line N/I/155, *And Student C is passive so she wouldn't say anything so I'll end up being the one like.. (Laughs)*, the phrase '*so I'll end up being the one like...*' implied that she decided to take it upon herself to be dominant in that situation to have some form of social superiority (Schwartz; 2012, 1992).

In addition to eye contact, Nadia also used hand gestures to indicate that she is attentive and when she invited the other party to speak freely. Nadia saw this as another means to be polite as seen in the utterances below.

Interviewer: How do you look at it as polite?

Nadia: uhm because, usually when I utter those words, I also look you straight in the eye I am talking to you, making sure that I am listening to you. So it's something that goes hand in hand with physical gestures, that show you that I am open to listening to what you have to say and for you to not hold back. [N/I/255]

Facial expression and tone have a distinct connection in interpersonal relationship (Tiwari, 2015). The phrase *I think* is mentioned numerous times by Lara and carried two different meanings depending on the tone she used and both had values emerged from them. It was self-esteem which is for personal focus and a value representing achievement. The utterance, *I think maybe from my facial expression. Cos if I say "I think" in a confident tone, then maybe they will be like oh that's the real one. If I question my thinking, they probably be like oh she is just thinking [L/I/172]*, shows how facial expression responds to a confident tone can make others assume what is real or not. This implies that one could be influenced by these two non-verbal actions in communication.

The importance of facial expressions whereby the manner one looked (Tiwari, 2015), contributed to Julie deducing that she might have been unclear in her group discussions *I think I'm judging myself... But then they look at me like I don't understand you (J/I/86)*. Likewise, Lara resorted to facial expressions for confirmation of her clarity *I think I was looking at their facial expressions (L/I/65)*. In both Lara's and Julie's cases the value seen through their facial expressions is achievement for some sort of personal success in obtaining social approval (Schwartz, 2012).

Julie and Lara had only one instance of confirmed non-verbal communication but Nadia had more as she was more expressive non-verbally. Nadia displayed a combination of values: achievement, self-direction and power through her non-verbal communication.

The findings in this study showed how non-verbal cues relate to an individual's values that are reflected based on their language use in face-to-face sessions. Non-verbal cues have a direct influence as they are embedded in a social context (Sinke, Kret, & de Gelder, 2011). It also revealed how one's values based on the non-verbal cues had some bearing in the choice of word or phrase uttered.

4.6.12 Values Reflected Through The Use of P/S and Signature

P.S. is short for postscript which signifies an after thought and is usually written after the body of a letter or email (Rosman, 2012). In this study, P.S. was used once as in *P/S: There seem to be a suspiciously small number of indirect speech/thought examples to be found in our texts, or is it just me? – Julie [J/W/F4/12]*. It depicted an after thought of both a statement and a question.

The use of P.S was only by Julie and she used it once in her forum entry but she signed off in 6 out of 8 entries with her name for example *Hmmmmm. – Julie [J/W/F3/10]* or *But what do the rest of you guys think about it? – Julie [J/W/F8/13]*. When the participants key in their forum entries, their names automatically appear but Julie insisted upon signing her name for the following reason.

Julie: (pause) Because when I write something, it is weird to not have a sign off. Because. (pause) Like when you write emails. Even when writing emails your name is already there but you sign off anyway. So this a convention, it just feels weird to not have it by the end. [J/I/426]

Unlike the use of P.S, the signing was not a one-off characteristic of Julie. There was a pattern emerging in nearly all her forum entries. Her reason revealed her preference to have some form of structure or *convention* but it was not significant enough to have a value emerging. This is because although it signified some form of structure, it was offset by the informality of the sentence just before the name and it relates to some form of informality.

Having a structure indicates that Julie exhibited the need to choose her own goals and in this situation signing off one's post is taking responsibility for what was said. The value she exhibited is self-direction as she was independent in both thought and action by choosing how she wanted to close her posts. Her use of P/S and the way she signs off also displays the idea that she is taking responsibility but in a lighter tone (Rosman, 2012).

4.7 Findings for Research Question 3: Students' Awareness of Their Values

This section discusses the findings that answer Research Question 3 – were the students aware of any of their values while interacting in these modes of communication? It presents and discusses the 5 participants' awareness of their values. The focus in this study, was on the speakers' use of language in communication and if their language use reflected their values. Identifying the participants' awareness of their own values would explain if the choice of words and phrases related to values were chosen based on the values that they subscribed to.

Addressing this Research Question had its own limitations as what was being said after a time lapse could differ from the actual thought or could subconsciously disclose thoughts at that point of time as reference. That is why the participants' background information on their value system play a vital role as it supports the findings based on the interview. Both the participants' prior awareness of their values and the values that they discovered during the interview with the researcher will be discussed in this section. The participants' reflections charted the type of values they subscribed to when communicating with others through written and oral medium of communication.

4.7.1 Nadia's Awareness of Her Values

Nadia was aware that she cared and was concerned about others. The words and phrases that she used like *out of concern*, *soft spot*, and *should try harder to include her* in the quote below feature the notion of concern in Nadia indicating the value of benevolence (Schwartz, 2012). Another value was that she was drawn to others who shared the same value as her and this was implied in her response during the interview session. She claimed that she likes *how people treat her* (Student A) in the quote below and this implies that these people have something in common with her which is the act of treating people in a decent manner.

Nadia: Oh, because Student A.. I think because the girl who is used to be with Student A was not there that day so she hasn't read the story to her. I don't know. It's **out of concern**. I have a very **soft spot** for Student A. I really like her. I mean like I **like how people treat her normally** and stuff and but they **should try harder to include her** in certain things and stuff. [N/I/72]

Her concern for others emerged through other words and phrases in her course of oral communication. However, this concern was absent in her written communication in all her forum entries which implies that Nadia communicates concern better orally than in writing.

Another value that was instilled in Nadia's early years was to be polite and this is evident in her following interview responses.

Nadia: Yeah. (Laughs). Do you know when you're young and your parents ask you what's the magic word when you do something?
[N/I/110]

Nadia: **Please** and **thank you**. [N/I/111]

Nadia: No, and like my mom doesn't believe that you giving orders to people. I mean, I always have a maid growing up, even though they're being paid they are equal to you. So if you want them to do something, you don't say, take this for me. You say, **can you please** take this for me. **Do you mind helping** me? [N/I/112]

The phrases *can you please*, *thank you*, *please* and *do you mind helping* assert the value of being polite to other people when communicating. Being polite is a value concerning interpersonal which is a under the value of conformity in Schwartz's basic human value (Schwartz; 2012), avoiding impulses that upset others in an interaction. The above responses indicate that she was brought up, subscribing to the value of being polite. The value of being polite, was reflected many times as reported (see subsection 4.5.1.1) in Nadia's oral communication. Although being polite was important to her in her face-to-face sessions, it was not present in any of her forum entries which is her written mode of communication. In her written form of communication, Nadia's language depicted more formal, content based rather than simple, everyday language. Values are individual beliefs and they are like 'heirlooms' that are passed down (Hebel, 1999) and in Nadia's case her mother played a major role in passing down these values and there was not evidence of peers influencing her values.

Nadia: Yeah. (Laughs). Do you know when you're young and your parents ask you what's the magic word when you do something? [N/I/110]

Nadia: My mother would be so proud of me. (Laughs) She'll be like, I taught you right, daughter. [N/I/127]

Politeness is included as the interpersonal element in the social focus by Schwartz because it is an essential component for smooth interaction when communication involves another person. Nadia's mother may have been instrumental in cultivating this value in her but, she might also be aware that politeness is essential in a socio-cultural context (Culpeper, 2011). Politeness functions as a marker for daily conduct in any socio-cultural environment (Scott, 2014) and since Nadia comes from mixed parentage (N/S/BI), it can be said that politeness is a shared value in many cultures.

4.7.2 Francis' Awareness of His Values

The findings revealed that Francis was not comfortable to pinpoint any particular value, indicating that he was unsure about the values he subscribed to or needed time to evaluate himself first. There was a clear attempt to avoid that subject matter and he was cautious about revealing his values as seen in the following interview responses.

Interviewer: What kind of basic values do you subscribe to?

Francis: (Laughs) Basic values? [F/I/16]

Interviewer: Yeah. What values do you have or you relate to?

Francis: Ah. Ummmmm. (Pause) Basic values. I don't know. It's a very broad question. [F/I/17]

Interviewer: Yeah.

Francis: I guess umm.. (Pause) [F/I/18]

Interviewer: Anything would be okay.

Francis: Okay. (Pause) ummm. Peace. Kindness. (Pause) Autonomy. Independence as well as balance. I guess. Those are like at the top of my head. [F/I/19]

The interview responses above indicate that, there was an effort to side step this topic either by laughing it off [F/I/16], pausing [F/I/18] or by inserting some fillers [F/I/17] and saying *I guess* a couple of times [F/I/18 &19]. In spite of this, the findings revealed that Francis portrayed a sense of autonomy which itself displays power value which was seen in the manner he steered the conversations and forum postings. His family dynamics and upbringing played a vital role in helping him to be independent in a social setting.

He displayed honesty when he later clarified that he was procrastinating because he needed the time to give some serious thoughts regarding his values as the response below shows.

Francis: I think I was trying to buy more time to think about the answer before answering hahaha, and even the list I came up with was spontaneous so it's not something I've thought through thoroughly. With something like defining my values I think I very much want to be sure of what they actually are before answering, so as I didn't have time to properly reflected, I delayed answering and still hedged at the end. [F/I/258]

Francis emphasised the reasons for not rushing to answer about his values as he claimed that it is a topic that requires thorough reflection. But this response only came at the end of the interview session when the question was prodded again by the researcher for which he responded as stated below.

Francis: I think they'd be: being compassionate, mindfulness, adaptability, being logical. (I still hedged because what I think I believe VS what I actually believe might be two different things!). Also these values may have changed over time. [F/I/259]

The interview response above shows the values that Francis believed he subscribed to. As this was the end of the interview, it can be argued that there is a possibility whereby, Francis based his values mentioned above on the reasons he provided for his language use. This could be because he is of the opinion that the values he think he

believes in and values he actually believe might be different and as such did not wish to commit.

Society's perception was important to Francis and that could have been the reason for him to be cautious and apprehensive. The value of saving face is the security through preserving one's public image (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994) and to Francis preserving his dignity in public is priority. It is a value that is personal and Francis was concerned of how he might be viewed as his explanation in F/I/209 shows.

Francis: Because if I don't then they would thought that I, why is he suddenly bringing that up? Is he trying to imitate the tutor? Is he trying to flirt? I guess I was trying to point out that I was imitating the tutor. [F/I/209]

Interviewer: So you're conscious about what the society is going to think about you?

Francis: Yeah I was conscious. Umm apprehensive. [F/I/210]

These exchanges point to how Francis preceived the role society plays in his life. Since values are identified in all cultures and societies (Schwartz, 1992), perhaps Francis did not wish to indicate if he was culturally influenced. By being apprehensive and conscious addressing the values he subscribed to, this revealed how JOHARI window (Luft & Ingham, 1955) can be used to one's advantage by keeping what he knows of himself from others.

Francis showed restraint when he spoke about the awareness of his values. He was cautious and guarded when relating to this topic specifically. However, this did not mean he did not know his values which were revealed earlier in the chapter.

4.7.3 Lara's Awareness of Her Values

Based on the findings, Lara was very aware, clear and direct on where she stood regarding her values when she declared *I'm not the nicest person* (L/I/14). But, at the same time she claimed to take steps to be a better person in *I try to be... I think the effort is there* (L/I/14). This notion is seen in the response below.

Lara: Ah well. I try to be kind to people. Because **I'm not the nicest person**. Yeah but I try to be, yeah you know. I think the effort is there.
[L/I/14]

By being truthful, Lara demonstrated honesty which itself is a benevolence value based on Schwartz' value. It also highlighted her sense of confidence when she acknowledged her shortcomings which she saw as lessons and intents to use it to a better person.

Lara: I have done things, you know everybody has done certain things but I choose to acknowledge it and learn from it and grow from it.
[L/I/15]

Another value that Lara was aware of was that she did not expect anything in return and this is a selfless act that indicates she was genuinely concerned over the welfare of others.

Lara: So yes, I am aware I'm being honest when I tell people I'm not nice. Because first, I do not do things to expect something in return and that I am not careless with what I'm willing to sacrifice. Moreover, it also acts as a disclaimer to others, letting them know not to take advantage of me because I will not take it. I suppose it acts as a defense mechanism that way. By announcing it, I get to decide how I'm perceived. [L/I/257]

The quote L/I/257 suggests that Lara was sure of what exactly she wanted and was not about to allow anyone to take advantage of her. Her cautious and guarded attitude reflected a sense of personal security under the security values.

A display of Lara's power value was when she stood up not only for herself but also for others when someone called her *basic*. According to her in L/I/146, *basic* is a term that is *used a lot to degrade somebody on the internet*. Her reply pointed to a distinctive proportion that she is extraordinary and so is everyone else and no one has the right to demean anyone. This showed a sense of loss of her public image (Schwartz, 1992) as seen in L/I/143. Her dominance value surfaced when she stands up for rights of all and herself and this is seen when she calls herself *special* and not *basic*.

Lara: The guy who called me **basic**, so rude! [L/I/142]

Lara: I think it means like, uhm, a girl who doesn't have any individualism and any individual characteristic. It is just the same with everyone else. I don't like that cos I am **special** (laugh) at least this is what I think. I think everyone is special in their own way so I don't think he has the authority to call me something like that, without actually know me well. [L/I/143]

Lara was mindful of her nature to be structured, to follow a set of rules and to complete something on time and considered them as attributes. There was a willingness to exert some form of dominance to get others to comply to a certain guideline as seen below.

Lara: I think cos I was irritated...cos she was talking a lot in BM and we are having a discussion. So I thought like maybe she needs a moment on her own, while we have a discussion. Like the whole structure thing again. I like to have fun but also like to get things done. So I just thought like... [L/I/186]

Lara was reflective of her own values as clarified in line L/I/224, *if you box yourself up, you cannot gain more information, but if you are open-minded, and you are aware to be open-minded, then you get more information*. This reflected her need to have the power over resources which is a personal value. These are values that Lara was aware of herself but it was not translated in her language use in any of the interactions (oral or written) over 8 weeks.

But at the same time, Lara's acceptance of her own flaws, indicated that she was receptive to her shortcomings in trying to be open-minded about it.

Lara: I think maybe I was slightly aware especially the not boxing things up. Because I like to be more open-minded, so I think when I mention those things, I was trying to encourage people to be more open-minded. So maybe that I was aware. But all the personal attack thing, maybe I wasn't aware and that was just me **being rash** about what I was saying. Probably should **control** it. [L/I/217]

In L/I/217, Lara exhibited a combination of value awareness which was universalism when she claimed to be broad minded and benevolence when she tried to encourage others. Both these values are social values because they enhance and protect the welfare of others by being broad minded and encouraging (Schwartz,1992; 2012).

Meanwhile, in the same response L/I/217, Lara displayed honesty in her awareness of her own weakness to *being rash* and was ready to act to overcome it by being more in *control* of it. These words in their contexts point to a personal value of self-direction of thought where Lara understands that she can obtain personal success through being aware of how not to be rash in situations. In this one response Lara's awareness of her values point to both personal values as well as social values.

Lara was aware that she preferred a sense of structure and rules because it provided a sense of direction. This was seen when she showed her instructive nature for example *Oh ya. Let's go! trying to make it short and concise* [L/O/T1/18.] Although, she preferred to take charge which showed her dominance, she did not want to lead because she does not like responsibilities. She made this clear in her interview response below.

Lara: I think I like to follow structure cos I think at that time it was already at the end of discussion time so I thought alright, let us, you know, make a substantial answer so that we can answer the tutor. [L/I/26]

Lara: I feel that if there is no structure I would do the structuring because I think at that moment no one wants to be the leader. I don't like to be the leader either, cos I don't like responsibilities but if I think at that moment , it's needed. I'll just you know, hey guys, try to make it, something like that. [L/I/27]

The response, L/I/27, shows that though Lara does not like responsibilities, she will still step up when there is no clear leader leading the discussions. This situation implies Lara's values have a greater impact on her than her preference. It is because of a need that she resorted to take the lead.

4.7.4 Kimmy's Awareness of Her Values

Kimmy was aware that being respectful was an important value to her and this was seen in her choice of words. The resurfacing of the value, respect, was identified many times for many reasons during the interview session as shown her response in K/I/9 below.

Kimmy: Yeah...erm, I guess one of the key values that I subscribe to will be **respect**. I always have this thing about, this very intrinsic need to abide by some rules. If there's an order in that particular environment, I would try to understand it and appeal. For instance, like in a class, I think at the mention of a classroom or a lesson, I immediately I have to be punctual, I have to be dress to **respect** that venue or something. I mean these are some examples. Pay attention, give the lecturer the **respect**, some key examples. [K/I/9]

Interviewer: So, your respect is for everything?

Kimmy: Most things. Even when there is no need for me to **respect** the particular ideology or person for instance, I still try to hold it like, I would, you know, if you give me reasons not to **respect** you, then I won't **respect** you. As simple as that. If not, there is still like an ounce of **respect**. [K/I/14]

Response K/I/14 shows the importance of respect to Kimmy's worldview and how she links it to everything. Based on the above responses too, Kimmy's idea of respect covers a broad range; from respect to abiding by rules, being punctual, dressing appropriately to paying attention to the someone.

Being respectful was the key ingredient in Kimmy's entire value system as clarified in the responses below. It was one of her core values which was fundamental to how she viewed relationships and believes as a *key principle* in her life as clarified in her response below.

Kimmy: Yeah perhaps.. like I don't know. I have always ascertain the fact that respect is quite the **key principle** in my life, as well as mannerism. [K/I/448]

However, in a moment of self-revelation, Kimmy acknowledged that it is difficult to be respectful all the time. Her response below indicates that sometimes the lines of respect are blurred as claimed in, ... *at some point I do see it like I was trying. But at some point, I just couldn't see it at all.* There is a sense of frustration because her intention was to be *respectful* that was the principle she lived by.

Kimmy: I assume that I was trying to be **respectful** but it seem to be that I wasn't enough. I don't know. I am just like my gosh, at some point I do see it like I was trying. **But at some point, I just couldn't see it at all.** Maybe to others it's more obvious? ... [K/I/449]

Being respectful for Kimmy denotes the value of universalism as it derives from the survival needs of the individual to treat others justly (Schwartz, 1992; 2012). According to Schwartz (1992; 2012), the goals of universalism values is understanding, appreciation and tolerance and for Kimmy these translate as respect for others and she expects respect in return as she claimed ...*Like you know, the need to respect and to be respected in return.* [K/I/379]

Kimmy considered keeping to rules and regulations as an important element that indicates one's respect for structure. She believed that some form of structure would help in understanding one another during an interaction. As mentioned in her responses below, she was a *stickler for rules*.

Kimmy: Cos when there was no order, everyone was just throwing ideas, no one is actually picking up those ideas and structuring them and you know, tidying it up so that everybody else is like you know, understand what everybody else has to say. [K/I/29]

Kimmy: Sometimes. Some people I don't know who, I mean, I wouldn't say it personally, I wouldn't give names but some people have identified me as a **stickler for rules** so yeah. [K/I/30]

Following rules is a value in Schwartz' Basic Human Values Theory and in Kimmy it is security value. The responses above show that she is advocating for a sense of stability in society during an interaction, which she hoped to achieve through order and structure.

Beyond a mere belief structure and rules, Kimmy also believed in enforcing these rules in a respectful manner as she claims *that you know, everyone is different, you shouldn't be **too harsh** cos you want order, respect and stuffs like that.* [K/I/32]

Based on the quote, to be respectful one should not be *too harsh* and it reflects the conformity value as it advocates politeness. This shows the extent of Kimmy's belief that respect is the most important value and the reason for it as the *key principle* in her life.

Having good *manners was important* [K/I/297] to Kimmy and it was identified in her choice of words and phrases that reflected respect, politeness, abiding by the rules, encouraging others and being inclusive. She credited having good manners to the way she was brought up, indicating the fact that values are 'heirlooms' (Hebel, 1999), instilled in people during their childhood as mentioned in K/I/299.

Kimmy: Manners I guess?! (laugh) [K/I/297]

Kimmy: It's the way I grew up I guess. [K/I/299]

The key value that Kimmy demonstrated in this study is having respect, as to her, respect transcends all other values because one would need respect as the base value for all other values like politeness, to enforce rules in society, basic interactions and even being punctual. Schwartz (2012) claims that some important values have multiple meanings as they express the goals of more than one value. That is the reason Kimmy's respect reflects security values, universalism values and conformity values.

4.7.5 Julie's Awareness of Her Values

Julie was partially vague about her awareness of her values. On one hand, Julie was clear about subscribing to being open-minded, optimistic, willingness to share and having a positive disposition which were evident in her language use. These values were implied in the many explanations she provided in the interview. On the other hand, it was uncertain what she meant by truth and goodness in general. Perhaps she was aiming Maslow's self-actualization, but there was the absence of clarity and her quotes in J/I/12 and J/I/13 below lacked specific explanation or examples.

JULIE: I guess I am very (pause) open. I think that is one of the most important thing, you have to be very open-minded. That's a very important thing. And you should be able to share with people and accept what people share with you. And another thing that I value is, (pause) Truth, goodness, just general, don't do thing if it's bad.
[J/I/12]

JULIE: ...I think I'm a very optimistic person. Very positive. So Yeah. I think being positive is very very very important thing as well... [J/I/13]

Values like being open-minded, being optimistic and having a positive outlook were identified from the choice of words in her face-to-face sessions and online forum entries. However, there was no evidence of any language use as a direct indicator of her being truthful in either modes of her interactions.

Hedging was used to downplay a situation, showing Julie's positive disposition using politeness strategies by not resorting to suggest that something said was wrong in an outright manner. Julie explained this in her response below.

Julie: Yeah. Okay. (laughs). (pause) It's probably about.. I didn't want to say he's, too **wrong**. Instead of saying that's he's **wrong**, I kind of hedged it a little. So it's you're off the book but you're not wrong. So it's a little too much. This is generally how I see it. But I **never thought why**. ...[J/I/34]

At times, Julie was unaware of her own values and it was identified in her claim, in the response above when she claimed she *never thought why* she phrased *reading a little too much into it* [J/O/T1/1] in that manner instead of just saying wrong.

Julie confirmed that she hedges a lot but, the hedging has revealed another value that she subscribed to. In the following interview response below, Julie's hedging reflected open-mindedness; another value in her which she is aware of.

Julie: I'm hedging about it. Because if it's the truth, it doesn't mean that it is to everyone as well. I tend to do this **a lot**. I notice that as well. When I say in my opinion, for me, because, you don't have to think that way, but I think this way. So I'm just letting you know that this is my opinion, you can agree, you can disagree. Yeah.. [J/I/51]

This instance points to Julie's open-mindedness in accepting other view points. Being open-minded is a feature of universalism value which highlights the goals of tolerance, understanding and appreciation of others in a society (Schwartz, 1992; 2012).

Julie declares herself as *a feminist* in her interview response below and her explanation, portrays a sense of open-mindedness when is seen in its totality.

Julie: Okay, I'm **a feminist**, and this guy in the documentary says that if they don't wear a tudung, they deserve to be raped. That is completely untrue. Even when I was in the class and that video came up, I was like can't. It's too much. I hear this so much and it is so wrong to think of it that way. And people still think that way. [J/I/285]

There is no evidence in this study to support if Julie is open-minded because she is a feminist or because she is feminist, she is open-minded. Either way, she expresses her thoughts and feelings in a direct manner and occasionally using swear words as her following response presents.

Julie: Again, it shows the emotion that I feel. It is something that I really didn't agree with him. It is something that I don't understand how people can think that way. It's my limit. It really shows to me that your values are shit. It really don't deserve to be talked about. You know your shit is like trash. [J/I/294]

Although hedging is used in Julie's term *a lot* in J/I/51 above, there are times she has admitted that it does not work and that one needs to be direct even if it is not a *nice* thing to do. Her explanations are seen in the following exchanges:

Interviewer: So you were saying, there was no more hedging here. Why?

Julie: Maybe at that point there was no point. So there's **no use being nice**. Hope they wouldn't take it **the wrong way**. [J/I/130]

Interviewer: You refused to be nice?

Julie: (laughs) I mean it wasn't **mean**. I was just saying that's not the point and (pause) we don't have much time so don't dwell on it. [J/I/131]

The phrase *no use being nice* paints Julie as a direct person though she hoped what she said would not be considered as *mean* or taken in *the wrong way*. Her claim is that if there is no time, one should disregard hedging and be direct which is self-direction value (Schwartz, 1992; 2012). This shows her independent thought and action to take control of a situation and in this case it is a situation that lacks time.

Prior to the interview session with the researcher, Julie was aware that one has to be considerate as indicated in her interview response below.

Julie: Yeah. But things like I don't like that, I don't mind saying that but there's also that thing that, just because you feel it, it doesn't make it true. That kind of thing. So you have to be considerate. [J/I/220]

Her response appears vague with the multiple use of *that* which functions as a filler in this instance but, she was clear that one has *to be considerate*. Ironically, though Julie advocated being considerate, there was no evidence of any language use in her tutorial transcriptions or written forum entries exhibiting her being considerate.

Julie's positive disposition is present when she was being polite. Her intention of wanting to be polite is evident when she used the phrase, *it was a nicer way* and this is seen in the following response.

Julie: I think **it was a nicer way to say let's start**. Because everyone was sitting quietly. And we were just sitting, looking at each other. So, are we supposed to sit here or discuss with each other? That kind of thing. Yeah. [J/I/248]

However, she used negative strategy for politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and this is based on her tutorial utterance *so, are we supposed to discuss?* [J/O/T7/2]. The above interview response was in relation to this utterance and Julie considers this utterance as *a nicer way to say let's start*.

4.8 Awareness of Their Values and Their Perception of Emerging Values

This section discusses if the participants were conscious of their own values in both oral and written forms of communication and contributes answers for Research question 3: Were the students aware of any of their values while interacting in these modes of communication? This section will also address any similarities in the participants' awareness of their values and their perceptions of any emerging values. In discussing the participants awareness of their values, it is noted that some have short list of values while others have a long one. This is seen in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Participants' awareness of their values

Participants	Aware of the values	Unaware of the values
Nadia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Being concerned- Being polite- Being respectful- Being assertive- Values instilled by her mother	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use of slang words and its value
Francis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Being respectful- Being honest- Being open-minded- Being responsible- Values instilled his father	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- presented himself as if he was unaware/unsure of his values
Lara	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Being kind- Being open-minded- Being assertive- Being structured- Being direct- Values influenced by friends	none
Kimmy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Being respectful- Being polite- Being structured- Values instilled by parents- Aware of lack of confidence- Aware of lack of self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-unaware of any values in the online written forum postings
Julie	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Being open-minded- Being polite- Being optimistic- Values instilled by parents- Values influenced by media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- unaware of the values reflected in some instances of the language use

Based on the table, only Lara was sure of her values and as such her language use reflected the values listed above. She was even aware of her own short-comings in her values and how people perceived her when she confessed that she was not a nice person. Still, she stood by her beliefs and that speaks of her strength and confidence.

Francis tried to avoid stating his values because he was cautious and viewed values as something that may *change over time* (F/I/259). However, he did not indicate the factors that would cause the values to change over time. In Julie's case, she was unaware of the values at times in her language use. Since media plays an influential

role in Julie's life, there might be a possibility for her values to change over time too, as her values are also influenced by external factors. Nevertheless, there were many instances of language used by them during their interactions that highlighted the values they were aware of.

Not every participant attributed their parents for instilling values in them. Lara for one thought her friends influenced her values and Julie claimed the media playing an prominent role. Apart from Lara, parents played a significant role in instilling values in all the other 4 participants especially in Nadia and Francis. However, Lara and Julie contradicted themselves on parents' role regarding values. In the case of Julie, she credited her parents after having opposing values and beliefs. This shows that unconsciously her parents had instilled the values which she disagreed with. On the other hand, Lara claimed it was not her parents, but rather her friends who showed her the value of understanding others. This would be highly improbable because from birth to the point of meeting her friends, some basic interpersonal values would have been instilled in her so that she was able to make friends. The only possible explanation is that she was unconscious of it since it was long ago and at present she is with friends. As such, they might be unaware of what they learnt or instilled in them when they were young.

Kimmy and Julie also claimed that their parents in general played an important role but they did not reveal who actually instilled the values. This was different with Nadia and Francis as they were specific. Nadia asserted that her mother was instrumental in instilling values in her *would be so proud* of her for being polite [N/I/127]. This showed that she was mindful of what she was saying and how she was saying it.

Francis claimed that it was his father who played a vital role with regards to respect. However, this study cannot categorically say which parent or both played a more prominent role in instilling all values portrayed by the participants in their language use.

Lara claimed to be kind, structured, open-minded, direct, encouraging and friendly to others but, she also refuted her own values by insisting she was not a nice person. Her intentions was to provide both sides of her. Similarly, Kimmy was honest with her low self-esteem issues. These 2 participants are the only ones to highlight their negative sides which indicates their honesty as well as mutual understanding of self and others based on JOHARI window communication model.

Low self-esteem contributes to the lack of confidence in oneself and it is evident in Kimmy. She claimed she was *born without it (K/I/174)* or *it died somewhere in the middle (K/I/175)* and yearned to have respect through her forum postings (K/I/378). Kimmy's awareness of her low self-esteem indicates how she views herself in a negative manner which contradicts Pronin, Lin and Ross (2002) that one considers him/her more positively when compared to others.

The participants were aware of both their positive and negative attributes. Self-awareness is an aspect of human consciousness (Jun, 2010) and this is seen in Kimmy being aware of her low self-esteem issues; Lara claiming that she not a very nice person; Nadia identifying that politeness is her core value; Francis believing that a close friendship can tolerate sarcasm; and Julie insisting that media influences her values. However, there were an instance when Nadia was unaware of her daringness

to use slang word. Kimmy too was unaware of her value in her language use in her written forum entries. As such, this study can only partially concur with Jun (2010), because they are instances in the study that showed the participants being unaware of their values reflected in their language usage.

4.9 Findings for Research Question 4: Influence of Values in Language Use in Spoken and Written Sessions

This sections discusses the findings for Research Question 4 – How do the students’ values influence the language used in written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions? In presenting the findings for this research question, the study hopes to shed some light on the students’ own value systems which in turn contribute to their choice of words or phrases during an interaction. These words and phrases may or may not emerge as a pattern throughout the entire period of communication, showing similarities and differences in the language adopted in both oral and written. The values that surface reflect both social and personal focus. This section plays a vital role in revealing if these values had any influence over their choice of words RQ4.

4.9.1 Nadia

Nadia, was aware of her attachments to certain choice of words in her language use that related to values as shown here. Utterance N/I/71, indicates Nadia’s acknowledgement to having a set of words and phrases that she was more comfortable and related to her values when communicating with others.

Nadia: This is quite funny. (Laughs) I don't know. I say sorry a lot.
[N/I/26]

Nadia: I used that word a lot. Like sorry. [N/I/70]

Nadia: I think it's like a part... You know everyone has their own vocabulary, like a set of vocabulary. [N/I/71]

The response above shows that the choice of language use is the manifestation of the values subscribed by the individuals and Nadia exhibited having the following social values; being polite, being tactful and having courtesy as interpersonal, caring, being concerned, and humility. This resulted in her, using words and phrases like *sorry*, *thank you*, and *give it a shot* in her oral face-to-face communication. Although Nadia appeared to have said *sorry* many times, it does not necessarily reflect reality as Sugimoto (1998) claims 'self-castigation in apology is not taken as a sign of weak ego or damaged self-esteem' (p. 74).

Nadia's language use also revealed her personal values like self-directed action, hedonism, dominance, but it is to be noted that all these personal values were in relation to social interactions which in turn reflected her social values. Her oral transcriptions showed evidence of language use that reflected predominantly social values but language reflecting some personal values was also present and reported in the findings. However, it was different in the language she used in the written forum entries.

Although, both oral and written were in a social context, the findings in the written forum entries featured only personal values and were void of social values. This can be seen in her interview responses below.

Nadia: ... Because **I** just didn't get it. Because **I** find it hard to understand umm... [N/I/200]

Nadia: Because **I** like how it sounds. [N/I/204]

Nadia: ... **I** have no idea, it sounded cool. (Laughs) [N/I/211]

Nadia: ... I think it's more about aesthetic. I mean, I wanted to paint a vivid image in your head so you understand what I'm trying to say more clearly. [N/I/217]

The focus in all the above responses was *I*. It concerned with Nadia's thoughts, and feelings in relation to the context in her interactions. As such, these would reflect values that highlight herself thus giving a personal focus. However, there exists moments when her real intention was towards social focus of wanting to make it easier for others like in N/I/217 when she said *I mean, I wanted to paint a vivid image in your head so you understand what I'm trying to say more clearly*.

Unlike the other participants, Nadia was unaware that she used a slang word, *damn it*. Her conscious state of mind would refrain her from using it but unconsciously she still used it. This means that she has heard it, or knows how to use that slang word for it to be verbalised at that particular instance confirming that there is a relationship between consciousness and words (Vygotsky, 1986). Consciously refraining the use of a word does not mean being unconscious of its existence as in Nadia's case. The other participants were all aware and knew their reasons for using their slang words and could justify their reasons.

The language use in written and spoken was contrasting. While Nadia's social values are reflected in her language use in her oral interaction, they are not reflected in her written forum entries. This is evident in her interview response below on this matter.

Nadia: It's very personal. Because you can see the contrast here between how I speak and how I write. Because I'm definitely more affirmative when I'm writing then when I'm speaking. [N/I/226]

As mentioned in her response, Nadia asserts that written form is personal to her as she is able to advocate her thoughts better in the written mode. Perhaps it is because she

does not need to face anyone when she expresses her thoughts and therefore can do away with pleasantries and minding all the ‘p’s and ‘q’s and just be forthright.

The findings in this study identified Nadia’s values of concern, politeness, humility, tactfulness, encouraging, being inclusive, to agree and being respectful. These values are part of Schwartz’ (1992; 2012) universalism and benevolence values which are social focus values. They influenced Nadia’s language use in her spoken sessions. Being assertive and dominant are also Schwartz’ power values which are personal focus values but they also influenced her language use in her spoken sessions.

On the other hand, the value of feeling gratified and having a sense of achievement indicates Schwartz’ hedonism and achievement values. These are personal focus values and they influenced Nadia’s language use in her written sessions. As such, Nadia’s values played a more influential role in her spoken language use compared to her written language use.

4.9.2 Francis

Francis appeared more courteous with social cues in his written communication in comparison to his spoken sessions. This is because in his spoken sessions he was predominantly bantering, hedging or being sarcastic which did not exhibit his courtesy. On the other hand, his sense of social etiquettes was prominent in his written forum entries like when he greeted his group members with a *hello* which was absent in his 8 weeks of oral sessions. Social etiquettes are more prominent during face-to-face interactions because they clear the way to have more efficient and pleasant

interactions (Miller, 2002). However, Francis exhibited frequent tendency towards hedging and was also sarcasm in his oral session and once in his written entries. It appears that bantering and being sarcastic had an impact in his face-to-face interactions and as such Francis used it more frequently in his oral sessions.

Francis was encouraging towards others and it surfaced in his written communication rather than his oral sessions. He used the phrase *pretty solid point* with the purpose of supporting someone. His intention of using *yeah* to agree with someone was also as a form of encouragement. There were certain words that Francis used repeatedly in both oral and written sessions because of the influence of his values and *pretty solid point* and *yeah* were two of them.

Being encouraging was not the only the social focus values exhibited by Francis. He also expressed politeness and showed tolerance and acceptance which are essential to promote social interactions. These values are present in both his oral as well as his written modes of communication.

Francis' use of *we* showed two different values; one was a social value of being inclusive while the other was a personal focus displaying his assertive manner. His assertiveness was shown when he used his inclusiveness to coerce others to see from his perspective. This value that surfaced depending on his intentions thus indicating that values influence the use of *we* in both oral and written sessions.

The use of slang and swear words, showed Francis' audacity to use the word in public. There is a possibility that he was at ease using the words in both modes of

communication. The reason being it was a normal for others around him to be involved in similar choice of vocabulary too, as these expressions are shaped by social and ideological forces of that particular time.

Emoticons are another form to express feeling in written communication. Francis used *smiley* and *big grin* emoticons in his forum entries to express his what he felt. This indicates that he is trying to incorporate social etiquettes in his written communication by ‘smiling’ in addition to him addressing people as *hello beautiful people*.

Francis was respectful even when he was bantering or being sarcastic as seen in his response below.

Francis: Why sarcasm. I guess sarcasm for me is really strong signifier of a **solid relationship**. Because you’re both secure in your own self and you respect the other person’s self-esteem to know that they will not be affected by such insult that is sarcasm. So for me it is sort of a sign of respect lah. [F/I/117]

The above response indicates how Francis sees sarcasm as a sign of respect based on the *solid relationship* he has with the other. However, this finding in Francis is not supported by other studies presently.

Francis did not display any feelings in either his oral or written forms of communication, but he tried to make others feel for him by playing a joke on his group.

Francis: I think that would probably be Student D because sometimes she couldn’t catch on what Student E and I were bantering. She was like bullies? I think at that time she thought I was serious. So she asked uni, school or what? (Laughs) [F/I/173]

The non-verbal gesture of laughing in the response above indicates that Francis meant it as a joke but others failed to see it. As such he succeeded in invoking some feelings and one group member thought it was a serious matter.

Francis' belief that one can be open-minded and have differences in opinion and yet foster friendship supports his notion that values may *change over time* (F/I/259). He acknowledged that *disagreeing and debating as fun* (F/I/193) for him which explained his desire towards bantering, hedging and the use of sarcasm. This was further validated by his views on *jesting and poking fun* (F/I/107) which he claimed was *developed through friendship* (F/I/108). This could be the reason for being apprehensive to associate himself with a particular value for he is of the opinion that any words and actions can potentially have some form of values attached to them.

Parental guidance in his early ages exposed Francis to the values of being independent in thought, to be helpful and encouraging, to be reasonable and accept responsibilities for his own actions and most importantly to be respectful. He attributes his father for teaching him the meaning of respect.

4.9.3 Lara

Lara exhibited values like being polite, encouraging, be inclusive, showing in agreement and conforming to a social group as social values. She also displayed personal values like being persistent, being assertive and said things to make herself feel good. These values influenced Lara's choice of words and phrases that she used during her written and spoken sessions.

Lara showed her politeness through many phrases throughout her written and spoken interactions. She constantly used *kind of like*, *just like*, *like we do* and *I think* to put forth another idea or an opposing idea in a polite manner. It could also, as she claimed act *as a disclaimer...a form of heading [L/I/258]* to express her thoughts. Lara also expressed her politeness by using *thank you* and *sorry* indicating that she subscribes to some social etiquettes.

Other than using the phrase *I think* to indicate her politeness, Lara also used it to show her assertiveness. It depends on her intention at that point of time and the context and these two elements are crucial before she decides which among the two values come in play for that situation.

Lara showed another value, that she is open to accept other people's thoughts and opinions. This is seen in her multiple usage of words and phrases that promote this value like *yeah*, *right*, *true*, *I think so*, *cool*, *that's cool*, *it's cool* and *I'm cool*. Lara was the only participant among the 5, to use a variety of words and phrase to denote the same value and did not show a clear preference for a particular word or phrase.

Being inclusive as a social value was seen in her language use, *we*, in both spoken and written sessions. However, the use of *we* was also used to reflect a personal value in herself that is to show a certain amount of power by being instructive and direct. This is as stated in the utterances below.

Lara: No. wait! **we** are done! This is the story. [L/O/T4/29]

Lara: Uhm~, like do **we** multiple motives or just one? Do **we** have multiple motives? [L/O/T6/53]

Lara also used the phrase *you guys* as an informal manner to show her being inclusive.

Being persistent was a personal value exhibited by Lara through her language use that denoted repetition of certain words twice, thrice or four times. Her use of repetition is based on two different values, one is being persistent to emphasise something while the other was it made her feel good as the repetition sounded rhythmic. Both values exhibited are personal values.

Lara was the only participant who did not claim that her parents had any role in instilling the values in her. She was sure of what she believed in at present and since she is mainly surrounded by friends, they might have some influence over her values and language use.

4.9.4 Kimmy

Kimmy reflected values of politeness, being respectful, being inclusive, encouraging and conforming to a social group in her language use during her spoken and written communication. The only personal value that manifested in her language use during interaction was her need to boost her self-esteem.

Kimmy's low self-esteem was a major factor that shaped her need to be respectful and warrant respect from others as seen as in utterance K/I/353.

Kimmy: I think because of my low self-esteem, I do tend to seek out validation, and I tend to inhibit myself into thinking about things before saying it. So I get you know, response. [K/I/353]

There was more control with Kimmy's choice of words in her writing than her oral means of communication because she had ample time to think of the words when she was writing compared to when speaking. But, even when writing the foremost value

in her mind was respect as stated in K/I/379 *Like you know, the need to respect and to be respected in return*. It was for this reason that she felt that she had more control of her writing rather than speaking thus, boosting her self-esteem.

Kimmy: I think the first thought that came up to my mind is, no it's not the same. It's different. I feel like I have more, I am in more control when I am writing things than I do speak. [K/I/377]

Kimmy: Hmm. Because I think choices of words. I get to think, I have the opportunity to think before I put down my thoughts. [K/I/378]

Kimmy also avoided repetition with her choice of words and phrases in her writing compared to speaking like *I agree, I considered, I wish, I advocate, I felt, I see, I am, I was, I drew, I believe*. The reason was when speaking she was being instinctive and spontaneous whereas in writing she was more in control and she could choose different words because she had the time to think about them.

Kimmy: I do find myself repeating many phrases when speaking because speech is more spontaneous than writing. I feel that when it comes to writing, it is easier to consciously select different words to produce a more eloquent piece of writing whereas where speech is concern, it is more easier to revert to a register of words that one has already been using in the beginning of the conversation. [K/I/471]

Politeness was a value that Kimmy reflected in her language use through the use of phrases like *I think* and *I guess*. This value also influenced the usage of the word *sorry* indicating good manners in her interactions. Kimmy claimed that she has low self-esteem and this could have invoked her politeness to garner respect as stated in K/I/379 *Like you know, the need to respect and to be respected in return*.

Kimmy exhibited being encouraging and conforming to a group. The latter value was reflected in her language use where she use slang words like *pretty* and *stuff* as well as the phrase *you go girl* as a form of encouragement. The repetition of these words in her oral sessions signified informality as she was trying to fit into a group. This would

also underline her need to be respected as part of a whole as language is considered as a marker of identity of a group membership (Ferri, 2017).

Being inclusive is another value that Kimmy reflected in her language use during her interactions through the pronoun we. Her intention to build a rapport with others was highlighted with her use of the word okay, which she used as a discourse marker to signal that she was about to speak. This again expresses the importance of respect as it is continuously being implied.

Kimmy's values have been ingrained by her parents and the basis of their upbringing according to her is that one has to face the consequences to all one's actions. Perhaps that is the reason she believes it is vital to have respect and be respected in return.

4.9.5 Julie

Julie exhibited both social values as well as personal values and both these values influenced her language use in her spoken and written communication. However, Julie was unaware of her values in her language as she thought that language was used only to express a point and it was a discovery to herself that there was something else to also be seen in it other than content as articulated in J/I/445.

Julie: Now I have to sit down and think about why did I say this. At that point it seemed like I was putting up my point but now, why didn't you just use this word? Why did I say in this way? I never thought about that. So, wow. [J/I/445]

Julie believed that she writes the way she speaks because both derive from the way one thinks. She seemed to echo Carroll's (1978) thoughts that language formed in the

mind becomes the mode for communication. She was aware of her values which surfaced in this study.

Julie: Yeah. true. I guess I am very (pause) open. I think that is one of the most important thing, you have to be very open-minded...[J/I/12]

Julie: ...So Yeah. I think being positive is very, very, very important thing as well. [J/I/13]

Based on the responses above, Julie claimed that she was open-minded and positive. Her open-mindedness could be from being exposed to a liberal and moderate school of thought through the media (see J/S/BI) and seen in her daringness to use slang words freely.

Her positiveness was seen when she was being inclusive of all by using the pronoun *we*. Julie was aware of this value and her language use reflecting it. As such, she contradicted herself when she said language was only used to express content. Perhaps, her basic notion of the role of language was clarified at the end of this study when she herself could identify her values through her language use.

One feature that only appears in Julie was that she signed her name at the end of her forum entry most of the time for example as stated below.

On a side note; could it be argued that the tone of desperation I see in Joe could be false? Since it's isn't actually Joe that is desperate, but the Milton-ness inside him that makes him that way. Hmmmmm. – Julie [J/W/F3/10]

If one participated in an online communication like a forum entry, it was understood that the identity of the one involved , as was automatically revealed. Knowing that her identity was known in her entry did not hinder Julie from writing her name at the end for she felt it was the appropriate thing to do as a rule and wanted to guarantee that everyone reading it knew who it was.

Julie: I always do that. I think. Because whenever I write, it just feels right for you to sign off. [J/I/424]
Julie: Yeah.. (laughs) Just in case you're unsure when you're reading, oh yeah, this is Julie's. [J/I/425]

Julie's writing and speaking styles were similar which substantiated her claim that she writes in the similar manner she speaks. There was a compelling argument by her on this matter, that though one has more control over writing than speaking, nevertheless both are governed by the way one reflects upon a topic and as such that individual cannot be completely different entities with different thought process.

Julie: ...Because the way you think is always the underlying control. Even though when you're writing you can be a bit more controlling on how you want to sound but it all comes down to how you think. Yeah. Because you cannot be totally different. Because I think like that. I think I write the way I speak. It's just sometimes when it's academic, it's a bit more formal. [J/I/452]

Julie was aware that she allowed others to disagree with her (J/I/51), repeated herself so that others would understand her (J/I/75), wrote the way she spoke (J/I/452) and was aware of her usage of slang or swear words which she referred to as *young people phrase* (J/I/343). Her use of slang words and swear words highlights her conformity values as she feels she fits in well with *young people* through the use of anti-language.

Julie is of the belief that her values differ from that of her parents and she thinks that the moderate school of thoughts and the media has influenced her way of thinking. However, she also claimed that she was closer to her mother and sisters. They would have been an influence in her formative years at least before she was exposed to the moderate school of thought and media.

Julie claimed that she was *not very good at expressing her feelings* [J/I/217]. This would mean her utterances and postings would not be expected to reveal her feelings.

However, this did not appear to be the case as she was vocal in both oral and written and even resorted to the use of slang and swear words which showed her daringness in expressing her feelings and thoughts. Julie asserted that her ability to be direct with her opinions does not translate to her ability to be direct about her feeling about people. This was clarified by Julie in her interview as seen below.

Julie: No. It's not about something you say. I don't mind you saying that. But the way I feel about people and you know. (pause) Usually how I feel about a person. What the person make me do, I don't share. If I don't like they way you said this to me, I'll tell you I don't like that or I don't agree with that. But. (pause) [J/I/218]

Julie: ... Expressing it and telling them straight out that hey you make me feel. (pause) Yeah, I don't say that. I don't have the direct words about the way I feel. [J/I/219]

Her explanation above implies her inability to identify the exact vocabulary to express the way she feels. As such, her intentions to express feelings are not facilitated with the right word choice. Though, Julie claimed that one of her values is her willingness to share, her reluctance to share her feelings as stated in her response J/I/218 shows that one might have the intentions to share but the intentions are not elucidated in the all areas.

4.10 Values as contributing factors in students' interaction in this study

This section discusses the influences of values in students' interaction in this study. The duration of the study enabled the researcher to identify a pattern emerging in the language use of the participants and the reasons for the use of those words and phrases.

As the findings show, parental influence is fundamental in influencing values in the participants. This was evident in all the participants except for Lara but the values that she exhibited in this study had to be instilled in her through some manner in her younger age before friends came into her life. As Jun (2002) claimed, people are not born with values rather they learn from the values and beliefs instilled in them thus, pointing to parental role in instilling these values when they were young. This notion is in agreement with values as heirlooms, something that is being passed down through generations (Hegel, 1999) which means values are taught and constructed through contextual scenarios and experiences. Parents and family as claimed by Hegel (1999) are not the only ones that helps co-construct these values in an individual as this study has revealed that friends, society as well as the media play a definite role in defining the values a person embodies. It is to be noted that there might be other factors which might influence values in one's language use that was not uncovered by this study.

Situations and contexts affect values which in turn reflect in the choice of words. These situations are essential for the construction of an idea, value or belief which is in turn materialised through the usage of words (Drobnak, 2013). These words could be the same or different as the findings in this study has shown. One example was the use of the words *cool*, *right* and *true*. These words express being in agreement based on the context but the words also have other meanings and as such could be used in different situations and contexts. However, words like *yeah* or *I agree* only mean to agree and do not carry any other meaning. Realising a situation gives rise to an intention (Langendoen, 1998; Malle & Knobe, 1997; Horn, 2006). Words and actions

complement intentions and these intentions influence the choice of words chosen to convey them (Hovy, 1990; Rosenberg, 2003; Dixon & O'Hara, 2008; Horn, 2006).

Conflicting ideas of values are presented by the participants when the same choice of words reflect different values. These words and phrases represented social values as well as personal values. This is because the context one encounters might differ from the other (Griffin, 2008) and as such, the values perceived might be different. Consequently, the intentions would differ, giving rise to the usage of a variety of language use (Drobnak, 2013). Words bear meaning to one's values, beliefs and intentions (Bernam, 1969) and this is seen in the participants' interactions in this study. Context matters in identifying sarcasm as seen in both Lara and Francis. Both of them did not resort to sarcasm unconsciously which contradicts Warner-Gracia (2014). Warner-Gracia (2014), claimed in his study that sarcasm was used as a defense mechanism (p. 167) to save face but in this study Lara used it for fun and Francis used it because he was sure of his *solid friendship* with the other thus, indicating that values and beliefs are the determiners to how one communicates with the other (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005).

The use of anti-language (Halliday, 1976) was notable in this study. Participants used slang and swear words to express feelings of frustration, irritation, an exclamation of shock or happiness. As Ferri (2017) claimed, language is an identity marker to recognise the existence of a particular group and the use of slang and swear words identifies one such group. These words are relatable to one specific social group and may be opposed by the other social groups (Namvar & Ibrahim, 2014). Thus, the

various values the participants exhibited at times were influenced by the language of their times (Namvar & Ibrahim, 2014).

The participants' intentions revealed their interpersonal needs for their interactions both face-to-face and online (Schutz, 1958). FIRO (see Table 2.1) explains why someone gravitates towards others during an interaction. The reasons people are drawn towards each other in an interaction motivate the speakers to use certain language based on their beliefs and the language use is value-laden as the findings have shown.

In the blended learning environment, the participants had the opportunity to be spontaneous with language use in the face-to-face sessions and had the time to provide written forum entries for their online discussion. All 5 participants were spontaneous and at times informal with the oral sessions. However, in the written sessions only Francis and Julie claimed that the language use was similar to the oral sessions because they interpreted forum discussion as informal. The other 3 participants viewed anything written as formal indicating that perception matters of how one perceives written to oral as the findings indicate. However, Kimmy and Lara both resorted to the use of emoticons to humanise their thoughts and feelings (Stark & Crawford, 2015; Bamberg, 1997) together with Francis and Julie. Nadia remained steadfast with her decision that all written forms even online discussion forums required to be formal language. It mattered how individual participants addressed what is formal or informal to them and their language use reflected it.

Values influence how one should behave (Robb, Barrett, Komaromy, & Rogers, 2004) and these behaviours include the manner language is used in an interaction. This study has presented its findings based on 8 weeks of classroom observation and forum entries. The rich data has revealed many words and phrases discussed earlier in the chapter. The participants' justification of words and phrases used in their interactions indicated that they used them based on their values or beliefs. Their validity suggests a value from Schwartz's Basic Human Values as shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: The presence of Schwartz' social and personal values in each participant

Participant	Social values	Schwartz' value	Personal values	Schwartz' value
Nadia	Being humble	Humility value	Being assertive	Power: dominance value
	Being polite	Conformity: interpersonal value	Capable	Achievement value
	Being respectful	Conformity: interpersonal value	Self-satisfying and gratifying	Hedonism value
	Being concern	Universalism: concern value		
	Being inclusive	Social security value		
	Use of slang	Tradition value		
	To agree	Conformity: interpersonal value		
	To encourage	Benevolence caring value		
Francis	Being polite	Conformity: interpersonal value	Being assertive	Self-direction: thought value
	Being courteous	Conformity: interpersonal value	Use of sarcasm	Security: personal value
	Being respectful	Conformity: interpersonal value	Being assertive	Power: dominance value
	Being open-minded	Universalism: tolerance value		

	Being inclusive To agree Use of slang To encourage	Social security value Conformity: interpersonal value Tradition value Benevolence – caring value		
Lara	Being respectful Being inclusive Being polite Use of slang Use of sarcasm To agree To encourage Being structured	Conformity: interpersonal value Social security value Conformity: interpersonal value Tradition value Security: personal value Conformity: interpersonal value Benevolence –caring value Conformity: rules value	Being assertive Use of repetition Use of repetition Being assertive	Self-direction: thought value Self-direction: thought value Stimulation value Power: dominance value
Kimmy	Being respectful Being humble Being tolerant Being inclusive Being polite Use of slang To agree To encourage Being structured	Conformity: interpersonal value Humility value Universalism: tolerance value Social security value Conformity: interpersonal value Tradition value Conformity: interpersonal value Benevolence value Conformity: rules value	Use of repetition Capable	Self-direction: thought value Achievement value
Julie	Being humble Being polite	Humility value Conformity: interpersonal value	Use of repetition Being assertive	Self-direction: thought value Self-direction:

	Being open-minded	Universalism: tolerance value		thought value
	Being inclusive	Social security value		
	To agree	Conformity: interpersonal value		
	Use of slang	Tradition value		

Table 4.10 categorises all the participants' values identified based of their language use in this study into social and personal values which are derived from Schwartz' Basic Human Values Theory (Schwartz, 1992; 2012). All them exhibited more social values than personal values through their language use, indicating that both modes of interactions induced more social values to emerge, a finding similar to that of Rovai and Jordan (2004).

Among the 10 of Schwartz' social values, only 8 values emerged in this study and they were humility, caring (benevolence), interpersonal (conformity), rules (conformity), tolerance (universalism), concern (universalism), societal security and tradition. However, the predominant values that were exhibited in this 8 weeks of study were that of interpersonal values, indicating the importance of courtesy, politeness, respect and being agreeable during social interactions. The 2 social values that did not surface in this study were dependability (benevolence) and nature (universalism). This does not signify that the participants do not have these values in them, as the context or situation requiring the language use pertaining to these values did not arise in this study.

On the other hand, among the 9 of Schwartz's personal values, 6 values surfaced in this study and they were power (dominance), achievement, self-direction thought,

personal security, hedonism and stimulation. Self-direction (thought) value emerged in 4 out of 5 participants which shows that these participants exercised and exhibited autonomy and independence during their social interactions. Face, resources (power) and self-direction (action) values of the remaining Schwartz' personal values were not identified in this study. Similarly, there is no indication that the participants are lacking in these values as the opportunity to exhibit these values through their language use did not arise in this study.

As such, all the values listed in Table 4.9 were identified based on the participants' language use during face-to-face and online interactions. This indicates that words and phrases can either reflect the participants' social or personal values depending on their intentions and motivation for the choice of vocabulary. However, each participant portrayed more social values than personal values during interactions which suggest that the participants were aware of social values in a social interaction thus, choosing words and phrases accordingly or using them unconsciously to communicate their intentions. There were instances when some participants claimed the importance of other values than those listed in Table 4.9. However, their claims were not reflected in the language use in either modes of interaction. Perhaps, they subscribed to these values but they (values) were not substantiated in their language use and as such, these values were not identified nor elaborated in this chapter.

4.11 Summary

The findings and data analysis of this study were presented in this chapter based on the research questions. The first Research Question was to identify the words and phrases that reflected values in students' written and oral communication sessions. Everyday, simple, and ordinary language that expressed value connotations were chosen solely by the researcher. However, these chosen words underwent 2 stages of inter-rating before the themes were decided upon. A total of 12 values were identified whereby some participants used the same exact word that reflected the same values. However, there were participants who exhibited the same values using different words. Other features that reflected values were part of the findings like the use of emoticons, use of P/S and signature and non-verbal communication.

The second Research Question was intended to justify the reasons for using the words and phrases identified. The reasons which were the findings for this research question revealed the values subscribed by the participants. The findings showed that every participant exhibited some values that were social focus while others were personal focus. Still, the personal values played an essential role in the social interactions. The participants' justifications reflected the values described by Schwartz' Basic Human Value Theory. In addition, other findings of language use like sarcasm, short direct question and replies as well as the use of different verb forms reflected values too.

The purpose of the third Research Question was to establish if the participants were aware of the values that emerged during the course of written and oral communication. The findings for this research question provided a range, showing the

participants from being fully aware to being oblivious towards the values they subscribed to. Participants who were fully aware of their values were sure and consistent with their justifications. The findings indicated that those who were cautious refrained from associating themselves to a specific value. There were also some participants who were unaware of some values or even some of their language use. The findings also showed that some participants were aware of some values in themselves but these values were not reflected in any of their ordinary language use.

The objective of Research Question four was to identify if there were influences of values in language in written and spoken communication. The findings showed that the participants were motivated to use the words and phrases discussed above because of the values that they subscribed to. All of them were motivated to use language that highlighted social values, especially interpersonal values. However, they also exhibited a fair amount of personal values during the social interactions, but these values contributed to the communicative process.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is represented in four sections. The first section contributes to an overall summary of the study followed by the summary of the findings and their conclusions. Subsequent to this are the implications of the study and followed by recommendations for future research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

Values are ingrained in every individual and this study presents some insights to understand this individual and how values are reflected in the interactions within their social dimension. The objectives of this study were to explore the language use that reflect values among students in a blended learning environment through the four research questions as listed as follows:

RQ1: Which words and phrases show values in the students' written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?

RQ2: Why did the students use these words and phrases that express their values in these modes of communication?

RQ3: Were the students aware of any of their values while interacting in these modes of communication?

RQ4: How do the students' values influence the language used in written communication (online) and spoken (face-to-face) sessions?

Research Question 1 identified the words and phrases that reflected values subscribed by 5 participants during written communication (online) and spoken communication (face-to-face) which was for the duration of one semester. Research Question 2 furnished the participants' rationale for using these words and phrases in the oral and written communication. Research Question 3 reflected the participants' awareness of their values and if they were conscious of their choice of words/phrases used when communicating. Finally, Research Question 4 examined and consolidated the roles values played in impacting the language used in both written and spoken communication.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The findings showed a distinct tendency by the five participants to use similar words and phrases in their communication both through online written forums and face-to-face oral sessions. However, there were also words/phrases that were used exclusively by individual participants. For Research Question 1 the findings are as follows:

- i. Value that were identified corresponded to Schwartz' values. Being polite, was the value portrayed through the use of the words and phrases like *sorry*, *but then*, *just like*, *I think* and *thank you*. *Give it a shot*, *pretty good*, and *that's*

good suggested being encouraging while *I think, I agree, I don't feel, are you* and *give it a shot* implied one being assertive. Being courteous which overlaps politeness was seen through *sorry* and *hello* while *we* and *you guys* pointed to the value of being inclusive. Words and phrases that expressed agreement were *true, right, okay, cool, me too,* and *yeah* while being respectful was denoted through phrases like *kind of* and *I guess*. The findings indicated the word that showed humility was *sorry*. The chosen words in spoken or written modes exhibited the tendency to reflect interpersonal, humility, social security, and caring values based on the speaker's motivation which is in alignment with Schwartz' Basic Human Values (1992, 2012).

- ii. The 'how' and 'why' participants expressed something in their communication suggest different values based on the speakers' intentions. As such, there exists a distinct connection between an intentional action of saying a word and moral concerns, which is pragmatic and not semantic, supporting the views of Adams and Steadman (2004).
- iii. Participants used different phrases/words that reflected the values they subscribed to. However, there were similar words/phrases that indicated a shared value. Among the many words/phrases, *I think* and *we* were the only two that were used by all the 5 participants in which *I think* reflected the value of being polite and *we* was for being inclusive. This suggests that neither the vocabulary nor values that they subscribed to were exclusive to an individual participant. *I think* was also used to show assertiveness indicating that one

word can reflect different values depending on how and why it is used signifying the importance of context in communication.

- iv. The repetition of words like *same, same, same* or *why, why, why* was a feature limited to face-to-face communication and did not surface in the written communication. It was used for personal reasons, which shows that the values subscribed to were favouring personal values and did not have a social focus.
- v. The emerging use of slang and swear words like *shit, hell, cool, pretty* and *damn* indicate the present generation's language use during interactions with each other. The use of these words appears natural in the participants' communication and may not be congruent with how other generations' use language. This signals that every generation might have a few vocabulary that is inclined to bring more meaning exclusive to them, thus creating a social identity for themselves (Halliday, 1978).
- vi. Participants opted to use words/phrases that highlighted their ability and it was done on purpose for solely personal reasons of self-gratification. These words/phrases were in the online written forum entries and it reflected personal values.

Research Question 2 investigated the motivations and rationale for the participants' usage of the words and phrases identified in Research Question 1. The analysis of the data led to the following findings:

- i. The words and phrases used reflected the participants' values with some being social focus like interpersonal, humility, tradition, tolerant, benevolence, and social security values while others being personal focus. The values the speakers subscribed to in a social context may not focus on their relationship to society. These words may concentrate on what is pertinent to them alone thus displaying a more inwardly focused values giving rise to personal values like hedonism, power dominance, self-direction in thought, stimulation and achievement values. In a social context, these personal values play a vital role in social interactions depending on their communicative needs.
- ii. Occasionally, the values revealed in the oral setting were similar to the ones revealed in the written setting. Some values emerged in a consistent manner during spoken and written sessions like *we* for being inclusive and *I think* for being polite. Though some words exhibiting values were the same on both oral and written modes, other word choices were personal to each and everyone's need, intentions and preference indicative of their own values.
- iii. The presence of politeness in both spoken and written sessions for the duration of the study indicates that participants are conscious of a social setting and the importance of politeness during communication. A distinguishing fact was the use of one phrase, *I think*, which was popular with all 5 of the participants and their reason for using was similar. It was to inform group members that their opinions were not the only correct ones and that they were open and willing to listen to other point of views. Politeness was also reflected through other individual words and phrases of the participants' choice, which confirms the

role of politeness strategies as vital in communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

- iv. The findings revealed that not all the participants practised social cues in their spoken sessions, though they play an essential role in the communication within a social context. The participant who did not use it during the spoken sessions employed them (social cues) in the written sessions signalling the awareness of these social cues but opting not to use them when speaking.
- v. Family upbringing played a vital role in the use of words that reflected values. This inherently supports Hebel (1999) that values are handed down from generation to generation. This study also identified the role of media as another attributing factor that influenced the speakers to uphold certain values.

The findings for Research Question 3 affirm if the participants were aware of their values. The analysis of the data led to the following findings:

- i. The findings revealed that some participants were aware of the values that they uphold whereas others were unaware of some values. Participants who were aware of the values they subscribed to claimed they were 'handed down' by family, especially the parents concurring with Hebel (1999). Participants who were unaware of some values reflected in their language use, employed words spontaneously. They did not give much thought to language usage and it contributed to their ignorance of their values.

- ii. Based on the findings, one participant was aware that values change over time according to situations. This notion supports Pratt's (2005) claim that one can decide the values he/she wishes to live by. In doing so, the participant is conscious of his/her values as he/she chooses the words and phrases to explain his/her thoughts, belief, and intentions, which reflect his/her values.
- iii. The findings showed that participants being aware of their values are related to society's perception of them and it was instrumental in their choice of language use. The need to preserve their image was a factor of consideration for the words and phrases used in both their oral and written modes of interactions.
- iv. The findings revealed that participants were more aware of values in their oral communication rather than their written. The oral communication was spontaneous with the use of everyday, simple language. As for the written aspect, participants had more time to think and as such, the language used was more formal and contained more content. Therefore, their formal written language use did not reflect as many values as the spontaneous oral communication did.

The findings for Research Question 4 revealed how values influence the language use in the oral and written communication sessions.

- i. Values played a major role in the participants' choice of words and phrases. The findings revealed that these values were more distinct in the oral session

compared to the written session. This is due to the spontaneous nature of the oral sessions especially during intense discussions. On the contrary, during the written sessions, participants have the time to choose the word of their choice and are able to correct their mistakes if the need arises, a factor that is missing during the oral sessions.

- ii. The findings revealed that all participants vocalised words and phrases with an intention during the oral sessions, and it aligns with Malle and Knobe (1997). These intentions permeate the participants' social interaction, which is reflected in the language use and this is associated to values and moral considerations. Words and phrases that consistently appear in the course of communication are verbalised or written for a reason and have their respective functions for what the participants wish to express and the basis for it.
- iii. The findings showed the presence of identical words or phrases used in both the modes of communications but reflect different values depending on the speaker's motivation. The participants were aware that their language played a vital role to show that words may mean the same semantically but are used for different reasons known to them.
- iv. Based on the findings, social focus values were not the predominant values in a social interaction as personal focus values also played an equally important role in directing the path of communication. It showed that participants with personal values also functioned and communicated effectively in a social interaction.

- v. The findings in this study revealed that the participants' use of sarcasm showed that cordial relationship in a social context can function despite the participants being sarcastic. This was because a strong friendship bond embodies sarcasm as part a casual form of language use between them.

5.4 Conclusions

The conclusions of the findings for the four research questions on the examination of students' value systems in language in a blended learning environment are based on the findings on the motivations for their everyday language use and the analysis of them in a social setting. The conclusions are as stated below:

- i. Students' use of language in the oral sessions depicted their beliefs and values based on their intentions. The oral sessions prompted the students to be spontaneous with each other, which allowed for language usage representing impromptu and casual manner of communication. In contrast, the language use in the online written forum entries was more crafted to create a well-thought out opinion that is more academically inclined and less spontaneous thus, providing a contrast to the language use in the oral sessions.
- ii. The motivations or the rationale for the students' choice of vocabulary in the language play a vital role in determining the values subscribed by the students. The values that emerged from the students' language use were indictors of their values and their beliefs which makes them fundamentally them by showcasing the essence of their individuality. Since the study was set in a

social context, many of the values that surfaced were focused towards society or another person. Moreover, the values like benevolence, tolerance, concern, tradition, interpersonal, rules, humility, and social security that emerged in this study represented those that were advocated by Schwartz (2012) in the social focus.

- iii. The findings revealed that occasionally, the choice of words and phrases differed because of personal preference to a certain vocabulary in the language use. Though, the study was set in a social context, not every value epitomised social focus as there were many values that suggested personal focus like self-direction in thought, stimulation, hedonism, dominance power, personal security and achievement values (Schwartz, 2012). These represent equal importance to one's beliefs and principles as they help mold the individual's value system.
- iv. The findings in this study illustrated that students were aware of the values that they subscribe to. As such, this awareness prompted them to choose the words and phrases in accordance to their value system. The students' awareness to their values was credited to their upbringing and the role family, particularly the parents who played a role in educating, promoting, and instilling these values in them. However, there were values that the students were unaware of. Thus, it is worthwhile noting that there exists times when students use vocabulary without any knowledge that it reflects some form of value, indicating that they were unconscious of their values.

- v. The findings in this study revealed that any form of communication displays the values instilled in the communicator. It is categorically present in oral, written, face-to-face, online, non-verbal communication and even through symbols. The presence of the participants' values is exhibited mainly in the language use and this is because language relays thoughts and binds the motivations to these thoughts.
- vi. The findings revealed that values are present even when one is being sarcastic. It is a misconception that being sarcastic is rude and does not contribute to cordial relationship in a society as the findings from this study has shown otherwise. Based on the findings, friendships embodying social values like being respectful, being concern, showing care and cooperation is a vital element so that the language of sarcasm will not have adverse effects.
- vii. The findings highlighted that participants viewed writing as formal, even if it was an online forum entry. As such, there was a lack of values emerging from the language use in the written sessions in comparison to the oral sessions. On the other hand based on the findings, the oral sessions comprised of formal language, ordinary, every day language and informal language consisting of slang and swear words. The values emerging were from the ordinary, everyday language use, as well as the informal language use.
- viii. Based on the findings, participants claimed that their language use in the written session was formal. Still, they added symbols and emoticons to induce

informality. This indicates the participants' need for informality in their language use regardless if it is written or spoken.

5.5 Implications of the Study

The findings in this study have contributed to the understanding that students' language use reflected their value system in a blended learning environment. This study has yielded findings that indicate values subscribed by participants manifest in their language use. The findings concur with and provide both theoretical and practical implications for all who are in the field of communication in general, and especially for educators. The implications are as follows:

- i. For those in the field of communication
 - a) This study has shown that values subscribed by people can be identified through their choice of vocabulary through their interactions with each other where intentions play a main role. Underpinned by Basic Human Value theory (Schwartz, 1992), the values emerge in the choice of words people use as these words play a vital role in expressing their intentions.
 - b) The study establishes that interactions especially spoken ones involve interpersonal communication, which requires one to express inclusion, need, and affection. These are the premise of William Schutz' (1958) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO) while Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham's (1955) JOHARI window communication

model points to the quality of relationship in the social interactions. They reflect the importance of context in communication to perceive one's intentions and awareness, and how forthcoming they are which will facilitate better interaction among people in general.

- c) The findings in this study show that oral communication is more susceptible to exhibiting the presence of values in an individual when compared to written communication. This is because oral communication is spontaneous thus, speakers would probably have lesser time to plan their thoughts and choose their words and phrases in the language use appropriately due to time constraints.
- d) The language use in the written communication indicated fewer values compared to oral communication. Non-verbal communication also indicated fewer values than oral communication. The findings did not show inherent values like politeness for instance between the 2 modes of communication in all 5 participants. It was because participants were aware of how and what they wanted to express in the written communication and their choice of words reflected their thoughts, beliefs and values at that point of time. It is possible that since participants had more time to formulate their thought process as well as organise their language into written form in a prudent manner using vocabulary geared towards content.

- e) The use of emoticons or symbols in the written communication can either portray people's feelings or provide misleading information of their real feelings. In essence, although their use provides a general overview of one's state of mind, they also offer multiple interpretations of the users' thoughts, feelings and intentions, which are unclear without clarifications.
- f) The study showed that the use of sarcasm, hedging and bantering are commonly used in a cordial interaction because the speakers have established a basis for their friendship. It gives them the licence to use them. This implies that when a foundation for a relationship is entrenched, it allows sarcasm to come in play without having an adverse effect in that particular relationship.
- g) It is to be noted that in an interaction, values that emerge do not necessarily fixate in social focus. The people's values can concentrate on personal focus and yet they can be involved in a meaningful interaction. Therefore, people who do not exhibit social cues during an interaction may demonstrate other values that are personal in nature, and these emerging personal values can also contribute to a social interaction.
- h) Online written interactions share some similarities to face-to-face interactions especially with informal use of language and the use of emoticons. At present with the rise in digital and technological

advancements, more people might resort to online written interactions. As such, one's values through his/her language use will determine how significant and consequential the interactions will be.

ii. For educators

- a) Words used in communication reflect the speakers' values and in view of this, teachers and educators will have to be cautious with their choice of vocabulary when they are communicating with their students. This is because instilling and imparting morals and values come under the purview of educators in an educational institution. Since it has been established in this study that values can be learnt, educators are the best people to inculcate values in students because these students are in school for the most part of their first 20 years.
- b) The findings of this study have indicated that the words used by the participants can be either the same or different to show a certain value but the context is imperative. In line with this, educators especially in the fields of language and social sciences should be open to different interpretations other than their own in order to understand their students and to cater to their needs.
- c) Though family initiates molding the values in a person at home, the findings also indicated that there existence of other external factors that contribute to the development of values. As such, teacher training institutions and universities offering education, psychology and

counseling degrees should incorporate a course based on the communication models of Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO) by William Schutz (1958) and Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham's (1955) JOHARI window to understand the communication needs. It will also be in the best interest of the students if teachers and counselors are exposed to the knowledge of understanding the speakers' intentions and perspective.

- d) This study on language use reflecting values was conducted on two modes; the spoken and the written. The findings expounded that the spoken mode revealing one's values more than the written mode. Virtually, teachers and counselors would need to focus on students' spoken language more than written one as it is inclined to be impromptu and instinctive and as such reflective of their values and conducting more classroom discussions would be a helpful activity in instilling values and building character in their students.
- e) Educators who use blended learning approach for teaching have the means to enhance teaching and learning whereby students would participate in discussions both online and face-to-face. This would facilitate more interactions, thus creating an avenue for educators to monitor and intervene when necessary but above all, moderate and guide the tone of the interactions.

iii. For higher learning institutions

- a) The use of technology in these institutes can promote online interactions and discussions both in synchronous and asynchronous manner. This is can be the first step any institutions partake in order to promote more classroom communication beyond the physical classroom or lecture hall.
- b) Blended learning is an approach that is more than just a pedagogical method as it can be used as a means to develop social values among the students. It is considered as a setting that provides the platform for more social interactions. In view of this, institutions should be more prepared to use this approach and provide sufficient training to their lecturers on how to manage the discussions to ensure, that they can become active agents towards the developments of values in their students.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Studies

This study has contributed to the understanding of students' values reflected in their language use in a blended learning environment. As the study progressed, a few areas surfaced as suggested areas for future studies. The recommendations are as follows:

- a) This study was on 5 participants' language use during interactions that reflected values. Some words and phrases indicating values were identified based on the underpinning Theory of Basic Human Values

by Schwartz (1992, 2012). It is recommended to conduct a similar study on words identified in this study, in a few other institutions to examine if these words still reflect the same values portrayed in this study or if the words reflect other values.

- b) The findings showed that most of the values in this study emerged during the face-to-face sessions rather than the online written forum sessions. There was a lack of participation among students to engage on the online forum discussions. The tutor could play a more significant role in moderating the online forum to promote more discussions. A study with active tutor participation may yield more discussions and other values may emerge.
- c) The presence of values emerged more in the oral discussions than in the written form because the students were more engaged orally in class. However, this study limits to only one class discussion per week for eight weeks. As such, only a few values were identified. It will be worthwhile to examine a longitudinal study on the same participants in different settings and contexts for it might generate a more wholesome view of the students' value system.
- d) In this study, the face-to-face interaction was synchronous and the online forum discussion was asynchronous. It is suggested that a future study be carried out with both face-to-face and online forum discussion in a synchronous mode because it would reduce the time taken by

participants to formulate their thoughts and craft their ideas in the written mode. As such, this setting could contribute an avenue to compare the emerging values in language use in both oral as well as written in real time.

5.7 Overall Summary

When one speaks of values, “the basic approach will not be to ask what values are in the real world” (Jackendoff, 2006, p. 376), rather it is how people visualise values mentally. It is abstract and generally, it is not directly obvious. Words have multiple interpretations but this research revealed the students’ values that were reflected in their language use in both face-to-face oral and online written sessions. Since the study was set in a social context many of the values reflected in the language use were social values. However, personal values also emerged and they contributed to the communicative process. This study not only provides new knowledge in values reflected in language use but also serves, as a foundation upon which future studies in this area is possible.

My task, which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel--it is, before all, to make you see.

Joseph Conrad

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APPENDIX A

Online Forum Questions

Week 1

by Tutor- Thursday, 1 October 2015, 5:46 PM

Do you agree or disagree with the Cat's moral of the story? Give your reasons.

Week 2

by Tutor - Thursday, 8 October 2015, 4:35 PM

This short story has strong feminist undertones. What do you think?

Week 3

by Tutor - Thursday, 15 October 2015, 5:01 PM

What is the story's general tone? Give me examples from the story to support your answer (diction, character, excerpts from the story) and DECIDE, as a group, the best answer to this question.

33 words

Week 4

by Tutor - Thursday, 22 October 2015, 5:31 PM

Present your findings here (summary, how to identify it and examples from the stories). Students from other groups are encouraged to leave questions/comments if they have any. The point is to ensure that everyone GETS it.

37 words

Week 5

by Tutor - Thursday, 5 November 2015, 3:25 PM

What is the importance of **IMAGERY** in the short stories you have read in this module? Support your views with reason and examples. Feel free to agree or disagree with your course mates.

33 words

Week 6

by Tutor - Thursday, 12 November 2015, 10:00 PM

There are a number of references to **EYES** in Extract 6 and 7, suggesting the use of a motif. What do eyes symbolise and how does it contribute to the general themes of the story? Feel free to agree or disagree with your group members as long as you have the supporting details.

53 words

Week 7

by Tutor - Thursday, 19 November 2015, 11:03 PM

Read the extract on page 190. Based on all extracts from *Of Mice and Men* that you have read, respond to the following statement:

Lennie Small is a bad guy and a menace to society. Agree or disagree?

Support your answers by referring to John Steinbeck's non-teleological perspective.
48 words

Week 8

by Tutor - Monday, 30 November 2015, 8:25 AM

“The world breaks everyone, and afterward, many are strong at the broken places.”
How do you relate this quote by Hemingway to the story's themes? Respond in no less than 50 WORDS. Let's start this discussion!

APPENDIX B

Classroom Observation Checklist

Group:

Venue:

Date:

	During the group session	Yes	No	Comments/Observations
1.	Students sat in their group the whole time			
2.	Speak slowly and clearly			
3.	Keep the discussion focused			
4.	Maintain an open atmosphere for discussion			
5.	Practice active listening (e.g., did not interrupt & paid attention)			
6.	Show responsiveness to the topic			
7.	Managing turn taking			
8.	Participants monitor effectiveness: - Focus on task - Non-verbal support			
9.	Participants managing communication breakdowns: - Managing long pauses - Disagreements			
10.	Participants have the opportunities to engage in structured conversations with the tutor			
11.	Interruptions from outside class			
12.	Equipment problems			
13.	Unusual group behavior			

Adapted from US Agency for International Development (USAID) Group Discussion Supervision Checklist (2011) and (Young, 2006)

APPENDIX C

Sample Preliminary Questions for Semi-structured Interview

1. What values do you think you subscribe to? Please elaborate.
2. Why did you mean when you said this word/phrase (...) during your group discussion?
3. What was your intention for using this word/phrase (...) repeatedly in the course of your communication?
4. Please explain if you meant the same as (...) when you said this phrases/words (...)?
5. Why did you use this word/phrase (...) in your online forum?
6. Do you think you show the same values during the spoken as well as written sessions? Yes/No. Can you elaborate?
7. Were you aware of all the values? Yes/No. Give your reasons.
8. Who or what do you think plays a major role in influencing your values? Do explain further.

APPENDIX D

Sample of Interview Transcript

Interview date: 09122015

Interview duration: 1 hour 20 min

R= Researcher H38= Participant Francis

R: First and foremost, thank you so much for volunteering.

H38: Okay. [F/I/1]

R: Can you tell me what's your IELTS band or did take IELTS?

H38: IELTS. [F/I/2]

R: Or any English requirement.

H38: To get me into this course? [F/I/3]

R: Yeah.

H38: I am not sure umm the IELTS was but I got ummm I got A+ in SPM for English and umm I think that's enough to get me into the foundation. [F/I/4]

R: Okay.

H38: After foundation I just progressed into other majors. [F/I/5]

R: Okay. Have you ever heard of blended learning before this?

H38: Blended learning? [F/I/6]

R: Have you heard of blended learning? From the way you look, it seems like you have not heard of this word before.

H38: I have never...[F/I/7]

R: So you have never heard of blended learning?

H38: No. [F/I/8]

R: What we were doing in class, what the tutor is teaching, and discussion online, that is blended learning.

H38: Ohhh. [F/I/9]

R: You blend face-to-face and online sessions.

H38: And online. [F/I/10]

R: Since you've never heard about it. Now you know, what do you think about it?

H38: Ohh okay so, having classes in real life and also online? [F/I/11]

R: Mmhmm.

APPENDIX E

Sample of Tutorial Transcript

Recording date: 01102015

Recording duration: 33 minutes

D18 = Student B

D19 = Student A

D20 = Nadia

D21 = Student X

D22 = Student Y

D23 = Student C

D20: So um.. We're on to symbols now right? Did you guys that it was pretty symbolic or was it like kind of like out there? Or.. [N/O/T1/1]

D18: It depends, are we looking at this from the surface value or are we going to take a mirror and do a huge metaphor of everything?

D20: I think when it comes to symbols, it is usually metaphorical so it is fair to look at it that way. But at first I don't really understand this story until I get at the end and it was like "Moral, by the cat." [N/O/T1/2]

(laughter)

D20: Okay, yaaa, I get it now. I wasn't entirely sure what was going on so.. I did at the end cuz I was like "woaaahh", so yeahh.. [N/O/T1/3]

D18: Do you think the mirror or the painting or the whole that they look into has any other symbolic meaning aside from the one, the moral given by the cat?

D21: Just their imagination, just to see their self look.

D20: Sorry, what did you say? [N/O/T1/4]

D19: Some people may say it sounds too deep though. When you're looking at it, you're looking at your inner self, your reflection.

D20: Yeah, that was what I was thinking as well. They look at it and like all they see is something else right? [N/O/T1/5]

APPENDIX F

Sample Forum Entries

by Julie - Sunday, 4 October 2015, 11:52 PM

The way I understand the Cat's moral is something along the line of "You can see what you want in anything you look at (the text in the moral), if you are to ignore/look past what is explicit. [J/W/F1/1]

However, just because you don't see something, doesn't mean it isn't there". [J/W/F1/2]

In other words, you can believe what you want based on your interpretation, but at the same time, you can't gloss over what is obvious. Does this make sense to you guys? [J/W/F1/3]

I agree with the Cat, briefly because I find it true that everything (truth, knowledge, what the REAL moral of the story is, etc) is relative to each person, and sometimes people stick so close to their readings of things that they often miss what is obviously there. [J/W/F1/4]

Personally, I've encountered people that believe in one thing so much that they lose sight of the bigger picture, much like the animals in Clemen's Fable. [J/W/F1/5]

There are many other readings possible though, so I'd like to hear what the rest of you think! [J/W/F1/6]

by Julie - Wednesday, 14 October 2015, 11:48 PM

I think the feminist undertones is seen in the way that the story flips the gender roles. [J/W/F2/1]

In a way it's trying to say that this should be normal, and if it makes you uncomfortable, you need to ask yourself why. [J/W/F2/2]

APPENDIX G

Interview Protocol for the Study

1. Preparation for the interview

- Review interview checklist
- Review aspects of consent form

2. During the interview

- Begin by asking basic background questions like about their English Language qualifications, knowledge on the use of blended learning and the values they subscribe to.
- Start asking about words and phrases identified from tutorial 1, which is in week 1, and proceed till week 8. Skip any tutorials the participant was absent.
- Begin with easy questions and move on to more in-depth questions based on the participants' answers.
- After asking questions on words and phrases based on the 8 weeks of tutorials, repeat the questioning process for the online forum entries beginning from week 1.
- Allow the participants to refer to their group tutorial transcriptions for weeks 1-8 as well as 8 weeks of forum entries to refresh their memory.

3. After the interview.

- The participants will verify the findings reported based on the interviews.

APPENDIX H

Results from Kappa Statistics for Validation

Stage 1

Francis

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.828	.083	9.296	.000
N of Valid Cases		125			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Nadia

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.793	.075	8.006	.000
N of Valid Cases		101			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Stage 2

Francis

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.818	.079	9.508	.000
N of Valid Cases		135			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Nadia

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.735	.079	7.826	.000
N of Valid Cases		112			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

APPENDIX I

Biographical Data of Inter-raters

Inter-rater 1

He is currently attached to one of the private universities in Malaysia as the Post Graduate Programme Director. After having taught in 3 public schools for 21 years since 1979, he obtained his Doctoral degree in TESL from UPM in 2000. His areas of research interest cover TESL, classroom practice, teacher training, and Literature in English.

Inter-rater 2

She is a senior lecturer in one of the private universities in Malaysia and obtained her Doctoral degree in Tourism and Hospitality Management from Taylor's University in 2015. Her work experience includes 8 years of industrial and 5 years of teaching. Her research interest areas are tourist behaviour, gender studies in tourism, virtual tourism, host and guest relationship and social capital in tourism.

Inter-rater 3

She is currently a senior teacher in a public school in Malaysia but has been a lecturer with a teacher training college. She received her Doctoral degree in Educational Psychology from University Malaya in 2004. Her areas of interest regarding research are classroom teaching, teacher reflection, implementation of multiple intelligences in classroom teaching, student engagement and leadership skills in teachers.

APPENDIX J

Audit Trail

1. Identification of Participants

- Identified 5 participants based on the online presence, attendance and classroom participants.

2. Data Collection

- Observed participants in the class.
- Recorded their group discussions.
- Transcribed the group discussions.
- Monitored the participants' online posting entries.
- Downloaded participants' forum entries.
- Conducted a 1 – 1.5 hours long interview with 5 participants.
- Transcribed the interview session.

3. Data analysis

- Engaged intensive reading of data from online forum entries, tutorial and interview transcripts to identify the words and phrases that reflect values.
- Decided on a method of coding process guided by the research questions.
- Started coding process.
- Verified coding process.
- Engaged inter-raters for Stage 1 for dependability of the coding process.

- Revised framework for coding
- Engaged inter-rater for Stage 2 for another round of dependability of the coding process.
- Created themes based on the categories identified.
- Verified the themes
- Consulted the participants for clarification (if the need arose).

4. Report writing

- Organised information with reference to the research questions.
- Drew conclusions based on the findings.
- Wrote the findings of the study.
- Verified the findings with the participants individually.
- Prepared conclusions of the study.
- Edited, proofread, and fine-tuned report.

APPENDIX K

Ms Shantini S Karalasingam
School of English

12 October 2015



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Dear Shantini,

FASS Research Ethics Committee Review

Thank you for submitting your proposal on "**An Examination of Students' Value Systems Reflected in Their Language Use in Blended Learning Environment**". This proposal has now been reviewed by the FASS Research Ethics Committee to the extent that it is described in your submission.

I am happy to tell you that the Committee has found no problems with your proposal and able to give approval.

If there are any significant changes or developments in the methods, treatment of data or debriefing of participants, then you are obliged to seek further ethical approval for these changes.

We would remind all researchers of their ethical responsibilities to research participants. If you have any concerns whatsoever during the conduct of your research then you should consult those Codes of Practice relevant to your discipline and contact the FASS Research Ethics Committee.

Independently of the Committee procedures, there are also responsibilities for staff and student safety during projects. Some information can be found in the Safety Office pages of the University web site. Particularly relevant may be:

Section 6 of the *Safety Handbook*, which deal with working away from the University,
<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/handbook/general-precautions.aspx>

Specific safety guidance on:

Fieldwork <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/documents/fieldwork-policy.pdf>

Lone working <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/documents/lone-working.pdf>

Overseas travel/work <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/documents/overseas-travel.pdf>

Risk management <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/policies-and-guidance/guides-and-support.aspx>

Responsibility for compliance with the University/National Data Protection Policy and Guidance also lies with the principal investigator or project supervisor.

The FASS Research Ethics Committee approval does not alter, replace or remove those responsibilities, nor does it certify that they have been met.

Sincerely

Zaharom Nain

Professor Zaharom Nain

On behalf of the FASS Research Ethics Committee

The University of Nottingham
in Malaysia Sdn Bhd (473520 K)

