

VALUE, IDENTITY, & IDENTIFYING VALUE:
EXPLORING META-COGNITIVE VALUE IN SLA CONTEXTS

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
GRADUATE INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM IN SECOND LANGUAGE
ACQUISITION AND TEACHING

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2019

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

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Acknowledgements:

There are many persons whom have believed in me and whom have caused me to believe in myself through this trying period of development and sacrifice, and it is to those individuals whom I wish to offer this meager thank you.

To my committee chair, my mentor, and now my colleague Dr. Suzanne Panferov Reese, my friend, advisor, and colleague Dr. Nicholas Ferdinandt, and to my committee member and mentor Dr. Mary Wildner-Bassett, I would like to offer each of you my sincerest thanks for believing in me and both inspiring me and guiding me along the most difficult path in academe, the path which for most ends at A.B.D. Thank you for investing your time, your energy, and most of all for your compassion and wisdom. At many times you saw within me what I could not see within myself. You saw potential in a few flickers of inspiration which smoldered with and kindled and stoked until they grew into an unstoppable passion, and for that, I cannot thank you enough.

To Dr. Grace Fielder, I would like to finally let you know how much your instruction as inspired me to look beyond what is known, and to question every ounce of knowledge that is taken for granted. You have shown me truths which most may never be given the opportunity to comprehend. You have shown me that language, identity, and the world itself is a gossamer dream which is only limited by the boundaries of the mind, and thanks to you, those shackles have clattered to the floor many years ago.

To Dr. Cecile McKee, I wish to thank you for looking past the exterior of my person way back in my first days at the university. You saw past the crew-cut and the ignorance and the insecurity of yet another non-traditional veteran student attending your lectures, and invested yourself in my academic experience, talking at length in office hours and probing me to think deeper than the surface level curriculum offered in undergraduate studies. You were the only professor who knew my name, and the only one from this university to recommend me for graduate school. None of this could have happened if it weren't for you and your support, and I will never forget your kindness to me back then.

To my friends, to those that have gone before me, to those that moved on and moved away, to those that I have lost and have gained back again, and to those who have been with me through the roughest parts, I want to thank you all for all you have put up with, and for understanding the sacrifices which were needed to come this far. I hope to see you all again and to thank you for your support and your sacrifices, so if not here, then in Valhalla where some are already waiting.

To my mother and to the father I have never known, to my departed aunt and to my grandfather, there is no way to describe the life I have led in your absence, the places I have been, the works I have wrought with mine own hands, the fears and doubts I have felt, the number of times I have been lost with no hope of being found, but I do hope that this achievement at least might work to redeem some of the years of absence and the heartache you must have all felt while the path to my future was being forged. I hope I have made you proud.

Dedication:

Yes, I have a lot of it. Thank you for noticing...

Biography:

Cody Dees was born in Texas and inherited the meager life of a subsistence farmer. Raised with his older brother, by a single mother. There was little prospect of college in his future despite his academic performance in his primary education. Striving for more than trade-skills and manual labor, Cody elected to serve in the United States Air Force in order to earn the right to attend college. Testing in the top percentile on all aptitude tests, he served for 6 years on active duty as a linguistic cryptologist.

It was his experience learning Korean language and culture at the prestigious Defense Language Institute that inspired him to pursue a double major in Linguistics and Anthropology. At the University of Arizona, Cody achieved his Bachelors, as well as a Master's in Applied Linguistics, and a PhD in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching all in the span of only 5 years.

Despite his accelerated academic advancements, upon completion of his Master's degree he began teaching English and Rhetorical Composition courses for the University of Arizona's English department. Applying unique insights from his own research in co-constructed learning, assessment practices, and learner identity, he was able to develop his own course curriculum which was later adopted in full by the English department and provided as a teacher training resource for all new and beginning within the department.

In addition to his studies and teaching Cody has also taken on several directorship roles with university affiliated programs, such as Alternative Breaks program in conjunction with Involve UA and the South Korea based Teaching English Abroad program in conjunction with the Office for Global Initiatives. These administrative experiences, along with his existing interest in curricular design lead Cody to pursue a certificate a of Language Program

Administration, in tandem with regular doctoral studies, in order to better prepare himself for his desired future in Language Program Administration.

With his diverse personal and educational background, Cody has been recognized nearly every semester for academic distinction and was awarded the highly competitive Critical Languages Scholarship from the State Department, for his dedication to foreign language in life and in academics.

Immediately upon graduation, Cody will begin work as a Language Program Coordinator, where he will be encouraged to demonstrate his prowess in pedagogical innovation, curricular design, and teacher training. However, the extent of his accomplishments can only be understood when realizing that Cody has done all this as a disabled veteran with no external support, and having both severe dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

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ABSTRACT:

The introduction of Social Cognitive Theory to the realms of pedagogy and language instruction was a pivotal point in developing the concept of learner identity in second language research. It became the cornerstone for cognition-based understandings of learner social dynamics, and perceptions of their own abilities and performance (Graham, 2006). It afforded us the avenue through which to recognize the impact of Self-Efficacy and Social Capital on both identity formation and learning (Mills, 2014). However, it is likely then, that we must attempt to engage with identity in a broader context of perception as opposed to action, if we are to explore higher levels of influence which may be affective of identity formation and performance. This research seeks to explore one potential influencer of identity development and performance; *value*.

As such, the following research questions were designed to guide this study:

- 1) How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields define Value as a meta-cognitive concept?
- 2) How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields identify links (if any) between Value and learner identity?
- 3) Should experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields identify links between Value and learner identity, how might these relationships be demonstrated?

As *value* is a highly abstract concept which has suffered from decades of educational silo-ing this Delphi study initially sought to identify value as an interdisciplinary concept, as a foundation for future value research. Additionally, key aspects of value as identified by study participants, demonstrated linkages to various aspects of identity formation, development and performance. These linkages were demonstrated in this study as multiplicitous and interactional *Value-Belief*

Systems which might be thought to represent individual and intersubjective world views, which have a profound effect on subjectivity and the development and maintenance of individual and group identity through ideals of *Belonging*.

The significance of such findings reside in their implications for Language Program Administration (LPA), Language Program Evaluation (LPE), Educational Culture, and Critical Pedagogy. As this study demonstrates, iterative value systems may be constructed in academic contexts to instill designer classroom cultures, which limit the subjectivity of learners regarding perceptions of what might constitute valuable education, student behaviors, and learner identity characteristics. This realization may of course aid in the development of language programs and best practices, but it also highlights a previously unrealized responsibility to preserve learner identities when considering stakeholder needs.

CHAPTER 01:

INTRODUCTION

Section 1.1.0 – INTRODUCTION

The introduction of Social Cognitive Theory to the realms of pedagogy and language instruction was a pivotal point in developing the concept of learner identity in second language research. It became the cornerstone for cognition-based understandings of learner social dynamics, and perceptions of their own abilities and performance (Graham, 2006). This understanding allowed us to grasp just how meaningful reflexive cognition could be in learner development, both individually and in the classroom. It afforded us the avenue through which to recognize the impact of Self-Efficacy and Social Capital on both identity formation and learning (Mills, 2014).

Despite this leap forward, Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) assert that these, and other such concepts in SLA are still in states of transformation and are reorienting themselves within SLA and pedagogical theory. One such evidence of this transition is the creation of transformative pedagogy, which blends critical and constructivist pedagogical understandings into an ‘activist’ pedagogy, which seeks to empower learners through critical introspection of ideals, beliefs, and values (Ukpokodu, 2009).

In contrast to this new value and value and identity driven pedagogy, there is a seeming over-representation of research which focuses on performance and/or behavioral evidences of identity, such as motivation, investment, and even social capital, in order to speculate about learner identity and what aids or inhibits its formation and performance (Carrio-Pastor & Mestre, 2013; Dörnyei & Otto, 1998; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Gardner, 1982; Heckhausen, 1991; Weninge et al., 2014). However, many researchers concerned with topics of motivation and attitude do

allude to there being something more that is responsible for the realization of individual action (Shahbaz & Yongbing, 2015; Kormos et al., 2011), alluding to ‘beliefs’ and ‘judgments’ as if they provided some insights into the impetus for the realization of identity or action.

Looking at the existing and burgeoning theories of pedagogy, such as transformative pedagogy, we find repetition in terms like identity, belief, and value, with explicit connections between these terms and areas of perception. It is likely then, that if we are to engage with and advance educational theory and practice, we must begin to engage with identity in broader context, such as those where the literature seems to imply that there is still more to be explored. Accordingly, we must begin to examine beliefs, judgments, values, etc. in order to assess the potential influences these forces may have.

One possible avenue for exploration may be *value*. Goldthwait (1985) in “Value, Language, and Life”, implies that value is intrinsic to human expression and perception, and when highly refined, *value*, as Goldthwait envisions it, can be described simply as a perceived truth (reality), which peoples and groups evaluate relative to subjective and arbitrary standards of their own (Goldthwait, 1985). If we consider this to be more than mere conjecture, Goldthwait’s interpretation places value on a unique conceptual pedestal in the continuum¹ of perception, belief², and behavior³ which already have strong links to certain conceptualizations of identity. Again, if this were the case, it might suggest that *value* may be a force which exists prior to individual and group interpretation, even existing prior to cognition.

¹ **Continuum:** a gradient of inordinate points existing between two conceptually distal poles

² **Belief:** the result of the perception of any value as existing at any point along the continuum of reflexivity

³ **Behavior:** any conscious or unconscious action or response.

Looking at areas of cultural transmission⁴ and the construction of subjectivity⁵, we also find that while explicitly being identified as ‘cultural values,’ these values do seem to influence⁶ those adopting or forming their own native cultures at a meta-cognitive level long before they are consciously understood. This would imply that at least in the context of cultural transmission, cultural values are seen as having an impact on the perceptions of the receiver, as these cultural world views work to shape and mold their individual perceptions of self and of self as a member of that group (Escobar, 1995; Bhabha, 1992).

However, should we divert our focus from the outward (culture⁷) and redirect our focus inward (self), we may easily realize that value⁸ has a much greater potential effect on identity than it might, if restricted to events of cultural transmission.

The “self,” at least in a post constructivist view is comprised of a simultaneous multiplicity of self-states, which are constantly being generated in relation perceived environment (physical, conceptual, and social). Additionally an individual may move within and between any number of “selves” which over time aids in the solidification of a core referential trajectory of ‘self’ (Horowitz, 2012; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; 2002). To put it more simply, however an individual identifies themselves at any given time, alone or with friends, at church or in school, is

⁴ **Transmission:** the projection of...

⁵ **Subjectivity:** the affordance of individual thought, withholding external influence(s)

⁶ **Influence:** a force which induces change or deviation from a truly vacuous autonomy.

⁷ **Culture:** a set of behaviors associated with a particular value system

⁸ **Value:** a conceptually isolatable perception of reality

determined through evaluation of whom they believe themselves to be in relation to the environment which they are perceived to be operating within.

Should we elect to believe in the psychological theories of self, we must also believe that identity is largely influenced by perception and by perception of environment. However, according to Escobar and Bhabha, as mentioned above regarding the construction of subjectivity, shared beliefs such as group cultures are highly influential over individual subjectivity regarding world views and belief systems⁹. Effectively, this means that adopting or otherwise receiving values influences in which way and to what extent individuals are able to perceive the world (environment) around them. Should this be the case, it would imply that value transmission and adoption¹⁰ effectively works to delineate the scope of identities possible for one sharing the same beliefs.

ESL/EFL and other language learning contexts have already explored areas of value transmission through language education. Neo-colonialism as an example is the negative aspect of values transmission which may occur in EFL/ESL contexts, transmitting implicit ideologies and reinforcing power dynamics through language instruction. Transformational pedagogy on the other hand, seeks to isolate implicit value and power dynamics and create an awareness of them within the learner's educational experience. This is thought to empower the learner by granting them awareness of otherwise implicit values imbedded within instruction (Foucault).

⁹ **Belief System:** the sum total of all perceived value-beliefs held by an entity

¹⁰ **Adoption:** the conscious or unconscious acquisition of...

As exemplified above, awareness of values being transmitted is also believed to have an impact on learner identity. By comparing neo-colonialism to transformative pedagogy, we see how values veiled from the conscious attention of the learner subject them to dominant ideologies, whereas becoming conscious of values is professed to elevate learners, granting them power over the otherwise implicit hegemony. Though these are two truly disparate examples of conscious and unconscious values transmission, they do aid in the identification of ‘awareness’ as a factor which may need to be explored when considering value as a larger scope of identity research.

In contexts of second language acquisition however, we realize that education is not the only influence in learner identity development, as culture and language both have been credited with aiding in the construction of learner subjectivity (Weedon, 1997 in Norton 2013). This means that the culture of education, as well as the culture of the language being instructed must be considered as ‘value-laden’ and potentially influential in learner identity development. However, studies have shown that certain values transmitted through instruction and educational culture have a positive impact on learning, in stark contrast to an intentionally value-stricken curriculum (Robinson & Campbell, 2010). Such values may or may not be made explicit to learners in pedagogy or academic environment, being something that learners consider consciously or adapt to subconsciously.

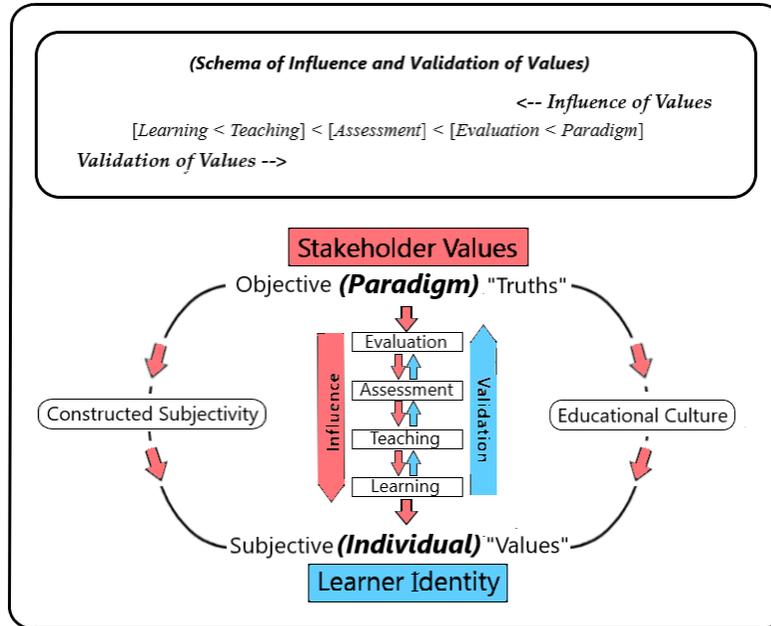
Specifically, in language education contexts, environmental factors contributing to the establishment of academic culture are artifacts such as the progression of the curriculum, explicit learning objectives, testing and assessments, and evaluations of what it means to be ‘proficient’ at various stages in a program. These effect not only how students perceive their instruction and

the value of the language being instructed (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Messick, 1996), but also their performance and membership in imagined communities of language users and learners (Pring, 1992).

This implies that value at all levels of language instruction may positively or negatively affect learner development, whether being transmitted explicitly from teacher to student, or implicitly as objective realities of programmatic expectations. Additionally, it seems that imagined community and group belonging¹¹ may also have an impact on value transmission, as these factors may influence the extent to which a student is willing or able to conform to shared values being established within the classroom culture.

In brief, we are aware that value may have positive or negative effects on learner identity development and academic performance, but we have yet to explore how exactly value behaves at different levels of cognition. Though there is much research on pedagogical values transmission and explicit values pedagogy, we have not defined value as a meta-cognitive concept in order to allow us to pursue the impact of value established at the programmatic level. However, it is likely that value in pedagogical contexts exhibits itself similarly to the following representation (*fig 1.1*).

¹¹ **Belonging:** the belief that an entity shares in some portion of an ordinate value system



(Figure 1.1 – hypothetical model created by Dees, Cody J. in working papers, 2017)

As such, it is the goal of this research to attempt to identify and define *paradigmatic*¹² value and any relationships it may have to identity and/or the formation of self-states. The identification of value used to construct the underlying concepts represented within the image above (fig 1.1), will primarily take place in chapter 02, the literature review, with the final definition being established *via* a consensus of scholars, over the course of this Delphi study (chapters 03 & 04).

1.1.1 – OBJECTIVE

In efforts to (a) construct expanded interdisciplinary definitions of Value which represents a consensus of current scholarship and (b) determine the extent of the interaction (if any) which might exist between Value and identity, a wide range of scholars from a variety of discipline will be consulted according to Delphi method. Socio-Cognitive Theory and a post-structuralist form of the Self-Concept, along with Philosophical, Psychological, and practical applications of value

¹² **Paradigm:** as a complete composite image of ‘reality,’ created through perceptions of values which are thought to reflect *actual* reality

theory will act as the guiding principles in establishing the foundations of this value research, and aid in the construction of foundational concepts represented within value which might aid in the construction of its definition. In doing so, this study will attempt to develop a more comprehensive understanding of *value* as a potentially *higher-order* agent which might influence the formation of identity and development of self-states. Additionally, such a study may have implications in ESL/EFL pedagogical and theoretical contexts, as well as in realms of assessment and language program evaluation (LPE).

The rationale encompassing the implicit need for this research is primarily that the state of the field is still one of exploration. Various avenues with which to approach identity concepts are still being carved out, and new concepts and operationalizations are being discovered and reimagined with each new scholar who attempts to study them. Likewise, this research identifies that there is a gap in explicit research, regarding the meta-cognitive levels of value and identity formation, negotiation, and performance, and attempts to investigate the possibility of an isotopic layer of the identity process which exist prior to conscious value and imagination.

A greater understanding of value's influence at a paradigmatic, or meta-cognitive level would not only have implications regarding individual identity theory, but group and organizational identity theories, as well as evaluation theory. As such, this research intends to address the gap by constructing a general consensus of modern scholars in related fields, regarding this particular area of value research, establishing a firm foundation of the state of the field regarding these concepts, for sake of promoting and enabling future value research.

Section 1.2.0 – RESEARCH PROBLEM

Value is a concept which is universal to all, however, it is used and understood differently by different researchers and in different fields of study, making it a difficult topic to pursue. This division of disciplinary usages regarding value concepts creates a perception that the terms *value* is merely a homophonic false cognate between areas of study. Therefore, in order to expand value research, interdisciplinary concepts must be created which are representative of current scholarship. Specifically, there is an overwhelming vagueness in research related to value at the meta-cognitive level and in the liminal transition point between “*value*” and “*values*”. In the literature, there are things, like the common yet illusive *beliefs* and *judgments*, which are thought to influence identity performance, but there is very little research suggestive of what these beliefs and judgments are, where they stem from, or what or how their influences might resolve.

Section 1.3.0 – PURPOSE OF STUDY

Particularly in second language contexts, where learner identity and imagined community development are considered to be paramount to successful language acquisition, paradigmatic value may provide the key to understating higher order aspects of identity formation linked to student success. Additionally, the disambiguating value concepts could provide the insights necessary to pursue theories of evaluation for LPE (Language Program Evaluation). As such, the purpose of this study is to explore ‘value’ from an interdisciplinary standpoint, in order to create a consensus definition regarding value at the level of paradigm, as well as disambiguate relevant terminology. Such a consensus will provide scholars with an interdisciplinary foundation from which to pursue future value related research, as well as greatly contribute to practical and theoretical knowledge in contexts of identity research and pedagogical contexts.

Section 1.4.0 – CONTEXT OF STUDY

In order to aid in the establishment of the significance of this study, we will work to establish the context of the study premise, within our current understanding of the value concept as it may be applied to contexts of second language acquisition in both theory and use. This section will briefly break down a few of the key features of the value concept as unveiled in the breadth of the literature review (chapter 02), address certain gaps in the existing literature, and reveal how the value concept is currently being operationalized in several unique contexts.

1.4.1 – DEFINITION OF VALUE

From an indiscriminate force, to a completely subjective feeling of pleasure, value has been defined in a multitude of distinct ways. Taken from the Miriam Webster dictionary, value is described as "... the regard a thing is held to deserve." or, "a person's principles or standards..." It is this dichotomous perception of value that also seems to permeate the ways in which value is researched and studied. Generally, there seems to be some unspoken division between *value*, the abstract and objective, and as *values*, the concrete and subjective. However, this bifurcated sense of value may also be further divided into additional categories of *intrinsic* and *extrinsic*. However, these categories like 'value,' seem imply different things in different fields.

Looking at the definitions of value as force, established by Lewin (1951) or evolutionary utility value, explored by Rubin and Capra (2011), we might understand extrinsic forms of value to be synonymous with *external* or "extra-somatic" forms of value, value which exists external to the experiencer¹³. Intrinsic value may be best represented by *hedonic* value as discussed by Bentham (1988), or even as *control*, as demonstrated in the psychological experiments of Berkowitz and

¹³ Defined as an entity subject to an influence.

Carder (1970). As opposed to extrinsic value, intrinsic value may be thought of as *internal* value, as it is thought to stem from within the experiencer, leaving subjective experience to determine whether an object, act, or thought is valuable.

However, philosophy constructs intrinsic and extrinsic value concepts quite differently. Most generally, the division of value as intrinsic or extrinsic does not regard any experiencer, but instead asks whether it is possible for value to be intrinsic to any item, action, thought, or concept, or whether all value is autonomous (Chakravartty, 2007; Ellul, 1964; Loewer, 1993) or merely instrumental (Stich, 1990). To put it simply, the division lies in whether value is innate, or whether value is generated due to instrumentation.

The categories of value as presented above raise interesting questions when regarding definitions of value in other fields, such as education and evaluation. Pedagogical fields, specifically those dealing with language education generally make use of the term *values* as opposed to *value*, as we have seen above. *Values* is taken to be more concrete, even if referring to abstract concepts. Values is most generally the term associated with culturally transmitted artifacts, specifically those dealing with conceptualizations of morality. However, while *values* pedagogy and the explicit instruction of morals in academic settings is a very real practice in several countries, it is not the only way in which the value concept influences education.

Value(s) are implicitly transmitted through teaching and testing, and explicitly exercised in evaluation. Norris (2016) professes that evaluation is less about determining programmatic effectiveness, than it is about creating and refining a desired reality. Similar to what we see in

organizational identity, values act as metaphoric guideposts which will aid in the development of desired outcome (Aust, 2004) by reinforcing what it means to be a member of that community (Albert & Whetten, 1985).

1.4.1a Value Application in ESL/EFL Contexts

In ESL/EFL contexts this question of value has another unique dimension which must be considered. Values represented in education go far beyond merely instructing students to follow the colloquial golden rule. Explicit values education, such as the program implemented by the Australian Department of Education, explicitly instruct moral codes as educational pillars (cite). However, values education, known also as *moral education*, *ethics education*, etc. (Lovat, 2010), acculturate learners in civics and socialization of the host community. According to Durkheim (1925) the French philosopher, the nature of the educational system is one of formation, reproduction, and reinforcement of socially contextualized moral identity.

According to Durkheim, societies are a collective consciousness of shared experiences within co-constructed reality. This positions education as the mechanism by which this collective consciousness is imparted to future generations (Durkheim, 1961 in Robinson & Campbell, 2010). However, this only applies to the imparting of the collective consciousness of the educational host community, regardless of the communal affiliations of its learners.

Emphasis on the society-level transmissive nature of education comes also from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which addresses formal education as being the only universal site for moral identity formation (Thomas, 1990). With this emphasis on the transmission of host values and shared experiences, we may begin to perceive the implicit

ideological re-writing of learner cultures and world views which may differ from that of the dominant culture of the educational host institution.

This is doubly a concern in ESL, EFL, and second language learning contexts as the educational host is responsible for transmission of both target language and culture whilst preserving the sociological integrity of its learners. However, formal education requires the assessment and evaluation competency which require that there be an implicit structure of shared values for all persons and cultures involved, if standards of achievement are considered to be accurate (Pring 1992).

Evidence also demonstrates that formal education is not a value-free system of outcomes, and progress and measurement, but a value-laden system of “instrumental pragmatism” (Robinson & Campbell, 2010). Influences of evaluative practices, in this way, are not far removed from the concepts of washback as reciprocal influence of assessment and seems to verify the theme present within Robinson and Campbell (2010), that the question of whether formalized education transmits values to students is entirely moot.

For those unfamiliar, the Commission for English Language Program Accreditation, or CEA, is the final authority on accreditation for both national and international ESL and EFL programs. Their mission is, “...to promote excellence in the field of English language teaching and administration... through accreditation of English language programs and institutions worldwide. CEA achieves its mission by advancing widely-held standards... [and] through a rigorous process of regular self-assessment and peer evaluation” (CEA).

Norris (2016) portrays program evaluation as the practice of creating a desired reality. However, in the global initiative of Language Program Evaluation (LPE) practiced by the CEA, we must question which reality is being sought after, and at what cost. When we compare organizational identity practices, which are designed to effect organizational culture and perceptions of group belonging (Aust, 2004; Albert & Whitten, 1985), we do find several areas of overlap, including the creation of a mission statement and hand selected primary values, which constitute the initial steps of both organizational identity development *and* CEA accreditation compliance (CEA).

As we have seen above, a uniform standard requires the implicit understanding of uniform values in order to maintain construct validity, and that evaluation is in the business of selecting and transmitting values in order to influence the realities of its programs and their members. This understanding alone, when placed in the real context of programs hosting students from a variety of individual backgrounds, as with ESL/EFL contexts globally, requires us to investigate value at higher levels, at levels which may otherwise appear as *a priori* truths, which will be explained later in this paper as values which are held or perceived paradigmatically.

1.4.2 – KEY FEATURES OF VALUE

Regardless of your position in relation to value and value concepts, there are a few key features of value which seem to be able to be generalized into two categories. Firsts and foremost, that *value* is a concept which is ascribed with perceived benefit¹⁴, whether actual or imagined, realized or unrealized. Whether regarding value as utility, or value as that which provides pleasure to the experiencer, value seems that it must provide some boon. The second aspect of

¹⁴ **Benefit:** the attribution of ‘good’ to any object, act, concept, or thought, etc.

value is that value seems to mean different things to different people. More accurately stated, value means different things at different levels of engagement, e.g. how proximal, or how reflexively aware one is of the value being perceived.

Primarily reflecting on educational environments' demonstration of multi-level value influences, from learner identity formation to program evaluation, it would seem that there is an inverse correlation between reflexive awareness¹⁵ and the objectification of value. The “proximity” of value refers to a gradient of conscious perception (subjective value \leftrightarrow objective value) which may be also be influenced by cultural or power dynamics.

1.4.3 – GAPS IN CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

Much work has been done regarding individual and group identity, as well as perceptions of self. However, merely referred to as “beliefs” and “judgments” there is an apparent gap in knowledge regarding what it is that inspires individual behavior and perception. To address this gap though requires interdisciplinary efforts and co-constructed definitions of terms and concepts. As of yet, there is much of value to explore, though without foundational definitions there are few tools to work with.

Paradigmatic value is an as of yet unexplored concept in theories of value, identity research, or in evaluation. Though there are decades of research in areas related to value and values, as well as education and identity development, there is little research which attempts to bridge this gap. Specifically, there has been little investigation looking into levels of value as a continuum

¹⁵ **Reflexivity:** the conscious awareness of one's own perceptions

progressing from the perceptually objective to the individually subjective, which may aid in the disambiguation of seemingly contradictory usages of value related terminology. Most work in value related research seems to work with individual value concepts as if isolates, occurring vacuously. However, in the applied sciences, especially when regarding identity, we must strive to see the entirety of the contexts within which we work, in order to best preserve and protect potentially vulnerable populations within our own educational and research contexts.

As addressed in section 1.4.1a, this is a critical gap when considering SLA contexts. If accidentally transmitting dominant values and/or linguistic ideologies through language education is synonymous with neo-colonialist practice, then it is all the more imperative that we consider the implications and impacts of value paradigm¹⁶s we set in place as language program administrators, testing coordinators, and teachers.

Section 1.5.0 – RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Below are the specific research questions which will be explored in this study.

- 4) How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields define Value as a meta-cognitive concept?
- 5) How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields perceive the relationship (if any) between Value and learner identity?
- 6) Should experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields agree that a relationship exists between Value and learner identity, how might this relationship be demonstrated?

¹⁶ **Value System:** the complete system of values under which an entity operates, as though they truly represent reality

Section 1.6.0 – SIGNIFICANCE

Paradigmatic value is an as of yet unexplored concept in theories of value, identity research, or in the field of evaluation. In the applied sciences, we realize that values are imbedded within all human interactions, especially within traditional educational contexts. As such, it is the duty of critical pedagogy to mitigate neo-colonialism through the accidental transmission of hegemonic values through education.

Countless studies have shown the effects of the imposition of extra-cultural values on individual identity, whether that be at a national border, or in a classroom. However, concepts such as *constructed subjectivity*¹⁷ offer exciting new avenues for the study of value and its effects of identity. Identity is formed and performed in relation to evaluations of self in relation to environment, but the meta-cognitive basis for these evaluations still has yet to be explored. In so saying, I mean to point out that we are aware that evaluations and judgments must take place in order to select and/or perform identity, but very little is understood regarding the high levels of conscious and unconscious mechanics and influences which must exist for these identity decisions to be base on.

In addition to identity related research, this study is also significant to advancing our understanding of evaluative practices. Expounding upon Norris' (2016) idea that programmatic evaluation was less about determining program effectiveness than establishing and refining a desired reality, this study will investigate meta-cognitive value at the level of paradigm.

Paradigm in this sense and in all future uses in this research, is being defined similarly to the

¹⁷ **Constructed Subjectivity:** any range of potential subjective awareness which has been delineated by an ordinate value system

typical definition, as a philosophical framework, but with the additional nuanced extension into the *a priori*. This is to say that regarding value, this study will be required to address the total range of perceptions of value, extending from perceptions of value as purely subjective, to those which are perceived as representing absolute truths. In educational contexts these may be exemplified by:

- a) imagining a teacher's perspective regarding an elementary student's belief that doing away with mathematics would be a wonderful idea (perceived as purely subjective)
- b) imagining a college freshmen's perspective on the authority of their Dean (perceived as completely objective).

Regardless of what the perceptions are, or who may be holding them, these values, these conscious and unconscious beliefs work to construct a composite image of the perceptual world within which an individual or group operates. This one complete composite image which is created based on the perceptions of values which are thought to reflect the actual world is total of what is represented by the term '*paradigm*' in this value related research. Likewise, values being held at the level of paradigm are those values which are thought to represent individual truths of the actual world. This is of course regardless of whether something is thought to be truly subjective or truly objective, as perceptions of that which is subjective and what which is objective are both required to create a complete paradigmatic representation of reality.

Based on the literature provided as the foundation for this study (Chapter 02), we may make two primary assumptions regarding value. Those are that value is an ascription of the level of benefit

something is thought to possess, and that the sum total of values held by an individual represent the sum total of the environment within which they perceive themselves to operate.

Should this study provide evidence that these two assumptions are correct, it would mean that value may indeed be tied to social events such as the construction of subjectivity, social conformity,¹⁸ social behavior, and social behavioral expectation. *Ergo*, the disambiguation of value related terms may provide us the necessary insights to better understand what it is that evaluative practices actually engage in when evaluating programmatic expectations, outcomes, and standards of achievement. To put it simply, this means that an increased awareness of value-related concepts such as those mentioned above, would provide Language Program Administrators a more tangible understanding the forces at play in their unique academic settings which might enhance or detract from students' and teacher's ability to adapt and conform to institutional expectations.

Section 1.7.0 – CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF STUDY

The ultimate focus of this study is the exploration of meta-cognitive value related concepts and the synthesis of an interdisciplinary consensus definition from current scholars researching identity and value related topics, across a variety of fields. The exploration of value and value related concepts will be conducted primarily within the literature review in attempt to isolate value as a singular concept, despite any possible inconsistency in terms generated for specific disciplines or fields.

¹⁸ **Conformity:** the adoption of, or acculturation to any portion of a value system or its related beliefs/behaviors

Central to this study is the understanding that even the most disparate usages of value and value related terminology all stem from one fundamental value concept, which needs to be both explored and disambiguated within the confines of this study. Secondary only in regards to the necessary order of events, as dictated by the study methodology, is the identification of any potential interaction(s) between value concepts and individual/group identity formation and/or performance.

As such, a Delphi 3-round Delphi study was conducted in order to gain insights regarding aspects and innerworkings of a singular unified concept of value, extending from the individually perceived 'subjective' to the intersubjectively¹⁹ understood 'objective', extending to the level of complete paradigm. Or, more explicitly put. This study was conducted to investigate the total perceptual range of value, from values which seem to be purely subjective (not eating fish on Wednesdays after 4:00pm), to those which seem to unquestionably objective (the benefit of an increased life-span).

Scholarly input in each round will be thematically categorized and statistically analyzed, in order to ensure representation of a true consensus within each round of the study. The results of the statistical analysis of implicit or explicit themes will then be used to reconstitute a synthetic definition to be used as the basis for each of the following rounds. Finally, participating scholars will be asked to accept or reject the final consensus definition, as well as provide their expert opinions as to whether or not the paradigmatic value concept might be thought to interact with identity.

¹⁹ **Intersubjective:** anything shared, or the belief that something is shared

Section 1.8.0 – OVERVIEW OF STUDY

This section of chapter 01 will function as a brief introduction to the study itself, with some explanation of concepts and methods to be covered in the later chapters. Chapter 02 will be dedicated to the literature review, and the exploration of foundational concepts. Chapter 03 will outline the methodology and explicitly detail each step in the participant selection and Delphi research process. Chapters 04 and 05 will provide the results and findings from the Delphi research, as well as implications of said findings.

Reviewing the literature, we find that value is a diverse and explicitly complicated concept. Foundational works in philosophy and psychology, cognitive experiments, recent case studies, and certain best practices are reviewed and compared in order to identify trends within value's definitions and usages. This review constitutes the basis for the assertion of *value criterion*, or, the fundamental key aspects of value as a unified concept.

Understanding the value criterion to be simply “benefit” and “proximity,” outlined further in Chapter 02, allows us to unify the currently dichotomous terms, *value* and *values*, and reposition them as the polar extremities of the proximity aspect of a unified value concept. This proximity aspect of value is aligned with current research on value transmission and resistance in academic settings, works analyzing power in neo-colonial and extra-cultural contact zones, popular assessment principles, and evaluative practices. This concept of a unified value further affords us the ability to make direct connections between paradigm level value and subjective interpersonal level values, and potentially the ability to uncover how paradigmatic value effects identity development and performance.

Chapter 03 details Delphi participant selection and the methods used to explore the above concepts of unified value and paradigmatic value. Initially, peer reviewed works relevant to value and identity research, published no earlier than 2015 were searched for relevant contributing works published no later earlier than 2010. This provided an overwhelming list of authors who had recently published on value and identity related topics, across a multitude of disciplines.

Chapter 04 provides explicit data analysis of each Delphi round. Participant feedback and critique of a supplementary synthetic definition of meta-cognitive value was compiled over the course of three rounds of an iterative Delphi study. These contributions were systematically analyzed for thematic content, and used to create true consensus data, representative of a current interdisciplinary perspective on meta-cognitive value. Following the study's final round, scholars were asked how, if at all, paradigmatic value might be seen to interact with identity.

The final chapter of this research is comprised of the implications of our findings, as well as implications for future research.

Section 1.9.0 - LIMITATIONS

Limitations which were considered during the conducting of this study are as follows:

- 1) The data contributed for the statistical analysis of an interdisciplinary consensus was limited to the expert scholars who participated in the study, and may be effected by the amount of time and attention devoted to engagement with the research prompts in each round of the Delphi study.

- 2) A participant selection criterion was created which attempted to identify the broadest possible range of candidates for participation in the Delphi study, however the random participant sample may not accurately represent the entire population.

- 3) Contributions to Delphi studies are largely individual opinion, though group consensus does work to mitigate this limitation.

- 4) Participant Sample Size (N=20) may not be representative of the actual scholarly population which is currently engaged with value and identity research.

CHAPTER 02:

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study attempts to isolate a definition for the meta-cognitive concept of value, which is thought to exist at the level of paradigm. Looking into contexts of value and paradigmatic value within current literature causes us to investigate through the following avenues:

- 1) Understanding what value is
- 2) Investigating how value is currently being operationalized
- 3) Identifying relationships between value and experienter

As such, this literature review will work to constitute the foundation of the total value concept being explored, in relation to the current body of research and theoretical works surrounding it. Various works spanning a variety of disciplines ranging from SLA to Philosophy will be incorporated into the total scope of works examined in this review. The main body of literature will consist of more recent works, specifically related to the humanities, applied linguistics, and behavioral sciences, and EFL/ESL research from the last decade or so. As the intention of this research is to provide footholds from which value and identity related research might advance beyond *current* understanding, the primary focus of the literature will rest on recent innovation and exploration of topics and concepts either directly or indirectly related to meta-cognitive aspects of value. An additional consideration for the home department (SLAT) under which this research is being conducted will also influence the examples and interpretations of literary works demonstrated within this chapter.

As the literature being reviewed in this chapter will cover a multitude of topics from a multitude of perspectives, an outline is provided below.

- Introduction Section **2.1.0**
- Value in Psychology Section **2.2.0**
- Value in Philosophy Section **2.3.0**
- Operationalized Value Section **2.4.0**
- Value Section Summary Section **2.5.0**
- Identity Section **2.6.0**
- Implications of the Lit Section **2.7.0**

Section 2.1.0 – VALUE

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Value is a concept which is present in every aspect of our daily lives. According to psychologists and philosophers, it is our sense of value which what guides us and shapes our understanding of not only the world around us, but of how we ourselves fit into that world. It enables us to act, to choose, to desire and want, as well as to protect ourselves from that which is toxic to us, both physically and metaphorically. Though, despite its abundance of influence, value itself is still a gossamer concept with many definitions and forms across the various fields which make use of it.

The concepts of value which many may be somewhat familiar with likely stem from fields of Anthropology, Education, and/or Pedagogy, were value is considered as a subjective system of beliefs, or as a derivation of a finite number of intangible culturally transmittable artifacts.

However, there are many fields of study which also capitalize on the value concept, but in very different ways, from an evolutionary principle, to truth itself.

To better engage with the concept of value, and in order to be provide a firm foundation for the forthcoming implications of this literature review, we should first establish a clear understanding of value in a clinical sense, before moving on to theoretical interpretations. Value has been long studied as an independent yet seemingly aspectual concept in psychology, and as such, it would be prudent to begin with definitions of value, as provided by decades of clinical study.

Section 2.2.0 – VALUE IN PSYCHOLOGY

This section will outline value as a psychological concept, dealing with the broadest definitions of the term, and progressing to the more nuanced. This will work to build an understanding of value in psychology as well as demonstrate how the conceptualization of value has evolved to be a much more complicated idea over time.

2.2.1 - EXTRINSIC VALUE

2.2.1a Value as Force

Though possibly a bit removed from how value is typically understood as “value,” Lewin (1951) expressed value as being a *force*. This force, he said, much like physical force (mass x acceleration), exerts intensity in a given direction, either in attraction or repulsion. In this way a valuable experience would be seen as an experience which exerts an attractive force with an intensity in relation to the level of attraction, not to be confused with the intensity of the experience itself (Lewin, 1951). Of course, the opposite is also true. Low intensity, or levels of attraction eventually transition over to the negative pole, repelling with its own measures of intensity.

This concept of value as force positions value itself, much like *utility* (Rubin & Capra, 2011), remains outside the conscious control of the experiencer, rendering the experiencer(s) of value more akin to subjects of value, rather than the participants. This essentially requires the understanding that each act, action, and/or interaction itself possess a binary value-attribute (attract – repulse) to varying degrees of intensity. Accordingly, if we are to posit that individuals do not choose what attracts or repulses them, but instead are being subject to interactional forces which exist between themselves and their subjective experiences, value can easily be described as a force.

2.2.1b Value as Utility

Rubin & Capra (2011) apply the concept of value to evolutionary psychology, and even further to economic concepts, addressing it as *Utility*. Utility, in short, is the value which is derived or resultant of decision and/or selection processes, which were of benefit to an organism.

Anecdotally, decisions or behaviors such as cooperation in early hominids eventually led to tribal behavior, which provided greater numbers and greater protection. This was valuable for the propagation of the species.

This is not the same as economic choice or preference, as human choice specifically seems to be a nearly unquantifiable variable when pursuing theories of utility, based on preference (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). As we are able to look retrospectively toward our past and the past in general, we may see which choices and/or behaviors were truly beneficial, regardless of choice or preference. *Ergo*, only that which provides utility (betterment) to an organism possesses value, and in this way, at least in an evolutionarily economical sense (Rubin & Capra, 2011), value is equal to utility.

2.2.1c Value as Instrument

Instrumental value is a simple concept, as it primarily defines that which affords the ability to accomplish an objective or reach a goal, has value.

2.2.2 - INTRINSIC VALUE

2.2.2a Value as Pleasure

In the most fundamentally basic extensions of the value concept, we are confronted with *hedonic* value, or value as it relates to *hedonism*, valuing what is pleasurable. Hedonic value, derived from the word “sweet”, in classical Greek, is the understanding that value stems from that which gives us pleasure. Pleasure therefore, if experienced is evidence of the positive value of the act or action. The inverse is also true. If pleasure is not experienced as a result of a given action or interaction, there is no value to be had from it (Bentham, 1988). This would in short mean that in the *hedonic* sense, value itself is equal to pleasure.

2.2.2b Value as Control

Interesting experiments have been run regarding the seeming preference for the exertion of effort for reward, despite there being no need to do so. One such experiment is detailed in Carder and Berkowitz (1970) work on rats' preference for earned reward over food that was freely available with no effort. In brief, rats were supplied with food pellets in a dish, as well as a separate food hopper which would dispense identical food pellets at the pull of a lever. Toward the end of the experiment, rats were seen to actively push the available food out of the way, in order to dispense food from the hopper mechanism.

While this could easily be compared to the work with chimpanzees adapting their behavior to incorporate the use of tools to probe for termites, the denial of a readily available food source demonstrates that the effort put forth to pull the lever has no instrumental value, as it was not

necessary in order to obtain food. In conclusion, the rats demonstrated that control of the food source was valued above the food itself (Berkowitz & Carder, 1970).

We also see this concept of value as control in more academically directed research, such as works and studies published on topics of learner agency. Agency being largely associated with consciousness, free will, empowerment, autonomy, and yes, even with identity (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). Agency itself though, much like the more recently identified concepts of social belonging, is seen as fundamental to learner success (McLoughlin, 2016). However, as explicated in works such as those of researchers like Peirce (1995), lacking power is not the same as lacking agency.

In this way we may understand the extension of the above referenced psychological experiment to the its application of in ESL and other pedagogical contexts. Language education, specifically second language acquisition as opposed to foreign language acquisition, deals with not only with the iterative power structure of the academic institution, but the social power dynamics of dominant linguistic and cultural ideologies. However, understanding that agency is both perceptual and contextual (Larsen-Freeman, 2019), we may understand that though potentially lacking power in the learning environment, learners may still perceive themselves as agentic and reap the benefits of such contextualized perceptions.

2.2.3 - SECTION SUMMARY

Looking into the definitions of value from a psychological perspective, there are a few conclusions that we might preemptively draw, even this early into the literature review.

Primarily, *value* regardless of its intrinsic or extrinsic context, would seem to be a concept which

consistently represents some attribution²⁰ of benefit to some concept. Second, as per the experiencer, value's benefit may be realized, unrealized, or both realized and unrealized to varying degrees, e.g. *pleasure, control, or utility*. And lastly, that the benefits of value, whether consciously realized or not, constitute an influential force upon the experiencer, either through short-term behavioral reinforcement, or long term evolutionary/economic benefit to an organism or group.

In the following section we will see how each of value is understood from a philosophical perspective, in order to better prepare us to understand not only how, but why value concepts are being operationalized, both in theory and in practice.

Section 2.3.0 – VALUE IN PHILOSOPHY

2.3.1 - INTRINSIC VALUE

Supernatural intrinsic value, views pure instrumental (autonomous) value as a concept which tears at the pillars of humanity's connection to the grater universe, and to the meaning of life (Ellul, 1964). Ellul (1964) published many arguments in favor of intrinsic value and has argued against philosophers such as John Dewey, claiming that intrinsic value is a necessary attempt by human society to justify its connection that which is sacred, and to create and/or maintain culture.

Realist intrinsic value is the term used to describe the theories of philosophers like Chakravartty (2007), who refers to the notion that instrumental values only as it exists as an approximation of intrinsic value. Ex. There is thought to be an intrinsic value to theory, as it may prove what is

²⁰ **Attribution:** the allocation or assigning of an attribute.

seen and demonstrate what is unseen. This means that theory has an intrinsic value in being suitable for discovery of truths. Individual theories then are instrumentally approximate to the intrinsic value of theory itself. As it were, individual theories are not intrinsically valuable, but instrumental in discovering and demonstrating intrinsic values.

2.3.1a Value as Truth

As an example of philosophical concepts of intrinsic value, we might look at *truth* value. “Truth” is highly interconnected with the human experience, as fundamental *truths* are what we consider to be the basis of our reality, and as the truth of subjective reality is more or less a norming exercise between the shared realities of others (Brosch & Sander, 2015), it is reasonable that we place *value as truth* in the ‘extrinsic’ section of this review. However, as the sum total of the interpretation of the *truth* is essentially a function of the individual, ‘value as truth’ has been included in the *intrinsic* value section of the review.

So far, we have seen that extrinsic forms of value are either exterior force, attracting or repulsing, or as any action or interaction which is of benefit (utility) to an organism. In contrast, intrinsic interpretations of value have been defined as that which gives pleasure (*hedonic* value), that which can enable the accomplishment of a goal (instrumental value), and the exertion of one's will (control value). However, despite the profundity of these definitions which seek to explain value, we are consistently confronted with behaviors which seem to contradict them.

The desire for truth has been shown in various thought experiments, to defy both hedonic and instrumental value. The perfect simulation machine proposed by Nozick (1974), but one example of such experimentation, resulting in subjects electing to forego entering into the perfect

simulation, in order to live an exponentially more difficult life, full of trouble, doubt, and worry, due to their desire to experience what is real and know what is truly going on in the shared reality (normative truth) around them.

Anecdotally, Fox Mulder, the fictional male lead of the television series “*The X-Files*”, provides a perfect example of this contradictory behavior. Fox is constantly seeking the “truth”, plastering his office with close encounter imagery and posters professing the ever present “I want to believe” mantra. He forgoes comfort of a high paying job, sacrifices health, career, and friendships, all in the hopes of eventually gaining truth. “Truth” in this case, denies pleasure and utility, sacrifices instrumentality, and far exceeds the limitations of willful control, situating its own value as superior to other value forms.

2.3.2 - EXTRINSIC VALUE

2.3.2a Value as Instrument (*Autonomous Value*)

In order to explore extrinsic value, as a contrast to intrinsic value, we shall continue to use our previous example of truth, in the philosophical context.

Loewer (1993) tells us that despite the obvious power of truth-value to dominate hedonic value, the value intrinsic to truth is actually an instrumental value, as the value of gaining access to truth is instrumental in achieving one’s goals, or in our previous example, in gaining peace of mind. This is also able to be explained if we consider that all truth is subject to shared interpretation, meaning that the truth is more akin to “true belief” rather than actual concrete *truth*. In this manner we might understand that seeking the truth of any thing is the search for what we wish to believe is true. Therefore, the value of obtaining truth lies within its instrumental value of satisfying our desire to validate what we wish to believe (Loewer, 1993).

A somewhat extreme extension of this notion comes from Stich (1990), who argues (regarding the intrinsic value of truth and true beliefs) that there is *no* value whatsoever (intrinsic or extrinsic) to possessing true beliefs (Stich, 1990). While this claim does allow for the value of truth to be re-assigned to an external instrument value, the claim that even this instrumental value was not intrinsic to truth was quite a controversial claim. Stich's claim is still hotly debated, as in order to make such a bold claim, he had to call into question and challenge several foundational theories of mind (Millar, 1992).

However, it is likely that Stich's claim is not as outlandish as it sounds given the contextual nature of truth and belief. If we consider that obtaining 'truth' is merely a means (instrumental) of validating our desires for knowing truth, believing 'true' beliefs would provide no greater value than believing *false* 'true' beliefs. As the operational understanding is that reality is subjective regardless of truth, the trueness or falseness of "truth" would seem to have no bearing on the value of belief, only that the believed truth serves as if it were *true* truth.

2.3.3 - SECTION SUMMARY

Looking into the value concept from a philosophical perspective, there are a few conclusions that we might draw here as well, before moving on to the following section. First, that intrinsic and extrinsic value does not refer to the experiencer of value, as it does in psychology. Intrinsic and extrinsic here denotes whether value is thought to be innate or alien to any real object, experience, or belief. To clarify, I mean to say that in this sense, so far as we have seen in philosophical contexts, value is taken to be an *attribute* of a thing, such as the intrinsic value of the scientific method, the value of life, the value of taking charge, etc.

Second, that the philosophical concepts of value arise mostly in relation to perception, not from actual benefit or utility. This takes into account the reality construct, as a shared experience, and extends this notion into the concept of value itself.

In the following section “Operationalized Value” we will see how each of the conclusions drawn from the philosophical and psychological definitions above may be seen in action, as they are operationalized in theory and in practice.

Section 2.4.0 – OPERATIONALIZED VALUE

2.4.1 - VALUES EDUCATION

As a brief generalization, value research for the most part, when it is concerned with the context of ESL or English language education in general makes a transition from “value” to “values.”

This is likely due to the need for academic contexts to isolate values in order to better assess their acceptance and reproduction as lesson, course, and programmatic outcomes.

Addressing this particular distinction completely is not within the scope of this research project, though the quantification of value to values does have a few very pronounced implications in and of itself. One such implication is that value may indeed be quantified. The other being that value may be divided and individualized into subsets of values, e.g. values may be universal, but their acceptance is individual. As such, this is an important distinction to make early as we attempt to engage with ESL and pedagogical texts and contexts, as the addition of an ‘s’ to the end of the word does much more than simply imply the plural.

2.4.1a Value(s) in Education

Looking into popular educational philosophy texts, especially those designed with a target audience of practicing pedagogues in mind, we find an overwhelming proclivity to synonymize *values* as the equivalent of morals (Berkowitz, 2011; Green, 1975; Johnston, 2003). Berkowitz (2011), in his review of values pedagogy research states,

“Values education (alternatively, moral education, character education) is the attempt, within schools, to craft pedagogies and supportive structures to foster the development of positive, ethical, pro-social inclinations and competencies in youth...”.

-Berkowitz (2011)

However, this equivocation of value(s) to morals is not limited to individual publications in academic journals, nor to individual classrooms. The Australian Department of Education has fully adopted explicit values pedagogy, embracing nine core tenants, from “Care and Compassion” to “Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion” (Charter of Destiny).

2.4.1b Values Education & Identity Formation

Values education though, goes far beyond merely instructing students to follow the colloquial golden rule. As it is possibly the most prominent example of an explicit values education program, much of values education research has been carried out using the values education program implemented by the Australian Department of Education as the primary subject of various case studies. Many of these studies have been conducted in order to attest to the nature, validity, and/or actualized frameworks of values education. However, as we see in the synonyms for value(s) education: Moral Education, Ethics Education, etc. (Lovat, 2010), The primary conceptualization of value(s) in education is akin to civics and socialization than the theoretical value concepts proposed in psychological and philosophical research. Though this is not to say that there is complete separation.

According to Durkheim (1925) the French philosopher, the nature of the educational system is one of formation, reproduction, and reinforcement of socially contextualized moral identity. We might unpack this definition a bit and understand what Durkheim stated as implying that education is a system of sociological reproduction, crafting the identities and moral convictions (world perceptions) of future generations to be inline with that which is seen to be of benefit to the current societal and even at this point in time, global power dynamics in play. This concept seems to bridge the gap between “value” in the philosophical sense and “values” in educational contexts. This is due mostly to Durkheim’s extensions of concepts of meta-physical *truth* and philosophical *reality* into the physical realm of actual society.

However, there is no need to wax philosophical in this particular case, as we have countless examples of the societal effects of dominant ideologies in educational contexts. Though it is unfortunate that despite a few prominent authors such as Pennycook, who have made it into limelight of higher education with their work on subjects related to neo-colonialism, others like Lomawaima who have worked to chronical the effects of historic re-education protocols instilled *on behalf of* America’s indigenous populations seem to be sequestered into the realms of ethnography.

Perceiving societies as a collective consciousness of shared experiences within co-constructed reality, Durkheim (1925) made it possible for us to see that education was the mechanism by which this collective consciousness is imparted to future generations (Durkheim, 1961 in Robinson & Campbell, 2010). A further emphasis on the society-level transmissive nature of

education comes from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which suggests formal education as being the only universal site for moral identity formation (Thomas, 1990).

2.4.1c Values Education & Academic Standards

The concept of values education has also had an impact on educational standards. Considering the evaluation of standards, shared value comes into question. Pring (1992) questions the imposition of standards of academic achievement in school systems, as there must be an implicit structure of shared values for all persons and cultures involved, if standards of achievement are considered to be accurate. Academic standards imposed without consideration for values (especially regarding international education programs) assumes all individuals and groups share identical standards of value and worth. further reinforcing the implicit values imbedded within the given curriculum.

2.4.1d Values Education & Assessment

Likewise, assessments of academic achievement as also been addressed, specifically calling into question the practices of the Office for Standards in Education. In collecting school or district statistics and weighing them according to a uniform standard, the presupposition of shared concepts of worth and value is imposed upon not only schools, but teacher and students, influencing their vision of what constitutes valuable education (Richards, 2001). This phenomenon of assessments influencing teaching and or learning through the implicit revision of value is also known in the field of assessment as *washback* (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Messick, 1996) and is sometimes used to influence teaching and learning according to stakeholder needs. Though washback is explicitly situated as one of the five tenants of

assessment, (Brown, 2004; White, 2017) the washback principle is also demonstrated in evaluative practices.

2.4.1e Values Education & Evaluation

Norris (2016) tells us that “evaluation is much less about discovering truths regarding which or whether programs work than it is focused on the pragmatic endeavor of crafting and refining a particular, sought-after program reality.” (p.184) Though somewhat abstracted from how we may typically envision evaluative practices, this quote from Norris does much to enlighten us to what evaluation *does* over what evaluation *is*.

In language program evaluation (LPE), stakeholder needs and desires, such as program outcomes and levels of proficiency which might be deemed necessary for successful program graduation provided to the educational institution, and are subsequently developed into explicit program values. These values are identified as those things which might be instrumental, cognitively, and/or socially valuable to achieve the goals developed in relation to stakeholder values, and might then be translated into frameworks of assessable indicators of achievement, and are measured accordingly to assure compliance.

One concrete example of this might be in the motivation of an institution to conform to a more ‘communicative’ language pedagogy, which is a real and current imperative in Chinese school under their current educational reform. In this case, we might imagine a government agency approaching an institution and asking them to create a program that would produce students who were more capable in circumlocution than direct translation of the target language. The value of conversational negotiation would then hypothetically be elevated above Grammar and

Translation methods and frameworks would need to be established to produce students which would reflect this newly elevated value of communicative prowess.

Once the ideal outcomes of the new program are isolated, methods, lessons, activities, and teaching styles would need to deviate from the previous norms in order to accommodate the new goals of communicative pedagogy, in order to produce students who are capable of indicating the achievement of such idealized outcomes. These indicators would in a sense become the basis for all assessments related to the course and its progression, which in turn would be used to inform the program's inevitable evaluation to determine whether or not the program was achieving its new goals, and to what extent.

Therefore, it is not scores, nor benchmarks which are being evaluated, but the level to which learners who have passed through the program are able to reflect the desires of the stakeholders. However, where many may confuse this is in the myopic focus on the points of assessment. Test scores merely act as indicators of successful institution of values which were established in the educational frameworks, and provide the data necessary to evaluate the efficacy of the academic culture which was created in relation to the desires of stakeholders.

The influences of evaluative practices, in this way, are not far removed from the concepts of washback as reciprocal influence of assessment and seems to verify the theme present within Robinson and Campbell (2010), that the question of whether formalized education transmits values to students is entirely moot. Rather, that we should be asking which values present in education constitute effective learning (Robinson & Campbell, 2010).

2.4.1f Values Education & Organizational Identity

Though likely not the most salient form of identity today, organizational identity plays a major role in the formation and reinforcement of an organization's culture, and the way in which people identify themselves as its members (Albert & Whetten, 1985). As an extension to the argument voiced by Pring (1992), that academic standards imply a unified value system²¹, Robinson and Campbell (2010) provide evidence that formal education is not a value-free system of outcomes, and progress and measurement, but a value-laden system of "instrumental pragmatism" (Robinson & Campbell, 2010).

This has been demonstrated as well through commercial practices of selective identity formation and through case studies detailing the formation and transition of organizational identity(s), as they emerge and mature (Aust, 2004). Similar to how values in the classroom, whether implicit or explicit, are seen to have an effect on student learning and information prioritization, the values adopted by an organization have also been shown to influence its members. In the study, *Communicated Values as Indicators of Organizational Identity*, not only did the organization's members adopt implicit organizational values, but demonstrated changes in their perceptions of self in relation to the organization as the organization grew (Aust, 2004). According to (cite study...) this would constitute evidence of an identity shift.

In the previous section, we saw how Norris (2016) portrayed program evaluation as the practice of creating a desired reality. When we compare this to organizational identity practices, it is likely no coincidence that the creation of a mission statement and hand selected primary values

²¹**Value System:** the sum total of all values perceived and un-perceived, which influence an entity

constitute the initial steps of both organizational identity development *and* CEA accreditation compliance (CEA).

2.4.2 - SECTION SUMMARY

In this section we have seen that value(s) in explicit pedagogical practices, closely resemble a moral code of conduct for students to adhere to. However, even without an explicit moral charter, implicit and/or pragmatic values are transmitted to learners and effect their perceptions of academic value, and cyclically reinforce and are reinforced by classroom culture.

However, the further we remove ourselves from the explicit value pedagogy conducted at the student-teacher level, we see how testing and assessment, and even evaluation are able to influence learner perceptions of what constitutes valuable education, as well as their perceptions of self in relationship to education. Therefore, we may conclude, at least in educational contexts, that value is an influential force used to mold the constructed subjectivity of organization members, despite potentially arising far beyond the learner's purview.

Regarding C.E.A. standards and regulations, imposed globally upon all ESL/EFL institutions seeking accreditation, the educational value paradigm is established external even to the educational institutions themselves. This implies that regardless of the geopolitical climate, national heritage, or cultural history, entire institutions as well as the students enrolled in their language programs are subject to a constructed subjectivity of largely western ideals regarding what might be considered to be acceptable academic standards, practices, and curricula.

Education itself is a powerful tool, and through education one might be granted the power to inform their own choices and take control of their own life, granting themselves a sustainable ‘resilience’ (a term used almost exclusively in developmental anthropology) in the face of even unforeseen adversity. However, the imposition of western education on indigenous peoples in the Midwest of the United States should provide all the example we might need regarding the danger of implementing educational systems within communities of peoples who may hold and/or operate within value systems divergent from that of the educational culture being implemented. In this unfortunately non-hypothetical example, the cultures and languages of countless indigenous tribes were lost to education, leaving an unknown number of peoples to wither into conformity through neo-colonial forced acculturation, under the guise of the benevolence of education.

As an example, the iconic “Silent Indian” of America’s recent past (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006) was not a characteristic of the North America’s indigenous peoples, but a manufactured image resultant of westernized educational imperatives. Throughout the 1920’s to the 1940’s, indigenous peoples were required to forfeit their children to state schools functioning under protestant moral codes, in order for them to be educated and ‘civilized.’ One of the primary imperatives of these schools was to educate these children in the English language, making them essentially one of the first state IEP’s (Intensive English Programs). However, as the native language of these children was seen as a heathen tongue, and fearing the loss of classroom control due to unchecked communication in their L1 (primary language), the children were not allowed to use their mother tongue when on school grounds and suffered severe punishments for deviation from this standard.

Accordingly, a population of learners who had little to no ability in the L2 (second language) were forced to stay silent in order to avoid corporal punishment. In this way, the devaluation of classroom interactions in the indigenous children's L1 completely stifled classroom integration and prevented L2 learning. The result then was the image of the "Silent Indian," who was dumb in speech and in mental acumen, who enjoyed their solitude, and like the mighty oak, withstood change and the pressure of the times (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006).

As language and culture were seen as inseparable, even at such an early state in American history, these indigenous children were also given American names, dressed in western clothes, and were even forced to wear their hair in western fashion. This was all carried out under the mindset of cultural education, and caused untold damage to the passage of tradition and native culture from generation to generation, language endangerment notwithstanding.

The problem here is not with education, or even with the imposition of values, but with the lack of understanding about which values are being transmitted and which are being overwritten. As we have seen in Campbell (2010) and above in the more philosophical works of Durkheim, education is by nature the transmission of normative behaviors, moralities, and values. Therefore attempting to 'sanitized' education of values is essentially a fool's errand. Thus, we do and will continue to educate through the imposition of values in value-laden curricula. The real question for educators is then, how can we become more aware of which values are being transmitted to learners passing through our institutions and which are being overwritten, and more pointedly, what are the potential after effects of such interventions?

Section 2.5.0 – VALUE SUMMARY

Viewing value from a psychological perspective, primarily *value* regardless of its intrinsic or extrinsic context, would seem to be a concept which consistently represents some form or attribute which is of benefit. Additionally, the value benefit may be realized, unrealized, or both realized and unrealized to varying degrees, e.g. *pleasure, control, or utility*. And lastly, the benefits of value, whether consciously realized or not, are regarded as constituting an influential force upon the experiencer, either through short-term behavioral reinforcement, or long term evolutionary/economic benefit to an organism or group.

However, the value concept from a philosophical perspective, is quite different. The most profound point being that the terms “intrinsic” and “extrinsic” do not refer to the experiencer of value, as they do in psychology. Intrinsic and extrinsic value in a philosophical sense, denotes whether value is thought to be innate or alien to any real object or experience, or to belief itself. Additionally, that the philosophical concepts of value arise mostly in relation to perception, and not from any actual benefit or utility which may arise. This stems from the notion that “reality” and “truth” are experienced as a shared experience between community and non-community members.

Finally, as an example of operationalized value(s), explicit pedagogical practices closely resemble a moral code of conduct to which students are expected to adhere. However, even without an explicit moral charter, implicit and/or pragmatic values transmitted to learners have been shown to effect their academic performance, perceptions of academic value, and to cyclically reinforce classroom culture.

However, the further we remove ourselves from the explicit value pedagogy classroom level, we see how testing and assessment, and even highly elevated levels of evaluation are used influence learner perceptions, ranging from what constitutes valuable education, to their imaginations of self in relationship to education. Therefore, we may begin to conclude, at least in educational contexts, value is an agent which molds constructed subjectivity, despite potentially arising far beyond the learner's purview.

Section 2.6.0 – IDENTITY

2.6.1 - INTRODUCTION

Identity has become a relatively popular topic in both the media and in research publications.

Though while it seems that many, regardless of their research interests or departmental affiliation are concerned with identity in some form or other. Identity is of course not limited to the humanities. Concerns related to the development and even cultivation of certain identity traits span an ever increasingly broad range in both the public and private sectors. From medical students struggling to realize that they have become doctors, to foreign language learners wavering between seemingly conflicting identities within both real and imagined communities, the desire to understand and aid identity development, the focus on identity has gained traction in much of the research works published in recent years. However, despite the breadth of identity topics and research outcomes, to truly understand the concept we must first seek out its fundamental features, in order to explore its potential relationship to value.

2.6.2 – IDENTITY DEFINED

2.6.2a The Self

In psychology, *the self* is considered to be a 3-part system of interactive wholes, the experiential consciousness, the inward self-consciousness, and the outward persona. The experiential

consciousness can be seen as the part of the self that perceives the ever-changing context (environment) in which we exist. The inward self-consciousness is more like how we perceive ourselves as who we are. This would be the ‘you’ that you think about when wondering if you fit in with a specific group, or if ‘you’ are the type of person to wear socks with sandals, the ‘you’ whom you are when no-one is looking. The third aspect, the outward persona, could be seen as the person you want others to see you as. Maybe you are inwardly concerned about your appearance, but want all your friends to see you as the life of the party with not a care in the world. This outward act likely doesn’t reflect the inward self-consciousness, but expresses the outward persona which you want others to see.

These comprise the base components of the self, which allow us to experience a multiplicity of self-states, while maintaining a single unified identity (Henriques, 2014). The concept of self-states was extended into SLA in Mills’ (2007; 2014) work, where identity was thought to consist of a single amalgam of multiplicitous kaleidoscopic self-states (Mills, 2014; Mills et al, 2007).

Horowitz (2012) grants us a little more insight into how exactly a multiplicitous self can exist as a single identity, harmoniously, or otherwise. The phenomena of self-organization manifests as a series of interconnected subconscious generalizations about which behaviors are dominant across a variety of social situations and contexts (Horowitz, 2012). This definition of self and self-states, as governed by self-organization provides us with the ability to understand and study self and identity as singular and fragmented, and affords us one of our first insights into identity formation which we will encounter in this literature review.

...[T]he notions of “self” and “identity,” ... are a result of different unconscious generalizations ... fed by various conscious and unconscious inputs, which may be of personal or social origin.

(Horowitz, 2012)

This deep explanation of the core self by Horowitz can be understood more simply through a more visually based example. Imagine a sheer square of cloth. It is mostly transparent, but has maybe one or two areas which are slightly more opaque. If we lay down another square of cloth right on top of this one, the slightly opaque areas may become a bit more obvious, yet still not completely defined. Adding another scrap, we see more clearly the total areas which are less than transparent, and again and again, until there is a seemingly solid representation of shape. However, this shape does not actually exist, not on any one cloth, nor on any number of cloths in any order, it is merely what we perceive to be a solid shape. This is close to how Horowitz means to explain the core self as a mass of generalizations about all of the “selves” we have ever been, in every conceivable context.

2.6.2b Identity Formation

Erikson (1968) divides identity formation into two phases, ‘identity crisis’ and ‘identity commitment’. Erikson saw identity as consistently being in flux, and only through situations wherein values are challenged, could identity be strengthened (Erikson, 1968). Marcia (1993) expanded on this notion, with slight nuances being added to the ideas of *crisis* and *commitment*. He specified that there were in reality, 4 stages to identity development: *Diffusion*, *Foreclosure*, *Moratorium*, and *Achievement* (Marcia, 1993). Known as “Identity Status Theory,” these four identity states outline an evolving process of identity formation, based on the testing and affirmation of self-imagination, values, and suppositions over time.

However, Cote and Levin (2002) saw identity formation as more of a stage by stage process, and were able to identify a 5 different stages of behavior through which individuals transition in order to gain their own individuation, as they adapt to their social contexts: *Refuser*, *Drifter*, *Searcher*, *Guardian*, and *Resolver* (Cote & Levin, 2002). This ontology of identity formation outlines behaviors ranging from those which display an extreme dependence on matured identities, with no engagement (Refuser), to behaviors of motivated self-seeking and growth within the desired community (Resolver).

2.6.2c Identity Selection

Regarding identity selection, Chai (1999) proposed a general theory of preference and belief, in her work, *Choosing an Identity*. In her book, she identifies *Rational Choice Theory*, largely used in psychology, philosophy, and even economic fields, as being able to model human actions, if combined with *Nonexcepted Utility Theory* and both higher and lower level culture and actor theories (Chai, 1999).

The reason for producing such a model lies within the desire to know why humans behave the way they do, even to the point of discovering how we become who we are. Though rational choice theory is primarily aimed at behavior prediction, a complementary *model of preference and belief* (Chai, 1999) is shown to justify human perception, value, belief, and choice within in relation to social contexts. These are many of the same factors and features which are thought to comprise the pressures responsible for identity formation. However, the theories covered in this section are not devoted to contextual pressure but rational selection and reinforcement of belief.

According to Chai's work, we can understand that not only do behaviors originate from external influences and pressures, but so do values and beliefs.

2.6.2d Identity Performance

Performative acts are those which are conducted as a social action, and are used to define or reinforce an identity (Butler, 1990). Such acts may be executed through speech or nonverbal means, or through a host of symbolic acts (Cavanaugh, 2015). Much like the theories of identity selection, this concept of performative identity regards actions as both the result of, and the reinforcement of identity.

According to Butler, these social actions are derivative of social, societal, and ideological pressures, rendering even the most private and personal actions the product of social ideological conventions (Butler, 1990 in Felluga, 2011). In gender identity research, we see that even biological sex is irrelevant to the act of "gender," which is not constructed of fixed categories, but of acts of *doing* gender (Lloyd, 1999). In this way, we may see that even the most fundamental aspects of identity stem from social action, congruent or contradictory to societal pressures.

Section 2.7.0 – BELIEF AND BELONGING

Moving deeper in to the literature, as we get away from the explicit definitions and usages of value(s), we start to see the influence of value, as it has been defined, though more often than not it is not specifically addressed in research and literature which is not directly related to value.

2.7.1 BELIEFS

This quote from Heiphetz, Spelke, and Banaji (2014) demonstrates quite well the state of much research regarding identity and behavior, when it attempts to reach for the fringes of what is known. Or, as it is consistently referred to in many disciplines, the contents of “the black box.”

Regarding the investigation of belief:

Beliefs are invisible contents of the mind... In three experiments... children additionally attributed prosocial *behaviors* to those who shared their ideological beliefs rather than to those who shared their behavior. Together, these experiments demonstrate that children form *social preferences* based on unobservable mental states and that they weigh ideological *beliefs* particularly strongly when making morally relevant behavioral attributions.

(Heiphetz et al., 2014)

As we seen above, which I must clarify is not meant to constitute any form of critique of the referenced literature, even in cases where topics of behavior, preference, and morality are the precise topics of investigation, informed definitions of “belief” seem to be taken as an understood constant. However, this perspective of unknowable constants, such as belief do little to progress our understanding, despite their suitability for being tested as such.

Additionally, in an identity focused study of adolescent delinquency, we see beliefs again being addressed as both a central point of the assertion and as known constant.

In this regard, adolescent-limited *delinquency* is considered to be a way of “knifing off childhood apron strings” (Moffitt, 1993, p. 688), in which adolescents can demonstrate that they and their *beliefs* are distinct from those of their parents.

(Mercer et al., 2017)

This research ties not only belief to behavior, but shared belief to copesetic social integration and divergent beliefs to social disintegration, or the *othering* of the self from those who do not share belief systems. Putting this into more simple terms, Mercer et al. connects the ideas of belief and identity with behavior and belonging, both in individual and social contexts. Their research states

all too plainly that beliefs and the behavioral exhibition of beliefs *are* used for the purposes of creating spaces of *sameness* (belonging) and spaces of *otherness* (not belonging) wherein the individual believes themselves to be adequately represented.

However, though we may draw conclusions from both of the above studies that beliefs inspire behavior, and that both belief and behavior are connected to identity, the question that must still be asked is, “Where is in that beliefs originate?” and accordingly, “What is it that causes someone to *believe*?”

Directly displayed in Przymus’ (2016) doctoral work on social semiotics and identity formation in SLA contexts, we again have multiple published works cited in support of the connections between beliefs, behaviors, and identity, but also explicitly to values.

[A] controversial statement made by a U.S. student in the current study regarding his belief that Mexicans are lazy, are examples of this kind of cultural clash of content. ... House (2000) claims “an emotional reaction [to *cultural* differences in communication styles] is often the major factor responsible for a deterioration of rapport and for the mutual attribution of negative personal traits which, in turn, effectively prevent any recognition of real differences in cultural *values* and norms” (p. 147).

(Przymus, 2016)

Ideas represented by terms such as “beliefs,” “cultural beliefs,” or “cultural values” may be held in such esteem as to warrant no further investigation, however, it is the connection of values, beliefs, emotions, ideals, morals, etc., to the topic of identity formation that should cause us to question whether we are really aware of the ramifications of terms and concepts which we assume are constants, even within highly publicized research works such as these and countless others dealing with these topics.

2.7.2 BELONGING

Another emergent topic within the ESL/SLA community and within pedagogy as a whole is that of belonging. As the focus on learning seems to shift ever more closely to a full consideration of the learner and the learning contexts, one key aspect being addressed with great concern is the idea of *belonging*.

In the example below, we may see how research in academic contexts has worked to connect the concept of *belief* to academic success by way of “belonging.”

...[H]owever, social-psychological interventions have recently gained attention as a “light-touch” approach for increasing motivation for persistence (Yeager & Walton, 2011). These interventions target college students’ uncertainty about *belonging* (i.e., *beliefs* about encountering commonplace adversities while trying to “fit in” in a new community) or growth mindsets (i.e., the *belief* that ability can be grown by exerting effort, seeking help from others, and revising strategies in the face of challenge (Yeager & Dweck, 2012) to help students overcome barriers to success.

(Broda et al., 2018)

Academic interventions affectionately known as the “light-touch” are currently being explored in homogenous and heterogeneous student populations on a variety of scales, demonstrating that student belief in their own ability to “fit in” (belong) has a profound impact on academic performance, closing the largest portion of the gap between majority and minority student populations. However, as a final note from the author,

...[T]hese interventions aren’t magic, and require careful customization to institutional context[s].

(Yeager & Walton, 2011 in Broda et al., 2018)

And though an obvious conclusion to be drawn from this statement, it is worth pointing out that this requirement of ‘careful customization’ from one institution to another does allude to the idea that even when educating similar demographics of student at the same level of education, different academic cultures may emerge within each.

In addition to belonging “growth mindsets” are a major focus of research dealing with *noncognitive* academic intervention.

Walton and Yeager (2014) describe growth-mindset as the *belief* that “intelligence is not fixed but grows with hard work, effective strategies, and help from others” (p. 1). *Social-belonging*, on the other hand, can involve realizing that most first-year students worry about whether they belong in college -- especially at the outset of college (Walton & Cohen, 2011).

(Walton & Yeager, 2014; Walton & Cohen, 2011 in Devers et al., 2016)

The excerpts above demonstrate that social belonging as it is currently being researched, is more or less a byproduct of a set of social beliefs, or beliefs regarding certain aspects of the social environment. However, despite the new research direction of studies in belonging as a factor in academic performance, from studies in belief as a factor in identity development, both are fundamentally grounded in to beliefs of their own. Primarily that *belief* is a powerful force, which extends its influence into a multitude of areas. Second is the idea that belief is *noncognitive*, exists within *the black box*, and yet somehow can be used in research as if it were a known constant which might be casually plugged in as the ‘X’ in any algebraic equation.

2.7.3 SECTION SUMMARY

In section 2.7.0, we have seen of how the concepts of belief and belonging have been used, studied, and observed in current research. From the above excerpts it becomes clear that though conceptually separate categories of study, belief and belonging are interdependent, requiring one to inform the other. Additionally, when regarding belief specifically, it is apparent that regardless of the number and type of research being conducted directly or indirectly related to belief, belief is still considered as an unknowable factor, despite its wealth of purported linkages to other popular areas of study such as behavior, belonging, culture, identity, and even value.

These conclusions drawn from the literature only aid the construction of compelling arguments regarding such an obvious gap in knowledge regarding the connections between each of these research areas, and additionally, for the disambiguation of relevant terms which might eventually provide the foundations necessary for more unified research efforts across and between academic disciplines.

Section 2.8.0 - IMPLICATIONS OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter has worked to identify value, and to understand it in relation to its definitions, related practices, and through triangulation of its influences through the investigation into topics of identity formation, selection, and performance. This has been done in order to demonstrate the strengths and the weaknesses in our current understanding of value and of its potential influences.

2.8.1 – PRIMARY ASSUMPTIONS

2.8.1a Nature of Value

As we have seen from the literature, there are a wealth of concepts appearing in the literature surrounding the investigation of “value.” However, despite the multiplicity of angles from which research trajectories have sought to approach value and value related topics, the nature of value seems to be indicated through the ways in which value is actualized, interpreted, and connected to other seemingly disparate research foci.

Value it seems, is a concept which is represented through the attribution of benefit, whether actual or imagined, realized or unrealized. Whether regarding value as utility, or value as that which provides pleasure to an experiencer, value must be perceived as providing some boon.

This applies to the benefits researched under evolutionary economy as well as the development of cultural practices researched in anthropology, as each provides unique benefit the organism directly, or indirectly through its social environment.

However, whether instrumental or intrinsic, it would seem that value is subject to individual and co-constructed perceptions of that value and may be interpreted differently by different persons of peoples at once or over time. The greatest possible implication then is that value itself, in all perceptible forms, is indeed subjective. For example, even seemingly profound truths such as the value of lengthening the human lifespan may ultimately prove to be purely subjective, given enough time, as the state of globalized gentrification and reproductive decline may indeed indicating at present.

2.8.1b Proximity of Value

Most commonly in our review of value related literature, we have seen how value seems to mean different things at different levels of engagement, e.g. how proximal, or how distally value is perceived to operate in relation to the perceiver. In identity development, we see that there are roughly 3 distinct levels of value: Internal, In Direct Contact, and External. These can also be seen as *accepted*, *transitioning*, and *rejected*. However, these are only the levels of value which involve direct/conscious interaction.

As we have seen from examples of teaching, testing, and assessment value exists at levels beyond that which is explicit to the experiencer, though still equally influential, if not more so. The value at these levels is deeply ingrained within the structure of the system to which subjects are being exposed and is reinforced by all who accept and all who deny them. *Ergo*, every

teacher who teaches, every exam that is given, student who passes, *and* every student who fails all reinforce values as represented by the structure and actions of the institution, whether that be regarding what constitutes valuable knowledge or model student behavior.

With evaluation, we engage with an ever further removed level of value which we believe to be the proverbial *root*, the explicit assertion of what is perceived to be valuable, and the connecting of actions to values. If we remember back to the quote from Norris regarding the nature of evaluation being the establishment of the desired reality, we see that at this level of proximity to the subject (learners) this is an entirely justified claim. Values determined at the programmatic and organizational levels likely never become apparent to their intended recipients. Despite this however, they work to shape the shared reality of learners, molding a finite scope of constructed subjectivity on their behalf.

The implication then is this. If we are to take what we have seen in each of these different environments wherein value is demonstrated and generalize it into a single rule, it would be that there is an inverse correlation between value proximity and the perception of value as objective reality.

2.8.1c Value and its Connection to Belief

As seen so far in the literature concerning value, value has a resounding connection to perception, perception of the world, of truth, or self, and of others, even the perception of perception (meta-cognition). Comparing this to *belief*, we see that belief also deals with perception though not always explicitly referred to as such. Most generally, in the literature presented we see belief being addressed as some form of perception or evaluation of self

(identity), self-ability (growth-mindset), belief (religious and moral judgment), or of the self in relation to others (belonging).

At this point it seems that there is at least one connection, if not several direct parallel between value and belief, or between subconscious and conscious perceptions of what is perceived as good, bad, or ugly. At a conscious level, these connections reside primarily in the act of perceiving and judging. However, there are additional connections between value and identity which exist at a level of influence seemingly removed from perception, residing almost in an *a priori* context of meta-cognition. However, this is far as the literature can take us as far as exploring these potential connections and as such, we are required to explore these concepts in new ways in order to disambiguate them as much as possible for use in future research.

2.8.2 – SECTION SUMMARY

From what we have seen reflected in the scope of the literature available, value can be described as a 2-fold concept. Primarily, “value” is a term which is generally attributed with subjective benefit. Secondly, that value may be perceived as being either subjective or objective by different persons or peoples at a given time perceived differently over time. Additionally, it is thought that it is a lack of reflexive awareness of the subjective nature of value in general which results in perceiving values as if ‘true.’ Finally, values being believed to be true seem to constitute a distinct level at which values influence the people or persons operating under those beliefs. Therefore, as this research moves forward, we will attempt to uncover how, why, and to what extent values may achieve this “paradigmatic” state of objectification, as well as to uncover the roles *belief* and *belonging* may play in value transmission and adoption and influence.

CHAPTER 03:

METHODOLOGY

Section 3.1.0 – INTRODUCTION

A preliminary literature review was conducted in order to confirm the depth and scope of published research currently available in the field of SLA, regarding identity and values, as well as to identify areas where related research works may have approached areas related to meta-cognitive Value concepts, in order to clearly identify the ‘gap’ in existing research and/or theory. This aided in the development of questions and prompts to be used within the initial rounds of the Delphi study, in order to explore areas paradigmatic Value with little to no redundancy between areas to be explored, and with as little overlap as possible with areas which are currently well researched. This was accomplished primarily by preemptively establishing working definitions of concepts which may be well represented in the literature, but which might be seen as related or even synonymous. This allowed for the creation of initial response prompts which would distinguish the concepts being explored in the context of this research, from other concepts which may not be entirely synonymous.

Using these disambiguated conceptual prompts, a Delphi study was conducted in order to generate a consensus between scholars in various fields, whose recent publications addressed topics language education, teacher education, SLA, identity, value, social behavior, and/or power in identity development. Such a broad range of scholarly contributors was used in order to gain the broadest possible insights into Value as a meta-cognitive concept, and its possible relationship to learner identity formation. As such, participants in the Delphi study were selected due to their having recently contributed published works on topics related to language, language education, SLA, identity, sociology, power, etc.

A small selection of recent publications on topics related to language, value, and identity were used in order to identify potential Delphi Participants. The reference sections within the selection of publications was used in order to identify all other recent authorship, which may have contributed to the most recent publications on these and other such related topics. This constituted the primary round of participant selection.

After several rounds of candidate refinement, the final self-selected participants in the study participated in several rounds of concept critique and revision. Thematic analysis of participant input at each the close of each of the four rounds produced data which statically represented themes present in the general feedback, which was used in the creation of a general consensus on Value and its potential interaction with learner identity, which can be said to represent the consensus of those scholars, and each of their fields.

3.1.1 DELPHI STUDY OVERVIEW

The Delphi study consisted of three rounds. Two rounds is generally seen as sufficient for gaining insights and forming consensus, however, regarding the two topics of Value and identity being addressed in this research project, a third round was used as well. Round 01 primarily facilitated the establishment of Value concepts and scope to be explored. Round 02 consisted of the representation of mean consensus(s) as established in previous rounds, for the purpose of acceptance, rejection, and/or modification. This round allowed scholars to view the general consensus from the first round and offer additional critique in light of the previous representation of the concepts being investigated. Round 03, the final round of the project proposed to supply an interactional model of Value and identity (should any links be though to exist), based on

previous contributions, and to solicit final acceptance, rejection, or modification to the proposed conceptual model.

3.1.1a – Round 01

Round 01 of the Delphi study asked participants to agree with, critique, or produce a definition of meta-cognitive ‘Capital “V” Value.’ Goldthwait’s (1985) assumptions were used in part as a provisional reference point, as well as several other definitions of concepts along the value spectrum in order to provide participants with a basis for agreement, revision, or critique of the definition of value which was composed synthetically through literature review (Bentham, 1988; Berkowitz, 1970; Brosch & Sander, 2015; Goldthwait, 1985; Loewer, 1993; Norris, 2016; Weedon, 1997).

While merely asking candidates to spontaneously provide definitions of ‘value’ would seem to be the most obvious means of eliciting a consensus regarding the value concept, the potential for confusion of ‘little-v’ (subjective) value and ‘big-V’ (objective) Value would likely be great enough to compromise Round 01 continuity. Thus, a principle concept definition derived through literature review was provided as a stimulus, for revision and critique, or to inspire newly generated definitions which might replace the one provided. This hoped to ensure the continuity of Round 01 participant responses, while enabling unique, novel, and nuanced participant contributions.

Participant responses were then thematically categorized (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bird et al., 2013), and used to establish a general consensus definition of big-V value, which was subsequently provided to participants as a stimulus for Round 02.

3.1.1b – Round 02

Round 02 of the Delphi study provided the definition of ‘big-V’ value, as it was constructed based on the consensus data from the previous round, and ask participants to suggest any revisions the new definition may require. This was done in order to display the results, as well as expose participants to the extent to which a consensus actually existed between participating scholars. The primary objective of this step in the process was to either reinforce the previous findings, or cause participants to become emboldened with their criticism in the following phase. As a general consensus is not synonymous with unanimous agreement, it was decided that reporting the general consensus along with an ordinal ranking of responses would encourage a heightened level of criticism in the following round.

Additionally, participants were asked to provide their thoughts on the nature of the relationship and/or interaction (if any) which may have been thought to exist between a meta-cognitive Value and learner identity (formation). In Round 02, the relevance of Value was intended to be mostly conjecture by participants. However it was thought that this would afford some context with which to espouse Value a relative position in SLA, as per its relationship(s) with identity and/or identity formation and negotiation. This data was used in order to produce a derivative model(s) of Value/identity interactional relationship(s), which was also submitted for scholarly critique in the following round.

3.1.1c – Round 03

Round 03, the final round of the Delphi study mainly focused on the critique of the provisional model of interactivity, constructed based on feedback and themes derived from rounds 01 and 02 of this study and was intended to constitute the operationalization of the Value concept, as per

the general consensus of scholars who are actively pursuing research topics related to language, value, and identity.

3.1.2 DATA TRACKING

As responses were qualitative, data needed to be catalogued and coded before it was able to be statistically analyzed. To this end, Excel was used to catalogue responses and categorize them thematically. As the actual number of participants did not total more than 30 persons, a manual process of data entry and coding proved most expedient. Though the researcher is a certified expert in linguistic cryptology and linguistic pattern recognition, methods and theories dictated by experts in the field regarding the thematic categorization of content, at lexical, phrasal, sentential, and paragraph levels was used (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thematic categorization, though seemingly under represented as a form of qualitative research is widely used in multiple fields of study, and is considered by many to be a foundational method for qualitative research (Holloway & Todres, 2003), as thematizing meanings is the root skill shared across all of qualitative analysis practices (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

As Delphi studies seek to explore targeted topics with little supporting research available, allowing subjects to produce novel responses to subject prompts was imperative. Limiting participants prescribed selections from quantifiable answer selections pools was thought to potentially inhibit participants from producing novel responses and could have potentially guided participants toward specific research results through ‘best answer’ selection (Furnham, 1986). Therefore, as novel participant responses and quantifiable data were desired for the creation of a quantifiably synthetic concept definition, the method of thematic categorization outlined in Miles

and Huberman (1994), as well as the more expositive work of Braun & Clarke (2006) was perfectly suited for use in this Delphi study (Boyatzis, 1998).

Coding of each round of Delphi feedback was unique. As such, codes were generated as necessary for use in each round. The generated codes were representative of major and minor themes, whether overt or distinguished through nuance. Qualitative responses represented by thematic code were then used to provide the means of quantitative statistical analysis. Though Delphi study results are seen as largely non-generalizable due to the exclusivity of the population being surveyed, statistical analysis provided a basis for reliability within the study and validity of assertions of consensus regarding the exploratory topics.

3.1.3 DATA CODING

Data coding for participant responses was accomplished through the individual analysis of each participant response individually. Each response would be assessed for relevant content, at the phrasal, sentential, and super-sentential levels. Each occurrence of contentful feedback was assigned a code related to its categorical topic and counted as a single token under an overarching theme which housed one or more thematic codes.

Contentful feedback which acted as the source of thematic codes was any portion of any participant response which made direct or indirect reference, or allusion to any portion (present or absent) of the concepts or contexts being explored.

Following the identification of all contentful portions of all feedback provided within each round of the Delphi study, each token was then codified according to its thematic content, color coded, and housed under a general theme, determined by its semantic.

Example response codified *thematically* and *semantically*:

Accept	<p>“I had mixed opinions about the statement. It depends on what is regarded as 'objective'. In my view, often value is not only something that an individual holds (subjectively), but something that a group of people share (intersubjectively). If intersubjectively is regarded as objective, I can agree with the statement.”</p>	Partially Agree	Objectivity is Vague	Objectivity is Perceptual
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(Figure 3.1)

This thematic coding process follows the principles laid out for thematic analysis of qualitative information in research, under Miles & Huberman (1994) and Braun & Clarke (2006).

Section 3.2.0 – PARTICIPANT SELECTION

3.2.1 PRIMARY SEARCH

The key to generating a consensus regarding the definition and terms related to the concept of meta-cognitive value, existing at the level of paradigm, was to ensure that the scholars and scholarship used as the foundations of the Delphi study were indeed representative. This meant that it was necessary to strip the concept of any form of disciplinary propriety and solicit participation for all scholars who might make be using elements of, or elements which contribute to concepts of paradigmatic value, regardless of their field or research interests. This included scholarship in or related to behavior, sociology, identity theory, identity formation and performance, power, ethnicity, etc.

In order to accomplish this broadening of the concept it was decided by the P.I. that the most reliable way to gain an accurate representation of current scholarship related to the subject of inquiry of the proposed Delphi study, would be via ‘Key Word’ search in an academic research archive.

As the results of the Delphi study are intended to represent not only the participants’, but the most recent scholarship related to the concepts being explored, two additional constraints were placed on the database key word search. Primarily, as topics of value and identity are presently addressed in a variety of rapidly evolving fields, a 36-month publication threshold was instituted. The next imposition on the search criterion was in regard to ensuring the accurate representation of the field(s) in which the referenced works was being published, and not merely representing the ideals of a single author or publicist. This was achieved by instituting the requirement that each result must also be a peer reviewed document.

The University of Arizona ‘*SUMMON*’ archive, was therefore used in order to generate a limited list of those related publications which had been both published within the last 36 months and peer reviewed. The key word search was conducted using the terms “*Language*,” “*Value*,” and “*Identity*,” in that order. These search terms generated a list of 112,357 relevant texts which had been published and peer reviewed within the 36-months prior to the initiation of this study.

Of the initial Summon Archive search results, the top 10 resources alone produced over 500 references to authors who had contributed to these 10 works. As the referenced authors were to

be used as the participant recruitment pool, 500 was deemed more than sufficient to produce an adequate sample population size for the conduct of this study.

Therefore, only the top 10 resources listed in the Summon search were selected as primary candidate selection resources, due to their breadth of topics and number of referenced authors. These ‘Top-10’ publications on combined topics of language, value, and identity were then entered into an Excel spread sheet, detailing their full citation as it appeared in its original source format, contributing author(s), subject(s) as listed, date of publication, and list of key terms. This was done in order to verify that each of the sources generated under the initial search criterion were indeed relevant to the goals of the Delphi study.

3.2.1a – Primary Search Revision

It was determined at this point that *Primary Source Text #06* was indeed irrelevant to the study, as its primary focus was on medical treatment and patient care, and was thusly discounted from the primary list. Additionally, *Primary Source Text #08* was found to be a duplicate entry, due to its publication in multiple journals, and was likewise discounted from the primary list. Following the expulsion of *text #06* and *text #08* an 11th and 12th text were added to the primary source list, in order to maintain the list of 10 primary sources.

(Additional sources were generated during the initial search phase, under identical criterion)

Following the cataloguing of the initial sources, the reference sections of each of the initial texts was scoured for all referenced authors and works which were cited as contributing to the primary text’s publication. As it is the goal of the Delphi study to represent the consensus of scholarship, it was thought that the authors who were referenced as contributing to the most recent primary

(top-10) texts, would likely constitute the largest pool of potential participants with foundational knowledge and insights into the concepts to be explored. However, the consideration of the representation of recent scholarship was still a concern with using cited authors. As such, only cited works which had themselves been published no more than 8 years prior to this study, were considered relevant.

At this point, it was found that *Primary Source Text #01* and *#02* contained no citations or referenced texts in their bibliography sections, which were of texts published within the 8 years prior to this study. As per the rational established for text and participant selection, this would likewise mean that sources *#01* and *#02* were not based on recent research, and were likewise exclude from the primary source list. To maintain the continuity of the initial list, a 13th and 14th source were added to the (top-10) primary source text list.

(Additional sources were generated during the initial search phase, under identical criterion)

The newly established primary source text list then consisted of initial search results #01 through #14, with the exception of entries #01, 02, 06, & 08, excluded due to irrelevance, redundancy, or lack of refence material (Appendix A1).

3.2.2 SECONDARY SEARCH

The references section of each of the 10 primary resources was then used to compile an expanded list of Delphi candidates (Appendix B1). The rational was that the authors referenced as contributing to the content of the primary text, whether in part or in whole, would represent the scholarly population whose work had been foundational to the production of theses most recent texts, which are focused at least in part on the interactivity of language, value, and identity

concepts. Should the number of potential participants identified in the expanded list Delphi candidates have not met or exceed the optimal number 200 of participants, there was a provision to extend the 8-year threshold to 10 years. However, the number of potential participants identified in the expanded list totaled 508 persons, prior to any reduction or refinement (Appendix B1), far exceeding initial expectations.

Potential participants in excess of 200 was seen as optimal at this stage of selection due to the inevitability of candidate numbers due to any of several expected eventualities.

- Candidates appearing as repeated references (expected 10%)
- Candidates being otherwise uncontactable (expected 30%)
- Candidates electing not to participate (expected 60%)

This would result in a realized population of 50.4 participants, well in excess of the 10-30 suggested by Deardorff (2004) citing Dalkey (1969) as the optimal number of participants necessary for validity in Delphi study methods.

The number and breadth of potential participants identified in the secondary search phase was both surprising and reassuring, as the scholars identified under the selection method were found to represent several academic fields, as well as communities on nearly every continent. However, as potential participant pool had exceeded 250% of the minimum optimal number expected, reduction was deemed a priority.

3.2.3 PRIMARY REFINEMENT

3.2.3a – Justification

The secondary search phase produced 216 cited works, with 508 contributing authors. This number was seen as problematic for both the projected scope and timeline of the proposed study, as thematic coding of individual responses of over 500 participants would potentially add months of coding time to the study. Additionally, as shown in Appendix B1, the initial cataloging of contributing authors revealed that more than 100 potential participant entries were duplicate entries. This further justified the reduction of participant numbers generated in the secondary search phase.

3.2.3b – Reduction

All 216 contributing works identified in the secondary search phase were catalogued in a separate Excel document. Each publication was searched through online library databases, publisher websites, etc., and key word lists, topics, and/or key terms used in abstracts were catalogued along with actual citation used, contributing author(s), and publication date (Appendix B1a). These key terms, phrases, and topics were labeled as “Tags”.

Key terms and phrases related to Individual or Group: *Sociology, Behavior, Cognition, Identity, Belief, Identity/Social Development* and/or *Negotiation, Value(s)*, etc. were deemed relevant to the study. Conversely, highly specialized or event specific topics, Medical reports, Methodologies, Statistical systems, Manuals, and Literature Reviews, etc. were deemed unrelated to the study (Appendix B1a). Following the cataloguing of each publication’s key terms, phrases, and topics, resources whose tags were not relevant to the proposed study were discounted, and all contributing authors removed from the candidate pool (Appendix C1).

3.2.3c – Result

The result of the initial refinement was the reduction of publications from 216 to 114, and contributing scholars 508 to 269. It should also be noted that while 102 works were discounted from the study due to non-relevance, many contributing authors remained as candidates, due to having contributed to other cited publications which were deemed relevant.

3.2.4 SECONDARY REFINEMENT

3.2.4a – Justification

Thought the primary refinement of relevant works reduced the participant candidate pool by nearly 50% (239), duplicate and redundant entries were still thought to be present within the Excel resource catalogue (Appendix C1).

3.2.4b – Reduction

Accordingly, a new Excel catalogue (Appendix C1a) was compiled, accounting for each duplicate entry, after all irrelevant texts had been removed from the resource list. This was accomplished by manually typing each author listed in Appendix C1, into Appendix C1a. Using the predictive Auto-Fill function in the Excel document, any repeated entries were highlighted in yellow. All unique entries were then highlighted in green, in order to draw an exaggerated contrast, primarily to aid in manually tabulating entry numbers. All Unique entries were then moved to new Excel catalogue (Appendix D1), in preparation for the next stage of participant selection.

3.2.4c – Result

Of the 269 contributing authors remaining as potential participants after the primary reduction, 67 listings were found to be redundant entries, due to being referenced multiple times or appearing as a contributing author in several different works (Appendix C1a). The remaining 202 novel entries were then copied to a separate document (Appendix D1).

3.2.5 TERTIARY REFINEMENT

3.2.5a – Justification

Attempting to obtain contact information was seen as the third and final form of refinement concerning the candidate pool, as any remaining reduction of numbers would largely be left to participant self-selection. However, despite the reduction of the initial 508 search results, to 202 potential participants, there remained a wealth of diversity. As candidates spanned several continents, languages, disciplines, and career maturities, the P.I. was required to establish clear criterion related to the search for participant contact information. This intentionality was the primary reason the search for contact information was deemed a tertiary refinement phase.

3.2.5b – Reduction

In order to obtain contact information for the 202 candidates identified in the Secondary Refinement phase, general internet and specific database searches were conducted using specific search terms. Search terms such as “Professor (participant name) contact”, “Dr. (participant name) contact”, and (participant name) C.V. were most commonly productive in obtaining contact information. However, additional information was also used when available. These additional searches though were limited to searching publishing institution, home institution, partial titles of publications, and subject area specialization terms, all in conjunction with the candidate’s name in any combination of *First*, *Last*, and/or *Middle* (if available).

Of the additional methods of search, searching the home institution was generally the most successful, when necessary. Though there were still several candidates whose contact information could not be located despite these additional search methods. It should be noted that most generally, candidates whose information was otherwise un-obtainable, were graduate students who had co-published with an advisor, or in some cases were professor *emeritus*, with

little to no academic presence even at a home institution. However, as an example of an extreme case, one candidate was found to have been recently deceased.

3.2.5c – Result

Of the 202 potential participants identified in the secondary refinement phase, only 36 were found to be uncontactable, resulting in 166 candidates who might be contacted for participation in the study (Appendix D1). This 17.8% attrition due to inability to locate contact information was far less than the expected 30% which were expected to be lost due to an uncontactable status. This also serves to further validate the search method utilized by the P.I.

3.2.6 SELECTION FINALIZATION

The total list of prospective participants was compiled into a single Excel spread sheet, which detailed author's name, contact information, and department or field (Appendix D1a). Entries were listed in the original order of publications, as they were cited as reference materials for primary source texts. This list was then duplicated and organized by author's last name, in alphabetical order and transitioned into a separate Excel document (Appendix D1b), in order to ensure that none of the 166 entries were duplicated or lost. This recompilation of candidates into alphabetical order was done to ensure that there was no way to suggest a ranking of participants, either by their primary source text, publication type, date, content, or field.

As the summation of the selection and reductions phases, Appendix D1b was used as the primary document for all further actions concerning initial participant outreach.

Section 3.3.0 – 1st PARTICIPANT OUTREACH

3.3.1 OVERVIEW

Upon completion of the final candidate list (Appendix D1b) of potential Delphi participants, the contact information obtained in the tertiary refinement phase was entered into the Qualtrics survey analytics system, to be used as the initial mailing list for the preliminary participation request. An initial mass-mailing, consisting of preliminary participation request email and survey, was sent to all candidates using anonymous links and encryption provided through the Qualtrics survey system.

Anonymous links and encryption tools were used primarily to ensure anonymity between participants, and not between participants and P.I. This was due mainly due to the need of the P.I. to verify that only responses from candidates who have participated in all four rounds of the study, were represented in the final findings. Of the 166 addresses provided to the Qualtrics ‘mailing list’, which contained primarily academic institution affiliated email addresses, only 1 address email was “bounced back”. This was most likely due to the candidate no longer being affiliated with the previously known host institution.

3.3.2 REQUEST E-MAIL

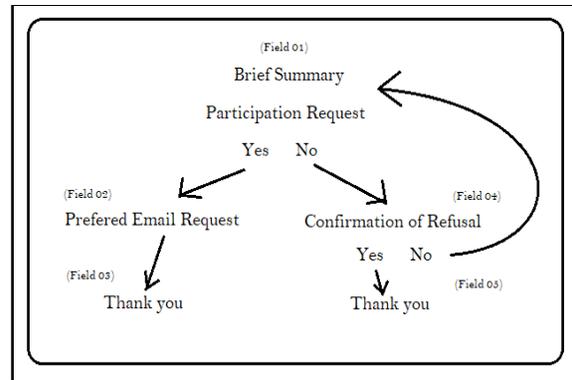
The participation request email, which was sent out to each candidate through the Qualtrics survey system. This email provided a brief explanation of the reason for being contacted (their candidacy) and a topical summary of the proposed Delphi study. This section of the e-mail also contained a hyperlink to an online document which detailed more in-depth specifics of the study and provided more information regarding their potential role as a participant, as well as IRB consent information and contact links (Appendix R1). Following the brief description, a link was provided for an online survey. Though under IRB regulation, participation in the Delphi study

would constitute consent, the like to the online survey included in the initial participation request e-mail was intended both verify explicit consent, as well as elicit preferred contact information (Appendix R2).

3.3.3 REQUEST DESIGN

The participation request was designed primarily as an adaptive response form Adaptive forms provide only the information and/or questions which are relevant to the individual participant currently involved in completing the survey. Rather than supplying participants with the entire list of questions which may or may not be relevant to them, each participant is only exposed to the items which are directly relevant to their previous responses/inputs. Though this system may become endlessly complex, the limited scope of merely obtaining consent afforded the form a latitude of simplicity.

As shown in the info graphic to the right, the participation request consisted of a description of the Delphi study, as it was proposed, followed by a yes/no participation request (Field 01). Should the participant select “Yes” they are directed to supply a preferred email address



(Figure 3.2)

for further participation (Field 02), and finally to a ‘thank you’ message (Field 03). Should the participant select “No” following the preliminary description, they will be directed to a message reiterating that selecting “No” will exclude them from all further participation and consideration in the proposed study (Field 04). Should they not confirm their previous refusal to participate, they are directed back to the previous participation prompt (Field 01). However, should the

participant confirm that they do on wish to participate, they are directed to a message thanking them for their consideration (Field 05).

3.3.4 REQUEST RESULTS

The time allotted for the initial consent phase of the study was decided to be no more than 30 days. Thirty days was thought to be sufficient for all willing participants to voice their willingness to participate, as well as contact the P.I. or IRB with any additional questions or concerns they might have had before consenting to participate. However, nearly two weeks following the initial invitation to participate, an overwhelming number of participants had not responded, either to accept or decline the invitation. Two weeks after the initial invitation was sent, a reminder email was sent to the 156 participants who had not initiated the attached survey or failed to complete it by that time.

Following the 30-day waiting period, the total number of survey respondents was 4, with 2 consenting to participate in the survey, and a further 162 who elected not to respond to the survey either to accept or decline the invitation to participate.

Section 3.4.0 – 2ND PARTICIPANT OUTREACH

3.4.1 OVERVIEW

A second attempt at participant outreach was made, due to the overwhelming lack of responses from Delphi study candidates (4/166). Under the advisement of the dissertation committee, the use of Qualtrics as an anonymous email platform was discontinued for participant outreach and individualized emails were sent to each candidate individually, asking for their consent to participate in a formal letter, rather than through automated survey. This did result in a much

higher response rate 48/166, resulting in 20 positive responses in the same response window allotted to the Qualtrics-based contact method.

3.4.2 2ND REQUEST E-MAIL

A second request email was sent to each potential study participant individually, from a non-anonymous university email address. Much like the previous Qualtrics survey email, the second version of the email contained details of the study, participant expectations, and a broad justification of purpose and significance. However, unlike the Qualtrics survey emails, each letter was addressed to each candidate individually and made reference to not only their field of study, but also to the specific research publication which had identified them as potential participants. The tone of the email was also adjusted from generic to individualized.

3.4.2a – Data Tracking

As the individualized participant requests were sent from an affiliated university email account, there was no need to track data via the Qualtrics survey system. This would have required duplicate data entries into excel and Qualtrics, therefore it was decided that participation data tracking would be conducted exclusively through Excel spreadsheet catalogues. This was accomplished by adding an additional “consent” column to the already existing Appendix D1b, and manually annotating a Yes/No response for each candidate, as responses were received.

3.4.3 2ND REQUEST E-MAIL RESULT

The 2nd participant request was sent out to all participant January 01, 2019, with a reminder to respond send out to all potential participants who had not previously responded by January 15th, 2019. The individualized participant request and reminder email result was a 29% response rate (48 / 166) with over 40% of the respondents agreeing to participate in the study (20 / 48). This

number was deemed an acceptable sample population for the generation of a consensus through Delphi study method (Dalkey, 1969).

Section 3.5.0 – THE STUDY

3.5.1 DELPHI ROUND 01

February 01, participants were sent an invitation to participate in the 1st round of the study. Each participant was emailed individually with a link to a Qualtrics survey and asked to respond within a 2-week period. All responses were collected on the 15th of February, two full weeks after the round 01 was distributed to study participants.

In total, of the 20 participants who elected to participate in the study, 18 completed Round 01.

The data derived through thematic analysis is represented in the findings in Chapter 04.

3.5.1a Round 01 Instrument

The Round 01 survey consisted of 06 separate question blocks:

- 1) a generalized reiteration of the purpose and format of the study
- 2) foundational concepts derived from literature review with provisional summary
- 3) the proposed definition with reiterative explanation of concept
- 4) a prompt for the participant to either accept or reject the proposed definition
- 5) a prompt for the participant to provide feedback, response or critique
- 6) information regarding the close of the round.

The purpose of Round 01 was to offer a broad interdisciplinary sample of participant scholars the ability to critique a novel definition of paradigmatic value, as was synthesized from interdisciplinary literature review. As such, the reiteration of Delphi method in block 01 and the

foundational literature provided in block 02 were deemed necessary to accommodate any potential gaps in knowledge or theory which may have stemmed from any participant's highly specialized background. The conceptual definition was proposed in block 03, immediately following the summary of foundational concepts in order to juxtapose the provisional definition with its synthetic foundations in the literature.

In blocks 04 and 05, the participants were asked to accept or reject the definition, as well as elaborate on their reasoning, rationale, or critique. These blocks were separated in order to force the participant to engage with their own unique insights regarding the concepts and definitions proposed in the previous blocks. Until moving on to next block, the participant was not aware that they would be able to elaborate on their rationale. As such, they were required to make a decision in block 04 as to whether they would fundamentally accept or reject the proposed definition. The reason for this was based on the same principles as removing the neutral option from Likert scales, in order to encourage a more insightful response (Nadler, Weston, & Voyles, 2015).

Following the input of any critique or final feedback regarding the terms, concepts, definitions, or justifications of their previous acceptance or rejection decisions, the participants were thanked and informed about expected dates for the following rounds of the study.

3.5.2 DELPHI ROUND 02

Following the analysis of Round 01 and the composition of an expanded definition based on participant feedback in Round 01, participants were sent an invitation to participate in the 2nd round of the study. Each participant was emailed individually with a link to a Qualtrics survey

and asked to respond within a 2-week period. All responses were collected two full weeks after Round 02 was distributed to study participants.

In total, of the 18 participants who elected to participate in the Round 01, 12 completed Round 02. The data derived through thematic analysis is also represented in the findings in Chapter 04.

Having identified the themes present within the Round 01 responses, clarity of terms and the explicit statement of the perceptual nature of ‘*objective*’ value, were largely identified as deficits in the supplementary definition. Additionally, several participants seemed to struggle with the second aspect of the proposed definition, “*proximity*.” Thus, the clarification of the concept of proximity as *reflexive awareness* was also thought to be of benefit to the new consensus definition, as well as an expansion of context surrounding the *value* concept in the first half of the definition.

Employing the consensus data from Round 01, the following expanded definition was constructed.

Paradigmatic Value exists as one polar extreme of a cognition-based value continuum. Primarily, the idea of value as a continuum rests on the understanding that the concept of ‘*value*’ fundamentally represents the attribute of any experience, action, object, or concept which is perceived to be of some form of benefit. By extension, ‘*value*’ is formed as the result of a perceptually generated attribution of benefit and is therefore fundamentally subjective in nature. However, transitioning value(s) from the subjective pole to the paradigmatic pole also stems from the experiencer’s perception, or more accurately the lack thereof. Should the perceiver of a given value be less reflexively aware of the subjectivity of their perception, subjective value(s) will likely resemble²² ‘*objective*’ value(s) in relation to the degree to which they are, or are not aware. Such perceptions of value(s) *as* objective or even as inter-subjective may additionally influence or reinforce beliefs, actions, and/or behaviors, further reinforcing the perceived value

²² **Resemble:** the subjective belief that something is or is not...

paradigm the experiencer is operating within. Therefore, the second aspect of ‘value’ can be understood as form of ‘*cognitive proximity*²³’ which forms the breadth of the continuum. Or, the degree to which the attributor²⁴ of value(s) can be reflexively aware of the subjectivity of value(s) being perceived or attributed, constitutes the distance between the subjective and paradigmatic poles.

(Dees, 2019)

This definition was supplied as the basis for Round 02.

3.5.2a Round 02 Instrument

The Round 02 survey consisted of 06 separate question blocks:

- 1) a generalized reiteration of the previous round and expectation for the current round
- 2) a visual representation of data gained from the previous round, with explanations
- 3) the expanded definition paired with original definition proposed in the previous round
- 4) a prompt for the participant to either accept or reject the expanded definition
- 5) a prompt for the participant to provide feedback, response or critique
- 6) information regarding the close of the round.

The purpose of Round 02 was to offer a broad interdisciplinary sample of participant scholars the ability to critique the expanded definition of paradigmatic value, as was modified and expanded according to feedback provided in round 01. As such, the reiteration of Delphi method in block 01 and the representation of feedback provided in block 02 were deemed necessary to accommodate any potential knowledge gaps or questions regarding the expansion of the definition provided. The expanded definition was proposed in block 03, immediately following the summary of foundational concepts in order to juxtapose the expanded definition with its synthetic foundations in the participants’ own feedback.

²³ **Reflexive Awareness:** the degree to which an entity is conscious of subjectivity of a given value

²⁴ **Attributor:** the entity generating an attribution.

In blocks 04 and 05, the participants were asked to accept or reject the expanded definition, as well as elaborate on their reasoning, rational, or critique. These blocks were separated, as they were in Round 01, in order to encourage the participant to engage with their own unique insights regarding the concepts and definitions proposed in the previous blocks. As such, they were required to make a decision in block 04 as to whether they would fundamentally accept or reject the expanded definition. The reason for this was based on the same principles as removing the neutral option from Likert scales, in order to encourage a more insightful response (Nadler, Weston, & Voyles, 2015).

Following the input of any critique or final feedback regarding the terms, concepts, definitions, or justifications of their previous acceptance or rejection decisions, the final block thanked the participants for their insights and informed them about the final round of the study.

3.5.3 DELPHI ROUND 03

Following the analysis of Round 02 and the composition of a quantitative questionnaire based on participant feedback from both Rounds 01, which sought to critique the foundational concept of meta-cognitive value, and Round 02, which sought to critique related contextual elements, participants were sent an invitation to participate in the 3rd and final round of the study. Each participant was emailed individually with a link to a Qualtrics survey and asked to respond within a 3-week period. This additional time for participants to respond was allotted due to several participants stating that they would be unavailable during certain portions of the collection period. All responses were collected three full weeks after Round 03 was distributed to study participants.

In total, of the 12 participants who elected to participate in the Round 02, 12 completed the Round 03 survey, which is still within the expected range (10-30) of participants for the Delphi method (Dalkey in Deardorff, 2004). The data derived from the survey is also represented in the findings in Chapter 04, along with all findings from the previous rounds.

Having identified the themes present within the responses from the two previous rounds, related to core concepts within meta-cognitive value, terminology, and relevant contexts, and inconsideration of specific feedback regarding unfamiliarity with discipline specific terminology causing confusion, Round 03 sought to deconstruct all concepts and provide participants with a means of engaging on a truly interdisciplinary level. As such, a series of six question blocks, each having between three and eight short statements was constructed in a ‘select all that apply’ survey format.

These question blocks were supplied as the basis for Round 03.

3.5.3a Round 03 Instrument

The Round 03 survey consisted of 08 separate question blocks:

- 1) a generalized reiteration of the previous round and expectation for the current round
- 2) 8 short statements related to the subjectivity and perceptual nature of value
- 3) 5 short statements related to cultural influence and constructed subjectivity
- 4) 5 short statements related to belief and behavior
- 5) 3 short statements related to value conformity and resistance
- 6) 5 short statements related to the transmission and adoption of values
- 7) 5 short statements related to value conformity and group belonging
- 8) a thanks for participating in the final round.

The purpose of Round 03 was to have participants engage with each of the key elements of value, as well as key contextual elements pertaining to individual and group identity, belief, and behavior, by identifying which if any of a series of statements they believed to be “correct” or “true.” Based on the feedback gained from both of the previous rounds, a series of 31 unique statements related to value and its related contexts were drafted. Each of these statements addressed specific that were believed to be key to the meta-cognitive value construct, or mitigate terminology which seemed to cause confusion in previous rounds.

As such, the reiteration of Delphi method and the representation of feedback from previous rounds were not deemed necessary to accommodate any potential knowledge gaps or questions regarding the short statements provided.

Following their selections of short statements which they believed to be true or correct, the final block thanked the participants for their insights and informed them about the final round of the study.

Section 3.6.0 - METHOD SUMMARY

Below is a brief summary of the steps that were taken during the research of this dissertation project:

- 1) Definition of meta-cognitive/paradigmatic value synthesized from literature review
- 2) Experts were identified through their contributions to relevant peer reviewed works
- 3) Participants were invited to participate and given a brief overview of the study, research questions, and a complete list of works referenced in literature review of this study

- 4) Monitor team was secured
- 5) Final participant selection reviewed by monitor team
- 6) Round 01 initiated and distributed via Qualtrics
- 7) Results collected, thematically analyzed, coded, and used in the construction of materials for Round 02
- 8) Data thematizing and coding reviewed by monitor team
- 9) Round 02 initiated and distributed via Qualtrics
- 10) Results collected, thematically analyzed, coded and used in the construction of materials for Round 03
- 11) Data thematizing and coding reviewed by monitor team
- 12) Round 03 instrument reviewed by monitor team
- 13) Round 03 initiated and distributed via Qualtrics
- 14) Results collected and data analyzed using frequency distribution and Pearson's chi-squared
- 15) Data analysis reviewed by monitor team
- 16) Findings written (Chapter 04)
- 17) Conclusions and Implications of findings written (Chapter 05)

Section 3.7.0 – LIMITATIONS

3.7.1 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

- 1) Though the researcher sought to conduct a study which would create an interdisciplinary consensus regarding the desired concepts, the study was ultimately conducted by a researcher who specializes in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, and all production and

interpretation of study data and item prompts was subject to the biases associated with this field.

- 2) Though the participants were randomly selected, we cannot assume that the sample is truly representative of the population of all experts who either work with or intend to work with concepts related to value and identity.
- 3) Wording, terminology, and phrasing could create biases.
- 4) Open and even closed answer responses could have been misinterpreted by the researcher.

3.7.2 LIMITATIONS OF DELPHI METHOD

- 1) The initial limitation that must be considered is the researcher's synthetic definition of paradigmatic value which was proposed as the foundation for the initial round of the Delphi study. The primary concern would be that the definition synthesized from the literature review may not have captured the entirety of the concept. The second consideration for this definition is that it may not have been capable of representing the concepts in a manner that participants would have been able to adequately engage with. The third consideration is in the assumption that this study makes, that the conceptualizations of meta-cognitive value are able to be defined at all.
- 2) Despite having a broad range of disciplines and represented by the experts participating in the study, we cannot be sure that they provided an accurate representation of the population which they represent.
- 3) The expert opinions of study participants, generated from greatly diversified fields and research specializations, were at times greatly varied and did not provide uniform consensus in certain phases of the study.

- 4) Language and wording used in each of the Delphi study items and definitions were produced by a researcher who specialized in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, and therefore certain verbiage or sentiments may not have been attainable or completely transparent to participants of differing backgrounds or specializations, despite being an expert on the concepts being explored. Additionally, participant responses were interpreted by a researcher who specialized in SBS, and therefore, participant responses which may not have been entirely clear may have been interpreted through this lens.
- 5) The goal of the research was to find a consensus, and therefore, it is possible that this pressure could have led the researcher to interpret findings accordingly. This, however is a concern for Delphi methods in general.
- 6) An additional consideration is one of the biases and cultural dispositions of the participants themselves. While this study did not seek to control for cultural, gender, or ethnic representation, those experts who consented to participate were primarily of an Anglo-ethnicity, despite representing several non-American nations.
- 7) The final consideration is of the effort contributed by each of the participants to accurately and thoughtfully engage with each prompt in each round of the study. Despite there having been no incentive offered to any participants at any time, we cannot be sure that participants considered each prompt and avoided giving superficial answers during any portion of the study.

Section 3.8.0 – CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 03 (Methodology) provided a detailed description of procedures and processes

undertaken in efforts to conduct this research. These included detailed descriptions of participant

selection methods, data collection procedures, analysis, etc. Additionally, a clear outline of steps taken during this doctoral research project were provided and limitations acknowledged.

CHAPTER 04:

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Section 4.1.0 – INTRODUCTION

This study examined the foundational concepts underlying value as a cognitive and meta-cognitive construct, as well as individual and group contexts which may be effected by value systems and related beliefs and behaviors, in order to define ‘paradigmatic value’ and its implications in educational (specifically SLA) contexts.

Specifically, this study examined three key questions:

- 1) How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields define Value as a meta-cognitive concept?
- 2) How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields perceive the relationship (if any) between Value and learner identity?
- 3) Should experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields identify a relationship between Value and learner identity, how might this relationship be demonstrated?”

The data in this chapter present answers to the above research questions and includes the results of all data collection phases. Carried out as a three round Delphi study, the data collection as conducted via a) The initial critique of the synthetic definition, b) The critique of an expanded and contextualized definition, and c) The acceptance or rejection of decontextualized conceptual elements in the form of simple short statements.

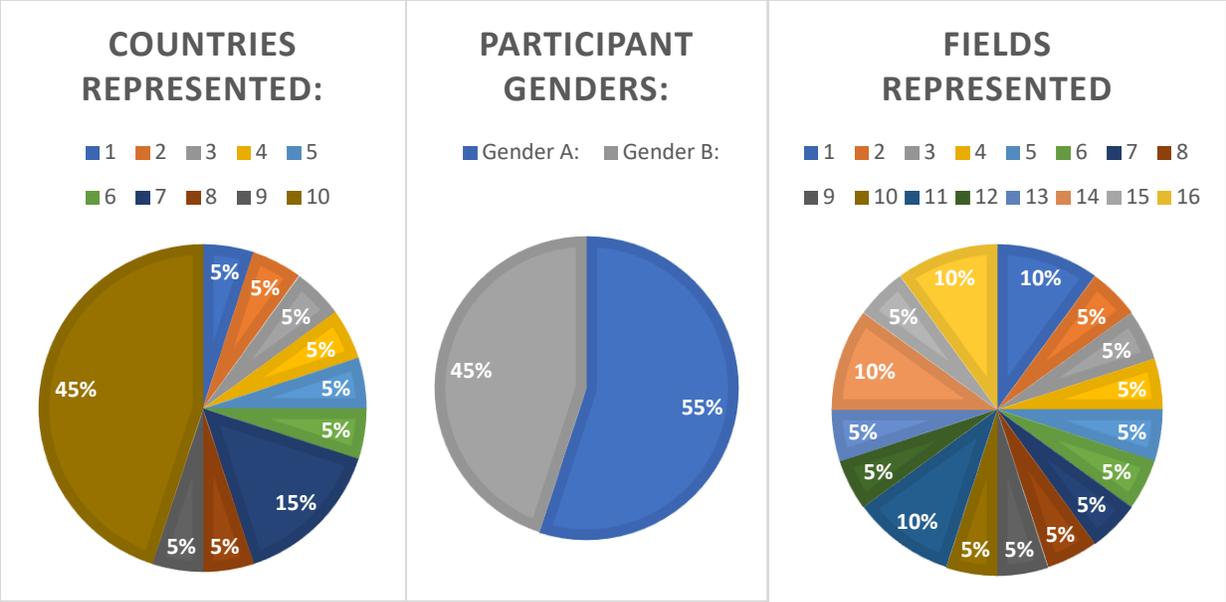
These data are presented in the following format.

- 1) Participant demographic information
- 2) Data and interpretation of participant responses (Rounds 1, 2, & 3)
- 3) Addressing of each Research Question Individually
- 4) Conclusion of Findings
- 5) Chapter Summary

4.1.1 DEMOGRAPHICS & RESPONDENTS

As this Delphi study was intended to investigate value concepts from an interdisciplinary perspective, the representation of a nationally and academically diverse sample population was paramount to this study. Therefore, participants for this study were selected at random, through being referenced as authors of works which had contributed to the research within peer-reviewed publications which were published on the topics of “language,” “value,” and “identity” which had been published with the 36 months prior to the initiation of this study. More information of the participant selection process and criterion may be found in Chapter 03: Methodology.

From this initial population sampling which identified 166 potential candidates for participation, 20 candidates self-selected, volunteering to participate in this study. As this was a random sample, which did not discriminate by region or publication house, but only publication keywords and publication date, the resulting sample population was quite diverse, representing 16 different fields of study across 10 different countries, and a nearly equal distribution of (binary) gender.

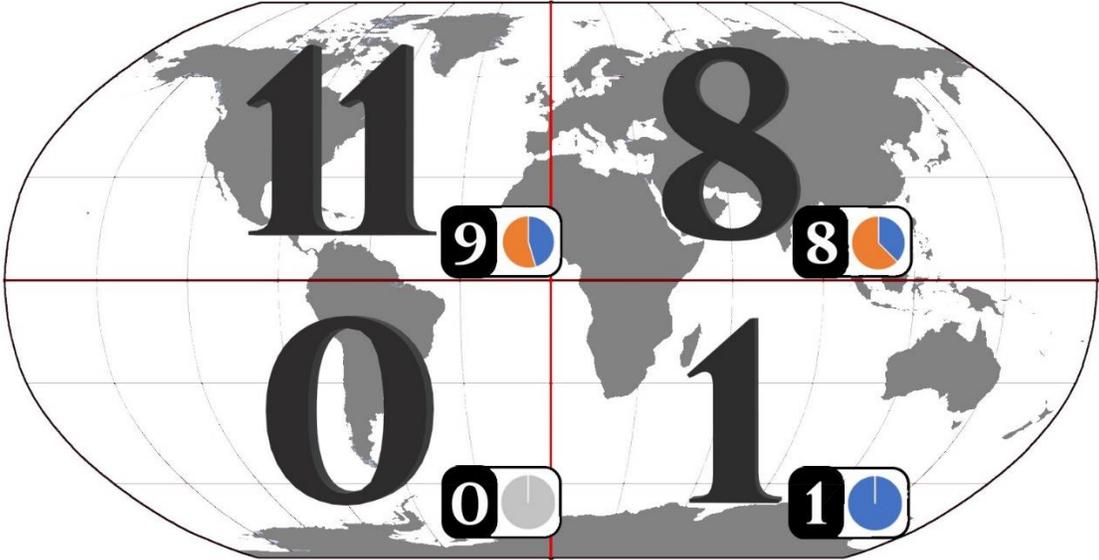


(Figure 4.0a)

(Figure 4.0b)

(Figure 4.0c)

Represented above are the distributions countries wherein each participant practices (country of host institution), binary gender distribution, and professed field or discipline of each of the initial 20 participants who self-selected from the initial sample population of 166 persons identified as potential study candidates (fig 4.0a, b, & c). An additional demonstration of participant diversity is represented in figure 4.0d, below.



(figure 4.0d)

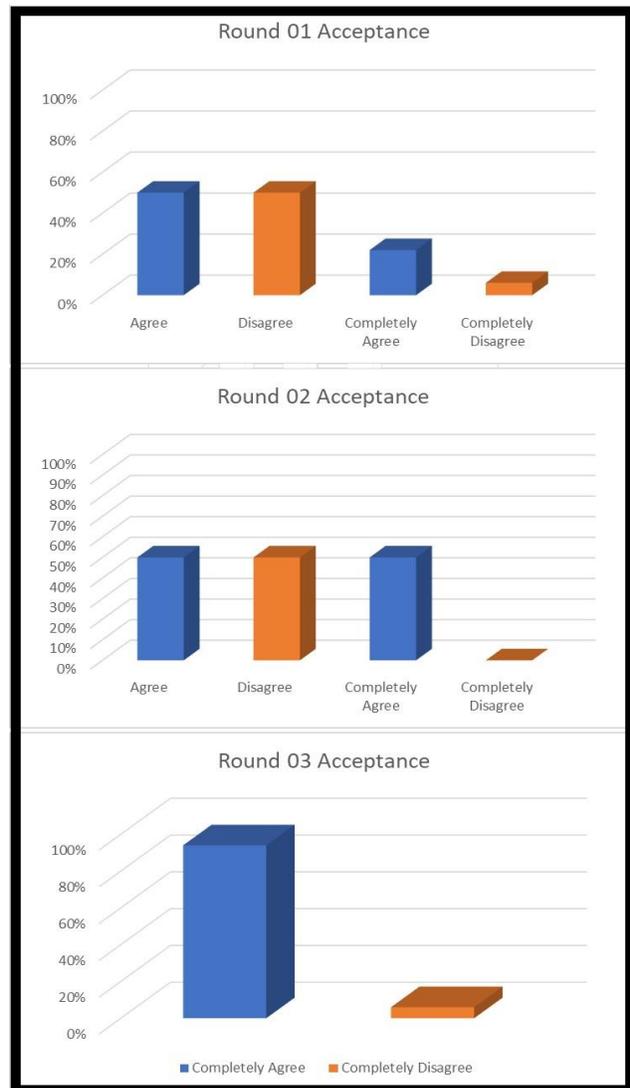
In this chart, the number of participants from each quadrant of the globe are displayed in the large black numbers, with the number of unique disciplines represented in subscript.

Additionally, the binary gender distribution is represented in a separate pie chart for each quadrant.

Section 4.2.0 – DELPHI STUDY DATA

In short, Delphi studies are meant to explore areas of interest which may have little supporting research currently published, and to generate consensus regarding the topics being explored. Likewise, this Delphi study was proposed to explore and find a consensus regarding meta-cognitive realms of value, and any possible connections to identity. Though there is literature on a variety of topics related to both value and identity, this linkage proved more elusive and required the collaborative insights of multiple experts in order to come to any relevant conclusions.

By structuring several iterative rounds of inquiry, one informing the other, concepts were able to be more clearly defined, more thoroughly investigated, and key aspects isolated for group consensus.



(Figure 4.0e)

In the graphic to the right, we see that the general topic being explored in round 01 was nearly an even split. Round 02 however had a much greater degree of acceptance, despite still being divided among participant scholars. The final round however, being constructed from information gained in both of the previous rounds has a nearly 95% consensus regarding key elements of the topics being explored within the contexts of this study.

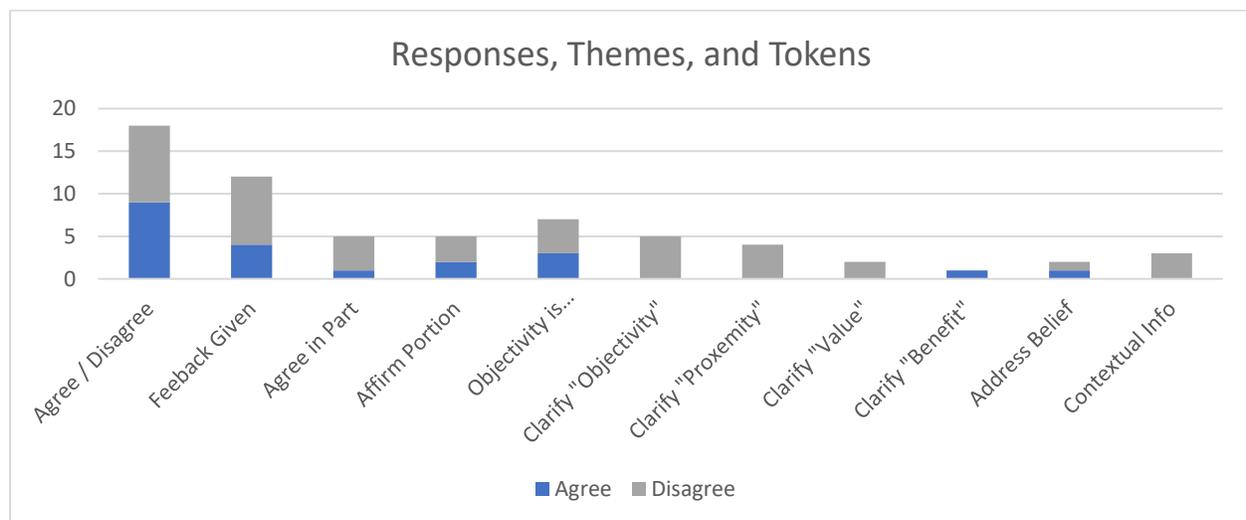
Following this introduction, each round of the Delphi study will be assessed individually, explaining and interpreting data round for round. After looking at the specific data produced in each round, the research questions used to guide this study will be answered in order according to the total study findings.

4.2.1 ROUND 01 RESULTS

4.2.1a Round 01 Responses

In total, of the 20 participants who elected to participate in the study, 18 completed round 01.

The data derived through thematic categorization is represented in the chart below.

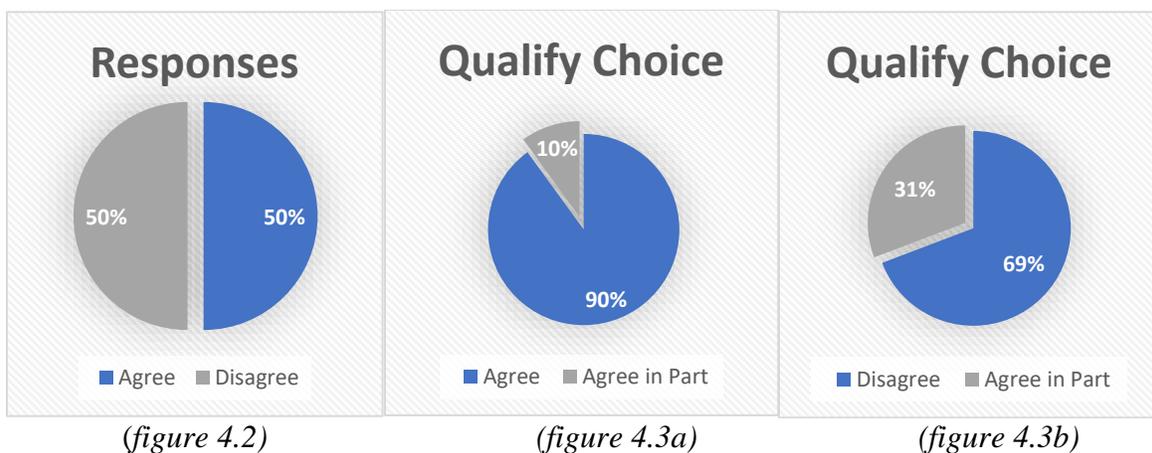


(Figure 4.1)

All participant responses were categorized and codified according to the methods and theories outlined in section 3.1.3 (*Data Coding*, Chapter 03).

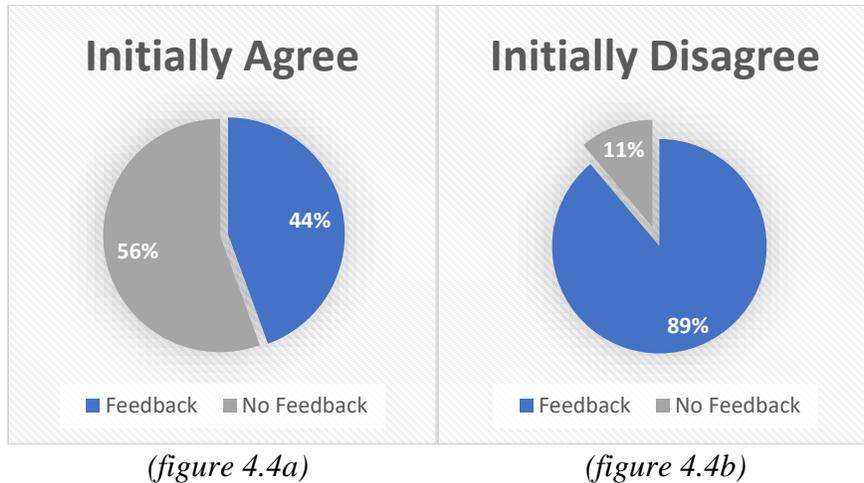
4.2.1b Round 01 Analysis

Represented in the graphic above (*fig 4.1*), are the codified responses from Round 01, outlining all tokens and themes represented across all participant responses. Outlined in Figure 4.2 (below) are the responses to the question in block 04, which asked participants to either accept or reject the provisional synthetic definition of paradigmatic value. This demonstrates that if participants were divided as to their willingness to accept or reject the definition as proposed. However, as demonstrated in Figures 4.3a & b (below), many felt the need to clarify the level to which they either agreed or disagreed with the proposed definition and concepts. 31% of participant who chose “disagree” stating that they do agree ‘in part’ (*fig 4.3b*), and 10% of participants who chose “agree” also clarified that they do agree, but ‘in part’ (*fig 4.3a*).



Figures 4.4a & b (below) display the number of participants who elected to supply additional feedback in block 05, in relation to their acceptance or rejection of the supplied definition. Figure 4.4a demonstrates that only 44% of scholars who agreed with the definition also offered additional feedback or critique. In contrast, 4.4b demonstrates that 89% of participants who

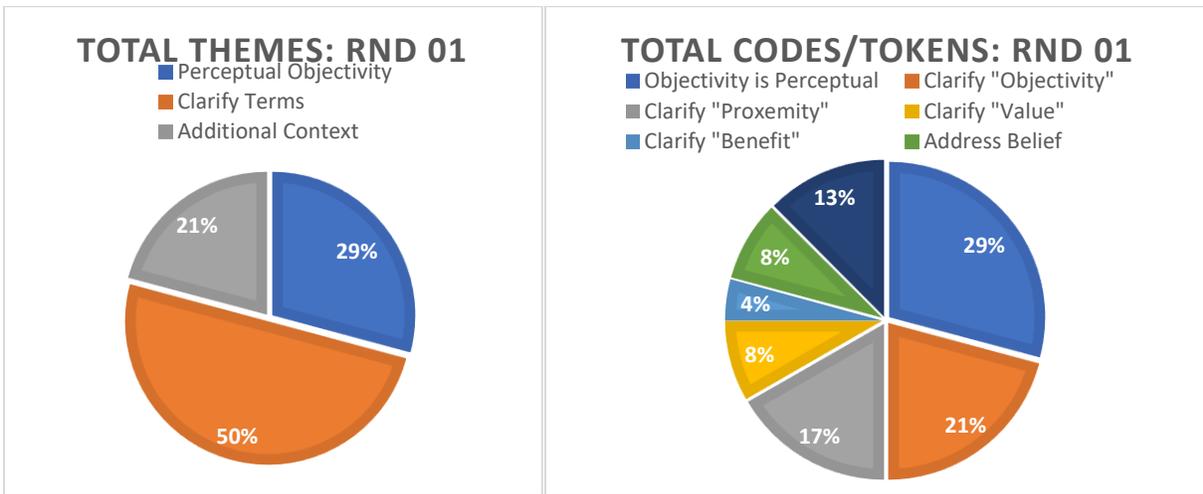
elected to disagree with the definition as proposed also supplied additional feedback and/or critique of the definition and concept covered.



Minimal critique from accepting scholars and high levels of feedback from rejecting scholars may be due to one of two reasons. Either a) the provisional definition is largely acceptable to the majority of participants with little to no revision, or b) participants who were willing to accept the provisional definition were either disinclined, or unable to volunteer supplementary feedback. However, thematic analysis of the feedback's content, whether received from scholars who had accepted or rejected the provisional definition seemed to rule out option "B" as a possible cause for the disparity.

Figure 4.5 displays the categories of feedback generated through thematic analysis of participant responses. Despite allowing participants to provide novel responses in block 05, there were only 9 total codes and 3 governing themes present in the total feedback between all participants involved in Round 01. As displayed in the figures below, these categorical themes were,

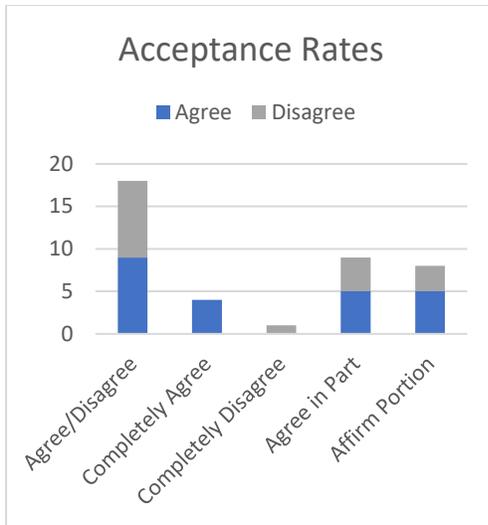
“Perceptual Objectivity,” “Clarification of Terms,” and “Additional Context Required” (figure 4.5a), with their sub-codes displayed to the right (figure 4.5b).



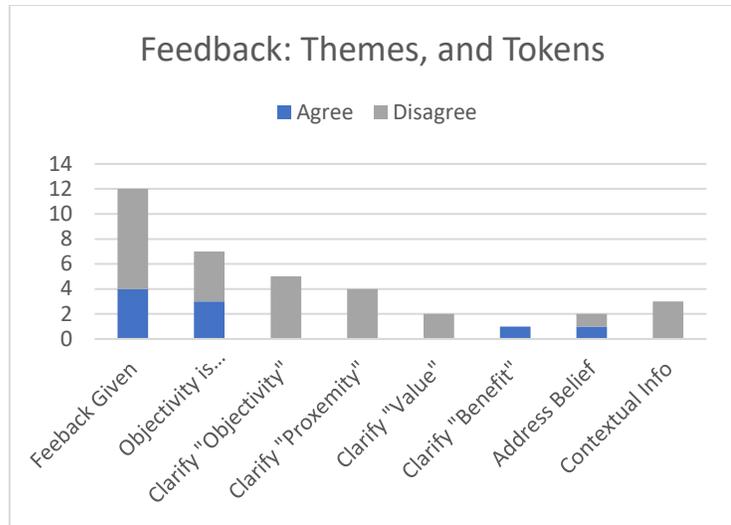
(Figure 4.5a)

(Figure 4.5b)

This data is also represented in bar graph form in figure 4.1. Figure 4.6b however, display the total number of coded tokens in relation to the “agree” / “disagree” status they were generated, regarding the critique of concepts. Represented in grey, we see the tokens generated by scholars who elected to ‘accept’ the definition of paradigmatic value as proposed. Likewise, the tokens generated by participants who elected to “reject” the definition are represented in blue (figure 4.6b). Figure 4.6a also represents coded tokens generated in participant responses, but focuses specifically on tokens and codes specifically related the acceptance or rejection of concepts, whether in total or in part.



(Figure 4.6a)



(Figure 4.6b)

In figure 4.6b, we find a similar representation of codes, regardless of whether the proposed definition was accepted or rejected in block 04 of the initial survey prompt. This demonstrates that regardless of the degree to which participants were able to negotiate their own acceptance or rejection of the concepts exemplified in the provisional definition of paradigmatic value (figure 4.6a), there is a general consensus among all respondents, as to how the proposed concept definition should be revised for the following rounds.

4.2.1d Synthesis

Having identified the themes present within the Round 01 responses, clarity of terms and the explicit statement of the perceptual nature of ‘*objective*’ value, were largely identified as deficits in the supplementary definition. Additionally, several participants seemed to struggle with the second aspect of the proposed definition, “*proximity*.” Thus, the clarification of the concept of proximity as *reflexive awareness* was also thought to be of benefit to the new consensus definition, as well as an expansion of context surrounding the *value* concept in the first half of the definition.

Employing the consensus data from Round 01, a new definition was constructed.

Paradigmatic Value exists as one polar extreme of a cognition-based value continuum. Primarily, the idea of value as a continuum rests on the understanding that the concept of ‘value’ fundamentally represents the attribute of any experience, action, object, or concept which is perceived to be of some form of benefit. By extension, ‘value’ is formed as the result of a perceptually generated attribution of benefit and is therefore fundamentally subjective in nature. However, transitioning value(s) from the subjective pole to the paradigmatic pole also stems from the experiencer’s perception, or more accurately the lack thereof. Should the perceiver of a given value be less reflexively aware of the subjectivity of their perception, subjective value(s) will likely resemble ‘objective’ value(s) in relation to the degree to which they are, or are not aware. Such perceptions of value(s) as objective or even as inter-subjective may additionally influence or reinforce beliefs, actions, and/or behaviors, further reinforcing the perceived value paradigm the experiencer is operating within. Therefore, the second aspect of ‘value’ can be understood as form of ‘cognitive proximity’ which forms the breadth of the continuum. Or, the degree to which the attributor of value(s) can be reflexively aware of the subjectivity of value(s) being perceived or attributed, constitutes the distance between the subjective and paradigmatic poles.

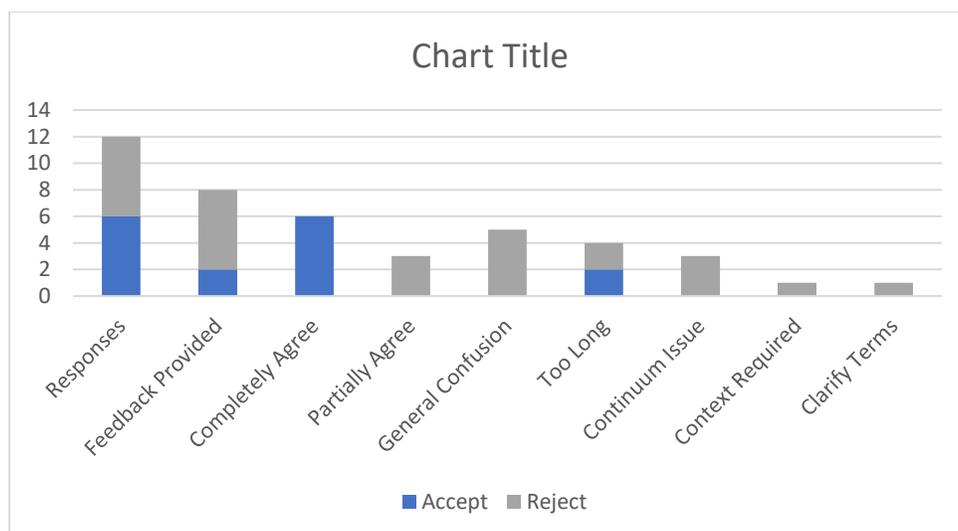
(Dees, 2019)

This definition was supplied as the basis for Round 02.

4.2.2 ROUND 02 RESULTS

4.2.2a Round 02 Responses

In total, of the 18 participants who participated in Round 01, 12 completed round 02. The data derived through thematic categorization is represented in the chart below.



(Figure 4.7)

All participant responses were categorized and codified according to the methods and theories outlined in section 3.1.3 (*Data Coding*, Chapter 03).

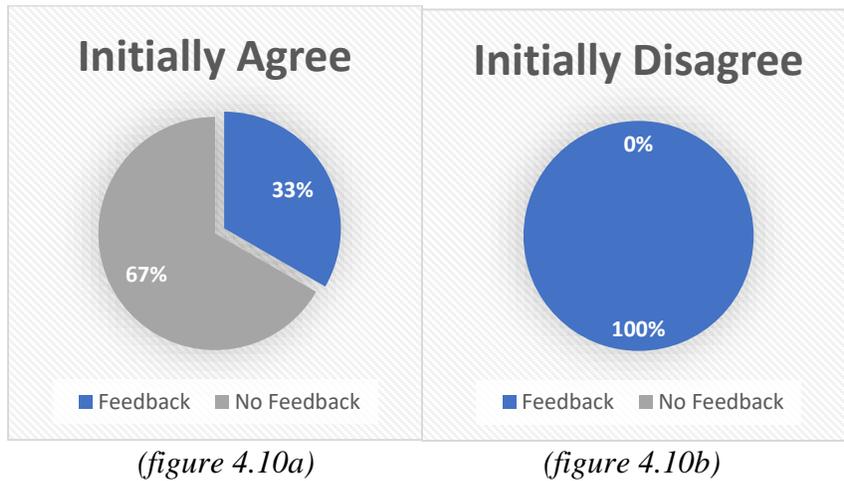
4.2.2b Round 02 Analysis

Represented in the graphic above (*fig 4.7*), are the codified responses from Round 02, outlining all tokens and themes represented across all participant responses. Outlined in Figure 4.8 (below) are the responses to the question in block 04, which asked participants to either accept or reject the expanded definition of paradigmatic value. This demonstrates that participants were divided as to their willingness to initially accept or reject the expanded definition as proposed. However, as demonstrated in Figures 4.9a & b (below), many of those who initially rejected the expanded definition felt the need to clarify the level to which they disagreed with the definition or its context. 33% of participant who chose “disagree” stated that they do agree ‘in part’ (*fig 4.9b*), while no participants who chose “agree” felt the need to clarify the level to which they agreed (*fig 4.9a*).



Figures 4.10a & b (below) display the number of participants who elected to supply additional feedback in block 05, in relation to their acceptance or rejection of the supplied definition. Figure 4.10a demonstrates that only 33% of scholars who agreed with the definition also offered

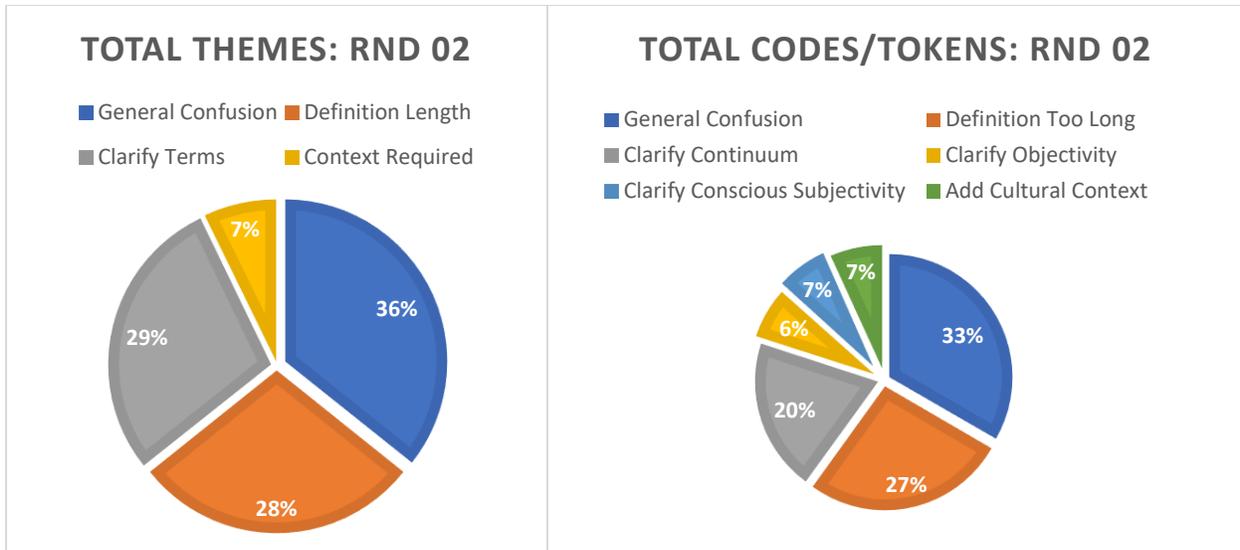
additional feedback or critique. In contrast, 4.10b demonstrates that 100% of participants who elected to disagree with the definition as proposed also supplied additional feedback and/or critique of the expanded definition or contexts.



Minimal critique from accepting scholars and high levels of feedback from rejecting scholars may be due to one of two reasons. Either a) the expanded definition is largely acceptable to the majority of participants with little to no revision, or b) participants who were willing to accept the provisional definition were either disinclined or unable to volunteer supplementary feedback. However, while analysis of the feedback provided in Round 02 was insufficient for determining which scenario was correct, the responses gained in Round 03 (provided in section 4.3.3 below) seemed to rule out option “B” as a possible cause for the disparity.

Figure 4.7 (above) displays the categories of feedback generated through thematic analysis of participant responses. Despite allowing participants to provide novel responses in block 05, there were only 5 total codes and 4 governing themes present in the total feedback between all participants involved in Round 02. As displayed in the figures below, these categorical themes

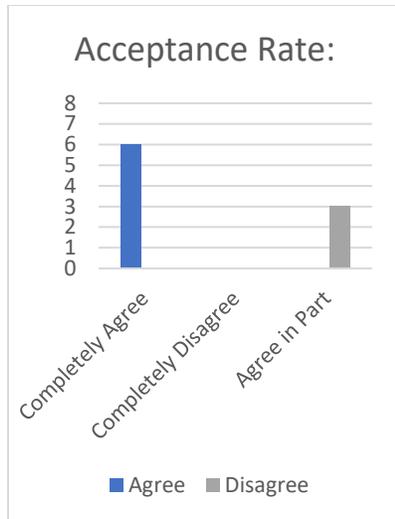
were, “General Confusion,” “Definition Length,” “Clarification of Terms,” and “Additional Context Required” (figure 4.5a), with their sub-codes displayed to the right (figure 4.5b).



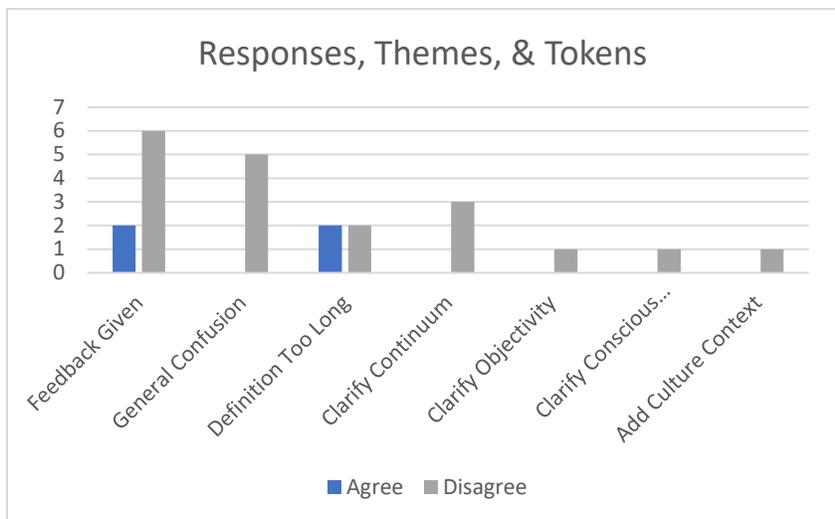
(Figure 4.11a)

(Figure 4.11b)

Figure 4.12b (*below*) displays the total number of coded tokens in relation to the “agree” / “disagree” status they were generated under. Represented in grey, we see the tokens generated by scholars who elected to ‘reject’ the definition of paradigmatic value as proposed. Likewise, the tokens generated by participants who elected to “accept” the definition are represented in blue (figure 4.12b). Figure 4.12a also represents coded tokens generated in participant responses, but focuses specifically on tokens and codes specifically related the acceptance or rejection of concepts, whether in total or in part.



(Figure 4.12a)



(Figure 4.12b)

In figure 4.12b, we find a dissimilar representation of codes. However, it should be noted that the only 1 participant alone was responsible for generating several of the codes regarding clarification of terms, creating a greater disparity between the feedback of those participants who either accepted or rejected the expanded definition.

4.2.2d Synthesis

Having identified the themes present within the Round 02 responses, which primarily demonstrated the acceptance of the newly expanded definition, a complete deconstruction of the definition and its contexts was thought to be of benefit, due to the attention participants allotted to the length of the definition. A deconstruction was also thought to be a viable avenue by which participants who might otherwise elect not to provide feedback, whatever the reason, might be encouraged to attest to their acceptance and/or rejection of any features of the concepts or contexts proposed and developed in rounds 01 and 02, respectively.

Based on the feedback from both rounds 01 and 02, the following 31 short statements, divided into thematic blocks, were created.

4.2.3 ROUND 03 RESULTS

4.2.3a Round 03 Responses

In total, all participants who had participated in Round 02 also completed round 03. The data derived from participant responses to the 31 thematic statements provided in Round 03 is represented in full in the appendix.

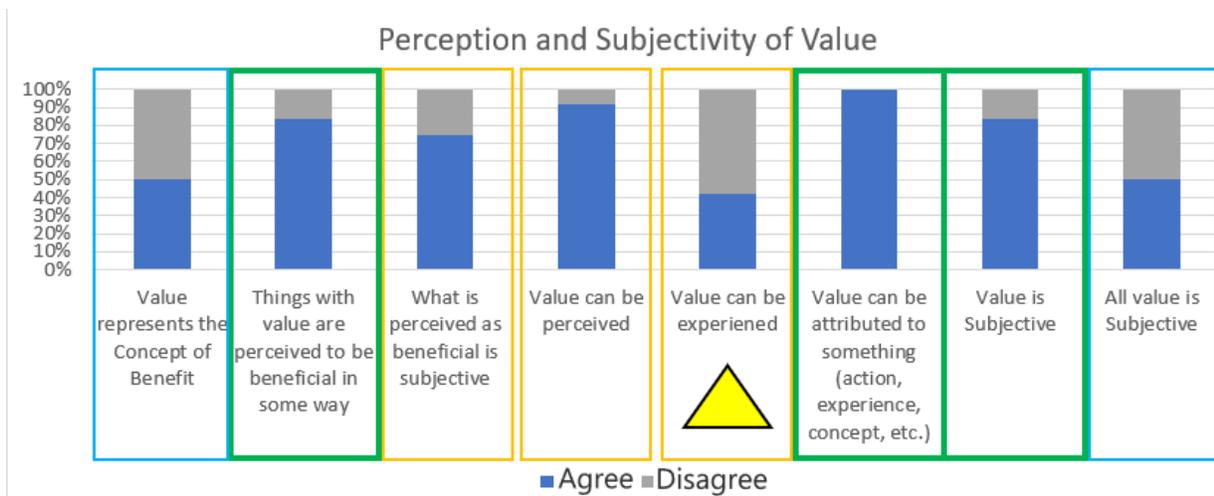
All statement prompts were categorized in the order represented above, prior to the administration of the survey. Participant responses were tabulated through the Qualtrics system which was used to distribute the survey and collect participant responses.

4.2.3b Round 03 Analysis

In each question block of 3 – 8 statement were provided for participant interaction. In each block a maximum of 3 statements were constructed in order to inform the consensus, with all others functionally acting as ‘check’ questions, or otherwise informing the on external factors such as participant engagement, terminology issues, potential ambiguity, or concept exploration. Figures 4.13a-f are included in the appendix section to present the results of Found 03. The figures shown below (*4.14a-f*) have been enriched to represent the primary prompts, check and exploratory prompts for individualized explanation and interpretation.

4.2.3b-1 “Question Block 01”

Figure 4.14a (below) was created to probe scholars for insights regarding the nature of value, specifically related to its subjective nature and its link to the idea of benefit. Prompts #2, #6, & #7 were created to this end, with prompts #3, #4, & #5 as conceptual check questions. Prompts #1 & #8 were included to test the limits of absolute statements, as were used in the construction of the definitions used as the bases for each of the previous rounds.



(Figure 4.14a)

4.2.3b-1a “Terminology Probes”

Prompts #1 & #8 (*outlined in blue*) probed the use of absolutes in the construction of the definitions used in previous rounds of the Delphi study. In each of the previous rounds’ participants were divide in their willingness to accept or reject the provisional and expanded definitions of paradigmatic value at 50/50 for and against in both Round 01 and Round 02 (*figures 4.2 & 4.8*).

- Regarding the use of ‘absolute’ terminology, exactly half of the participants identified the statements as being true or correct, while the other half identified the same statements as being untrue or incorrect.

The responses to prompts #1 & #8, when compared to the primary prompts (*outlined in green*) as well as their check questions (*outlined in yellow*) would suggest that scholars were largely accepting of the concepts being represented, but were to a large extent impeded by the use of absolute terms used within each of the previous rounds.

4.2.3b-1b “Primary Probes”

Prompts #2, #5, & #6 (*outlined in green*) were the primary prompts in Question Block 01, and were constructed to obtain data related to core concepts related to the paradigmatic value construct. The acceptance of the primary prompt statements as being true or correct was nearly unanimous.

- >80% of participants identified the statement, “Things with value are perceived to be beneficial in some way” as being true or correct.
- 100% of participants identified the statement, “Value can be attributed to something (action, experience, concept, etc.)” as being true or correct.
- >80% of participants identified the statement, “Value is subjective” as being true or correct.

These three probes (#2, 6, & 7) work to verify the participant’s positions regarding the subjectivity of value, as well as it’s basis in human perception of benefit.

4.2.3b-1c “Check Questions”

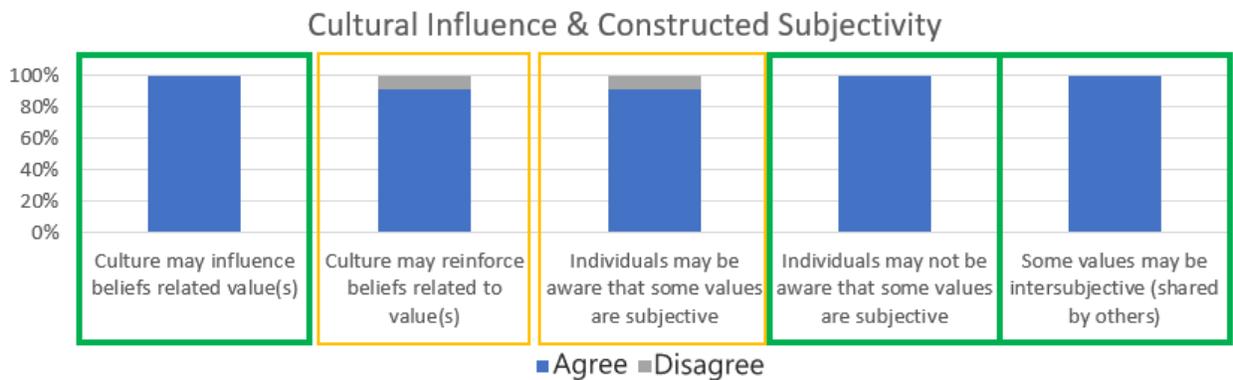
Check questions #3, #4, & #5 (*outlined in yellow*) were included in order to provide participating scholars an opportunity to navigate between nuanced responses, despite being asked to ‘select all that apply’ in a yes/no format survey.

- 75% of participants identified the statement, “What is perceived as beneficial is subjective” as being true or correct.
- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Value can be perceived” as being true or correct.
- >40% of participants identified the statement, “Value can be experienced” as being true or correct.

While the majority of scholars agreed with the first two check questions, affirming the nature of value as perceptual and linking it to subjectivity and benefit. However, the final check question was primarily identified as being untrue or incorrect. This was later determined to be the result of an ambiguity within the prompt’s wording, resulting in participants being unsure as to whether the prompt was intended to state, “Value is experiential.” As value was attested to be perceptual, a negative response related to value being experiential would be expected. However, due to the ambiguity check question #7 was marked and withheld from the final analysis.

4.2.3b-2 “Question Block 02”

Figure 4.14b (below) was created to probe scholars for insights regarding the nature of value, specifically related to its cultural contexts and intersubjectivity. Prompts #1, #4, & #5 were created to this end, with prompts #2, & #3 included as conceptual check questions.



(Figure 4.14b)

4.2.3b-2a “Primary Probes”

- 100% of all scholars identified the following statements as being true or correct.
 - “Culture may influence beliefs related to value(s)”
 - “Individuals may not be aware that some values are subjective”
 - “Some values may be intersubjective (shared by others)”

These primary probes (#1, 4, & 5) work to verify the participant’s positions regarding reflexive awareness, intersubjectivity, and cultural influences on value.

4.2.3b-2b “Check Questions”

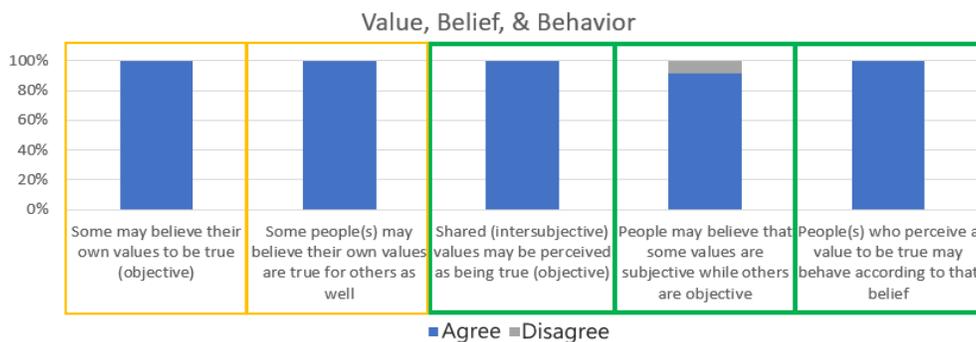
Check questions #2, & #3 (*outlined in yellow*) allowed for participants to navigate between more nuanced responses, despite being asked to participate in a closed response survey.

- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Culture may reinforce beliefs related to value(s)” as being true or correct
- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Individuals may be aware that some values are subjective” as being true or correct.

Both of these check questions assisted in verifying participant’s positions regarding cultural influence on value(s) and reflexive aware awareness of subjectivity regarding value(s).

4.2.3b-3 “Question Block 03”

Figure 4.14c (*below*) was created to probe scholars for insights regarding the nature of value, specifically related intersubjectivity, deminished subjectivity, and behavior. Prompts #3, #4, & #5 were created to this end, with prompts #1 & #2 included as conceptual check questions.



(Figure 4.14c)

4.2.3b-3a “Primary Probes”

- 100% of participants identified the statement, “Shared (intersubjective) values may be perceived as being true (objective)” as being true or correct.
- >90% of participants identified the statement, “People may believe that some values are subjective, while others are objective” as being true or correct.

- 100% of participants identified the statement, “People(s) who perceive a value to be true may behave according to that belief” as being true or correct.

These primary probes (#3, 4, & 5) work to verify the participant’s positions regarding intersubjective values, as they apply to objectivity and behavior. Though prompt 4 was not unanimous, the unanimous responses gained through the check questions implies that much like the qualitative feedback given in previous rounds regarding the use of the term “objective,” it is possible that there was some level of ambiguity present. The researcher believes a possible interpretation of prompt #4 as being, “People may believe that some values are subjective, while other values are [in actuality] objective.”

4.2.3b-3b “Check Questions”

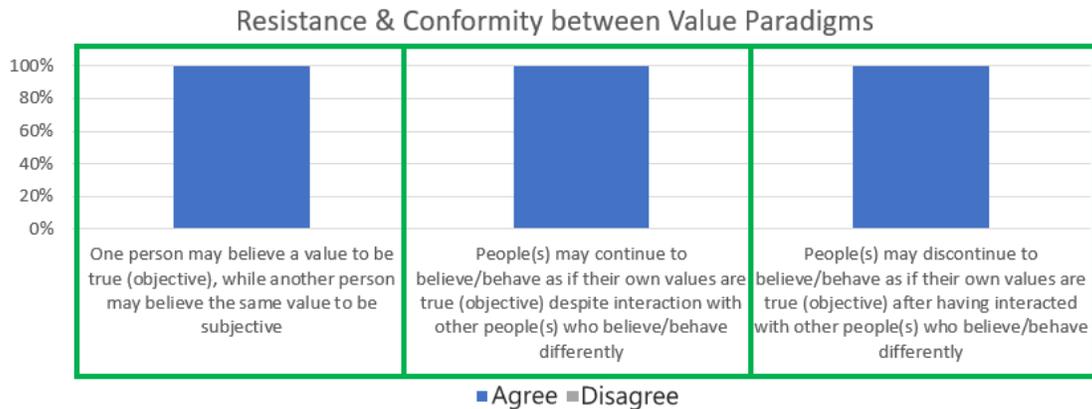
Check questions #1 & #2 (*outlined in yellow*) allowed for participants to navigate between more nuanced responses, despite being asked to participate in a closed response survey.

- 100% of participants identified the statement, “Some may believe their own values to be true (objective)” as being true or correct
- 100% of participants identified the statement, “Some people(s) may believe their own values are true for others as well” as being true or correct.

Both of these check questions assisted in verifying participant’s positions regarding intersubjectivity beliefs and diminished subjectivity.

4.2.3b-4 “Question Block 04”

Figure 4.14d (*below*) was created to probe scholars for insights regarding the nature of value, specifically value paradigm navigation. Prompts #1, #2, & #3 were created to this end, with no prompts included as conceptual check questions.



(Figure 4.14d)

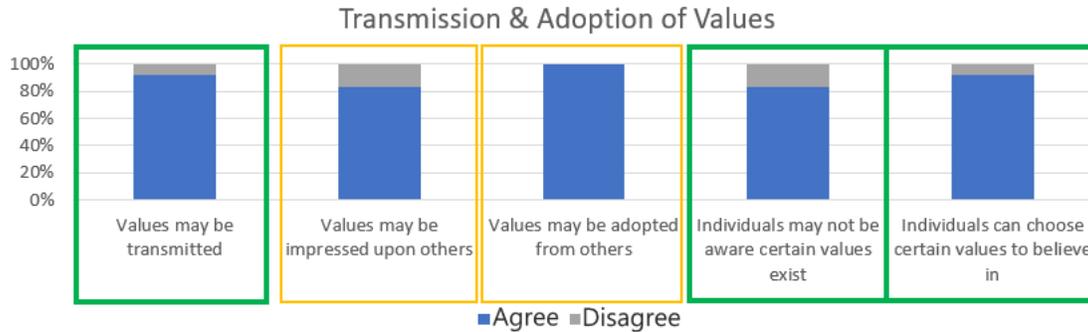
4.2.3b-4a “Primary Probes”

- 100% of participants identified the statement, “One person may believe a value to be true (objective), while another person may believe the same value to be subjective” as being true or correct.
- 100% of participants identified the statement, “People(s) may continue to believe/ behave as if their own values are true (objective) despite interaction with other people(s) who believe/ behave differently” as being true or correct.
- 100% of participants identified the statement, “People(s) may discontinue to believe/ behave as if their own values are true (objective) after having interacted with people(s) who believe/ behave differently” as being true or correct.

These primary probes (#1, 2, & 3) work to verify the participant’s positions regarding value paradigms and paradigm resistance and conformity.

4.2.3b-5 “Question Block 05”

Figure 4.14e (*below*) was created to probe scholars for insights regarding the nature of value, specifically the transmission and adoption of values from one paradigm into another. Prompts #1, #4, & #5 were created to this end, with prompts #2 & #3 included as conceptual check questions.



(Figure 4.14e)

4.2.3b-5a “Primary Probes”

- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Values may be transmitted” as being true or correct.
- >80% of participants identified the statement, “Individuals may not be aware certain values exist” as being true or correct.
- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Individuals can choose certain values to believe in” as being true or correct.

These primary probes (#1, 4, & 5) work to verify the participant’s positions regarding value transmission and adoption at both cognitive and meta-cognitive levels.

4.2.3b-5b “Check Questions”

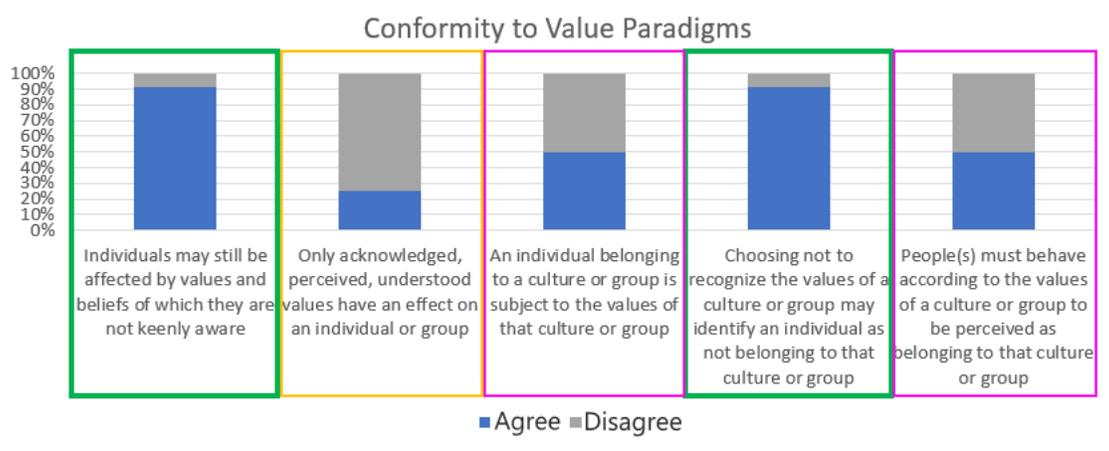
Check questions #2 & #3 (*outlined in yellow*) allowed for participants to navigate between more nuanced responses, despite being asked to participate in a closed response survey.

- >80% of participants identified the statement, “Values may be impressed upon others” as being true or correct
- 100% of participants identified the statement, “Values may be adopted from others” as being true or correct.

Both of these check questions assisted in verifying participant’s positions regarding the transmission and adoption of values.

4.2.3b-6 “Question Block 06”

Figure 4.14f (*below*) was created to probe scholars for insights regarding the nature of value, specifically value paradigm conformity and belonging. Prompts #1 & #4 were created to this end, with prompt #2 included as a negative check question for prompt #1 and prompts #3 & #5 included for exploratory purposes.



(Figure 4.14f)

4.2.3b-6a “Primary Probes”

- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Individuals may still be effected by values and beliefs of which they are not keenly aware” as being true or correct.
- >90% of participants identified the statement, “Choosing not to recognize the values of a culture or group may identify an individual as not belonging to that culture or group” as being true or correct.

These primary probes (#1 & 4) work to verify the participant’s positions regarding the affective nature of value and its role in group belonging.

4.2.3b-6b “Check Questions”

Check question #2 (*outlined in yellow*) acted as a semantically negative check question to primary prompt #1, to ensure that participants were actively considering the content of the primary prompt.

- >70% of participants identified the statement, “Only acknowledged, perceived, understood values have an effect on an individual or group.” as being *untrue* or *incorrect*.

This check question assisted in verifying participant’s positions regarding the affective nature of values at the meta-cognitive level.

4.2.3b-6c “Exploratory Probes”

Exploratory probes (*outlined in pink*) were included to test the upper limits of value and group identity.

- 50% of participants identified the statement, “An individual belonging to a culture or group is subject to the values of that culture or group” as being true or correct.
- 50% of participants identified the statement, “People(s) must behave according to the values of a culture or group to be perceived as belonging to that culture or group” as being true or correct.

While the exploratory probes were intended to engage participants with concepts related to social and projected identity, the uniformly divided acceptance rates suggest that once again (refer to figure 4.14a), that ‘absolute’ language used within the prompt statements provided a sufficient impedance to scholars’ decision making.

4.2.4 SUMMARY OF STUDY RESULTS

This section of chapter 04 (*Research Findings*) has inspected each element of the Delphi study, in order to better understand the specific data gained in each round. This knowledge affords us the ability to follow the iterative progression of the study, in order to move forward in addressing the findings of the study as a whole. In the following section (*section 4.3.0*), we will see how the consensus data extrapolated from the final round of the study might be used to answer the governing research questions which have guided the study to this point.

Section 4.3.0 – FINDINGS

In the findings section of this chapter the interpretations of data gained from each round of the Delphi study, as interpreted in the previous section (*section 4.2.0 Delphi Study Data*), will be applied to the research questions used as the premise for developing this study. Each question will be answered in order, using interpretations and extrapolations of consensus data gleaned over the course of this study.

4.3.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 01

- “How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields define Value as a meta-cognitive concept?”

Based on the Round 03 data, where scholars were asked to identify which statements related to value and its relevant contexts, we can see that experts in identity, SLA, and related fields nearly unanimously agree that:

Value is a subjective and perceptually based construct which may be individualized or shared, and may be perceived as if ‘subjective’ *or* ‘objective’ to varying degrees. However, despite value being a subjective construct, a lack of reflexive awareness of the subjective nature of value(s) may cause individuals and/or groups to interpret certain value(s) as objective truths. Value intersubjectivity is seen as potentially diminishing reflexive awareness regarding the value(s) being shared. Accordingly, the perception of value(s) as objective may cause people(s) act according to those beliefs. Behaviors in relation to such value beliefs²⁵ are also thought to reinforce the value beliefs of those operating within that value system (value paradigm) and influence the belief systems of those in contact with it. Both realized and unrealize value(s) are thought to be influential in individual beliefs and behaviors, which result in either conformity or resistance to the value system (value paradigm). Additionally, while value conformity and demonstration of value(s) related behaviors is considered to not be strictly necessary for group belonging, it is believed to be synonymous.

(synthesis of findings: Dees, 2019)

²⁵ Defined as a conscious belief regarding any value

Deconstructing these major points and isolating value as a meta-cognitive concept, we find that experts in identity, SLA, and related fields agree that meta-cognitive (paradigmatic) value is:

The distal pole of a perceptual continuum, which is primarily contingent on the extent to which it is possible for a person(s) to be reflexively aware of the subjectivity of any given value(s). *Paradigmatic Value* then is defined as the result of value(s) being projected to the level of paradigm, a state at which the objectified value(s) may become an influencer of individual and/or group behavior, as its subjective nature is no longer realized.

(synthesis of findings: Dees, 2019)

4.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 02

- “How do experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields perceive the relationship (if any) between Value and learner identity?”

Based on the results of this study, experts in identity, SLA, and related fields do perceive that there is a connection between value and learner identity.

Paradigmatic value is believed to be an influential force in both individual and group behavior, whether realized or unrealized, as it constitutes the level at which value(s) has been objectified and established as ‘truth’ for those within the scope of its influence. Experts also identified value related behaviors as being influential over the beliefs of others who may interact with them. Similarly, ‘*Culture*’ was explicitly marked by experts as a system of shared beliefs and intersubjective value systems. Intersubjectivity as well, was expressed as reducing individual subjectivity due to conformity to the perceptions of the values being shared under the cultural value system, mirroring identity concepts of constructed subjectivity.

(synthesis of findings: Dees, 2019)

In relation to the literature presented in chapter 02 (*Literature Review*), we find that experts have identified value as a multiplicitous and aspectual construct. However, it is in its intersubjective and paradigmatic states where value is linked to identity formation as well as identity performance and group belonging. However, it is the scholars’ identification the influential

nature of value(s), whether realized or unrealized, which demonstrates the strongest support in connecting the ideas of value conformity with belonging and as such, value to identity.

Using the experts' identification of the relationships between the nature of paradigmatic value, culture, and subjectivity along with insights provided in the literature review (Chapter 02), we may extrapolate these relationships and potentially represent them in the form of a conceptual model(s).

4.3.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 03

- “Should experts in learner identity, SLA, and related fields identify a relationship between Value and learner identity, how might this relationship be demonstrated?”

Having identified what might be seen as the breadth of the layers of value beliefs, the levels to which value(s) might influence beliefs and behaviors, and the connections between value(s) and group belonging, we might demonstrate the total span by aligning them into a continuum of reflexivity²⁶ or “reflexive awareness,” as demonstrated below.

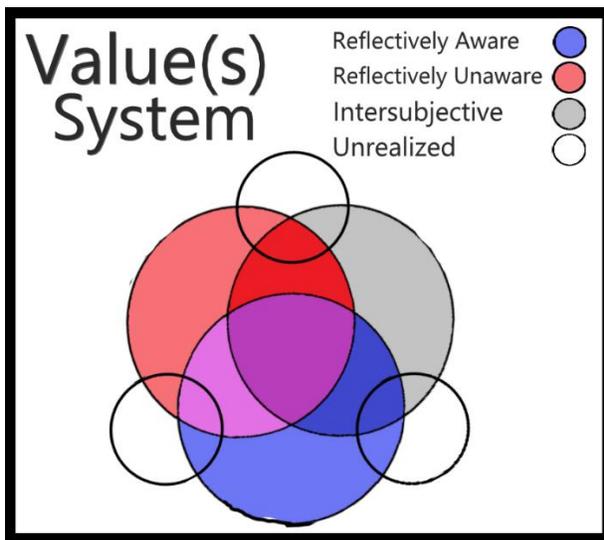


(Figure 4.15)

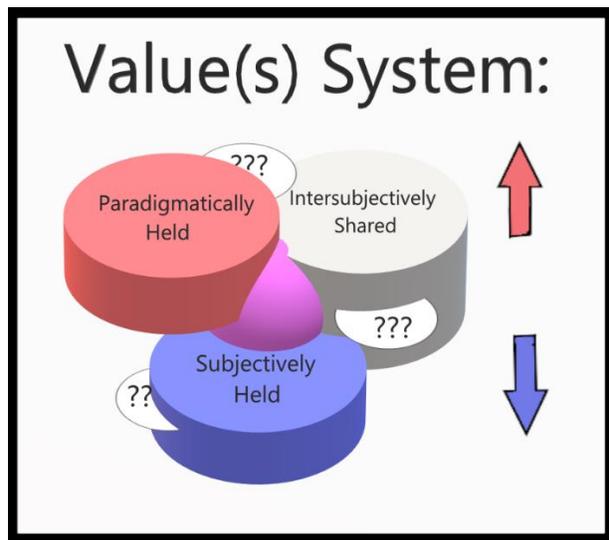
²⁶ **Reflexivity:** the consideration of one's own beliefs

However, through the course of this research, it has become clear that though an individual value may be able to be considered as an isolate, values function as combined systems of values, or *belief systems*, as demonstrated through the 2D and 3D vin diagrams below.

Representing individual elements of the continuum, we may use a vin diagram to demonstrate the gradation of multiple points which may interact in a single ‘value system’ (fig. 4.16a&b).



(Figure 4.16a)



(Figure 4.16b)

In contrast to figure 4.15 (above), which demonstrates how any value may exist at any point along a continuum spanning its perception as absolutely subjective to absolutely objective, figures 4.16a&b demonstrate how groups of held values may occupy different positions along the continuum of perception and work together as a unit, representing the sum total of an individual value system (explained in the following paragraph).

Figure 4.16a merely represents the potential overlap between various levels of perception as subjective, objective, individual, shared, realized, unrealized, etc., as might be demonstrated through this somewhat expanded version of a vin diagram. Figure 4.16b however pulls this vin

diagram into a 3-dimensional representation of the same concept, which affords a more vivid picture of exactly *how* each of these perceptions might interact. Following the definition of *paradigm* as outlined in Chapter 01 of this research, values may be perceived as being absolutely subjective, absolutely objective, and anywhere along the spectrum existing between the two. Additionally, as we have found as a result of this research, individually held values may be perceived as being shared with others. Accordingly, the sum total of all values, perceived and unperceived which might be understood as constituting a singular value system of an individual or group.

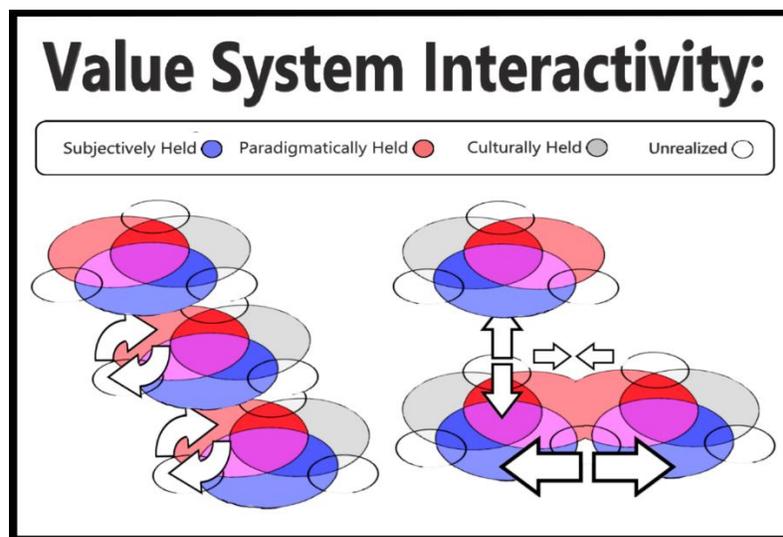
It is important at this point that we disambiguate value and belief at this point, lest further synonymy work to confuse the following concepts.

Value systems are systems of values that work together to establish the entire realm of both perceived and unperceived values which might be influential in the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of an individual or group. As scholars have identified that people(s) may not at times be aware of the existence of certain values, and as even those values of which people(s) are not keenly aware are still considered by experts to be influential forces upon a person(s), based on the results of the study we must disambiguate value and belief systems as follows.

- **Value:** An isolatable conceptualization of reality
- **Belief:** A value which is perceived as existing at any point along the continuum of reflexivity
- **Value System:** The sum of all values which might influence an individual or group
- **Belief System:** The sum of all values which are perceived as existing at any points along the continuum of reflexivity

As an additional bit of clarification, this means that values may exist in an unperceived state while still effecting an individual or group, and therefore must be accounted for in the total value system of any individual or group. However, belief systems specifically isolate values of which the believer is aware, and has assigned an elevation along the continuum of reflexivity, either as being subjective, objective, or somewhere in the liminal space between. Therefore, it is a conscious awareness that distinguishes *belief* from *value*, within this study.

Moving still further though, according to experts in Language, Identity, and Value related fields, value systems though individual are not isolated once established, but interactional. Whether an interaction is intrapersonal, interpersonal, inter-group, individual to group, or group to individual each implies interaction between value systems. Demonstrated in the image below are possible representations of interactional value systems, as implicated by the findings of this study.



(Figure. 4.17)

Displayed in the graphic above (fig 4.17) is merely an example of potential interactional behaviors of value systems, e.g. 'iterative,' 'ordinate – subordinate,' and 'convergent' or 'divergent.' However, any number of interactions may occur in any number of combinations

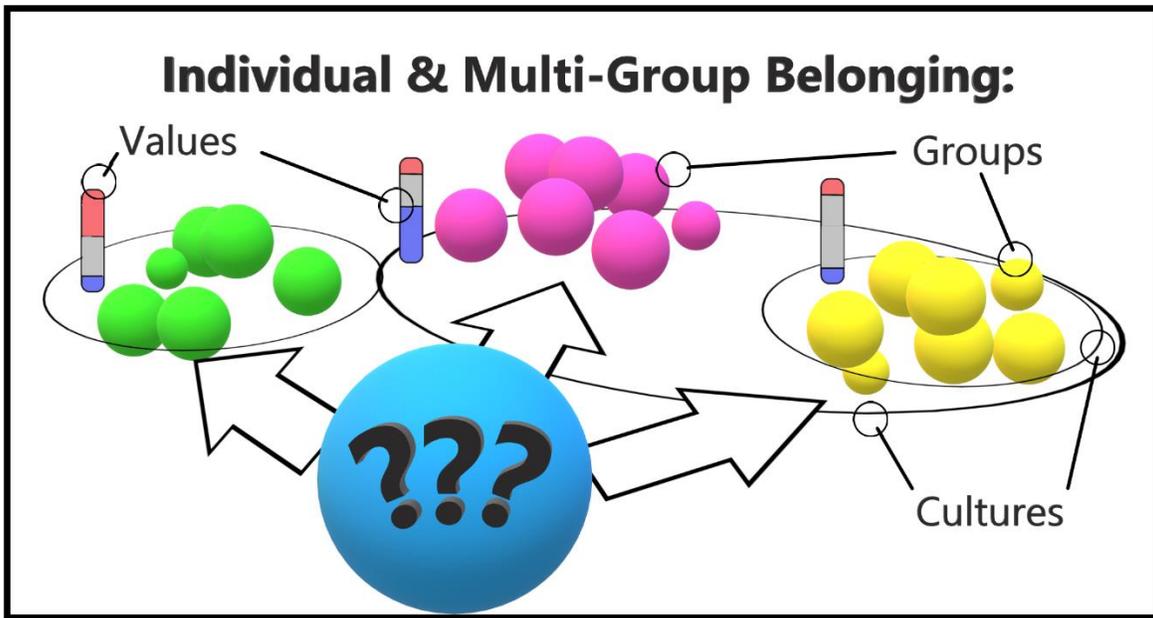
simultaneously. Iterative systems may contain both convergent and divergent value systems within a variety of ordinate or subordinate levels, which may exhibit several more iterations of value systems within each, etc. If the reader is familiar with fractal geometry, the concept is quite similar. No matter how far or how close you move the focus on the pattern, it will continue to produce new levels of complexity *ad infinitum*.

At the far left of figure 4.17, we see the representation of an iterative value system, which might be seen as a representation of academic contexts, wherein students, teachers, and administrative staff are all working together under the same value system, but with varying levels of reflexivity regarding values in play, and different extents to which each value may be influential. The next example is of the “ordinate – subordinate” value system interaction, which may be thought to represent instances of colonial or neocolonial values transmission from one dominant group to another with less power. Though, acculturation and even explicit values pedagogy could also be thought to be represented by this structure, due to the separation of values and beliefs primarily being associated with power dynamics. Lastly, to the bottom right of figure 4.17, we see the representation of divergent and convergent value systems. Subtracting the power dynamic from the previous example allows us to see how value systems may interact in more balanced situations of linguistic or cultural contact zones. However, partially convergent or overlapping value systems, such as those ~~resulting from a~~ resulting from a disparity external association and internal belonging, might also be represented by this image.

Before we move into an actual demonstration of how value's connection to identity might be realized, it is important at this point to restate what we have covered to this point in attempting to answer the 3rd research question.

- 1) Value is affective whether perceived or unperceived.
- 2) Values work together in complete systems (paradigms).
- 3) Perception of values allows them to be placed along the reflexivity continuum.
- 4) A value perceived as existing along the reflexivity continuum is called a *belief*.
- 5) Each value system also represents the spectrum of beliefs held by an individual or group.
- 6) Each value system is interactional with other value systems.
- 7) Values systems may be shared in part or in whole.
- 8) *Culture* is directly tied to value, as it consists of the behaviors of a shared value system.
- 9) Intersubjectivity of shared values has a diminishing effect on reflexivity of beliefs.
- 10) Behaviors related to value systems may further influence or reinforce related beliefs.
- 11) Value conformity is synonymous with group *belonging*.

In short, this means that according to experts in language, identity, and related fields, the link between value and identity formation, selection, and performance lies within all aspects of belief and behavior which are related to value conformity and group '*belonging*.' This concept might be demonstrated similarly to the following:



(Figure. 4.18)

Represented above is the idea of group belonging and value system conformity. According to this research, groups are not differentiated haphazardly, but are created and insulated by systems of shared beliefs, which are differentiated and reinforced by their individual systems of value related behaviors. Individually distinct groups may exist external to, or even internal to other distinct groups. However, it is *belonging*, whether desired or professed, which causes or reinforces conformity to group value systems and associated behaviors (*culture*).

Section 4.4.0 – CHAPTER SUMMARY

Initially, this chapter used demographic information to justify the study as both balanced and diverse in as an interdisciplinary study, and proceeded to explain and interpret each question and prompt in each of the 3 rounds carried out under this Delphi study. Finally, each of the three research questions used to establish the research and its methodologies were addressed individually.

Though this iterative Delphi study, where scholars and experts were able to repeatedly critique conceptualizations of value and eventually isolate individual characteristics of value, its contexts, and its behaviors we have unveiled much about value, belief, and culture, and even how value concepts are linked to identity and identity formation and selection. We have demonstrated many aspects of value and how it functions in conceptual isolation, as well as how it behaves in interactional systems, eventually extending the concepts into individual and multi-group belonging.

Overall though, the results of this study have shown us much that we might extrapolate from and use to for implication which may meaningfully impact several areas of educational philosophy, evaluative practices, and critical pedagogy, as well as areas of future research.

Chiefly, these points will be used as the basis for the implications covered in the next chapter (chapter 05):

- 1) Value is affective whether realized or unrealized
- 2) Values work together in complete systems (paradigms)
- 3) Perception of values allows them to be placed along the reflexivity continuum
- 4) A value perceived as existing along the reflexivity continuum is called a *belief*
- 5) Each value system also represents the spectrum of beliefs held by an individual or group
- 6) Each value system is interactional with other value systems
- 7) Values and/or entire value systems may be shared in part or in whole
- 8) *Culture* is directly tied to values as it is behaviors associated with a shared value system

- 9) Intersubjectivity of shared values has a diminishing effect on reflexivity of beliefs
- 10) Behaviors related to value systems may further influence or reinforce related beliefs
- 11) Value conformity is synonymous with group *belonging*
- 12) *Belonging* drives value conformity

CHAPTER 05:

IMPLICATIONS of RESEARCH

Section 5.1.0 – INTRODUCTION

This study examined the foundational concepts underlying value as a cognitive and meta-cognitive construct, as well as individual and group contexts which may be influenced by value systems and related beliefs and behaviors, in order to define ‘paradigmatic value’ and its implications for educational (specifically SLA) contexts.

In this chapter, we will be discussing the implications of the findings arrived at under this study. Specifically, we will be addressing three major implication of the findings themselves, as well as implications for future research. Below is an outline of topics to be discussed in this chapter.

- 6) Summary of Findings
- 7) Implications for SLA (Second Language Acquisition)
- 8) Implications for LPE (Language Program Evaluation)
- 9) Implications for Critical Pedagogy
- 10) Avenues for Future Research

Section 5.2.0 – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 – DEFINITIONS

Through the course of this study, we have dealt with a variety of terms which are largely taken to be synonymous in many disciplines and courses of study – terms such as *value* and *belief* – though through interpretation of expert responses provided during this interdisciplinary Delphi study, we have been able to clearly disambiguate several terms for use in this and future research.

- **Value:** An isolatable conceptualization of reality
- **Belief:** A value which is perceived as existing at any point along the continuum of reflexivity

- **Value System:** The sum of all values which might influence an individual or group
- **Belief System:** The sum of all values which are perceived as existing at any points along the continuum of reflexivity

5.2.2 - TERMS

Additionally, in order to express certain novel concepts being explored or being discovered throughout the course of this research, several new terms needed to be created.

- **Reflexivity:** The awareness of held value beliefs
- **Continuum of Reflexivity:** The total possible span along which values may be believed to be subjective or objective
- **Cognitive Proximity:** The level to which one is aware of the subjectivity of value beliefs
- **Value Objectification:** The reduction/removal of the subjectivity of value
- **Paradigmatic Value:** The level at which values are believed to truly represent reality
- **Culture:** The pattern of normative behaviors which demonstrate a value-belief system

5.2.3 – BRIEF SUMMARY OF CONCLUSION

Based on experts' responses gained over the course of this Delphi study, we have been able to conclude that:

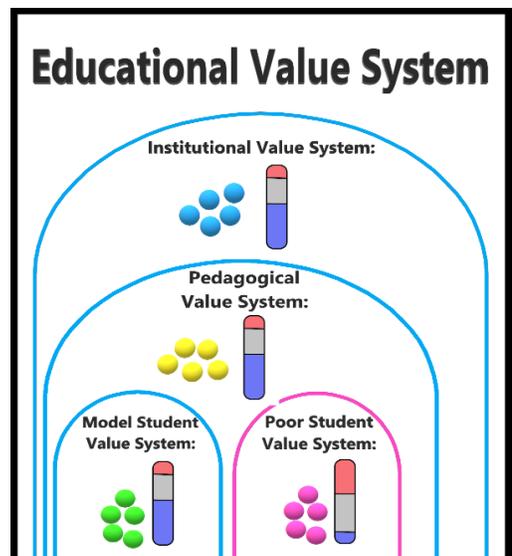
- 1) Value is affective whether realized or unrealized
- 2) Values work together in complete systems (paradigms)
- 3) Perception of values allows them to be placed along the reflexivity continuum
- 4) A value perceived as existing along the reflexivity continuum becomes a *belief*
- 5) Each value system also represents the spectrum of beliefs held by an individual or group
- 6) Each value system is interactional
- 7) Values and/or entire value systems may be shared in part or in whole

- 8) *Culture* is directly tied to values as ‘*behaviors associated with a shared value system*’
- 9) Intersubjectivity of shared values has a diminishing effect on reflexivity
- 10) Behaviors related to value systems may further influence or reinforce related beliefs
- 11) Value conformity is synonymous with group *belonging*
- 12) *Belonging* drives and maintains value conformity

Accordingly, in answering the final summative research question posed in the introductory chapter, we may conclude that *Value* is indeed linked to *Identity*, and that connection may be demonstrated through conceptualizations of communities as groups unified by the intersubjectivity of their value systems (*shared beliefs*) and differentiated through their unique systems of value-related behaviors (*cultures*). This allows us to understand how *belonging* drives and reinforces value conformity, and the ways in which values and value beliefs may be transmitted or adopted. However, as the final conclusion of the study, it is the unique concept of belonging which proves the ultimate link between value, culture, belief, behavior, and identity.

Section 5.3.0 - IMPLICATIONS

Isolating the above principles as derived from expert responses at various stages during the course of this study, we might see its application as an isolated iteration of single education-cultural value system, wherein the subjective values of the stakeholders are held paradigmatically by the students within.



(Figure 5.1)

Represented here is the application of an iterative value model wherein the stakeholder values are used to establish the educational value paradigm. According to this iterative value model we may not the following stages of paradigm construction and values transmission/assimilation.

- 1) Stakeholder values are established which govern the mission of the institution at large
- 2) This mission is interpreted and transmitted by faculty to staff
- 3) The values of the faculty are interpreted by the staff and transmitted to students
- 4) The students interpret these values and transmit them laterally between one another
 - a. Value transmission may not always be successful, appearing as resistance

To expound upon this model, in an SLA setting the construction of overall proficiency objectives, course learning outcomes, levels of progression, benchmarks, cut-scores, etc. are created based on stakeholder values.

Subsequently, assessments are then designed which might effectively report on isolated indicators of the values established through the programmatic evaluation criterion. Having established assessable indicators of the achievement of stakeholder values, teaching is used to produce students which might be capable of reproducing these indicators of achievement.

Each of these behaviors, from the selection of stakeholder values, to the selection of teaching methods conducive to the learning of suitable materials, demonstrates a system of shared beliefs, which resolves itself as an “academic culture,” or system of behaviors related to shared beliefs. Acceptance and participation in the value related behaviors of the academic culture becomes synonymous with belonging, and the new intersubjectivity of the academic values works to

restrict reflexivity and reinforce the perception of the academic cultural values as truly paradigmatic (*a reflection of the reality of education*).

Coming full circle, students who wish to *belong* in this academic culture will demonstrate behaviors which represent the institutional values, and reciprocally, demonstrating academic value-related behaviors is seen as belonging. Students who have adopted behaviors which reflect institutional values, such as study habits, participation, adequate progress, etc., will be seen as “model students” likely regardless of their numeric achievement.

However, assessments are used to report on the students’ ability to produce forecasted achievement indicators of achievement of stakeholders’ values. This in short means that assessment might inform evaluation, and evaluation in turn uses this information to ascertain if the desired paradigm has been established which is capable of producing an academic culture suitable for conforming students to regularly achieve stakeholders’ desired outcomes, affirming the selected values.

The above is of course, merely an example of one hyperbolically homogeneous example of a single iterative value system. Value systems in reality would likely have no limit to the number of interactions possible at each and every level conceivable. As many of us who work in or around academia may be well aware, there are few (if any) examples of an institution wherein every staff member would agree with every faculty member on every point, and certainly even if that were the case, there is little likelihood that they would also agree with administration on every point of policy within their organization. Therefore, as this is the reality which we will all

realistically encounter, it may edify the reader to engage with a more realistic example of how iterative value systems may appear in a more authentic context.

As stated earlier in the findings chapter, values and value systems may be shared in part *or* (hypothetically) in whole. This hypothetical sharing of value systems in whole is what was demonstrated in the above model. However, sharing identical value systems would likely mean sharing an identical representation of the world, and therefore would produce identical “individuals.” As such, we may assume that no iteration of any value system, regardless of how closely it may resemble another is ever truly shared “in whole,” but to varying degrees *in part*.

Therefore, we may understand an actual institutional setting as having large divisions in value systems at every level wherein perspectives on educational duties may differ to a significant degree (administration, staff, faculty, student, etc.), but also in any situation wherein perspectives external to the institution may differ (sociology, methodological preference, conviction, etc.). In short, this means that at the boarder of sameness is division. And, however obvious this may sound, should we wish to understand an organization in its entirety, investigate issues between department heads, or chase down the broken links in communication from provost to student, this must be the framework from which we work.

However, while such a mindset might seem to call value systems into question and even suggest that a more homogeneous organization would be subject to fewer issues expected in situations of value system divergence, without further investigation into this topic, we cannot know if this is indeed the case. Regardless though, understanding where and how conflicts in communication,

behavior, performance, and/or expectations may occur, understanding that they likely stem from issues related to value system conflicts aids us in understanding that how to approach and address these issues. And as will be covered in the following sections regarding the implications for SLA, we will see that most likely, such issues will likely be alleviated through consciousness raising.

5.3.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR SLA

The implications of this research for SLA contexts is twofold. Primarily there are implications to be explored in establishing academic cultures suitable for learning. Secondly, and likely the most powerful implications of this research reset in the notion of *belonging* being a stimulus for values adoption, conformity, and maintenance. This means that given this new understanding of behavior as a reflection of a given value system, we may be able to reverse engineer the most suitable academic value system to induce desired learner behaviors. Though it would take time and research to reliably chart behaviors to values, it is conceivable that educational institutions would be able to create synthetic classroom cultures for optimal learning accommodation.

However, potential changes to pedagogy such as these would undoubtedly need to stem from the administrative realms of SLA, and may or may not be pursued by program administrators. This being the case, even without redesigning programs to engineer value systems for learner accommodation, there are many implications for possible applications of this research, even if directly applied at the pedagogical level.

In SLA (second language acquisition) contexts specifically, and in line with the concepts underlying transformative pedagogy, value, as it has been explored within this research may

seem a bit cyclical, as it is both the way result of perception and an influencer of perception. However, this does not mean that there is no way to interrupt the cycle. As pedagogues, regardless of which model or method is used to construct the learning frameworks within each individual classroom, education should include ‘consciousness raising’ regarding whichever subject or language being taught. This can be as simple as informing learners of the existence of certain benchmarks for performance, or as intricate as deconstructing etymologies to unveil masked power dynamics encoded within words and phrases being taught.

While the latter would require great insights on the part of the language instructor, and an incredible command of language and semiotics the prior would require only for the instructor to be aware of the expectations of their department, regarding student progress. In most cases, these benchmarks are outlined clearly at the classroom level as SLO’s (Student Learning Objectives) or at the course level as CO’s (Course Outcomes), which define specific expectations for progress and for graduation from one course level to the next. While informing student of the existence of these benchmarks and thresholds may not immediately seem advantageous or impactful on student learning, according to this research the exact opposite may be true. Such an act of consciousness raising would allow students to understand that the expectation placed upon them in language learning are not what it means to be proficient as a language learner and as a language user, but merely that they are a means of measurement for academic purposes.

Additionally, if possible, instructors should inform students of institutional assessment policies and practices. And, whenever possible, allow students to participate in the creation of testing materials, whether in question creation or in the wording of prompts. While this might be seen as

potentially compromising an exam, this does not need to be the case. A writing or speech class, for example uses rubrics to assess student language production in relation to certain expectations. However, in most cases these rubrics are reserved for the instructor's use and often are written in an academic format. However, it is a simple task to take a few minutes of class time to ask students to read and "translate" them. This exposes them to the standards and allows them to negotiate standards and expectations in a co-construction of their own learning.

Exposure to and interpretation of assessment standards in this way effectively elevates the learner to the role of *participant*, as opposed to *subject*, regarding their own education. In this way, we allow them to develop a more broadened subjectivity within the educational paradigm, affording them and their independent identities a greater level of security from external influence.

5.3.1a Establishment of Suitable Academic Culture

According to this research, academic or classroom culture is not established in the classroom, but at the far-removed level of program administration, in the form of mission statements and course outcomes. As we have seen, culture spawns naturally as the set of behaviors associated with a given value system. This means that classroom culture is much the result of the value system forming the learner paradigm, which is typically instituted at the administrative level in relation to administrative and stakeholder needs.

5.3.1b Belonging and Values Adoption

One of the most recent focal points in language program administrations is the idea that students should feel like they are a part of the education which they are receiving, being co-creators of learning, they should feel as though they *belong*. The sense of belonging has recently been

identified as a pivotal influencer in learning and achievement, and through this study, we can see why this may be the case.

Belonging itself seems to insist that individuals conform to the values of the group to which they belong, or would wish to belong. As we have seen though, the adoption of intersubjective values is not a vacuous internalization but requires behavioral demonstration of values assimilation to maintain group belonging. In short, should a student poses sense of belonging within their academic environment, they will demonstrate behaviors aligned with the academic cultural norms.

According to this research, this happens for two reasons. Primarily, as experts participating in this study have unanimously affirmed, “People(s) who perceive a value to be true may act upon that belief.” We can interpret this also as, “individuals and groups behave according to the truths which they believe about the world,” or further refine it to, “people(s) behave in accordance with their value systems.”

Value systems, as we have seen in Chapter 04 represent all values which might influence an individual or group and encapsulate all value beliefs. Applying this to the above, we are able to understand the effect of belonging is not only value conformity, but the acquisition of the intersubjectivity required to limit reflexivity. This produces a true group member who ‘walks the walk,’ not out of necessity or the desire to conform, but because their shared perception of the world influences which actions and behaviors they might *choose* to enact in their rendition of the world, as it is perceived.

However, group affiliation does not necessarily require the full adoption of the complete value system, as many individuals may indeed be members, or be seen as members of groups to which they do not, or do not wish to belong. *Vis a vis* we may see an individual with a briefcase and a button-down shirt and assume they are a responsible adult, hetero-normative, vegetarian, or whatever other group associations we may ascribe to them. This brings us to the second reason ideals of belonging might influence value-related behavior.

Greater than 90% of participants stated that choosing not to recognize group values identifies an individual as not being part of the group. We can assume then that unless an individual desired to be considered as an outsider, they would likely elect to demonstrate the value-related behaviors of the group, despite the possibility of not explicitly desiring to belong. Additionally, situations wherein the value-related behaviors are demonstrated are also thought by experts to have an impact on individual perceptions of values, and may result in value conformity, passively or actively.

5.3.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR LPE

This research on value has uncovered much of what value itself is and how it may act. With these insights it may now be possible to isolate the previously undiscovered theory of evaluation currently lacking unilaterally in LPE (Language Program Evaluation).

In LPE, we are surrounded by a wealth of models, styles, and best practices, but as of yet there has been no unifying theory available to bring all of the ideals held by evaluators together. This is likely because the focus in the field may have been on finding a root practice from which all evaluation seemed to stem, or due to the search of the one “best” method which might be seen as

the most efficient/most accurate. However, it is likely that the theory will be isolated not in the form of a single practice, but in understanding what it is that values behave in an iterative system, such as it must in academic contexts.

As has been explained to some extent in the above section (*Section 5.3.1a SLA Conceptual Model*), academic institutions are an iterative instance of several value systems which must act and inform one another of the values to be instilled and of the values being adopted at each level. However, currently evaluation of academic systems is conducted considering only the identifying markers of successful value transmission as the primary focus, which gives little weight to the socio-cultural system required to produce the scores and standards being assessed and subsequently evaluated.

However, despite using indicators of achievement to inform program-level evaluation, what is likely being evaluated is not productivity of the program, but the applicability of the academic culture which has developed in response to institutional values set in place at administrative levels. In a sense, though using numbers, benchmarks, and cutoff scores as evidences, evaluation seeks to determine how conducive the institutional value system is at instilling the educational culture necessary for group-member students to reproduce markers indicative of the desired stakeholder values, e.g. test scores and benchmarks.

According to the research conducted in support of this study, the above is, I believe, the foundational understanding required to develop and operationalize a unified field theory of evaluation, which might also be applied to LPE specifically.

5.3.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGY

Of course, with the more insights we are able to gain with regards to value, belief, identity, behavior, and culture, the more responsibility we will have to preserve human rights and ensure that we understand how best such knowledge might be employed and how to avoid its improper usage in applied contexts.

This research has shown us potential avenues by which one may manipulate institutional values and cultures, in order to potentially construct learner subjectivity, in order to produce students who would thrive and devote themselves to learning in the most conducive manners available. We have also come to the realization that evaluation may not be about setting standards and attempting to regulate performance, but that it functionally works to test and check the extent to which learners are being effected by value paradigms established according to stakeholders' desires.

With this knowledge, we cannot help but understand the potential for such implications of this research to be misused by the ill-informed, in potentially unethical ways: neocolonialistic values acculturation, etc. While institutional and group value systems will establish their own unique cultures for themselves with little to no intervention, it is this new understanding we have been granted regarding the gravity of intentional values selection, even when far removed from the awareness of the students themselves, which requires a much greater attention than previously afforded in either pedagogical or administrative realms.

If we are to employ explicit value techniques, or any strategy which hitherto fore might be understood as potentially operating through a value framework, we must consider which values

are to be augmented and which are to be overwritten through our intervention, and whether or not we might morally justify such action. In the context of language program administration (LPA), we must ask if designing educational value systems which might cause learners to willingly chose the forfeiture of native values for engineered ones is justifiable under the auspices of a more proficient pedagogy.

However, should we employ this knowledge of the existence of constructed value paradigms, and move forward with a conscious awareness of the impact such externally imposed value systems might have on our students, we could not help but engage in transformative pedagogical tactics in our classrooms. As language educators, this is especially important, as we are all too aware that that languages house ideologies which are transmitted through language instruction. Therefore, in moving forward in the advancement of pedagogy, it is likely that methods which seek to preserve learner identity and agency will naturally evolve into more transformative methods which practice the elevation of learner consciousness regarding values imbedded within materials and even within the programs and institutions responsible for their instruction, as this will allow for the development of a truly autonomous learner identity which might develop healthily along-side their curriculum, as opposed to developing in reaction to it.

Section – 5.4.0 IMPLICATIONS for FUTURE RESEARCH

5.4.1 INTRODUCTION

This research into value has produced several results which were not the expressed goal of the study, as it was originally envisioned. As an iterative study, which was designed to inform itself according to the minimally guided open responses of its expert panel of participants, we have been able to gain unique insights into not only *Value*, as was the intention of the study, but about

contexts of value and its various connections to well researched topics such as behavior, culture, belief, belonging, and even individual and group identity formation, selection, and performance. In addition to the application of value frameworks in SLA and other pedagogical contexts, each extrasomatic connection value is thought to have also provides new potential avenues of novel research.

5.4.2 FUTURE RESEARCH IN SLA

5.4.2a Learner Values

Further research is required in areas of value in SLA contexts. Specifically, in developing accurate instruments to assess student naïve value systems, in hopes of preserving them despite academic intervention.

5.4.2b Academic Institutional Values

Further research is also required to better understand the true impact of institutional values construction, and its effect on staff, faculty, and students.

5.4.2c Value Framework Development

Further research is required in the development and testing of values frameworks which might successfully produce academic cultures which might enhance student belonging and learning effectiveness.

5.4.2d Ethics of Values Intervention

Having identified that values and their related behaviors are influential in contexts of individual reflexivity and may result in the assimilation of group values, more research is required to understand the ethics of value intervention. This does not only extend to pedagogical interventions such as explicit values pedagogy but also to evaluative practices, as they too imply the manipulation of value and belief systems.

5.4.3 FUTURE RESEARCH IN EVALUATION

5.4.3a Field Theory of Evaluation

As stated in section 5.3.2, regarding the implications for value in language program evaluation, more work needs to be done in order to ascertain exactly evaluative practices are conducted.

According to this study, it is evaluative practices are conducted in order to ascertain levels of conformity between ordinate and sub-ordinate levels of a single iterative value system. However, this assertion regarding LPE must be tested.

5.4.3b Value-Based Evaluative Framework

Additional research needs to be carried out in the area of evaluation, specifically regarding evaluation in academic contexts such as LPE, in order to determine if conceptual value frameworks might be operationalized in order to enhance current LPE practices, or create new tools which might be used to further aid in the development of the field and its practices.

5.4.4 CONNECTIONS TO VALUE

5.4.4a Value and Belonging

More work needs to be carried out in the area of belonging. This research has arrived at the conclusion that belonging represents the key linkage between value and identity development, selection, and performance. This connection needs to be explored and further isolated.

5.4.4b Value and Culture

According to this research, experts professed that value belief systems represented the entire perception of reality held by an individual or group, and that these beliefs generated patterns of behavior which were conducive to the reality being perceived. This caused the researchers to define the patterns of beliefs which represent individual and/or group value-belief systems as “*culture*.” This definition of culture needs to be explored and regarding its accuracy in relation to current research.

5.4.4c Value and Identity

Though links to identity were identified by an interdisciplinary panel of intercultural experts, and provisional representations of these findings were produced to demonstrate these connections, further exploration of these linkages and their contexts must take place in order fully understand how these connections work.

Additionally, psychological studies may need be conducted in order to explore what inspires the desire to belonging and whether it is the desire to belong which results in values assimilation, or whether the values assimilation inspires the desire to belong.

5.4.4d Value and Identity Dissonance

Still further research possibilities in the field of identity are alluded to in the findings of this study. Intersubjectivity of value systems is thought to reduce individual reflexivity regarding the value beliefs which are shared by the group. However, should an individual develop or maintain some level of reflexive awareness, this may produce a form of cognitive dissonance, resulting in a dissonant identity, appearing as akin to imposter syndrome, etc.

We can imagine this as being a situation in where an individual was hired for a position for which they feel uniquely unqualified for, or maybe in the situation of a newly graduated Ph.D. student. In either of these situations, the individual has been welcomed to a new group, but it is possible that their imaginations of that group preclude them from a sense of belonging. In these cases, we may see an awareness of intersubjective values, but a lack of shared belief. However, this too will require future study.

Section – 5.5.0 IMPLICATIONS for METHOD LIMITATIONS

5.5.1 INTRODUCTION

As many of the limitations of this study were due specifically the use of Delphi method, which has many of its own limitation, regardless of the size and/or scope of the research being conducted, there are several implications for future research which might hope to mitigate some of these limitation, either through the employment of enhanced methods or new methods focused on the same or similar research goals.

- 1) The initial prompt proposed as a guide for Delphi participants to address and subsequently inform the evolution of the Delphi study was provided through the researcher's own efforts to synthesize relevant literature, and though evaluated by monitor team, this could be improved by first conducting a study which might inspire participants to supply the relevant insights needed to create the initial synthetic definition.
- 2) The limited number of participants in this study, though deemed sufficient for gaining consensus according to established Delphi method, may not truly represent the consensus of the entire population. This could be addressed through the conduct of an additional study wherein the total study results are made available for acceptance or rejection decisions by a much sample population or greater statistical power.
- 3) Further investigation into the interdisciplinary nature of the study could also provide avenues for future research through the investigation of value concepts according to methods with would isolate responses from specific discipline individually.

- 4) Language and wording used through the course of the Delphi study were subject to the specializations of the P.I. and therefore could have had an effect on participants' interpretation or ability to understand study materials and prompts. This could be addressed in future studies wherein an interdisciplinary panel was responsible for designing and interpreting study materials and participant responses.

- 5) As is the expressed goal of all Delphi research, the voiced objective to find a consensus could have had an impact on the study findings and/or interpretations of data gained. This could potentially be mitigated by employing a grounded theory method wherein correlation data would be gained spontaneously, rather than in reaction to study design.

- 6) Finally, the lack on incentive to participate and fully engage with each portion of the study may have had an effect on the level to which scholars engaged with each portion of the study. This may be addressed in future research by offering incentives for participation. However, it is likely that even with incentives offered, it will be unknowable as to whether or not participants were fully engaging with study materials.

Section – 5.6.0 CLOSING THOUGHTS of the AUTHOR

This dissertation research was a labor of love, as well as a consistent exercise in questioning everything I've ever taken at face value. As a Department of Defense linguistic cryptologist turned academic, studies in developmental anthropology and applied linguistics have of course prepared me well to explore theoretical topics in language, identity, and value, as have been explored in this dissertation. However, despite having pursued these topics throughout both my

Masters' and Doctoral programs, nothing could have prepared me for the wealth of possibilities and avenues of future research which have been clearly delineated as a result of the implications of this study.

I feel truly blessed that I was able to perform the role of Principle Investigator in this research, and still, months after the close of this study, I find it nearly impossible to comprehend all of the possibilities now open to all of us, due to a simple inquiry into the casually indescript (archaic term meaning un-described) term, *value*.

Having taken several courses in social semiotics, I found myself and my research interests changing with every new realization of exactly how signs and symbols (including language itself) are used to allow human beings to interact with our world and operate within it. Codifying information began to seem as though it were almost a "coping mechanism" for survival as individual, yet social, creatures. And, the deeper I looked the more 'hidden' meanings I would find in nearly everything I could possibly think to question, until the final epiphany.

I have always enjoyed cognitive linguistics, and the cognitive sciences in general, but I have also always been intrigued by the physical sciences, especially those dealing with particle physics and quantum mechanics. The 'slit experiment' as it is causally known, as well as wave-particle observation phenomena utterly captivated me as a teen, because they seemed entirely impossible, but could be reproduced by anyone with the necessary equipment and reproduced time and time again. It was almost as if (which actually may be the case) all of physics, as if every concrete "law" since the dawn of time were subject to our perception of it. If we measure light as a wave, we see a wave pattern emerge, but if we measure it as a particle, we find unquestionable evidence that light particles exist. But, how could any of this be true? How could 'laws' be

depended on observation? I mean, it is obvious that if a tree falls in the forest, it does make a sound... right?

In the final year of my doctoral program in second language acquisition and teaching, I began enrolling in course after course of administrative leadership and program administration and one course in particular took advantage of my interest in semiotics and my fascination with scientific impossibilities by offering me a single question. “If we have decades of research on best practices in language program evaluation, why can we not seem to isolate the theory of the field?”

In response to this question I began to challenge everything. I challenged the idea of ‘best practice,’ I challenged the division between evaluation and assessment as separate practices, I played devil’s advocate between the ideas that language itself was and was not assessable at all, but finally I challenge the word “evaluate” itself. Words are after all, merely symbols used to encode meaning so that we might interact with our world more conveniently. And, the outcome brought me to a greater precipice looming above a deeper chasm than I had ever dared to peer into before.

“Evaluate” at its core consisted of a value concept. It was a simple enough conclusion, but why? What was the ‘value’ in ‘evaluate’ for? Why was it so hard to find a theory of the field, if countless scholars had written countless volumes of theory and practice regarding evaluative practices? And while I cannot say that a light broke through the fog, I can most assuredly state that it was at that point when I became aware that there indeed was a fog through which I should have been seeking a light. It was at that point I realized; we do not actually have a consistent definition of what exactly value is.

My mind started racing from that moment forward. I began to dissect the word and its semiotic nuances, hoping to identify what value meant as a social construct, what it meant perceptually as a symbol of meaning, and it was not long after that I discovered a seemingly off-hand quote linking evaluative practices and manipulation of realities, within one of the suggested readings for my language program administration curriculum, which spurred me to attempt to connect the seemingly disparate concepts of value and reality itself.

It was then that I realized that ‘reality’ and ‘value’ were not disparate as I had previously assumed, but that they must in all actuality be one concept, one concept which had been symbolically divided for ease of use by social creatures attempting to make sense of their environment, which is the same reason ‘value’ as a term had also undergone so many divisions for use in so many various contexts. And in short, it was this hypothesis which this dissertation research sought to test by attempting to isolate an interdisciplinary definition of value itself.

And, as we have seen in the research, *value*, just like *reality* itself, is both created by and simultaneously a reflection of what we believe about that which we perceive. Still, this notion seems to be absolute insanity, as it turns all that we know upside down, yet somehow simultaneously connects so many seemingly distal concepts together in complete harmony.

This research is both the culmination of a life’s passionate pursuits, and at the same time, it is merely the beginning of an endless pursuit. It is both the answer and entrance to an abyssal void of questions. It shines light through the dark, but makes us aware of the darkness so much more vividly. But, above all, it is mine and a reflection of me, in both my wisdom and my ignorance, my pride and my shame, my triumph and folly.

Through this work, I hope that many more will take up the mantle and pursue these and related topic in the future. I desire that we should all, as academic professionals, call into question the very foundations of thought and make new discoveries.

GLOSSARY

- **Adoption:** The conscious or unconscious acquisition of...
- **Attribution:** The allocation or assigning of...
- **Contributor:** The entity generating an attribution
- **Behavior:** Any conscious or unconscious action or response.
- **Belief:** The result of the perception of any value as existing at any point along the continuum of reflexivity
- **Belief System:** The sum total of all perceived value-beliefs held by an entity
- **Benefit:** The attribution of 'good' to any object, act, concept, or thought, etc.
- **Belonging:** The belief that an entity shares in some portion of an ordinate value system
- **Conformity:** The adoption of, or acculturation to any portion of a value system or its related beliefs/behaviors
- **Constructed Subjectivity:** Any range of potential subjective awareness which has been delineated by an ordinate value system
- **Continuum:** A gradient of inordinate points existing between two conceptually distal poles
- **Cognitive Proximity:** The degree to which an entity is conscious of subjectivity of a given value

- **Culture:** A set of behaviors associated with a particular value system
- **Experiencer:** An entity subject to an influence...
- **Influence:** A force which induces change or deviation from a truly vacuous autonomy
- **Intersubjective:** Shared, or the belief that something is shared
- **Intersubjectivity:** Sharedness, or the perception of sharedness
- **Paradigm:** A complete composite image of 'reality,' created through perceptions of values which are thought to reflect *actual* reality
- **Reflexive Awareness:** The conscious awareness of one's own perceptions
- **Reflexivity:** The consideration of one's own beliefs
- **Resemble:** The belief that something is or is not...
- **Subjectivity:** The affordance of individual thought, withholding external influence(s)
- **Transmission:** The projection of...
- **Value:** A conceptually isolatable perception of reality
- **Value-Belief:** A conscious belief regarding any value
- **Value Paradigm:** The complete system of values under which an entity operates, as though it truly represented reality
- **Value System:** The sum total of all values perceived and un-perceived, which influence an entity

APPENDICES:

Appendix A1 – E1:

(Contains participant information which when masked might still allude to participant identity and are therefore have not been included in this appendix, despite having been referenced in the participant selection methods section of Chapter 03)

Appendix F: (Y/N) Prompts for Round 03

Perception and Subjectivity:

- Value represents the Concept of Benefit
- Things with value are perceived to be beneficial in some way
- What is perceived as beneficial is subjective
- Value can be perceived
- Value can be experienced
- Value can be attributed to something (action, experience, concept, etc.)
- Value is Subjective
- All value is Subjective

Culture Constructed Subjectivity:

- Culture may influence beliefs related value(s)
- Culture may reinforce beliefs related to value(s)
- Individuals may be aware that some values are subjective
- Individuals may not be aware that some values are subjective
- Some values may be intersubjective (shared by others)

Belief and Behavior:

- Some may believe their own values to be true (objective)
- Some people(s) may believe their own values are true for others as well
- Shared (intersubjective) values may be perceived as being true (objective)
- People may believe that some values are subjective while others are objective
- People(s) who perceive a value to be true may behave according to that belief

Value Paradigms:

- One person may believe a value to be true (objective), while another person may believe the same value to be subjective
- People(s) may continue to believe/ behave as if their own values are true (objective) despite interaction with other people(s) who believe/ behave differently
- People(s) may discontinue to believe/ behave as if their own values are true (objective) after having interacted with other people(s) who believe/ behave differently

Value Transmission:

- Values may be transmitted
- Values may be impressed upon others

- Values may be adopted from others
- Individuals may not be aware certain values exist
- Individuals can choose certain values to believe in

Paradigmatic Value Conformity:

- Individuals may still be effected by values and beliefs of which they are not keenly aware
- Only acknowledged, perceived, understood values have an effect on an individual or group
- An individual belonging to a culture or group is subject to the values of that culture or group
- Choosing not to recognize the values of a culture or group may identify an individual as not belonging to that culture or group
- People(s) must behave according to the values of a culture or group to be perceived as belonging to that culture or group

These statements were supplied as the basis for Round 03.

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