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Our Hands, Our Minds, Our Destiny

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**AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF TERTIARY STUDENTS
GREETING.**

BY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my mother and father for the support and belief in me throughout my studies.

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I want to thank God for the gift of life and the opportunity to pursue my career. My heartfelt thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. H. Mangeya, for mentoring, supervising and providing fruitful assistance throughout the research. I would like to thank my family for their undying love and financial support.

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ABSTRACT

This study is a close analysis of how gender, language, relationships affect the way tertiary students greet in Midlands State University Zvishavane Campus. Greetings are more than just a way of proclaiming one's presence but an important phenomenon of any society. The way people greet reveals a lot about their identity, background and ethnicity. Moreover, the act is carried out differently from one individual to the other. The way people greet is mostly determined by the relationships that exist between the individuals concerned. Language is not just a communication, it is also a carrier of culture. It, therefore, plays a major role in greetings. Greetings should not be taken for granted as they communicate masses about an individual and society as a whole.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The researcher observed that tertiary students from various ethnic and social backgrounds like Ndebele, Shona and Sudanese have their own unique ways of greeting each other as they interact on campus. The research interrogates diverse ways which students use when greeting each other. It interrogates how particular factors such as the nature of relationships, religion, culture, background and ethnicity. Firth (1972) rightly observes that greetings should not be treated as spontaneous emotional reactions to the coming together of people. Rather, they are highly conventionalized and follow patterned routines. Greetings are, in actual fact important conventional practices in the negotiation of social relationships. As such, they are constrained by the social context in which they are enacted. They, therefore, suggest the type of relationship people have, their background as well as their peculiarity.

1.2 Problem Statement

Findings by various scholars like Firth (1972) have shown that greetings are taken for granted in societies. The significance of greetings is never recognized and the act is treated as extemporaneous and just a way of announcing one's presence. The world is said to be one global village therefore MSU as an institution has to have some sort of a shared culture. When a closer look is taken one would realize that there are different ways used by the students when greeting each other. These differences are infused by diverse cultures and

social backgrounds. When different cultures come together they should interlink and make one community. Therefore, the study seeks to find out the differences and the reasons why the practice is carried out differently from one individual to the other.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

Duranti (1997) asserts that greetings are highly cultural and situation-specific. Resultantly, they might vary according to culture and social relationships. As such, the research is guided by the following aims and objectives:

1. To explore the differences in carrying out routine daily greetings amongst the MSU (Zvishavane) students.
2. To establish the extent to which linguistic behaviors in the conduction of greetings in tertiary institutions are shaped by such social factors as culture, gender and ethnicity.
3. To explore the social determinants of student greetings.

1.4 Assumptions of Study

The researcher makes the following assumptions:

1. Students selected for the study responded to the interview questions with honest. The participants have the interest in participating in the research because they would also want to know what causes the differences in the way we do things.

2. The research is of interest to the students also because greetings haven't been of importance as people have for so long taken them for granted. Therefore, with the curiosity of knowing more about greetings the participants will have sincere interest in taking part in the research.

1.5 Delimitations of Study

This research only focuses on Midlands State University (Zvishavane Campus) students and all other tertiary institutions are not covered by the study. The study focuses on students greeting each other only, staff and other individuals are not included. It is also centered on how language, culture, ethnicity and gender affect the ways of greetings in the institution. Lastly, the researcher uses Hymes' ethnography of Communication as the theoretical framework to carry out this research.

1.6 Limitations of Study

This research does not in any way provide the solutions or elucidations to what can be done in order to have students forming one community with one shared culture and social practices. This is because the institution enrolls different people from various places with diverse backgrounds, language and cultural practices. Therefore, it might be difficult to select the culture to follow as this will cause differences amongst the students. This research may not reflect the diversity of the student population in its entirety in relation to the aspect of greeting.

1.7 Significance of Study

This research looks at the significance of greetings in the society. From a sociolinguistic perspective, greetings are one of the most important social phenomena. Greetings are socially constructed and they give individuals a sense of belonging. They also determine and reflect the relationships that exist among certain individuals and most of all a tool of identity. This research therefore, interrogates the different discursive ways used by the students as they interact on campus. It also brings out what determines the way they greet and point out the differences on the basis of gender, culture, language and ethnicity.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

1.8.1 Identity

It refers to the distinctive characteristics belonging to any given individual or shared by all the members of a particular social category.

1.8.2 Greetings

It's an act of communication in which human beings intentionally make their presence known to each other, to show attention to and suggest a type of relationship or social status between individuals or groups of people coming in contact with each other.

1.8.3 Sociolinguistics

It is the study of the relationship between language and society. It focuses on social influences of language variation and language in its social context.

1.8.4 Interpersonal communication

It is the process by which people exchange information, feelings and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages. It is face to face communication.

1.8.5 Culture

Culture refers to the beliefs and customs of a particular society. The way of life, thinking and behaving.

1.8.6 Ethnicity

It is a category of people who identify each other based on common language, ancestral, social, cultural or national experiences.

1.8.7 Gender

It refers to socially constructed characteristics of women and men such as norms, roles and relationships.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter of the study focused more on the background of the research; the study examines how students from various ethnic and social backgrounds like Shona, Ndebele and Sudanese greet each other as they interact on campus. The research also has its main focus on what causes the differences in ways of doing things in the institution (MSU).

This chapter focuses on the theoretical definition of greetings and explores what other writers say about them. Greetings are one of the most important social phenomena. Every human society has various forms and ways of greeting.

Sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and the society (Ball, 2010). The discipline focuses on how language is used by the distinct speakers and groups in specific social context. The major goal of sociolinguistics is to explain how the speaker's variable linguistic behaviors are interrelated with their variable social background.

Covarrubias (2002) asserts that interpersonal communication is a complex process that can be described in simple terms by a sender and a receiver who exchange messages containing ideas and feelings. Interpersonal communication seeks to bring out the fact that we live in a world full of people whom we live and associate with. A greeting is an act of communication in which human beings intentionally make their presence known to each other. It is a crucial

as well as a frequent act used in our daily life. Therefore, the way greetings are conducted can be used to determine the nature of the interpersonal relationships involved. However, it should be noted that the act of greeting doesn't take place between every person one encounters and that it is done different from one individual to the other.

The study analyses the different ways in which tertiary students at Midlands State University (MSU) Zvishavane campus greet each other in their daily interactions. It sheds light on the social practice; how they carry out their discourses as well as what determines the way it is done.

2.2 Literature Review

One has to understand that greetings are an important part of any speech community's communicative competence. It is a way in which human beings acknowledge their presence. The act of greeting is as highly culture-specific as it is situational; it is determined by an individual's culture and social background.

Jibreen (2010) asserts that forms of greetings vary extensively and that we have different forms of greetings for each and every type or status of people. Greetings help us learn more about culture, personal and the historical background about the person who utters it. Cultural differences such as the pressure on girls to be nice and polite and on boys to be strong and assertive and dominant are likely to lead to the learning of different interaction styles and the adoption of different linguistic choices by girls and boys. The ways of greeting can also be largely influenced by gender. In trying to follow the societal expectations, girls and boys find

themselves doing things differently and thus greetings being culture and societally infused. The present study therefore, investigates the different ways in which males and females enact their greetings as well as the extent to which those greetings are modeled along Jibreen's gendered perspective.

Neman and Nasekh (2013) asserts that there is widespread evidence that greeting is an important part of the communicative competence necessary for being a member of any speech community. This means the way of greeting is socially constructed and it's usually known by that specific group of people who belong to that community. The research, therefore, extends the study by outlining the cultural as well as situational verbal and non-verbal behaviors that constitute greetings at tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe.

Goffman (1971) maintains that greetings in all societies are about continuation of relationships. Greetings are used prior to a conversation or made in passing. However, the way people greet each other sometimes show the kind of relationship and bond they have. The way individuals greet each other can also reveal their identity. There are different ways of greeting each other in different ethnic groups. Closer analysis reveals that people from different parts of the world have their own cultural and social practices. Hence, the study seeks to bring out the different ways of greeting exhibited by the tertiary students.

Emery (2000) views greetings as a tool used to establish identity and affirm solidarity. Language, culture and identity are intertwined disciplines that can't be separated. The way people greet each may avail their identity. All ethnic groups have their own distinct ways of

greeting each other, for example, Sotho people have their own distinct way of greeting different from those of Venda people. Therefore, the way one conducts the act reveals his/her identity. Greeting is therefore, a tool that can be used to bring out students' identities as they come from different parts of the world.

Akindel (2007) asserts that greetings are extremely important strategies for the negotiation and control of social identity and social relationships between the participants in the conversation. Through greetings one is able to note the social relationships that exist between person A and B involved in the conversation. This brings out the notion that greetings are socially constructed and society plays a major role in the act. Therefore, greetings also show us the relationships that exist between individuals on campus as the act differs according to the affiliations the students have. The research will therefore bring out the relations between the individuals.

Greetings are the general rituals of beginning an encounter. They have a vital social function. Labov (1970) argues that some languages can be evaluated in terms of the greeting patterns. This means greetings play a major role in the assessment of certain languages therefore the act differs from one language to the other. Hence, the way people greet each other can be determined by the language they speak.

Holmes (1992) avers that, semantically, greetings gain their meaning from the culture they are derived from and their content is culture specific. Basically, greetings are culture oriented

and without culture the act would be void and meaningless. Therefore, it is people's culture that determines the way they do things, including greetings.

Lungstrum (1987) brings out that the form of greeting used by particular individuals also indicates a special social reference to the status of the speakers, the period of meeting and the type of relationship that exist between the two. One of the most important social and daily customs in any human society is the greeting. Greetings have a high social position due to their importance in enhancing and promoting the relations between the society members. Therefore, the relationship between people affects the way they greet. The present study will therefore show how relationships affect the way people greet.

This research, thus interrogates how culture, language and gender influence the way students greet each other.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

For this study, Dell Hyme's Ethnography of Communication is used to analyze the elements of greetings, their significance and what determines the way students greet each other. The theory was propounded in 1962 as the Ethnography of speaking and was later changed to Ethnography of Communication so as to include other symbolic means of expression/communication.

One of Hymes' major goals was to help researchers study language use in specific contexts. Looking at how people use language would also help open avenues on various patterns rather than just looking at words themselves. To study the communication of a particular society Hymes proposed the basic units that indicate the area one would be most interested to examine and these include the following:

- a. Speech community
- b. Speech situation
- c. Speech event
- d. Communicative event
- e. Communicative style
- f. Ways of speaking

However, for this research, speech community, communicative acts, communicative style and ways of speaking will be used.

2.3.1 Speech Community

It comprises of a group of people who often use common signs. It is their peculiar way of communication that makes them different from other groups. Hymes (1972) defines speech community as people who share rules for when and how to speak. For one to be considered a part of the speech community he/she has to share at least one of the ways of communication with other members of that particular group.

2.3.2 Communicative Acts

These are the smaller units of speech. This unit describes what action is getting done when particular words are used. They can be also referred to as utterances we use to perform some linguistic action in communication. The meaning of any act is influenced by non-verbal signals such as gestures.

2.3.3 Communicative Style

It refers to the way one usually speaks. It could be said to be a characteristic of an individual to speak in a certain way. These styles can be noted by patterns in one's speech. The styles differ from diverse cultural backgrounds. One is required to make the next person more comfortable by selecting and emphasizing certain behaviors that fit within his/her personality.

2.3.4 Ways of Speaking

This refers to styles of speech that may be used in various situations and events. These ways of speaking are determined by Hymes' model of speaking which was developed to analyze discourse as a series of speech events and speech acts within a cultural context. Five of the eight factors of the model are used to analyze the study and these include the following:

1. Participants- this refers to the speaker and audience, the audience can be differentiated into addressees and the listeners. For example, the one greeting can be the addresser while those being greeted are the listeners or addressees.

2. Act sequence- refers to the form and order of the event. The plot and development of the speech. For example, how the act of greeting take place between the individuals addressing each other.
3. Key- these are cues that establish the tone, manner and the spirit of the speech act. It can also include the voice and gestures used during the speech act.
4. Norms- the social rules governing the event and participants' actions and reaction. This therefore depends on individual social background as it depends or governed by societal rules.
5. Genre- this is the kind of speech act or event. Different disciplines develop terms for kinds of speech acts and speech communities.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the functions of greetings and their importance in a society. The literature mostly focused on what greetings are as well as notions of how they create identity and how they vary across cultures, social backgrounds and ethnicity. Dell Hymes' Ethnography of communication helped analyze the functions and how greetings take place within individuals and societies. The ways of speaking are analyzed using the model of speaking.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the literature review. It focused on how the present study links with what other researchers and related studies have said about greetings. It should be noted that greetings are an important phenomenon in any society as they help identify, bring out one's social background and most importantly the act varies from one ethnic group to the other.

The present chapter is an outline of how the researcher gathered information using various research instruments and techniques. The researcher justifies particular methods used for the study. The qualitative research method is used for the study. Qualitative research is designed to bring out a target audience's range of behaviour and the perceptions that influence it. Pope (2000) asserts that, this type of method aims at answering a question, collecting evidence, and producing findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study.

3.2 Research Instruments

Bernard (1994) observes that, a research instrument can be defined as a tool designed to measure knowledge, attitude and skills. In this study, data was collected using focus group discussions and participant observation. These helped get reliable and accurate information on the study.

3.2. 1 Focus Group discussions

Barbour (2005) defines a focus group as a data collection method. Data is collected through a semi-structured group discussion. This method is used to collect data on a specific topic. The researcher held 4 group discussions with 9 participants. These were done once in a week to ensure the researcher got all the requisite information. The researcher used focus group to gather information from the participants as this helps get different views and opinions from the group members.

Participant observation is the primary method used by researcher to collect data. This method helps researchers learn more about the activities of the people under study in the natural setting. It is appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviors in their usual contexts (Merriam 1998).

The method helps identify and guide relationships with informants, the researcher get the feel for how things are systematized and how people interrelate as well as their cultural parameters. Participant observation made it possible for the researcher to collect different types of data and the researcher was able to develop questions that made sense in the native languages and that were culturally relevant.

During the study, there was observation of participants which was done nine times so as to ensure that the act was consecutively done the same. The participants were not aware they were being monitored so as to get their actual and natural way of doing things. Observations took place on campus where all the students meet, particularly in the lecture rooms, resting

bays, by the campus gate and lecture room passages. These were deemed the perfect places to carry out the observations because it is where students meet, greet and interact.

3.2.3 Video recording

The researcher used video recording so as to identify who raised a certain point since students from different ethnic groups were actively involved in the discussion. Audio recording were used to compliment video recordings as they enabled the researcher get all the nuances of the discussion and helped replay the sessions during data analysis. Moreover, the researcher also used note taking in the gathering of data so as to collect all the information.

3.3 Sampling Procedures

Sampling is a process of selecting units, for example, people from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) define a sample as a portion, piece or segment that is representative of a whole. Purposive sampling was used to ensure a fair outcome of the research. The method enabled the researcher to gather much information in the area of study. Moreover, it enabled the researcher to collect data from the relevant respondents.

The researcher conducted one focus group discussion with ten participants. The number of participants was chosen to ensure that the researcher gets accurate and different views from a number of people. This group consisted of 3 Shona, 4 Ndebele and 3 Sudanese speaking students.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The researcher clearly explained the nature of the research. The participants are aware of the aims and objectives of the study. The researcher guaranteed to preserve the participant's anonymity. The research does not contain where the information was got from and no names will provided in the research. The members were aware that they were being recorded and are free to withdraw at any given time during the study.

3.5 Limitations of Methodology

The researcher does not guarantee she got all the requisite information because she doesn't understand Sudanese therefore a challenge might be faced during focus group discussions. Moreover, there might be research bias since she belongs to one of the ethnic groups being observed and male/female researchers have access to different information, access to different people therefore the information acquired might be different from the one that would be accessed by a male researcher.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined how the researcher gathered information presented in the study. These data collection procedures were selected as they were seen as best ways to collect adequate information.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the sampling procedures used for the collection study data. The qualitative research method is used to guide the gathering of the data. Focus group discussions and observations are used as a tool to collect requisite data from the participants.

This chapter presents the data which was collected by the researcher. Data is classified according to gender, ethnicity and language.

4.2 The Social Importance of Greetings

Neman and Nasekh (2013) assert that there is widespread evidence that greetings are an important part of the communicative competence necessary for being a member of any speech community. Ethnographic studies stress the importance of greetings in connection with identity. They bring out one's identity as well as their background and viewed as important phenomena of any society.

4.3 Data Presentation and Analysis

4.3.1 Participants

Participants are referred to as the speaker and audience involved in any given speech act. These can be further categorised into speaker/addresser and listener/addressee. There are various ways of greeting used by Shona, Ndebele and Sudanese speaking people. These vary according to the relationship the individuals have. The nature of the greeting itself can be determined by a variety of relationship configurations that obtain between the interlocutors involved in the greeting itself.

4.3.1.1 Friends

The researcher observed that there are various ways of greetings used by students as they interact. Greeting is not just a random act but it varies from one individual to the other. Friends have their own ways of greeting each other and these are determined by the bond they have.

The closeness of the friendship also determines the nature of the greeting. That is, whether the participants involved are very close (best) friends or they are just friends in ‘general’.

Q: How do you greet your friend?

Nkosi: I hug, shake hands, fists greet or verbally say “zkiphani”,
“wassup”

Sahar: I usually use high fives, hugs and verbal greetings.

Belz: I hug and give them a cheek kiss as I say “how are you”.

This, therefore, shows how relationships affect the way people interrelate. Gender also plays a major role in greetings as one can realise that the way boys greet is practically different from how girls carry out the act.

4.3.1.2 Lovers

These have their own unique ways of announcing their presence and intimacy to each other, and indeed to the onlookers who might be present. Their greetings are more intimate; mostly involving emotions. The relationship and bond they have is stronger and hence the greetings are peculiar.

The way love birds greet shows how close they are and it is a way of marking one’s territory. The act shows a bit of ownership and showing observers that one is taken.

Q: How do you greet your girl/boyfriend?

Wendy: Out of excitement, I hug my boyfriend despite where we are.

Dumi: I hug and kiss her forehead.

Rutendo: I hug him and just say “hi babe”.

Greetings are not just a way of proclaiming one’s presence but can be a way of expressing feelings to each other. They communicate a lot about those involved in the act.

4.3.1.3 Acquaintances

The nature of relationships between individuals highly affects the way people greet. Greeting between classmates is just a way of announcing one's presence and doesn't involve any extra cues.

Q: How do you greet your classmates?

Blessy: I wave, give them a high five or verbally greet them.

Sahar: I verbally say "hie" and sometimes I don't greet them at all.

This is due to the fact that feelings play a major role in greetings. The attitude one has towards an individual affects the way they interact. It is the bond that exists between people that determines the act of greeting.

4.3.1.4 Strangers

The absence of any social ties, close or otherwise, between individuals highly affects the way the act is carried out. Greetings, therefore, are not just arbitrary but vary according to relations people have.

Akindel (2007) asserts that greetings are extremely important strategies for the negotiation of social identity and relationships between the participants in the conversation. Through greetings one is able to note the relationship that exist between person A and B. Therefore,

greetings serve as occurrences that defines relations people have. The researcher agrees with Akindel as this was recognized in the observations conducted.

In conclusion, greetings between individuals are highly determined by the nature of the relationship that exist among them and differ with language from one ethnic group to the other.

4.3.2 Act Sequence

Act sequence refers to the plot and development of the speech act. It is basically the form in which the act of greetings takes place between individuals. The sequence differs from one individual to the other according to the relationship and background. However, the differences in the sequence were observed and the researcher found out that gender and relationships have much influence on how greetings are carried out. Greetings in all societies are about continuity of relations. Goffman (1971). The kind of relationship and bond people have determines the way they greet.

Greetings between the participants who don't have any relationship, the act is only carried out verbally and sometimes followed by a head nod. This is because the participants aren't familiar with each other and they have nothing in common hence this shows how relationships determine the way people greet on campus.

The researcher also found out that greetings between best friends (girls) come with different cues and usually they start with a verbal greeting and then followed by a hug and cheek kiss. Moreover, there is a smile before engaging in a small conversation. Thus, relationships have a great impact on forms of greetings. However, on the same note with boys, friends usually use verbal and non-verbal at the same time. They shoulder hug or fist greet at the same time verbally greeting. Hence, the issue of gender plays a crucial role in greeting as male and female participants have their own unique ways of greeting. The fist greeting and the shoulder hug are illustrated below in image 4.1 and 4.2, respectively:



Image 4.1: Fist greeting



Image 4.2: Shoulder hug

The images above shows the extra cues close male friends use when greeting. The act has a bit of assertiveness and show an element of domination and masculine. Therefore, gender also plays a crucial role in greetings.

The act of greeting also reveals the exact nature of the attachment people have with each other. Female and male friends also have their peculiar way of greeting characterized by hugs then a verbal greeting after that. Verbally, the greeting is informal and full of enthusiasm.

However, it differs from people who have an intimate relationship. These give each other a long hug, a forehead kiss and hold hands as they verbally greet each other.

During the group discussion the members gave their various opinions on what determines the way people greet and interact on campus. Below are some of the responses from the participants:

Q: What determines the way you greet?

Sphiwe: It depends on the relationship I have with that particular person, if we are close we hug, kiss on the cheek when greeting.

Thato: I usually wave to people I know, verbally greet my classmates when we meet in class and hug my friends. The way I greet people is determined by the bond and common things we share.

The researcher also observed the religious students as they greet on campus. Their greetings are pigeonholed by a handshake and a verbal greeting. This is because they have preconceived notions about decency and respect for each other and how their relations should be kept 'pure' and exceptionally 'holy'. Below are the responses from some of the group participants.

Q: How do you greet your fellow brethren?

Mercy: I hug the sisters and shake hands with the brothers.

Lisa: I just say "how are you my brother/sister", as I give them a 'holy hug'.

4.3.3 Key

Key refers to tone, manner and the gestures used during the speech act. There are various extra gestures used by the individuals when greeting and these also vary according to the relationships people have.

The students in intimate relationships have their way of greeting that includes forehead kiss, hand kiss, cheek kiss and their long hugs clearly shows the emotional feelings that exist between them. Image 4.3 bellow shows how these extra cues take place;



Image 4.3: A forehead kiss

This therefore shows how greetings can be influenced by the relations that exist between individuals involved in the act. The image shows the two individuals hugging tight, the hands of the male participant are on her neck which shows the level of intimacy involved. The forehead kiss and smiles on their faces shows their emotional attachment. Thus, the researcher found out that the individuals in love have their own distinct ways of greeting.

Moreover, close friends have their own forms of greeting and these help reveal the bond people share and the kind of conversation they might engage. Gestures like smiles, cheek kiss and hugs are often used by girls when greeting. Image 4.4 below shows how the act is conducted;



Image 4.4: A hug

Handshakes and hugs are the extra actions that are used by close friends when greeting. Friends usually snap fingers when handshaking and this applies on both male and female

participants. Hence, greetings are not just a way of announcing one's presence but also a way of expressing feeling and establishing a sound relationship with someone.

There are some students who generally know each other there is no bond that bring them together; these include a friend of a friend, classmates, church mates etc. Verbal greeting like "hello, hie, *hesi*, *ndeipi*, *zkiphani*" are usually used. However, in some instances there is use of non-verbal cues like high-five and waving when greeting each other. These are shown in images 4.5 and 4.6, respectively.



Image 4.5: The high five

The image above shows friends greeting. The use of a high and smiles on their faces clearly shows that they are close and they share certain common interests. Therefore, greetings can be used to establish relations between individuals.



Image 4.6: Waving

Relations play a major role in greetings in a society and they determine how certain members of the society interact.

4.3.4 Genre

Genre refers to the study of language specialisms in a variety of occupational, social and cultural contexts. It is language that makes various groups unique and every speech community is identified by its language.

There are different languages used by students when greeting each other and the differences are infused by ethnicity. Despite the fact that students usually use slang when interacting, it also comes with different languages. Most participants are between the age of 20-35 and due

to change in generations slang is the most used language around campus. Slang consists of a lexicon of non-standard words and phrases in a given language (Partridge, 2002). The use of slang implies that the user and other members of the group are familiar with what the terms mean. Slang is used in informal set ups, by members of the same speech community. Table 4.1 below summarizes the terms and phrases used by Ndebele, Shona and Sudanese participants when greeting each other.

NDEBELE	SHONA	SUDANESE
<i>zkiphani?</i>	<i>ndeipi</i>	<i>inta kwayesi?</i>
<i>zthini?</i>	<i>zvirisei?</i>	<i>fi shonu?</i>
<i>etah!</i>	<i>eh! mdara</i>	<i>Taman</i>
<i>usharp?</i>	<i>Hesi chimoko</i>	<i>Kwayis</i>
<i>eh! chomie</i>	<i>wakadi?</i>	
<i>uright?</i>	<i>Hesi kani sha</i>	
	<i>uribho?</i>	

Table 4.1: Terms used.

4.3.5 Norms

Norms are customary rules that govern behavior in groups and societies (Bicchieri, 2010). Despite the fact that students come from different societies with distinct ways of doing things, the researcher observed that none of these norms exist on campus. In fact, each ethnic

group has adopted the college norm and practiced it. Slang has become the language of this community and all the ways of greeting are conditioned to the expectations of the college life.

Additionally, participants from various ethnic groups have established different norms that are only familiar to the members of the groups. The norms include, hugs even with opposite sex, hand shake while snapping fingers, the use of slang and informal language when interacting. Conversely, these ways of greeting cannot be used with individuals who do not belong in the speech community as it is informal and does not apply in normal societies.

Participant observation proved to be an appropriate tool for collecting data; this is because the researcher got every glimpse of what happens around campus. The observations helped the researcher get real life behaviors as it best to observe what people do than gather what people say they do. The researcher could get the feel of how things work in the real world, how people interrelate and their cultural parameters. Image 4.7 below shows participants involved in a focus group discussion.



Image 4.7: Focus group discussion

The group discussion was an effective way of data collection as the participants fully engaged in the discussion as they knew they were being video taped. The group members gave accurate information on the subject as they were interested on the debate and had a great time. This method also provided a natural setting for the researcher.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented results from the data collected on greetings. There are various ways of greeting used by students at MSU Zvishavane campus. These ways of greeting are influenced by ethnicity, gender and societal expectations. It can also be noted that college life has a greater influence on ways of doing things amongst people of different ethnicities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined and analysed the data collected during the course of the study. The researcher used observations and focus group discussion as tools to collect and gather requisite data for the study.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The present study explored how the students in tertiary institutions greet each other. Differences on how the greetings are carried out were examined. The world is perceived as one global village therefore as an institution there has to be some sort of a shared culture. When a closer look is taken one would realize that there are different ways used by the students when greeting each other. The differences are as a result of the diverse cultures, languages, ethnicity, and gender.

When different cultures come together they find common ground. The study looked at what determines the way students greet each other, the reasons why the act is carried out differently from one individual to the other. If there are any rifts on cultures and ways of doing things, what causes these and why can't a normal trend of interrelating take place.

The second chapter focused on the literature review where the researcher explored what greetings are and their importance in the society. Several definitions were reviewed by the researcher. The researcher outlined Dell Hymes' Ethnography of communication which is used in the analysis of students' greetings in tertiary institutions.

In the third chapter, the researcher gathered information with the use various methods and techniques. These include, focus group discussions and participant observations. Qualitative research method was used for the study.

The fourth chapter analysed the data gathered during the research. The researcher used observations and focus group discussions to gather all the required data for the study. It was noted that there are different ways used by students when greeting each other and these differ according to gender, language and relationships that exist between individuals.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

Greetings are the important part of every society and hence they must not be taken for granted. They communicate various messages about the individuals involved in the act. They bring out one's identity and background. Therefore, different people from different parts of the world have their own peculiar ways of greeting.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

The researcher recommends the following:

1. Greetings are an important phenomenon in the society and hence should be treated as such.
2. Generations change and lots of things are introduced, but societies and individuals should keep their culture and norms.
3. MSU as an institution is a society therefore; there should be a certain shared culture/norm as a community.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This research did not in any way provide the solutions or elucidations to what can be done in order to have students forming one community with one shared culture and social practices. This is because the institution enrolls different people from various places with diverse backgrounds, languages and cultural practices. Therefore, it might be difficult to identify the culture to follow as this would cause differences amongst the students.

This research may not be accurate as people differ in thinking and the researcher was not able to interview every individual on campus to get their own views on the aspect of greeting.

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