



Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of Tshwane University of Technology

M Mushaathoni

 **orcid.org/0000-0002-7911-4515**

Thesis accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Doctor of Philosophy in Communication* at the North-West University

Promoter: Prof L Holtzhausen

Co-promoter: Prof LM Fourie

Graduation: June 2021

Student number: 25299557

DECLARATION

I, **Maria Mushaathoni**, hereby declare that this study, Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology, is my own work, that all sources used or quoted have been reported and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this thesis has not been previously submitted, either in its entirety or partially, by me or any other person for degree purposes at this or any other university.



2021-02-23

.....

.....

M. Mushaathoni

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late parents, **Mr Samson Mutheiwana** and **Mrs Rebecca Mutheiwana**, for always wishing me success in life. I know that wherever they are, they are celebrating with me

and

to my mother-in-law, **Mrs Nyamukamadi Mushaathoni**, I am, once blessed with a mother, twice blessed with a wonderful mother-in-law

and

to my lovely husband, **Dr Avhashoni Michael Mushaathoni**, for laying a solid foundation for all my achievements. Thank you for your wholehearted support and always watering my growth

and

to our dear children, **Andani, Gudani, Mutondwa and Edzani**, you inspire me to be the best version of myself.

Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Psalms 37:4

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the following people, to whom I am highly indebted, for their contributions in different and unique ways towards the successful completion of the study:

- I am grateful to the Almighty for sowing and nurturing my life. I thank Him for His Grace and Mercy that guided me throughout this journey.
- I am grateful to my supervisor, *Prof. Lida Holtzhausen*, and co-supervisor, *Prof. Lynnette Fourie*, for their guidance throughout this study. I also thank them for believing in me and for their kind words, which motivated me to work extra hard to complete the study.
- *Prof. Suria Ellis*, let me express my sincere gratitude for all the help you provided with statistics in a short period of time. Keep up the good work.
- A special word of thanks to all my colleagues in different environments and campuses of TUT, who volunteered to participate in the study.
- My husband, for being part of my life and supporting me in everything I do. Your motivation is out of this world.
- I acknowledge my children for giving me a purpose in life. Gudani, thank you for using your computer skills to assist with all the figures in the thesis.
- I appreciate my family, friends, and colleagues for their support and keeping me in their prayers.
- Hettie Human, thank you for language editing the thesis.

When the time is right, I, the lord, I will make it happen,

Isaiah 60:22

ABSTRACT

The composition of the South African workforce has changed and many organisations employ people from different cultural backgrounds. Cultural diversity affects behaviour and, regarding organisations, its impact also becomes evident in the way employees communicate with each other as they struggle to identify how they relate to colleagues who are different to them. Organisations that manage intercultural communication benefit from such an approach, as they are more likely to improve intercultural communication competence of employees. Without effective intercultural communication, culturally diverse organisations, such as TUT, cannot effectively function, which is why its strategic and continuous enhancement is important.

This study maintains that strategic and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication is one possible way of improving intercultural competence and ultimately assisting an organisation to achieve success. The study suggests that intercultural communication needs to align with the strategic orientation of an organisation. Accordingly, the study argues that the strategic orientation of an organisation ought to serve as the specific purpose or main motive for why employees, despite different cultural backgrounds, need to adapt to one another in intercultural communication encounters. It is assumed that strategy-aligned intercultural communication enhancement endeavours could improve intercultural communication competence of employees, including the overall effectiveness of a team, in that it allows coherence and integration between strategic priorities of an organisation and the goals and desired outcomes of internal communication. In view of this assumption, the following general research question guided the study:

What are the assumptions motivating a communication framework to assist Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist the university to achieve success?

The study's design was divided into three parts. First, the conceptualisation of the study involved a literature review that was intended to extract theories pertinent to intercultural communication adaptation principles. Second, an empirical study that followed a mixed methods research approach was conducted to explore TUT's intercultural communication and approaches and practices. Phase 1 of the empirical study involved content analysis of TUT's strategic and policy

documents. A significant finding from content analysis results is that, even though TUT, currently, values cultural diversity and recognises it as a strategic priority, there is no strategic emphasis on enhancing intercultural communication to assist employees to improve their intercultural communication competence. Phase 2 of the empirical study involved extracting information and data by means of semi-structured interviews and an online survey respectively. The findings pertaining to information sourced through semi-structured interviews overall point to a need for TUT to develop and implement a framework to assist the university to enhance intercultural communication. The conclusions drawn from findings of the online survey emphasised the need for TUT to utilise intercultural communication adaptation as a foundation for its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours. This finding supports the literature review finding that the extent to which intercultural communication effectiveness is achieved is based on the extent to which intercultural communication adaptation determinants are inculcated in an internal communication strategy. In the third part of the study, the assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT, were identified based on the literature review and empirical findings and conclusions.

Overall, the current study argues that following a common approach to issues of intercultural communication, including its enhancement, could assist a culturally diverse organisation to improve intercultural communication competence and offer it a common basis for increasing effectiveness of a team, unifying employees towards a common purpose and achieving success. With strategy alignment and continuous enhancement as guiding principles, informed by assumptions motivating a framework that the study proposes as its main contribution, the study adds to the volume of research that has been conducted, and to the knowledge base regarding enhancement of intercultural communication, with the primary purpose of improving intercultural communication competence.

Keywords: *continuous improvement, cultural diversity, intercultural adaptation, intercultural communication, intercultural communication barriers, intercultural communication competence, intercultural communication enablers, intercultural communication enhancement, internal communication, organisational success, strategic orientation, team cohesion, workforce*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	I
DEDICATION.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	III
ABSTRACT.....	IV
APPENDIXES.....	XIII
LIST OF TABLES	XIV
LIST OF FIGURES	XV
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	XVI
GLOSSARY OF TERMS.....	XVII
CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY	1
1.1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.2. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	4
1.3. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF DIVERSE ORGANISATIONS	5
1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	7
1.5. GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION.....	9
1.6. SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS	9
1.7. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	10
1.8. GUIDING ARGUMENTS	10
1.9. RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS	13
1.9.1 Literature review	14
1.9.2 Empirical part of the research	16
1.9.2.1 Content analysis	18
1.9.2.2 Semi-structured interviews	18
1.9.2.3 Quantitative online survey	19
1.9.3 Ethical considerations	20

1.10	Limitations and delimitations of the study	21
1.11	Contribution of the study	21
1.12	CHAPTER LAYOUT.....	22
1.13	CONCLUSION	23
CHAPTER 2: ANALYSIS AND CONTEXTUALISATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION PRINCIPLES.....		24
2.1.	INTRODUCTION	24
2.2.	INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN ORGANISATIONS.....	26
2.3.	WORKPLACE DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY	31
2.4.	THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS	35
2.5.	CONTEXTUALISING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.....	40
2.5.1	Intercultural communication defined	40
2.5.2	Barriers to intercultural communication	44
2.6.	INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE.....	48
2.6.1	Motivation	51
2.6.2	Knowledge	51
2.6.3	Skills.....	52
2.6.4	Character	53
2.7.	THEORIES AND MODELS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION	55
2.7.1	Intercultural adaptation contextualised	55
2.7.2	Theories of intercultural communication adaptation	58
2.7.2.1	Communication adaptation (accommodation) theory.....	59
2.7.2.2	Intercultural adaptation theory	63
2.7.2.3	Co-cultural theory	65

2.7.3	Models of cultural adaptation.....	71
2.7.3.1	Anxiety and uncertainty management model	72
2.7.3.2	U-curve model	74
2.7.3.3	Transitional model	76
2.7.4	Stages of intercultural adaptation.....	79
2.8.	INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION: FINAL REFLECTIONS	86
2.9.	CONCLUSION	91
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH APPROACHES, DESIGN AND METHODS		94
3.1.	INTRODUCTION	94
3.2.	RESEARCH APPROACHES	95
3.2.1	Qualitative approach	95
3.2.2	Quantitative approach	96
3.2.3	Mixed methods approach	97
3.3.	RESEARCH DESIGN.....	103
3.4.	RESEARCH METHODS	107
3.4.1	Qualitative research methods	107
3.4.1.1	Qualitative content analysis	108
3.4.1.2	Semi-structured interviews	109
3.4.2	Quantitative survey	115
3.4.2.1	Quantitative sampling methods.....	115
3.4.2.2	Online survey questionnaire	117
3.4.2.3	Distribution of the questionnaires to participants	119
3.4.2.4	Quantitative data analysis	120

3.5.	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	121
3.5.1	Informed consent.....	122
3.5.2	Violation of confidentiality	124
3.6.	CONCLUSION	125
 CHAPTER 4: CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS AND PERCEPTIONS OF PURPOSIVELY SELECTED PROFESSIONALS REGARDING APPROACHES TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.....		126
4.1.	INTRODUCTION	126
4.2.	FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION... ..	127
4.3.	CONSTRUCT 1 – GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES OF COMMUNICATION.....	129
4.4.	CONSTRUCT 2 – WORKPLACE DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY.....	133
4.5.	CONSTRUCT 3 – INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION.....	135
4.6.	CONSTRUCT 4 – CULTURAL ELEMENTS	139
4.7.	CONSTRUCT 5 - BARRIERS TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.....	140
4.8.	CONSTRUCT 6 – INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ENABLERS/CO- REQUISITES	142
4.9.	CONSTRUCT 7 – INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE	144
4.10.	CONSTRUCT 8 - STAGES OF ADAPTATION	145
4.11.	ELEMENTS NECESSARY TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.....	148
4.12.	CONCLUSION	151
 CHAPTER 5: PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES OF FACULTY OF HUMANITIES REGARDING CURRENT INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES.....		153

5.1.	INTRODUCTION	153
5.2.	EFFECT OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES ON THE FACTORS	153
5.2.1	Differences in intercultural communication factors based on age and education	155
5.2.2	Differences in intercultural communication factors based on country of origin	157
5.2.3	Differences in intercultural communication factors based on gender	159
5.2.4	Differences in intercultural communication based on language	162
5.2.5	Differences in intercultural communication based on race	165
5.3.	VALIDITY AND RALIABILITY STATISTICS	169
5.4.	EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS	170
5.5.	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION FACTORS.....	176
5.5.1	Intercultural communication adaptation	176
5.5.2	Intercultural communication competence.....	177
5.5.3	Impact of culture on communication	178
5.5.4	Recognition and understanding of cultural differences	178
5.5.5	Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion.....	179
5.5.6	Enhancement of intercultural communication	179
5.6.	CONCLUSION	183
CHAPTER 6: FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		185
6.1.	INTRODUCTION	185
6.2.	THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE REGARDING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION PRINCIPLES.....	186
6.2.1	Internal communication.....	186

6.2.2	Workplace dimensions of diversity	188
6.2.3	Cultural elements applied during intercultural communication	189
6.2.4	Intercultural communication	190
6.2.5	Intercultural communication competence	191
6.2.6	Intercultural communication adaptation.....	192
6.2.7	Recommended theoretical approach to intercultural communication.....	194
6.3.	TUT’S APPROACHES TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.....	195
6.3.1	TUT’s current approaches to intercultural communication – content analysis findings.....	195
6.3.2	TUT’s approaches to intercultural communication – semi-structured interviews findings.....	197
6.3.2.1	Goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication.....	198
6.3.2.2	Workplace dimensions of diversity	198
6.3.2.3	Intercultural communication.....	198
6.3.2.4	Intercultural adaptation	199
6.3.2.5	Cultural elements	200
6.3.2.6	Barriers to intercultural communication	200
6.3.2.7	Intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites	201
6.3.2.8	Stages of adaptation	201
6.3.2.9	Intercultural communication competence.....	202
6.3.2.10	Elements necessary to enhance intercultural communication	202
6.4.	TUT’S CURRENT INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES	203
6.4.1	Effect of biographical variables on intercultural communication factors	204
6.4.2	Correlation between intercultural communication factors	205
6.5.	ASSUMPTIONS MOTIVATING A FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.....	207

6.6.	FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION...	208
6.6.1	Core features of a proposed framework to enhance intercultural communication.....	210
6.6.1.1	Recognition and understanding of cultural differences	211
6.6.1.2	Formulation and implementation of intercultural communication action plan.....	212
6.6.1.3	Promotion of integration.....	213
6.6.2	Intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites	214
6.6.2.1	Motivation.....	215
6.6.2.2	Knowledge	215
6.6.2.3	Skills	216
6.6.2.4	Character	216
6.7.	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	216
6.8.	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	217
6.9.	CONCLUSION	217
	LIST OF REFERENCES	219

APPENDIXES

Appendix A ¹ : Ethics approval letter of study	237
Appendix A ² : Extension of ethical approval.....	238
Appendix A ³ : Permission letter: Research ethics committee.....	240
Appendix B ¹ : Permission letter: (Office of the Executive Director: Human Resources & Transformation)	243
Appendix B ² : Permission letter (Office of the Chief Information Officer and Executive Director: Institutional Effectiveness and Technology)	244
Appendix B ³ : Permission letter: (Director: Corporate Affairs and Marketing	246
Appendix C: Information leaflet	247
Appendix D: Consent form	250
Appendix E: Interview questions	251
Appendix F: Information leaflet	252
Appendix G ¹ : Self-administrated questionnaire	254
Appendix G ² : Electronic questionnaire.....	258
Appendix H: Declaration by language editor	272
Appendix I: Turnitin report.....	273
Appendix J: Second declaration by language editor	274

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Five aspects of the immediate communication situation.....	60
Table 2.2: Factors that influence co-cultural group members' communication.....	68
Table 2.3: Summary of communication adaptation constructs and principles/enablers.....	88
Table 3.1: Research design.....	105
Table 3.2: Constructs and applicable semi-structured interview questions.....	113
Table 3.3: Faculty of Humanities profile.....	116
Table 3.4: Intercultural communication factors and items loading.....	118
Table 5.1: Factors loading.....	155
Table 5.2: Correlation between age and education and factors.....	156
Table 5.3: Differences in intercultural communication based on country of origin.....	158
Table 5.4: Differences in intercultural communication based on gender.....	160
Table 5.5: Differences in intercultural communication based on languages.....	163
Table 5.6: Differences in intercultural communication based on race.....	166
Table 5.7: Cronbach's Alpha.....	170
Table 5.8: KMO and Bartlett's test.....	171
Table 5.9: Factors summary, items number and items loading on the factors.....	173
Table 5.10: Factors summary, items number and items loading on the factors.....	176
Table 5.11: Correlation coefficient of intercultural communication factors.....	181

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Information/data collection and analysis stages – visual diagram of a sequential research design.....	17
Figure 2.1: Goals of internal communication	28
Figure 2.2: Workplace dimensions of diversity wheel	33
Figure 2.3: The process of transformation to a competent intercultural communicator.....	50
Figure 2.4: Theories of intercultural adaptation	58
Figure 2.5: Models of cultural adaptation.....	72
Figure 2.6: Comparison of Bennett’s (1998), Guirdham’s (2005) and Martin and Nakayama’s (2004) stages of adapting	83
Figure 6.1: A framework to enhance intercultural communication.....	209

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AUMM	Anxiety and uncertainty management model
CAT	Communication adaptation (accommodation) theory
CCT	Co-cultural theory
IAT	Intercultural adaptation theory
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TM	Transitional model
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
UCM	U-curve model

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Continuous improvement - an ongoing effort to improve services or processes with the aim to achieve performance improvement.

Cultural diversity - an instance of being composed of employees who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs.

Intercultural communication - a form of internal communication that occurs between employees whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to alter the communication event.

Intercultural adaptation - the process through which employees change over time in their endeavours to respond to their intercultural experiences upon relocating to a new cultural working environment.

Intercultural communication barriers - factors that have the potential to hinder effective intercultural communication.

Intercultural communication competence - the ability to be open-minded about cultural differences, change one's behaviour, possess skills and the desire to improve one's ability to effectively communicate across cultures.

Intercultural communication enablers - attributes that are most relevant for culturally diverse employees to improve intercultural communication competence.

Intercultural communication enhancement - intensification of intercultural communication such that culturally diverse employees could improve intercultural communication effectiveness.

Internal communication - a group of processes that are responsible for information flow and collaboration among participants involved in the communication process

Organisational success - achievement of desired outcomes that is measured by analysing where the organisation stands regarding its strategic goals and objectives.

Strategic orientation - an indication of the scope and direction in which an organisation wants to go in the future with the aim of achieving success.

Team cohesion - a sense of unity that bonds a team while working to achieve a common purpose.

Workforce - a group of professionals brought together to work towards the achievement of a common purpose.

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The South African nation is referred to as the rainbow nation because it includes people from different cultural backgrounds. While South African people share the important dimensions of the human species, cultural diversity separates and distinguishes them as individuals and groups (Smit, Cronje, Brevis & Vrba, 2011:276). Cultural diversity causes South Africans to perceive and interpret similar situations differently. People's perceptions and different ways of interpreting situations affect their interactions and the manner in which they communicate (Hellriegel, Jackson, Slocum, Amos, Klopper, Louw & Oosthuizen, 2005:369). The way people create assumptions and form decisions is based on their cultural upbringing and it is through interaction with others on a daily basis that people acquire the meanings, values, attitudes, norms and styles of communicating that are necessary for them to communicate effectively and appropriately in various and different cultural contexts (Gudykunst, 2005; Thompson, 2018). Communication encounters or interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds are contextualised as intercultural communication (Gudykunst, 2003; Jandt, 2004; Beerkens, Le Pichon-Vorstman, Supheert & Thije, 2020).

Shifts in demographics, immigration, as well as political and social changes, are all factors that are asserted to contribute to cultural diversity and intercultural communication (Smit *et al.*, 2011:276). Cultural diversity and intercultural communication became prevalent in post-apartheid South Africa, given the greater freedom of movement of individuals that became possible across provincial boundaries, and movement of people into South Africa from other countries. The prevalence of cultural diversity post-apartheid led to dramatic changes in terms of the composition of employees in South Africa, and it is now a common norm that many organisations in the country employ people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Urbanisation, as an example, means that more individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds are brought together as they move from rural areas to urban areas. This reinforces the assertion that movement of people facilitates cultural diversity (Dyers & Wankah, 2010:1; Smit *et al.*, 2011:276).

Cultural diversity also became more important within organisations as South Africa became more connected. As employees begin to operate beyond their cultural environments, they bring along

(to organisations) their different cultures, thereby contributing to cultural diversity and, in consequence, intercultural communication becomes inevitable and more prevalent (Booyesen, 2007; Fasset, 2013). Smit *et al.* (2011:275) maintain that, due to the culturally diverse nature of organisations in South Africa, employees from different cultural backgrounds have to work together and be able to interact and communicate effectively. Relating to organisations, Smit *et al.* (2011) refer to cultural diversity as an instance of being composed of employees who bring a variety of cultural backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs as assets to an organisation. Advancing the advantage of cultural diversity, Daft (2006:734) contends that a culturally diverse group of employees is likely to be characterised by a complex skill set, because people with different backgrounds possess different experiences and knowledge. From an intercultural communication standpoint, as employees from different backgrounds come together, they bring with them their different ways of communication (Nyathi-Saleshando, 2011:167; African Development Bank, 2012; African Union Commission, 2015). As a result, understanding cultural diversity, the human response to it and its impact on communication within organisations, is a territory that has grown in complexity (Booyesen, 2007; Fasset, 2013).

Though cultural diversity has been prevalent in South Africa for years, discussions in some organisations pertaining to how employees respond to experiences in cultural environments that differ from their own, and the impact this has on communication, have been peripheral. Some organisations have neglected purposefully managing how intercultural communication can be utilised to unify culturally diverse employees, so that they work towards a common purpose (Booyesen, 2007; Fasset, 2013). Daft (2006) indicates that, if the uniqueness of employees, and their experiences and knowledge, are effectively managed, a culturally diverse workforce can be of immense value to an organisation. Management of cultural diversity is, therefore, important, as it contributes to a workplace that enables employees from different cultural backgrounds to work together and relate to each other with respect and understanding, which has the potential to foster team cohesion. Most importantly, unification of employees towards a common purpose has the potential to assist organisations across sectors to achieve success. Intercultural communication competence is considered as one possible way of fostering team cohesion and unifying employees from different cultural backgrounds towards achieving a common purpose and is, for the purpose

of this study, regarded as a precondition for organisations to function effectively and, subsequently, to achieve organisational success (see Mazibuko & Govender, 2017:1).

From a communication perspective, it will be argued in this study that recognition and appreciation of the uniqueness of employees and the contribution each one of them makes to the functioning of an organisation becomes the starting point of working towards enhancing intercultural communication, and consequently improvement of intercultural communication competence. As a result, culturally diverse organisations need to implement policies and strategies to deal with intercultural communication, including how it could be continuously enhanced such that intercultural communication competence could be improved and utilised to create better relationships, and ultimately assist organisations to achieve success. Without effective intercultural communication, organisations cannot effectively function (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2005:313; Falkheimer & Heide, 2006:180; Smit *et al.*, 2011:296).

Indeed, transformation of the employees into culturally diverse employees signifies the need for the enhancement of intercultural communication. The need for enhancement of intercultural communication is not unique to a particular sector. Concerning institutions of higher learning, the culturally diverse nature of their employees reinforces a need for strategic and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication (see Booysen, Nkomo & Beaty, 2002; Mmope, 2016:3; Mampane, 2019:141). It will be argued in this study that, if intercultural communication is strategically and continuously enhanced, it can improve intercultural communication competence and propel institutions of higher learning to functioning effectively towards the achievement of their mandates, namely, teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

The discussion in this section highlights that the prevalence of cultural diversity in many South African organisations, and the necessity of effective intercultural communication is increasing the need for research that focuses on enhancement of intercultural communication within organisations; institutions of higher learning are no exception.

1.2. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The current study focuses on assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a culturally diverse organisation, specifically Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), a higher education institution. TUT recruits and employs professionals from different cultural backgrounds, namely, from different parts of South Africa, as well as from countries beyond South Africa in cases where there is a shortage of skilled people available locally. Considering its perceived culturally diverse nature, it is important for TUT to be aware of the dynamics of cultural diversity and its impact on communication. As TUT is the institution where the study was conducted, a brief description of the institution is provided.

TUT was established in terms of Section 23 of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended. The university's *Strategic Plan 2008–2012* (TUT, 2008) indicates that the institution was established on 1 January 2004, when the former Technikon Northern Gauteng, Technikon North-West and Technikon Pretoria merged. TUT enrolls not less than 60 000 students annually, making it one of the largest residential universities in South Africa. It has six campuses in three of South Africa's nine provinces, namely, Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. TUT is divided into seven faculties that offer a range of academic programmes. Most of the programmes offered at the different campuses of TUT lead to Master's and doctoral studies.

A preliminary review some of TUT strategic and policy documents, namely, its *Policy on Unfair Discrimination* (TUT, 2006) and *Diversity Training Guide* (TUT, 2014), reveals that, during 2011, the university embarked on a process that culminated in the development of *TUT Employment Equity Plan (2011–2015)* (TUT, 2011). Among the goals of the plan are promoting cultural diversity in the institution, and encouraging equal dignity, respect for all staff members and improved communication across cultures. The *TUT Employment Equity Plan (2011–2015)* (TUT, 2011) identifies cultural diversity management as one of the strategic priorities of the university.

Furthermore, a preliminary review of other TUT strategic and policy documents, namely, its *Strategic Plan (2014–2019)* (TUT, 2014), *Transformation Framework* (TUT, 2017), *Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019)* (TUT, 2016), as well as the *Policy on Unfair Discrimination* (TUT, 2006), *Employment Equity Plan (2011–2015)* (TUT, 2011), *Language Policy* (TUT, 2005) and *Diversity Training Guide* (TUT, 2014), reveals that the university seems

to lack a policy document to give proper guidance on the way intercultural communication could be enhanced and to pave the way for cultural diversity management across the university. For instance, the *Transformation Framework* (TUT, 2017) aims to strategically reinvent the university's existential core to assert its position in society; however, it does not refer to the way intercultural communication should be used to achieve this noble goal. Owing to the perceived lack of a policy document to give proper guidance, faculties and support departments at the university do not approach intercultural communication uniformly.

In spite of the existence of the strategic and policy documents referred to above, the preliminary review of the documents reveals the need for a study on the enhancement of intercultural communication, which is likely to improve intercultural communication competence. The improvement of intercultural communication competence is, for the purpose of the current study, regarded as a precondition for effective flow of common work instructions – an imperative necessary for individuals within organisations to successfully work towards the achievement of a common purpose, which is necessary to spur organisational success.

1.3. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF DIVERSE ORGANISATIONS

The culturally diverse nature of South African society also finds expression in institutions of higher learning, which operate in a competitive and increasingly global world. Since the attainment of democracy, South African institutions of higher learning have become a destination of scholars and administrators from across the globe, and Africa in particular. This implies that their success is, amongst other factors, dependent on whether cultural diversity and intercultural communication are managed effectively. For institutions of higher learning to manage cultural diversity and intercultural communication effectively, their approach should be suitable for the type of cultural diversity and intercultural communication they want to achieve (see Dyers & Wankah, 2010:1).

The slow progress of transforming the composition of staff in institutions of higher learning implies that employees will continue to become more culturally diverse, as these institutions strive to become more representative of the country's demographics (Hubbard, 2004; Dyers & Wankah, 2010). The culturally diverse nature of South African institutions of higher learning presents a notable case for research on an intercultural communication topic. While studies of intercultural

communication have been conducted by various researchers, more research can contribute insight and add to the base of knowledge regarding enhancement of intercultural communication and improvement of its effectiveness (see Mahlari, 1996; Nhlapo, 2013; Gumede, 2016; Mmope, 2016; Mampane, 2019).

As discussed in Section 1.1, effective intercultural communication is, in the context of this study, viewed as imperative for employees of institutions of higher learning, including TUT, if the institutions are to achieve institutional success. As being able to deal with cultural differences and its impact on communication is becoming a survival issue, institutions of higher learning should pay attention to it if they are to thrive (Mahlari, 1996; Mathur-Helm, 2014). A preliminary review of the literature found that, without clearly communicated expectations and priorities, it is impossible for employees to know where to start, and how to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Most importantly, it is asserted that, for any type of organisation to meet its deadlines, have a competitive edge, and achieve success, strategic intercultural communication practices must be in place (Smit *et al.*, 2011:280; Mmope, 2016:241).

Considering the culturally diverse nature of institutions of higher learning, it is essential for TUT to seek ways to embrace cultural differences and to strategically and continuously enhance intercultural communication. Following a strategic and continuous approach to enhancing intercultural communication is essential for TUT to inculcate best intercultural communication practices that can help improve intercultural communication competence. As discussed in Section 1.1, if TUT could determine requirements that reinforce strategic and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication, it would be better placed to improve intercultural communication competence, foster good working relationships and enhance cohesion, interaction and teamwork, which, in turn, can improve achievement of institutional success (see Smit *et al.* 2011:278; Okoro & Washington, 2012:57; Mathur-Helm, 2014:90; Mazibuko & Govender, 2017:9). In view of this understanding, this study will argue that strategic and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence of employees could be improved is important for TUT to achieve success.

The most important rationale for contextualising the current study in intercultural communication is that it presents an opportunity to motivate advancing an intercultural communication enhancement approach suitable for the unique nature of TUT and other similar institutions. The

framework the study will propose will provide the basis for TUT to enhance intercultural communication, reinforce improvement of intercultural communication competence and help the university to unify its employees to strive towards achieving a common purpose, and ultimately achieve its mandate as a University of Technology.

1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

It was stated in Section 1.1 that the composition of the South African workforce has changed and many organisations employ people from different cultural backgrounds. Regarding organisations, the impact of cultural diversity, amongst others, becomes evident in the way employees communicate with each other as they struggle to identify how to relate to colleagues who are different from them (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2005:368; Smit *et al.*, 2011:300). It is essential for managers of organisations to acknowledge that their workforce is made up of culturally diverse groups, and that cultures of employees have an impact on communication; different cultural backgrounds, experiences and perceptions affect behaviour and their impact is evident in the way individuals interact and communicate with each other (Penceliah, 2008:335; Nyathi-Saleshando, 2011:162). Considering that intercultural communication involves participants from different cultural backgrounds, each participant involved in the communication exchange needs to cooperate if communication is to be effective (Penceliah, 2008:335; Sadri & Flammia, 2011:80).

The importance of effective intercultural communication within organisations should, therefore, not be undermined, as it plays an important role in the organisation's functioning, and affects its final output. As stated in Section 1.1, without effective communication, culturally diverse organisations, such as TUT, may fail to function effectively. This emphasises the importance of a strategic and continuous effort to enhance intercultural communication.

Organisations that manage intercultural communication benefit from such an approach. Managing intercultural communication, including understanding that cultural diversity has a communicative purpose, helps culturally diverse organisations to improve intercultural communication competence, which is a requirement for employees from various cultural backgrounds to work together to achieve a common purpose (Gudykunst, 2005:211; Sadri & Flammia, 2011:80). In order for organisations to respond to the challenges of intercultural communication, they must recognise the communication difficulties and needs of employees. As mentioned in Section 1.1,

recognition and appreciation of cultural differences is the departure point of working towards enhancing intercultural communication.

In view of the understanding that employees use the communication process to carry out their tasks, organisations should create an environment in which plans, work instructions, issues, opinions, thoughts and ideas pertaining to work are discussed through effective communication (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2005:313; Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014). As maintained in Sections 1.1 and 1.2, an effective intercultural communication approach is important if everyone involved is to understand what goals and desired outcomes are, and can work towards successful execution of plans and tasks.

TUT's current approach to issues of intercultural communication is not conducive to the enhancement of intercultural communication in a uniform, focused and coordinated fashion, including common improvement of intercultural communication competence. Preliminary review of TUT strategic and policy documents, as reported in Section 1.2, reveals that the university seems to lack a uniform intercultural communication enhancement approach, which is necessary for its employees to clearly understand what the institutional strategic goals and desired outcomes are, so that they can work to achieve them. It is maintained that effective intercultural communication facilitates achievement of predetermined goals and desired outcomes. The perceived absence of a common approach to issues of intercultural communication is, for the purpose of this study, considered to be a less than ideal practice for the enhancement of intercultural communication, and is unlikely to help TUT to strategically and continuously improve intercultural communication competence of its culturally diverse employees. The perceived gap pertaining to TUT's current approach to issues of intercultural communication suggests that a different orientation is taken, which has the potential to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist the university to achieve success.

One possibility to address the identified intercultural communication deficiency is through a framework suited to the culturally diverse and unique nature of TUT. This study will argue that, for TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, the university requires a formalised strategic and continuous intercultural communication enhancement approach. An

investigation into assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT, can serve as an initial step to address the current gap.

Thus, this study investigated assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist organisations to achieve success.

1.5. GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION

Given the background provided and the problem articulated in Section 1.4, the general research question that arose, is as follows:

What are the assumptions motivating a framework to assist TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist the university to achieve success?

This general research question is divided into four specific research questions that are intended to acquire information/data that will inform assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within TUT.

1.6. SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.6.1. What are the theoretical perspectives regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles that are relevant for a culturally diverse organisation to enhance intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence is improved?

1.6.2 What are TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication?

1.6.3 What are the perceptions of TUT staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication?

1.6.4 How do TUT employees of the Faculty of Humanities perceive current intercultural communication practices?

1.7. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of this study are:

1.7.1 To outline theoretical perspectives regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles that are relevant for a culturally diverse organisation to enhance intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence is improved;

1.7.2 To determine TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication, by means of content analysis of strategic and policy documents;

1.7.3 To explore the perceptions of TUT staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication, by means of semi-structured interviews; and

1.7.4 To determine how TUT employees of the Faculty of Humanities perceive current intercultural communication practices, by means of a survey.

1.8. GUIDING ARGUMENTS

The current study was guided by existing knowledge that fits intercultural communication adaptation. Theories that focus on intercultural communication adaptation, therefore, acted as guiding arguments upon which this study is based. Communication adaptation theory (CAT), intercultural adaptation theory (IAT) and co-cultural theory (CCT) were identified as the theories that fit intercultural communication adaptation. The theories provide a framework for explaining why, when and how individuals adapt their behaviour during intercultural communicative interaction, for the purpose of communicating effectively. The central viewpoints of the theories referred to in this paragraph will be briefly explained below.

CAT explores different ways in which individuals accommodate or adapt communication, thereby contributing to an understanding of interactions between people from diverse cultural backgrounds. CAT explains adaptation from the so-called socio-historical context of interaction and orientations of immediate situations. Relating to organisations, the dominant viewpoint of CAT is that personality aspects and cultural factors that exist within and outside an organisation influence and shape styles of intercultural communication in the organisation concerned (Wiseman, 1995:115; Gudykunst, 2005:14–15; Giles & Ogay, 2007:293).

IAT was designed to elaborate how intercultural communicators adapt to each other in purpose-related encounters. The theory explains how individuals, when they engage in intercultural communication encounters aimed at achieving a common purpose, adapt their communicative behaviour to decrease the probability of being misunderstood. Accordingly, when the situation favours one communicator, or when one has more power than another does, the other communicator has the burden to adapt. The theory holds that the more intercultural communicators engage in adaptive behaviour, the more change there will be in cultural beliefs and, subsequently, improved intercultural communication (Gudykunst, 2005:15; Beerkens, Le Pichon-Vorstman, Supheert & Thijs, 2020).

CCT focuses on interactions between underrepresented or co-cultural group members and dominant group members. Central to the CCT is the explication of plus factors that influence the process by which co-cultural group members communicate. The theory draws from various frameworks related to culture, power and communication, for example, muted group theory and standpoint theory. Standpoint theory, for example, elaborates an inclusive approach to intercultural communication, whereby the experiences of both co-cultural and dominant group members are inculcated to determine a style of communication that protects marginalisation of the voices of non-dominant group members (Orbe, 1998:1-4).

The models of cultural adaptation, namely, the anxiety and uncertainty management model (AUMM), U-curve model (UCM) and the transitional model (TM), were added as theoretical cultural adaptation underpinnings relevant for the purpose of this study. This was done to gain a more complete understanding of how individuals navigate through the adaptation journey from an intercultural communication orientation. Models of cultural adaptation focus specifically on elaborating how culturally diverse individuals achieve or fail to achieve adaptation. Presentation of the orientations of the theories of intercultural communication and models of cultural adaptation will be preceded by description of the main features of the models of cultural adaptation referred to above.

The AUMM describes how individuals adapt their communicative behaviour on the basis of their anxiety and uncertainty in a cultural environment that is different from their own. The model predicts that the most effective communicators will be those who are best able to manage anxiety and uncertainty, including predicting and explaining others' behaviours (Gudykunst, 2005:125).

The UCM's main idea is that individuals pass through predictable stages in adapting to new cultural situations. They first experience excitement and anticipation, followed by a period of shock (the bottom of the U-curve), and then, gradually, they adapt to the new cultural context. Though this framework does not represent every individual's experience, most people pass through general stages of cultural adaptation before they become competent intercultural communicators (Martin & Nakayama, 2004:280; Martin & Nakayama, 2013:337).

The TM suggests that culture shock is just like any other transition, and is the initial reaction to experiences individuals may have when they move to a different cultural environment. The model elaborates that all cultural transitions share common characteristics and provoke the same kinds of cultural adaptation experiences, though people go through transition stages at their own pace (Martin & Nakayama, 2004:284).

Clearly, theories of intercultural communication and models of cultural adaptation collectively are complementary in nature, and they all explain why, when and how individuals from different cultural backgrounds adapt their behaviour for achieving intercultural communication competence. It is also apparent that each theory and model describes adaptation from a different point of departure, and analysis of theories of intercultural communication and models of cultural adaptation was necessary for the researcher to understand intercultural adaptation from non-identical points of reference. In summary, (1) CAT focuses on how adaptation occurs from social and historic contexts of individuals and immediate situations, (2) IAT explains how individuals adapt behaviour for the purpose of achieving a common purpose, (3) CCT's main focus is on communication between co-cultural and dominant group members, (4) AUMM describes how anxiety and uncertainty affect the manner in which individuals communicate, (5) UCM explains that cultural shock is the lowest point of a long and complex adaptation process, and (6) TM elaborates that cultural shock is an initial reaction when individuals find themselves among people with cultures different to their own.

The guiding theoretical arguments maintained in this section reflect the understanding that communication in culturally diverse organisations deviates from the familiar ways of communicating, as individuals are faced with communication patterns that do not correspond with their cultural backgrounds (see Kim, 2006:52). Given this understanding and consistent with the problem statement formulated in Section 1.4, the guiding theoretical argument for the purpose of

this study is that, for culturally diverse organisations to function effectively, it is imperative that they adopt new communication approaches that are likely to enhance intercultural communication, strategically and continuously, such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist their respective organisations to achieve success. The theories and models presented in this section, which assisted the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of adaptation from different orientations, will be analysed and contextualised in Chapter 2 from an intercultural communication enhancement point of reference, so that the researcher could gain a theoretical foundation for the empirical study.

1.9. RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

A research approach focuses on the process of research and the decisions the researcher has to take to execute the research (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:36). There are three main approaches in scientific research, namely, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research.

The quantitative research approach is associated with analytical research and is utilised to arrive at a universal statement. The approach involves a systematic and objective way of using numerical data gathered from sampled participants to generalise the findings to the universe that is being investigated (Mouton, 2001:128; Maree, 2011:45; Babbie, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

A qualitative approach to research refers to a research procedure that is used to source responses, which are generally participants' own written or spoken words regarding their experiences or perceptions. Using a qualitative research approach allows researchers to describe, decode, translate and come to terms with the meaning of naturally occurring phenomena in a social setting (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:139; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:37).

This study followed a mixed methods research approach, and also conducted a literature review. A mixed methods research approach incorporates elements from both qualitative and quantitative research approaches and is, in social research, also known as blended research (Mouton, 2001:128; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007:16; Du Plessis & Majam, 2010:456; Harrison & Reilly, 2011:8). Following a mixed methods research approach assisted the researcher to collect complete data and responses through both quantitative and qualitative research methods, in order to ensure optimal understanding of the research problem identified in Section 1.4, by integrating different

ways of knowing (see Bazeley, 2009:204; Flick, 2014:35). Utilising mixed methods research, therefore, involved integrating conclusions that were drawn from various information and data sources. Content analysis of TUT strategic and policy documents, semi-structured interviews and an online survey were used to source empirical information/data.

A detailed discussion of the research approaches and methods used to conduct empirical research will be provided in Chapter 3. A presentation of the qualitative and quantitative research methods that were followed will be provided in Sections 1.9.2.1 to 1.9.2.3. Ethical processes followed to ensure that the research was conducted justly will be provided in Section 1.9.3. Before a brief presentation of the research methods and ethical considerations is provided, the findings of a preliminary review of available literature relevant to this study will be presented in Section 1.9.1.

1.9.1 Literature review

The literature review was done to evaluate current theoretical knowledge, and justify why further study is required, including indicating which databases were used to search for relevant literature. The literature review involved a review of scholarly journal articles, books, research reports, dissertations, theses, case studies, presentations at conferences and workshops, and other documents relevant to the study (see Creswell, 2003:294). These sources were reviewed to investigate the theories and principles on which this study is anchored (Ghauri & Gronshaug, 2002:45). The findings of the literature review will be presented in Chapter 2.

Databases, such as book catalogues, Google Scholar, national and international guideline documents relevant to the research, LexisNexis, JSTOR, Emerald, ProQuest, Academic Search Premier, catalogues of theses and dissertations and other relevant recognised national and international journal article databases were consulted to source information for the literature review. The review of literature contributed to drawing out previous studies that had investigated intercultural communication and its ramifications for the manner in which culturally diverse organisations conduct business.

The findings of some research studies, of which three were Master's and one was a doctoral study that investigated cultural diversity and its impact on communication in organisations comprising people from diverse cultural backgrounds, are the following:

Nhlapo (2013) investigated intercultural communication in information systems development teams in several organisations in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The research concluded that culture and personality might affect the effectiveness of communication.

Mahlari (1996) examined intercultural communication in a Johannesburg public library and discovered that mastery of communication skills, which includes an understanding and appreciation of cultural differences, is necessary if culturally diverse organisations are to achieve effective communication between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Mmope (2016) investigated assumptions to motivate a conceptual framework for integrated intercultural employee communication for line management of transformed universities. The study proposes a framework that provides a basis for the inculcation of best practices for effective and integrated employee communication that can help to reinforce effective line management communication as a strategic priority, a core managerial accountability, and an enabling factor for fulfilling strategic alignment at the transformed universities.

Gumede (2016) explored whether cultural diversity exists and if it requires organisational response, and whether managing cultural diversity has an impact on performance, and, finally, recommends strategies, methods and tools that the Engen Refinery can use to manage its culturally diverse employees. Though the study identified no intercultural communication issues, the study noted the importance of starting team building activities and social gatherings to increase employee interactions, implementing cultural diversity programmes and policies, and restructuring work teams so that they become more multicultural.

The studies referenced above recognise a need for employees to understand and appreciate cultural differences in order to work and communicate in harmony. The studies also reveal consensus that cultural differences create a barrier to effective intercultural communication. Mmope (2016) proposes a framework that provides a basis for the inculcation of best practices that can, amongst other benefits, help to reinforce effective communication as a strategic priority; the study focused on effective communication as a core managerial accountability and an enabling factor for fulfilling strategic alignment. In this context, inculcation of best intercultural communication practices was intended to reinforce intercultural communication competence by motivating and advancing integrated intercultural employee communication.

This study supports and built on the study by Mmope (2016). In addition to inculcating intercultural communication best practices of the communication role of managers when executing strategy alignment, this study aimed to expand the strategy alignment orientation by proposing a framework that provides a basis for the inculcation of best practices regarding the manner in which intercultural communication could be enhanced, strategically and continuously. This improvement will be achieved through investigating how strategy alignment and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication could be used as a path intended to culminate in improved intercultural communication competence and achievement of organisational success, as ultimate outcomes. The current study refers to strategy alignment in the context of setting intercultural communication enhancement goals and desired outcomes, which can be related back to goals and objectives as defined in the TUT's institutional strategic focus.

Consistent with the research problem stated in Section 1.4, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in relation to enhancement of intercultural communication as one possible way of improving intercultural communication competence and ultimately assisting organisations to achieve success. Details about the findings of the current study, and a comparison with the results of some of the previous studies referenced above will be presented in Chapter 6.

1.9.2 Empirical part of the research

Having clarified a research approach that was followed in Section 1.9, this section will introduce the methods used to conduct the empirical study. The section (1.9.2.1) will commence with a brief explanation of the process that was followed to analyse TUT's strategic and policy documents considered relevant for the purpose of this study. Thereafter, the section will explain the methods that were used to collect and analyse empirical information/data, which were sourced through semi-structured interviews and an online survey, including an indication of the manner in which individuals who participated in the study were selected. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews and an online survey concurrently, in the same phase, weighed the methods equally, and analysed and interpreted the two components independently. Lastly, conclusions drawn from the literature review and empirical study findings culminated in assumptions that motivated a framework to enhance intercultural communication (as discussed Section 1.2).

Figure 1.1 presents a visual layout of information/data collection and analysis stages of the study.

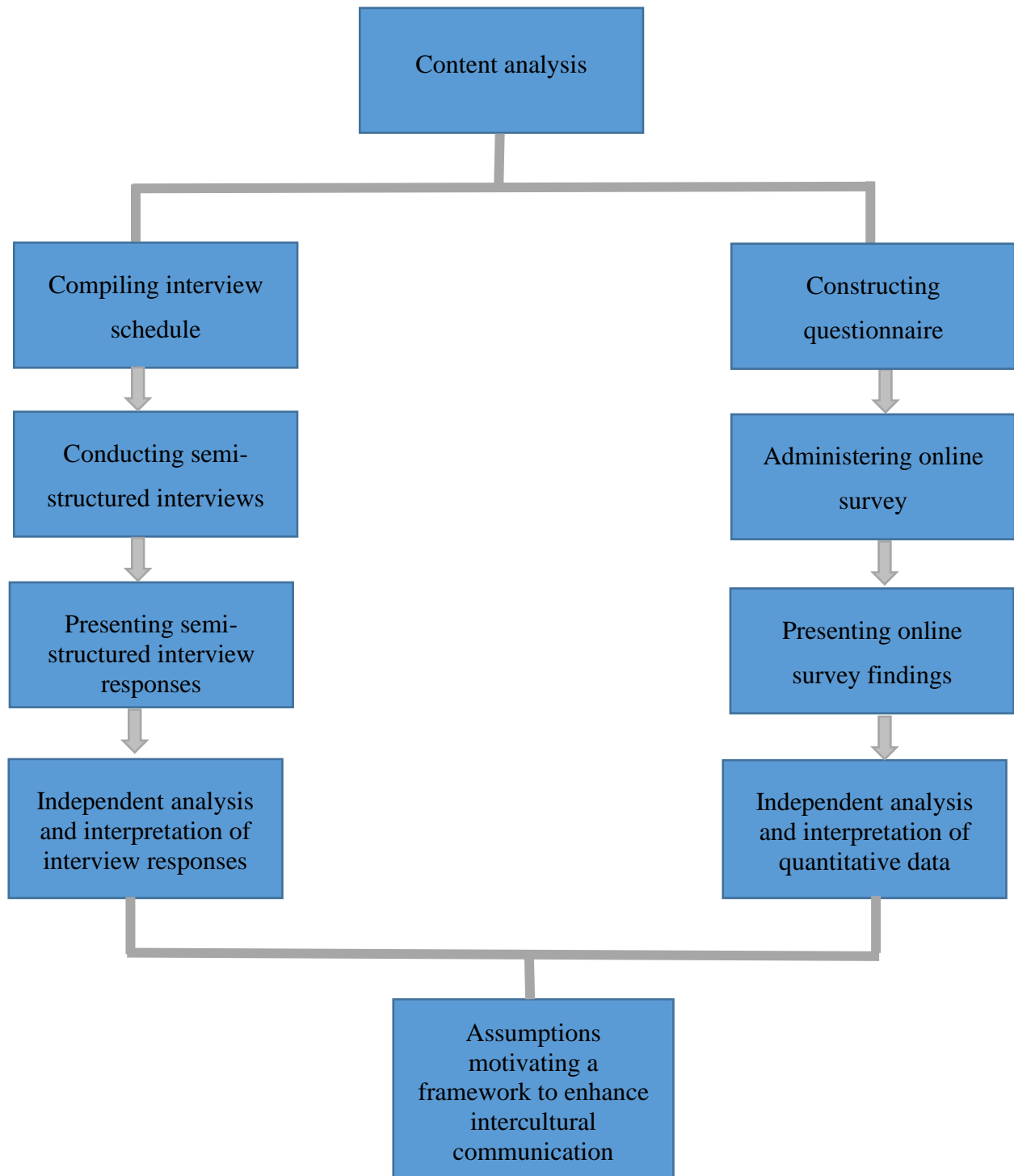


Figure 1.1: Information/data collection and analysis stages – visual diagram of a sequential research design

Source: Adapted from Maree (2011:269).

A brief explanation of the research methods that were followed during the empirical stage of the study will be provided in Sections 1.9.2.1 to 1.9.2.3. As explained in a paragraph above, the explanation also attests to the manner in which those who participated in the study were selected and how semi-structured interviews and online survey questionnaire responses were analysed.

1.9.2.1 Content analysis

Content analysis of relevant TUT strategic and policy documents was the first step of the empirical investigation stage of the study; content analysis, therefore, preceded the semi-structured interviews and online survey. The discoveries derived from content analysis of strategic and policy documents are regarded as findings in their own right (see Silverman, 2011:80). Content analysis provided insight into TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication. Findings derived from the analysis of the content of the identified TUT strategic and policy documents informed the formulation of semi-structured interview and online survey questions. Moreover, as information gathered via other information/data collection methods, TUT content analysis findings informed the determination of the core features of the framework that is proposed as the main contribution of this study. An explanation of the manner in which content analysis was conducted will be given in Chapter 3.

The following documents were considered relevant for the purpose of this study:

- TUT Strategic Plan 2014–2019
- TUT Transformation Framework 2017
- Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy 2016–2019
- TUT Employment Equity Plan 2018–2022
- TUT Language Policy 2005
- TUT Diversity Training Guide 2014
- Policy on Unfair Discrimination 2006

1.9.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

To collect qualitative data, the researcher conducted individual semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that uses open-ended questions that provide participants with the opportunity to answer a set of predetermined questions. A set of pre-

determined, open-ended questions on an interview schedule based on theoretical principles and content analysis findings was developed to guide the researcher during the semi-structured interviews (see Maree, 2011:87). The pre-determined questions were used to source information on the viewpoints of cultural diversity management and training and communication experts regarding TUT's approaches to intercultural communication.

a) Qualitative sampling techniques

For the purpose of the semi-structured interviews, the sample comprised 10 purposively selected professionals from the departments responsible for transformation, employment equity and diversity; human resources development and corporate affairs and marketing. Flick (2013:176) remarks that purposive sampling is used in special situations, where the sampling is done with a purpose to select participants with a specific knowledge in a particular field. Professionals from the departments mentioned above were, therefore, targeted due to their expert knowledge about the problem the researcher sought to address.

b) Analysis and interpretation of semi-structured interview responses

Qualitative responses were analysed independently once all interviews had been conducted. Analysis was followed by interpretation of the responses sourced through semi-structured interviews for the purpose of arriving at informed conclusions. Consistent with Maree (2011:105), qualitative responses were analysed manually by transcribing all handwritten notes and audio-recorded interviews. Viewpoints provided by the 10 sampled professionals regarding TUT's approaches to intercultural communication were carefully read and constructs identified accordingly.

1.9.2.3 Quantitative online survey

An online, self-administered questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. A questionnaire was preferred because it provided the researcher with quantifiable data. A survey is a widely used technique for obtaining data from participants in quantitative research using a large sample. Closed-ended questions were used, and a four-point Likert scale was used to elicit responses to the questions. The scale enabled the researcher to obtain information on the participants' perceptions of the research problem, by asking questions that required participants to provide strongly disagree/disagree/agree/strongly agree responses (see McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:194).

a) Quantitative sampling techniques

The researcher used the probability sampling method to collect quantitative data, so that each individual had an equal probability of being selected to participate in the study (Maree, 2011:176). Staff members from the largest TUT faculty, namely, the Faculty of Humanities, were invited to participate in the research with the specific purpose of collecting quantitative data. The participants were, first, divided into two distinct groups (stratified sampling). Thereafter, a sample was randomly selected from two non-overlapping sub-populations, namely, academic and non-academic staff members across TUT. For this purpose, simple random sampling was used and all staff members from each sub-population had an equal chance of being selected (see Burger & Silima, 2006:660; Maree, 2011:172). Staff members were allocated numbers, which were used to decide which individuals should be included in the quantitative study. Finally, 294 academic staff members (n=294) out of N=319 academic staff, and 25 (n=25) out of N=32 non-academic staff members were selected as possible participants in this study.

b) Analysis and interpretation of quantitative data

The researcher analysed the data collected through the questionnaire (N=294) using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 25.0 (SPSS) to determine the perceptions of participants regarding TUT's current intercultural communication practices. An explanation of how analysis of quantitative data was done will be provided in Chapter 3.

1.9.3 Ethical considerations

The research was conducted in accordance with North-West University and TUT ethical procedures and conditions, as it will be discussed in detail in Section 3.5. Approval to start conducting the research at TUT was sought from that university prior to data collection. In addition, the researcher took the following into account to ensure that the study is conducted justly:

- The researcher consulted with all participants before collecting information/data and proceeded only after consent was given.
- The researcher conveyed the purpose of the study to all participants, including informing them about the conditions for participating in the study.
- The researcher asked for permission to record the interviews on an audio-recorder.

- The information received from participants was treated as private and confidential.

1.10 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to a specific institution, which could be considered a limitation. Collecting information/data from more than one institution could have improved the richness of empirical findings. In addition, the fact that the researcher is a member of the TUT faculty from which the quantitative data was collected could be considered as a limitation of the study. An explanation of the manner in which limitations to the study were addressed will be given in Section 6.7.

Relating to its delimitations, it was not the purpose of the current study to explore enhancement of intercultural communication from a diversity, in its entirety, point of reference. Considering the culturally diverse nature of the university where the empirical study was conducted, as well as the research problem identified in Section 1.4, this study primarily focused on enhancement of intercultural communication with the purpose of improving intercultural communication competence, and ultimately achieving organisational success. With this understanding, the study was approached from a cultural diversity perspective.

1.11 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The principal motivation for conducting the current study was to explore, understand and interpret assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT. An investigation into theoretical principles motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication will, together with the empirical study, serve as an attempt to address the research problem that was identified in Section 1.4, and add to the volume of research that has been conducted, and to the base of knowledge and practice pertaining to enhancement of intercultural communication. Conclusions, which will be drawn from the findings of the study, will serve as the blueprint upon which the framework the study will propose will be based. The framework will provide the foundation upon which to begin the inculcation of best practices for strategic and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication, which is an enabling factor for employees from various cultural backgrounds to improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist their organisations to achieve success.

1.12 CHAPTER LAYOUT

This section will list the contents of the six chapters, which each focus on different aspects according to the research questions already posed in Section 1.6.

Chapter 1: Orientation and motivation for the study

Chapter 1 introduces the study and provides orientation and motivation for the study. The chapter also contains the research problem, general research questions, specific research questions, research objectives, purpose of the research, guiding theoretical argument, and a brief explanation of the research approaches and methods that were followed to conduct the empirical study, including ethical considerations. A brief explanation of the contribution, limitations and delimitations of the study is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Intercultural communication adaptation principles

Chapter 2 covers an analysis and contextualisation of available literature to identify theoretical principles that fit adaptation in the context of intercultural communication. Considering that intercultural communication takes place in the context of internal communication, theories relevant to internal communication will also be explored in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Research approach, design and methods

Chapter 3 will examine the research process in depth, including approaches that were followed to conduct the research, the design that guided the research process, the research methods that were used to clarify the appropriateness of the approach that was followed by the research, including ethical processes followed to ensure that the research was conducted justly.

Chapter 4: Approaches to intercultural communication – Qualitative approach

This chapter will explore TUT's approaches to intercultural communication. The chapter will cover an analysis and presentation of findings regarding the responses collected through semi-structured interviews. Findings of the content analysis of strategic and policy documents relevant to the study will also be presented in this chapter. Communication adaptation principles that will be suggested for inclusion in a communication adaptation framework to enhance intercultural communication in culturally diverse organisations, such as TUT, will also be discussed.

Chapter 5: Intercultural communication practices – Quantitative approach

The chapter will present the data and an analysis of the data on perceptions of employees in relation to TUT's intercultural communication practices. Only the data collected through an online questionnaire, and relevant findings will be presented and analysed in this chapter.

Chapter 6: Framework to enhance intercultural communication

Based on the findings of the responses, information and data collected using different collection instruments, a framework that could assist culturally diverse organisations, like TUT, to enhance intercultural communication will be proposed in this chapter. The chapter will also present conclusions, limitations and recommendations for further research.

1.13 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to contribute theoretical and empirical insights, from which lessons can be drawn regarding the manner in which intercultural communication can be enhanced. With the understanding that intercultural communication competence is a precondition for organisations to function effectively, it is imperative for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to continuously and strategically enhance intercultural communication, so that culturally diverse employees could improve intercultural communication competence, and assist the university to achieve success.

The absence of a uniform and formalised approach to issues of intercultural communication is perceived to be likely to hinder focused and coordinated enhancement of intercultural communication and improvement of intercultural communication competence. This observation highlights the significance of undertaking research pertaining to assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication in a culturally diverse organisation; hence this study.

Chapter 2 will provide an analysis of theories, and identify intercultural adaptation principles relevant for culturally diverse organisations to enhance intercultural communication. The analysis of the theoretical information will include a review and contextualisation of knowledge from books, journal articles, case studies and any other documents relevant to the topic of the study.

CHAPTER 2: ANALYSIS AND CONTEXTUALISATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION PRINCIPLES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Enhancement of intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence could be improved, is one possible way for a culturally diverse organisation to unify employees towards a common purpose, and ultimately achieve success. The findings of the preliminary review of TUT's strategic and policy documents seem to suggest that there is a disconnect in the way intercultural communication is enhanced at the university. The emphasis of this chapter will be on analysis and contextualisation of intercultural communication adaptation principles suitable to serve as the main theoretical underpinnings to guide the investigation of principles relevant to enhancement of intercultural communication in culturally diverse organisations. A review of theoretical intercultural communication adaptation principles was considered as the first step of investigating features essential for employees from different cultural backgrounds to adapt to each other in intercultural communication encounters, as they strive to improve their intercultural communication competence.

The discussion in this chapter is intended to respond to Research Question 1.6.1, which is formulated as follows:

What are the theoretical perspectives regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles that are relevant for a culturally diverse organisation to enhance intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence is improved?

The chapter has five related purposes. First, it will analyse internal communication, that is, communication that takes place within an organisation. The study aligns itself with the argument that, in the context of organisations, intercultural communication is a form of internal communication that takes place between employees from culturally diverse backgrounds. Second, considering that the study is about enhancement of communication in the context of employees coming from different cultural backgrounds, the chapter will, then, proceed by explaining the workplace dimensions of diversity. The study will maintain that understanding that everyone

within an organisation is unique, thereby recognising individual differences, is an initial step in working towards enhancement of intercultural communication, and in the end, improvement of intercultural communication competence. Third, the cultural elements that are used in the intercultural communication process will also be explored, to gain insight on the manner in which culture creates and shapes intercultural communication. Fourth, the chapter will analyse and contextualise intercultural communication, with the aim of providing a link between internal communication and intercultural communication. Consistent with the understanding provided above that, in the context of organisations, intercultural communication is a form of internal communication, this section will provide an indication of where intercultural communication fits in the internal communication framework. Five, the chapter will explore the theories and models that fit adaptation in the context of intercultural communication. The enquiry in this section will be approached from the assertion that CAT, IAT and CCT are the theories that fit adaptation in the context of intercultural communication, and will provide a description of the way individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds respond to their experiences of other cultures during intercultural interactions. Furthermore, the section will probe models of cultural adaptation, namely, the AUMM, the UCM and the TM, to gain a more holistic understanding of how individuals navigate through the adaptation journey from an intercultural communication point of reference (as discussed in Section 1.8). The study will argue that theories of intercultural communication and models of cultural adaptation are complementary in nature, and that they collectively describe how individuals adapt to intercultural interactions.

The theories that fit adaptation in the context of intercultural communication, models of cultural adaptation and other relevant intercultural communication adaptation imperatives that will be identified in this chapter will inform the empirical phase of the study and also act as the contributing central and main guiding theoretical blueprint upon which the assumptions motivating a framework that the study seeks to propose will be based. Finally, concluding remarks will be provided to sum up the main theoretical principles that will inform determination of assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication. The framework the study seeks to propose is aimed at enhancement of intercultural communication in a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT.

2.2. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN ORGANISATIONS

Given the understanding that, in organisations, intercultural communication occurs in the context of internal communication, the discussion in this chapter begins with a review of what internal communication entails. This is achieved through (1) identification of what is considered the foremost goals and desired outcomes of internal communication, and (2) a contextualisation of the discussion.

Internal communication is considered as a group of processes that are responsible for information flow and collaboration among participants involved in the communication process. The fundamental significance of internal communication is the effective downward, upward, horizontal or diagonal transfer and receipt of information between employees or functional parts of an organisation, and its primary goal and desired outcome is common understanding of information by all who participate in the communication process. For organisations to function effectively, information should, therefore, flow in such a manner that it provides clear direction and is commonly understood by all participants in the internal communication process (Chang, Chuang & Chao, 2011:309; Emuze & James, 2013:46).

Concerning the levels at which internal communication takes place, Mumby and Stohl (2013:503–504) assert that it occurs across all levels of operation. Though basic communication skills are necessary for effective internal communication to occur, when communicating, regardless of the level at which communication is taking place, it is significant for all people participating in the process to have the ability to receive, interpret and understand information; and to obtain or provide feedback (Stanton, 2009:4; Mumby & Stohl, 2013).

It is essential to mention that TUT uses various channels of communication in pursuit of ensuring that the flow of information occurs across all levels of operation, namely, strategic, tactical and operational levels. As technology is increasingly integrated into organisations, the channels of communication continue to expand. In view of the increase in the use of technology, in addition to paper-based communication channels, TUT, like other organisations, increasingly relies on electronic methods of communication to share information that is necessary for making important decisions. Emphasising the use of technology in the flow of information, Bennett and Giles (2013:321) articulate that electronic communication also fits the definition of internal

communication, as this mode is also used in the processes that are responsible for information flow and collaboration among participants within organisations.

It is clear that, notwithstanding the use of different channels of communication, it is important that the manner of internal communication should be such that it facilitates common understanding of information; regardless of type, the primary purpose of internal communication is mutual creation of meaning. Regardless of type, effective internal communication should be an integral part of management strategy because it goes a long way to enhance employee and organisational performance. Regarding employee performance, it is argued that an important aspect of organisational members' performance is the extent to which employees find internal communication effective (Decramer, Smolders & Vanderstraeten, 2013; Van Staden 2013; Van Staden, Marx & Erasmus-Kritzinger, 2007:13). It is maintained that internal communication satisfaction gives organisational members a feeling of greater responsibility, which subsequently leads to improved performance that has the potential to contribute positively to the successful functioning of organisations. More importantly, effective internal communication is essential if employees are to work towards the achievement of a common vision and purpose (Taylor & Elsey, 2005; Sudhakar & Patil, 2006; Sopow, 2007; Carriere & Bourque, 2009; White, Vanc & Stafford, 2011).

Relating to organisational performance, scholars, such as Parker (2005) and Munshi (2014), argue that effective internal communication plays an important role in the successful running of organisations, and is a prerequisite for organisational success. It is maintained that organisational success is measured by analysing where an organisation stands regarding its strategic goals and objectives. The assertions in this paragraph call for organisations to ground their internal communication practices in their strategic orientations (Deetz, 2001:5; Smit *et al.*, 2011:309; Ruch & Welch, 2012:294–302).

It is evident from the above discussion that effective internal communication and successful functioning of organisations are mutually reinforcing. In other words, effective internal communication helps to improve performance, and ultimately the likelihood of organisations achieving success. This suggests that, in their pursuit of success, organisations, like TUT, should not underestimate the importance of internal communication, as it plays an important role in their functioning, improvement of employee performance and realisation of their strategic orientations.

These fundamentals demonstrate that strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication is imperative for organisations, in order to improve communication competence, and ultimately achieve success.

Regarding outcomes of internal communication, Welch and Jackson (2007:177) identify the following as its foremost goals, which, for the purpose of this study, are considered to be contributing factors for an organisation to function effectively, and ultimately achieve success.

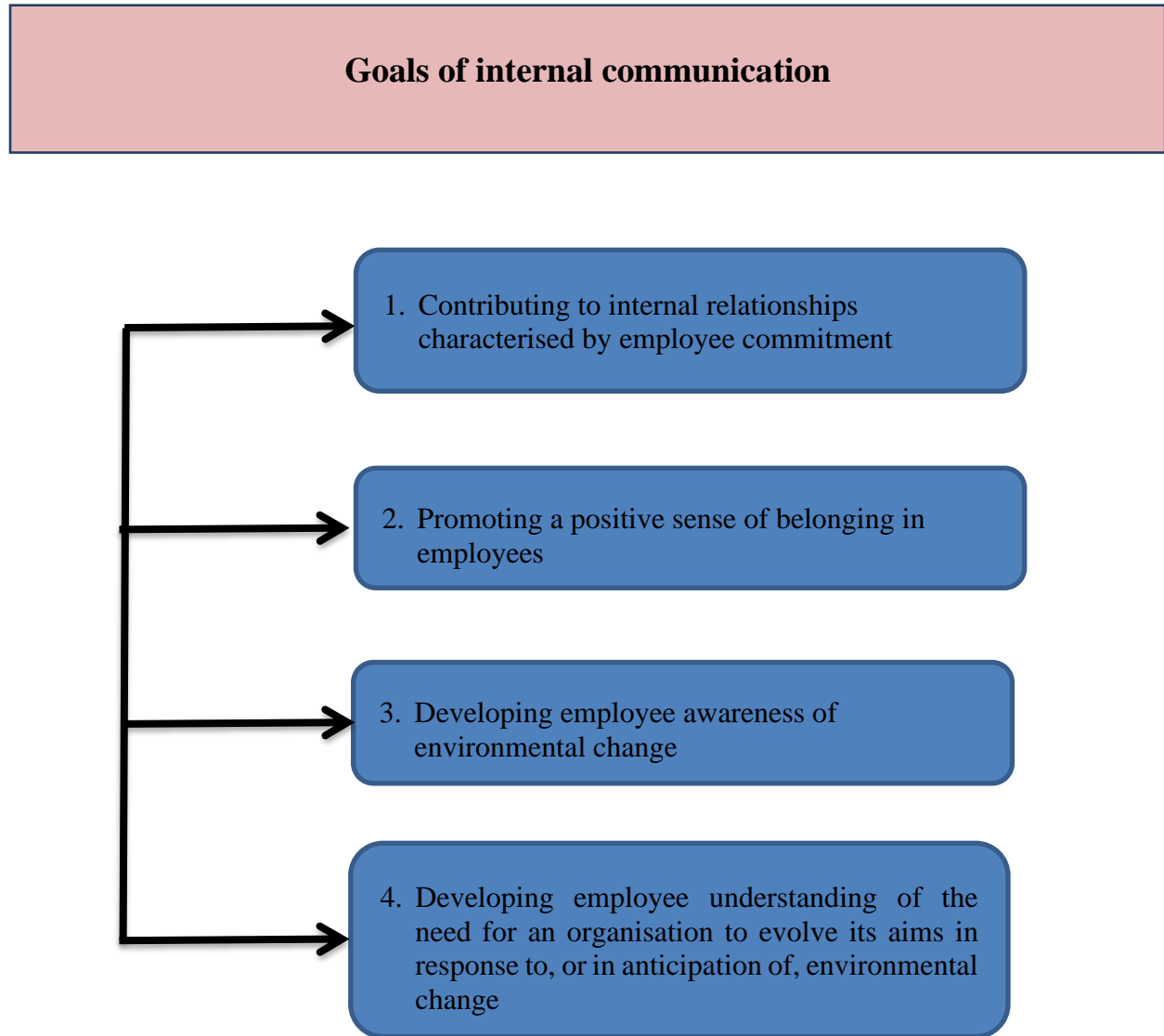


Figure 2.1: Goals of internal communication

Source: Welch and Jackson (2007:177).

Figure 2.1 suggests that the goals of internal communication are to develop employee commitment, create a sense of belonging, enhance awareness of the changing environment and develop an understanding of the need for organisations to evolve their aims. Considering the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations, Figure 2.1 advocates that, to achieve inclusivity for success, internal communication should be aimed at promoting a positive sense of belonging in all employees. Additionally, in view of the dynamic nature of the environments within which organisations operate, it becomes important for managers of organisations to have an understanding of the need for their organisations to continuously evolve their internal communication enhancement approaches in response to changes taking place in the external and internal environments. This, according to Emuze and James (2013:46), can be achieved through managers of organisations keeping abreast of environmental changes that have a significant effect on internal communication practices.

For communication to contribute to effective functioning of organisations, managers need to understand and acknowledge the dynamics of internal communication, including how perceived barriers to internal communication could prevent organisations from achieving success; perceived inadequacies in the internal communication process could inadvertently hinder effective internal communication, and ultimately affect the effective functioning of organisations. Workplace dimensions of diversity, selection of internal communication channels, differences in perception, misunderstandings, stereotyping, lack of knowledge, lack of interest, absence of nonverbal information to help others interpret what we are really saying, and emotions are some of the factors that are considered to cause ineffective internal communication (Daft, 2006:736; Huang & Trauth, 2007:37; Stanton, 2009:4; Martin & Nakayama, 2013:24). When internal communication barriers transpire, organisations may be prevented from achieving success (as mentioned above); hence, there is a need for all forms of internal communication to be intentionally enhanced and managed at all times (Kiss, 2008:443). A detailed discussion regarding barriers to internal communication in the context of culturally diverse organisations will be provided in Section 2.5.2.

As maintained in one of the paragraphs above, one fundamental way through which culturally diverse organisations can overcome ineffective internal communication, is by aligning their internal communication enhancement efforts with their strategic orientations (Mumby & Stohl, 2013:54). The results of research by Forman and Argenti (2005) emphasise the importance of

aligning internal communication and an organisation's strategic orientation. It is contended that such an approach assists organisations to develop and implement internal communication strategies that support their strategic direction. Mmope (2016) concurs that best practices for effective internal communication are those that are aligned with the strategic orientation, and which assist managers to communicate more effectively when they strive to execute strategies. It will be argued in this study that alignment of goals and desired outcomes of internal communication and an organisation's strategic orientation is more likely to contribute to enhancement of internal communication, and achievement of organisational success.

The discussion in this section emphasises the following internal communication foundational prepositions:

- **Principle 1:** Organisations need to ground internal communication practices in their strategic orientations.
- **Principle 2:** Strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication is imperative for culturally diverse employees to improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist organisations to achieve success.
- **Principle 3:** Alignment of internal communication strategies and an organisation's strategies assists organisations to develop and implement internal communication practices that support their strategic orientations.

The most fundamental theoretical insight derived from the preceding discussion is that organisations need to ground internal communication practices in their strategic orientations. Grounding communication practices in strategic orientation requires an organisation to be strategic in its approach to internal communication, including how it can be continuously enhanced, how it can improve performance of employees, how it can improve intercultural communication competence of employees, and how it can contribute to greater success (see Volk & Zerfass, 2018). It is assumed in this study that continuous and strategic enhancement of internal communication is a precondition for organisations to improve internal communication competence of employees. Additionally, in their pursuit of strategically and continuously enhancing internal communication, organisations should have a clear blueprint of what they consider as goals and desired outcomes of internal communication in the context of the environment in which they operate.

It was stated in Section 1.1 that when culturally diverse employees begin to operate beyond their cultural environments, they bring along their different cultures and, in consequence, intercultural communication becomes inevitable and more prevalent. In Section 2.3, a narrative of workplace dimensions of diversity will be provided. It is assumed that, more recently, internal communication is predominantly influenced by cultural diversity as a result of the increasing cultural diversity of the workforce in organisations. Consequently, intercultural communication is progressively becoming predominant in culturally diverse organisations.

2.3. WORKPLACE DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

Hayles (2009) asserts that as workplace dimensions of diversity are important contributing factors in understanding the organisational cultural diversity climate. Healy (1997:102) maintains that workplace dimensions of diversity are applicable to all types of culturally diverse organisations, and that they set a tone for inclusion of employees despite cultural differences.

Gardenswartz and Rowe (2003) categorise the workplace dimensions of diversity into what they refer to as the four layers of diversity (see Figure 2.2), which, according to them, set a tone for inclusion by reflecting each person's reality within an organisation. The four categories that apply to all organisations, TUT included, are as follows.

- **Personality:** Includes an individual's likes and dislikes, values, morals and beliefs. Personality is shaped early in life and is both influenced by, and influences, the other three layers throughout one's lifetime and career choices.
- **Internal dimensions** are largely out of our control, but have a powerful impact on behaviours and attitudes. These dimensions are regarded as the layer in which many divisions between and among individuals exist, and include age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, ethnicity and race.
- **External dimensions** are largely within our control and are choices formed by environmental, social and cultural factors and experiences. This layer includes aspects of life, such as income, religion, marital status, work experience, recreational habits, personal habits, appearance, geographic location and educational background, which usually form the basis for decisions on work style.

- **Organisational dimensions** are largely defined and influenced by the group or organisation in which we work. This layer concerns aspects of culture found in a workplace, namely, management status, work location, seniority, department, union affiliation, functional level, work content field, and work location.

Management of workplace dimensions of diversity is important, considering that culture and communication work in tandem. Konrad (2003:5) argues that managing workplace dimensions of diversity mediates cultural conflicts and improves internal communication competence. Hayles (2009:37) contends that, to respond adequately to workplace dimensions of diversity, managers of organisations need to acknowledge each employee's reality and the impact this has on internal communication. The most important prerequisite for managers to enhance internal communication is to develop an accurate understanding of intergroup dynamics and relations, as well as to promote equality between all culturally diverse employees. Recognising and acknowledging workplace dimensions of diversity that are specific to an organisation could help managers to appreciate how different attributes combined make a person. This understanding is important for organisations to determine, and to develop communication enhancement initiatives aimed at addressing challenges that maybe posed by these dimensions that are applicable to the cultural environment within which they operate (see Mor Barak, Cherin & Berkman, 2013:85).

The fact that TUT has employees from different cultural backgrounds creates vast cultural diversity, which may prevent them from using a common language, unless internal communication is handled and enhanced such that cultural diversity is managed well (see Steinberg, 2007; Martin & Nakayama, 2008; Neuliep, 2009; Macleod & Mathews, 2012). It is imperative for managers within organisations, like TUT, to acknowledge and understand workplace dimensions of diversity that have the potential to affect the manner in which communication occurs. Moreover, determining potential advantages and disadvantages of workplace dimensions of diversity defines an organisation's approach to managing cultural differences, including intercultural communication (see Kamal & Ferdousi, 2009:160).

Figure 2.2 depicts the workplace dimensions of diversity as categorised by Gardenswartz and Rowe (2003).



Figure 2.2: Workplace dimensions of diversity wheel

Source: Gardenswartz and Rowe (2003).

Workplace dimensions of diversity wheel as depicted in Figure 2.2 shows the different categories of a workforce and implies that the assumptions culturally diverse employees make influence their behaviours, which, in turn, impact on how they relate, interact and communicate with others. Regardless of the unique nature of employees, differences can be a source of team cohesion and could possibly help nurture organisation success, if managed effectively. Team cohesion is, for the purpose of this study, considered an important imperative for team members to remain united while

working to achieve a common purpose. In this instance, common purpose is deemed to be an attribute that serves to link team members to one another and to the team as a whole. It is, therefore, important to manage differences, so that team cohesiveness is achieved. It is argued that a highly cohesive team is likely to be more committed to organisational goals and activities (Hayles, 2009; Henderson, 2010:263). Considering these perceived realities, culturally diverse organisations need to pursue all-inclusive communication enhancement practices that have the potential to unite team members to achieve a common purpose. An inclusive approach to enhancing internal communication brings employees from different cultural backgrounds together, and increases loyalty and a feeling of belonging – one of the foremost goals and desired outcomes of internal communication (see Section 2.2).

This discussion culminates in the following workplace cultural diversity imperatives that are relevant for organisations such as TUT:

- **Principle 4:** Cultural differences have an impact on the manner in which intercultural communication occurs.
- **Principle 5:** Culturally diverse organisations need to pursue all-inclusive communication enhancement practices that have the potential to unite team members to achieve a common purpose.

In summary and in the context of this study, an all-inclusive intercultural communication enhancement approach is considered as more likely to unite team members towards the achievement of a common purpose. It can also be deduced from the discussion in this section that internal communication practices are largely created and shaped by dimensions of diversity relevant to an organisation. This implies that effective internal communication practices are, amongst others, dependent on the extent to which the dimensions of diversity of the organisation itself and the external environment in which it operates are managed. These qualifications signify that there is a link between personality, internal, organisational and external dimensions of cultural diversity and internal communication practices. The qualifications suggest that a culturally diverse organisation, such as TUT, should enhance intercultural communication with due consideration of what happens within and outside the institution, as this is necessary for developing an internal communication approach that is conducive to implementation of communication practices informed by dimensions of diversity that are specific to the unique nature of an organisation and

the environment within which it exists. The assertion that the external environment creates and shapes communication practices is interconnected with two of the goals and desired outcomes of internal communication that were identified in Section 2.2. Development of employee awareness of the external environment, and development of employee understanding of the need for an organisation to evolve its aims in response to environmental change, were identified as two of the foremost goals and desired outcomes of internal communication, and are considered to be contributing factors for an organisation to function effectively and ultimately achieve success. It was maintained in Section 2.2 that managers should determine and shape internal communication practices in alignment with what are considered as goals and desired outcomes of communication that occurs within their organisations.

Flowing from the discussion of workplace dimensions of diversity, the impact culture has on communication will be explored below. In view of TUT being culturally diverse in nature, the foremost purpose of the next section is to discuss primary cultural imperatives that influence communication styles in organisations.

2.4. THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Culture, as a whole, consists of a set of beliefs, values, attitudes and patterns of behaviour shared by members of a social unit. In the context of internal communication, it is assumed that each culture encourages a particular communication style, has the power to shape perception, and is regarded as the glue that bonds organisation members together (Holmes, 1997; Samovar & Porter, 2007:24; Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:48; Morse 2008:4). As propounded in Section 1.1, culture has an impact on behaviour and communication. Accordingly, culture and communication are inseparable, as culture is the foundation of communication – this is more prevalent when communication occurs between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (as discussed in Section 1.4). When different cultures are involved, communication practices vary. It is indispensable for individuals to understand culture differences, as culture tells us how to interpret the behaviour of others, including how to communicate effectively with individuals from other cultural backgrounds (Jandt, 2004:29; Kiss, 2008:44; Schimitz, 2012).

It is important to mention that there are different levels of culture, namely, 1) *National culture*, the set of norms, behaviours, beliefs and customs that exist among the population of a sovereign nation; 2) *Business culture*, which represents the working style, accepted norms, values and beliefs of the sector within which an organisation operates; 3) *Organisational culture*, which is a system of shared assumptions, values and beliefs, which govern how individuals behave in organisations; and 4) *Occupational culture*, which encompasses associated values, norms and characteristics of members of a particular occupational group (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:48; Westaby, Fowler & Philips, 2020). Whatever cultural environment surrounds people helps to shape and inform their attitudes, behaviour and readiness to respond to intercultural encounters (Samovar & Porter, 2007:57). TUT, for instance, is characterised by values, norms and characteristics that can be understood to be the foundation upon which its intercultural communication practices should be based.

Essentially, for intercultural communication to be appositely enhanced, all TUT employees need to be sensitive to the values, norms and characteristics that are likely to influence the university's communication style. Understanding the deeper meaning of culture is necessary when employees transition from one cultural environment and style of communication to the other (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:49; Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Orgad (2006:896) argues that cultural elements reflect the community's image of itself as a social structure. It is essential that individuals recognise elements that exist in a specific culture, so that they understand what dominant principles, values, norms and characteristics are being embedded by the way communication takes place in particular social setting.

Though there might be more similarities than differences regarding cultural elements among TUT employees, and despite the many common attributes employees share, there still exist cultural differences. As elucidated in Section 2.3, cultural differences also exist within a single race, language group, religious group or nationality; people are also differentiated by age, gender, socio-economic status, education and exposure to other cultures. Furthermore, (1) cultures have internal variations, and cultural awareness varies among individuals; (2) one's own sense of cultural identity is not always evident until you encounter another culture; (3) cultures continuously evolve; and (4) understanding another culture is a continuous process (Surbone, 2007:238; Samovar & Porter, 2007). It is imperative that decision makers at TUT have a sense of these dynamics of

culture, so that they ensure that appropriate measures that are aimed at enhancement of intercultural communication and improvement of intercultural communication competence are in place.

Important to indicate that each generation passes its culture on to the next generation and a particular culture is continuously reinforced when people see symbols, hear stories and engage in rituals. In the context of organisations, culture influences how employees think, and act and, most significantly, how they judge others. Given the impact culture has on communication, it becomes imperative for organisations to recognise that culture teaches significant rules, rituals and procedures that are essential for interaction among employees. Inherently, elements of culture, which will be explained in the discussion to follow, influence internal communication in culturally diverse settings (Cullen & Paeboteeah, 2008:47; Abullahi & Zainol, 2016). These elements shape and inform the way employees in an organisation, like TUT, communicate across cultures.

Norms help to inform people about behaviour that is considered acceptable, as an illustration, what we can do and what we cannot do. Accordingly, cultural norms prescribe how to greet other people, what clothes we can or cannot wear to our places of work, and when and whom may we marry (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:47). *Values* are beliefs that guide attitudes; they tell us what is good, what is beautiful and what are legitimate goals for life (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:47-48). Understanding values helps individuals in culturally diverse organisations to express their feelings and emotions, and tells them how to behave (Hall, 2017:21; Lang Wang, 2018:78). Cullen and Parboteeah (2008:47–48) explain that *beliefs* represent our understandings about what is true. Some cultures may have a belief that God can reveal facts, whereas others have a belief that research has to be conducted to reveal the truth (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:47–48; Lang Wang, 2018:80). *Cultural symbols*, amongst others, express or stands for people’s beliefs, identities, attributes, values, ideals and signs. In the workplace, office size and location can serve as cultural symbols (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:47–48; Udechukwu, 2019). *Stories* are, for instance, rhymes and traditional legends (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:47–48; Blinne, 2012:217). *Rituals* communicate the norms, values and beliefs of a society or a group of people, or in the context of this, an organisation, like TUT, or a group of employees (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:47–48; Abullahi & Zainol, 2016).

Cullen and Parboteeah (2008:48) acknowledge that culture is *pervasive*; societies develop pervasive cultural norms, values and beliefs to assist their members to adapt to their environments, and communication is no exception. Understanding culture as a pervasive phenomenon implies that the way individuals think, feel, and act is influenced by culture. *Prejudice* is irrational suspicion or hatred of a particular group, race, religion or sexual orientation (Jandt, 2013:85; Fasset, 2013). Hall (2017:204) articulates that prejudice is an attitude, which suggests that it exists within a person, and it is expressed in a variety of ways, often without people even realising or admitting to themselves that they are expressing prejudice. Moreover, prejudice can be problematic during communication encounters. Basically, dominant race and culture groups could develop prejudicial tendencies to other race and culture groups to suit their needs and wants, thereby promoting or prioritising their culture over other cultures. To enhance intercultural communication, it is imperative for culturally diverse organisations to eliminate prejudicial tendencies. *Stereotypes* related to judgements that are made about another solely on the basis of ethnicity or other group membership. Seemingly, stereotypes are based on categorising and the human desire to make sense of the world. Although we may think of stereotypes as being negative judgements, they can also be positive (Holmes, 1997:280; Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008:49; Jandt, 2017:397; Fasset, 2013).

Abullahi and Zainol (2016) and Cullen and Parboteeah (2008:49) reflect that *ethnocentrism* also plays an important role in intercultural communication. Ethnocentrism is defined as a tendency to think that your own culture is superior. Accordingly, ethnocentrism involves negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one's own culture; this can prevent groups from acquiring new and productive knowledge that could be gained from other cultural groups. Fittingly, some people may regard other cultures to be inferior to their own cultures. Moreover, feelings and expressions of ethnocentrism that protect a position of superiority increases competition, fear and hate; all of which can lead to various types of damaging conflict in interactions or conversations. Ethnocentrism has, at times, been associated with positive social outcomes. These include such cultural aspects as a strong social identity, which may increase one's self esteem, group loyalty and group survival, and may reduce a group's internal problems.

In essence, and regardless of whether the outcome of how you think about your own culture is negative or positive, the groups to which we belong, and the way members of cultural groups do things are part of cultural knowledge, and it helps us to understand the world in which we live and communicate. Building an effective communication system requires that culturally diverse organisations are aware of the way people negatively judge certain aspects, and this should be managed, to ensure that intercultural communication is enhanced such that intercultural communication competence of employees is improved (Jandt, 2013:83; Martin & Nakayama, 2013:5; Hall, 2017:199).

The discussion in this section explained that cultural elements play an important role in shaping interactions. Expressly, culture is fundamental to and pivotal in communication encounters, considering that we speak and interpret communication encounters in ways our culture has influenced us. Of central importance is that cultural elements determine how we experience and interact with the world in general, and colleagues in particular; hence, people often think and act in substantially different ways during different activities (Allwood, 2008:3; Neuliep, 2012:57; Harvey & Allard, 2014:108). Going through the process of learning and respecting cultural elements that are at play during internal communication instils certainty of conviction, which is essential for creating a psychological state of readiness for employees to react to the objects and events confronting them in organisations that are culturally diverse in nature. For this reason, employees from different cultural backgrounds should understand cultural elements that are relevant in the context of their own organisations; this understanding can help them to improve their intercultural communication competence. During intercultural communication, culture acts as a filter through which all intercultural communication interactions must pass (Gudykunst, 2005; Neuliep, 2012); hence, the need for knowledge of cultural elements that are used during communication encounters in organisational settings (Hall, 2017:22). Regarding cultural elements specific to TUT, it is paramount for employees to know what influences the manner in which communication takes place within the university (see Surbone, 2007:238; Frank, 2013:2).

The following significant insight can be derived from the above discussion:

- **Principle 6:** Cultural elements play an important role in shaping and informing intercultural communication.

Consistent with the argument advanced in Section 1.4, given that communication practices are largely created and shaped by culture, cultural sensitivity and competence contribute to our ability to communicate effectively. As cultural elements shape and inform intercultural communication, of essence is that managers within a culturally diverse organisation should understand and acknowledge different cultural and individual preferences and styles, and realise how the imperatives of cultural elements influence intercultural communication in organisations. This understanding and acknowledgement is essential for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to formulate communication strategies informed by the cultural imperatives applicable to the social setting within which the organisation operates, specifically, a system of shared assumptions, values, norms and characteristics, which governs how individuals behave and communicate.

This section and Section 2.3 discussed the various dimensions of cultural diversity that are present in organisations, and the cultural elements that affect the way in which individuals communicate. Intercultural communication, which is the type of communication that takes place between individuals from different cultural backgrounds, will be contextualised in Section 2.5.

2.5. CONTEXTUALISING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

This section will contextualise intercultural communication, with the aim of, amongst others, providing a link between internal communication and intercultural communication, to determine where intercultural communication fits within the internal communication framework. Furthermore, the discussion will identify factors that could hinder effective intercultural communication, and will also indicate how to obviate such barriers.

2.5.1 Intercultural communication defined

This section will provide definitions of intercultural communication, a form of communication that takes place between people from culturally diverse backgrounds. The purpose is not to provide all the definitions of intercultural communication, but rather to cover the main perspectives of what intercultural communication entails. Defining intercultural communication is necessary, as it will guide the understanding of the primary purpose of intercultural communication, and determine characteristics that capture the intercultural communication focus best. Furthermore, exploring

intercultural communication definitions will assist the researcher to formulate an operational definition relevant for the purpose of this study.

From an essential foundation, Allwood (2008:3) defines intercultural communication as the sharing of information between people from different cultural backgrounds. These differences may be national cultural differences, and differences that relate to participation in the different activities that take place in organisations. Hall (2017:38) maintains that intercultural communication is a matter of negotiation, respect and understanding. Emphasising a common understanding of information, as the main characteristic of intercultural communication, Klein and Chen (2001) and Arasaratnam (2013) consider intercultural communication as the skill of interacting appropriately, and individuals who are culturally different sharing an understanding. Evidently, Human (2005), Klein and Chen (2001) and Arasaratnam (2013) describe intercultural communication from a vantage point of sharing of information and having a common understanding of information. In the context of organisation, these definitions describe intercultural communication as a form of interaction between employees from different cultural backgrounds to convey work related information in a respectful way with the aim to create shared understanding.

Approaching intercultural communication from the performance improvement and productivity frame of reference, Schneider and Barsoux (2003:104) define it as the processing of information using a common language in order to make decisions, and communicate policies and procedures aimed at achieving organisational success; thereby emphasising a need to recognise intercultural communication as a performance improvement driver. Schneider and Barsoux (2003) also highlight the use of a common language as a characteristic necessary for individuals in organisations to work to improve productivity. The definition in this paragraph describes intercultural communication from an internal communication orientation. The point of emphasis, in this instance, is performance improvement and productivity, and achievement of organisational success as the primary purpose of intercultural communication in an organisational setting.

Ting-Toomey and Dorjee (2019) define intercultural communication as the process through which individuals from different cultures use the resources of visual communication in ways that are related to their specific underlying value systems. They also refer to the value of culture in shaping intercultural communication (as discussed in Section 2.4). Also defining intercultural communication from a culture point of view, Guirdham (2005) asserts that intercultural

communication can be deeply conditioned by the degree of understanding of visual semiotics as a cultural code. Ting-Toomey and Dorjee and Guirdham underscore that intercultural communication is the ability to understand dissimilar ways and patterns of communication, for instance, norms, beliefs and values. In the same vein, Samovar and Porter (2007:45, 58) describe intercultural communication as communication between people whose cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough to affect the communication event. These definitions are consistent with the main principle articulated in Section 2.4, namely, that culture plays an important role in shaping and informing intercultural communication. It was also stated in Section 2.4 that the way people communicate is based on their cultural upbringing. The definitions in this paragraph, and the arguments in Section 2.4, emphasise the impact culture, in organisational setting, has on communication between culturally diverse individuals. The emphasis is that intercultural communication practices in organisational settings should be aligned to the cultural dimensions that are dominant in a particular organisation and the immediate external environment in which the organisation concerned exists (as discussed Section 2.3). In the context of this study, organisations should align their intercultural communication enhancement endeavours with the cultural dimensions that are applicable in those organisations and the environment in which they operate. In the case of differences in dimensions between the organisation and the environment, the cultural dimensions applicable to the organisation should take precedence.

Due to the culturally diverse nature of many organisations, employees today communicate across cultures, and this is the type of communication alluded to by the definitions provided and analysed in this section. Inherently, this implies that all settings in which there is more than one individual are characterised by intercultural communication. All the authors referenced in the preceding paragraphs define intercultural communication from a culture and communication correlation point of reference, supporting the assertion made in Section 1.4 that culture and communication are mutually reinforcing. The understanding that communication in organisations is unavoidable and that organisations mainly comprise employees from diverse cultural backgrounds is presumed to be the reason why these authors approach their intercultural communication definitions from the point of reference of the influence culture and communication have on each other.

Regardless of differences in emphasis in relation to primary characteristics of intercultural communication, it is evident from the definitions that intercultural communication refers to

communication that take places between individuals from different cultural backgrounds and that, in the contexts of organisations, it occurs in the form of internal communication. This inference signifies, or provides a link between internal communication and intercultural communication, and places intercultural communication within the internal communication framework. In view of the culturally diverse nature of organisations today, it can, therefore, be argued that the form of internal communication that occurs in many, if not all, organisations of the magnitude of TUT, appears to have conspicuous intercultural communication dynamic.

The definitions provided in this section advance the following principle with reference to intercultural communication:

- **Principle 7:** Intercultural communication in an organisational setting manifests a reality that entails communication between people whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to alter the communication event.

Given the primary theoretical principle referenced above, and to provide an operational definition for the purpose of this study, intercultural communication is considered to be a form of internal communication that occurs between employees whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to alter the communication event. It was maintained in the definitions provided in this section that, in organisational settings, intercultural communication occurs with the primary purpose of creating a shared understanding. Common sharing of information is an imperative necessary for employees to work towards achievement of a common purpose; it facilitates unification of culturally diverse employees towards a common purpose due to a shared understanding of information, and assists organisations to achieve success because of improved performance and productivity.

It was maintained in Section 2.2 that lack of shared understating of internal communication may prevent organisations from achieving success. Given the background that shared understanding of meaning is important for the effective function of culturally diverse organisations, the section below proceeds to explain barriers to intercultural communication. The explanation is an extension of the brief exposition of barriers to internal communication that was provided in Section 2.2.

2.5.2 Barriers to intercultural communication

Shifting the focus to negative outcomes of intercultural communication, Sadri and Flammia (2011:63) illustrate that the contexts in which intercultural communication encounters occur can have a significant influence on whether the outcome of the encounter leads to the formation of positive attitudes towards members of other cultures. This requires a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to note that poor intercultural communication practices could create personal conflict, missed deadlines and incorrect goal assumptions, and ultimately, failure to achieve strategic imperatives, due to ineffective communication. It was highlighted in Section 2.2 that inadequacies in intercultural communication could damage relationships between organisation members, due to misunderstandings and misinterpretation of information.

Jandt (2004), Gass (2005:70) and Varonis (2007) articulate that the misunderstandings that occur when we communicate with people from other cultures may be due to the following factors:

- The messages may be transmitted in a way that cannot be understood by others, due to language differences, thereby identifying language differences as one of the main factors that hamper effective intercultural communication. Intercultural communication breakdown is, in this instance, attributed to the recipient of the message not understanding the unfamiliar vocabulary, due to the speed of speech, or an accent.
- The communication rules of communicators from different cultures may differ, and influence how messages are interpreted.
- The nonverbal communication codes of participants with different backgrounds may differ and influence the flow of information.
- One person may not understand how to accomplish a certain task or interpret a specific utterance within a social context, due to mistakes our brains make because of stereotyping. Stereotypes are harmful to communication, because they impede the effective flow of information.
- People could make errors in attributions, because of their group identity and/or intergroup expectations. Too many mistakes during interactions can be attributed to ineffective intercultural communication.
- Communicators from different cultures may not be familiar with the topic being discussed.

The misunderstandings referred to above apply to intercultural communication in the main, and organisations are not immune to any of the intercultural communication barriers. Some of the factors identified by Jandt (2004), Gass (2005:70) and Varonis (2007) are related to unfamiliarity with the cultural elements that are used during intercultural communication in a cultural environment that is different from your own. It was stated in Section 2.4 that cultural elements affect the way individuals experience and interact with the world in general, and their colleagues in particular. It was maintained in Section 2.4 that formulation of communication strategies not informed by the cultural imperatives (for example, values, norms and characteristics) applicable to the social setting within which the organisation operates might cause inadequacies in intercultural communication. Concerning avoidance of intercultural communication breakdown, in order to develop an understanding and common interpretation, TUT and similar organisations need to be proactive in ensuring that factors that may hinder effective intercultural communication are identified and obviated timeously (see Schweiger, Atamer & Calori, 2002:133).

Emphasising the importance of eliminating misunderstandings associated with intercultural communication differences, Rana (2013:4) contends that organisations should -

- Teach individuals to know the best way different cultures receive information. Some cultures do not trust information from colleagues operating at certain levels, but would rather take direction from a supervisor or leader; employees also differ in whether they appreciate praise for their effort in front of a group, or in private;
- Prepare all their employees through cultural awareness and cultural diversity programmes, encourage empathy and mutual respect, and provide ongoing acculturation training to new employees, so that they truly understand the company's overall culture and goals and behaviour expected;
- Assign mentors to employees, so that integration is facilitated, and employees can turn to someone who understands them;
- Avoid using slang, common jargon or metaphors when they address employees representing different cultures. Some terms make no sense to people of different cultures;
- Use graphics, when possible, to explain goals and processes to employees of various cultures; and
- Ask for feedback, but be prepared to use an intermediary.

Kiss (2008:437) suggests applying the following principles to eliminate intercultural communication misunderstandings. Kiss emphasises that an understanding of these principles could support both managers and their subordinates to become more insightful observers of other cultures.

- First-hand experience is necessary to understand many subtleties of any culture.
- Feelings of apprehension, loneliness or lack of confidence are common when experiencing another culture.
- Differences between cultures are often experienced as threatening.
- What is logical and important in a particular culture may seem irrational and unimportant to an outsider.
- In describing another culture, people tend to emphasise the differences and overlook the similarities.
- Stereotyping due to generalising may be inevitable among those who lack frequent contact with another culture.
- Personal observations about others of another culture should be regarded with scepticism.

The above principles should be taken into consideration by culturally diverse organisations to improve the effectiveness of intercultural communication.

The classic work of Amir (cited by Sandri & Flammia, 2011:63) describes four conditions that typically lead to positive attitudes in internal communication between individuals from different cultural backgrounds:

- The encounter is arranged by a person in a position of authority;
- The communicators have a personal stake in the outcome;
- The encounter is pleasant; and
- All parties derive some benefit from the contact, that is, the communicators share a common goal, or a goal that allows them to achieve their individual goals.

The deductions one can make from the elements and conditions explained above, which are aimed at eliminating misunderstandings or misinterpretation of information during intercultural communication, is that understanding and acknowledging that we have different cultural backgrounds is essential if culturally diverse employees are to become insightful observers of other

cultures. With reference to the institution where this study was conducted, employees of TUT should be made aware of the cultural varieties that exist among university employees, as a starting point of working towards enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence (as discussed in Section 2.3). By doing so, TUT, regardless of the cultural backgrounds of its employees, could eliminate hindrances to intercultural communication. This would require TUT to prepare all its employees through continuous cultural awareness and cultural diversity programmes, so that they can truly understand the university's overall culture. Acknowledging cultural differences, and accepting and understanding the need to improve intercultural communication form the basis of understanding the culturally diverse nature of employees and its impact on communication. Consistent with the discussion in Section 2.2, managers should be tasked with the responsibility to ensure that communication is purpose-directed, so that it directs everyone's attention to the vision and purpose of the team and TUT, and influences employees to act in a way that will facilitate the achievement of organisational success. Furthermore, intercultural communication should involve employees talking across cultures, and about TUT's vision, themes and values that help to achieve a common purpose.

The discussion above regarding barriers to intercultural communication and elimination of misunderstandings associated with cultural differences emphasises the following fundamental concluding reflections:

- **Principle 8:** Inadequacies in the intercultural communication process could damage relationships between organisation members, due to misunderstandings and misinterpretation of information.
- **Principle 9:** Organisations need to be proactive in ensuring that factors that could hinder effective intercultural communication are identified and obviated timeously.
- **Principle 10:** Effective intercultural communication involves employees talking across cultures about themes and values that help to achieve common purpose.

The foregoing discussion focused on factors that could hinder effective intercultural communication, including principles that could support employees to become more insightful observers of cultures other than their own. It was submitted in the discussion that ineffective intercultural communication could damage relationships – an imperative inconsistent with one of the foremost goals of internal communication (see Section 2.2). Of fundamental importance is that

a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, needs to be proactive in ensuring timely obviating of any factors that have the potential to hinder effective intercultural communication. This suggests that diverse organisations should enhance intercultural communication with due consideration of factors that may hinder effective intercultural communication – this is viewed as essential for organisations to obviate barriers to intercultural communication.

Of particular importance to this study is enhancing intercultural communication to improve intercultural communication competence. Accordingly, Section 2.6 will discuss the extent to which individuals adapt their communication styles to the appropriate cultural context. The discussion will provide an analysis and contextualisation of theories relevant to intercultural communication competence, to clarify how enhancing intercultural communication could be beneficial to a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT.

2.6. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Intercultural communication competence is an extension of internal communication competence, with a specific application to culture. As argued in Section 2.5, achieving intercultural communication competence requires a willingness to acknowledge the frequently unexpected differences between one's own and a different culture; it requires a willingness to accept the characteristics of the other culture for what it is (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009:529; Beamer, 2016:285).

The term *competence* is considered, broadly, as an impression that behaviour is appropriate and effective in a given context (Spitzberg, 1993:379; Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2007:314; Lieberman & Gamst, 2015:17). The word competence is not independent of the relationships and situations within which it occurs. Thus, cultural competency is not an individual attribute; rather, it is a characteristic of the association between individuals with different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural competence is contextual, that is, an impression or judgement that a person is intercultural competent is made with respect to both a specific relational context, and a particular situational context. It is possible for someone to be perceived as highly competent in one set of intercultural interactions, and only moderately competent in another (Kiss, 2008:438).

The discussion in this section focuses on intercultural communication competence, which is a person's ability to communicate effectively in intercultural interaction situations. Intercultural communication competence is defined as the degree to which someone effectively adapts communication to the appropriate cultural context. Being a competent communicator means one can analyse the situation and select the appropriate mode of behaviour in the context of communicating across cultures (Hyde & Kullman, 2004; Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005; Neuliep, 2006; Santos & Rozier, 2007; Kiss, 2008; Arasaratnam, Banerjee & Dembek, 2011). It is argued that individuals tend to become more competent at intercultural communication if the communication encounter they are engaging in is characterised by effective mutual creation of meaning and interpretation (as discussed in Section 2.2). It is asserted that competent intercultural communicators can effectively project and receive responses in the intercultural communication event, as they improve their degree of intercultural adroitness and acquire greater degrees of cultural and self-awareness (Kim, 2006:362). Kim (2006:268) indicates, further, that individuals who hope to carry out effective intercultural communication must be equipped with a set of communication abilities, so that they are able to understand and deal with the dynamics of cultural differences. The synthesis of the prevailing approaches to the study of intercultural communication competence, therefore, aims to promote communicators' abilities to acknowledge, respect, tolerate and integrate cultural differences (Chen & Starosta, 1996).

In the context of organisations, intercultural communication abilities signify the attributes relevant for employees to become competent intercultural communicators. As an illustration, what is pivotal for TUT employees to become competent intercultural communicators is that they should have the ability to adapt effectively to the manner in which communication occurs at the university.

A discussion regarding the perspectives from which the process of transformation to a competent intercultural communicator occurs will follow; this process is depicted in Figure 2.3. The discussion will explore attributes that are most relevant for employees to become competent intercultural communicators. The discussion will primarily focus on the intercultural communication competence attributes contended by Kim (2006) and Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (2012).

Figure 2.3 illustrates the process of transformation to a competent intercultural communicator argued by Kim (2006) and Samovar *et al.* (2012:314).

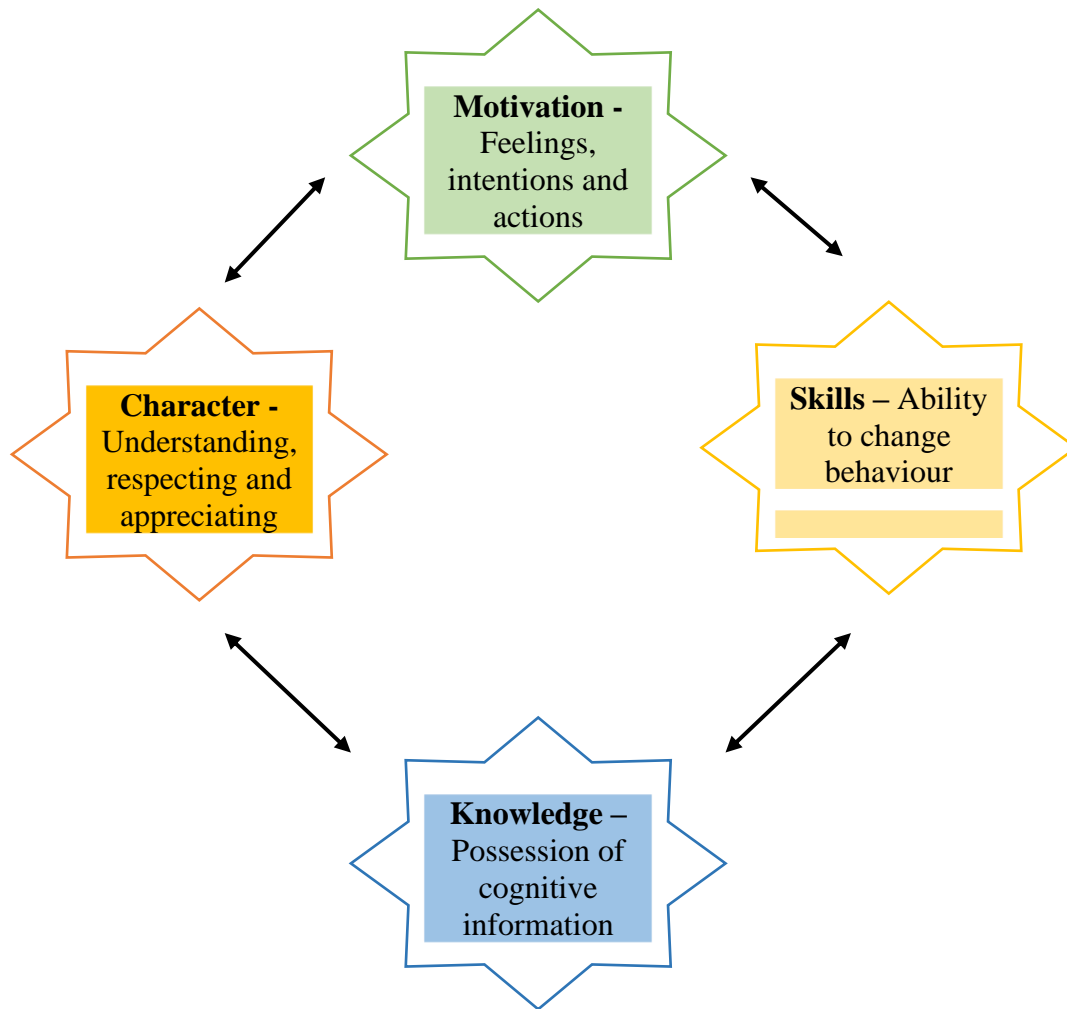


Figure 2.3: The process of transformation to a competent intercultural communicator

Source: Kim (2006) and Samovar *et al.* (2012).

Figure 2.3 reflects that in selecting the most appropriate trajectory, competent intercultural communicators are those who are (1) motivated, (2) have a fund of knowledge to draw upon, (3) possess communication skills and (4) are of good character – distinct qualities to become competent intercultural communicators. These attributes are, for the purpose of this study, regarded as the most relevant core intercultural communication enablers or co-requisites.

2.6.1 Motivation

Motivation, as it relates to intercultural communication competence, means that, as a communicator, someone wants to interact with people from cultures different to their own, and for that to happen successfully, they must desire to improve their ability to communicate effectively across cultures. Feelings, intentions and actions are conditions that motivate or are more likely to lead to an attitude conducive to individuals having a desire to become competent intercultural communicators. *Feelings* are the emotional states that are experienced when communicating with someone from a different culture. *Intentions* guide choices in a particular intercultural interaction – the goals, plans, objectives and desires that focus and direct behaviour. *Actions* are the actual performance of behaviours that are regarded as appropriate and effective during intercultural communication encounters. If people allow feelings of anxiety, ethnocentrism and prejudice to control their actions, for example, they obviously lack the motivation necessary to be effective communicators. Instead, individuals need to be committed to the entire communication process. For employees in a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to become competent intercultural communicators, they need to have positive feelings about the process of personal transformation, and have intentions to transform and act in a manner that reflects the desire to transform. It can, therefore, be concluded that motivation plays an important role as an intercultural communication enabler for employees to become competent intercultural communicators (see Martin & Nakayana, 2004:285; Kim, 2006; Kiss, 2008:439; Samovar *et al.*, 2012).

2.6.2 Knowledge

Knowledge relates to the cognitive aspect of intercultural communication competence advanced by Kim (2006). The *cognitive* aspect of intercultural communication competence refers to the process by which people acquire knowledge that allows them to function successfully and interact meaningfully with one another (Kim, 2002; Vevea, 2011). For someone to interact meaningfully across cultures requires a fund of knowledge about cultures – other people's and one's own culture – and the context and the norms of appropriateness that operate in specific cultures (Samovar *et al.* 2012:315). Without such knowledge, it is unlikely that people will be able to select behaviours that are appropriate and enable them to achieve intercultural communication objectives. Penceliah (2008:336) mentions that knowledge of culture and of fundamental principles of communication

are essential propositions of intercultural interactions. Therefore, if we would like to communicate effectively, it becomes necessary for us to know what culture is, how cultures vary and how culture affects behaviour. This highlights that the kinds of knowledge that are essential in intercultural communication include culture-general and culture-specific information (Kiss, 2008:438). For organisations, knowledge of different cultural perspectives gives employees a broader understanding that different cultures have different customs, standards, social norms and thought patterns, which is essential for people to become competent intercultural communicators. Knowledge about cultures is, therefore, considered an aspect that is likely to make employees more receptive to initiatives that are intended to make them become competent intercultural communicators.

2.6.3 Skills

Skills, in the context of this study, refer to skills required to communicate effectively with people of other cultures, which Kim (2006) refers to as the *behavioural* aspect of intercultural communication competence. Skills are displayed by intercultural effectiveness, which refers to the cultivation of communication skills to accomplish specific goals; this is the ability to recognise communication rules, meet the contextual requirements of those rules and recognise the rules in different contexts. The behavioural skills needed for reaching intercultural effectiveness include language ability, behavioural flexibility, interaction management, identity maintenance and relationship cultivation (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009:530-531). Skills are, therefore, the actual applications of specific acts that enable people to accomplish their intercultural communication competence goals; skills are goal directed, because they must be designed to accomplish something (Samovar *et al.*, 2012:315; Jandt, 2013:36). Skills are needed to adapt to the rules of intercultural communication that are appropriate to organisational culture. Employees need to have the ability to recognise communication rules, meet the contextual requirements of those rules and recognise the rules in different contexts, as these are the skills needed for individuals to improve their intercultural communication competence (see Kim, 2006; Samovar *et al.*, 2012:315). It is assumed that gaining skills in effective intercultural communication can minimise intercultural communication conflicts and make it possible for employees to become competent intercultural communicators.

2.6.4 Character

Character relates to the ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences, and could be referred to as the sum total of a person's choices in an intercultural interaction, which Kim (2002) refers to as affective aspects of intercultural communication competence. The key is how someone acts out choices when they interact with people of other cultures, as these choices indicate character attributes, such as trustworthiness, integrity, honour, altruism, sincerity and goodwill. A valid measuring instrument of intercultural sensitivity, based on these elements, was developed by Littlejohn and Foss (2009:530). Littlejohn and Foss measure intercultural sensitivity by, amongst others, examining people's open-mindedness concerning the differences they encounter in other cultures, their flexibility concerning behaving in unfamiliar cultures, and understanding of different ways they can behave, depending on the environment in which they find themselves.

As far as intercultural communication in the context of an organisation is concerned, employees need to have the ability to be flexible and to speak the language/s of communication used in their respective organisations. As communication is interactive, an essential influence on its effectiveness is employees' ability to understand, respect and appreciate culture varieties, including their relationships with others. Employees should continuously attempt to understand the ways communication varies across cultures, and apply these understandings to enhance relationships, despite differences (Samovar *et al.*, 2012:317). So, managing cultural differences such that employees become aware of and become open-minded about character attributes that influence intercultural communication, has the likelihood of preparing employees to respond positively to endeavours that seek to improve their intercultural communication competences.

It is clear that the focus of the attributes advanced by both Kim (2006) and Samovar *et al.* (2012) can be referred to as intercultural communication enablers or co-requisites, which capture attributes employees require in order for them to improve their intercultural communication competence. Accordingly, the discussion in this section shows that employees in culturally diverse organisations require the following competences to become competent intercultural communicators:

- **Enabler/co-requisite 1:** The ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences.

- **Enabler/co-requisite 2:** The ability to change behaviour and act in a way consistent with the cultural environment in which people find themselves.
- **Enabler/co-requisite 3:** Possession of requisite cognitive information about different cultures, including one's own.
- **Enabler/co-requisite 4:** The desire to improve the ability to effectively communicate across cultures.

To sum up the discussion in this section, it is contended that competent intercultural communicators are individuals who possess the desire to improve their intercultural communication abilities, who are in possession of the requisite information about different cultures, have the ability to change their behaviour and act in a consistent way in each cultural environment they find themselves, and have the ability to understand and appreciate cultural differences. Motivation, knowledge, skills and character are distinguished as intercultural communication competence enablers or co-requisites, which are important for employees in a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to communicate meaningfully across cultures. Motivation is considered to be at the root of an employee's desire to improve intercultural communication competence. It is maintained by this study that, if an employee is not motivated to improve intercultural communication competence, the other three attributes do not really matter. The pivotal conclusion is that motivation and other enablers/co-requisites can improve intercultural communication competence and facilitate achievement of organisational success. Doing so requires culturally diverse organisations to invest in ensuring that employees are motivated to become competent intercultural communicators, and use motivation as the foundation upon which to base the other attributes.

Given the discussion in this section overall, an operational definition of intercultural communication competence for the purpose of this study is that intercultural communication competence is the ability to (1) be open-minded about cultural differences, (2) change one's behaviour, (3) possess skills and (4) the desire to improve one's ability to effectively communicate across cultures.

How individuals respond to cultures different to their own is important for the purpose of adaptation and improvement of intercultural communication competence. Therefore, the following section will explore intercultural communication theories and models of cultural adaptation, which

will act as the contributing central theoretical underpinnings upon which the framework the researcher seeks to develop will be based. The framework is aimed at assisting TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve their intercultural communication competence.

2.7. THEORIES AND MODELS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION

The current section will expand on the brief explanation given in Section 1.8 of what this study considered as the guiding theories and models of adaptation in relation to intercultural communication. The purpose of the section is to explain the meaning, nature, and challenges of intercultural communication adaptation, to help the researcher to understand and determine assumptions motivating a framework for a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT, to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence.

Considering that this section will discuss theoretical principles that relate to adaptation in the context of intercultural communication, the discussion will start with a brief clarification of the concept intercultural adaptation, to assist the researcher in determining theoretical propositions relating to intercultural communication that capture the intercultural communication adaptation focus best.

2.7.1 Intercultural adaptation contextualised

It is essential to start by indicating that words, such as *assimilation*, *adjustment*, *acculturation*, and even *coping*, are used by different sources interchangeably to describe how individuals respond to their experiences of cultures other than their own, as all these terms refer to how people from one culture react to prolonged contact with those of another culture (Lustig, Koester & Halualani, 2018:161). For Gudykunst (2005:408), intercultural adaptation is the process of change over time that takes place within individuals who have completed their primary socialisation process in one culture and then come into continuous and prolonged first-hand contact with another, unfamiliar culture. Intercultural adaptation is also considered as an expansion of one's worldview to include behaviour and values appropriate to the host or dominant culture (Bennett, 2005:14; Patel, Li &

Sooknanan, 2011). This perspective includes physical, biological and social changes in people who are in the process of adapting to a new environment. Guirdham (2005:241) refers to intercultural adaptation as changes that individuals make to their emotions, thoughts, sense of identity and behaviour as they interact in a new environment. This description covers the change, behaviour and other intercultural adaptation aspects referenced by Gudykunst (2005:408); Bennett (2005:14) and Patel, Li and Sooknanan (2011). Approaching intercultural adaptation from a relationship point of view, Kim (2006:265) and Lustig *et al.* (2018:161) define intercultural adaptation as the process by which people establish and maintain relatively stable, helpful and mutually shared relationships with others upon relocating to an unfamiliar setting. Contributing to internal relationships characterised by employee commitment was argued in Section 2.2 as being one of the goals of internal communication, of which intercultural communication is part. According to the cognitive dissonance theories mentioned by Martin and Nakayama (2004), individuals typically have three options when confronting behaviours that do not fit with previously held attitudes: they can *reject* the new ideas, try to *fit* themselves into their existing frameworks, or *adapt* their frameworks. Regardless of differences in emphasis in relation to primary characteristics of intercultural adaptation, it is evident in all instances that intercultural adaptation is approached from a change perspective.

Regarding how individuals adapt, Martin and Nakayama (2004:287) argue that characteristics, including age, gender, preparation level and expectations, can influence how well they adapt. Younger people may have an easier time adapting, because they are less fixed in their ideas, beliefs and identities. In comparison, older people may have more trouble adapting, because they are less flexible. In pursuit of assisting employees to respond to their experiences in cultures different to their own, organisations must do so with due consideration of the characteristics of all their employees, including recognising and acknowledging how each characteristic contributes to the manner in which individuals adapt to cultures that differ from their own.

Though authors referenced in this section describe intercultural adaptation from a different frame of reference, all the definitions emphasised that individuals respond to their experiences of cultures other than their own in order to fit in with the new cultural environment. It is for this reason that, for the purpose of this study, the term intercultural adaptation is used to describe the manner in which individuals respond to their experiences in other cultures. Informed by the main features of

the definitions provided above, the operational definition, for the purpose of this study, is that intercultural adaptation is the process through which employees change over time in their endeavours to respond to their intercultural communication experiences upon relocating to a new cultural environment.

The intercultural adaptation operational definition provided above was approached from a communication orientation, considering that enhancement of intercultural communication is the focus of the study. Consistent with the operational definition provided, and in spite of the culturally diverse nature of organisations, it is argued in this study that, from a communication point of reference, intercultural adaptation reduces cultural distance and increases intercultural communication competence. Central to the argument is acknowledging a need for employees in culturally diverse organisations to respond to their experiences in a manner conducive to them adapting to a new way of communicating and improve their intercultural communication competence. Though some individuals have difficulty adapting to new ways (Martin & Nakayama, 2004:285), considering that communication is at the core of everything we do, Bennett (2005:15) believes that adapting for communication purposes is necessary, as it is essential for individuals to communicate effectively and assist their organisations to achieve success. For effective intercultural communication to take place, it is imperative for employees in a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to adapt their communication behaviour such that they respond positively to their communication experiences involving cultures other than their own, in order for them to fit themselves into the institution's communication frameworks and assist the university to achieve success. Adapting to and fitting into an organisation's communication framework is viewed as a prerequisite for organisations to enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence of employees from different cultural backgrounds could be improved. It is assumed that it is through employees responding positively to new communication experiences that intercultural communication is enhanced, and enables intercultural communication competence to be improved.

2.7.2 Theories of intercultural communication adaptation

The section will now move on to the analysis and contextualisation of theories that explain adaptation in the context of intercultural communication, to describe the way individuals respond to their experiences in cultures other than their own.

The CAT, IAT and CCT are, for the purpose of this study, considered to be theories that explain adaptation in the context of intercultural communication. Theories of intercultural communication adaptation provide a wide range of frameworks aimed at describing the way in which employees at an organisation, like TUT, respond to their experiences of cultures not similar to theirs.

By way of summary, Figure 2.4 illustrates theories that are considered to explain adaptation in the context of intercultural communication.

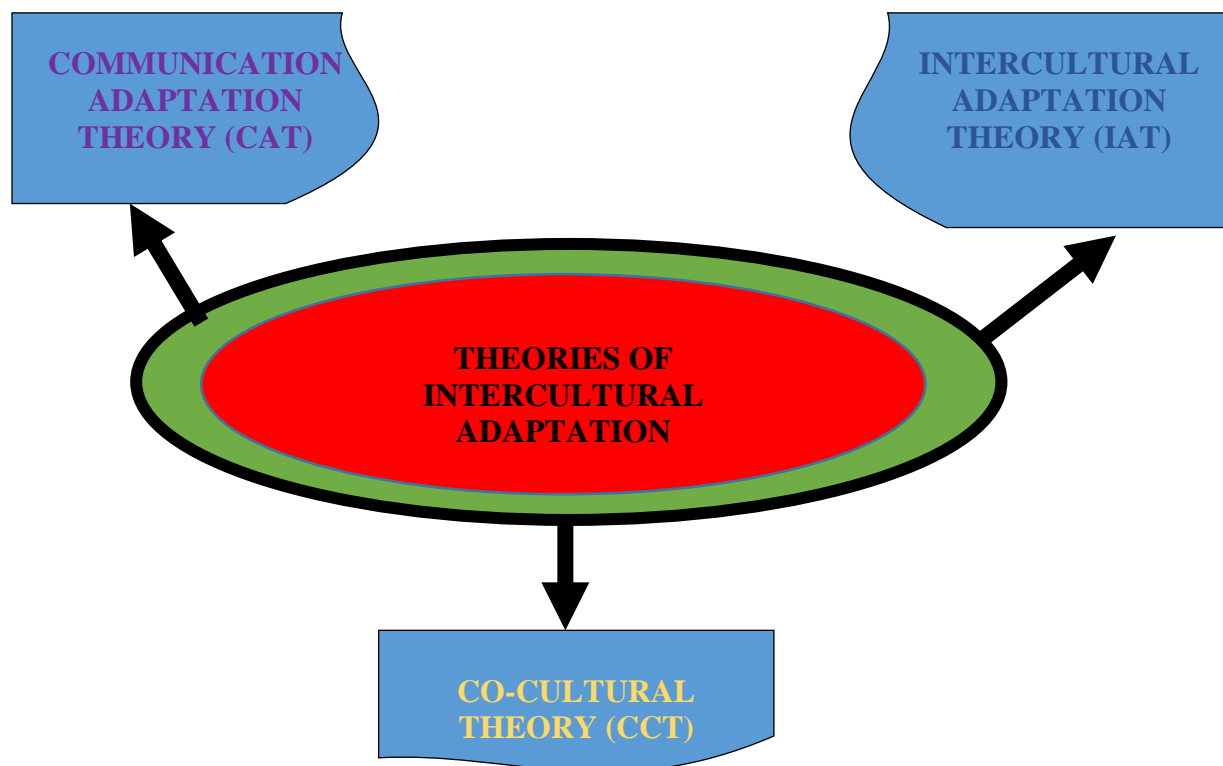


Figure 2.4: Theories of intercultural adaptation

An exploration of the theories of intercultural communication adaptation will be provided in the next sections.

2.7.2.1 Communication adaptation (accommodation) theory

The CAT begins with the socio-historical context of the interaction, including the relations between the groups having contact, and the social norms. The theory elaborates that the social environment in which individuals interact also affects their communication behaviour, which is a reflection of the extent of the influence the socio-historical context has on intercultural communication.

Gudykunst (2003:26) maintains that the CAT examines the attitudes and motives that shape communication interactions across cultures. According to this outlook, the CAT provides a framework that is aimed at predicting and explaining many of the adaptations individuals make to create, maintain, and decrease social distancing in intercultural communication. The framework explains the ways in which individuals accommodate their communication, their motivation for communication, and consequence goals. In this instance, the CAT is also concerned with how the responsibility for adapting is allocated between two or more participants, with the ultimate motivation being to adapt to intercultural interactions. Accordingly, the theory incorporates individualism and collectivism on communication accommodation imperatives; thereby affirming the interpersonal and inter-group approach to intercultural communication adaptation. This component of the CAT relates to cases where intercultural communication is influenced by the communicators' accommodative orientation and tendencies; as an illustration, interpersonal or intergroup dynamics or a combination of the two (Ayoko *et al.*, 2002:167; Giles & Ogay, 2007:293). Accordingly, employees' accommodative orientation and tendencies motivate their desire to improve intercultural communication competence. Employees enter intercultural interactions with personal attitudes (interpersonal) and social (intergroup) identities as factors that shape intercultural communication. Moreover, the attitudes of individuals are determined more by their immediate surroundings (immediate situation) than by the society within which they find themselves. Therefore, recognition of the impact on the features of the immediate situation of employees is regarded essential for understanding the context within which enhancement of intercultural communication could be successful, as the extent and nature of adaptation depends

on the influences of the immediate surroundings of people participating in intercultural communication (Giles & Ogay, 2007:294).

In support of the immediate situation imperatives, Gudykunst (2005:15) claims that there are five distinct and interrelated aspects of the immediate communication situation, as depicted in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Five aspects of the immediate communication situation

Communication situation	Examples
1. Socio-psychological states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicators' interpersonal orientation in the communication situation • Communicators' intergroup orientation in the communication situation
2. Goals and addressee focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivations in the encounters • Conversational needs • Relational needs
3. Sociolinguistic Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximation • Discourse management
4. Behaviour and tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Accent • Topic
5. Labelling and attributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification • Causes of behaviour

Source: Gudykunst (2005:15).

In accordance with Table 2.1, socio-psychological states signify communicators' interpersonal orientation and serve as motivational aspects for adapting to the context of intercultural communication. Wiseman (1995:118) contends that the motivational component was expanded, firstly, to incorporate the initial socio-psychological states of speakers, or the extent to which

speakers are motivated to move towards each other at the outset of an interaction. Secondly, speaker strategies were reconceptualised because of addressee focus, or the way in which one speaker pays attention to the behaviours of another and, accordingly, adjust their behaviour in order to fit into the communication style of the new cultural environment. Thirdly, Wiseman (1995:118) expanded the conceptualisation of reactions to interactions to speaker behaviour. Finally, the latter part of the CAT model was expanded to include an evaluation that interlocutors take away with them, which influences their future orientation to both the other person and other members of that person's group (Gallois & Giles, 1988; MacIntyre, 2019). To enhance intercultural communication, it is necessary for culturally diverse organisations to embark on improving intercultural communication effectiveness initiatives that are premeditated by interpersonal and intergroup attitudes of their employees. It is reasoned in this study that doing so could contribute to internal relationships and promotion of a sense of belonging, and is more likely to make employees accommodate each other and adopt a uniform style of communicating.

At its foundational level, the CAT emphasises the cognitive and effective processes that are fundamental to speech convergence or divergence, which are linguistic moves to increase or decrease communication distance respectively. In terms of intercultural communication, individuals communicating across cultures use convergence and divergence strategies to signal their attitudes towards each other and their respective social groups. Convergence is a process in which individuals tend to adapt the other person's communication characteristics to reduce the social differences; it involves adjusting one's communicative behaviours to be similar to another's. Divergence contradicts the method of adaptation and relates to the social and nonverbal differences between people participating in an intercultural interaction; it refers to adjusting one's communicative behaviours to be more dissimilar to another's (Dragojevic, Gasiorek & Giles, 2015; MacIntyre, 2019). Gudykunst (2005:14) asserts that individuals adopt convergence or divergence approach for intercultural communication to signal a salient group distinctiveness and to reinforce a social identity. Accordingly, the CAT exposes individuals to the patterns of convergence (that is, when people's ideas in organisations coincide, they stop being different, and become similar to each other) and divergence (that is, when people's ideas move or extend in different directions from a common point). Patterns of convergence and divergence explain why speakers are either able to interact toward one point or another, or, on the other hand, move in

different directions (Giles & Ogay, 2007:294; MacIntyre, 2019). In the context of organisations, the patterns of convergence indicate that, regardless of people's differences, it is practicable to enhance intercultural communication and achieve a focused and common manner of communicating across cultures. Achieving this requires culturally diverse organisations to maintain a balance that normalises the process that helps to reduce the uncertainty that results when cultures collide (Wiseman, 1995:115; Ayoko, Hartel & Callan, 2002:167; MacIntyre, 2019). To guide successful enhancement of intercultural communication, it is, therefore, a requirement for a culturally diverse organisation to strategically and continuously ensure that intercultural communication competence is improved such that collision of cultures could be avoided.

The CAT has, so far, been discussed as a communication accommodative strategy, and from socio-historical context, motivation, interpersonal and intergroup, and immediate situation perspectives. The preceding discussion suggests that, for TUT to achieve adaptation such that intercultural communication and intercultural communication competence are improved, the following dominant suppositions should be the guiding blueprint:

- That socio-historical context influences intercultural communication;
- That, during intercultural interactions, individuals use specific communication accommodative strategies, particularly convergence and divergence;
- That motivation to adapt, and immediate situation imperatives shape intercultural communication encounters; and
- That individuals enter intercultural interactions with personal attitudes (interpersonal) and social identities (intergroup).

A convergence approach is, in this study, suggested as the communication accommodative strategy culturally diverse organisations should use to move colleagues of different cultures towards each other, considering that its patterns reflect that, regardless of differences, it is practicable to achieve a focused and common manner of communicating. Furthermore, for culturally diverse organisations to successfully enhance intercultural communication, their social and historical contexts, and the cultural dynamics of the environment within which the organisations concerned operate (immediate situation), should form the basis of their intercultural communication enhancement framework. For this study, interpersonal, intergroup and immediate situation cultural dynamics of an organisation discussed in this section are equated to personal, internal,

organisational and external workplace dimensions of diversity, as discussed in Section 2.3, where it was asserted that workplace dimensions of diversity set the tone for inclusion by reflecting each person's reality within an organisation. Personal attitudes, intergroup identities and immediate situations are considered to provide intercultural adaptation imperatives that is contended are pivotal in shaping the style of intercultural communication. From the CAT standpoint, it is maintained that the degree of intercultural communication adaptation and effectiveness is achieved based on the degree to which social and historical context and the immediate situation are successfully inculcated in an intercultural communication strategy aimed at consciously moving employees towards each other, notwithstanding their cultural differences.

Unlike CAT, which elaborates that socio-historic context and immediate situations influence intercultural communication, the discussion to follow focuses on IAT, a theory designed to describe a complex, long-term adaptation process in which stress serves as the necessary drive for individuals to adapt their communication behaviours, specifically for working towards the achievement of a common purpose (purpose-related encounters).

2.7.2.2 Intercultural adaptation theory

From a communication perspective, the IAT suggests that, during intercultural interaction, participants who recognise themselves as being outside their environment will become stressed, experience confusion, and as a result, practice ineffective communication. Through a long-term adaptation process, stress-adaptation and growth dynamic subside, as individuals achieve functional efficacy in interacting with the host environment. IAT holds that, in terms of communication, intercultural adaptation is a complex and long-term process, in which individuals go through a journey characterised by stress, before they become capable of communicating and functioning effectively in a culture other than the one they were originally socialised to. Some individuals struggle to cope with the feelings of inadequacy and frustration in the changed environment and this affects the way they communicate and function. When people enter an environment in which they no longer communicate and function effectively, they attempt to change through stress adaptation and growth. In this context, stress, then, serves as the necessary drive for people who find themselves in a new cultural environment, to adapt their original cultural habits. In the context of communication, IAT is, therefore, used to explain why stress serves as the

necessary driver for individuals from different cultural backgrounds to adapt their communicative behaviours. From this perspective, stress serves as intercultural communication enabler or co-requisite, given that it motivates individuals who are strangers in a new cultural environment to improve their ability to effectively communicate across cultures (Wiseman, 1995:122; Haslberger; 2005:86; Kim, 2006:5).

Furthermore, IAT, in the context of communication, refers to the adaptation of communicative behaviour, particularly in situations where the participants have a mutual intention. Ellingsworth (1983) suggests a theory that is designed to explain how communicators adapt to each other in purposeful encounters. In this frame of reference, IAT is designed to explain how individuals from different cultural backgrounds adapt their communication behaviours for achieving a particular purpose. From this perspective, the need to cooperate in order to communicate for a specific purpose serves as a motivation for individuals to adapt. Based on the propositions generated from Ellingsworth's laws, it is argued that functionally adapting communication facilitates task completion. One of Ellingsworth's (1983) laws is that IAT, when it relates to communication, affects the invocation of culture-based belief differences, and the burden of adaptive behaviour is affected by the extent to which the setting favours one or the other participant; when communicators have to co-operate, there is an equity in adapting communication. When the situation favours one communicator, or one communicator has more power, the other communicator has the burden to adapt. The more adaptive the behaviour communicators engage in, the more cultural beliefs will change; that is, the less powerful will conform to the beliefs of the more powerful. As a result, the less powerful will try to adapt by learning new elements of the organisational culture that will allow them to communicate as people from the dominant culture, while, simultaneously, unlearning the elements of their own culture, provided the justification is common. In the context of intercultural communication, it is maintained that the more individuals work to achieve a common purpose, and the situation favours all participants in the communication encounter, the more they are likely to improve intercultural communication competence (Gudykunst, 2005:15; Kim, 2006).

Of central importance and relevance is that employees at TUT communicate with each other for the purpose of working towards the achievement of a common vision and purpose guided by the slogan that TUT is *A people's university that makes knowledge work*. TUT's vision is, therefore,

a specific purpose that acts as the main guiding principle in relation to what the institution hopes to become. From the IAT point of reference, the TUT vision, therefore, serves as the specific purpose or main motive why all within the university, despite different cultural backgrounds, should adapt to one another in intercultural communication encounters. In the context of this study, and consistent with the main insight acquired from this section, all people at TUT, despite cultural differences, must adapt their behaviours such that they improve their intercultural communication competence and function effectively towards the achievement of that common vision and purpose.

The deduction from the discussion in this section is that, from the IAT standpoint, it is maintained that the degree of intercultural communication adaptation and effectiveness is achieved based on (1) the extent to which stress serves as the driver for employees to adapt their communicative behaviours and (2) a need for employees to adapt their communication behaviours with the aim of working towards the achievement of a particular common purpose. From the IAT standpoint, reduction of stress and unification of employees towards a common purpose should be utilised as intercultural communication enhancement contributing factors or intercultural communication competence enablers.

2.7.2.3 Co-cultural theory

The focus of the CCT is to explain how individuals in a co-cultural group communicate when they talk to people of the dominant group; it assists in the identification and explication of the communication practices of co-cultural groups. According to Orbe (1998), CCT is based on work of feminist scholars such as Kramarae (1981) (muted group theory) and Smith (1987) (standpoint theory). The standpoint theory focuses on standpoints defined by, for instance, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender, and is one of the conceptual frameworks from which the CCT draws theoretical foundational perspectives. The standpoint theory acknowledges that a specific societal positioning serves as a subjective vantage point from which persons interact with themselves and the society. The muted group theory suggests that, in every society, a social hierarchy exists that privileges some groups over others, and that those groups that function at the top of the hierarchy determine the communication system of the entire society (Orbe, 1998; Hawkesworth, 1999; Wood, 2005).

In the context of CCT, co-cultural group members are individuals who are members of traditionally marginalised groups, and the theory is specifically helpful for understanding the manner in which co-cultural group members are impacted, and the strategies they use, during everyday communication with members of the dominant group. CCT offers a practical framework for identifying and examining non-dominant-group members' communicative experiences, as it describes the communication process of those individuals traditionally marginalised within dominant social structures. In the context of organisations, the theory, therefore, holds that the degree of intercultural communication effectiveness that is achieved is based on the value and importance of how employees who are marginalised communicate with those who have direct access to power (Orbe, 1998).

Fundamentally, CCT provides a structure through which co-cultural group members negotiate attempts by others to render their voices muted within dominant societal structures. In the context of internal communication, CCT insinuates that, if their experiences are not valued, non-dominant-group members' positions become less visible; their voices, thus, become muted. This implies that co-cultural group members' voices may be muted when their views are dismissed, when they are invisible or when dominant societal structures and power inhibits their ability to vocalise their experiences. In short, the CCT reflects an intercultural communication adaptation process where non-dominant-group members describe the ways in which they communicate within dominant social structures. When co-cultural members find themselves in situations where they need to communicate with members of the dominant group, they choose different approaches, for example, trying to eliminate the stereotypes, trying to go along as members of a dominant group, working to build connections with the dominant group, or even avoiding the dominant group. The approach co-cultural members choose, therefore, determines the effectiveness of intercultural communication within an organisation (Orbe, 1998; Visagie, Linde & Havenga, 2011:117; Orbe & Roberts, 2012; Orbe, 2017).

A more detailed list of approaches co-cultural group members may choose when they find themselves in situations where they need to communicate with members of the dominant group is provided by Orbe (1998:15) and Gudykunst (2005:16), who suggest the following courses of action for co-cultural members:

- Non-assertive separation, which involves practicing avoidance and maintaining interpersonal barriers,
- Non-assertive accommodation, which involves practices of increasing visibility and dispelling stereotypes,
- Non-assertive assimilation, which involves practices of emphasising commonalities, developing a positive face, censoring self and averting controversy,
- Assertive separation, which involves practices of communicating self, intergroup networking, exemplifying strengths, and embracing stereotypes,
- Assertive accommodation, which involves practices of communicating self, intergroup networking, utilising liaisons, and educating others,
- Assertive assimilation, which involves practices of extensive preparation, overcompensating, manipulating stereotypes, and bargaining,
- Aggressive separation, which involves practices of attacking and sabotaging others,
- Aggressive accommodation, which involves practices of confronting and gaining advantage, and
- Aggressive assimilation, which involves practices of dissociating, mirroring, strategic distancing and ridiculing self.

The central argument from the course of action and communication approaches advanced above is that non-assertive, aggressive separation and aggressive assimilation behaviours are usually emotionally dishonest, indirect, inhibited, and self-denying. While being assertively and aggressively accommodative are ways of showing a confident and forceful personality, it should be noted that some individuals will find it hard to be assertive and aggressively accommodative in a culturally diverse environment, because they might feel inferior, maybe because their culture is not the dominant one (see Orbe, 1998:15; Gudykunst, 2005:16).

Notwithstanding the course of action and communication approaches referenced to above, the elements listed in the table below are, according to Orbe (2004) and Gudykunst (2005), the primary factors that influence co-cultural group members' communication pathways.

Table 2.2: Factors that influence co-cultural group members' communication

Factors that influence co-cultural group members' communication	Examples
1. Field of experience	Individuals' abilities to perform different practices.
2. The situational context	Where are they communicating with dominant group members?
3. Perceived costs and rewards	The pros and cons of certain practices.
4. The communication approach	Being aggressive, assertive or non-assertive.
5. Isolation practices	Ways members of marginalised groups negotiate their muted group status.

Sources: Orbe (2004) and Gudykunst (2005).

Table 2.2 reflects that co-cultural communication is directly influenced by the field of experience, situational context, perceived costs and rewards and isolation practices. In the context of this study, which is aimed at enhancing intercultural communication within a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT, the above attestation suggests that organisations are locations of domination, with power and control being central (Orbe 2004). It is important that TUT, as a culturally diverse organisation, understands and acknowledges co-cultural groups and dominant-group communication dynamics, and finds ways and means to respond to manage them effectively. One way of responding to co-cultural groups and dominant-group dynamics is to purposefully institute measures aimed at, for instance, contributing to promoting inclusion of all employees in spite of their cultural differences (Orbe, 2004; Gudykunst, 2005; Dyers & Wankah, 2010). It was argued in Section 2.2 that solidified inclusivity unifies employees and reinforces improvement of intercultural communication competence.

The dominant assertion from the discussion in this section is that CCT focuses on how culture and power affect communication from co-cultural group and dominant-group standpoints. It was asserted in Section 2.4 that culture and communication have a great influence on each other and that culture plays an important role in shaping the style of communication. In the context of CCT,

the relationship between dominant culture and co-cultural communication styles and interdependency thereof is more likely to shape the style of communication. This insight prompts an assertion that, for an organisation, like TUT, to enhance intercultural communication, the institution should purposefully institute measures aimed at guiding co-cultural groups towards choosing approaches that are more likely to improve their intercultural communication competence. This should be done with due consideration of the relationship and interdependence between cultures of the dominant group and co-cultural groups. With the understanding that, more often than not, dominant groups use their power to inhibit the ability of co-cultural group members to vocalise their experiences, a culturally diverse organisation's communicative framework should be structured such that non-dominant-group members are not marginalised. For non-dominant groups to adapt in intercultural interactions, it is important that they learn how to deal with assertive behaviour of the dominant group, and to respond positively to such assertive behaviours. An important aspect is the pursuit of enhanced intercultural communication, for which TUT needs an approach to communication that considers the perspective of protecting non-dominant groups from being marginalised by dominant groups. From a standpoint theory perspective, this can be achieved through inclusion of non-dominant-group members' cultural experiences in shaping the manner in which intercultural communication is enhanced such that intercultural communication is improved (as discussed in a paragraph above). The standpoint theory contributes to CCT by recognising a mixture of standpoints among and within different co-cultural and dominant groups, including incorporation of co-cultural group experiences (see Orbe, 1998:4-5). From an internal communication perspective, the theory embraces the notion of understanding the experiences of both co-cultural and dominant-group members as the imperatives necessary to shape the intercultural communication style of an organisation. From this point of reference, in their pursuit of enhanced intercultural communication, culturally diverse organisations need to shape internal communication styles, and not only from the perspective of the dominant group's experiences. This approach is more likely to contribute to internal relationships characterised by employee commitment – an imperative that was distinguished as one of goals and desired outcomes of internal communication (as discussed in Section 2.2).

To sum up, the discussion in Section 2.7.1 broadly covered the analysis and contextualisation of intercultural communication adaptation theories, namely, CAT, which is regarded as a communication accommodation theory and explains how socio-historic context influences intercultural communication; IAT, which explains how communicators from diverse cultural backgrounds adapt to each other in purpose-related communication encounters; and CCT, which emphasises intercultural communication interactions among underrepresented and dominant-group members of organisations. Overall, the analysis of intercultural communication adaptation theories assisted the researcher to gain a better understanding of how individuals respond to their experiences in other cultures during intercultural communication encounters; an understanding essential for organisations to have a grasp of how intercultural communication could be enhanced.

The following are fundamental cultural adaptation elements derived from the analysis of theories of intercultural communication adaptation discussed in Sections 2.7.1.1 to 2.7.1.3:

- **Principle 11:** Socio-historical context and immediate situations influence intercultural communication.
- **Principle 12:** Individuals use communication strategies, specifically convergence and divergence, as a manifestation of their inclination towards or away from each other and their respective social groups.
- **Principle 13:** Intercultural communication adaptation is a long-term process, where a common purpose serves as the necessary drive for individuals to adapt their communication behaviours.
- **Principle 14:** Inculcating a mixture of standpoints among and between co-cultural and dominant groups promotes an inclusive intercultural communication approach that protects non-dominant groups from being marginalised.

The discussion in this section discloses the theoretical insight that adaptation is the process through which individuals change over time, in order to continue to exist and interact in a new environment. It is asserted that, notwithstanding the culturally diverse nature of an organisation, adaptation reduces cultural distance and increases intercultural communication quality, trust and performance of employees. Intercultural communication adaptation theories serve as intercultural adaptation determinants, in that they influence a particular style of intercultural communication. The central argument is that organisations should pursue a strategic and continuous approach in their

endeavours to consciously enhance intercultural communication. It is argued that intercultural adaptation exposes individuals to patterns of convergence (that is, when different people's ideas in organisations coincide, they stop being different and become similar to each other) and divergence (that is, when different people's ideas move or extend in different directions from a common point) (as discussed in Section 2.7.3.1). A convergence accommodative strategy is suggested as the guiding principle TUT should adopt in its concerted efforts towards making sure that culturally diverse employees' ideas coincide for the purpose of ensuring that they adapt, become competent intercultural communicators, and assist their organisations achieve success.

Having analysed and contextualised the foundational principles of the theories focusing on adaptation in the context of intercultural communication, the discussion moves to cover an explication of the models of cultural adaptation, namely, UCM, AUMM and TM. The intent of the analysis of the foundational principles of intercultural communication theories and models of cultural adaptation was to concurrently acquire complementary insight, and to obtain a more comprehensive theoretical perspective on how individuals adapt during intercultural interactions. The analysis in the section below will include a demonstration of the relatedness of the identified models and the theories of adaptation outlined in the preceding section. The communication adaptation principles that will be distinguished in the discussion below will, just like the adaptation fundamentals identified in the preceding section, theoretically inform determination of the assumptions motivating the framework the study seeks to propose.

2.7.3 Models of cultural adaptation

This section will discuss models of cultural adaptation, namely, the AUMM, which explains that, in order for successful intercultural communication to take place, anxiety and uncertainty must be reduced, the UCM, which depicts that the cultural adaptation process goes through different adaptation stages, and the TM, which proposes that transitional shock is the initial reaction to an experience individuals have when they move into a new cultural environment. More specifically, models of cultural adaptation are concerned with demonstrating how individuals achieve or fail to achieve adaptation during intercultural interactions, including how individuals' previous intercultural experiences help or hinder adaptive efforts with individuals from a different cultural background (Gudykunst, 2005:125; Beerkens, Le Pichon-Vorstman, Supheert & Thije, 2020).

Models of cultural adaptation assume that initial communication improvement initiatives should aim at minimising hindrances to effective intercultural communication.

By way of summary, Figure 2.5 represents the three models of cultural adaptation that will be expounded and contextualised in this section.

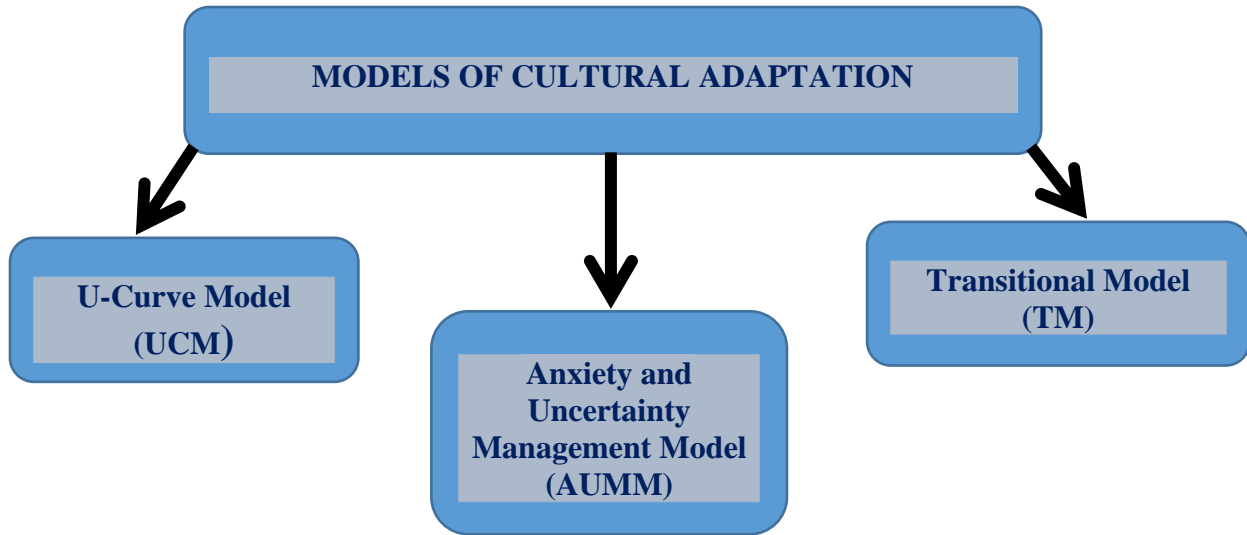


Figure 2.5: Models of cultural adaptation

Sections 2.7.3.1 to 2.7.3.3 will elucidate each of the three models of cultural adaptation summarised in Figure 2.5.

2.7.3.1 Anxiety and uncertainty management model

According to Gudykunst (2005:125), the AUMM is based on the supposition that at least one of the individuals in an intercultural encounter is a stranger. Strangers experience both anxiety and uncertainty, as they feel insecure and are not sure how to behave when they interact with individuals from cultures different to theirs. Neuliep (2015) argues that interacting with a stranger from a different culture typically involves more uncertainty and anxiety than interacting with a stranger from a culture similar to your own. The central assumption is that the primary concern of strangers upon initial interaction is reducing uncertainty. In view of the understanding that uncertainty has a positive effect on anxiety, it is presumed that reducing uncertainty will assist in

making individuals less anxious. The AUMM, therefore, holds that anxiety and uncertainty are two behavioural manifestations during intercultural adaptation and that managing the two behavioural aspects is necessary and sufficient for effective intercultural adaptation (Hammer, Wiseman, Rasmussen & Bruschke, 1998:312; Stephan, Stephan & Gudykunst, 1999).

The AUMM highlights, furthermore, that, when individuals find themselves in new cultural environments, their primary goal is to reduce uncertainty and increase the predictability of their own and the other person's behaviour. In this instance, what constitutes uncertainty, therefore, depends on what individuals want to be able to predict and what they might be able to do about it (Neuliep, 2015). According to Martin and Nakayama (2004:278–279), there are two kinds of uncertainty, namely, *predictive uncertainty* and *explanatory uncertainty*. Predictive uncertainty is the ability to predict what someone will say or do, as it is important to be relatively sure how people respond to us. Explanatory uncertainty is the inability to explain why people behave as they do. For Martin and Nakayama (2004:279), *predictive uncertainty* and *explanatory uncertainty* may vary, according to the cultural context of an organisation. Neuliep (2015) asserts that, regardless of its form, uncertainty makes individuals anxious (as pointed out in a paragraph above). When one is anxious because of not knowing how to react to experiences in a new cultural environment, it is only natural to focus on that feeling and not be present in the intercultural adaptation process. Gudykunst (2005) mentions that, during initial intercultural encounters, what one knows about an individual from a different cultural background triggers how one feels about the other person; uncertainty triggers anxiety and, hence, there is a link between the two behavioural aspects.

Regarding intercultural communication, the AUMM relates well with the cognitive and affective perspectives from which the employees' transformation process to competent intercultural communicators occurs, as argued by Kim (2006) in Section 2.6. It was maintained in Section 2.6 that, for employees in culturally diverse organisations to improve intercultural communication competence, they require, amongst others, cognitive information about different cultures and the ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences. The AUMM's assumptions are, therefore, also applicable to the way individuals respond to their intercultural communication experiences, including how cultural adaptation is managed, such that the employees' transformation to competent intercultural communicators is a smooth process (Stephan *et al.*, 1999; Gudykunst, 2005; Samochowiec & Florack, 2010).

The above elucidation establishes that, concerning intercultural communication, the AUMM places specific emphasis on early management of anxiety and uncertainty experienced by employees, in order for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence could be improved. In essence, the model advances that effective communication is less likely when employees who are new to an organisation engage in communication encounters, unless the integration process starts early – as soon as they enter the new organisation. It stands to reason that, for effective communication to be achieved, anxiety and uncertainty should be reduced in the initial stages of intercultural interaction.

Consistent with the assumptions advanced in the preceding paragraphs, suggestions to minimise anxiety and uncertainty in the starting stages of intercultural interaction encounters are based on the idea that the anxiety and uncertainty individuals experience in new cultural environments are more prevalent during the early stages of adapting, and slowly disappear as individuals adapt and become competent intercultural communicators. Given that anxiety and uncertainty are probably more prevalent when individuals are new in an organisation, it is needless to say that, for TUT to enhance intercultural communication successfully, the university should institute a programme or course of action that is aimed at guiding employees' intercultural communication adaptation journeys, in such a fashion that their anxiety and uncertainties are managed and reduced as early as possible – when new they are inducted or introduced to the new workplace.

2.7.3.2 U-curve model

The UCM is an adaptation model that also depicts the transition from one culture to another. The model makes provision for people to comprehend the adaptation challenges that are experienced in a new culture, and provides a guideline for adapting and coping with cultures that differ from what people were socialised in. The UCM comprises various phases that are referred to by different names by different sources. The main features of the stages that are suggested by the various sources capture and explain the journey individuals go through in their efforts to adapt to new cultural experiences (Martin & Nakayama, 2013:337).

Concerning its development, Church (1982) quotes Lysgaard (1955), who describes the four stages individuals go through in their efforts to adapt and become competent intercultural communicators.

Lysgaard hypothesises that the process of transformation to a competent intercultural communicator over time follows a U-shaped curve. According to Church (1982), the original model included the honeymoon stage (which is characterised by excitement and curiosity), the culture shock stage (which is characterised by a sensation of confusion), the recovery stage (which is characterised by a sense of recovering from the confusion experienced during the culture shock stage), and the adjustment stage (which is the phase during which individuals adjust to the new cultural environment). The UCM emphasises that the culture shock individuals experience in the initial stages of the adaptation process is a short-term feeling of disorientation and discomfort due to the unfamiliarity of the surroundings and the lack of familiar cues. This feeling of disorientation and discomfort is a reaction to individuals attempting to adapt to an unfamiliar cultural environment. The UCM suggests that individuals ultimately recover from the culture shock and adjust to the new cultural experiences (Martin & Nakayama, 2013:338).

With regard to intercultural communication, of essence is that employees may not experience adaptation from one culture to another in the same way – each individual's experience is shaped by what they bring to it. Understanding and appreciating the different intercultural communication adaptation stages is fundamental if a culturally diverse organisation plans to intentionally guide employees through the adaptation process. Of primary importance is that organisations should not underestimate the necessity and importance of managing the culture shock that might affect the intercultural communication adaptation process. The extent of intercultural communication competence is, in one way, dependent on the degree to which employees are introduced to the new way of communication, and the way culture shock is managed during the initial stages of cultural interactions, immediately after being appointed.

With the above understanding, it becomes imperative that, in their intercultural communication enhancement efforts, culturally diverse organisations, like TUT, should introduce training and awareness programmes aimed at empowering employees with the understanding and knowledge needed to deal with culture shock and to navigate through the intercultural communication adaptation journey. In doing so, employees from different cultural backgrounds could move towards each other, including changing their communicative behaviour. This is essential, considering that, despite previous experiences, working in a new culture is completely different.

TUT should, therefore, manage the adaptation process in a structured manner, such that intercultural communication is facilitated and adaptation journey is managed effectively.

2.7.3.3 Transitional model

The TM also approaches the cultural adaptation process from the culture shock orientation. The model highlights stages of transition that people go through when they experience change, as is the case with the UCM. The TM suggests that culture shock is a normal part of human experience, and is considered to be a subcategory of transition shock. As explained in Section 2.7.3, transitional shock is the initial reaction to an experience people may have when they move to a cultural environment that is different from their own. Culture shock and adaptation are just like any other adult transition. Adult transitions, such as leaving home to attend college for the first time, getting married and moving from one part of the country to another, are experiences that share common characteristics and provoke the same kinds of experiences as joining a new organisation; it is an experience resulting from numerous stressors occurring due to contact with a different culture. Individuals get disoriented because they find themselves in cultural environment unfamiliar to them (Fabrizio & Neill, 2005; Barna, 2009; Winkelman, 2010). Martin and Nakayama (2004:284) maintain that all transition experiences involve change; for example, when people marry, they may lose some independence, but gain companionship and intimacy. In the same way, when employees join new organisations, they may lose working in a familiar work environment, but they may gain improved quality of life due to an increase in income and other benefits. However, such a change may lead to culture shock, because of being in a new cultural environment, and this, undoubtedly, requires some form of adaptation. Consistent with findings in the preceding section, this also highlights a need for intercultural communication enhancement efforts to start in the initial stages of cultural interactions.

With the TM, cultural adaptation depends, in part, on the individual, as each person has a preferred way of dealing with new and unfamiliar situations. Adaptation in the context of adjusting to the manner in which communication occurs when employees join new organisations is no different. Psychologists found that most individuals prefer either a flight, fight or flex approach to unfamiliar situations. Each of these approaches may be more or less productive, depending on the context. In the context of organisations, employees who prefer a flight approach when faced with new

situations tend to hang back, get the lay of the land and see how things work, before taking the plunge and joining in. Employees who take this approach may hesitate to speak a language different from theirs until they feel they can get it right. Taking time out from the stresses of intercultural interaction (by speaking, reading in one's native language, and socialising with friends of similar backgrounds) may be appropriate in the early stages of moving to an unfamiliar environment. Small periods of flight give individuals breaks from the challenges of cultural adaptation. However, being stuck in the flight mode can cause communication breakdown, due to the individuals concerned not becoming competent intercultural communicators (Martin & Nakayama, 2004:284).

On the other hand, individuals who focus on the fight approach simply jump in and participate in interactions. Individuals who take this approach use the trial-and-error method; they try to speak the new language, do not care if they make mistakes, jump on a bus even when they are not sure whether it is the right one and often make cultural gaffes. Being stuck in the fight mode can be unproductive, as individuals who take this approach to the extreme tend to react to their surroundings with little flexibility, and are likely to criticise the way things are done in the new culture. Individuals focusing on the fight approach to adaptation have this preference because of family, social and cultural influences. For example, some parents encourage their children to be assertive, and others encourage their children to wait and watch in new situations (Martin & Nakayama, 2004:284).

Martin and Nakayama (2004:285) indicate that of preferences for dealing with new situations is neither inherently right nor wrong; hence, the flex approach, which is referred to as an alternative approach to adapting. In the flex approach, individuals use a combination of productive fight or flight behaviours. The idea is to go with the flow while keeping in mind contextual elements. In the context of organisations, it is imperative to acknowledge and understand how differently employees experience cultural transition, including different preferred ways of dealing with new and unfamiliar situations. Acknowledgement and understanding of different approaches to adaptation is essential if organisations wish to develop and implement all-inclusive intercultural communication adaptation initiatives than follow an adaptation approach that may not be relevant to or preferred by any of the employees who require guidance in transitioning. Following an

approach preferred by many within an organisation is assumed to be more likely to contribute to enhancement of intercultural communication.

Similar to the other two models of cultural adaptation discussed in the two preceding sections, the TM's theoretical adaptation perspectives complement the adaptation theoretical knowledge derived from an analysis of adaptation imperatives acquired through the analysis of theories of intercultural communication (Section 2.7.2). The all-inclusive inference is that the three models underscore how employees at culturally diverse organisations struggle to achieve understanding, specifically during initial intercultural interactions. In view of this recognition and in the context of this study, the overarching supposition underpinning enhancement of intercultural communication, derived from the point of reference of the models of cultural adaptation, is that an organisation, like TUT, should intensify its intercultural communication adaptation efforts at an early state of cross-cultural interactions. This study, therefore, puts forward early communication adaptation efforts as an initiative TUT and similar organisations should institute in their endeavours to strategically and continuously enhance intercultural communication.

The following are fundamental cultural adaptation elements derived from the analysis of models of cultural adaptation discussed in Sections 2.7.3.1 to 2.7.3.3, which are articulated in the context of intercultural communication adaptation:

- **Principle 15:** For effective communication to be achieved, anxiety and uncertainty should be reduced.
- **Principle 16:** Culture shock is an initial reaction to an experience people have when they move to a cultural environment that is different from their own.
- **Principle 17:** To consciously enhance intercultural communication, a culturally diverse organisation should help employees to steer through intercultural adaptation stages.

It is evident from the above principles that models of cultural adaptation focus on the process of demonstrating how individuals could achieve understanding during intercultural interactions. Through analysis of models of cultural adaptation, the key intercultural communication adaptation principles an organisation, like TUT, should prioritise in their efforts to enhance intercultural communication during early stages of interaction across cultures are as follows: (1) Early reduction of anxiety and uncertainty employees may have, (2) Systematic management of challenges

individuals go through in the process of navigating the different stages of cultural adaptation, and (3) Empowering employees with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to deal with culture shock, which is the manifestation of the initial reaction to cultural experiences employees may have.

The discussion in Section 2.7.4 will analyse and contextualise different intercultural adaptation stages individuals go through in their journey to transform into competent intercultural communicators.

2.7.4 Stages of intercultural adaptation

This section is an extension of the stages of intercultural adaptation discussed in Section 2.7.3.2. The discussion was envisaged to aid the researcher to gain a more comprehensive comprehension of the stages through which employees go before they adapt and become competent intercultural communicators. It was maintained in Section 2.7.3.2, that intercultural communication is a journey, and that there are stages that individuals go through to adapt to cultures different to their own. It was indicated that Lysgaard (1955) argues that intercultural adaptation is a process to transformation that involves four linear stages: the honeymoon stage, the culture shock stage, the recovery stage, and the adjustment stage.

Over the years, different sources have suggested different intercultural adaptation stages that, in many ways, complement the stages originally proposed by Lysgaard. As an illustration, stages of intercultural adaptation advanced by Bennett (1998), Martin and Nakayama (2004) and Guirdham (2005) will be provided below. The presentation will be followed by a comparison of intercultural adaptation stages suggested by the three sources with the original stages proposed by Lysgaard.

Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity describes perspectives and behaviours in the face of cultural difference and outlines a continuum of increasing cultural awareness, understanding and adjustment. The model chart of personal growth includes ethnocentric stages, namely, denial, defence and minimisation; and ethnorelative stages, namely, acceptance, adaptation and integration (Bennet, 1998).

The ethnocentric and ethnorelative stages are outlined below.

- **Ethnocentric stages** – Ethnocentrism assumes that the worldview of one’s own culture is central to reality and the person uses their own set of standards and customs to judge all people, often unconsciously.
 - **Denial of cultural differences** – People in this ethnocentric stage isolate themselves and are not interested in experiencing cultural differences, and avoid cultural differences to protect their own worldview. They live in isolation from other cultures, either by happenstance or by choice. Either they do not perceive cultural differences at all, or they can conceive only of broad categories, such as foreigner, people of culture, or Africans. People at this stage may use stereotypes in their description of others that are not meant to denigrate, but which are based on knowing only one or two things about the other people.
 - **Defence against cultural difference** – People at the defence stage have a better ability to interpret cultural difference, but they attach negative evaluations to it. They combat the threat of change to their stable worldview by denigrating others with negative stereotypes and by attaching positive stereotypes to themselves. Consequently, they view their own culture as the acme of development and tend to evaluate other cultures as underdeveloped. People in defence consider themselves under siege and, thus, tend to defend their own culture without accommodating cultures different to their own.
 - **Minimisation of cultural differences** – People at the minimisation stage try to bury cultural differences within already-familiar categories of physical and philosophical similarity. They recognise and accept superficial cultural differences, such as eating customs and other social norms, but they assume that, deep down, all people are essentially the same. Because of this assumption, certain cultural values may be mistaken for universal desires.
- **Ethnorelative stages** – Ethnorelativism supposes that cultures can only be understood relative to one another and that a particular behaviour can only be understood within a cultural context.
 - **Acceptance** – People in the acceptance stage enjoy recognising and exploring cultural differences. They are aware that they themselves are cultural beings. They are tolerant of ambiguity and are comfortable knowing there is no one right answer

(although there are better answers for particular contexts). Acceptance does not mean that a person must agree with or take on a cultural perspective other than his or her own, rather, people accept the variability of different cultural ways of thinking and behaving.

- **Adaptation** – People at this stage use knowledge about their own and others' cultures to intentionally shift into a different cultural frame of reference. People in this stage can modify their behaviour in ways that make it more appropriate for cultures other than their own. Another way to think about this is that people in adaptation have increased their repertoire of behaviour – they have maintained the skills of operating in their own cultures, while adding the ability to operate effectively in one or more other cultures.
- **Integration** – People at the integration stage of development are attempting to reconcile the sometimes-conflicting cultural frames that they have internalised. In the transition to this stage, some people become overwhelmed by the cultures they know and are disturbed that they can no longer identify with any one of them. However, as they move into integration, people achieve an identity that allows them to see themselves as interculturalists or multiculturalists in addition to their national and ethnic backgrounds. They recognise that worldviews are collective constructs and that identity is itself a construction of consciousness. Furthermore, people at this stage are able to manipulate multiple cultural frames of reference in their evaluation of a situation. Their identity is not primarily based on any one culture and they are constant creators of their own reality.

For Guirdham (2005:274), the cultural adaptation process includes the following stages:

- **Fascination** – In the early days, buffers/shock prevent real contact with the other culture and language.
- **Hostility and aggression** – As the buffers reduce, contact occurs and often leads to anger towards everything and, sometimes, everyone in the host (organisation). This is a critical point, where the shock can develop into rejecting the host culture and language, or accepting it and adjusting to new surroundings.

- **Acceptance** – People accept the host culture as much as they can. This is never total, but is sufficient to make life comfortable.
- **Adaptation** – In spite of difficulties, a person does his or her best to adjust to the new culture and language and refuses to give in to culture shock.

Martin and Nakayama (2004:280) contend that adapting to a new culture is the anticipation or excitement process. They emphasise that, when individuals enter a new cultural context, they go through the following stages:

- **Excitement and anticipation** – During this phase, individuals are excited to be in the new situation and only a little apprehensive; they first experience excitement and anticipation.
- **Cultural shock** – Excitement and anticipation is followed by a period of shock and discrimination. The culture shock stage happens to almost everyone in intercultural transitions.
- **Adaptation** - During this, stage individuals learn the rules and customs of the new cultural context. For example, after a period of time, new individuals start adapting, they make new friends, and start to figure out how much of themselves can change in response to the new cultural context.

Although the adaptation frameworks referenced to above are simplistic and do not represent every employee's experience, most employees experience these general phases of cultural adaptation at one time or another.

The adaptation process stages as elaborated by Bennett (1998), Guirdham (2005) and Martin and Nakayama (2004) are summarised in Figure 2.6.

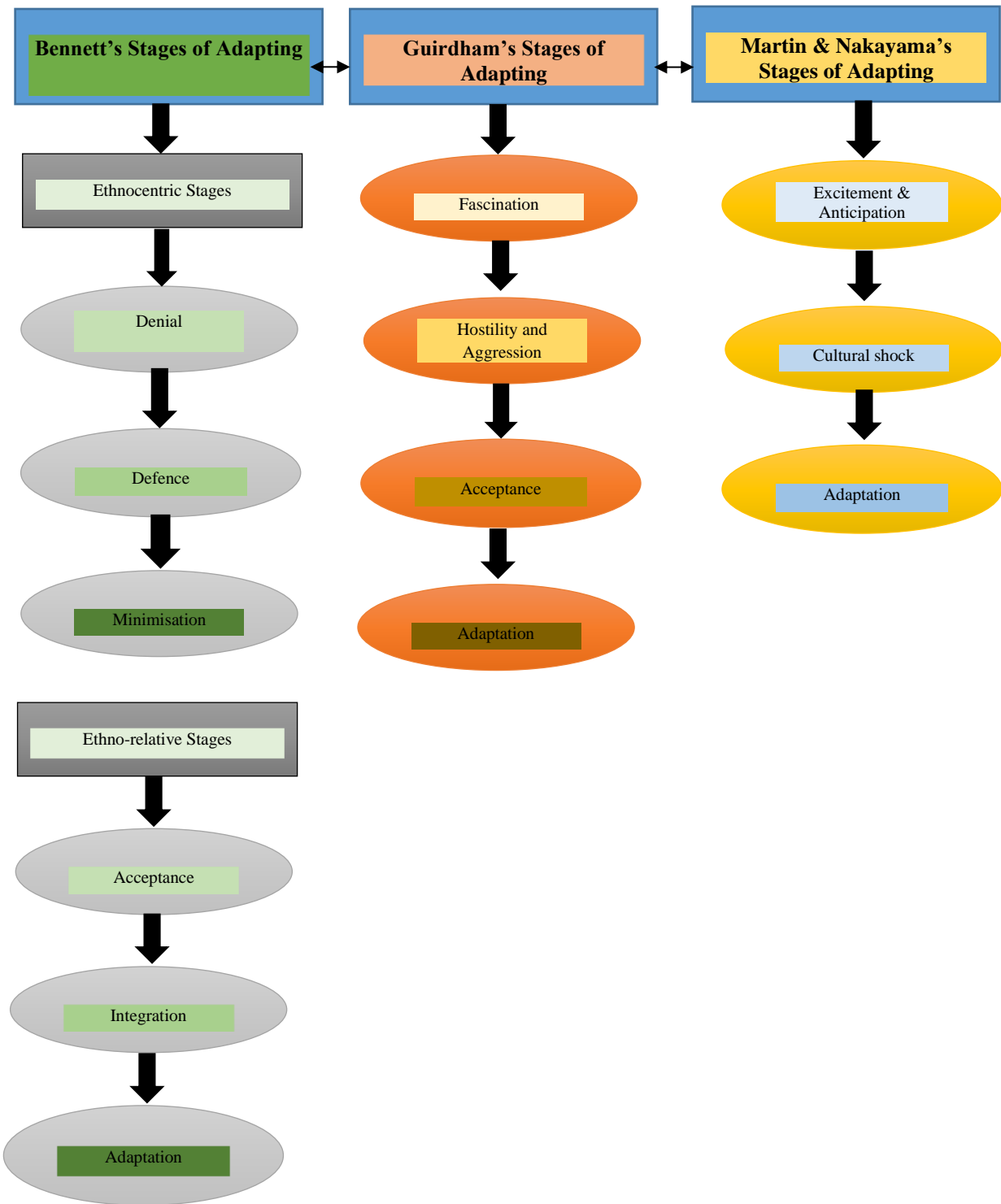


Figure 2.6: Comparison of Bennett's (1998), Guirdham's (2005) and Martin and Nakayama's (2004) stages of adapting

In comparing the ethnocentric and ethnorelative stages proposed by Bennett (1998), namely, denial, defence, minimisation, acceptance, integration and adaptation (six stages), Guirdham (2005), namely, fascination, hostility and aggression, acceptance and adaptation (four stages), and Martin and Nakayama (2004), namely, excitement and anticipation, cultural shock and adaptation (three stages), it becomes clear that there are notable overlaps, even though the description of the way in which people respond to their experiences in the new cultural environments varies slightly. The discussion below will explain the distinctness and obvious corresponding nature of the adaptation stages depicted in Figure 2.6. Thereafter, the discussion will proceed to clarify the relevance of the description of the adaptation stages in relation to the current study.

Bennett begins with *denial* as the first stage, during which people isolate and intentionally separate themselves from cultural differences to protect their own worldview. In turn, Martin and Nakayama (2004) and Guirdham (2005) start with *fascination* and *excitement*, and *anticipation* stages respectively, the adaptation experiences of which are similar. These are stages involving someone starting off being excited and fascinated, that is, being extremely interested in being in a new cultural environment and meeting new people. These stages relate well with the honeymoon stage submitted by Lysgaard (1955) – a stage characterised by excitement and curiosity. Bennett's second stage is *defence*, during which people consider themselves under siege and defend their own culture without accommodating other cultures. Guirdham's (2005) and Martin and Nakayama's (2004) second stages, *hostility* and *aggression*, and *cultural shock* respectively are considered similar to Lysgaard's *culture shock* stage, and slightly similar to Bennett's (1998) *denial* stage. In these stages, individuals become hostile and aggressive due to the cultural shock they experience when they find themselves in a new cultural environment. Consequently, they become unfriendly and vigorous, they are characterised by forceful strength and effort, and exhibit unapproachable behaviour, which leads to them being in denial and not interested in experiencing cultural differences. It was also asserted in Section 2.7.3.2 that Lysgaard's (1955) second stage is characterised by culture shock and a sensation of confusion. Bennett's third stage is *minimising*, a stage that is likened to Lysgaard's (1955) *recovery stage*, which is characterised by a sense of recovering from the confusion experienced during the culture shock stage. Similarly, during Bennett's (1998) *minimising* stage, everything that could create misunderstanding and misconception between individuals is minimised. During stages four, five and six, namely,

acceptance, integration and adaptation, individuals eventually accept the new cultural environment, integrate with the environment and begin to adapt, to become part of the completely new environment. For Guirdham (2005), stage three (*acceptance*) occurs after individuals were hostile and aggressive in stage two, only then do they start to accept that they are in a new environment. During the last stage (*adaptation*), individuals become better suited to their environment and then, just like in Bennett's (1998) stages five and six, and Martin and Nakayama's (2004) stage three, they adapt and integrate. The final stages proposed by Bennett (1998), Martin and Nakayama (2004) and Guirdham (2005) are equated to Lysgaard's adjustment stage, which is the phase during which individuals adjust to the new cultural environment (Section 2.7.3.2).

Acknowledging and understanding the stages individuals go through in their attempt to adapt and become competent intercultural communicators, is necessary for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, which should base its endeavours on assisting employees to navigate through the different stages from an informed departure point. Though the stages put forward by Lysgaard (1955), Bennett (1998), Martin and Nakayama (2004) and Guirdham (2005) vary in names, the essence of what happens through the intercultural adaptation journey is similar, and this provides clear guidance in terms of how the experience can be translated and applied in the context of intercultural communication enhancement efforts. The slight differences between some of the stages (see Figure 2.6) proposed by Bennett (1998), Martin and Nakayama (2004) and Guirdham (2005) and those proposed by Lysgaard (1955) suggest that individuals respond to experiences in new cultural environments differently – or that researchers observe the way individuals respond to cultural differences differently. Nonetheless, in organisational settings, managers need to understand and appreciate that intercultural communication adaptation happens and that employees need to be assisted to deal with the unknown in order for them to transit from one way of communicating to another with ease. From the stages proposed by Lysgaard (1955), Bennett (1998), Martin and Nakayama (2004) and Guirdham (2005), regarding this study, the following consolidated intercultural communication adaptation stages are suggested, as the stages that best capture the journey individuals go through in their pursuit of adaptation and becoming competent intercultural communicators: (1) fascination and excitement, (2) culture shock, (3) acceptance, and (4) adaptation.

From the intercultural adaptation stages advanced above, it can, in the context of organisations, be concluded that, in spite of initial defences and denials, employees have no choice but to adapt in order to communicate effectively. The categorisation of stages as depicted in Figure 2.6 is an indication of common agreement regarding different stages through which individuals navigate in order for them to adapt and become competent intercultural communicators. Considering that adaptation is a journey, understanding and appreciating intercultural communication adaptation stages is a step necessary for a culturally diverse organisation, so that it can institute a course of action to consciously enhance intercultural communication. TUT should, therefore, introduce and implement a formal intercultural communication enhancement process through which employees, amongst others, are, intentionally and properly, guided to adapt to a TUT style of communication.

2.8. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION: FINAL REFLECTIONS

As stated in Section 2.1, the analysis and contextualisation of theories of intercultural communication adaptation principles were aimed at responding specifically to Research Question 1.6.1. Therefore, principles identified in this chapter answer Research Question 1.6.1 and form the basis of the empirical phase of the study. As reflected in Section 1.3, an investigation into principles motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication serves as an initial attempt to address the research problem formulated in Section 1.4, and answers the general and specific research questions posed in Sections 1.5 and 1.6 respectively.

In closing the overall discussion regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles, the core realisation is that the elements of the theories of intercultural communication and models of cultural adaptation are complementary. The analysis of theories of intercultural communication adaptation and models of cultural adaptation, therefore, assisted the researcher to arrive at conclusions that were drawn from different, but complementary intercultural adaptation orientations. This approach assisted the researcher to gather a more complete and comprehensive theoretical insight into why there is a need for intercultural adaptation, and what cultural imperatives may hinder a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, from enhancing intercultural communication.

Theories of intercultural communication adaptation describe what this study refers to as intercultural communication adaptation determinants. It is argued that socio-historical context and immediate situations, purpose-related encounters, and a need for inclusivity collectively determine a need for a common way of communicating, including influencing a style of intercultural communication. Complementing the insight gained through analysis of theories of intercultural communication adaptation, models of intercultural adaptation elaborate how employees adapt or fail to adapt during intercultural encounters. Uncertainty and anxiety, culture shock and long and complex processes employees go through before they adapt and become competent intercultural communicators, were submitted as potential hindrances to adaptation and enhancement of intercultural communication, which may be negated if they are consciously, strategically and continuously managed.

The theoretical ideas about intercultural communication enlightened the articulation of the principles associated with constructs determined for the purpose of this study. The central insight acquired through the review of the literature is that intercultural communication adaptation is a prerequisite for organisations to enhance intercultural communication so that employees could become competent intercultural communicators. Moreover, intercultural communication competence is a requirement for effective functioning of an organisation. As maintained in Section 1.11, the main contribution of this study is to determine assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence of employees from various cultural backgrounds could be improved and, ultimately assist their organisations achieve success. Therefore, the principles identified in this chapter will guide the framing of the assumptions motivating the intercultural communication framework the study seeks to propose.

Table 2.3 lists principles that were recognised as core elements relevant to systematically guiding the framing of the specific research questions, including presentation of empirical findings.

Table 2.3: Summary of communication adaptation constructs and principles/enablers

Construct	Principles/Enablers
Goals and desired outcomes of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 1: Organisations need to ground internal communication practices in their strategic orientations. • Principle 2: Strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication is imperative for culturally diverse employees to improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist organisations to achieve success. • Principle 3: Alignment of internal communication strategies and an organisation’s strategies assists organisations to develop and implement internal communication practices that support their strategic orientations.
Workplace dimensions of diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 4: Cultural differences have an impact on the manner in which intercultural communication occurs. • Principle 5: Culturally diverse organisations need to pursue all-inclusive communication enhancement practices that have the potential to unite team members to achieve a common purpose.
Cultural elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 6: Cultural elements play an important role in shaping and informing intercultural communication.
Intercultural communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 7: Intercultural communication in an organisational setting manifests a reality that entails communication between people whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to alter the communication event.
Barriers to intercultural communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 8: Inadequacies in the intercultural communication process could damage relationships between organisation members, due to misunderstandings and misinterpretation of information. • Principle 9: Organisations need to be proactive in ensuring that factors that could hinder effective intercultural communication are identified and obviated timeously.

Construct	Principles/Enablers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 10: Effective intercultural communication involves employees talking across cultures about themes and values that help to achieve a common purpose.
Intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabler/co-requisite 1: The ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences. • Enabler/co-requisite 2: The ability to change behaviour and act in a way consistent with the cultural environment in which people find themselves. • Enabler/co-requisite 3: Possession of requisite cognitive information about different cultures, including one's own. • Enabler/co-requisite 4: The desire to improve the ability to effectively communicate across cultures.
Intercultural adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 11: Socio-historical context and immediate situations influence intercultural communication. • Principle 12: Individuals use communication strategies, specifically convergence and divergence, as a manifestation of their inclination towards or away from each other and their respective social groups. • Principle 13: Intercultural communication adaptation is a long-term process where a common purpose serves as the necessary drive for individuals to adapt their communication behaviours. • Principle 14: Inculcating a mixture of standpoints among and between co-cultural and dominant groups promotes an inclusive intercultural communication approach that protects non-dominant groups from being marginalised. • Principle 15: For effective communication to be achieved, anxiety and uncertainty should be reduced. • Principle 16: Culture shock is an initial reaction to an experience people have when they move to a cultural environment that is different from their own.
Stages of adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 17: To consciously enhance intercultural communication, a culturally diverse organisation should help employees to steer through intercultural adaptation stages.

Construct	Principles/Enablers
Intercultural communication competence	Operational definition: To serve as an operational definition in the context of this study, intercultural communication competence is defined as the ability to be open-minded about cultural differences and to change behaviour, to possess skills and have the desire to improve the ability to communicate effectively across cultures.

In view of the central viewpoints of communication adaptation analysed in this chapter, including constructs and principles identified and summarised in Table 2.3, a continuous enhancement approach is proposed as a preferred plan of action that TUT and other similar organisations should follow in their pursuit of enhancing intercultural communication. A continuous approach provides for continuous enhancement of intercultural communication, which should involve monitoring and evaluation, to determine the extent to which a communication style is contributing to the achievement of organisational success. Additionally, the convergence technique is suggested as the accommodative strategy that the university should adopt in its efforts to ensure that individuals move towards one another to enhance intercultural communication competence. A convergence accommodative strategy suggests that individuals converge towards each other to achieve meaningful intercultural communication.

Furthermore, it is suggested that strategy alignment should be the core of the proposed framework, which suggests that TUT's intercultural communication enhancement efforts must be strategically driven and the university's strategic orientation ought to serve as the specific purpose or main motive for why employees, despite different cultural backgrounds, need to adapt to one another in intercultural communication encounters. It is presumed that following a strategic approach to enhancing intercultural communication is important if employees are to adapt to each other in communication encounters as they strive to assist their organisations achieve success.

As mentioned in Section 2.1, the intercultural communication adaptation principles highlighted in this chapter and summarised in Table 2.3 will act as the central contributing theoretical underpinning or main guiding theoretical blueprint upon which the framework the study sought to propose will be based. The framework will, amongst others, be developed with the view to promoting an intercultural communication plan of action that seeks to advance inclusion of all TUT employees, and to protect underrepresented or marginalised people from dominant groups.

2.9. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter reviewed and contextualised theoretical communication adaptation prepositions and identified core principles that fit adaptation in the context of intercultural communication. The chapter ascertained that the form of internal communication that occurs in

culturally diverse organisations have conspicuous intercultural communication dynamic, thereby providing a link between internal communication and intercultural communication. With increased globalisation touching almost everything we do, it is essential for a culturally diverse organisation to establish and maintain effective intercultural communication. Recognition of the diverse nature of present-day organisations was highlighted, as the starting point for working towards enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence. It was maintained that, regardless of the unique nature of individuals, if managed effectively, differences can be a source of team cohesion and could possibly help nurture effective functioning of an organisation, which is a precondition for the achievement of organisational success.

It is asserted that each culture encourages a particular communication style, has the power to shape perception, and is regarded as the glue that bonds organisation members together. Cultural elements specific to the unique nature of organisations are appraised as the guiding aspects that can assist in shaping and enhancing intercultural communication. CAT, IAT, CT, AUTM, UCM and the TM were identified as the theories and models that could explain intercultural communication adaptation. The core realisation is that the elements of the theories of intercultural communication and models of cultural adaptation are complementary. Theories of intercultural communication adaptation were appraised as intercultural communication adaptation determinants; they influence a style of communication. Complementing the knowledge gained through analysis of theories of intercultural communication adaptation, models of cultural adaptation elaborate why employees adapt or fail to adapt during intercultural encounters.

Based on the insight gained through the analysis and contextualisation of literature, the recommendation is that a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, should strategically and continuously enhance intercultural communication and that the institution should adopt a convergence accommodative strategy in its pursuit of ensuring that intercultural communication is enhanced such that individuals could move towards one another. This is considered as the most important step towards conceptualising a framework aimed at guiding TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist their organisations to achieve success.

The study utilised the insight acquired through the review of theoretical intercultural communication adaptation principles as the foundation upon which the empirical study was based; the insight gained on the theoretical intercultural communication adaptation principles contributed to developing assumptions for motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication.

Having explored intercultural communication and the primary theoretical communication adaptation principles, the next chapter will provide an explanation of the research approaches and methods this study used, and will clarify why the approach and methods the researcher chose to follow to conduct the empirical exploration of the study, are appropriate.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH APPROACHES, DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Central to this study is the following research problem that was identified and formulated in Section 1.4, which this study sought to investigate:

Enhancement of intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence assists organisations to achieve success.

One possible way of addressing the above research problem is through a framework that is suitable for the unique nature of TUT (as discussed in Section 1.4). In Chapter 2, intercultural communication adaptation principles relevant to culturally diverse organisations and which can enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence is improved, were reviewed. The aim of the literature review was to identify intercultural communication adaptation principles that guided the empirical part of the study.

This chapter will proceed to a narration of the process that was followed to conduct the empirical research; more specifically, the research approaches, research design, and practicalities of conducting the empirical study (research methods), and ethical issues considered to ensure that the research was conducted in accordance with sound ethical practices.

Considering that this study followed a mixed methods research approach, the chapter begins with an explanation of how the approach was used to ensure a more comprehensive picture of the problem the study sought to investigate. This section of the study will include an elucidation of why mixed methods research approach was chosen as the most suitable research approach. This will be followed by the presentation of the research design, which will provide specific direction for procedures followed in the study. Thereafter, the specific research methods that were followed to conduct the empirical study will be explained. This will involve an explanation of (1) how the people who participated in the study were selected, (2) how qualitative information and quantitative data were collected, and (3) how analysis of qualitative information and quantitative data was done. Given that all approaches to research recognise the ethical dimension, the chapter will wrap up with an indication of how questions of ethical conduct were dealt with. This is

essential, considering researchers need to anticipate the ethical issues that may arise during their studies.

3.2. RESEARCH APPROACHES

There are three main approaches that are used to conduct research, namely, quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Crotty, 1998:216; Mouton, 2001:128; Maree, 2011), and a combination of the two, which is known as the mixed methods research approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:14). Quantitative and qualitative research approaches are distinct research paradigms with different foci. In emphasising the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research approaches, Bazeley (2009:2) reflects that the two research approaches have been distinguished according to the logic they employ, the type of investigation, method of analysis and the approach to explanation.

Although qualitative and quantitative research studies differ in how they collect and analyse information/data, they can be applied to study the same problem. Integration of quantitative and qualitative research is considered beneficial, in that it involves concurrent use of both research approaches; hence, the mixed methods research approach was chosen. In view of the disadvantages of using either a qualitative or quantitative research approach alone, and the advantages of combining elements of the two approaches, the current study used a mixed methods research approach.

The distinction that is used to differentiate types of research approaches will be provided in Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.3.

3.2.1 Qualitative approach

Qualitative research relates to use of case studies through interviews and other related information collection methods, such as fields notes, documents and images, and it produces descriptive information, which is generally the participants' own written or spoken words regarding their experiences or perceptions (Schwandt, 1997:130; Berg, 1998:3; Yauch & Steudel, 2003:466; Brynard & Hanekom, 2008:37; Somekh & Lewin, 2011:327). Leedy and Ormrod (2005:139) assert that qualitative research is an umbrella concept that encompasses an array of interpretive

techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate and come to terms with the meaning of naturally occurring phenomena in a social setting. Following a qualitative approach, researchers collect descriptive information with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being studied. Its main distinguishing characteristic is that it presents researchers with an opportunity to understand participants in terms of their own description of the world and that it is carried out in real life, instead of in experimental situations (Mouton, 2001:194; Maree, 2011:79; Rahman, 2017).

Regarding the advantages of using a qualitative research, it is contended that it involves the exploration and understanding of the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Qualitative research is, therefore, concerned with understanding the process and the social and cultural contexts that underlie various behavioural patterns and is mostly concerned with the why questions of a study. The approach typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment and focusing on their meanings and interpretations (Maree, 2011:51; Somekh & Lewin, 2011).

Rahman (2017) indicates that the disadvantage of using a qualitative research approach alone for a study is that it is almost impossible to duplicate the findings, because information collected is based on the perspectives of participants, and as a result, the information collected can be difficult to verify. Furthermore, in qualitative research, the bias of the researcher can affect information, and conclusions can be influenced by the bias.

3.2.2 Quantitative approach

Quantitative research is expressed in numbers that are used to test or confirm theories and assumptions, through data collected mainly through surveys (Berg, 1998:3; Yauch & Steudel, 2003:466). The three most important elements of quantitative research are objectivity, numerical data and generalisability (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1997:554; Berg, 1998:3; Yauch & Steudel, 2003; Maree, 2011:145). The main distinguishing characteristic of quantitative research is that it presents researchers with a means for testing objective theories, by examining the relationship among variables. Moreover, research instruments can typically measure these variables, so that numerical data can be analysed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2009:4; Bazeley, 2009).

The advantage of using a quantitative approach to research is that its reports are organised to show a clear progression from theory to operationalisation of concepts; from choice of methodology and procedures to data collection; from statistical tests to findings and, ultimately, to conclusions. Accordingly, quantitative research places emphasis on methodology, procedure, and statistical measures of validity. This type of research can be used to establish quantifiable facts or findings about a research topic. To achieve this, the approach systematically uses numerical data from a selected sample of a total population to generalise the findings to the total population that is being studied (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1997:554; Rahman, 2017).

The disadvantage of using a quantitative research approach alone in a study is that it collects a narrow and sometimes superficial dataset, and that quantitative research findings are limited in that they provide numerical descriptions, rather than detailed narrative and, generally, provide less elaborate accounts of the perceptions of participants (Matthews & Ross, 2010; Rahman, 2017).

The discussion that will follow will provide an explanation of basic principles related to the research approach followed to conduct an empirical study, and motivation why the researcher used the combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the problem that triggered the study. The discussion will include an explanation of the way the qualitative and quantitative approaches were combined in practice through a mixed methods research approach.

3.2.3 Mixed methods approach

Mixed methods research has emerged as a viable alternative to purely qualitative or quantitative research approaches. The core assumption of mixed methods research is that the integration of qualitative information and quantitative data yields additional insight, beyond the information provided by either the qualitative or quantitative information/data alone. Social researchers are increasingly drawing from both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to get a holistic picture of phenomena, as combining techniques from both qualitative and quantitative research approaches may provide a better understanding of the research problem. Therefore, by following a mixed methods approach, researchers incorporate elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and thereby combine the advantages of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Mixed method approaches allow for contextual interpretations, the use of multiple methods, and flexibility in choosing the best strategies to resolve the research problem (Bryman,

1995:97; Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005:233; Matthews & Ross, 2010:144; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:3). Moreover, collecting data from at least two perspectives to investigate the same problem assists researchers to triangulate the findings from qualitative and quantitative approaches in one study. It is maintained that the insights gained from the integration of qualitative and quantitative techniques in a research study may produce more than the sum of qualitative and quantitative research findings (Yauch & Steudel, 2003:465; Bryman, 2007:9; Creswell, 2009:230; Du Plessis & Majam, 2010:456; Matthews & Ross, 2010:145; Harrison & Reilly, 2011:8; Maree, 2011:262; Babbie, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:4).

According to Creswell (2003), the following are the four main reasons for using a mixed methods research approach for a single research study:

- It makes it possible to explain or elaborate on quantitative results with qualitative information;
- A researcher can use qualitative information to develop a new measurement instrument or theory that is subsequently tested, while quantitative data is used to generalise the results to the whole population;
- It is possible to compare qualitative information and quantitative data sets to produce more comprehensive conclusions; and
- Research is enhanced with a supplemental data set.

For the purpose of this study, the empirical study required that a mixed methods research approach was utilised to respond to different specific research questions posed in Section 1.6, specifically, **Research Question 2**, **Research Question 3**, and **Research Question 4**. The research questions suggested that using a combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches would be more likely to collect comprehensive data and information, than if only one approach was utilised. A mixed methods research approach was, therefore, preferred, as it had the potential to supplement one form of information and data with the other form (see Maree, 2011:15; Flick, 2014).

Following the mixed methods research by combining elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches was therefore of fundamental importance in that, it broadened depth of understanding in terms of how intercultural communication could be enhanced. The findings of the two information/data sets, therefore, expanded the researcher's understanding of the intercultural

communication imperatives that guided the determination of assumptions that motivated a framework that could assist TUT and other similar organisations to enhance intercultural communication. Fundamentally, using information/data collected from all the population subgroups that were identified, helped the researcher to collect complementary findings and to arrive at better conclusions regarding the research problem the study sought to investigate (see Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1997:599; Maree., 2011:113; Plano Clark, 2011:86; Soketh & Lewin, 2011:330; Flick, 2014:35).

For the purpose of this study, the qualitative approach in a mixed methods research approach was used to determine TUT's current approach to intercultural communication. This was done by means of content analysis of strategic and policy documents and investigating perceptions of staff responsible for managing cultural diversity and communication about approaches to intercultural communication, including their suggestions in relation to practical communication adaptation principles for improving intercultural communication. The quantitative approach was used to collect numerical data to determine the perceptions of employees of the Faculty of Humanities about current practices pertaining to intercultural communication. The quantitative approach was used to determine the interconnectedness of biographical variables of participants and intercultural communication factors. Furthermore, the quantitative approach helped to establish the relationships between intercultural communication factors determined for the purpose of the study. The mixed methods research approach, thus, provided a more complete understanding of the research problem the study sought to address, by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to build on or complement the results of the other approach (see Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007:74; Maree, 2011:262).

Despite the advantages of using a mixed methods research approach, Richardt and Cook (1979) outline the following disadvantages of using both qualitative and quantitative research approaches:

- It is costly;
- Working with both qualitative and quantitative research methods is time consuming;
- Researchers need to be trained to use both approaches.

Moreover, the findings of the research conducted by Bryman (2007) reveals that one of the main barriers to integrating qualitative and quantitative research is the inability of researchers to merge

analyses of qualitative information and quantitative data to provide an integrated analysis. This study was conducted with due consideration of both advantages and disadvantages of integrating qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Despite the cost, time and other disadvantages associated with mixed methods research, this study followed this research approach, as its advantages were considered to outweigh its disadvantages.

Regarding features of mixed methods research, Creswell (1998:206) articulates that the approach comprises four important aspects, namely, *timing*, *weighting*, *mixing* and *theorising*. Furthermore, Creswell (1998:208) indicates that these four important aspects present an overarching perspective that is used with all the mixed method strategies of inquiry. The four aspects are briefly discussed below.

Timing: Different research approaches used in mixed methods research can be implemented concurrently or sequentially, for different reasons. Accordingly, in mixed methods research, qualitative methods can be used before, at the same time as, or after quantitative methods. It is, therefore, imperative for researchers to consider the timing of their qualitative information and quantitative data collection, whether it will take place in phases (sequentially) or will be gathered at the same time (concurrently) (Matthews & Ross, 2010; Somekh & Lewin, 2011).

When information/data is collected concurrently, both qualitative information and quantitative data is gathered at the same time and the implementation is simultaneous (Creswell, 1998:206; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Somekh & Lewin, 2011). Creswell (2003:217) mentions that the advantage of using the concurrent approach to research is that it shortens the research process.

In contrast, the sequential approach involves a two-phase information/data collection project; it involves collecting information/data in phases; either the qualitative information or the quantitative data is collected first, followed by the collection of other information/data type during a second phase, depending on the initial intent of the researcher. In this situation, the qualitative information and quantitative databases are kept separate in a two-phase research approach. The researcher begins with one phase and the analysis of the information/data from the first phase, and uses these results to build on the other type of information/data. Following a sequential approach, thus, assists in explaining and interpreting the findings of different types of information/data, collected during different stages. The purpose is to use the results from one information/data set to explain and

interpret the findings from information/data collected during the subsequent phase. By way of illustration, when qualitative information is collected first (exploratory sequential approach), the intent is to explore the topic with participants at sites. Then, the researcher expands the understanding through a second phase, in which data are collected from a large number of people (Creswell, 2009:270; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Somekh & Lewin, 2011:261).

In this study, the sequential approach was used to collect information/data. Two information/data collection phases were used, during which content analysis was conducted in phase 1 and semi-structured interviews were conducted and an online survey was administered in phase 2. The semi-structured interviews and online survey were preceded by content analysis of strategic and policy documents relevant to the study, to provide the researcher with an understanding of the university's current approach to intercultural communication. Semi-structured interview and online survey participants were concurrently sampled, and information/data was collected during a similar timeframe, though independent of each other. In addition to literature review findings, content analysis results informed the formulation of questions for the semi-structured interviews and online survey. The intent was to concurrently obtain comprehensive information/data by bringing together the various strengths and weaknesses of online surveys with those of semi-structured interviews. After distributing the self-administered questionnaires to participants, the researcher continued collecting information from people who participated in the semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain the viewpoints of purposively selected staff regarding the manner and extent to which intercultural communication is currently enhanced at TUT.

Weighting: A second factor is the weight or priority given to quantitative or qualitative research in a particular study. In some research, the weight is equal; in other research, it might emphasise one or the other. The priority depends on the interests of the researcher, the audience of the research and what the investigator seeks to emphasise in the research. Not losing sight of the rationale for conducting mixed methods research is one consideration that may aid the linking of qualitative information and quantitative data (Creswell, 1998:206–208; Bryman, 2007). The important aspect is, therefore, whether both methods are equally important, or one category of methods is more important than the other (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:261).

In this study, equal weight was attributed to semi-structured interviews and online surveys. Care was taken to ensure that the conclusions of the research were drawn in the context of a mixed methods research approach and equal priority was given to the findings of both types of research methods. Content analysis weighting was less comparable to the other two research methods, considering that limited intercultural communication information was derived from the strategic and policy documents analysed. However, qualitative and quantitative studies responded to specific, related research questions and insight derived from both studies served as the foundation upon which the intercultural communication enhancement framework the study is proposing is based (see Morse, 2008:122).

Mixing: Another key dimension in respect of a mixed methods research approach is whether the quantitative and qualitative methods and information/data sets are integrated throughout the research, or kept separate until the end, at which stage of the research are conclusions and inferences connected? Mixing might occur at several stages: at information/data collection, information/data analysis, interpretation, or at all stages. It is essential to indicate when the mixing will occur. Mixing is difficult, considering that qualitative information consists of text and images, and quantitative data or numbers. The questions one should ask are, when does a researcher mix data in a research, and how does mixing occur (Bryman, 2007; Somekh & Lewin, 2011:261)?

One option of mixing is that the researcher keeps the information/databases separate but connected. This manner of mixing takes place during information/data collection and it involves mixing qualitative and quantitative strands when the researcher collects a second set of information/data; the findings of the one research approach build on the other type of information/data. In this situation, the connection involves using the findings of the first strand to shape the collection of information/data of the second strand. This manner of mixing, thus, involves integrating the two information sets/databases by merging the qualitative information with the quantitative data; the secondary information/database plays a supporting role in the research (Creswell, 1998:207–208; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:67)).

In this study, content analysis, semi-structured interviews and online survey findings were connected during the last chapter when assumptions that informed the development of the framework the study sought to propose were formulated. Therefore, the point of interface occurred when the researcher used the conclusions drawn from different sources to make assumptions that

reflect the combination of the results from all three information and data collection methods (see Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:66; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:217).

Theorising: All researchers bring theories, frameworks and hunches to their inquiries; these theories may be made explicit in mixed methods research, or be implicit and not mentioned. In mixed methods research, theories are typically found in the earlier sections, and serve as an orienting lens that shapes the types of research questions to be asked, guides who will participate in the research, how information/data are to be collected, and the implications that will be made from the study; as was the case in this research. In Chapter 2 of this study, the CAT, IAT and CCT were referenced, as the theories that fit adaptation in the context of intercultural communication. These theories assisted to describe the manner in which individuals from different cultures respond to their experiences in cultures different from their own during intercultural interactions. In addition, models of cultural adaptation, namely, AUMM, the UCM and the TM, assisted the researcher to gain a more holistic understanding of why individuals in the context of organisations adapt or fail to adapt during initial intercultural interactions. The intercultural communication adaptation principles identified in the literature review chapter of this study served as the main theoretical guide of the empirical part of the study, particularly, collection of qualitative information by means of content analysis and semi-structured interviews, and quantitative data by means of an online survey.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This section will present the research design that was followed in the study, which used a mixed methods research approach – the design is the conceptual blueprint according to which the study was conducted. The presentation will depict the overall strategy that was chosen to integrate different components of the study in a logical manner, thereby, ensuring that the study effectively addressed the gap between the current and ideal intercultural communication enhancement approaches (see Bryman, 1994:178; Robson, 1998:38; De Vos, Strydom & Fouché, 2005:59; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research design, depicted in Table 3.1, sketches the research problem, general research question, specific research questions, the manner in which the chapters are structured, theoretical guiding argument, principles derived from the literature, research approach, research methods

(including an indication of the manner in which participants were sampled), data analysis methods and, lastly, the stage at which mixing was done to determine the assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication.

Table 3.1: Research design

<p>Problem statement</p>	<p>Enhancement of intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence assists organisations to achieve success.</p>
<p>General research question</p>	<p>What are the assumptions motivating a framework to assist TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist the university to achieve success?</p>
<p>Specific research questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RESEARCH QUESTION 1: What are the theoretical perspectives regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles that are relevant for a culturally diverse organisation to enhance intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence is improved? – Literature review • RESEARCH QUESTION 2: What are TUT’s current approaches to intercultural communication? – Content analysis • RESEARCH QUESTION 3: What are the perceptions of staff who manage cultural diversity regarding approaches to intercultural communication? – Semi-structured interviews • RESEARCH QUESTION 4: How do employees of the Faculty of Humanities perceive current intercultural communication practices? – Online survey
<p>Chapters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 –Orientation and context • Chapter 2 – Literature review • Chapter 3 – Research approach and methods • Chapter 4 – Qualitative findings • Chapter 5 – Quantitative findings • Chapter 6 – Conclusions and recommendations


Guiding argument	For organisations to function effectively and achieve organisational success, it is imperative that they adapt to a new communication approach that could enhance intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence is improved (see Section 1.8).	
Constructs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and desired outcomes of communication • Workplace dimensions of diversity • Intercultural communication • Intercultural adaptation • Intercultural communication competence • Intercultural communication enablers • Barriers to intercultural communication • Stages of adaptation <p>Refer to Table 3.2 for semi-structured interview questions applicable to each construct.</p>	
Research approach	Mixed methods research approach	
	Qualitative approach	Quantitative approach
Sampling methods	Non-probability sampling method – Purposive sampling	Probability sampling method – Stratified and random sampling
Data collection methods	Content analysis and semi-structured interviews	Online survey
Data analysis methods	Manual analysis	SPSS Version 25.0 (SPSS)
Mixing	 <p>Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication</p>	

Table 3.1 reflects the problem that triggered the study and the general research question that guided the study. As illustrated in Table 3.1, the general research question was divided into four specific research questions. The first specific research question informed analysis and contextualisation of available literature in Chapter 2, as building research on and relating it to existing knowledge is a building block of all research activities. Accordingly, a literature review in Sections 2.2 to 2.7.2.3 analysed and contextualised existing knowledge that is relevant to the study. Intercultural communication adaptation principles, which were identified in sections referenced to above and given in Tables 2.3 and 3.1 acted as the contributing theoretical underpinnings or main guiding theoretical blueprint, upon which the empirical component of the study is based. Table 3.1 also indicates the stage of the study during which mixing of data and information occurred. Table reflects that, mixing occurred when assumptions derived from conclusions drawn from findings of the literature review, content analysis and semi-structured interviews were consolidated to serve as the foundation upon which the proposed framework to enhance intercultural communication is based.

3.4. RESEARCH METHODS

The discussion in this section will give an explication of the practicalities of the methods through which the empirical study was conducted to investigate the research problem that triggered the study. As mentioned in Section 3.2.3, for the empirical study, a mixed methods research approach was used by means of content analysis, semi-structured interviews and an online survey.

The methods through which the empirical exploration of this study was conducted will be explained below.

3.4.1 Qualitative research methods

As stated in Section 3.2.1, qualitative research methods are used to collect and analyse non-numeric information so that researchers can understand concepts, opinions or experiences with the purpose of gathering insights into a research problem. In this study, content analysis and semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative information.

3.4.1.1 Qualitative content analysis

Content analysis is a qualitative research method that is used to identify and summarise content of texts; it is a systematic approach that involves determining the presence of themes or patterns within given qualitative information (see Neuendorf, 2011).

Content analysis was selected as a qualitative information collection method to assist the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of intercultural communication practices at TUT before semi-structured interviews were conducted. Furthermore, content analysis was identified as a qualitative information collection method due to its non-invasive nature and because the documents were readily available to be analysed.

In this study, content analysis of TUT's strategic and policy documents was utilised to source relevant information to respond to specific research question 1.6.2, posed as follows:

What are TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication?

Considering that the main contribution of the study is the development of a framework to enhance intercultural communication at a culturally diverse organisation, using TUT as a case study, TUT documents, specifically, its Strategic Plan (2014–2019), Transformation Framework (2017), Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019), Policy on Unfair Discrimination, Language Policy (2005), Diversity Training Guide (2014) and Employment Equity Plan (2018–2022), were analysed as the first step of the empirical investigation stage of the research (see Section 1.9.2.1). Content analysis, therefore, focused on analysing strategic and policy documents the researcher considered pertinent for shedding light on TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication practices. Consistent with Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:169), using formal TUT documents facilitated the analysis of authentic and accurate documents, to avoid arriving at findings not consistent with the university's official position.

In light of the topic of this study, content analysis of strategic and policy documents was done with the purpose of identifying current approaches to intercultural communication, specifically how intercultural communication is enhanced and used to improve intercultural communication competence of culturally diverse employees. Considering that intercultural communication occurs in the context of cultural diversity, themes related to workplace cultural diversity were also

determined. Using the intercultural communication adaptation principles identified in Sections 2.2 to 2.7.2.3 as a content analysis departure point, strategic and policy documents that articulate the university's position regarding cultural diversity and intercultural communication were analysed with the purpose of distinguishing patterns related to workplace cultural diversity and intercultural communication, specifically its enhancement. The theoretical understanding that recognition of the culturally diverse nature of present-day societies and the uniqueness of individual members of societies was the starting point of working to improve communication across cultures (as argued in Section 1.1), informed content analysis of strategic and policy documents.

In presenting content analysis outcomes, care was taken to ensure that the document analysis findings were presented in the context in which the information is expressed in the documents analysed, and presenting only the information that directly addresses and responds to specific research question 1.6.2 as part of the content analysis findings. Only results that confirm or disconfirm a systematic approach to cultural diversity management and enhancement of intercultural communication will be presented as content analysis findings. Content analysis findings, in conjunction with the literature review findings and results of other information and data collection methods, informed the identification of core elements of the framework that will ultimately be proposed as the main contribution of the study.

3.4.1.2 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were used to determine the perceptions of staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication, including suggestions in relation to core elements participants believed should be included in a framework to enhance intercultural communication to respond to the following research question, which was posed as specific research question 1.6.3:

What are the perceptions of TUT staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication?

The word interview is defined as a situation where selected participants provide answers (usually face-to-face) to questions posed to them. The purpose of an interview is to obtain reliable and valid information from a participant during a conversation regarding a topic, as required for research

purposes. The aim is always to obtain rich, descriptive information that will help the researcher to understand the participants' knowledge and social reality. Semi-structured interviews, as an interview type, requires a set of predetermined questions. It differs from structured interviews, which do not allow interviewer to divert; predetermined semi-structured interviews allow new ideas to be brought up during the interviews, depending on how participants respond. In addition, semi-structured interviews provide an opportunity for participants to ask the researcher to clarify questions, if need be, during interview sessions. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for the researcher to ask follow-up questions, to get clarity in relation to original responses given by participants (Forcece & Richer, 1973:169; Johnson & Christensen, 2004:178; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:674; Maree, 2011:87).

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted in the interviewees' offices, in order to provide participants with an opportunity to relax, because the interviews were taking place in surroundings familiar to them. At the beginning of each interview, the purpose of the interview was explained to all participants. One semi-structured interview per participant was conducted with the ten purposively selected staff. Only one follow-up interview was conducted with one staff member who was responsible for corporate communication, as there was a need to clarify information collected during the first round of interviews, to clarify elements the interviewee proposed should be included in the framework, to guide the way intercultural communication should be enhanced.

With the permission of participants, the researcher used a recorder, notebook and pen to record data during the semi-structured interviews. Though a recorder was used as a primary source of collected data, comprehensive handwritten notes were used as a backup so that the researcher would still have data to refer to should the recorder malfunction (see Rananga, 2008:103). The researcher posed each question, and recorded all the interviewees' responses while taking notes and recording at the same time.

a) Semi-structured interviews sampling methods

A sample is a specific subset of a population observed, and is used to make inferences about the nature of the total population (Burger & Silima, 2006:657; Babbie & Mouton, 2001:202). Sampling participants was the first step of the semi-structured interviews part of the empirical study. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was used to select participants

from whom answers to semi-structured interview questions were sourced. Purposive sampling is used in special situations, where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind, which was the case in this study (see Baxter and Babbie, 2004:135; Flick, 2014:176). Given the understanding that purposeful sampling involves selecting participants based on the purpose of the research, and considering that the main contribution of this study was the development of a framework through which intercultural communication could be enhanced, expert knowledge was sought from TUT staff directly involved in managing cultural diversity and institutional communication.

In view of this understanding, purposive selection of staff from the departments responsible for transformation, employment equity and diversity; human resources development, and corporate affairs and marketing, who are qualified either due to possession of applicable qualifications or extensive experience in institutional communication and cultural diversity management, assisted the researcher to generate an in-depth account that presents a clear picture of the participants' understanding of the problem the research sought to investigate. Selecting purposively selected staff was based on the presumption that they have access to relevant information, considering that they were TUT officials responsible for rendering professional services relevant to the topic of this study.

The sample for the semi-structured interviews comprised ten participants. The director responsible for transformation, employment equity and diversity, transformation, employment equity, and diversity officer and manager responsible for human resources development were selected due to their extensive experience and understanding of cultural diversity training and cultural diversity management. The director responsible for corporate affairs and marketing, the deputy director of corporate affairs and marketing, the university spokesperson, the university brand manager, and three staff members responsible for writing electronic journal stories were selected due to their expert knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of communication.

b) Interview schedule

To gather detailed viewpoints regarding the TUT's current approach to intercultural communication, 12 open-ended questions were designed beforehand, compared to ten questions used during the pilot study. Semi-structured interview questions evolved between the pilot and interview steps, in order to avoid duplication and to ensure that all participants understood them. Substitution and reformulation of questions was done without losing focus or changing the context

within which the questions were originally phrased. The pilot question in relation to uniqueness of employees was substituted by a general question that was aimed to explore the participants' understanding of intercultural communication. One question regarding barriers of intercultural communication was retained, instead of two questions that were used for the pilot study to source information concerning the same construct. The same approach was followed for questions concerning adaptation stages and the role managers play in assisting employees to navigate through intercultural communication adaptation; one question was maintained to address stages of adaptation. Lastly, participants were asked to indicate elements they considered relevant for inclusion in a framework to guide the way intercultural should be enhanced. The question substituted the two pilot questions that related to the same focus area.

The interview schedule was designed to facilitate consistency and uniformity in the manner in which semi-structured interviews were conducted. The constructs that were phrased as guiding threads of the study, including relevant questions, are reflected in Table 3.2. The schedule that was used during the final semi-structured interviews is attached as Appendix E.

Table 3.2: Constructs and applicable semi-structured interview questions

Semi-structured interviews	
Constructs	Open-ended questions
Workplace dimensions of diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your understanding of intercultural communication? • What is the impact of the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations on intercultural communication?
Intercultural adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your first intercultural encounters in the workplace. • How does the university management currently approach intercultural communication? • What do you consider as the ideal approach to intercultural communication?
Cultural elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see as cultural elements fundamentally crucial in intercultural encounters?
Barriers to intercultural communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you consider as the challenges or barriers to effective intercultural communication?
Intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see as the overriding enablers or co-requisites important for employees to become competent intercultural communicators?
Intercultural communication competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you adapt and became a competent intercultural communicator?
Stages of adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which stages do you think employees go through in order for them to adapt before they could become competent intercultural communication communicators?
Goals and desired outcomes of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you consider as the goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication?
	<p>Intercultural communication critical elements</p> <p>What elements do you suggest should be included in a framework to give guidance to the way intercultural communication should be enhanced?</p>

The intercultural theoretical communication adaptation principles upon which the semi-structured interview questions were based are highlighted throughout Sections 2.2 to 2.7.2.3, and summarised in Table 2.3. As indicated in Section 3.2.3, the intercultural theoretical communication adaptation underpinnings identified in sections referenced, and content analysis findings, guided the formulation of questions that formed part of the semi-structured interview schedule. The constructs pertaining to intercultural adaptation and workplace dimensions of diversity were covered by different questions, considering that the focus of the study was on enhancing intercultural communication, specifically adaptation of employees in an institution that is culturally diverse in nature, for the primary purpose of becoming competent intercultural communicators. The open-ended semi-structured questions required participants to indicate elements they suggested should be included in a framework the research will propose as the main contribution of the study (see White, 2005:145; Du Plooy, 2009:196-197).

c) Analysis of semi-structured interview responses

While the researcher has limited the presentation of the interview responses to what is necessary for the purpose of the research, care was taken to ensure that the responses are expressed in the context in which statements were made during interviews with the purposively selected participants, in order to ensure accurate analysis and interpretation of collected data. Presentation of transcribed information was done in such a manner that the statements are presented in the context within which the responses were provided during interviews (see Flick, 2014:385–386).

Bearing in mind that only ten purposively selected participants took part in the research, information collected through interviews was analysed manually. The analysis involved listening to the recorded information, transcribing, reading and rereading the collected data, in order to improve understanding of the collected data and to make sense of the data before presenting the findings. Each of the participants sampled from the environments responsible for transformation, employment equity and diversity; human resources development and corporate affairs and marketing were given a unique identifying number between 1 and 10, to facilitate systemic analysis of information (see Maree, 2011:104). Assigning unique numbers to participants was followed by a process during which the researcher manually categorised responses of this sub-population.

Analysis of interview responses was conducted in accordance with the nine constructs identified in Chapter 2 and summarised in Table 2.3. The questions related to each construct were grouped

together, but analysed independently of each other; after which the overall findings of each construct were analysed collectively. This was achieved through identification and categorisation of responses provided by participants. Development of different trends and the relationships between them required close examination of the responses, to identify common opinions and patterns of meaning that arose repeatedly. The common opinions and patterns were analysed further together with the findings of the online survey (see Chapter 6), and assisted the researcher to determine broader perspectives and to ascertain elements that informed the assumptions that served as the foundation upon which the framework that is proposed as the main contribution of the study, is based. The final analysis in Chapter 6 was done using the theoretical intercultural communication adaptation principles identified under each of the nine constructs distinguished and summarised in Table 2.3 (as pointed out in a paragraph above) as the point of reference (see De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delpont, 2005: 335; Babbie, 2011:397; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:208).

3.4.2 Quantitative survey

The discussion in this section will provide an explanation of how people who participated in the online survey were selected, how quantitative data was collected and the way in which quantitative data was analysed.

3.4.2.1 Quantitative sampling methods

To select people to participate in the online survey, the researcher made use of probability sampling methods, namely, stratified and random sampling methods. As an initial step, prospective participants from the Faculty of Humanities were selected from two subgroups (strata), namely, academic and non-academic staff members (stratified sampling). Stratified sampling was used primarily to ensure that two groups of a population from the Faculty of Humanities were adequately represented in the sample. The underlying idea of using the stratified sampling was fundamentally informed by the heterogeneous nature of the two subgroups. The intention was to avoid selecting participants only from members who all share attributes and characteristics, for example, academic staff members, considering the small number of support staff within the faculty. In this respect, the researcher used available information on the population to divide it into

groups, such that each group was represented. The list of faculty members was sourced from the Human Resources and Transformation executive directorate. The list reflected all faculty members, including the nature of their employment, namely, academic or non-academic. Random sampling was used in addition to stratified sampling to select participants so that individuals from each subpopulation would have an equal probability of being selected. Using random sampling, each sample member was chosen randomly from each stratum, and it was not possible to predict which sample members would be selected to participate in the study (see Teddlie & Yu, 2007:79; Matthews & Ross, 2010:154–155).

Table 3.2 depicts the profile of the Faculty of Humanities, the TUT faculty from which staff who participated in the online survey were selected.

Table 3.3: Faculty of Humanities profile

	Enrolment	Staff complement	Academic staff members	Non-academic staff members
Total	12 000+	351	319	32
Sample size		320	295	25
Responses received		294	272	22

The Faculty of Humanities was selected based on its size: it is the biggest faculty at TUT, with a total student population of at least 12 000 and 351 academic and non-academic employees. A probability sample of 295 and 25 was drawn from 319 academic staff members and 32 non-academic staff members respectively. A response rate of 92% from 272 academic staff and 22 non-academic staff was achieved, which represents 84% of the total population (351). One possible reason why not all questionnaires were returned could be that the study was conducted during the examination time, and some participants possibly did not have internet connectivity at their homes. It is also possible that some part-time employees' contracts had ended before the research was conducted, which meant they could not access TUT's email domain. Lack of interest by some participants could also be one of the reasons why some potential participants chose not to complete

the online questionnaire. However, a response rate of 70% is regarded as sufficient, therefore, the response rate in this study is considered to be sufficiently representative of the total population (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Maree, 2011).

3.4.2.2 Online survey questionnaire

For the online survey, a questionnaire was used to collect data from 294 participants. The advantage of using a questionnaire is that it gives the participants time to think before they provide their responses (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:46; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:194). Another rationale for using a questionnaire was that it was cheaper, and effective (see Bryman, 1989:42), especially considering a large number of participants who were geographically dispersed in three provinces – Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga.

The online questionnaire was used to source quantitative data to respond to specific research question 1.6.4, posed as follows:

How do TUT employees of the Faculty of Humanities perceive current intercultural communication practices?

A typical questionnaire with questions that were used to collect quantitative data is attached as Appendix G². The rationale for the questions that made up the online questionnaire was to explore and determine the perceptions of employees of the Faculty of Humanities regarding current approaches to intercultural communication.

Table 3.4 lists the six intercultural communication factors that were distinguished for the purpose of this study, and items loading each factor.

Table 3.4: Intercultural communication factors and items loading

Online survey	
Factors	Items loading different factors
Factor 1 – Intercultural communication adaptation	17, 18,19, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29
Factor 2 – Intercultural communication competence	15, 16, 22, 23 and 24
Factor 3 – Impact of culture on communication	3, 4 and 5
Factor 4 – Recognition and understanding of cultural differences	1, 9 and 10
Factor 5 – Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion	6, 11, 12, 13, 20 and 21
Factor 6 – Intentional enhancement of intercultural communication	2, 7, 8,14 and 30

Table 3.4 indicates that 30 questions were used to draw out quantitative data. Theoretical intercultural communication adaptation principles, identified in Sections 2.2 to 2.7.2.3, were used as a point of departure in the formulation of the 30 closed-ended questions. Just like with the interview questions, the researcher, therefore, used the applicable theory outlined in Sections 2.2 to 2.7.2.3 to shape the nature of questions that made up the questionnaire. The inputs of the content analysis were also incorporated in the development of the questionnaire.

Questions were clearly formulated, and double-barrel questions were avoided. The formulation of questions was done such that the meaning of each question was the same for all participants, and questions were ordered in a way that avoided confusing participants. In most instances, multiple questions were asked on the same construct to test the validity of the theoretical perspectives upon which the questions were based. This was done to test the degree to which inferences could be made from the practical application of this study to the theoretical perspectives on which the operationalisation of the available knowledge was based (see Maree, 2011:160).

The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A of the questionnaire was designed to gather biographical information from participants. This section of the questionnaire gathered the

same biographical information that was gathered from the purposively selected participants. As was the case with the purposively selected participants, explained in Section 3.4.1, the purpose of gathering the same type of biographical information was to give the researcher a sense of the extent of the cultural backgrounds of participants selected from the two subpopulations in the Faculty of Humanities. Furthermore, starting with a few easy-to-answer and non-threatening questions, like biographical details, is assumed to have assisted to put participants at ease.

Section B of the questionnaire was designed to gather information relevant to the research topic. The section covered questions aimed at sourcing participants' perceptions and ideas regarding TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication, in accordance with specific research question 1.6.4.

Participants were required to choose one item as a response from four items provided. To this end, a 4-point Likert scale was implemented as a measurement scale for quantitative closed questions. A Likert scale, as one of a number of different approaches, was utilised as a convenient way of collecting data on a concept. It enabled the researcher to obtain more information on the participants' opinions or feelings on a particular topic. The structure of the Likert scale required the writing of a number of statements, known as scales items, each with the same standard set of responses (see David & Sutton, 2004:167). The Likert-type statements were used to draw conclusion from participants' responses – as participants had been given a set of options to choose from. Participants had to evaluate statements, using a scale of strongly disagree; disagree; strongly agree; or agree. These response categories were given a score that ranged from 1 to 4. The Likert-type statements are considered a reliable way to measure attitudes of people, and giving four response categories scale forced participants to either (strongly) agree or (strongly) disagree, with no possibility of being neutral (Maree, 2011:167).

3.4.2.3 Distribution of the questionnaires to participants

Questionnaires were electronically distributed in bulk, thereby speeding up the quantitative data collection process and reducing expenses associated with printing and distribution of hardcopy questionnaires. People who participated in the quantitative study completed the questionnaires electronically using the link that was provided. The researcher requested permission from the executive director responsible for Institutional Effectiveness and Technology to access staff

members using the TUT email platform. This was preceded by permission granted by the executive dean of the Faculty of Humanities for the researcher to approach members of the faculty to request that they serve as participants. After the questionnaire had been finalised, a link through which participants accessed the questionnaire was created. Thereafter, the questionnaire and the information leaflet were forwarded to all 220 staff members who had been identified to participate in the study.

3.4.2.4 Quantitative data analysis

The Statistical Support Services of the NWU (Potchefstroom Campus) carried out the statistical analysis with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 25.0 (SPSS 25.0). The analysis produced the following statistics that summarised the data collected using an online survey to convert the data into a form useful for data analysis: tables, standard deviations, means, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, independent-samples t-test, exploratory factor analysis, Cronbach alpha coefficient, KMO and Bartlett's test, correlation using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficients, interconnectedness and Eigenvalues and percentage variances. Standard deviations and mean were used to show the dispersion of the data and to measure central tendency of the data respectively (see Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The quantitative data validity was tested to determine the extent to which the online survey questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure. Pearson's product moment correlations were used to assess the degree of internal consistency of the scores from a set of indicators. Measurement validity means that a measure must produce the same measurements over a period of time (Du Plooy, 2002).

Reliability analysis was done using Cronbach's alpha statistics. Considering that the online survey questionnaire, with its multiple questions, was used to gather quantitative data, Cronbach's alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the Likert scale. For a measuring instrument, like Likert scale to be standardised, it must be reliable and valid (see Maree., 2011:216).

Exploratory factor analysis was done to determine questionnaire items that measure the same factor, to simplify interrelated measures and to explore a possible underlying factor structure of a set of the observed intercultural communication variables imposing a preconceived structure on

the outcome. The purpose of exploratory factor analysis was to reduce data dimensionality by explaining correlations among multiple outcomes resulting from one or more underlying factors, which resulted in six factors being extracted from common questionnaire items. The six factors that were phrased as guiding threads for quantitative data analysis, including relevant online survey questions, are reflected in Table 3.4.

Details on how quantitative data analysis was done, including how the interconnectedness of biographical variables of employees of the Faculty of Humanities and intercultural communication variables and how the relationship between intercultural communication factors were determined, will be provided in the chapter in which the findings of the quantitative component of the study will be presented (Chapter 5).

3.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research relates to what is right and wrong when conducting research. Fundamentally, in the context of research, moral principles give rise to rules and set behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct (Robson, 1998:30; Baxter & Babbie, 2004:85; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:477; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:84; Matthews & Ross, 2010:477). In emphasising the need for ethical considerations, Somekh and Lewin (2011:27) reflect that ethical committees have long been established across sectors to ensure that researchers consider ethical issues in the process of conducting research. They impress that ethical committees develop protocols to protect those who participate in research, in order to ensure their rights are not violated; hence, the stringent ethical clearance procedures the empirical investigation stage of the study was subjected to at the institution where the research was conducted.

To address research ethics issues, the researcher ensured that the research was conducted in accordance with North-West University and TUT ethical procedures and conditions. Approval to start conducting the research at TUT was sought from that university prior to data collection. The empirical investigation of the study was only conducted after approval had been granted by the TUT Senate Committee for Research Ethics. This is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:144), who contend that, in the case where the research is conducted at an institution such as university or school, approval to conduct the research should be obtained prior to data collection.

The research was also conducted subject to the ethical considerations of the North-West University, namely, research proposal approval and ethics clearance. The ethics approval letter specified the timeframe within which the study had to be completed. The following documents were submitted to the TUT Senate Committee for Research Ethics for evaluation, clearance and approval:

- Research proposal;
- Information leaflet;
- Informed consent form;
- Interview schedule (qualitative research instrument); and
- Questionnaire (quantitative research instrument).

The above approach is in line with the prescripts of TUT documents on the evaluation of research documents intended for the collection of data from TUT members of staff and/or students, particularly, paper and electronic-based questionnaires and structured interviews. The document impresses that all studies intending to collect data from TUT staff and students should be submitted to the TUT Senate Research Ethics Committee before the empirical investigation is conducted. For this purpose, permission was only sought and granted after finalisation of the theoretical chapters, namely, literature review and research methodology sections of the study. Conditions prescribed by the Senate Committee for Research Ethics at TUT were strictly adhered to, as non-compliance would have been virtually the same as not conducting the research in accordance with the prescribed rules.

A description of process followed to ensure that the research was conducted in accordance with sound ethical practice will follow.

3.5.1 Informed consent

According to Somekh and Lewin (2011:26), people participating in research should give consent in full knowledge of the purpose of the research, including consequences for them of participating in the research. Giving consent by participants is referred to by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:143) as informed consent, which is achieved by providing the participants with an explanation of the research, including full disclosure of any risks associated with the research.

Essentially, informed consent should be freely given, and clear and adequate information should be provided, which indicates what the benefits for the participants are, why the research is being conducted, what the practical implications to the participants are; they should also know that participation is totally voluntary, and that participants have the right to withdraw at any time without facing penalties. Providing this information to participants is important, so that they can give informed and voluntary consent (Du Plooy, 2009:471; Matthews and Ross, 2010:73). In this study and consistent with the above requirements, the main purpose of informed consent was to help the people participating in the study understand what they were consenting to participate in. The researcher, therefore, ensured that all research informed consent requirements were complied with, and that all the participants were well informed of their rights.

In this study, participants had the right to choose whether to participate in the research, as nobody must be forced, deceived, threatened or subjected to any form of coercion (Collins, Du Plooy, Grobbelaar, Van Eeden, Puttergill, Terre Blanche, Van Rensburg & Wigston, 2000:110). Only participants with the cognitive capacity to understand and evaluate the information about the intended research were invited to participate. Besides, people who participated in the study had enough time to decide whether they would like to participate in the research, and to decide to participate in the research without any pressure. Furthermore, participants were free to withdraw from participating in the research at any stage of the research and were also told who would have access to information collected about them, how their anonymity would be protected and whom to contact with questions regarding the research. All the information referred to above was contained in the information leaflet that was circulated to all participants with the invitation letter and the consent form (see Leedy, 2005:116–117).

The primary purpose of the invitation, consent form and information leaflet was to invite research participants, to request them to give consent, and to inform participants about the conditions for participating in the research, including providing details of the researcher, supervisors and North-West University Research Ethics contact person. This information would be necessary if participants had clarification-seeking questions regarding the study. Considering that TUT was the case study, details of the chairperson of the TUT Senate Committee for Research Ethics were also provided, so that participants could obtain answers to their questions regarding ethical aspects of the research at the organisation where the research was conducted. The primary objective of the

study was also provided in the information leaflet, in order to inform participants what the researcher sought to achieve with the study. This was done to give participants an opportunity to determine whether it was ethically sound for them to participate in the study, before they gave consent.

For the *qualitative* component of the study, an invitation and information leaflet, including a consent form, were sent to all prospective participants in advance, and only those participants who completed, signed and returned the consent form were interviewed to collect qualitative information. The consent form was completed and signed before interviews were conducted and by completing, signing and returning the consent form, the participants consented to participate in the research. The empirical investigation of the research was, therefore, only conducted after the researcher had received consent forms from the sampled participants.

For the *quantitative* component, the invitation and information leaflet, including the consent form, were electronically distributed together with the research questionnaire, and only faculty members willing to participate in the research electronically completed, signed and returned the consent form, together with the completed research questionnaire. All the consent forms were kept as proof that all the participants had participated in the research willingly.

3.5.2 Violation of confidentiality

Dambudzo (2009:97) articulates that confidentiality is maintained when the privacy of the individuals is protected, by ensuring that the data provided by participants is handled and reported in such a way that no individual's identity is disclosed and that no one, except the researcher, will have access to the data or the names of those who participated in the study.

For purposes of this study, the information received from people who participated in the research was treated as private and confidential, and the participants' right to privacy and confidentiality was respected throughout the study. The information received was treated as strictly confidential and the right of the participants to privacy was respected throughout the research and upon its conclusion. Moreover, responses of all purposively selected participants were linked to the unique identifying numbers (ranging from 1 to 10) assigned to them, in order to guarantee anonymity

regarding responses provided. For the quantitative component, neither the demographic form nor the self-administered questionnaire asked participants for identifying details.

3.6. CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion provided an explanation of the research approaches followed and methods that were used in this study in order to select participants, collect and analyse information and data, and the ethical considerations applied in the study. This study followed a mixed methods research approach, because there are distinct advantages for researchers in using the approach, among which generalisation of findings through its quantitative component while, at the same time, assisting researchers to gain an understanding of the issues they investigate through the qualitative component of the study.

The main advantage of using a mixed methods research approach was that it enabled the researcher to use two distinct research approaches to address research questions aimed at resolving the same research problem. The approach assisted in providing results that provide a broader perspective of the manner in which intercultural communication could be managed at TUT such that intercultural communication competence is achieved.

A sequential approach was used to collect information/data using content analysis, semi-structured interviews and an online survey as qualitative information and quantitative data collection methods. Content analysis was the first process to be undertaken, after which semi-structured interviews and online survey were concurrently used to collect more empirical information and data.

The next chapter of the study will present the qualitative findings of the empirical exploration of TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication. The presentation will include an explication of intercultural communication elements that were identified by participants in the semi-structured interviews as necessary to include in a framework to enhance intercultural communication in a culturally diverse organisation, with specific reference to TUT.

CHAPTER 4: CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS AND PERCEPTIONS OF PURPOSIVELY SELECTED PROFESSIONALS REGARDING APPROACHES TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings pertaining to qualitative component of the study will be presented. The information was collected by means of a content analysis of TUT's strategic and policy documents that were considered relevant for the purpose of the study, and semi-structured interviews with officials from environments responsible for transformation, employment equity and diversity; human resources development; and corporate affairs and marketing.

Content analysis was conducted with the aim of responding primarily to specific research question 1.6.2, posed as follows:

What are TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication?

The semi-structured interviews were conducted to source information to respond to specific research question 1.6.3, posed as follows:

What are the perceptions of TUT staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication?

Using a combination of content analysis and semi-structured interviews as qualitative research methods helped the researcher to collect complementary information and to arrive at better conclusions regarding the research problem the study sought to investigate. The approach broadened the depth of understanding in terms of TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication, and how intercultural communication could be enhanced (as discussed in Section 3.2.3).

The key constructs identified in Chapter 2 (literature review chapter) form the main guiding theoretical blueprint around which presentation of findings and responses will be structured. Internal communication and theoretical intercultural communication adaptation insights that were acquired through analysis of available literature in Chapter 2 will serve as the departure point in presenting findings and responses related to each construct.

4.2. FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

At the time of analysing TUT's strategic and policy documents, the TUT Strategic Plan (2014–2019) (the university's institutional strategic plan used for the purpose of the study) was under review. TUT Strategic Plan (2014–2019) reflects that the institution embraces cultural diversity, fosters inclusivity and promotes equality; however, the plan provides no strategic orientation regarding unification of cultural diversity towards a common purpose, which, amongst others, could be achieved through deliberate enhancement of intercultural communication. Concerning enhancement of intercultural communication, the content analysis findings discovered that the Strategic Plan (2014–2019) made no mention of cultural diversity being essential as a strategic priority, let alone establishing control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of cultural diversity management through enhancing intercultural communication.

Additionally, the Transformation Framework (2017) recognises the culturally diverse nature of TUT, including systematic management of cultural diversity and inclusion for success. However, the Framework is not specific about the way in which cultural diversity could be amplified through deliberate enhancement of intercultural communication.

Furthermore, just like the TUT Strategic Plan (2014–2019) and the Transformation Framework (2017), it is evident from an analysis of the Policy on Unfair Discrimination (2006) that its formulation was activated by the acknowledgement of a need for TUT to pave the way for cultural diversity management, and it reflects the University's policy intention to advance inclusion of all individuals. However, the policy makes no mention of how intercultural communication could be used as a means to unify employees to achieve a common purpose.

Though the Employment Equity Plan (2011–2015) and Employment Equity Plan (2018–2022) focus more on achieving employment targets, the two plans also make reference to and seek to promote cultural diversity, as do the Strategic Plan (2014–2019) and Transformation Framework (2017).

Undoubtedly, the findings of the content analysis of strategic and policy documents attest that cultural diversity management is considered to be a strategic priority at TUT. This is a sign of how highly issues of cultural diversity management are regarded. Though this finding confirms that cultural diversity management is a valued strategic imperative, however, a review of strategic and

policy documents that were applicable at the time of the analysis and referenced in this section give substance to the preliminary finding that TUT lacks a framework to serve as a blueprint for guidance of the way intercultural communication could be enhanced. This is a significant finding that confirms that the university lacks an operational document to give proper guidance to how intercultural communication could be improved further to pave the way for intercultural communication competence. This implies that, although improving intercultural communication is considered a strategic priority, effectively, there is no implementation plan with specific details regarding how the TUT intends to put this into practice. For this to be achieved, action plans aimed at operationalising the strategic priority should be developed and cascaded down to all levels of operation for implementation purposes – a practice that was not given credence by the findings derived from content analysis of the strategic and policy documents that were applicable at the time the empirical study was conducted.

Responses provided by purposively selected professionals support content analysis findings, specifically that the university does not have a framework or policy to enhance intercultural communication. Supporting this strategic and policy document analysis finding, Participant 1 stated:

The way communication happens is not informed by any guidelines or a policy document. Corporate communication strategies as well do not allude to the way messages should be uniformly transmitted. In summary, there is no concerted effort to ensure that intercultural communication is managed in a uniform way across the University.

Two other participants affirmed the absence of an intercultural communication enhancement framework:

Although I may not confirm its visibility in terms of policy, it is important that cultural diversity management and intercultural communication are regulated by a policy document. There are good intentions from management, but it becomes difficult for everyone to enforce that in the absence of a formal document one can refer to.
[Participant 4]

Participant 9 gave the following response:

I can say with no doubt that, there is no specific approach that one can say it is aimed at ensuring that communication across cultures is approached in a similar way.

It is also apparent from the responses provided by purposively selected professionals that TUT lacks a solid plan of action aimed at conscious enhancement of intercultural communication, and that communication strategic documents do not provide guidance regarding the manner in which effective intercultural communication could occur, and that there is no concerted effort to ensure that intercultural communication is managed consistently across the institution. Purposively selected professionals were of the view that management's strategic intentions pertaining to enhancement of intercultural communication should be operationalised and regulated in the form of a policy document. Their assumption is that a formal and uniform approach to intercultural communication could assist all at TUT to follow a formal and similar way of approaching issues of intercultural communication. Notwithstanding high regard of issues of cultural diversity management, TUT lacks an operational plan to guide the way in which intercultural communication could be used as a means to improve intercultural communication.

4.3. CONSTRUCT 1 – GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES OF COMMUNICATION

The discussion in Section 2.2 disclosed that internal communication should occur such that it, amongst others, promotes a sense of belonging among employees and contributes to a common understanding of information and promotion of internal relationships, as these goals and desired outcomes of internal communication increase the overall effectiveness of a team. In their pursuit of strategically and continuously enhancing internal communication, culturally diverse organisations should have a clear blueprint of what are considered the goals and desired outcomes of internal communication in the context of the environment in which they operate.

Compatible with the goals and desired outcomes regarding a common understanding of information, the TUT Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019) aims to restructure and direct effective internal communication university-wide. This, according to the Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019), is done with the aim of informing, persuading and creating a shared understanding of information through the right combination of channels, at the right time, and measured against institutional and communication-specific goals.

As discussed in Section 2.2, the most essential part of any form of communication is shared understanding. Shared understanding happens when there is mutual creation, which translates to a common understanding of the meaning of information that is being communicated. As indicated in Section 4.2, content analysis findings reflect that, though shared understanding of information is set as a strategic imperative and a goal and desired outcome of communication, TUT appears to lack an implementation plan or operational document that details how the intent could be put in action, such that effective internal communication can be achieved.

Purposively selected professionals also commented on what they understand to be the goals and desired outcomes of internal communication. Comments were made in the specific context of intercultural communication. In emphasising the effective flow of information as a goal and desired outcome of intercultural communication, Participant 4 stated:

I think the most important outcome of intercultural communication is for it to be effective. Through effective intercultural flow of information, people understand the kind of information you convey to them. Individuals should, therefore, be open-minded about accepting variations regarding cultures represented in their workplace. Without understanding that variation exists, it becomes difficult to make an effort to learn other people's cultures, including improving the way you communicate with them.

The above response is understood to be based on acknowledging and understanding the culturally diverse nature of TUT, as a starting point for employees to have a desire to improve intercultural communication and to communicate effectively. The response confirms the insight derived from the available theoretical knowledge, in that it identifies effective flow of information as a fundamental outcome of intercultural communication (as discussed in Section 2.2). It is also argued by this study that effective flow of information is a requirement for employees from culturally diverse backgrounds to have a common transmission and receipt of work instructions, which is necessary for them to work to achieve a common purpose.

Commenting from language proficiency and unification of employees, and mutual respect points of view, two professionals commented as follows:

From my point of view, the desired course is to make a unified nation to improve communication proficiency, understand each other in the workplace, create peace and

harmony and build bridges amongst different groups. Intercultural communication is, therefore, about learning other languages, including writing, reading, expressing yourself, and increasing multiculturalism. A desire to interconnect encourages people to learn the way other people communicate. Most importantly, giving and receiving clear instructions is a prerequisite for organisations to be productive and it promotes peace, tranquillity and love in the workplace. [Participant 5]

Intercultural communication brings about unity in the workplace and it helps people to respect each other regardless of differences. When we respect one another, we recognise the human rights of individuals different from us and that, as a person, you do have dignity that we need to respect. [Participant 10]

Highlighting, valuing and appreciating cultural differences as a goal and desired outcome of internal communication, Participant 2 suggested learning to value and appreciate each other, including how to accommodate each other communication wise is good for productivity within organisations.

In practice, valuing, respecting and appreciating cultural differences and language proficiency are perceived to be attributes that are likely to improve intercultural communication effectiveness. In their different ways of expression, purposively selected professionals highlighted improvement of multiculturalism, unification of employees, developing a common understanding of information, improving communication proficiency, creating peace and harmony, building bridges, promoting mutual respect, and enhancing productivity and quality of work as the salient goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication. These intercultural communication imperatives are, therefore, suggested as practical goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication in the context of TUT. It is contended in this study that employees who are, amongst other attributes, unified, and who respect and understand each other and work in an environment where there is peace and harmony, are likely to form an effective team that could work successfully to achieve a common purpose. Organisations should, therefore, determine what are considered to be goals and desired outcomes of communication in their respective contexts, and set those as goals and desired outcomes of their intercultural communication enhancement efforts.

Despite differences in focus and variation in expression, the goals and desired outcomes outlined in the form of responses outlined above are pertinent to goals and desired outcomes discovered through the literature review in Section 2.2, and are aligned to what the TUT Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019) alludes to. It is evident that the goals and desired outcomes discovered by means of content analysis and responses provided by purposively selected professionals, and those foregrounded by literature, conclude that, for organisations to enhance intercultural communication successfully, they should determine goals and desired outcomes applicable to their specific situations, and strive to channel their efforts to their successful achievement.

The findings regarding goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication, overall, point to a significant finding, namely, that restructuring and directing intercultural communication, including creation of shared understanding of information, is set as a TUT strategic orientation. However, it appears that TUT lacks an action plan to detail how intercultural communication could be enhanced and how a shared understanding of information could be implemented, such that internal communication effectiveness is improved. For TUT to realise what is considered as applicable goals and desired outcomes of communication in practice, the university should develop and implement an action plan that details how the strategic orientation regarding creation of a shared understanding of information could be conceptualised and put in action, such that it seeks to achieve what are considered as goals and desired outcomes of communication within its context. It is argued in this study that an action plan that gives clear direction regarding what intercultural communication enhancement efforts seek to achieve could facilitate intercultural communication effectiveness, and ultimately assist a culturally diverse organisation to achieve success. TUT's action plan should be developed with due consideration of the culturally diverse nature of the university, and goals and desired outcomes of communication determined by means of content analysis of strategic and policy documents, and data gathered through semi-structured interviews with purposively selected professionals. Goals and desired outcomes of internal communication, as justified in Section 2.2, and what is, in practice, regarded as goals and desired outcomes of communication in the context of TUT, should, therefore, be used as the platform upon which the institution should base operationalisation and implementation of its strategic orientation pertaining to restructuring and directing intercultural communication and mutual creation of meaning.

4.4. CONSTRUCT 2 – WORKPLACE DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

It was stated in Section 2.3 that personality, internal, organisational and external dimensions of diversity create and shape a style of intercultural communication. It is assumed that, regardless of the unique nature of employees, if properly managed, differences can be a source of team cohesion and could enhance intercultural communication, improve intercultural communication, and possibly help nurture effective functioning of an organisation.

The TUT Diversity Training Guide (2014) confirms that the TUT recognises that its employees originate from diverse cultural backgrounds and that they bring a variety of cultures with them, as an illustration, styles, perspectives, beliefs and competences, which could be assets to the teams and individuals with whom they interact. Accordingly, TUT's cultural diversity training is aimed at engagement, with the goal of building a common understanding of how to value cultural diversity in support of the strategic orientation of the university.

Additionally, the TUT Employment Equity Plan (2011–2015) sets out TUT's institutional culture effects, which are influenced by all aspects of the working environment at the university. The plan states that, though TUT has made significant progress in taking progressive measures to eliminate racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, the deeply rooted social culture of the institution was still a perceived and experienced reality for many employees. As a result, the university needed to create a culture of inclusion and change management processes to address the challenges identified by the plan.

The TUT Language Policy (2005) confirms the university's determined efforts in relation to a need for inclusion. The analysis of the policy revealed that the university recognises and advocates for the promotion of all South African official languages, including foreign languages commonly used in the country. The policy also makes provision for the promotion of use of any other official South African languages for communication and teaching purposes, where it is reasonably practicable: if doing so does not violate the language rights of other people. Promoting multilingualism is demonstrated, furthermore, by the university's commitment to rendering professional translation services and support for employees to become proficient in the language or languages of teaching, instruction and communication through various modes of language training.

The findings above clarify that the culturally diverse nature of TUT is understood and acknowledged. The unique nature of employees, cultural diversity training, recognition of institutional culture, creation of culture of inclusion and promoting multilingualism are recognised as workplace dimensions of diversity that reflect the shape and impact of TUT as an institution; hence, their placement as priority areas in the strategic and policy documents referred to above. The findings coincide with the literature review finding articulated in Section 2.3, that recognition and understanding of the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations is a starting point for an organisation, like TUT, to work towards systematic enhancement of intercultural communication.

Commenting on their understanding and acknowledgement of the impact the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations, like TUT, has on intercultural communication, purposively selected professionals commented as follows. Participant 1 commented from a belonging point of view. The participant is of the view that,

Employees who embrace cultural differences are more accommodative of colleagues from cultures different from theirs and do not feel isolated or isolate team members, as they understand uniqueness of employees and the value that has to an organisation. Moreover, if you understand the impact of cultural diversity, you are more tempted to support cultural diversity management approaches, including accommodating initiatives aimed at improving communication.

Participant 2 commented as follows from a productivity perspective:

One becomes a valuable asset to an organisation if you understand and are familiar with cultures different to yours. The more there is a common way of conveying messages, the more chance of people working towards same direction. This is key for employees to be productive.

Explaining the impact the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations has on intercultural communication from inclusion and productivity standpoints, Participant 5 mentioned that,

The diverse nature of present-day organisations encourages people from different cultural backgrounds to inter-connect and produces hybrid of cultures. Working within an environment where all people are accommodated is exciting in that it encourages multiculturalism.

Findings of the content analysis of strategic and policy documents, and responses provided by purposively selected professionals substantiate available literature, which states that it is significant for an organisation to recognise and acknowledge that the complexity of its members represents a large variety of cultural differences. Purposively selected professionals' responses indicate that acknowledging that present-day organisations are culturally diverse in nature promotes sense of belonging and inclusion of all employees and it improves productivity. Additionally, purposively selected professionals indicated that understanding and acknowledging the culturally diverse nature of organisations serve as a building block to encourage teamwork, as it highlights the understanding that more can be achieved if individuals work as members of a team, and not in isolation. This view aligns with available literature that maintains that differences can be a source of team cohesion and could possibly help nurture the all-important intercultural communication effectiveness, an imperative for organisations to achieve organisational success (as discussed in Section 2.3). This positive finding, coupled with determined efforts discerned in TUT strategic and policy documents referenced in this section, places TUT in a better position to successfully intensify its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours.

4.5. CONSTRUCT 3 – INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION

It is contended that organisational success happens when individuals engaging in communication interaction have adapted their experiences in a new cultural environment, such that the intercultural interactions achieve their intended objectives. Literature points to the understanding that intercultural adaptation reduces cultural distance, increases intercultural communication competence and, ultimately, creates a conducive platform for meaningful intercultural communication to occur (as discussed in Section 2.7.1).

Purposively selected professionals reported their experiences in relation to their own first intercultural encounters in the workplace and their understating of intercultural communication. Regarding first intercultural encounters in the workplace, the following perceptions were provided:

My first intercultural encounter was after TUT was established. As Africans, we were judged to be loud by our White colleagues. What annoyed my white colleague most was the fact that we were using the language she could not understand. This was a clear indication of the assumption individuals have about themselves in thinking that the way they communicate is better than the way people from other cultures do. It is imperative that as colleagues we acknowledge that we are different and find a way of co-existing. [Participant 6]

I once worked for an organisation where we used to be expected to go to some areas where ways of doing things were completely different as compared to the way we were socialised growing up. It is important that we find ways of making sure that integration takes place, even if that happens informally. We must use each opportunity we get to talk about our differences, including finding solutions on how we can understand and accommodate each other. [Participant 7]

I once invited an executive from a different cultural background to my office; that was after the attainment of democracy. I could pick up from the way he reacted to my handshake that he was not used to that kind of being greeted. To avoid intercultural conflict, I decided to adapt to his way of greeting and that eventually became my way of greeting people. We eventually accepted that we are different and that we need to accommodate each other. The fact that we started far apart from understanding each other brought us closer together. [Participant 9]

An interesting observation from the responses solicited from purposively selected professionals is that individuals' initial intercultural experiences are diverse, which reflect our cultural diversity as a people. The three professionals quoted above recounted their first intercultural encounters, in general, from different perspectives, for example, from a race point of reference, a gender difference point of departure, and from the frame of reference of exchanging greetings. The comments presented above confirm the insight explained in Section 2.7.2.3, that individuals

experience cultural transition differently. Importantly, regardless of them being judged, initially, and behaving the way they were socialised while growing up, purposively selected professionals believe that, eventually, individuals acknowledge differences and find ways to co-exist. Intercultural adaptation is, therefore, preceded by navigation on an intercultural journey characterised by various and differing experiences. Purposively selected professionals were of the view that, later, individuals accept one another, integrate and adapt accordingly. It was argued in Section 2.8 that intercultural adaptation in the context of communication is a prerequisite for employees from different cultures to improve intercultural communication competence.

Concerning purposively selected professionals' understanding of what intercultural communication is, the following comments were made:

The most important aspect of intercultural communication is the golden line of communication aimed at not offending and humiliating anyone. Individuals within organisations must always try to understand and avoid the kind of communication that might offend other people, but still be able to communicate easily across all levels. This golden rule applies to workplace and any other form of intercultural communication, regardless of the context within which it takes place, as long as the communication in question is taking place between people from different cultural backgrounds. [Participant 1]

Intercultural communication is more about acceptance; accepting that we are unique individuals and giving people from other cultures space to freely express themselves. Colleagues who do not acknowledge our uniqueness tend to look down upon those who are not from the same background as them. They often expect everyone to do as they do as they believe that things must only be done their way. Those who acknowledge and understand differences in individuals are more accommodative and they always strive towards achieving a balance regarding how people should be treated. [Participant 6]

Intercultural communication is about creating a platform where one can respect the dignity of different cultures. In the context of the now generation, intercultural communication also relates to new ways of communication and is not only limited to

face to face way of communicating. The culture of the University must be respect-oriented where no one feels other individuals are more important than others because we work for the same employer. Mutual respect is imperative for promotion of integration within organisations. [Participant 10]

Though purposively selected professionals described the concept differently, their views confirm the literature. The dominant view from responses advanced by purposively selected professionals is that intercultural communication refers to communication encounters between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Purposively selected professionals conceded that acknowledging, accepting and understanding that individuals are unique and different is the core of fostering an enabling environment for employees to engage in intercultural communication, and it is assumed that it contributes to promoting integration and enhancement of intercultural communication. The responses provided by purposively selected professionals confirm the argument in Section 2.6.4, that understanding and appreciating different cultures are essential elements of intensifying intercultural communication. The finding is also consistent with the insight acquired from the available literature and reported in Section 2.3, that acknowledging and understanding the uniqueness of individuals is the starting point for working to improve intercultural communication competence. It is, however, maintained that acknowledging and understanding cultural differences is the precondition for accepting and appreciating individuals from cultures different to your own (also see Section 4.4).

Furthermore, responses provided by purposively selected professionals suggest that communicating with the purpose of avoiding offending and humiliating other participants is an objective that intercultural communication should seek to achieve. What the finding points to is that intercultural communication should occur in such a way that no one engaging in it should feel offended or humiliated in the process. The findings regarding intercultural adaptation, overall, suggest that TUT should invest greater effort to ensuring that employees acknowledge and understand cultural differences and utilise this understanding as the foundation upon which adaptation is promoted, as it is regarded as an intercultural communication variable that can contribute to improving intercultural communication competence.

4.6. CONSTRUCT 4 – CULTURAL ELEMENTS

Literature review findings reported in Section 2.4 show that cultural elements are contributing factors for effective intercultural communication, in that they direct the manner in which individuals communicate across cultures. This assumption suggests that cultural elements play an important role in shaping and informing intercultural communication and that culturally diverse organisations should be conscious of cultural elements that are likely to influence their communication styles.

Furthermore, literature states that elements such as norms, values, beliefs, cultural symbols and stories and rituals are core elements that guide and assist us to shape intercultural communication (see Section 2.5). TUT Strategic Plan (2014–2019) analysis findings point out that, aspects such as integrity, respect, inclusion, honesty and dignity, are features distinguished as fundamentally imperative for shaping intercultural communication at TUT. These are elements TUT should use as contributing factors in its efforts to enhance intercultural communication and to improve intercultural communication competence.

The responses sourced from purposively selected professionals reflect a certain level of familiarity with cultural elements, which were discovered in the literature and TUT strategic and policy documents, including an understanding of the values the university ascribes to.

For instance, Participant 10 mentioned,

If you share beliefs, norms and values, chances are understanding each other during intercultural encounters is possible as these elements inform how people communicate. These elements make us to learn to understand each other during communication encounters. People who share beliefs, norms and values also tend to respect each other, maybe because it is a sign of belonging to same cultural background.

Two other participants also indicated familiarity with the importance of cultural elements in shaping intercultural communication, and gave the following responses.

I would say respect, language and honesty. These are the basics of intercultural communication. Be honest and truthful to yourself and others. [Participant 4]

For me, I think language, traditions, attitude, values, respect, behaviour, habits and the way we perceive things are the main cultural elements that influence the way we interact. One of the challenges that we face is that people hold on to what they believe in and do not want to change that for anything, they have a sense of entitlement.
[Participant 9]

The strategic and policy document analysis findings presented in Section 4.4 in relation to social culture being both a perceived and experienced reality point to a need for the university leadership to aggressively work to change the perspective to a reality that is experienced by all. Despite documented consciousness, strategic and policy documents analysis findings and purposively selected professionals' responses, overall, demonstrate that cultural elements specific to TUT are well documented and employees are familiar with the elements fundamentally necessary for shaping intercultural communication at TUT. Beliefs, norms, language, values, respect, honesty, tradition, attitudes, habits and integrity are the aspects purposively selected professionals submitted as the elements they considered fundamentally necessary in intercultural encounters. Having a communication framework that is, amongst others, structured around the existing documented cultural elements that employees are familiar with, places TUT at an advantage, and makes it more likely that TUT will succeed in its efforts to improve intercultural communication effectiveness.

4.7. CONSTRUCT 5 - BARRIERS TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

It was submitted in Section 2.5 that ineffective intercultural communication practices can lead to failure to achieve organisational success, due to hindrances to or breakdown in communication. Culturally diverse organisations should, therefore, be proactive in ensuring timeous obviation of any factor that has the potential to hinder effective intercultural communication.

Responses solicited from purposively selected professionals exposed different perspectives regarding what they perceive as hindrances or barriers to effective intercultural communication.

Approaching barriers to effective intercultural communication from lack of planning and lack of feeling of belonging perspectives, Participant 3 commented:

Lack of planning is a barrier that poses a challenge to the way people communicate across cultures. It seems we are still behind when it comes to promotion of effective intercultural communication. Colleagues should have that feeling of belonging, which I feel it is lacking. They should feel that they are part of the culture of the university. That, according to me can contribute towards ensuring that colleagues get motivated to align themselves to how everyone is supposed to communicate within the university.

Participant 4 advanced cultural rigidity and limited language proficiency as barriers to effective intercultural communication, through the following comment:

I consider cultural rigidity as one of the barriers to effective intercultural communication. Some people are not prepared to grow beyond their own cultural practices in order to accommodate other cultures. This can create serious tension due to negative attitude towards other people's cultures. People consider their cultures to be superior as compared to cultures of other people. This way of thinking makes it impossible for those who consider themselves better to adopt other cultures not similar to theirs. One can also say that limited language proficiency can be a limitation regarding the ability to communicate effectively across cultures. Lack of proficiency in a language fails people to understand and express their views and feelings.

Listing unwillingness by managers to improve intercultural communication and a hostile environment as the main barriers, Participant 5 commented,

I think largely it is really lack of willingness from those who are in the driving seat to create a platform for their followers to hear each other when they engage in communication across cultures. Our people need to be communicated to; they need to be made aware that there is a specific goal and that they have a part to play for the university to achieve the goal. If you do not have that sort of engagement with your stakeholders, then you are creating hostile, very restrictive and resistant environment that will never be conducive to effective intercultural communication. Therefore, for me, I think the greatest barrier has always been the lack of willingness in being systematic regarding implementing programmes aimed at improving communication between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Regarding limited language proficiency as a hindrance to effective intercultural communication, it was inferred that employees cannot communicate effectively if they are not proficient in the language of communication. It is also perceived that, for employees to communicate effectively, they need to be flexible in accommodating cultural differences. Lack of planning is also perceived to be a hindrance to effective intercultural communication, in that, if managers do not consciously plan for intercultural communication to be enhanced, chances are employees will never make an effort to improve their intercultural communication competence. Furthermore, it was reported that a feeling of belonging contributes to employees being more inclined to make an effort to communicate effectively; it is reasoned that lacking this feeling of belonging can cause a hindrance to effective intercultural communication.

Conscious elimination of the hindrances or barriers to intercultural communication pointed out by purposively selected professionals, namely, lack of planning, lacking a feeling of belonging, cultural rigidity, and a hostile environment, including traditional barriers discovered through the literature review, requires TUT to be proactive in ensuring that factors that may hinder effective intercultural communication are identified and obviated without delay. It was stated in Section 2.2 and highlighted again in Section 2.5 that ineffective intercultural communication is a deficiency that can be avoided by adopting an approach that provides a platform that is conducive to people communicating productively across cultures.

4.8. CONSTRUCT 6 – INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ENABLERS/CO-REQUISITES

Competent intercultural communicators are individuals who possess the desire to improve their intercultural communication abilities, who are in possession of requisite information about different cultures, have the ability to change their behaviour and act in a consistent way in each cultural environment they find themselves in, and have the ability to understand and appreciate cultural differences. As a result, organisations need to invest greater efforts in ensuring that employees are empowered to become competent intercultural communicators, as doing so has the potential to facilitate effective functioning of organisations (as discussed in Section 2.6).

Comments made by purposively selected professionals indicate that they acknowledge that there are conditions that contribute as enabling factors for employees to improve intercultural

communication competence. As an illustration, Participant 4 suggested enablers or co-requisites that are important for employees to become competent intercultural communicators:

One of the greatest weapons that you can give to employees is to make them feel that they matter; by so doing, you know that they will be motivated and encouraged. So, make people feel welcome, make people feel that they matter, make people know that you have their back, and make people feel that they are recognised. All these aspects are essential to motivate and encourage people to become competent intercultural communicators.

Participant 5 offered the following conditions, which are aligned with the enablers that were identified by the analysis of the literature:

Employees should be empowered with skills to become competent intercultural communicators. People who know that they are skilled enough to communicate across cultures easily express themselves in all situations they find themselves. The university should also train employees regarding the primary language that is used for communication purposes.

Participant 10 gave a statement that is slightly different from what is argued in Section 2.6 about intercultural communication enablers; this participant commented as follows from a cultural integration and awareness viewpoint:

Cultural integration initiatives and awareness campaigns should also be conducted throughout the year. New employees should also be oriented to ensure that they understand that the institution they are joining is culturally diverse in nature and that there exists a need for them to familiarize themselves with the new ways of doing things. This approach could make them quickly form relationships and make social connections with ease.

The comments quoted above give substance to the theoretical argument that, for employees to become competent intercultural communicators, they require certain attributes and abilities. Motivation, encouragement, empowering people with skills, training employees, and presenting cultural integration initiatives and awareness campaigns are suggested as conditions that are likely

to enable employees to improve intercultural communication competence. The conditions advanced by purposively selected professionals, specifically, motivation, skills, knowledge and character are aligned with the enablers discussed in Section 2.6 as conditions that are likely to contribute to helping employees become competent intercultural communicators. It is assumed that the submission regarding cultural integration initiatives and cultural awareness campaigns as intercultural communication enablers was triggered by an understanding that the two conditions are likely to equip employees with knowledge about different cultures that exist in the environment within which they operate, including their own culture (as discussed in Section 2.6).

To operationalise the findings related to intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites, managers at TUT have the responsibility to distinguish enablers specific to the university, and to employ them in their purposeful endeavours to enhance intercultural communication.

4.9. CONSTRUCT 7 – INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Employees' ability to communicate effectively across cultures is held as a precondition for them to work to achieve organisational success. The contention in Section 2.6 is that individuals tend to become more competent in intercultural communication if they improve their degree of intercultural expertise.

Commenting on how they adapted and became competent intercultural communicators, purposively selected professionals referred to conditions such as speaking different languages fluently and observing and feeling included as factors they consider to contribute to improvement of intercultural communication competence. As an illustration, Participant 3 stated,

In addition to my home language, I speak different languages fluently. Whenever I interact with people who speak a language or languages different to mine, I make sure that I learn and that is what made me to adapt with ease. I make it my responsibility to make sure that I empower myself by getting skills and knowledge that can assist me to interact with people from cultures different to mine. My desire to communicate with ease serves as a motivator for me to always do my best regarding striving towards ensuring that I never find myself in a situation where I will struggle to engage in a

meaningful conversation because of me not understanding the manner in which other people communicate.

Participant 4 commented,

I learned according to what I was observing every day. Feeling included culminated into a positive feeling that made me to start enjoying my work.

Participant 5 affirmed the empowerment of individuals as a factor that contributes to improvement of intercultural communication competence:

I attended training sessions that were aimed at empowering employees to become aware of the diverse nature of the university. This assisted me to have a better understanding of what cultural diversity is all about and how one can navigate through different stages until you adapt.

It is clear from the statements presented above that there is no invariable mode of adapting that will ensure individuals become competent intercultural communicators. What is prevalent is the common consent regarding the need for employees to adapt in order for them to become competent intercultural communicators. The statements provided above refer to adapting with ease because of being fluent in different languages, adapting through observing what is happening in the environment within which one operates, and adapting because of feeling included – these ways of adapting are in addition to conditions stated in Section 4.8, which are similar to the intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites referred to in Section 2.6, particularly, motivation, skills, knowledge and empowerment of individuals through cultural training sessions/integration initiatives/awareness campaigns. This study advocates for cultural diversity training initiatives that create awareness concerning how intercultural communication could be enhanced so that intercultural communication competence can be improved.

4.10. CONSTRUCT 8 - STAGES OF ADAPTATION

Figure 2.6 summarises adaptation stages, which are phases that individuals go through in their pursuit of becoming competent intercultural communicators. The UCM agrees with the adaptation

stages summarised in Figure 2.6 (in Section 2.7.3.2) and also submits that there are various stages through which individuals move in adapting to cultures that differ from their own.

Purposively selected professionals referred to the following stages they believed individuals go through before they adapt and become competent intercultural communicators. Participant 4 said,

When employees find themselves within environments they are not familiar with, at the beginning, they might find it strange not understanding what is required of them and might feel intimidated. Nevertheless, if the environment is conducive for them to adapt and there is a strategic way of integrating new employees to the new environment, overtime, they become more used to the new environment, accept the new situation, and no longer feel threatened by it. As soon as they accept that the situation is what it is, they eventually integrate and adapt to the new situation.

Participant 6 explained,

Largely, as a new employee, you go through the normal and basic three stages of change. Firstly, finding yourself in a new working place make sort of being frustrated by not knowing what is expected of you by everyone around you. Then you go into a stage where you rather try to form friendship and relate to fellow colleagues. The last stage is asking yourself as to what you do with what you know. How you progress through these stages is dependent on the kind of support you get from the institution. It is important for the university to device ways and means of ensuring that employees are taken by hand for them to navigate through these stages with easy.

Participant 7 said,

They start from a stage of fear and then they move on to a stage of slightly self-doubt. You fear and then you express your doubts, after which you are slightly self-actualised. Then, depending on the environment, you become comfortable and start interacting with your colleagues. It is only after one start feeling comfortable that you slowly start feeling at home. This is then the stage at which you start adapting and get integrated in the new environment, including understanding the way the new colleagues communicate and do things in general.

Participant 8 said,

I think they go through a whole lot of stages. Firstly, they become shocked because they do not know the environment. Depending on the attitudes of the individual employee, the second stage will be grouping, that is identifying yourself with specific individuals within the organisation. That is followed by acclimatising yourself with the way the group you identify with do things. Thereafter, you observe what other groups are like as compared to the group you identify with. Slowly you gel-in and start behaving exactly the same way as the everyone else in general behaves, and that becomes the final stage where you then feel at home and start communication the way each employee is expected to.

Though there are differences regarding the specific stages identified in responses provided by purposively selected professionals, it is clear that they concur that employees go through different stages of adaptation before becoming competent intercultural communicators. Frustration, fear and self-doubt, finding it strange, feeling intimidated and feeling shocked are the experiences purposively selected professionals identified as phases individuals go through during initial stages of their adaptation journey. These experiences correspond with the adaptation stages depicted in Figure 2.6, namely, fascination and excitement, and anticipation stages of adaptation, and Lysgaard's honeymoon stage explained in Section 2.7.4. Forming friendship and relating, self-actualisation and grouping, acclimatisation, gelling-in and feeling at home are experiences that relate to Lysgaard's recovery and integration stages, as are the acceptance, integration and adaptation stages, depicted in Figure 2.6. Acknowledging and understanding the different stages individuals go through in pursuit of adapting and becoming competent intercultural communicators is important for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, in its endeavours to assist employees to navigate through different intercultural adaptation stages from an informed departure point.

The discussion in this chapter, so far, has highlighted TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication. The section that follows will focus on presenting what purposively selected professionals discerned as elements necessary to enhance intercultural communication.

4.11. ELEMENTS NECESSARY TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Content analysis of applicable strategic and policy documents, and responses provided by purposively selected professionals, provided information on knowledgeable awareness of TUT's formal position on its approaches to intercultural communication. As discussed in Section 4.2, strategic and policy document analysis findings provided evidence that cultural diversity management is a valued strategic imperative at TUT. Accordingly, TUT seeks to promote cultural diversity through encouraging equal dignity, respect of all staff members and improved intercultural communication. Purposively selected professionals also recognise and appreciate the culturally diverse nature of TUT, including the uniqueness of its employees. Concerning enhancement of intercultural communication, the content analysis findings and responses provided by purposively selected professionals point to the conclusion that TUT's strategic and policy documents do not refer to providing control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of cultural diversity management through enhancing intercultural communication. It is perceived that the absence of a solid plan of action and lack of conscious and concerted efforts, prevent TUT from strategically and continuously maximising its efforts to use enhancement of intercultural communication as a means to improve intercultural communication competence. Appropriately, the main gap identified through content analysis and responses provided by purposively selected professionals is that, although TUT values and seeks to promote cultural diversity, the institution lacks a solid plan of action aimed at conscious enhancement of intercultural communication – there is no concerted effort to ensure that issues of intercultural communication are managed consistently across the institution.

To address the main gap identified, purposively selected professionals suggested continuous and strategic enhancement of intercultural communication as an approach that TUT needs to follow to improve intercultural communication competence. They are, collectively, of the view that operationalisation of the strategic intercultural communication orientation could be achieved through a framework or policy document, which should prescribe the manner in which intercultural communication competence should be improved. It is assumed that, in the absence of a policy document, uniform, coordinated and focused enhancement of intercultural communication and improvement of intercultural communication competence become difficult.

It was stated in Section 1.4 that one way of enhancing intercultural communication is through a framework suited to the unique nature of TUT. Consistent with the suggestions by purposively selected professionals, it is assumed in this study that having a solid plan of action, and conscious and concerted intercultural communication enhancement efforts could improve TUT's performance and consolidate its standing as one of the best universities in South Africa. It is believed that creating an environment in which a blueprint to enhance intercultural communication is drawn up and implemented is likely to improve the functioning of the university.

In view of the above comprehension, purposively selected professionals were requested to indicate elements they believe should be included in a framework to give guidance to the way intercultural communication could be enhanced. Coupled with suggestions regarding elements of intercultural communication, participants also expressed their views in relation to what they consider to be an ideal approach to intercultural communication.

Regarding the impact of culture on communication, it was asserted in Section 2.4 that culture shapes and informs the style of intercultural communication. In relation to cultural values captured in the TUT Strategic Plan (2014–2019), purposively selected professionals perceive moral values, dignity, equity, and respect as cultural elements that are likely to shape TUT's style of communication (also see Section 4.6). In view of the multi-campus and the culturally diverse nature of the institution, it is suggested that an identical style of communication, informed by applicable cultural imperatives, should apply to all campuses, regardless of where a campus is located. Despite its multi-campus nature, all TUT campuses should work to achieve a common purpose.

In connection with intercultural communication enablers, training, cultural events and awareness campaigns were suggested by purposively selected professionals as the initiatives TUT should embark on to empower employees with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to understand different cultures that exist in the institution, and having the ability to change behaviour and cope in different cultural situations (also see Section 2.6). In line with TUT's slogan, we empower people, purposively selected professionals suggested that employees should be empowered with the knowledge they need to become competent intercultural communicators. It is assumed that having knowledge and skills regarding different cultures that exist at the institution, and the ability to change behaviour, could assist to raise awareness, increase cultural tolerance and inspire

employees to respect one another and adapt communication styles. In Section 2.6, it was argued that knowledge and skills are two of the foremost intercultural communication enablers. Purposively selected professionals extended insight regarding knowledge as an intercultural communication enabler, by referring to the way cognitive information about different cultures, including one's own, could be acquired, for example, training, cultural events and awareness campaigns.

In emphasising the need for early intercultural communication adaptation, purposively selected professionals suggested that sessions aimed at empowering employees with cognitive information about different cultures should occur during early stages in their careers, in the form induction sessions. Additionally, it is proposed that follow-up sessions should take place, so that the institution continuously sensitises employees about cultural differences. This, purposively selected professionals, believe could also be achieved through training sessions, cultural events and awareness campaigns, which participants suggested can be used as platforms to further highlight cultural diversity and the impact it has on the way people communicate across cultures. Imperative to mention that content analysis findings exposed that TUT already has training programmes, campaigns and events aimed at creating cultural diversity awareness and socialising employees to a unified culture (see TUT Diverse Training Guide, 2014). Existing cultural diversity training and awareness initiatives could be used as a foundational platform upon which intensification of intercultural communication could be built.

Still on intercultural communication enablers, purposively selected professionals concurred with the literature that motivation could serve as a driver for employees to adapt and become competent intercultural communicators. Purposively selected professionals were of the view that a sense of belonging motivates and unifies employees to work towards achieving a common purpose. In this instance, a sense of belonging was advanced as a motivation enabler – instead of it being a goal and desired outcome of intercultural communication. It was argued in Section 2.6 that culturally diverse organisations, like TUT, need to invest greater efforts to ensure that employees are motivated to become competent intercultural communicators. This implies that organisations must use motivation as the foundation upon which other intercultural communication competence enablers, such as knowledge, skills and character, are based.

In summation, what purposively selected professionals suggest as an ideal imperative for TUT to enhance intercultural communication point to a need for the university to adopt a strategic and continuous approach. It is perceived that, with due consideration of cultural elements specific to the unique nature of TUT, and motivation, skills and knowledge as enablers, a strategic and continuous approach, supported by a formal document that provides guidance regarding the way employees could embrace cultural differences, is what is needed for employees to navigate through intercultural communication adaptation process. Inherently, findings in this chapter point to an urgent need for TUT to institute a formal way of enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence.

4.12. CONCLUSION

Content analysis findings and responses provided by purposively selected professionals enhanced the comprehension regarding TUT's current and suggested approaches to intercultural communication. The findings and responses provided evidence that, even though cultural diversity management is a valued strategic imperative and that TUT seeks to unify cultural diversity, amongst others, through improved intercultural communication, the institution lacks a solid intercultural communication enhancement implementation plan. This shortcoming prevents the university from consciously improving intercultural communication competence. The significant finding is that, though improvement of intercultural communication is considered a strategic priority, in the absence of a plan of action and concerted intercultural communication enhancement efforts, perceived inadequacies pertaining to the improvement of intercultural communication competence will always be a drawback.

In view of the above, content analysis findings and responses provided by purposively selected professionals point to a need for TUT to have a formal intercultural communication enhancement implementation plan. Considering that effective communication is viewed as an imperative for culturally diverse organisations to function effectively and achieve greater success (as discussed in Section 2.2), TUT should strategically and continuously enhance intercultural communication. With due consideration of cultural elements and intercultural communication enablers specific to the unique nature of TUT, a strategic and continuous approach is what is needed for employees to

navigate the intercultural communication adaptation process better in their efforts to become competent intercultural communicators.

Now that content analysis findings and responses solicited from purposively selected professionals have been presented, in the next chapter, the findings of the online survey will be presented. In the end, conclusions drawn from qualitative and quantitative research approaches will, together with the main literature review findings, be presented and analysed in Chapter 6 of the study – the chapter in which a framework aimed at enhancing intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence is improved, will be proposed. This will be done to reflect how the literature review and empirical study chapters responded to the research questions posed in Section 1.6. Conclusions drawn from the literature review and empirical study findings will, therefore, serve as the foundation upon which the framework this study will propose is based.

CHAPTER 5: PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES OF FACULTY OF HUMANITIES REGARDING CURRENT INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings pertaining to perceptions of academic and non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities regarding current intercultural communication practices will be presented, with the aim of responding to specific research question 1.6.4 posed as follows:

How do TUT employees of the Faculty of Humanities perceive current intercultural communication practices?

The findings reported on this chapter are based on the quantitative data collected through the following data collection method: an online survey conducted among (n=272) academic employees and (n=22) non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities.

The chapter will, first, present findings pertaining to the interconnectedness of biographical variables of employees of the Faculty of Humanities and intercultural communication variables determined for the purpose of the study. Then, the chapter will proceed to present findings regarding the relationship between intercultural communication factors. The insight acquired through the review of literature, as outlined in Chapter 2, will serve as a theoretical blueprint upon which this quantitative component of the empirical study is based.

5.2. EFFECT OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES ON THE FACTORS

In this section, biographical variables of academic and non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities will be presented for the primary purpose of determining the extent of their significance to intercultural communication variables distinguished for the purpose of this study. It is important to know whether a relationship between two variables is practically significant. In a study of relationships between variables, we can often distinguish between dependant variables and independent variables. The variables in a study of cause and effect relationships are called independent and dependent variables – the independent variable is the cause and the dependent variable is the effect (Ellis & Steyn, 2003; Maree, 2011:147). In this study, the intercultural

communication factors displayed in Table 5.1 were studied under the supposition that they depend on biographical variables of participants.

While discussing workplace dimensions of diversity in Section 2.3, it was stated that internal dimensions have a powerful impact on behaviours and attitudes and are regarded as the dimensions in which many divisions between and among individuals exist. In this instance, age, race, education, gender, language and country of origin are the biographical variables that were used to determine their effect on different intercultural communication variables distinguished for the purpose of the quantitative component of this study. The theoretical assumption made in Section 2.3 is that a number of variables, such as the biographical variables used in this study, may influence the perceptions of individuals.

The biographical variables of participants were divided into two types. Some of the variables have order and some do not have order. As an illustration, age and education are, for the purposes of this study, the biographical data variables that have order, however, the same cannot be said of gender, race, language and country of origin of participants.

Table 5.1 lists intercultural communication factors extracted from the questionnaire items. Factor analysis was done for the questionnaire items, to explore the factor loadings; six factors were extracted from the 30 questionnaire items. The purpose of factor analysis is to determine which questionnaire items belong together, in the sense that they measure the same factor. A factor analysis performed on a set of items produces a matrix of items loading on different factors (Creswell, 2011:219). In the case of this study, the analysis involved reducing a large set of items (30 items) to a much smaller set of summary variables (6 factors), in order for the data set to be more manageable and understandable (refer to Table 5.10 for a summary of items loading on each of the six intercultural communication factors).

Table 5.1: Factors loading

Factor number	Factor description
Factor 1 (f1)	Intercultural communication adaptation
Factor 2 (f2)	Intercultural communication competence
Factor 3 (f3)	Impact of culture on communication
Factor 4 (f4)	Recognition and understanding of cultural differences
Factor 5 (f5)	Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion
Factor 6 (f6)	Enhancement of intercultural communication

The findings of the analysis of correlation pertaining to the effect of biographic data variables of employees of the Faculty of Humanities on intercultural communication factors listed in Table 5.1 will be presented in the next sections. The findings will demonstrate whether, in practice, a correlation exists between biographical variables and intercultural communication factors determined for the purpose of this study, for example, whether age or education impact any of the intercultural communication variables displayed in Table 5.1. The information is imperative for managers of organisations, so that they understand which path to follow in their pursuit of enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence.

5.2.1 Differences in intercultural communication factors based on age and education

Results pertaining to the correlation between intercultural communication factors based on age and education are given in Table 5.4. Age and education are of the same type as the intercultural communication factors, because all the factors listed in Table 5.1 also have order. Age and education were compared to the factors by Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, to summarise the strength and direction of a relationship between them or to determine whether there were any statistical differences between the factors and these ordered biographical variables. Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed). A lower mean or lower score for factors means they agree less than in a case were a higher mean or higher score would have been achieved.

Table 5.4 shows that there are no statistically significant differences between intercultural communication factors based on age and education level. Table 5.2 shows that age and education of academic and non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities had no effect on their perceptions on “intercultural communication adaptation”, “intercultural communication competence”, “impact of culture on communication”, “recognition and understanding of cultural differences”, “intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion” and “enhancement of intercultural communication”. Even though participants were of different ages and had different educational levels, the results point to the conclusion that there were no significant statistical differences regarding the manner in which participants responded to questions related to the intercultural communication factors based on age and level of education.

Table 5.2: Correlation between age and education and factors

Factors		Age	Education
Intercultural communication adaptation	Correlation coefficient	0.008	-0.003
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.897	0.956
	Number	282	284
Intercultural communication competence	Correlation coefficient	0.099	0.113
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.098	0.057
	Number	282	283
Impact of culture on communication	Correlation coefficient	0.035	-0.027
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.559	0.645
	Number	289	289
Recognition and understanding of cultural differences	Correlation coefficient	-0.054	-0.075
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.359	0.201
	Number	291	291
Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion	Correlation coefficient	0.070	0.059
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.235	0.214

Factors		Age	Education
	Number	288	290
Enhancement of intercultural communication	Correlation coefficient	0.081	0.074
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.167	0.210
	Number	289	289

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

5.2.2 Differences in intercultural communication factors based on country of origin

As shown in Table 5.3, the independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare differences in intercultural communication factors based on country of origin of participants. Though various countries were listed in the questionnaire completed by participants, all countries, except for South Africa, were, for the purpose of this test, grouped together. Table 5.3 therefore shows South Africa and other countries as participants’ countries of origin. Table 5.3 shows that more participants were South Africans than participants from other countries grouped together.

While South Africans had a high mean on most factors, participants from other countries recorded a high mean value on intercultural communication competence. South Africans and participants from other countries recorded the same mean value for enhancement of intercultural communication. Furthermore, Table 5.3 shows that there were statistically significant differences between South Africans and participants from other countries on the impact of culture on communication. The scores for this factor for South Africans (mean=2.95; standard deviation=0.42) and participants from other countries (mean=2.84; standard deviation=0.37) translated to a p-value of <.05 (0.023). However, the effect size of 0.25 is a small effect and this demonstrates that there is not much difference, in practice, pertaining to the manner in which South Africans and participants from other countries perceive the impact of culture on communication.

Table 5.3: Differences in intercultural communication based on country of origin

Factors	Country of origin	Number of employees	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size
Intercultural communication adaptation	South Africa	169	3.08	0.30	0.166	0.16
	Other countries	115	3.03	0.35		
Intercultural communication competence	South Africa	169	3.03	0.30	0.665	0.05
	Other countries	114	3.05	0.32		
Impact of culture on communication	South Africa	174	2.95	0.42	0.023	0.25
	Other countries	116	2.84	0.37		
Recognition and understanding of cultural differences	South Africa	175	3.03	0.37	0.192	0.15
	Other countries	117	2.97	0.34		
Intercultural communication as source of team cohesion	South Africa	173	3.02	0.31	0.835	0.02
	Other countries	117	3.03	0.28		
Enhancement of intercultural communication	South Africa	174	3.03	0.32	0.950	0,01
	Other countries	116	3.03	0.29		

5.2.3 Differences in intercultural communication factors based on gender

Table 5.4 illustrates the results of one-way analysis of variance on intercultural communication factors based on gender. Table 5.4 shows that the largest number of participants (48.6%, n=143) were men; 28 (9.5%) participants did not specify their gender; and 42% (n=123) of participants were women.

The findings in Table 5.4 indicate that the p-value on intercultural communication adaptation, intercultural communication competence, impact of culture on communication, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion, and enhancement of intercultural communication, is smaller than 0.05, demonstrating that there were statistically significant differences between male, female and prefer not to say employees in these factors based on gender. Considering the mean of different gender groupings, the preferred not say participants recorded the lowest scores in all the five factors referenced to above. This finding implies that it was statistically proven that there were differences between the prefer not to say employees and male and female employees in all five factors that recorded a p-value of smaller than 0.05. Despite its insignificance, the finding demonstrates that organisations should develop intercultural communication enhancement plans of action that seek to advance inclusion of all employees. The results in Table 5.4 also show that there were no statistically significant differences in recognition and understanding of cultural differences based on gender, including the prefer not to say employees. Furthermore, the results show that there were no statistically significant differences between men and women in all six intercultural communication factors listed in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Differences in intercultural communication based on gender

Factors	Gender	Number of employees	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size male with	Effect size female with
Intercultural communication adaptation	Male	134	3.09	0.32			
	Female	123	3.07	0.26		0.06	
	Prefer not to say	27	2.84	0.49		0.51	0.47
	Total	284	3.06	0.32	0.001		
Intercultural communication competence	Male	133	3.07	0.29			
	Female	123	3.04	0,26		0.07	
	Prefer not to say	27	2.85	2.50		0.42	0.38
	Total	283	3.04	0.31	0.004		
Impact of culture on communication	Male	139	2.93	0.38			
	Female	123	2.96	0.38		0.07	
	Prefer not to say	28	2.59	0.49		0.69	0.75

Factors	Gender	Number of employees	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size male with	Effect size female with
	Total	290	2.91	0.41	0.000		
Recognition and understanding of cultural differences	Male	141	2.99	0.34			
	Female	123	3.05	0.31		0.20	
	Prefer not to say	28	2.90	0.57		0.14	0.26
	Total	292	3.01	0.36	0.091		
Intercultural communication as source of team cohesion	Male	139	3.06	0.29			
	Female	123	3.03	0.21		0.08	
	Prefer not to say	28	2.84	0.54		0.40	0.36
	Total	290	3.03	0.30	0.002		
Enhancement of intercultural communication	Male	139	3.06	0.28			
	Female	123	3.03	0.27		0.11	
	Prefer not to say	28	2.84	0.51		0.43	0.37
	Total	290	3.03	0.31	0.003		

0.2= small; 0.5=medium; 0.8=large

5.2.4 Differences in intercultural communication based on language

Though various languages were listed in the questionnaire completed by participants, all languages, except Afrikaans and English, were, for the purpose of analysis in this section, grouped together as indigenous language. Therefore, Afrikaans, English and indigenous languages are the language groupings used for the purpose of analysing differences in intercultural communication factors based on languages. Table 5.5 shows that most of the participants were speakers of indigenous languages.

The findings in Table 5.5 show that the p-value on intercultural communication adaptation, intercultural communication competence, impact of culture on communication, recognition and understanding of cultural differences, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion, and enhancement of intercultural communication, is above 0.05, demonstrating that there were no statistically significant differences between speakers of Afrikaans, English and indigenous languages. The findings indicate that, in practice, the extent to which intercultural communication is perceived in terms of the factors in Table 5.5 was not dependant on the language spoken by participants.

Table 5.5: Differences in intercultural communication based on languages

Factors	Language	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size Afrikaans with	Effect size English with
Intercultural communication adaptation	Afrikaans	41	3.1289	0.29949			
	English	71	3.0827	0.28500		0.15	
	Indigenous	151	3.0257	0.34197		0.30	0.17
	Total	263	3.0572	0.3224	0.141		
Intercultural communication competence	Afrikaans	41	3.1293	0.36759			
	English	71	3.0176	0.30344		0.30	
	Indigenous	150	3.0153	0.27727		0.31	0.01
	Total	262	3.0338	0.30165	0.087		
Impact of culture on communication	Afrikaans	41	2.9268	0.36142			
	English	73	2.9178	0.30697		0.02	
	Indigenous	155	2.9151	0.45321		0.03	0.01
	Total	269	2.9176	0.40356	0.986		
Recognition and understanding of	Afrikaans	41	3.0285	0.31159			
	English	74	3.0090	0.33999		0.06	

Factors	Language	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size Afrikaans with	Effect size English with
cultural difference	Indigenous	156	3.0021	0.39982		0.07	0.02
	Total	271	3.0080	0.37079	0.922		
Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion	Afrikaans	41	3.1098	0.28287			
	English	74	3.0086	0.27500		0.36	
	Indigenous	154	3.0030	0.31754		0.34	0.02
	Total	269	3.0208	0.30256	0.123		
Enhancement of intercultural communication	Afrikaans	41	3.0927	0.30691			
	English	73	3.0055	0.30363		0.28	
	Indigenous	155	3.0110	0.32184		0.25	0.02
	Total	269	3.0219	0.31505	0.294		

5.2.5 Differences in intercultural communication based on race

Table 5.6 contains differences in intercultural communication based on race. The table reflects that most of the academic and non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities who participated in the online survey were Africans, fewer participants were white, Coloured and Indian.

The results in Table 5.6 indicate that African, white, Coloured and Indian participants had higher mean values on intercultural communication adaptation than on other five intercultural communication factors (Africans: mean=3.04, standard deviation=0.29; whites: mean=3.16, standard deviation=0.35; Coloureds: mean=3.07, standard deviation=0.19; Indians: mean=3.09, standard deviation 0.23). However, the results in Table 5.6 indicate that there were no statistically significant (p -value $>.05$) differences observed on all factors of intercultural communication based on race of academic and non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities who participated in the online survey. The results show that the perceptions of participants regarding the intercultural communication factors were not informed by their belonging to different racial groupings.

Table 5.6: Differences in intercultural communication based on race

Factors	Race	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size African with	Effect size White with	Effect size Coloured with
Intercultural communication adaptation	African	188	3.04	0.29				
	White	58	3.16	0.35		0.35		
	Coloured	23	3.07	0.19		0.11	0.25	
	Indian	14	3.09	0.23		0.17	0.20	0.07
	Total	283	3.07	0.30	0.060			
Intercultural communication competence	African	188	3.03	0.29				
	White	58	3.05	0.42		0.04		
	Coloured	23	3.03	0.24		0.02	0.06	
	Indian	14	3.04	0.16		0.04	0.02	0.07
	Total	283	3.04	0.31	0.980			
Impact of culture on communication	African	193	2.88	0.45				
	White	59	2.95	0.32		0.16		
	Coloured	24	2.88	0.30		0.01	0.22	
	Indian	14	3.05	0.12		0.36	0.29	0.56

Factors	Race	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size African with	Effect size White with	Effect size Coloured with
	Total	290	2.91	0.41	0.363			
Recognition and understanding of cultural difference	African	194	3.01	0.36				
	White	59	2.99	0.35		0.04		
	Coloured	24	3.04	0.36		0.10	0.14	
	Indian	14	3.10	0.28		0.24	0.30	0.15
	Total	291	3.01	0.36	0.764			
Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion	African	192	3.01	0.30				
	White	59	3.09	0.31		0.25		
	Coloured	24	2.01	0.30		0.01	0.27	0.07
	Indian	14	2.99	0.11		0.08	0.33	
	Total	289	3.03	0.30	0.320			
Enhancement of intercultural communication	African	193	3.01	0.31				
	White	59	3.08	0.34		0.19		
	Coloured	24	3.01	0.30		0.01	0.20	
	Indian	13	3.07	0.23		0.19	0.02	0.21

Factors	Race	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Effect size African with	Effect size White with	Effect size Coloured with
	Total	290	3.03	0.31	0.491			

5.3. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY STATISTICS

After data had been collected, questionnaire items were coded, cleaned, validated and analysed using SPSS version 25.0. Data cleaning (validation) was done by first checking whether data entries corresponded with items and sub-items in the questionnaire. Validity was assessed using Pearson's product moment correlations to assess the degree of internal consistency of the scores from a set of indicators (questionnaire items). Reliability analysis was done using internal reliability. The two analyses (validity and reliability analyses) were used to assess the validity of the data collection instrument and to assess whether items in the instrument (questionnaire) measured the same construct that they are purposed to measure (reliability).

Table 5.7 presents the reliability of intercultural communication factors within the workplace. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were 0.750 for impact of culture on communication; 0.754 for enhancement of intercultural communication; 0.756 for recognition and understanding of cultural differences; 0.808 for intercultural communication as source of team cohesion; 0.825 for intercultural communication competence; and 0.904 for intercultural communication adaptation. All the Cronbach Alpha values were higher than the recommended threshold of 0.70, which is an indication that the online survey questionnaire was reliable. The high Cronbach's Alpha values of all the factors show a good internal consistency of items included in the questionnaire, and this was found to be acceptable (Sekaran, 2003:311).

Table 5.7: Cronbach's Alpha

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardised items	Number of items
Intercultural communication adaptation	0,904	0,905	8
Intercultural communication competence	0,825	0,826	5
Impact of culture on communication	0,750	0,747	3
Recognition and understanding of cultural difference	0,756	0,759	3
Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion	0,808	0.809	6
Enhancement of intercultural communication	0.754	0.756	5

5.4. EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Exploratory factor analysis was done to determine questionnaire items that measure the same factor to simplify interrelated measures and to explore a possible underlying factor structure of a set of the observed intercultural communication variables (items) imposing a preconceived structure on the outcome. The purpose of factor analysis was to reduce data dimensionality by explaining correlations among multiple outcomes resulting from one or more underlying factors. A common factor analysis technique was used since the factors determined for the purpose of this study were common to the questionnaire items measuring them (see Section 3.4.2.4).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was .8911, surpassing the acceptable value of .60 (Kaiser, 1974). The Bartlett sphericity test was also conducted and achieved statistical significance, which confirmed the matrix of correlation ($\chi^2=4884.624$; $df=435$; $p < 0.0001$) (Bartlett, 1954; Pallant, 2011:199). The test statistic (KMO=.8911) from the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy test was closer to 1 and was, hence, found to be acceptable. The combination of these two tests' results provided minimum requirements for the researcher to conduct factor analysis (or

principal components analysis). Communalities (h^2), defined, as the sum of squared factor loadings of the variables, were included in the output to show the proportion of each variable's variance that could be explained by the factors. The extraction communalities, the proportion of each variable's variance that can be explained by the retained factors column in Table 5.8, indicates that basically all variables were well represented in the common factor space ($0.45 \leq h^2 \leq 1$). Therefore, the researcher proceeded with factor analysis.

Table 5.8: KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
KMO measure of sampling adequacy		0.8911
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	4884,624
	Df	435
	Sig.	0,000

Table 5.9 illustrates item loadings, Eigenvalues and percentage variance for each extracted factor. To this end, factor analysis was done on the questionnaire data by running principal component analysis in SPSS 25.0 to explore the factor loadings, which resulted in six factors being extracted from the 30 questionnaire items (Table 5.10). Eigenvalues represent the proportion of variance accounted for by the factors. Pearson's correlation analysis showed that all the factors that form part of a six-component solution have Eigenvalues higher than 1. A summary of factor loadings and Eigenvalues and percentage variances for each factor are given in Table 5.9. The six factors that were extracted represent 63.32% of the total variance, which is considered a good statistic (Akram, Chen, Eaton & Wei, 2016). Table 5.9 shows the rotated component matrix of extracted factors, and it can be observed that the first extracted factor (factor 1) spanned the largest number of facets of intercultural communication, loaded very strongly, and constituted 38.71% of total variance; it comprised items 17, 18, 19, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29. This factor was named *intercultural communication adaptation*. Items 15, 16, 22, 23 and 24 loaded on the second factor, which was named *intercultural communication competence*. This factor constituted 6.75% of total variance. The third factor, factor 3, which was named *impact of culture on communication*, consisted of

three facets of intercultural communication – items 3, 4 and 5 – and constituted 5.52% of total variance. The other extracted factors loaded weakly (each constituted <5% of total variance). Factor 4, named *recognition and understanding of cultural differences* and consisting of items 1, 9 and 10, accounted 4.55% of total variance. Factor 5 was named *intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion*, and consisted of items 6, 11, 12, 13, 20 and 21, and accounted for 4.18% of total variance. Items 2, 7, 8, 14 and 30 loaded on factor 6, which was named *enhancement of intercultural communication*, and accounted for 3.61% of total variance.

To assess the degree of internal consistency of scores from a set of indicators (questionnaire items), reliability analysis was done. The decision criterion used for this method is that, when a questionnaire item score correlates significantly with the total score, the item is considered valid. Corrected item-total correlations (Table 5.7) were checked to determine the level of internal consistency of items' scores with composite scores from all other items purposed to measure the same construct. Results in Table 5.9 show that correlations between each item and the total score for most of the questionnaire items were strong (corr >.3). These items correlate well with the overall score from the scale. If items have weaker correlation, they might be dropped from the questionnaire because they are not internally consistent with other items, meaning that they seem to fail to measure the construct they are supposed to measure. To this end, Table 5.9 shows that all items had a strong correlation with the composite score (corr <-.3). All item loadings exceeded 0.30, which is within the acceptable limits, and they were, thus, retained (see Matsunaga, 2010:101).

Table 5.9: Factors summary, items number and items loading on the factors

Factors and items	Item loading
Factor 1: Intercultural communication adaptation (Eigenvalue=11.61, % of variance=38.71)	
It is imperative for managers to understand how individuals transit from one culture to the other, so that managers can devise strategies to improve intercultural communication	0.685
It is vital that managers motivate employees from different cultural backgrounds, so that they become competent intercultural communicators	0.669
For communication to be enhanced, employees need to acknowledge cultural changes happening around them	0.660
It is of essence that organisations devise ways and means to ensure that employees adapt and become competent intercultural communicators	0.620
Commitment is important for employees to adapt, to the extent that intercultural communication is enhanced	0.619
Effective communication is essential for employees to integrate and work towards the achievement of a common purpose	0.605
Creation of a conducive environment for new employees to be accepted is necessary for them to adapt to the way intercultural communication occurs	0.586
Uncertainty of new employees should be managed such that they understand and acknowledge cultural changes confronting them	0.584
Factor 2: Intercultural communication competence (Eigenvalue=2.02, % of variance=6.75)	
Character of employees determines the extent to which they could adapt and become competent intercultural communicators	-0.690
For communication to be enhanced, employees have no choice but to adapt to the manner in which information is transmitted	-0.569
Management of anxiety is a requisite for new employees to understand and acknowledge cultural changes confronting them	-0.530
It is crucial for employees to accept that it is important that information is communicated such that it is received in the context within which it was transmitted	-0.475

Factors and items	Item loading
Management should provide financial resources necessary for the successful empowerment of employees to communicate effectively across cultures	-0.459
Factor 3: Impact of culture on communication (Eigenvalue=1.66, % of variance=5.52)	
Culture tells us how to interpret how to communicate with individuals from other cultures	0.963
Culture and communication are inseparable, as culture is the foundation of communication	0.890
Achievement of organisational success is possible if employees have the capacity to communicate effectively across cultures	0.422
Factor 4: Recognition and understanding of cultural differences (Eigenvalue=1.36, % of variance=4.55)	
For intercultural communication to be enhanced, it is essential for employees to understand the dominant language used within the organisation they work for	-0.790
The ability to adapt is a requisite for employees to become capable of communicating effectively in a culture other than the one they were originally socialised to	-0.593
Recognising that present-day organisations are diverse in nature is the starting point in working towards enhancement of intercultural communication	-0.320
Factor 5: Intercultural communication as source of team cohesion (Eigenvalue=1.25, % of variance=4.18)	
It is imperative that attempts by dominant groups to suppress voices of minority groups is managed such that effective intercultural communication is achieved	-0.811
Employees should be equipped with the necessary skills to enable them to successfully adapt and become competent intercultural communicators	-0.660
Events aimed at raising awareness through promotion of integration of employees is vital for the enhancement of intercultural communication	-0.624
In spite of initial denials, employees have no choice but to adapt in order to effectively communicate across cultures	-0.621

Factors and items	Item loading
Knowledge of cultural backgrounds of fellow employees is important for individuals to become competent intercultural communicators	-0.352
Positive sense of belonging is crucial for employees to adapt to the extent that intercultural communication is enhanced	-0.348
Factor 6: Enhancement of intercultural communication (Eigenvalue= 1.08, % of variance=3.61)	
In first-time communication encounters, employees tend to defend themselves, thereby considering that the way they communicate is better than the way colleagues from other cultures do	0.691
It is vital for organisations to have a framework to give guidance to the way in which intercultural communication should be enhanced	0.548
It is of critical importance that the uniqueness of employees is managed such that intercultural communication is enhanced	0.527
Management of the cultural shock employees experience when they join a new organisation is critical for them to adapt and communicate effectively across cultures	0.461
Understanding of nonverbal behaviour of individuals is essential for employees from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively	0.328

Table 5.10: Factors summary, items number and items loading on the factors

Items loading	Factor description and number of items
17, 18, 19, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29	(f1) Intercultural communication adaptation – 8 items
15, 16, 22, 23 and 24	(f2) Intercultural communication competence – 5 items
3, 4 and 5	(f3) Impact of culture on communication – 3 items
1, 9 and 10	(f4) Recognition and understanding of cultural differences – 3 items
6, 11, 12, 13, 20 and 21	(f5) Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion – 6 items
2, 7, 8, 14 and 30	(f6) Enhancement of intercultural communication – 5 items
Total	6 factors x 30 items

5.5. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION FACTORS

Table 5.11 shows the relationships between different intercultural communication factors, as determined for the purpose of this study. It was stated in Section 5.4 that an exploratory factor analysis was done on the questionnaire data to explore the factor loadings, which resulted in six factors being extracted from the 30 questionnaire items, as shown in Table 5.10.

5.5.1 Intercultural communication adaptation

The results displayed in Table 5.11 show that intercultural communication adaptation was largely correlated with intercultural communication competence ($r=.533, p<.01$), recognition and understanding of cultural differences ($r=.512, p<.01$), intercultural communication as source of team cohesion ($r=.530, p<.01$), and enhancement of intercultural communication ($r=.588, p<.01$), thereby confirming the best fit between these variables. The results also reflect that intercultural communication adaptation was moderately correlated with impact of culture on communication ($r=.348, p<.01$). These results are a key finding. In essence, even though the correlation with the impact of culture on communication is moderate, the results overall point to the finding that

intercultural communication adaptation has a positive impact on all other intercultural communication variables. A large positive correlation with four of the other five variables, and a positive moderate correlation with just one of the variables, therefore, indicate that intercultural communication adaptation is an intercultural communication imperative that is necessary for culturally diverse organisations to enhance intercultural communication successfully.

It was maintained in Section 2.7.1 that adapting for communication purposes is necessary, as it is essential for individuals from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively and work to achieve a common purpose. Consistent with this literature review argument, the results displayed in Table 5.11 imply that, in practice, and considering its best fit with four of the intercultural communication variables, and the moderate relationship with impact of culture on communication, intercultural communication adaptation needs to serve as the foundation upon which intercultural communication enhancement efforts should be based, as it has the probability of influencing all other variables. The finding highlights the importance of organisations instituting measures in place that aim to improve intercultural communication adaptation, as this is likely to enhance intercultural communication and improve intercultural communication competence.

5.5.2 Intercultural communication competence

The results displayed in Table 5.11 indicate a best fit between intercultural communication competence and intercultural communication adaptation ($r=.533$, $p<0.1$), in view of their strong positive correlation. Intercultural communication competence was moderately correlated with recognition and understanding of cultural differences ($r=.319$, $p<.01$), intercultural communication as source of team cohesion ($r=.415$, $p<.01$) and intentional enhancement of intercultural communication ($r=.433$, $p<.01$). These results related to the relationship between intercultural communication competence and other intercultural communication factors, determined for the purpose of this study, collectively support the theoretical assumption advanced in Sections 1.1, 1.3 and 2.6, that without effective intercultural communication, organisations cannot effectively function, and that organisations should create an environment wherein plans, work instructions, issues, opinions, thoughts and ideas pertaining to work are discussed through effective communication. The key finding is that intercultural communication competence, which is the ability to communicate effectively across cultures (as discussed in Section 2.6), plays an important

role in employees adapting to and improving intercultural communication effectiveness, recognising and understanding cultural differences and being unified towards achieving a common purpose. The positive effect intercultural communication competence has on other intercultural communication variables points to a need for continuous improvement of intercultural communication effectiveness, as this is likely to lead to the successful intensification of other intercultural communication variables.

5.5.3 Impact of culture on communication

Impact of culture on communication was moderately correlated with intercultural communication adaptation ($r=.348, p<.01$), recognition and understanding of cultural differences ($r=.318, p<.01$), intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion ($r=.339, p<.01$), and enhancement of intercultural communication ($r=.316, p<.01$). It is interesting to note a slight contrast: impact of culture on communication had a less than moderate correlation with intercultural communication competence ($r=.178, p<.01$). Even though the results indicate that there is a positive relationship between the two variables, the less than moderate correlation does not strongly support the theoretical assumption advanced in Section 2.4 that culture and communication are inseparable, as culture is the foundation of communication and that culture shapes or shapes the style of communication. In essence, the low correlation signifies that, in practice, culture has a more positive impact on intercultural communication adaptation, recognition and understanding of cultural differences, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion and enhancement of intercultural communication, compared to intercultural communication competence. However, considering the overall positive relationship, managers of organisations need to understand the effect culture has on other intercultural communication variables, and leverage that knowledge and use it to devise strategies intended to continuously enhance and intensify intercultural communication and other intercultural communication variables.

5.5.4 Recognition and understanding of cultural differences

Recognition and understanding of cultural differences largely correlated with intercultural communication adaptation ($r=.512, p<.01$) and enhancement of intercultural communication ($r=.564, p<.01$) (confirming a strong correlation between the three variables), and moderately

correlated with intercultural communication as source of team cohesion ($r=.408, p<.01$). Though the results show a positive correlation between all variables, what the findings tell us is that, in practice, recognition and understanding of cultural differences are more likely to have a positive impact on intercultural communication adaptation and enhancement of intercultural communication. To a moderate extent, recognising and understanding cultural differences is perceived necessary to intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion, impact of culture on communication, and intercultural communication competence. The finding supports the theoretical argument made in Section 2.6.4, that understanding, respecting and appreciating different cultures is an essential element of intensification of intercultural communication. The results suggest that organisations should introduce initiatives aimed at engagements to build a common understanding and recognition of different cultures that exist in the workplace, as there is a probability that it will affect other intercultural communication variables.

5.5.5 Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion

There was a large correlation between intercultural communication as source of team cohesion and intercultural communication adaptation ($r=.530, p<.01$), and a moderate correlation with all other intercultural communication variables distinguished for the purpose of this study. It was assumed in Section 2.3 that, if cultural diversity is managed properly, regardless of the uniqueness of individuals, differences can be a source of team cohesion and possibly help nurture organisation success. Consistent with this theoretical assumption, the findings displayed in Table 5.11 tell us that intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion has an effect on all other variables determined for the purpose of this study. Moreover, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion and intercultural communication adaptation are more mutually reinforcing. This implies that it is important for organisations to establish a sense of team cohesion, as this is essential, largely, for intercultural communication adaptation, and moderately necessary for all other relevant intercultural communication variables to be achieved.

5.5.6 Enhancement of intercultural communication

The results displayed in Table 5.11 demonstrate that enhancement of intercultural communication was largely correlated with intercultural communication adaptation and recognition and

understanding of cultural differences, and moderately correlated with intercultural communication competence, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion and impact of culture on communication. The results mean that enhancing intercultural communication has a positive effect, largely, on intercultural communication adaptation and recognition and understanding of cultural differences. In essence, the more organisations strive to enhance intercultural communication, the more employees are likely to adapt communication-wise and recognise and understand cultural differences that exist in the workplace.

Overall, the results regarding correlation between intercultural communication variables relevant for the purpose of this study are that all variables have an effect on one another. Furthermore, Table 5.11 shows that the correlations between all intercultural communication variables tend to be medium to large, and this indicates a statistically validated conclusion that there is either a moderate or a strong relationship between all variables. The results, furthermore, demonstrate that intercultural communication adaptation tends to have a greater effect on the other factors, followed by impact of culture on communication and enhancement of intercultural communication.

Based on the results displayed in Table 5.11, there seems to be considerable empirical support for motivation to develop a framework to enhance intercultural communication such that employees could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist organisations achieve success. The study determined that intercultural communication adaptation, recognising and understanding cultural differences, and the impact of culture on communication and intercultural communication enhancement are mutual reinforcing, and go hand in hand in as far as enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence is concerned.

Table 5.11: Correlation coefficient of intercultural communication factors

Factors		ICA	ICC	ICOC	RUCD	ICSTC	EIC
Intercultural communication adaptation	Correlation coefficient	1,000	.533**	.348**	.512**	.530**	.588**
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
	Number	284	283	283	283	284	283
Intercultural communication competence	Correlation coefficient	.533**	1,000	.178**	.319**	.415**	.433**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0,000		0,003	0,000	0,000	0,000
	Number	283	283	283	283	283	283
Impact of culture on communication	Correlation coefficient	.348**	.178**	1,000	.318**	.339**	.316**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0,000	0,003		0,000	0,000	0,000
	Number	283	283	290	290	288	290
Recognition and understanding of cultural difference	Correlation coefficient	.512**	.319**	.318**	1,000	.408**	.564**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000		0,000	0,000
	Number	283	283	290	292	289	290
Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion	Correlation coefficient	.530**	.415**	.339**	.408**	1,000	.465**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000		0,000
	Number	284	283	288	289	290	288

Factors		ICA	ICC	ICOC	RUCD	ICSTC	EIC
Enhancement of intercultural communication	Correlation coefficient	0.588	.433**	.316**	.564**	.465**	1,000
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	
	Number	283	283	290	290	288	290

** Correlation is medium at .3 and large at .5. ICA=Intercultural communication adaptation; ICC=Intercultural communication competence; ICOC=Impact of culture of communication; RUCD=Recognition and understanding of cultural differences; ICSTC=Intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion; EIC=Enhancement of intercultural communication

5.6. CONCLUSION

By applying a quantitative approach, this study was able to uncover statistically validated insight pertaining to the nature of the interconnectedness between (1) biographical variables and factors extracted from questionnaire items, and (2) the relationship between various intercultural communication variables.

The findings pertaining to the biographical variables indicate that education, age, language, race, and country of origin do not influence the manner in which employees perceive intercultural communication adaptation, intercultural communication competence, the impact of culture on communication, recognition and understanding of cultural differences, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion, and enhancement of intercultural communication. In addition, the findings show that women and men perceive the above intercultural communication variables in the same way. These findings are in contrast with the theoretical assumption that internal workplace dimensions of diversity, including biographical variables, are dimensions in which many divisions between and among individuals exist.

It was also interesting to note a slight difference in the perceptions of employees of the Faculty of Humanities; those who preferred not to indicate their gender status experienced the intercultural communication variables referenced in the preceding paragraph differently than participants who stated their gender status. Despite its insignificance, the finding demonstrates that organisations should develop intercultural communication enhancement plans of action that seek to advance inclusion of all employees.

With regard to the relationship between intercultural communication variables, the findings show that all intercultural communication variables identified for the purpose of this study are mutually reinforcing, in that, they all have an effect on one another. The statistical validation of the positive nature of the relationship between intercultural communication variables supports the rationale to integrate all intercultural communication variables determined for the purpose of the quantitative component of this study when organisations develop strategies aimed at enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence.

The positive relationships between intercultural communication variables suggest that, for TUT to strategically and continuously enhance intercultural communication and improve intercultural communication competence, all members of the institution need to adapt to new ways of communicating, efforts should be made to ensure that effective intercultural communication is achieved, all employees should recognise and appreciate cultural differences, and that the impact culture has on the manner in which employees who are unique due to cultural differences communicate should be acknowledged and understood. The finding that intercultural communication adaptation tends to have a greater effect on other factors is particularly significant for the current study, because it suggests that intercultural communication adaptation is a variable that has a more positive effect on other intercultural communication variables.

Lastly, the findings regarding the perceptions of employees of the Faculty of Humanities in relation to the current intercultural communication practices emphasise a need for TUT to utilise intercultural communication adaptation as a foundation upon which its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours are based. The findings expand existing theory regarding a need for culturally diverse organisations to enhance intercultural communication as a means to improve intercultural communication competence and, to unify employees to work to achieve a common purpose.

The empirical study and literature review findings served as a basis for developing a framework to enhance intercultural communication, which will be presented in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 introduced the study and provided the orientation to and scope of the study. The problem statement was discussed, and the research objectives and the guiding theoretical arguments were elucidated. In this chapter, conclusions will be drawn on the findings of the review of the literature and the empirical study. The conclusions on the findings of the literature review and empirical study provide a basis for the researcher to conceptualise a framework to enhance intercultural communication in a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT. In order to frame the framework to enhance intercultural communication in a contextualised manner, the conclusions and the assumptions motivating such a framework are presented first. Thereafter, recommendations are made with a specific focus on the core features of the intercultural communication enhancement framework the study is proposing as its main contribution.

The literature review in Chapter 2 outlined theoretical perspectives regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles that are relevant for a culturally diverse organisation to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence. The intercultural communication adaptation principles identified by means of the literature review served as the main theoretical guide of the empirical study. Chapter 4 determined TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication, by means of content analysis of strategic and policy documents, and semi-structured interviews with staff who manage cultural diversity and communication. Chapter 5 determined the perceptions of employees of the Faculty of Humanities regarding current intercultural communication practices, by means of an online survey.

The study was guided by the following general research question, stated in Section 1.5:

What are the assumptions motivating a framework to assist TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist the university to achieve success?

The conclusions drawn on the findings of the literature review and empirical study will be presented in the next section. The conclusions are presented in accordance with the specific research questions posed in Section 1.6.

6.2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE REGARDING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION PRINCIPLES

Chapter 2 reviewed and contextualised intercultural communication adaptation principles relevant for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence could be improved to respond to specific Research Question 1.6.1, posed as follows:

What are the theoretical perspectives regarding intercultural communication adaptation principles that are relevant for a culturally diverse organisation to enhance intercultural communication, such that intercultural communication competence is improved?

The above question finds answers in the following theoretical intercultural communication adaptation imperatives argued in Chapter 2.

6.2.1 Internal communication

Chapter 2 began with an analysis and contextualisation of internal communication based on the comprehension that, in organisations, communication occurs in the context of internal communication (see Section 2.2.). The analysis and contextualisation of internal communication closed with the following foundational principles:

- **Principle 1:** Organisations need to ground internal communication practices in their strategic orientations.
- **Principle 2:** Strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication is imperative for culturally diverse employees to improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist organisations to achieve success.

- **Principle 3:** Alignment of internal communication strategies and an organisation's strategies assists organisations to develop and implement internal communication practices that support their strategic orientations.

In view of the foundational principles referenced to above, the fundamental theoretical insight derived from the discussion in Section 2.2, pertaining to internal communication, is that, for organisations to increase overall effectiveness of a team and unify employees towards a common purpose, they need to strategically and continuously enhance internal communication. It is maintained that organisations need to ground their internal communication practices in their strategic orientations, and that an organisation's strategic orientation ought to serve as the specific purpose or main motive for why employees need to be unified towards a common purpose.

It is argued that strategy-aligned intercultural communication could increase the overall effectiveness of a TUT team in that it allows coherence and integration between strategic priorities of an organisation with the goals and desired outcomes of internal communication. Strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication within TUT should include having a clear blueprint of what are considered to be goals and desired outcomes of internal communication that is unique and specific to the university. It is contended that, in organisations, success is measured by the extent to which organisations succeed in realising their strategies. Having goals and desired outcomes of internal communication aligned to the strategic orientation of TUT would allow its internal communication efforts to merge with the university's strategic orientation; this is regarded as a precondition for organisations to function effectively and achieve success (as discussed in Section 2.2).

In view of the above findings, a key assumption in relation to internal communication can be formulated as follows:

Assumption 1: Strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication is important for culturally diverse employees to improve intercultural communication, and ultimately assist their respective organisations to achieve success.

6.2.2 Workplace dimensions of diversity

Considering the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations and the focus of this study, the discussion in Section 2.3 proceeded from an intercultural communication perspective; hence, the discussion of cultural differences in the place of work and the impact it has on communication. The discussion in Section 2.3, pertaining to workplace dimensions of diversity, culminated in the following theoretical principles:

- **Principle 4:** Cultural differences have impact on the manner in which intercultural communication occurs.
- **Principle 5:** Culturally diverse organisations need to pursue all-inclusive communication enhancement practices that have the potential to unite team members to achieve a common purpose.

The conclusion drawn from the discussion regarding workplace dimensions of diversity is that internal communication practices are impacted by organisational, internal, external and personal dimensions that are relevant to an organisation. This conclusion implies that intercultural communication enhancement endeavours by organisations should be characterised by an understanding of how cultural differences impact the way employees communicate. Managers of organisations need to understand the culturally diverse nature of employees, and determine a communication style that fits the unique nature of their organisations. It is assumed that, regardless of the unique nature of employees, if properly managed, intercultural communication can be a source of team cohesion, and could possibly help nurture organisational success (as discussed in Section 2.3).

Understanding of (1) the external dynamics of the environment within which an organisation operates, (2) the personalities, which include likes and dislikes, values, morals and beliefs of employees, (3) organisational dimensions, which are largely defined and influenced by the group or organisation in which we work, and (4) internal dimensions, for example, age, gender, ethnicity and race of employees, are argued to be essential for managers in organisations to embark on intercultural communication enhancement endeavours informed by cultural dynamics relevant and specific to their organisations. Given cultural differences of employees, cultural sensitivity and competence contribute to their ability to communicate effectively. It was stated that workplace

dimensions of diversity have an impact on behaviours and attitudes of employees, considering that assumptions individuals make drive their behaviours, which set the tone for the manner in which intercultural communication occurs. This insistence signifies that there is a link between personality and internal, organisational and external workplace dimensions of diversity and intercultural communication practices (as discussed in Section 2.3).

The following assumption pertains to conclusions drawn from findings related to workplace dimensions of diversity:

Assumption 2: Intercultural communication enhancement endeavours that are characterised by an understanding of how differences in all manifestations impact the way employees communicate are likely to improve intercultural communication competence.

6.2.3 Cultural elements applied during intercultural communication

This section will provide a summary of the discussion concerning cultural elements employees apply during intercultural communication. The discussion in Section 2.4 regarding cultural elements culminated in the formulation of the following principle:

- **Principle 6:** Cultural elements play an important role in shaping and informing intercultural communication.

The understanding that cultural elements applicable to an organisation contribute to a culture that is specific to that organisation motivated this principle. Individuals in culturally diverse organisations should respect and appreciate how elements of culture that are applicable in a specific social setting contribute to organisational culture and affect the manner in which intercultural communication occurs. Of essence is that everyone in a culturally diverse organisation should understand and acknowledge different cultural preferences and styles, including how cultural elements applicable to an organisation influence intercultural communication that occurs in that particular organisation. This understanding and acknowledgement is essential for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to formulate communication strategies informed by the cultural imperatives applicable to the social setting within which the institution operates – specifically, a system of shared assumptions, values and beliefs, which govern how individuals behave and communicate. Cultural elements that are shared

by employees and which contribute to a specific culture should be distinguished, so that managers of a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, can identify elements that govern how employees behave and are likely to play a role in shaping and informing intercultural communication.

The discussion regarding cultural elements used during intercultural communication culminated in the following assumption, which is an extension of the assumption discussed in Section 6.2.2:

Assumption 3: Elements of culture create and shape intercultural communication.

6.2.4 Intercultural communication

To serve as an operational definition that consolidates the main features of various definitions presented in Section 2.5, intercultural communication is considered to be a form of internal communication that occurs between employees whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to affect the communication event. The definition culminated in the following principle in relation to intercultural communication:

- **Principle 7:** Intercultural communication in an organisational setting manifests a reality that entails communication between people whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to alter the communication event.

Various barriers to intercultural communication were discerned, with cultural differences being one of the hindrances to effective intercultural communication. The discussion regarding barriers to intercultural communication and elimination of misunderstandings associated with cultural differences emphasised the following fundamental principles:

- **Principle 8:** Inadequacies in the intercultural communication process could damage relationships between organisation members, due to misunderstandings and misinterpretation of information.
- **Principle 9:** Organisations need to be proactive in ensuring that factors that could hinder effective intercultural communication are identified and obviated timeously.
- **Principle 10:** Effective intercultural communication involves employees talking across cultures about themes and values that help to achieve a common purpose.

These principles indicate that ineffective intercultural communication practices can lead to organisations failing to function effectively due to breakdown in communication. Moreover, inadequacies in the intercultural communication process were argued to damage relationships between organisation members, which is not consistent with one of the goals and desired outcomes of internal communication maintained in Section 2.2. Eliminating barriers to intercultural communication requires a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to be proactive in ensuring that factors that may hinder effective mutual creation of meaning are identified and timeously obviated. It is assumed that timeous obviation of hindrances to intercultural communication could facilitate mutual creation of meaning of work instructions and clear interpretation of strategies and implementation plans.

A key assumption in relation to intercultural communication is articulated as follows:

Assumption 4: Timeous obviation of barriers to intercultural communication enhances the likelihood of employees improving intercultural communication competence.

6.2.5 Intercultural communication competence

The focus of this study was enhancement of intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence of employees from various cultural backgrounds could be improved. Intercultural communication competence is, for the purpose of this study considered as the ability to communicate effectively across cultures. Awareness of cultural varieties and having effective intercultural communication practices were identified as being imperative for employees, so that they understand organisational culture and so that all employees improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist their organisations to achieve success. The discussion in Section 2.6 explained that employees require the following attributes to become competent intercultural communicators:

- **Enabler/co-requisite 1:** The ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences.
- **Enabler/co-requisite 2:** The ability to change behaviour and act in a way consistent with the cultural environment in which people find themselves.

- **Enabler/co-requisite 3:** Possession of requisite cognitive information about different cultures, including one's own.
- **Enabler/co-requisite 4:** The desire to improve the ability to effectively communicate across cultures.

Motivation, knowledge, skills and character were distinguished in Section 2.6 as intercultural communication competence enablers, or co-requisites, that are necessary for employees from many and different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively across cultures. It was stated that the intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites referenced above can improve intercultural communication competence and facilitate achievement of organisational success – with motivation being the foundation upon which other enablers are based. It is clear that, unless an employee is motivated to improve intercultural communication competence, the other three attributes do not really matter. Suggestions pertaining to how TUT should go about enabling employees to become competent intercultural communicators will be presented later in Section 6.7, when the features of the framework the study will propose will be clarified.

An assumption regarding intercultural communication competence can be articulated as follows:

Assumption 5: By ensuring that motivation is the foundation upon which other intercultural communication enablers are based, organisations can improve intercultural communication competence.

6.2.6 Intercultural communication adaptation

Theories and models of intercultural communication adaptation were discussed in Section 2.7, to assist the researcher to develop insightful comprehension of how individuals respond to their experiences in other cultures during intercultural communication. The discussion also referred to different stages or phases individuals go through in their pursuit of adaptation and becoming competent intercultural communicators.

The following are fundamental cultural adaptation elements that were derived from the analysis of theories of intercultural communication:

- **Principle 11:** Socio-historical context and immediate situations influence intercultural communication.

- **Principle 12:** Individuals use communication strategies, specifically convergence and divergence, as a manifestation of their inclination towards or away from each other and their respective social groups.
- **Principle 13:** Intercultural communication adaptation is a long-term process where a common purpose serves as the necessary drive for individuals to adapt their communication behaviours.
- **Principle 14:** Inculcating a mixture of standpoints among and between co-cultural and dominant groups promotes an inclusive intercultural communication approach that protects non-dominant groups from being marginalised.

CAT, IAT and CCT were considered as theories that explain adaptation in the context of intercultural communication. The theories provided a variety of frameworks aimed at describing how employees respond to their experiences in cultures dissimilar to their own during intercultural communication encounters. The discussion of theories of intercultural communication disclosed that socio-historical context, immediate situations, common purpose and co-cultural and dominant group dynamics are intercultural adaptation determinants that influence a particular style of intercultural communication. From the viewpoint of theories of intercultural communication, the degree of intercultural communication adaptation and effectiveness that is achieved is determined by the extent to which the intercultural adaptation determinants referenced above are inculcated in a communication strategy that aims to consciously move employees towards each other in spite of their cultural differences (as discussed in Section 2.7.2).

The following fundamental cultural adaptation elements were derived from the analysis of models of cultural adaptation:

- **Principle 15:** For effective communication to be achieved, anxiety and uncertainty should be reduced.
- **Principle 16:** Culture shock is an initial reaction to an experience people have when they move to a cultural environment that is different from their own.
- **Principle 17:** To consciously enhance intercultural communication, a culturally diverse organisation should help employees to steer through intercultural adaptation stages.

Models of cultural adaptation demonstrate how employees could achieve or fail to achieve adaptation during intercultural communication interactions. From the standpoint of models of cultural adaptation, the degree of intercultural communication adaptation and effectiveness achieved is determined by the extent to which uncertainty, anxiety and cultural shock are managed, and the extent to which employees are assisted to navigate through stages of adaptation. Overall, elements of the theories of intercultural communication adaptation and models of cultural adaptation are complementary in nature (as discussed in Section 2.7.3).

Regarding stages of adaptation, the ethnocentric and ethno-relative stages, as elaborated in various sources, for example, Lysgaard (1955), Bennett (1998), Guirdham (2005) and Martin and Nakayama (2004), were compared. It was found that the stages suggested by the various authors are related and they all culminate in individuals adapting and becoming competent intercultural communicators. From the stages proposed by the authors referred to above, regarding this study, the following consolidated intercultural communication adaptation stages are suggested, as the stages that best capture the journey individuals go through in their pursuit of adaptation and becoming competent intercultural communicators: (1) fascination and excitement, (2) culture shock, (3) acceptance, and (4) adaptation (as discussed in Section 2.7.4).

6.2.7 Recommended theoretical approach to intercultural communication

As discussed in Section 2.8, this study will propose a strategic and continuous approach that TUT could use as a preferred framework in its pursuit of enhancing intercultural communication with the aim of improving intercultural communication competence. Following a strategic and continuous approach suggests that TUT's intercultural communication enhancement efforts must be strategically driven, and that the university's strategic orientation ought to serve as the specific purpose or main motive for why employees, despite different cultural backgrounds, need to adapt to one another in intercultural communication encounters. Furthermore, a continuous approach provides for continuous enhancement of intercultural communication, which should involve monitoring and evaluation to determine the extent to which the university's communication style is contributing to the achievement of organisational success. A convergence accommodative strategy is suggested as a strategy that TUT should adopt in its efforts to ensure that individuals move towards one another in order to adapt and become competent intercultural communicators.

As mentioned in Section 2.7.1.1, a convergence accommodative strategy suggests that individuals converge towards each other to achieve a meaningful intercultural communication. It is assumed in this study that intercultural communication effectiveness is necessary for organisations to unify employees to a common purpose.

The principles presented in this section are, for the purpose of this study, considered to be the fundamental intercultural communication adaptation principles relevant for culturally diverse organisations, in this case, TUT, to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence.

The next section will present the conclusions drawn from the findings derived from the analysis of TUT's strategic and policy documents, and responses provided by staff who manage cultural diversity and communication. The principles advanced served as an orienting lens that, amongst other things, shaped the type of empirical questions asked, the type of documents analysed and selection of participants. The intercultural communication adaptation principles identified in the literature review chapter of this study (Chapter 2), therefore, served as the main theoretical guide of the empirical part of the study.

6.3. TUT'S APPROACHES TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 present conclusions drawn on the findings of the qualitative study. Section 6.3.1 will address specific research question 1.6.2 regarding current approaches to intercultural communication, determined by means of content analysis of TUT's strategic and policy documents. Section 6.3.2 will address specific research question 1.6.3 regarding the perceptions of staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication, determined by means of semi-structured interviews.

6.3.1 TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication – content analysis findings

Specific research question 1.6.2, as stated below, was aimed at sourcing information by means of content analysis of strategic and policy documents.

What are TUT's current approaches to intercultural communication?

Findings from content analysis of strategic and policy document attest that cultural diversity management is considered as a strategic priority by TUT, and that its management is a valued strategic imperative. Recognising cultural diversity as a strategic priority points to TUT's aim of encouraging employees to understand the culturally diverse nature of the institution and the need for them to adapt (see TUT Strategic Plan (2014–2019)).

Content analysis findings drawn from the TUT Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019) point out that the university aims to restructure and direct effective internal communication university-wide. According to the Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019), these is done with the aim of informing, persuading and creating a shared understanding as the goals and desired outcomes of communication. It is recommended in the current study that goals and desired outcomes of internal communication that were derived through content analysis should be used as a platform upon which TUT should base implementation of its strategic orientation pertaining to restructuring and directing intercultural communication and mutual creation of meaning (as discussed in Section 4.3).

Findings drawn from content analysis of TUT's strategic and policy documents adhere to findings of the literature review that it is significant for culturally diverse organisations to recognise, understand and acknowledge that the complexity of individuals means they differ in a variety of ways (as discussed in Section 2.3). As mentioned in Section 4.4, recognition and acknowledgement of the unique and the culturally diverse nature of TUT and its employees place the institution in a better position to initiate a process through which its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours could be intensified. This content analysis finding is consistent with what was argued in Section 2.3, namely, that recognition and understanding of the culturally diverse nature of present-day organisations are starting points to work to deliberately enhance intercultural communication.

Regarding elements of culture, the findings of content analysis of TUT's Strategic Plan (2014–2019) identify aspects such as integrity, respect, inclusion, honesty and dignity as the features that are fundamental for shaping intercultural communication at TUT. It is suggested that cultural elements identified by means of the content analysis of strategic and policy documents should be used as contributing factors in efforts to enhance intercultural communication (see Section 4.6).

Regarding integration of employees, content analysis findings indicated that TUT has training programmes, campaigns and events aimed at creating cultural diversity awareness and socialising employees to a unified culture (see TUT Diversity Training Guide 2014). It is recommended that the existing cultural diversity training and awareness initiatives should be used as a foundational platform upon which intensification of intercultural communication is built (see Section 4.11).

Regardless of high regard of issues of cultural diversity management, a significant overall finding from content analysis results is that, even though TUT, currently, values cultural diversity and recognises it a strategic priority, in practice, there is no emphasis on enhancing intercultural communication to assist employees from different cultural backgrounds to improve their intercultural communication competence and to unify them to a common purpose. Even though improving intercultural communication has been identified as a strategic priority, there is no operational document with specific details of how the university intends to put the strategic priority into practice.

This study suggests that a framework, including an implementation plan that aims to operationalise the strategic priority regarding improving intercultural communication should be developed and applied throughout the university (as discussed in Section 4.2). The current study argues that one possibility to enhance intercultural communication and improve intercultural communication competence of employees is through a framework suited to the culturally diverse and unique nature of TUT. It is assumed that this could offer TUT a common basis for increasing the effectiveness of a team, and unifying employees towards a common purpose and achieving success.

6.3.2 TUT's approaches to intercultural communication – semi-structured interviews findings

The conclusions drawn from the findings pertaining to TUT's approaches to intercultural communication will be presented next. Specific research question 1.6.3, as stated below, was aimed at determining perceptions by means of semi-structured interviews conducted with staff who manage cultural diversity and communication:

What are the perceptions of TUT staff who manage cultural diversity and communication regarding approaches to intercultural communication?

6.3.2.1 Goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication

Concerning goals and desired outcomes of internal communication that occurs between employees from different cultural backgrounds, staff suggested effective intercultural communication, unification of employees and unity in the workplace, improvement of communication proficiency, creation of peace and harmony, building of bridges between culturally diverse employees, mutual respect and increasing multiculturalism as the ultimate aims and end results of intercultural communication (see Section 4.3). These communication objectives corroborate the assertion made in Section 2.2, that if organisations could determine requirements that reinforce intercultural communication, they will be better placed to enhance cohesion, interaction and teamwork. Responses provided by staff regarding goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication point to the conclusion that creating a shared understanding of information with the intention of unifying employees towards the achievement of a common purpose is the foremost goal and desired outcome of communication in organisations. Beyond everything else, goals and desired outcomes sourced through findings drawn from responses provided by staff, and those foregrounded by literature discussed in Section 2.2, point to the assumption that effective intercultural communication is necessary for organisations to function effectively.

6.3.2.2 Workplace dimensions of diversity

Staff also indicated that acknowledging that present-day organisations are culturally diverse in nature promotes sense of belonging and inclusion of employees despite cultural differences, and it improves productivity. The perceptions of workplace dimensions of diversity align with literature, which maintains that differences can be a source of team cohesion and possibly help nurture the all-important intercultural communication effectiveness – an imperative that is a requirement for organisations to achieve organisational success (as discussed in Section 2.3). It is argued that this positive finding places TUT in a better position to intensify its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours (as discussed in Section 4.4).

6.3.2.3 Intercultural communication

Regarding understanding of intercultural communication, all staff shared a common understanding of what intercultural communication entails. The dominant view was that intercultural

communication refers to communication encounters between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Communicating for the purpose of avoiding offending and humiliating other participants in the communication process was presented as an objective that intercultural communication should seek to achieve. What the finding highlights is that intercultural communication should occur in such a way that no one engaging in intercultural communication should feel offended or humiliated by the process. Most importantly, responses provided by staff indicated that, despite cultural differences and the uniqueness of individuals, it is of fundamental importance that each employee should be geared towards recognising that acknowledging and understanding cultural differences is a precondition for accepting and appreciating individuals from cultures that differ from their own, and that it is an essential element pertaining to the intensification of intercultural communication (see Section 4.5). Doing so will require organisations to invest greater efforts in ensuring that employees recognise and understand cultural differences. Managers should use this as the foundation upon which integration to promote and intensify intercultural communication is based.

6.3.2.4 Intercultural adaptation

Regarding first intercultural interactions, an interesting observation from the responses provided by staff is that individuals' intercultural experiences are diverse – as culturally diverse we are as a people. This finding is consistent with assertions by the literature submitted in Section 2.3, that cultural differences manifest themselves in different forms. Responses provided by staff about adaptation reflect that, though navigating through an intercultural communication journey is characterised by various and differing experiences, and regardless of being initially judged and behaving in the way they were socialised while growing up, eventually, individuals acknowledge differences and find a way to co-exist, integrate and adapt (see Section 4.5). The finding points to a need for culturally diverse organisations to invest in initiatives that assist employees to adapt in new cultural settings, as intercultural communication adaptation is considered a necessity for intercultural communication competence improvement.

6.3.2.5 Cultural elements

Language, respect, honesty, tradition and attitudes are the aspects staff distinguished as elements they view fundamental for intercultural encounters (see Section 4.6). The responses provided by staff reflect a certain level of familiarity with the TUT's strategic orientation, as the elements submitted were in agreement with values the university ascribes to (TUT Strategic Plan, 2014–2019) (see Sections 4.6 and 6.3.1). The elements also coincide with what the literature reported in Section 2.4 asserts as guiding aspects that are essential for assisting to shape effective intercultural communication. The aspects staff submitted as elements necessary for informing intercultural encounters, namely, integrity, respect, inclusion, dignity, beliefs, language, norms values, honesty, tradition, attitudes and habits are the cultural aspects from which TUT should choose elements what it considers most relevant, and use these elements as contributing factors in its efforts to enhance intercultural communication. TUT should also take advantage of having employees who acknowledge the content of documents that guide its strategic orientation, and use that as a path in its efforts to improve intercultural communication competence and move employees of the institution towards one another (see Section 4.6).

6.3.2.6 Barriers to intercultural communication

In Section 2.2, effective intercultural communication was assumed to be essential for the effective functioning of organisations. For TUT to overcome hindrances and inadequacies that may cause misunderstanding of information, it is necessary to improve communication; especially communication that takes place between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Lack of planning, unwillingness by management to improve intercultural communication, absence of a feeling of belonging, a hostile environment, cultural rigidity and limited language proficiency are the barriers that were listed by responses provided by staff.

Responses provided by staff were in accordance with the findings of the literature review. It was argued that eliminating barriers to intercultural communication go a long way to ensuring effective intercultural communication (see Sections 2.2 and 4.7). In agreement with the literature, as argued in Section 2.5, responses provided by staff suggest that conscious elimination of barriers to intercultural communication requires TUT to be proactive in ensuring that factors that may hinder effective intercultural communication are identified and timeously obviated.

6.3.2.7 Intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites

Staff acknowledged the presence of conditions that were likely to lead to positive attitudes, and that these conditions can pave the way for individuals in organisations to communicate and function effectively. This finding is aligned to the theoretical argument in Section 2.6, that for employees to become competent intercultural communicators, they require certain attributes and abilities. Providing motivation and encouragement, empowering people with skills, and training employees were suggested by staff as actions that were likely to enable employees to improve intercultural communication competence. The attributes submitted by staff show similarities to the enablers/co-requisites listed in Section 2.6, namely, motivation, character, skills and knowledge.

It was maintained in Section 4.8 that, to operationalise the findings related to intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites, managers are responsible for distinguishing enablers specific to TUT, and employing them in their purposeful endeavours to improve intercultural communication competence. Staff proposed launching cultural integration initiatives and awareness campaigns, as innovations that could be utilised to create an environment conducive to employees being empowered to become competent intercultural communicators. It was stated in Section 4.8 that cultural integration initiatives and cultural awareness campaigns, as intercultural communication enablers, are likely to equip employees with knowledge about different cultures. Knowledge about different cultures, including one's own, was argued in Section 2.6 to be an attribute that allows individuals to improve intercultural communication competence.

6.3.2.8 Stages of adaptation

In spite of the inconsistencies regarding the specific stages mentioned in responses provided by staff, it is clear that they concur that employees go through different stages of adaptation before becoming competent intercultural communicators. Frustration, fear and self-doubt, finding it strange, feeling intimidated and a sense of being shocked are the experiences staff believed individuals go through during initial stages of their adaptation journey. Conscious integration of individuals was suggested as a possibility for making the transition process less frustrating, thereby avoiding expecting employees to navigate through the stages of adaptation on their own. Furthermore, staff concurred that understanding and acknowledging stages of adaptation are steps that TUT has to take to continuously develop and implement strategies in their pursuit of enhancing

intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence (as discussed in Section 4.10).

Though there are inconsistencies in relation to the stages of adaptation determined by means of semi-structured interviews, it is clear that there are similarities between the stages advanced by staff, and consolidated intercultural communication adaptation stages that were suggested in Section 2.7.4 as the stages that best capture the journey individuals go through in their pursuit of adaptation and becoming competent intercultural communicators, namely, fascination and excitement, culture shock, acceptance, and adaptation.

The discussion regarding stages of adaptation led to the following assumption:

Assumption 6: Integrating employees could make the adaptation process less frustrating and reinforce intercultural communication competence.

6.3.2.9 Intercultural communication competence

It is unequivocal from the responses provided by staff that, in practice, there is no invariable mode for individuals to become competent intercultural communicators. The responses that were provided varied from adapting instantly, because of being a social being, to attending training sessions aimed at exposing employees to cultural diversity imperatives, and a need for colleagues to learn how to improve the manner in which they communicate across cultures (as discussed in Section 4.9). What is clear is the common idea that adaptation is a prerequisite for employees if they are to achieve intercultural communication competence. Furthermore, staff's responses confirmed the literature's assumption that one's ability to communicate effectively in intercultural interaction situations is fundamental for an organisation to function effectively (as discussed in Section 2.2).

6.3.2.10 Elements necessary to enhance intercultural communication

From the responses provided by staff, uniform transmission of messages, a concerted effort, a specific approach, a strategic and continuous approach, cultural awareness, cultural training, recognition of the uniqueness of individuals, motivation, intercultural knowledge, empowering employees with skills, a focused guiding or policy document, unification of team members,

integration of employees, and achievement of a common purpose made up an inclusive list of elements staff were of the view were important to enhance intercultural communication. Some elements suggested were consistent with intercultural communication aspects identified through the analysis of the literature (see Section 4.11).

The findings pertaining to what staff who manage cultural diversity and communication suggested as elements necessary to enhance intercultural communication overall point to a need for TUT to develop and implement a framework to assist the university to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence. It was perceived that, with due consideration of cultural elements specific to the unique nature of TUT, and motivation, skills and knowledge as enablers, a strategic and continuous approach supported by an implementation plan that operationalises how intercultural communication could be enhanced uniformly across the institution, is what is needed for employees to improve intercultural communication competence (see Section 4.11).

What staff who manage diversity and communication suggest as an ideal imperative for TUT to work towards improving intercultural communication competence, is a need for the institution to adopt a strategic and continuous approach to enhancing intercultural communication (as discussed in Section 4.11). It is assumed that following a strategic and continuous approach, including drawing up a plan aimed at operationalising and implementing intercultural communication enhancement priorities, is what is needed for TUT to improve intercultural communication competence, and to function effectively. The suggestion by staff that TUT needs a framework to assist the university to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence serves as a motivation for TUT to strategically and continuously enhance intercultural communication as one possible way of unifying employees towards a common purpose, and ultimately assisting the university to achieve success.

6.4. TUT'S CURRENT INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

Sections 6.4.1 and 6.4.2 present conclusions drawn from the findings of the quantitative study to address specific research question 1.6.4 regarding perceptions of employees of the Faculty of

Humanities regarding current intercultural communication practices, determined by means of an online survey. The question was posed as follows:

How do TUT employees of the Faculty of Humanities perceive current intercultural communication practices?

Findings pertaining to the interconnectedness of biographical variables of participants and intercultural communication factors that had been determined for the purpose of the study will be presented first. Then, the section will proceed to present findings on the correlations between intercultural communication factors. The conclusions drawn from the findings derived from the online survey will be presented in the following sections.

6.4.1 Effect of biographical variables on intercultural communication factors

Biographical variables of academic and non-academic employees of the Faculty of Humanities were presented with the aim of determining the extent of their significance to the factors extracted for the purposes of the study. Age, race, education, gender, language and country of origin were the biographical variables that were used to determine the effect of biographical variables on various intercultural communication factors.

The findings pertaining to the correlation of the intercultural communication factors and biographical variables indicate that education, age, language, race, and country of origin did not have an influence in the manner in which employees perceived intercultural communication adaptation, intercultural communication competence, impact of culture on communication, recognition and understanding of cultural differences, intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion or enhancement of intercultural communication. Despite participants being from different countries, that they spoke different languages and were of different ages, educational levels and races, the online survey results indicate that there are no significant statistical differences regarding the manner in which participants responded to questionnaire items related to the intercultural communication factors extracted for the purpose of the study (as discussed in Section 5.2).

In terms of the gender variable, the findings are that women and men perceived intercultural communication adaptation, intercultural communication competence, impact of culture on

communication, recognition and understanding of cultural differences, and intercultural communication as a source of team cohesion and enhancement of intercultural communication in the same way, despite their gender differences. However, the findings point out that participants who preferred not to indicate their gender status experienced the intercultural communication variables referenced to above differently. Though it was an insignificant finding, it demonstrates that culturally diverse organisations should develop intercultural communication enhancement and intercultural communication competence improvement strategies and implementation plans that seek to advance inclusion of all employees (as discussed in Section 5.2).

The discussion pertaining to the differences between biographical variables and intercultural communication factors culminated in the following assumption:

Assumption 7: Organisations should develop intercultural communication enhancement strategies that seek to advance inclusion of all employees.

6.4.2 Correlation between intercultural communication factors

Regarding the relationship between intercultural communication factors, a significant finding was that, though intercultural communication adaptation tended to have greater effect on the other five factors, overall, all factors had an effect on each other. This finding shows that all intercultural communication variables are mutually reinforcing, and points to a need for a culturally diverse organisation, such as TUT, to enhance intercultural communication with due consideration of the various intercultural communication variables, as an example, by considering the correlation between all the factors applied in the study. As an illustration, the findings indicated that, when intercultural communication adaptation is high, all other factors extracted from questionnaire items applicable to this study, are also high. The significance of this finding is that intercultural communication adaptation tends to have a greater effect on all other variables, thereby emphasising the need for TUT to utilise intercultural communication adaptation as a foundation for its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours. This supports the literature finding that the extent to which intercultural communication effectiveness is achieved is based on the extent to which intercultural communication adaptation determinants are inculcated in a communication strategy (as discussed in Section 2.7.2).

In view of the findings summarised above, there seems to be considerable empirical support and motivation for the development of a framework to enhance intercultural communication. The findings pertaining to perceptions of staff in relation to intercultural communication point to a conclusion that intercultural communication variables are interdependent and go hand in hand as far as enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence are concerned. The findings reflect that the statistical validation of the positive nature of the relationship between intercultural communication factors support the rationale to integrate all variables extracted for the purpose of this study when organisations develop strategies aimed at enhancing intercultural communication and improving intercultural communication competence (as discussed in Section 5.5).

The discussion pertaining to relationships between intercultural communication factors extracted for the purpose of this study culminated in the following assumption:

Assumption 8: Intercultural communication elements supplement each other in improving intercultural communication effectiveness and unifying employees to achieve organisational success.

Overall, conclusions drawn on the findings of the quantitative study regarding the association between biographical variables of participants and intercultural communication factors expanded conclusions drawn from the findings of the literature review, conclusions drawn on the of content analysis of TUT's strategic and policy documents that were applicable at the time of the analysis, and semi-structured interviews. The conclusions drawn identified additional intercultural communication and intercultural competence dynamics that could not be discovered through content analysis and semi-structured interviews, namely, the effect of biographical variables on intercultural communication factors and correlation between intercultural communication variables.

6.5. ASSUMPTIONS MOTIVATING A FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The following eight assumptions motivating the framework to enhance intercultural communication the study will propose are based on the conclusions drawn on the findings of the literature review, content analysis, semi-structured interviews and online survey:

- **Assumption 1:** Strategic and continuous enhancement of internal communication is important for culturally diverse employees to improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist their respective organisations to achieve success.
- **Assumption 2:** Intercultural communication enhancement endeavours that are characterised by an understanding of how differences in all manifestations impact the way employees communicate are likely to improve intercultural communication competence.
- **Assumption 3:** Elements of culture create and shape intercultural communication.
- **Assumption 4:** Timely obviating of barriers to intercultural communication enhances the likelihood of employees improving intercultural communication competence.
- **Assumption 5:** By ensuring that motivation is the foundation upon which other intercultural communication enablers are based, organisations can improve intercultural communication competence.
- **Assumption 6:** Integrating employees could make the adaptation process less frustrating and reinforce intercultural communication competence.
- **Assumption 7:** Organisations should develop intercultural communication enhancement strategies that seek to advance inclusion of all employees.
- **Assumption 8:** Intercultural communication elements supplement each other in improving intercultural communication effectiveness and unifying employees to achieve organisational success.

The eight assumptions listed above make up the main guiding blueprint for motivating a framework aimed at enhancing intercultural communication in a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT.

6.6. FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Figure 6.1 depicts the intercultural communication enhancement framework that is proposed as the main contribution of the study. A narrative of the core features and enablers/co-requisites of the proposed framework will follow the presentation of the framework. The framework the study is proposing is the answer to the general research question posed in Section 1.5. The framework could serve as an essential guide for a culturally diverse organisation, like TUT, to become more resilient in a highly culturally diversified environment in its pursuit of enhancing intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds improve intercultural communication competence.

Comparable to the findings of previous, related studies, there is consensus that cultural differences create a barrier to effective communication. This study supports and build on the study by Mmope (2016). In addition to inculcating intercultural communication best practices of the communication role of managers when executing strategy alignment, this study expanded the strategy alignment orientation by proposing a framework that provides a basis for the inculcation of best practices regarding the manner in which intercultural communication could be enhanced, strategically and continuously. The framework recognises that effective intercultural communication can contribute to improvement of intercultural communication competence, an intercultural communication variable relevant for unification of culturally diverse employees to a common purpose and, ultimately, effective functioning of an organisation and achievement of organisational success.

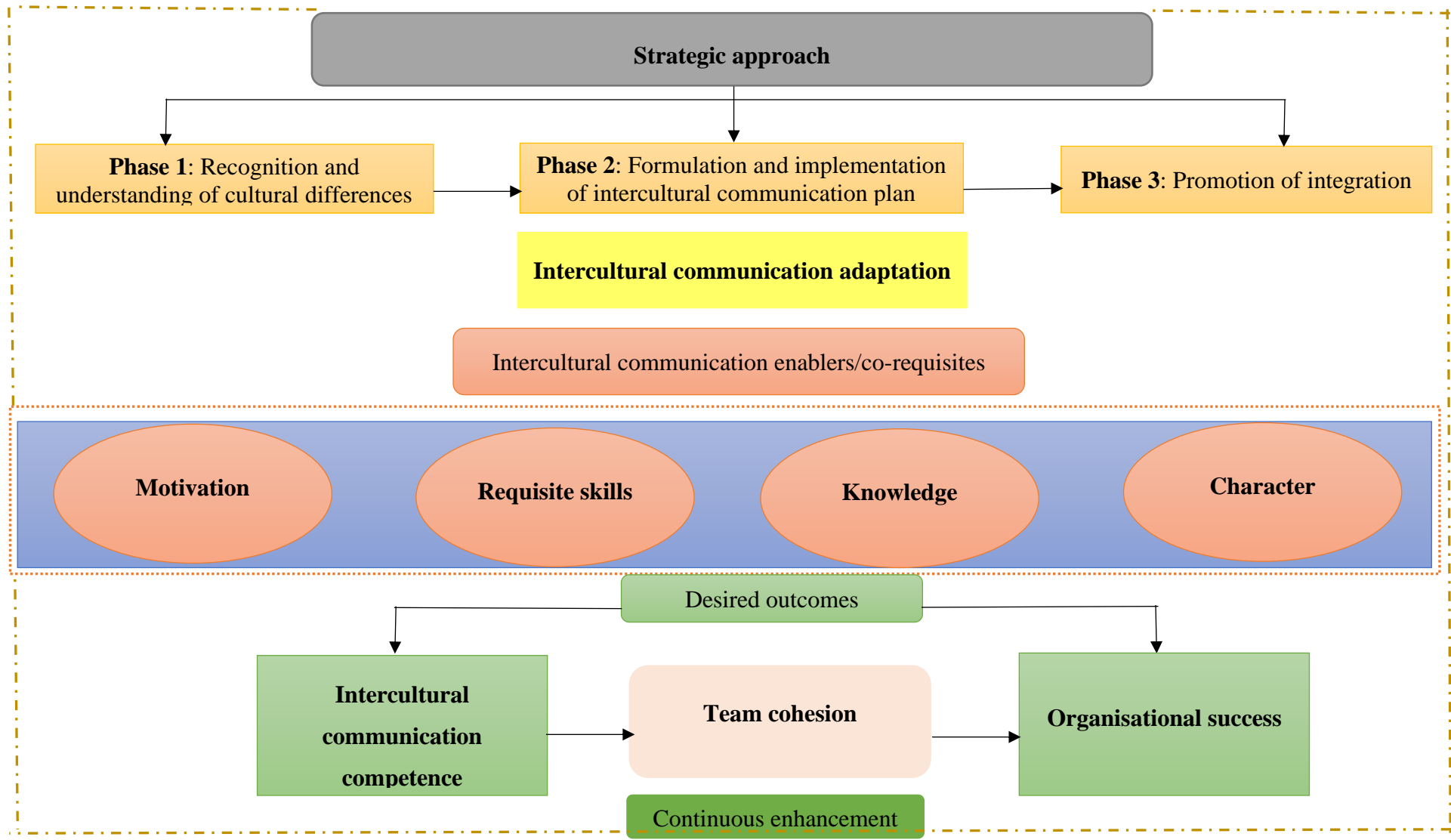


Figure 6.1: A framework to enhance intercultural communication

6.6.1 Core features of a proposed framework to enhance intercultural communication

Figure 6.1 illustrates that strategic enhancement of internal communication is important for an organisation if it desires to improve effective intercultural communication practices and unify employees towards the achievement of a common purpose. The proposal regarding strategic enhancement of intercultural communication implies that all intercultural communication enhancement endeavours should be strategically driven. Accordingly, the TUT's strategic orientation ought to serve as the specific purpose or main motive why culturally diverse employees, despite their cultural differences, need to adapt to one another in working to improve intercultural communication competence.

Additionally, the framework advocates for continuous enhancement of intercultural communication; a gradual, never-ending improvement that is focused on improving employees' intercultural communication competence. For this reason, the framework suggests a strategy that requires regular monitoring and evaluation, to determine the extent to which TUT's intercultural communication enhancement endeavours are achieving the intended goals and desired outcomes. Should the adopted approach fail to enhance intercultural communication and improve intercultural communication competence, refinements should be made until the predetermined goals and desired outcomes are realised.

The convergence technique is recommended as the accommodative strategy that the TUT should adopt in its efforts to ensure that its employees move towards one another to achieve the intended outcomes of the proposed framework. The study has indicated that the convergence accommodative strategy suggests that, for organisations to enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence is improved, employees need to converge towards each other.

Furthermore, Figure 6.1 suggests an intercultural communication framework that is structured around three basic phases, namely, recognition and understanding of cultural differences, formulation and implementation of an intercultural communication plan, and promotion of integration. Linked to the three basic phases are four enablers/co-requisites, namely, motivation, knowledge, skills and character, which, it is argued, create a conducive environment for employees to improve intercultural communication competence.

Considering that it was empirically proven that intercultural communication adaptation tends to have a great effect on all other intercultural communication variables, the proposed framework emphasises a need for TUT to utilise intercultural communication adaptation as a foundation upon which its intercultural communication enhancement endeavours should be based. This finding suggests that, with intercultural communication adaptation as the starting point of its intercultural communication enhancement initiatives, TUT could enhance intercultural communication such that intercultural communication competence could be improved, with the intended purpose to unify culturally diverse employees (team cohesion) to a common purpose, and ultimately achievement of organisational success. Literature review findings indicate that the degree to which intercultural communication is effective is based on the extent to which intercultural communication adaptation determinants are inculcated in a communication strategy. Moreover, the proposed framework advances an intercultural communication enhancement strategy that provides for the inclusion of all employees. In summary, the study argues that a strategic all-inclusive and continuous enhancement of intercultural communication is one possible way of improving intercultural communication competence and unifying employees to a common purpose, and ultimately assist an organisation to achieve success.

The chapter will proceed to present the recommended basic phases around which the proposed framework to enhance intercultural communication should be structured, including explaining the enablers/co-requisites necessary for employees to become competent intercultural communicators.

6.6.1.1 Recognition and understanding of cultural differences

The study indicated that recognition of cultural differences and understanding the impact of culture on communication are mutually reinforcing and work hand in hand to enhance intercultural communication and improve intercultural communication competence; hence, the study identifies recognition and understanding of cultural differences as the initial step of the proposed framework. As was mentioned in Section 2.3, communication practices are largely created, shaped and transmitted by culture. Accordingly, the study reflected that cultures bond organisation members together, and serve as the guiding aspects that assist in shaping intercultural communication. That being the case, regardless of the uniqueness of individual employees, recognising and understanding cultural differences and the uniqueness of

employees should be the foundation upon which the enhancement of intercultural communication and improvement of intercultural communication competence should be based.

Findings derived from the analysis of strategic and policy documents showed that TUT acknowledges that employees originate from diverse cultural backgrounds. As a result, the institution's cultural diversity training sessions are aimed at engagements that build a common understanding of how to value cultural diversity. A gap that became evident in the findings of the analysis of strategic and policy documents and responses provided by participants, is that intercultural communication is not used to pave the way for managing cultural differences. It is recommended that cultural diversity training initiatives, including intercultural communication enhancement efforts, should be introduced, as this approach is likely to help employees to understand the impact culture has on communication.

While the characteristics of each culture are unique, all cultures share certain common functions, in that they link individuals to one another. TUT should, therefore, amongst other initiatives, use cultural diversity training sessions to provide the basis for a common identity and create context for intercultural interaction. Introducing cultural diversity training sessions that involve intercultural communication enhancement activities, will indicate that it is important for TUT to create a platform that is conducive to bringing employees towards each other and reinforcing intercultural communication competence. It is assumed that integrating employees could possibly make their adaptation process less frustrating, and unify them to achieve a common purpose.

6.6.1.2 Formulation and implementation of intercultural communication action plan

A strategic approach to intercultural communication enhancement requires action that involves formulation and implementation of an intercultural communication plan – this is suggested as a second phase of the proposed framework. As far as its operational application is concerned, the plan the framework proposes should be formulated in alignment with TUT's strategic orientation in relation to enhancing intercultural communication. Appropriately, the study emphasises a need for all intercultural communication enhancement efforts to be aligned to a strategic orientation. The proposed framework suggests that aligning intercultural communication initiatives to the strategic orientation of an organisation could facilitate a more structured approach to enhancing intercultural communication. The study shows that enhancing intercultural communication is a prerequisite for organisational success and that, in

turn, organisation success is measured by analysing where the organisation stands regarding its strategic goals and objectives.

It was stated that TUT's Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy (2016–2019) aims to restructure and direct the flow of communication across the university. Considering the multi-campus nature of TUT, which has campuses scattered in different provinces, creating a single, consistent communication approach is necessary to facilitate the effective flow of communication. With a clear intercultural communication enhancement strategic direction already provided, the next step is for the institution to formulate and implement an intercultural communication plan, with clear details outlining actions needed to reach this noble strategic priority. The proposed plan should be intended to help TUT establish a clear sense of direction and purpose towards organised enhancement of intercultural communication.

The plan the framework proposes should include a blueprint of what are considered to be the goals and desired outcomes of communication. In addition, the proposed blueprint should be developed with the view of promoting an intercultural communication enhancement process that seeks to advance inclusion of all individuals at TUT, including protection of underrepresented or marginalised people. In accordance with TUT's values of care and cultural diversity, inclusion and equity, the intercultural communication plan should seek to promote the treatment of all the employees with dignity and respect, including embracing cultural diversity, fostering inclusivity and promoting equity. It is assumed that having an inclusive plan with a clear guideline regarding what are considered to be desired outcomes of intercultural communication enhancement efforts, can help TUT build a sense of harmony and positivity among employees. It is, furthermore, assumed that an inclusive plan can help employees pull in the same direction, and to achieve a common purpose.

6.6.1.3 Promotion of integration

Empirical study findings support the literature review results, namely, that employees experience intercultural communication adaptation differently; hence, the current study advocates for promotion of integration of employees. The study indicates that promoting integration is an important step in working towards adaptation and improving intercultural communication competence. In practice, intercultural communication is perceived to be a source of team cohesion. Appropriately, after formulation of an intercultural communication plan, the next logical step is promotion of integration through cultural awareness and training

initiatives that are aimed at raising awareness regarding cultural differences and how intercultural communication can be a source of team cohesion, and how it could help to unite employees towards the achievement of a common vision and purpose. It is assumed that cultural awareness and training can help build a bridge between employees, by providing and empowering them with knowledge and an understanding of how culture and communication interconnect, including appreciation for the various cultures that are represented in the institution.

It is proposed that TUT should intensify its cultural training and awareness efforts. Its current practices in relation to cultural awareness and training initiatives only focus on cultural diversity, and should be amplified to include raising awareness of how intercultural communication can unify people who differ culturally towards a common purpose. It is recommended that the institution considers expanding its current cultural diversity training programmes to include training on intercultural communication dimensions of cultural differences. Cultural awareness campaigns in the form of information fliers and cultural events, as well as cultural training sessions, should form an integral part of intercultural communication enhancement initiatives. Given the proposal for a continuous intercultural communication enhancement approach, the proposed framework advocates for ongoing cultural awareness and training activities that are intended to consciously integrate employees.

Early intercultural awareness and training activities are proposed as a means of reducing anxiety and uncertainty employees may have during the early stages of intercultural interactions. The proposed framework suggests that early intercultural awareness and training could lead to timeous promotion of integration of its culturally diverse workforce, including obviation of barriers to intercultural communication. Early integration of employees could make the adaptation process less frustrating and reinforce intercultural communication competence. This is more likely to be achievable if there are formal induction programmes through which new employees are oriented, as a way of familiarising them with the new environment. The framework, therefore, proposes that cultural awareness induction should be applied as a stepping stone towards continuous cultural awareness and training sessions.

6.6.2 Intercultural communication enablers/co-requisites

Based on the findings from different information/data sources, the discussion in this section will explain the four overriding enablers or co-requisites, which the proposed intercultural

communication framework suggests are fundamentally important if employees are to become competent intercultural communicators. The study shows that competent intercultural communicators are those who are motivated, have a fund of knowledge to draw upon, possess the requisite communication skills and are of good character; hence, their placement at the core of the proposed framework. It is assumed that, with motivation as the foundation upon which other intercultural communication enablers are based, TUT could improve the intercultural communication competence of its employees. The four elements that the study proposes as the attributes TUT employees should possess will be explained next.

6.6.2.1 Motivation

For the purpose of this study, motivation means that someone possesses a desire to improve intercultural communication abilities; it includes the inspiration provided by managers for employees to become competent intercultural communicators. Appropriately, the proposed intercultural communication framework advocates that TUT employees should have a positive attitude, which is derived (1) from a desire to improve intercultural communication competence, and (2) from managers' determined efforts to continuously inspire employees to communicate effectively; these efforts include availing financial resources to fund initiatives intended to facilitate adaptation and enhancement of intercultural communication, so that employees can become competent intercultural communicators. From the employer perspective, TUT should create an environment that is conducive for employees to desire to become competent intercultural communicators.

6.6.2.2 Knowledge

In the context of this study, knowledge refers to possessing the requisite cognitive information about different cultures, including one's own. Knowledge of different cultures that are represented in an organisation is imperative, as culture acts as a filter through which messages are transmitted. Consequently, the proposed framework submits that TUT employees should improve their knowledge and comprehension of the institution's cultural imperatives, as that is required if they are to adapt and achieve intercultural communication competence. Consistent with its slogan, *we empower people*, TUT should empower its employees with the knowledge they need to communicate effectively across cultures.

6.6.2.3 Skills

Skills, in the context of intercultural communication competence, are associated with the ability to change behaviour and act in a way consistent with the cultural environment in which you find yourself. In the context of this study, the proposed framework suggests that TUT employees should have skills relating to the actual applications of specific acts that would enable employees to accomplish their intercultural communication competence goals. The proposed framework, therefore, submits that, as the study indicates, for TUT employees to become competent intercultural communicators they must have the skills to recognise institutional communication rules, meet the contextual requirements of those rules, and recognise the rules in intercultural communication interactions.

6.6.2.4 Character

The study indicates that character relates to the ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences. The proposed framework recommends that TUT managers should understand the attributes that influence culture, as this helps an organisation to devise strategies of improving intercultural communication competence that are suited to its unique nature. It is argued in this study that the affective aspect of intercultural communication refers to the ability to understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences in an intercultural interaction. Employees who understand, respect and appreciate cultural differences are more open to adapting and improving their intercultural communication competence. The study showed that recognition and understanding of cultural differences supplement intercultural communication adaptation and enhances intercultural communication.

6.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in relation to the manner in which intercultural communication could be enhanced. The fact that the study was limited to a specific institution could be considered a limitation, as collecting information/data from more than one culturally diverse institution could have improved the richness of both qualitative and quantitative findings. However, the researcher sourced as much information as possible, using multiple data sources, which aided in enhancing the richness of the findings despite only one institution being involved in the study.

The researcher is a member of the faculty from which the quantitative data was collected, which could be considered as a limitation of the study. However, the information collected from members of the faculty of which the researcher is part was done via a questionnaire, which was completed electronically by all participants, thereby ruling out the possibility of the researcher interfering in the data collection process. Though qualitative data was collected from members of the same institution as the researcher, the utmost care was taken to ensure that all ethical considerations were strictly adhered to.

6.8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following are the recommendations for future research:

- A study involving private sector organisations that manage intercultural communication strategically could be the next phase of research into this topic, to determine the extent to which the approaches organisations follow contribute to enhancing intercultural communication.
- Considering that information and data were collected from only one public institution, the next phase could involve participation by more than one institution, so that the findings from different cases could be compared.
- A comparative study of the manner in which intercultural communication is enhanced by a private organisation and a public sector organisation is also recommended as an area for future research.

6.9. CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, an intercultural communication framework aimed at aiding a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT, to enhance intercultural communication and improve intercultural communication competence was proposed as the main contribution of the study. The chapter presented the main findings of the literature review and empirical study that were considered important for the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions and answer the general research question that guided the discussion.

The conclusions drawn on the findings of the study culminated in the determination of assumptions motivating a framework to assist TUT to enhance intercultural communication such that employees from various cultural backgrounds could improve intercultural communication competence, and ultimately assist the university to achieve success. The

importance of intercultural communication competence as a source of team cohesion and a means of achieving organisational success cannot be emphasised enough. Accordingly, the study proposes an intercultural communication framework that could guide a culturally diverse organisation, specifically TUT, through an intercultural enhancement path intended to culminate in improved intercultural communication competence and unified employees. Complementary findings derived from multiple sources aided the researcher to draw holistic conclusions that are relevant for the development of the framework, which is intended to serve as an instrument for TUT and other, similar organisations to become resilient in their pursuit of enhancing intercultural communication as a strategic and continuous priority, including providing the basis for reinforcing improvement of intercultural communication competence and unification of employees to achieve a common purpose.

The proposal regarding strategic enhancement of intercultural communication implies that all intercultural communication enhancement endeavours should be strategically driven and aligned to the TUT strategic orientation. TUT's strategic orientation ought to serve as the main motive why intercultural communication should be enhanced such that employees could adapt to one another in working to improve intercultural communication competence. Furthermore, the study advocates for continuous enhancement of intercultural communication, a strategy that requires regular monitoring and evaluation, to determine the extent to which TUT's intercultural communication enhancement endeavours are achieving the intended goals and desired outcomes.

With strategy alignment and continuous enhancement as guiding principles, and informed by assumptions that motivated the proposed framework, this study closed the gap and add to the volume of research that has been undertaken, and to the base of knowledge regarding enhancement of intercultural communication with the specific purpose of improving intercultural communication competence, unifying employees towards a common purpose and achieving organisational success, as ultimate outcomes.

LIST OF REFERENCES

- ABULLAHI, A.I. & ZAINOL, F.A. 2016. The impact of socio-cultural business environment on entrepreneurial intention: A conceptual approach. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 6(2):201–320.
- AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK. 2012. *African Bank report: Towards green growth in Africa*. Available from: <https://www.afd.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb.documents/projects-and-operations> [accessed 18 April 2020].
- AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION. 2015. *Agenda 2063: The Africa we want*. AU.
- AKRAM, J, CHEN, Z. EATON, D & WEI, X. 2016. Time-frequency denoising of micro-seismic data. *SEG Technical Program Abstracts*, 2016:2750–2754.
- ALLWOOD, J. 2008. English translation of: "Tvärkulturell kommunikation" (1985). In J. Allwood, J. (Ed.), *Tvärkulturell kommunikation*. Papers in Anthropological Linguistics 12, University of Göteborg, Department of Linguistics.
- ARASARATNAM, L.A. 2013. Intercultural communication competence. In A. Kurylo (ed), *Intercultural communication: Representation and construction of culture* (Chapter 3, 47-68). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- ARASARATNAM, L.A., BANERJEE, C. & DEMBEK, K. 2011. The integrated model of intercultural communication competence (IMICC). *Australian Journal of Communication*. 37(3):103.
- ARASARATNAM, L.A. & DOERFEL, B. 2005. Sensation-seeking intercultural communication competence: A model test. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 35(2):266–233.
- AYOKO, O.B., HARTEL, C.E.J. & CALLAN, V.J. 2002. Resolving the puzzle of productive and destructive conflict in culturally heterogeneous workgroups: A communication accommodation theory approach. *International Journal of Conflict Management*. 13(2).

- BABBIE, E.R.2011. Introduction to social research. Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.
- BABBIE, E. 2016. *The practice of social research*. South African edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- BABBIE, E. & MOUTON, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. South African edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- BARNA, L.M. 2009. *How culture shock affects communication*. Paper presented in the Distinguished Scholar's Program at the Communication Association of the Pacific Annual Convention (Kobe, Japan, June 19-20).
- BARTLETT, M.S. 1954. A note on the multiplying factors for various chi square approximation. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 16(2):296–298.
- BAXTER, L.A. & BABBIE, E. 2004. *The basics of communication research*. Thomson Wadsworth.
- BAZELEY, P. 2009. Integrated data analyses in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3(3):203-207.
- BEAMER, L. 2016. Learning intercultural communication competence. *The Journal of Business Communication*. 29(3):205–303.
- BEERKENS, R, LE PICHON-VORSTMAN, E, SUPHEERT, R, THIJE, J.T. (Eds) 2020. Enhancing intercultural communication in organisations: Project advisers. Routledge.
- BENNETT, T. 1998. *Culture: A reformer's science*. Allen & Unwin.
- BENNETT, M. 2005. Intercultural communication. In M.J. Bennett (Ed.), *Basic concepts of intercultural communication: selected readings*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- BENNETT, N.P. & GILES, L. 2013. *Channeling the deluge: research challenges for big data and information systems*. Proceedings of the 22nd ACM international conference on Conference on information & knowledge management. doi: 10.1145/2505515.2525541

- BERG, B.L. 1998. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Singapore: Allyn & Bacon.
- BLINNE, K.C. 2012. Making the familiar strange: Creative cultural story telling within the communication classroom. *Communication Teacher*. 26(4):216–219. doi:101080/17404622.2012.700722.
- BOOYSEN, L. 2007. Societal power and changing identities in South Africa: Workplace implications. *South African journal and management sciences*. Available from: <https://researchgate.net/publication/283593127>.
- BOOYSEN, L, NKOMO, S. & BEATY, D. 2002. Breaking through the numbers game: High impact diversity, *Management Today*. 18(9):22.
- BRYMAN, A. 1989. Collision or collusion? A discussion and case study of the unplanned triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research methods. *International journal Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 1(1):47-63, 1989.
- BRYMAN, A. 1994. *Social scientists meet the media*. London: Routledge.
- BRYMAN, A. 1995. *Work, employment and society*. Loughborough University: SAGE Publications.
- BRYMAN, A. 2007. Barriers to integrating quantitative and qualitative research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1):8-220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2345678906290531>
- BRYNARD, P.A. & HANEKOM, S.X. 2006. *Introduction to research in management related fields*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- BRYNARD, P.A. & HANEKOM, S.X. 2008. *Introduction to research in management related field*. 2nd edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- BURGER, A. & SILIMA, T. 2006. Sampling and sampling design. *Journal of Public Administration*, 41(31) October: 656-668.

- CARRIERE, J. & BOURQUE, C. 2009. The effects of organisational communication on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a land ambulance service and the mediating role of communication satisfaction. *Career Development International*. 14 (1):134–147.
- CHANG, H, CHUANG, S. & CHAO, S. 2011. Determinants of cultural adaptation, communication quality, and trust in virtual teams' performance. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*. 22(3):305–329.
- CHEN, G.M. & STAROSTA, W.J. 1996. Intercultural communication competence: A synthesis. *Annals of the International Communication Association*. 19(1):34–45.
- CHURCH, A.T. 1982. Sojourner adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 91(3):540–572.
- COLLINS, K.J., DU PLOOY, G.M., GROBBELAAR, M.M. PUTTERGILL, C.H., TERRE BLANCHE, M.J., VAN EEDEN, R., VAN RENSBERG, G.H. & WIGSTON, D.J. 2000. *Research in the social sciences*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- CRESSWELL, J.W. 1998. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. SAGE publications, Inc.
- CRESWELL, J.W. 2003. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. 2nd edition. Thousands Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- CRESWELL, J.W. 2009. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. London: SAGE Publications.
- CRESWELL, J.W. 2011: *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. SAGE Publications.
- CRESWELL, J.W. & CRESWELL, J.D. 2018. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative & mixed method approaches*. 5th edition. London: SAGE Publications.
- CRESWELL, J.W. & PLANO CLARK, V.L. 2011. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Washington DC: SAGE Publications.
- CROTTY, M. 1998. *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: SAGE Publications.

- CULLEN, J.B. & PARBOTEEAH. 2008. *Multinational management: A strategic approach*. 4th edition. Thomson South-Western.
- DAFT, R.L. 2006. *Organisation theory and design*. Cengage Learning.
- DAMBUDZO, I.I. 2009. *The relationship between learner self-concept and achievement in secondary schools in Zimbabwe* (Doctoral thesis, UNISA, Pretoria).
- DAVID, M. & SUTTON, C.D. 2004. *Social research: The basics*. Thousands Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- DE VOS, A.S., STRYDOM, H. & FOUCHÉ, C.B. 2005. *Research at grassroots. For the social sciences and human professions*. 3rd edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- DECRAMER, A. SMOLDERS, C. & VANDERSTRAETEN, A. 2013. Employee performance management culture and system features in higher education: relationship with employee performance management satisfaction. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(2):352–371, doi: 10.1080/09585192.2012.68060
- DEETZ, S. 2001. *Conceptual foundations*. In F.M. Jablin & L.L. Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organisational communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- DRAGOJEVIC, M., GASIOREK, J. & GILES H. 2015. Communication adaptation theory. In *International encyclopedia of interpersonal communication*. John Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118540190.wbeic006>
- DU PLESSIS, P. & MAJAM, M. 2010. Mixed method research: A new paradigm? *Journal of Public Administration*, 43(3), September:456–472.
- DU PLOOY, G.M. 2002. *Communication research: techniques, methods and applications*. Cape Town: Juta.
- DU PLOOY, G.M. 2009. *Communication research: techniques, methods and application*. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Juta.
- DU PLOOY-CILLIERS F., DAVIS, C. & BEZUIDENHOUT, R. 2014. *Research matters*. Cape Town: Juta.

- DYERS, C. & WANKAH, F.J. 2010. Uncovering and negotiating barriers to intercultural communication at Greenmarket Square, Cape Town's 'world in miniature': An insider's perspective. *Per Linguam*. (26)1. doi: 0.5785/26-1-10
- ELLINGSWORTH, H.W.1983. A theory of adaptation in intercultural dyads, in Kim, Y.Y. & Gudykunst, W.B. (EDS) *Theories in intercultural communication*. Newbury park: SAGE Publications.
- ELLIS, S.M. & STEYN, H.S. 2003. Practical significance (effect sizes) versus or combination with statistical significance (p-values), *Management Dynamics*, 12(4):51–53.
- EMUZE, F. & JAMES, M. 2013. Exploring communication challenges due to language and cultural diversity on South African construction sites. *Acta Structilia*. 20(1).
- FABRIZIO, S.M. & NEILL, J.T. 2005. Cultural adaptation in outdoor programming. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*, 9(2):44-56.
- FASSET. 2013. Cultural diversity in the workplace handbook. Faranani facilitating service Pty Ltd
- FALKHEIMER, J. & HEIDE, M. 2006. *Multicultural crisis communication: Towards a social constructionist perspective*. Wiley Online Library. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5973.2006.00494.x>
- FLICK, U. 2014. *An introduction to qualitative research*. 5th edition. London: SAGE Publications.
- FORCECE, D.P. & RICHER, S. 1973. *Social research methods*. Prentice Hall.
- FORMAN, J. & ARGENTI, P.A. 2005. How corporate communication influences strategic implementation, reputation and the corporate brand: An exploratory qualitative study. *Corporate Reputation Review*. 8(3):245–264.
- FRANK, J. 2013. Raising cultural awareness in the English language classroom. *Journal for Teaching Forum*, 5(1):2–11.

- FRANKFORT-NACHMIAS, C. & NACHMIAS. 1997. *Research methods in the social sciences*. London: Edward Arnold.
- GARDENSWARTZ, L. & ROWE, A. 2003. *Diverse teams at work*. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin.
- GASS, H. 2005. Attention when? An investigation of the ordering effect of input and interaction. *Studies in second language acquisition*. 27(1):1–31.
- GHAURI, P. & GRONSHAUNG, K. 2002. *Research methods in business studies: a practical guide*. Prentice-Hall.
- GILES, H. & OGAY, T. 2007. Communication accommodation theory. In B.B. Whaley & W. SAMTER (Eds.), *Explaining communication: Contemporary theories and exemplars* (pp. 293–310). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- GUDYKUNST, W.B. 2003. *Cross-cultural and intercultural communication*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- GUDYKUNST, W.B. 2005. *Theorizing about intercultural communication*. London: SAGE Publications.
- GUIRDHAM, L. 2005. *Communicating across cultures at work*. 2nd edition. Indiana: Inchor Business Books.
- GUMEDE, M. 2016. *The impact of cultural diversity on organisational performance and success* (Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal).
- HALL, B.J. 2017. *Among cultures*. 3rd edition. Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
- HAMMER, M.R., WISEMAN, R.L., RASMUSSEN, J.L. & BRUSCHKE, J.C. 1998. A test of anxiety/uncertainty management theory: The intercultural adaptation context. *Communication Quarterly*. 46(3):309–326. doi: 10.1080/0146337909370104
- HANSON, W.E., CRESWELL, J.H., PLANO CLARK, V. L., PETSKA & CRESWELL, J.D. 2005. *Mixed methods research designs in counselling psychology*. Faculty Publication, Department of Psychology. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

- HARRISON, R.L. & REILLY, T.M. 2011. Mixed methods designs in marketing research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*. 14(1), October:7–26.
- HARVEY, C.P. & ALLARD, B. 2014. *Understanding and managing diversity*. Pearson.
- HASLBERGER, A. 2005. Facets and dimensions of cross-cultural adaptation: refining the tools. *A Journal of Dimensions of Culture*, 31(1):85–109.
- HAWKESWORTH, M. 1999. Analysing backlash: Feminist standpoint theory as analytical tool. *Journal for Women's International Forum*, 22(2):135–155.
- HAYLES, V.R. 2009. Diversity at workplace. *HRM Review*, August:36–40.
- HEALY, L.M. 1997. International dimensions of diversity: Issues for the social agency workplace. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*. 4(4):97–116. doi:10.1300/J285v04n0407
- HELLRIEGEL, D., JACKSON, S.O., SLOCUM, J., STAUDE, G. AMOS, T., KLOPPER, H.B., LOUW, L. & OOSTHUIZEN, T. 2005. *Management*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- HENDERSON, J.K. 2010. The implications of language boundaries on the development of trust in international management teams. In M. Saunders, D. Skinner, G. Dietz, N. Gillespie & R. Lewicki (Eds.), *Organisational trust: A cultural perspective* (pp. 358-382). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511763106.015
- HOLMES, S. 1997. *Intercultural communication and dialogue competence: An attempt at synthesis through useful "fictions"*. Working paper of International Society for Diversity Management e.V. No. 2. https://www.idm-diversity.org/files/Working_paper2-Holmes.pdf
- HUANG & TRAUTH 2007. Analysing ICT and development: Thailand's path to the information economy. *Journal of Global Information Management (JGIM)*.19(1):1–29.
- HUBBARD, E.E. 2004. *The manager's pocket guide to diversity management*, Amherst, MA: HRD Press.
- HUMAN, L. 2005. Diversity management for business success. *Management today*. 21 (8), 42-44, 2005.

- HYDE, M. & KULLMAN, J. 2004. *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book for students*. Routledge.
- JANDT, F.E. 2004. *Intercultural communication: A global reader*. London: SAGE Publications.
- JANDT, F.E. 2017. *An introduction to intercultural communication: Identities in a global community*. Singapore: SAGE Publications.
- JOHNSON, B. & CHRISTENSEN, L. 2004. *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches*. Boston: Pearson.
- JOHNSON, R.B., ONWUEGBUZIE, A.J. & TURNER, L.A. 2007. Towards a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 1(2):112–133. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298224>
- KAISER, H.F. 1974. An index of factorial simplicity. *Psychometrika*. 3(9):311–336.
- KAMAL, Y. & FERDOUSI, M.M. 2009. Managing diversity at workplace: A case study of hp. *ASA University Review*. 3(2):157–170.
- KIM, Y.Y. 2006. *Communication and cross-cultural adaptation: An integrative theory*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.
- KISS, G. 2008. A theoretical approach to intercultural communication. *Communication*. 7(3):435–443.
- KLEIN, M.D. & CHEN, D. 2001. *Working with children from culturally diverse backgrounds*. Albany: Delmar Thomson.
- KONRAD, A.M. 2003. Special issue introduction: Defining the domain of workplace diversity scholarship. *Group and Organisation Management*. 28(1):4–17.
- LEEDY, P.D. & ORMROD, J.E. 2005. *Practical research: planning and design*. 8th edition. Canada: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

- LIEBERMAN, D. & GAMST., E. 2015 Intercultural communication competence revisited: Linking the intercultural and multicultural fields. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 48. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2015.03.007.
- LITTLEJOHN, S.W. & FOSS, K.A. 2009. *Encyclopaedia of communication theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- LUSTIG, W., KOESTER, J. & HALUALANI, R. 2018. *Intercultural competence: Interpersonal communication across cultures*. Boston: Pearson.
- MACINTYRE, P.D. 2019. Anxiety/uncertainty management and communication accommodation in women's brief dyadic conversations with a stranger: An idiodynamic approach. Sage
- MACLEOD, C. & MATHEWS, A. 2012. Cognitive bias modification approaches to anxiety. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*. 8:189–217. doi: 10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-032511-143052.
- MAHLARI, L.P. 1996. *Intercultural communication in the Johannesburg public library* (Master's dissertation, Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg).
- MAMPANE, S.T. 2019. Managing diversity in South Africa in South African higher education institutions. In M.R. Olivas-Lujan & T. Bondarouk (Eds.), *Advanced series in management*, 21, 139–156. Emerald Publishing.
- MAREE, K. 2011. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- MARTIN, J.N. & NAKAYAMA, T.K. 2004. *Intercultural communication competence*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- MARTIN, J.N. & NAKAYAMA, T.K. 2013. *Intercultural communication in contexts*. 6th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- MATHUR-HELM, B. 2014. Women and the glass ceiling in South African banks: an illusion or reality? *Women in Management Review*. 21(4):311–326.

- MATSUNAGA, M. 2010. Testing a mediational model of bullied victims' evaluation of received support and post-bullying adaptation: A Japan–US cross-cultural comparison. *Communication Monographs*. 77(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637751003758235>.
- MATTHEWS, B. & ROSS, L. 2010. *Research methods: a practical guide for the social sciences*. Pearson.
- MAZIBUKO, J.V. & GOVENDER, K.K. 2017. Exploring workplace diversity and organisational effectiveness: A South African exploratory case study. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*. 15:1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v15i0.865>
- MCMILLAN, J.H. & SCHUMACHER, S. 2006. *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. 4th edition. Boston: Pearson.
- MMOPE, P.P. 2016. *Integrated intercultural employee communication for line management in transformed universities in South Africa* (Doctoral thesis, North-West University, Potchefstroom).
- MOR BARAK, M.E., CHERIN, D.A. & BERKMAN, S. 2013. Organisational and personal dimensions in diversity climate: ethnic and gender differences in employee perceptions. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*. 34(1):34–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886398341006>
- MORSE, J.M. 2008. Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation. *Nursing Research*, 40(1):120–123.
- MOUTON, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your Master's & doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- MUMBY, D.K. & STOHL, C. 2013. Disciplining organisational studies. *Management Communication Quarterly*. 22(3):502–511.
- MUNSHI, K. 2014. Community networks and the process of development. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 28(4): 49–76.
- NEUENDORF, K.A. 2011. Content analysis: A methodological primer for gender research. *Sex Roles*, 64(3–4): 276–289.

- NEULIEP, J.W. 2006. *Intercultural communication: A contextual approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications
- NEULIEP, J.W. 2009. *Intercultural communication: A contextual approach*. London: SAGE Publications.
- NEULIEP, J.W. 2012. *Intercultural communication: A contextual approach*. London: SAGE Publications.
- NEULIEP, J.W. 2015. The relationship among intercultural communication apprehension, ethnocentrism, uncertainty, reduction, and communication satisfaction during initial intercultural interaction. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*. 41(1):1–16.
- NEULIEP, J.W. 2016. *Intercultural communication: A contextual approach*. 7th edition. Thousands Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- NHLAPO, M.E. 2013. Intercultural communication in information systems development teams. Dissertation: North-West University.
- NYATHI-SALESHANDO, L. 2011. An advocacy project for multicultural education: the case of Shiyeyi language in Botswana. *International Review in Education*. 57(5–6).
- OKORO, E.A. & WASHINGTON M.C. 2012. Workforce diversity and organisational communication: Analysis of human capital performance and productivity. *Journal of Diversity Management*. 7(1):57–61.
- ORBE, M.P. 1998. From the standpoint(s) of traditionally muted groups: Explicating a co-cultural communication theoretical model. *Communication Theory*. 1998(81):1–26.
- ORBE, M.P. 2004. Negotiating multi identifies within multiple frames: an analysis of first-generation college students. *Communication Education*. 53(2):131–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520410001682301>.
- ORBE, M.P. 2017. Critical intercultural communication, theories, issues, and concepts. In *The international encyclopaedia of intercultural communication*. Wiley Online Library. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118783665.ieicc0201>

- ORBE, M.P. & ROBERTS, T.L. 2012. Co-cultural theorizing: Foundations, applications and extensions. *Howard Journal of Communications*. 23(4):293–311. doi:10.1080/10646175.2012.722838
- ORGAD, S. 2006. The cultural dimensions of online communication: A study of breast cancer patients' spaces. *New Media & Society*. 8(6):877–889. doi: 10.1177/1461444806069643.
- PALLANT, J. 2011. *SPSS survival manual: A step by step to data analysis using SPSS*. 4th edition. Allen & Unwin.
- PATEL, F, LI, M & SOOKNANAN, P. 2011. *Intercultural communication: Building a global community*. Sage Publication
- PARKER, W. 2005. *Teaching democracy: unity and diversity in public life*. Teachers College Press.
- PENCELIAH, Y. 2008. Managing across cultures for organisational success. *Journal of Public Administration*. 61(3):330–341.
- RAHMAN, S. 2017. The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language “testing and assessment” research: A literature review. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 6(1):102–112.
- RANA, R. 2013. Effective communication in a diverse workplace. *International journal of enhanced in management and computer system*. 2(2) 1 – 5.
- RANANGA, N.C. 2008. *Professionalising storytelling in African languages with special reference to Venda*. Doctoral thesis: Unisa, Pretoria).
- RICHARDT, C.S. & COOK, T.D. 1979. *Qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation research. Beyond qualitative versus quantitative methods*. Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications.
- ROBSON, C. 1998. *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. Oxford UK: Blackwell.
- RUCH, K. & WELCH, M. 2012. Valuing internal communication: Management and employee perspectives. *Public Relations Review*. 38(2):294–302.

- SADRI, H.A. & FLAMMIA, M. 2011. *Intercultural communication: A new approach to international relations and global challenges*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group.
- SAMOCHOWIEC, J. & FLORACK, A. 2010. Intercultural contact under uncertainty: The impact of predictability and anxiety on the willingness to interact with a member from an unknown cultural group. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34(5):507–515.
- SAMOVAR, L.A. & PORTER, R.E. 2007. *Intercultural communication*. Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
- SAMOVAR, L.A., PORTER, R.E. & MCDANIEL, L.M. 2012. *Intercultural communication*. Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
- SANTOS, C.A. & ROZIER, A. 2007. Cultural politics in contemporary travel writing. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 31:122–138.
- SCHIMITZ, L. 2012. Sociology: Brief edition. *Sociology and the Sociological Perspective*. 10(2):109-131.
- SCHNEIDER, S.C. & BARSOUX, J.L. 2003. *Managing across cultures*. Prentice Hall.
- SCHWANDT, T.A. 1997. *Qualitative inquiry: A dictionary of terms*. London: SAGE Publications.
- SCHWEIGER, D.M., ATAMER, T. & CALORI, R. 2002. Transnational project teams and networks: Making the multinational organisation more effective. *Journal of World Business*. 38(2):127–140.
- SEKARAN, U. 2003. *Research methods for business. A skill-building approach*. 4th edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.
- SILVERMAN, D. 2011. *Qualitative data*. 3rd edition. London: SAGE Publications.
- SMIT, P.J., CRONJE, G.J., BREVIS, T., & VRBA. 2011. *Management principles: A contemporary edition for Africa*. Cape Town: Juta.

- SOMEKH, B. & LEWIN, C. 2011. *Theory and methods in social research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- SOPOW, E. 2007. The communication climate change at RCMP. *Strategic communication management*. 12, 20 - 23.
- SPITZBERG, K.B. 1993. *Communication competence and interpersonal communication*. San Diego State University.
- STANTON, C. 2009. Organisational research methods. *Research and Practice*.10(15):195.
- STEINBERG, S. 2007. *Communication studies: An introduction*. Cape Town: Juta.
- STEPHAN, W.G., STEPHAN, C.W. & GUDYKUNST, W.B. 1999. Anxiety in intergroup relations: A comparison of anxiety/uncertainty management theory and integrated threat theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 23(4):613–628.
- SUDHAKAR, B. & PATIL, S. 2006. Measuring up. *Communication World*. 23(5):32–35.
- SURBONE, A. 2007. Cultural aspects of communication in cancer care. *Support Cancer Care*. 16(3):235–240. doi: 10.1007/s00520-007-0366-0
- TASHAKKORI, A. & CRESWELL, J.W. 2007. The new era of mixed methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, (1):3.
- TAYLOR, M. & ELSEY, G. 2005. Building commitment to a new business strategy at Sensis. *Strategic Communication Management*. (9):14-17.
- TEDDLIE, C. & YU, F. 2007. Mixed methods sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1):77-100.
- TING-TOOMEY, S. & DORJEE, T. 2019. Language, identity, and culture. Multiple identity-based perspectives. In T.M. Holtgraves (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of language and social psychology*. Oxford University Press. 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199838639.013.013.
- THOMPSON, N. 2018. *Effective Communication: A Guide for the people professions*. Mcmillan International Higher Education.

- TUT 2011. *Employment equity plan (2011–2015)*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2005. *Language policy*. Pretoria Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2006. *Policy on unfair discrimination*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2008. *Strategic plan 2008–2012*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2011. *EE plan (2011-2015)*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2011. *Employment equity plan (2011–2015)*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2011. *Strategic plan (2014-2019)*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2014. *Diversity training guide*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2016. *Integrated marketing communication strategy for the Tshwane University of Technology (2016-2019)*. Pretoria: Corporate Affairs and Marketing, Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2017. *Transformation framework*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- TUT. 2020 *Strategic plan (2020-2025)*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.
- UDECHUKWU, G.I. 2019. The significance and use of cultural symbols in the contemporary African society: Igbo symbols as a paradigm. *Mgbakoiba, journal of African studies*. 8(1) 110 – 116.
- VAN STADEN, A. 2013. An evaluation of an intervention using sign language and multi-sensory coding to support word learning and reading comprehension of deaf signing children. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*. 29(3):305–318. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265657013479961>.
- VAN STADEN, E., MARX, S. & ERASMUS-KRITZINGER, C. 2007. *Getting the message across in business*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- VARONIS, E. 2007. Non-native/non-native conversations: A model for negotiation of meaning, *Applied Linguistics*. 6:71–90.
- VEVEA, N.N. 2011. *Integrated intercultural employee communication for line management*. (Doctoral thesis, Fargo: North Dakota).
- VISAGIE, J.C., LINDE, H. & HAVENGA, W. 2011. A theoretical approach to the experience of diversity management: Mead revisited. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 27(2):111–121. doi: 10.1080/09718923.2011.11892911.
- VOLK, S.C. & ZERFASS. 2018. Alignment: Explicating a key concept in strategic communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*. 12(4), 433-451, doi:10.1080/1553118X.2018.1452742
- WELCH, M. & JACKSON, P.R. 2007. Rethinking internal communication: a stakeholder approach. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 12(2):177–198.
- WESTABY, C., FOWLER, A. & PHILIPS, J. 2020. Managing emotion in probation practice: display rules, values, and the performance of emotional labour. *International journal of law, crime and justice*. 61(2020)100362.
- WHITE, C., VANC, A. & STAFFORD, G. 2011. Internal communication, information satisfaction, and sense of community: *The Effect of Personal Influence Journal*. 1(3):231–341.
- WHITE, K.M. 2005. An exploration of the interplay between psychological sense of community, social identification. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 15(2):127–135.
- WINKELMAN, M. 2010. *Cultural shock and adaptation*. Blackwell Publishing, British Academy of Management.
- WISEMAN, R.L. 1995. *Intercultural communication theory*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- WOOD, J.T. 2005. Feminist standpoint theory and muted group theory commonalities and divergences. *Women and Language*, 26(2):61–64.

YAUCH, C.A. & STEUDEL. H.L. 2003. Complementary use of qualitative and quantitative cultural assessment methods. *Organisational Research Methods*, 4(6):465–481.

Appendix A¹: Ethics approval letter of study



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520
Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>
Research Ethics Regulatory Committee
Tel: 018 299-4849
Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

5 May 2016

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the Arts Research Ethics Committee (AREC) on 05/05/2016, the Arts Research Ethics Committee hereby approves your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: A conceptual framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology			
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof L Holtzhausen			
Student: M. Mushaathoni			
Ethics number:	N W U - 0 0 2 1 8 - 1 6 - A 7		
	<small>Institution Study Number Year Status</small>		
	<small>Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small>		
Application Type: Single Study	Risk Category:	Low	
Commencement date: 05/05/2016			
Expiry date: 05/05/2021			
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.			

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the AREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the AREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

General conditions:
<i>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the AREC:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and</i> - <i>without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.</i> • <i>The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the AREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.</i> • <i>Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.</i> • <i>The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.</i> • <i>In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-RERC and AREC reserves the right to:</i>

1

*The title reflected on the ethics certificates differ slightly from the final title of the study. This serves to confirm that the nature of the empirical research in the study has not been altered or adapted in any way. The ethical clearance received for the research remain unchanged. A slight amendment was made to reflect the contribution of the study.

Appendix A²: Extension of ethical approval



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOMKAMPUS

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520

Tel: (018) 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**Faculty of Humanities (Arts) Ethics
Committee**
Tel: (018) 299 1751
E-mail: Willie.vanwyk@nwu.ac.za

Mrs. M. Mushaathoni
14 October 2019

EXTENSION OF ETHICAL APPROVAL: NWU-00218-16-A7

Title of the research: “A conceptual framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology.”

Project Leader/Supervisor: Prof Lida Holtzhausen

Student: M. Mushaathoni

Period of approval: 5 June 2016 to 30 October 2017.

The Humanities (Arts) Ethics Committee hereby extends your ethical approval until 30 April 2020.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W.J. van Wyk', is written on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and includes a small flourish at the end.

Prof W.J. van Wyk

Chair

Humanities (Arts) Ethics Committee

Appendix A³: Permission letter: Research Ethics Committee



Research Ethics Committee

The TUT Research Ethics Committee is a registered Institutional Review Board (IRB 00005968) with the US Office for Human Research Protections (IORG# 0004997) (Expires 30 Jan 2020). Also, it has Federal Wide Assurance for the Protection of Human Subjects for International Institutions (FWA 00011501). In South Africa it is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-160509-21).

October 30, 2019

Ref #: REC/2019/09/007
Name: Mushaathoni M
Student #: 25299557, NWU

Ms M Mushaathoni
C/o Dr L Holtzhausen
School of Communication
North West University

Dear Ms Mushaathoni,

Decision: Gatekeeper Permission: Final Approval

Name: Mushaathoni M

Project title: *A conceptual framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology*

Qualification: Doctor Philosophiae in Communication Studies, North West University

Supervisor: Dr L Holtzhausen

Co-supervisor: Prof LM Fourie

Thank you for submitting the project documents for ethics clearance by the Research Ethics Committee (REC), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). In reviewing the documents, the comments and notes below are tabled for your consideration, attention and/or notification:

- **North West University (NWU), Ethics Letter**

- The REC took note of the ethical clearance granted by the NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC) [Ethical Clearance Number: NWU-00218-16-A7; dated 15 June 2016]. The Ethics Clearance Certificate expired on the 30 October 2017.



We empower people

Tel. 0861 102 422, Tel. (012) 382-5911, Fax (012) 382-5114, www.tut.ac.za • The Registrar, Private Bag X680, Pretoria 0001

- **Permission Letters, Proposal, Information Leaflet, Questionnaire, and Memo of Revisions**

- The REC takes note of the resubmitted documents.
- The corrections and documents are in order and the study may proceed.

The Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee, Tshwane University of Technology, reviewed the project documents on October 30, 2019. **Final Approval** gatekeeper permission is granted to the study.

The proposed research project may now continue with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher/s will conduct the study according to the procedures and methods indicated in the **approved proposal**, particularly in terms of any undertakings and/or assurances made regarding the confidentiality of the collected data.
- 2) The proposal will again be submitted to the Committee for prospective ethical clearance if there are any substantial **deviations** and/or changes from the approved proposal.
- 3) The researcher/s will act within the parameters of any applicable **national legislation, professional codes of conduct**, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Strict adherence to the following South African legislation, where applicable, is especially important: Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013), Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) and the National Health Act (Act 61 of 2003).
- 4) The researcher will inform the REC as soon as possible of any **adverse events** involving research participants that may have occurred during the course of the study. It includes the actions and/or processes that were implemented to mitigate and/or prevent any further injuries and/or adverse outcomes.
- 5) The researcher will inform the REC of any **new or unexpected ethical issues** that may have emerged during the course of the study, as well as how these ethical issues were addressed. The researcher must consult with the REC for advice and/or guidance in any such event.
- 6) The current ethics approval expiry date for this project is **October 31, 2021**. No research activities may continue after the ethics approval expiry date. An application for the extension of ethics approval must be submitted for projects that need to continue beyond the expiry date.

Note:

The reference number [top right corner of this communiqué] should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants.



We empower people

Tel. 0861 102 422, Tel. (012) 382-5911, Fax (012) 382-5114, www.tut.ac.za • The Registrar, Private Bag X680, Pretoria 0001

Yours sincerely,



HD Mason (Dr)
Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee
[TUTRef#2019=09=007=MushaathonIM]



We empower people

Tel. 0861 102 422, Tel. (012) 382-5911, Fax (012) 382-5114, www.tut.ac.za • The Registrar, Private Bag X680, Pretoria 0001

Appendix B¹: Permission letter (Office of the Executive Director: Human Resources & Transformation)



Office of the Executive Director
Human Resources & Transformation

18 November 2019

To whom it may concern

I, Ms Moretlo Mokuele, Executive Director of Human Resources and Transformation hereby give Ms M Mashaathoni, who is a registered student for the qualification: Doctor Philosophie in Communication Studies at the North West University, permission to conduct a survey amongst some selected employees at TUT.

The student is doing research on the following title "A conceptual framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology". An ethical clearance approval has been granted to the student by the TUT Research Ethics Committee.

Regards



Ms. M Mokuele
Executive Director
Human Resources and Transformation



We empower people

Tel (012) 342 3034/4795, MokueleMB@tu.ac.za 17Bag X650, Pretoria, 0001 www.tut.ac.za

**Appendix B²: Permission letter (Office of the Chief Information Officer and Executive
Director: Institutional Effectiveness and Technology)**



••••Memo

**Office of the Chief Information Officer & Executive Director: Institutional
Effectiveness and Technology**

To: Ms M Mushaathoni

Date: 24 January 2020

Dear Ms Mushaathoni

Re: Permission to use Institutional Data

Thank you for requesting to use institutional documentation and/or data for research and publication thereof. By virtue of my office as the custodian of the Institutional Management Information System and the data stored therein, I have a fiduciary responsibility to protect the university's intellectual property as well as ensure compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (2013).

Your request has been reviewed and I am pleased to inform you that you may use the TUT email platform to collect quantitative data from staff members within the Faculty of Humanities across the University (target group).

The documentation may only be used for research purposes on the topic "A conceptual framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: the case of Tshwane University of Technology," and any in further publications emanating from the research.

As indicated in your email, kindly comply with the ethical conduct principles as stipulated by the Tshwane University of Technology Policy on Research Ethics.

I want take this opportunity to wish you every success in your PhD.
Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David", enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

CIO and ED: Institutional Effectiveness and Technology

APPENDIX B³: Permission letter (Director: Corporate Affairs and Marketing)

RE: Request of permission to conduct research

BW

Brenda Watson
Mon 2019/11/18 11:36
To: Maria Mushaathoni



Dear Ms Mushaathoni,

You may conduct the said research in the Corporate Affairs & Marketing environment, pending permission from individuals you choose to include in the study.

Kind regards

Brenda

Brenda Watson
Director: Corporate Affairs and Marketing
Pretoria Campus, Building 21.490
Staatsartillerie Road, Pretoria West
Private Bag X680, PRETORIA 0001
Republic of South Africa

Tel: +27 12 382 5543 /2
Fax: +27 12 382 5343
E-mail: watsonb@tut.ac.za
Website: www.tut.ac.za +27 12 382 5533/4 086 110 2421



Appendix C: Information leaflet

Qualitative Study

| 0123824716 | mushaathonim1@tut.ac.za

Project title: Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organization: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology

Dear Recipient

You are invited to participate in a research to be conducted by Ms M Mushaathoni, a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Communication Studies student at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University. The research proposal and title were submitted to ethical clearance procedure at the North-West University. To further address the ethics issues, the research documents were reviewed by the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) Ethics Committee after which an approval for the research to be conducted was granted. The researcher is a lecturer within the Applied Languages Department of TUT. However, positional power will not be used to obtain information or to demand certain actions from the participants, and the research will be conducted fairly.

The primary objective of the research for the completion of a PhD thesis is to propose a framework that would assist diverse organisations, such as TUT to enhance intercultural communication between employees from different cultural backgrounds in order to line them up towards improved organisational performance and the achievement of a common organisational vision and purpose. Participation in this research is voluntary. Throughout the research, your right to participate and to withdraw from participating at any stage of the research will be respected. The

information received will be treated as private and confidential and your right to privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout the research and after its conclusion.

The data collected during the research will be used only for academic purposes. Any information obtained that can be identified with you will be treated as private and as confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or as required by law.

Those who are interested in participating in the research are requested to sign the online consent form and return it within 5 days from the date of the distribution of the consent form. By completing and returning the consent form you are assenting to participate in the research. For the purpose of collecting qualitative data, a recorder and notebook will be used for managing and recording information. One interview per participant will be conducted and follow up interviews will only be conducted in cases where there could be a need for clarification in relation to the data collected during the first round of interviews.

For further information, you can contact the following people:

- Researcher: Ms M Mushaathoni Tel 012 382 4607, e-mail mushaathonim1@tut.ac.za, mmushaathoni@ymail.com
- Supervisor: Prof L. Holtzhausen lida.holtzhausen@nwu.ac.za
- North-West University Research Committee: Ms Hannekie Botha, e-mail ethics@nwu.ac.za
- Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact office hours at Tel (012) 382 5073, e-mail MasonH@tut.ac.za or you can report by completing, signing and returning the attached biographical information form, you are consenting to participate in the research.

Yours Faithfully,

M. Mushaathoni (Researcher)

Ethical reference number: NWU-0218-16-A7

Date: 2020/11/ 12

Appendix D: Consent form

I, _____
____, have read the informed consent details and understand that I am being asked to participate in a research. I consent to participate in the research.

Participant's signature

Date: _____

Kindly return this document to the researcher via e-mail (mushaathonim1@tut.ac.za)

Appendix E: Interview questions

Title – Assumptions motivating a *framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology*

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
1	What is your understanding of intercultural communication?
2	Describe your first intercultural encounters in the workplace?
3	What do you see as cultural elements fundamentally crucial in intercultural encounters?
4	What is the impact of the diverse nature of present day organisations on intercultural communication?
5	What do you consider as the challenges or barriers to effective intercultural communication?
6	What do you see as the overriding enablers or co-requisites important for employees to become competent intercultural communicators?
7	Which stages do you think employees go through in order for them to adapt before they could become competent intercultural communicators?
8	What do you consider as the goals and desired outcomes of intercultural communication?
9	How does the University management currently approach intercultural communication?
10	What do you consider as the ideal approach to intercultural communication?
11	What elements do you suggest should be included in a framework to give guidance to the way intercultural communication should be enhanced?
12	How did you adapt and became a competent intercultural communicator?

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix F: Information leaflet

Quantitative Study

| 0123824716 | mushaathonim1@tut.ac.za

Project title: Assumptions motivating framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organization: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology

Dear Recipient

You are invited to participate in a research to be conducted by Ms M Mushaathoni, a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Communication Studies student at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University. The research proposal and title were submitted to ethical clearance procedure at the North-West University. To further address the ethics issues, the research documents were reviewed by the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) Ethics Committee after which an approval for the research to be conducted was granted. The researcher is a lecturer within the Applied Languages Department of TUT. However, positional power will not be used to obtain information or to demand certain actions from the participants, and the research will be conducted fairly.

The primary objective of the research for the completion of a PhD thesis is to propose a framework that would assist diverse organisations, such as TUT to enhance intercultural communication between employees from different cultural backgrounds in order to line them up towards improved organisational performance and the achievement of a common organisational vision and purpose. Participation in this research is voluntary. Throughout the research, your right to participate and to withdraw from participating at any stage of the research will be respected. The

information received will be treated as private and confidential and your right to privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout the research and after its conclusion.

The data collected during the research will be used only for academic purposes. Any information obtained that can be identified with you will be treated as private and as confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or as required by law.

A questionnaire will be sent to the participants via e-mail, however, a link will be provided as the questionnaire will be completed online. Participants are requested to complete the online questionnaire within 10 working days from the date of the distribution of the questionnaire. Those who are interested in participating in the research are requested to sign the online consent form and return it together with the completed research questionnaire.

For further information, you can contact the following people:

- Researcher: Ms M Mushaathoni Tel 012 382 4607, e-mail mushaathonim1@tut.ac.za, mmushaathoni@gmail.com
- Supervisor: Prof L. Holtzhausen lida.holtzhausen@nwu.ac.za
- North-West University Research Committee: Ms Hannekie Botha, e-mail ethics@nwu.ac.za
- Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact office hours at Tel (012) 382 5073, e-mail MasonH@tut.ac.za or you can report by completing, signing and returning the attached biographical information form, you are consenting to participate in the research.

Yours Faithfully,

M. Mushaathoni (Researcher)

Ethical reference number: NWU-0218-16-A7

Date: 2019/12/12

Appendix G¹: Self-administered questionnaire

Title - Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology

SECTION A:

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Please answer the following questions by crossing (X) in the relevant block (Only 1 cross per question)

1	Gender	Female	1
		Male	2

2.	Age	Less than 25	1
		Between 26-30	2
		Between 31 – 50	3
		Above 50	4

3	Highest educational qualification	PhD	1
		Masters	2
		B Tech or Honours degree	3
		First diploma or degree	4
		Grade 12	5

4	Home language	Afrikaans	1
		English	2
		IsiNdebele	3
		IsiSwati	4
		IsiXhosa	5
		IsiZulu	6
		Sepedi	7
		Sesotho	8
		Setswana	9
		Tshivenda	10
		Xitsonga	11
	Other (specify)		12

5	Country of origin	Angola	1
---	-------------------	--------	---

		Botswana	2
		Democratic Republic of Congo	3
		Ghana	4
		Lesotho	5
		Mozambique	6
		Namibia	7
		Nigeria	8
		South Africa	9
		Swaziland	10
		Zambia	11
		Zimbabwe	12
	Other (specify)		13

6	Race	African	1
		Coloured	2
		Indian	3
		White	4
	Other (specify)		5

SECTION B:

All the statements in this questionnaire relate to the importance of intercultural communication as a means of achieving performance improvement and ultimately organisational success.

Indicate by an X in the box that reflects your impression on each of the statements in this questionnaire. Use the following scale to indicate your opinion on each statement:

1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly agree.

1	Recognising that present day organisations are diverse in nature is the starting point in working towards enhancement of intercultural communication.	1	2	3	4
2	It is of critical importance that the uniqueness of employees is managed such that intercultural communication is enhanced.	1	2	3	4
3	Achievement of organisational success is possible if employees have the capacity to communicate effectively across cultures.	1	2	3	4
4	Culture and communication are inseparable as culture is the foundation of communication,	1	2	3	4
5	Culture tells us how to interpret how to communicate with individuals from other cultures.	1	2	3	4

6	Positive sense of belonging is crucial for employees to adapt to the extent that intercultural communication is enhanced.	1	2	3	4
7	Understanding of nonverbal behaviour of individuals is essential for employees from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively.	1	2	3	4
8	Management of the cultural shock employees experience when they join a new organisation is critical for them to adapt and communicate effectively across cultures.	1	2	3	4
9	For intercultural communication to be enhanced, it is essential for employees to understand the dominant language used within the organisation they work for.	1	2	3	4
10	The ability to adapt is a requisite for employees to become capable of communicating effectively in a culture other than the one they were originally socialised to.	1	2	3	4
11	It is imperative that attempts by dominant groups to suppress voices of the minority groups is managed such that effective intercultural communication is achieved.	1	2	3	4
12	Events aimed at raising awareness through promotion of integration of employees is vital for the enhancement of intercultural communication.	1	2	3	4
13	In spite of initial denials, employees have no choice but to adapt in order to effectively communicate across cultures.	1	2	3	4
14	In first-time communication encounters, employees tend to defend themselves thereby considering that the way they communicate is better than the way colleagues from other cultures do.	1	2	3	4
15	It is crucial for employees to accept that it is important that information is communicated such that it is received in the context within which it was transmitted.	1	2	3	4
16	For communication to be enhanced, employees have no choice but adapt to the manner in which information is transmitted.	1	2	3	4
17	Effective communication is essential for employees to integrate and work towards the achievement of a common purpose.	1	2	3	4
18	It is of essence that organisations devise ways and means to ensure that employees adapt and become competent intercultural communicators.	1	2	3	4
19	Motivation by managers is vital for employees from different cultural backgrounds to become competent intercultural communicators.	1	2	3	4
20	Knowledge of cultural backgrounds of fellow employees is important for individuals to become competent intercultural communicators.	1	2	3	4
21	Employees should be equipped with necessary skills to enable them to successfully adapt and become competent intercultural communicators.	1	2	3	4
22	Character of employees determines the extent to which they could adapt and become competent intercultural communicators.	1	2	3	4
23	Management should provide financial resources necessary for the successful empowerment of employees to communicate effectively across cultures.	1	2	3	4
24	Management of anxiety is a requisite for new employees to understand and acknowledge cultural changes happening to them.	1	2	3	4
25	Uncertainty of new employees should be managed such that they understand and acknowledge cultural changes happening to them.	1	2	3	4

26	For communication to be enhanced, employees need to acknowledge cultural changes happening around them.	1	2	3	4
27	It is imperative for managers to understand how individuals transit from one culture to the other so that they could devise strategies to improve intercultural communication.	1	2	3	4
28	Creation of conducive environment for new employees to be accepted is necessary for them to adapt to the way intercultural communication occurs.	1	2	3	4
29	Commitment is important for employees to adapt to an extent that intercultural communication is enhanced.	1	2	3	4
30	It is vital for organisations to have a framework to give guidance to the way in which intercultural communication should be enhanced.	1	2	3	4

Thank you for participating in this study

Appendix G²: Electronic questionnaire

1/20/2021

Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane Uni...

Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organisation: The case of the Tshwane University of Technology

Dear Colleague

You are invited to participate in research to be conducted by Ms M Mushaathoni, a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Communication Studies student at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University.

Yours Faithfully,

M Mushaathoni (Researcher)
Ethical reference number: NWU-0218-16-A7

*Required

Consent Form

Consent Form

- I confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this study has told me about the nature and procedure of the study.
- I have read and understood as explained in the information leaflet
- I understand that participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at anytime without penalty.
- I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings but that will be kept confidential.

1. I agree to participate in this study *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

Section
A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

All the statements in this questionnaire relate to the importance of intercultural communication as a means of achieving performance improvement and ultimately organisational success.

2. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

Female

Male

I will rather not say

3. Age

Mark only one oval.

Less than 25

Between 26 - 30

Between 31 - 50

Above 50

4. Highest Educational qualification

Mark only one oval.

- Grade 12
- First diploma or degree
- B Tech or Honours
- Masters
- PhD

5. Home Language *

Mark only one oval.

- Afrikaans
- English
- IsiNdebele
- IsiSwati
- IsiXhosa
- IsiZulu
- Sepedi
- Sesotho
- Setswana
- Tshivenda
- Xitsonga
- Other: _____

6. Country of Origin

Mark only one oval.

- Angola
- Botswana
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Ghana
- Lesotho
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- South Africa
- Swaziland
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe
- Other: _____

7. Race

Mark only one oval.

- African
- Coloured
- Indian
- White

**Section
B**

All the statements in this questionnaire relate to the importance of intercultural communication as a means of achieving performance improvement and ultimately organisational success.

Click the box that reflects your impression on each of the statements in this questionnaire. Use the following scale to indicate your opinion on each statement:

1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly agree.

8. Recognising that present day organisations are diverse in nature is the starting point in working towards enhancement of intercultural communication.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

9. It is important that the uniqueness of employees is managed such that intercultural communication is enhanced.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

10. Achievement of organisational success is possible if employees have the capacity to communicate effectively across cultures

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

11. Culture and communication are inseparable as culture is the foundation of communication

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

12. Culture tells us how to communicate with individuals from other cultures.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

13. Positive sense of belonging is needed for employees to adapt so that intercultural communication is enhanced.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

14. Understanding of nonverbal behaviour of individuals is needed for employees from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

15. Management of the cultural shock employees experience when they join a new organisation is necessary for them to communicate effectively across cultures.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

16. For intercultural communication to be enhanced, employees should understand the dominant language used within the organisation they work for.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

17. The ability to adapt is needed for employees to become capable of communicating effectively in a culture other than the one they were originally socialised to.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

18. Attempts by dominant groups to suppress voices of the minority groups should be managed such that effective intercultural communication should be achieved

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

19. Events aimed at raising awareness through integration of employees are necessary for intercultural communication to be enhanced.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

20. Employees have no choice but to adapt in order to effectively communicate across cultures.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

21. Intuitively, employees tend to consider the way they communicate as better than the way colleagues from other cultures do.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

22. Employees should accept that information should be communicated such that it is received in the context within which it was transmitted

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

23. For communication to be enhanced, employees have no choice but adapt to the manner in which information is transmitted.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

24. Effective communication is necessary for employees to work towards the achievement of a common purpose.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

25. Organisations should devise ways and means to ensure that employees become competent intercultural communicators.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

26. Managers should motivate employees from different cultural backgrounds to become competent intercultural communicators.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

27. Knowledge of cultural backgrounds of fellow employees is important to become competent intercultural communicators.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

28. Employees should be equipped with necessary skills to enable them to become competent intercultural communicators.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

29. Character of employees determines the extent to which they could become competent intercultural communicators.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

30. Management should provide financial resources necessary for the empowerment of employees to communicate effectively across cultures.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

31. Management of anxiety is needed for new employees to understand cultural changes happening to them.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

32. Uncertainty of new employees should be managed such that they understand cultural changes happening to them.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

33. For communication to be enhanced, employees need to acknowledge cultural changes happening around them.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly agree

34. Managers should understand how individuals transit from one culture to the other so that they could devise strategies to improve intercultural communication

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

35. Creation of a conducive environment for new employees to be accepted is necessary for them to adapt to intercultural communication.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

36. Employees should be committed to adapt so that intercultural communication is enhanced.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

37. Organisations should have a framework to give guidance to the way in which intercultural communication should be enhanced.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix H: Declaration by language editor

4 November 2020

PO Box 4
Otjiwarongo
Namibia

Student: M Mushaathoni

Thesis: Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organization: The case of Tshwane University of Technology

I confirm that I edited this thesis, checked the references and recommended changes to the text.



MA Language Practice



+264 813 359 120 | hettie.human@gmail.com

Appendix I: Turnitin Report

LYNNETTE FOURIE 10071474:THESIS_FINAL_VERSION_M_MUSHAATHONI.docx

Match Overview

17%

17

1	repository.mwu.ac.za	2%
2	dspace.mwu.ac.za	1%
3	docplayer.net	1%
4	uir.unisa.ac.za	1%
5	ojs.pub	1%
6	hdl.handle.net	1%
7	www.chinamediaresearch.com	<1%
8	repository.up.ac.za	<1%
9	moam.info	<1%
10	mafadoc.com	<1%
11	Submitted to North West University	<1%
12	Submitted to University of Limpopo	<1%

Page: 56 of 277 Word Count: 70152

Text-only Report | High Resolution Off

19:12 2020/12/01

Appendix J: Second declaration by language editor

Declaration

21 May 2020

PO Box 4
Otjiwarongo
Namibia

Student: M Mushaathoni - 25299557

Thesis: Assumptions motivating a framework to enhance intercultural communication within a diverse organization: The case of Tshwane University of Technology

I language edited this thesis and made recommendations for changes.

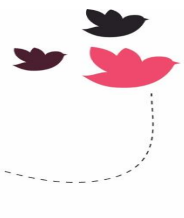
Part of my usual service involves checking the thesis after assessment. I reread the thesis, and performed a spell check again.



MA Language Practice



Hettie Human
WRITER | EDITOR | TRANSLATOR | INTERPRETER



+264 813 359 120 | hettie.human@gmail.com