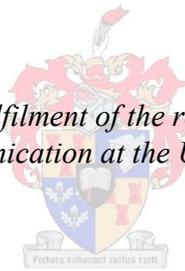


# **Intercultural communication and the community of practice in a South African sport team**

by  
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*Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
MA in Intercultural Communication at the University of Stellenbosch*



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## **DECLARATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate the impact of individual sociocultural and linguistic differences on the creation of a successful sports team on and off the field. The specific team of interest for this particular study is the Western Province amateur cricket team, based in Cape Town, South Africa. The sociocultural and linguistic differences of the participants were examined using theories focusing on intercultural communication and the various strategies that can be put in place to overcome the barriers of intercultural difference within a sports team. To this end the linguistic repertoires of participants were captured through the use of language biographies. The study further investigates how participants consider themselves to be a part of the team's community of practice (CofP), and seeks to identify obstacles in terms of acquiring and maintaining membership of this CofP. The data is analysed with the use of thematic analysis (TA) methodology. In total 17 members of the Western Province amateur cricket team participated in the study, two coaches and 15 players. They are speakers of English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. Questionnaires which elicit both personal and linguistic background information, as well as information on perceived linguistic competence, were used for data collection. Along with the questionnaires, structured interviews which aimed to determine language preferences in receiving feedback and level of comfort when communicating with speakers of different languages and from different cultures, were conducted. The questionnaire and interview data reflect the linguistic preferences of the participants, however also show that all participants conform to the team's lingua franca in order to understand and communicate openly without misunderstanding. The study shows that sociocultural and linguistic differences can act as a barrier to a sports team's dynamic and environment, but these barriers can be overcome to create a successful and cohesive community of practice on and off the field.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie het ten doel om die impak van individuele sosiokulturele- en taalverskille op die skep van 'n suksesvolle sportspan, beide op en van die veld af, te ondersoek. Die spesifieke span van belang in hierdie studie is die Westelike Provinsie amateur-krieketspan, gebaseer in Kaapstad, Suid-Afrika. Die sosiokulturele- en taalverskille tussen die deelnemers word met behulp van teorieë wat op interkulturele kommunikasie fokus en die verskeie strategieë wat ingestel kan word om die hindernisse van interkulturele verskille binne 'n sportspan te oorkom, te ondersoek. Vir hierdie doel is die taalrepertoires van deelnemers ingesamel met behulp van taalbiografieë. Die studie ondersoek ook hoe deelnemers hul lidmaatskap tot praktyk gemeenskappe beskryf, en poog om struikelblokke in terme van die verwerwing en instandhouding van hierdie lidmaatskap te identifiseer. Die data is ontleed met die gebruik van die tematiese analise (TA) metode. In totaal het 17 lede van die Westelike Provinsie amateur-krieketspan deelgeneem in die studie, twee afrigters en 15 spelers. Hulle is sprekers van Afrikaans, Engels en isiXhosa. Vraelyste wat beide persoonlike- en taalagtergrondinligting, asook inligting oor waargenome taalvaardigheid, ontlok, is gebruik vir datainsameling. Saam met die vraelyste, is gestruktureerde onderhoude, wat daarop gemik is om inligting oor taalvoorkeure in verband met terugvoer ontvang en vlak van gemak in kommunikasie met sprekers van ander tale en van ander kulture te ontbloot, gevoer. Die vraelys- en onderhouddata het die taalvoorkeure van die deelnemers getoon, maar dit het ook getoon dat al die deelnemers toegang het tot die span se omgangstaal, wat hulle in staat stel om te verstaan en openlik te kommunikeer sonder enige misverstande. Die studie toon dat sosiokulturele- en taalverskille as hindernisse tot 'n sportspan se dinamiek en omgewing kan optree, maar ook dat hierdie hindernisse oorkom kan word om 'n suksesvolle en samehangende praktyk gemeenskap, op en van die veld af, te skep.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A sports team consists of various individuals who strive together toward a particular common goal. The individuals that make-up a team often differ in terms of sociocultural and linguistic background, with their race, age, socioeconomic status, geographic placement, and language all contributing to the success of the team. This study sets out to examine how individuals in a South African amateur provincial cricket team are able to overcome, or exploit, these sociocultural and linguistic differences in order to form a community of practice and, hopefully, achieve success as a unified team.

### 1.1 Background

Prior to 1994, South Africa was characterised by Apartheid, ‘the state of being apart’, and defined by the segregation and separation of individuals based on their race. During the apartheid regime Nationalist parties ruled with an iron fist and gave freedom only to those who were of their race or supported their laws. Nationalists developed various laws such as the Group Areas Act of 1950, which forcefully relocated people to residential and business areas usually on the periphery of cities and towns which were then known to be so-called ‘black’<sup>1</sup> or ‘coloured’<sup>2</sup> townships (Adhikari, 2006: 144). This resulted in communities such as District Six, which was a prominent vibrant ‘coloured’ community in Cape Town, being destroyed under the act and its inhabitants moved out to the Cape Flats. The ‘creation’ of these new communities also resulted in new sport teams being formed. The apartheid regime didn’t allow for mixing of races and the sport teams in the ‘newly’ created communities were comprised of individuals

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<sup>1</sup> In 1978, the Nationalist government agreed to use the term **Blacks** in place of **Bantu** in referring to inhabitants of exclusively African ancestry. Although the term did refer, especially, during the seventies and eighties, under the influence of the Black Consciousness Movement, to all those who would identify themselves as Black, excluding only those who regard themselves as white, but including Coloureds and Indians, the term has since 1994 come to refer exclusively to people of African ancestry (Williams, 1988:33).

<sup>2</sup> The Nationalist government referred to people of mixed racial ancestry as being **Coloureds**. Their origins, dating to 1657, involved White men and slave women from tropical Africa, Madagascar, Java as well as local San and Khoi women (Swanepoel, 2011: 3)

with similar cultural, racial, linguistics and socio-economic backgrounds. The only difference that could possibly be distinguished in ‘same race’ teams was the religious denomination of the individuals. The apartheid regime did the same for sport teams and inter-racial competition, in that only same race teams were allowed to compete against each other and only under special circumstances were inter-racial competitions allowed. The racial division was also visible in the sport facilities, or lack thereof. Sport in South Africa suffered under the apartheid regime and was a highly divisive issue which disqualified non-white players from opportunities to be recognised nationally and internationally through various media channels. The apartheid regime excluded the non-white players in fear that, internationally, these players would be offered the opportunity to play elsewhere in the world and also at the same time show the world the oppression that was forced upon the non-white population of South Africa. The role of cricket during the apartheid era was regarded as “the game of the privileged white man” (Morgan, 2012) and within the country ‘mixed raced’ fixtures were banned, while internationally, international committees banned South Africa from competing (SAinfo reporter, 2012).

In the Western Province, apartheid resulted in separate cricket unions being established which catered for the different racial groups, and which established different leagues for each racial group to compete within (Allie, 2000). The result of separate cricketing unions also resulted in players of different races vying for ‘mixed’ cricket to be made official, however in accordance with the apartheid laws these ‘mixed’ cricket fixtures were not allowed and on various occasions fixtures were even policed to prevent ‘mixed-race’ fixtures (Allie, 2000).

Post-apartheid<sup>3</sup>, South Africa is now seen as a democratic and multi-cultural society. Diversity and multi-culturalism has filtered into sport teams in which all individuals are given fair and

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<sup>3</sup> The post-apartheid era is defined as post-1994, the year which saw South Africa’s first democratic general elections.

equal opportunities regardless of their race. This is characteristic of the Western cultural and linguistic background, coming together to form one team and competing as a collective unit. The formation of this 'unit' results in the sharing of cultures, languages and knowledge in the creation of new cultures and understandings which are significant for the team. In this sense sport can be seen as a vehicle which drives national unity and promotes and creates a national culture.

Intercultural communication is an integral part of a creating a 'unit' in that it bridges various cultures and languages so that commonality can be shared among all participants of a particular group. The diversity of South Africa can therefore affect the formation of the 'unit' in that intercultural miscommunications and misinterpretations can often be encountered. The make-up of a sport team is known for its diversity and intercultural communication can be a great source of friction. Kasanga (2001 in Jones, 2013: 1-2) contends that inter-racial communication in South Africa is characterised by pragmatic failure and miscommunication in "same-language different-culture interaction" which leads to resentment, racial stereotyping and negative labelling. In a sport team environment this is significant as the miscommunication can result in on- and off-field mishaps which may be detrimental and cause the team's results to suffer. Chick (1985: 299) states that "misinterpretation of intent and misjudgement of attitude and ability" are caused by the different interpretations attached to meanings by different first language speakers. Misinterpretation among individuals that make up a team can cause division among team members and cause results to suffer as a consequence.

## 1.2 Situational context

The Western Cape boasts an ethnically diverse population, with many individuals living in areas characterised by a mixture of apartheid's racial categories. The Western Cape's demographic population is split up as 42.4% coloured, 38.6% black, 15.7% white, 1.4% Asian

and 1.9 % other (City of Cape Town, 2012: 2). However, as much as the Western Cape has changed and developed under democracy, there are still areas that are affected by the apartheid regime. The affected areas remain dominated by racial divisions and are poverty stricken; areas such as Langa and Hanover Park are ‘black’ and ‘coloured’ communities, respectively, struggling with poverty. The statistics provided are an essential building block in understanding team dynamics and culture in that the diverse population affects a sports team’s dynamic and culture directly, and the individuals who comprise the team each vary in social and socio-economic backgrounds and bring along their own attitudes, values, views and beliefs.

The focus of the study, the Western Province amateur cricket team, is made up of a diverse group of individuals who potentially come from different parts of South Africa, each with their own cultural and socioeconomic background. In the team, although English is established as the common lingua franca, there are individuals who have both Afrikaans and isiXhosa as mother tongues, so therefore, besides cultural background, language proficiency forms a potential barrier in creating a community of practice. The community of practice for the study will be based on the mutual engagement of the individuals that make up the Western Province amateur team in which the individuals adapt to the particular ways of talking, beliefs, values and doing things within the team environment. The theory of a community of practice will be later discussed in more depth.

In recent times Cricket South Africa<sup>4</sup> (CSA) has introduced a new policy in which at least three black players have to be included in a provincial team, which affects the Western Province amateur cricket team (Moonda, 2013). This ruling is a result of policies established to empower those ‘previously disadvantaged’<sup>5</sup> and allow them opportunities once not had. While this ruling

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<sup>4</sup> Formally known as the United Cricket Board (UCB), formed in June 1991 and then in July 1991, re-admitted to become a full member of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

<sup>5</sup> ‘Previously disadvantaged’ refers to those cultural groups who were discriminated against and were not granted fair and equal opportunities during South Africa’s apartheid era.

could have generated strife, the Western Province amateur team have proven that such measures do not necessary produce insoluble fiction. The amateur team has successfully managed to win the three-day provincial competition for the 2013/2014 season which shows that diversity can be managed and channelled in the right way to bring out the best of the individuals so they that they can perform optimally on the field and function off the field as a successful community of practice.

### 1.3 Rationale for the study

This study aims to examine the various aspects culturally diverse individuals can bring to a team environment and dynamic, and how these influence the development of a team community of practice. This study was born from personal interest, in that I myself play cricket competitively and have been exposed to team environments in which there were individuals with different cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds to that of my own. In these environments I have had mixed emotions in that at certain times I experienced different levels of comfort, anxiety and understanding with fellow team mates as well as coaching staff. The study is thus interested in how a diverse group of individuals come together in the team environment, participate in the same activities, engage in mutual activities, and create a community of practice, in spite of various cultural, social and linguistic barriers.

### 1.4 Research questions

1. To what extent do the coaches and players in a particular sports team consider themselves to be part of a Community of Practice?
2. How do coaches and players make sense of finding a common goal of a good team environment, culture and atmosphere?
3. What is the specific role of language in the construction of identity and membership within a certain Community of Practice?

### 1.5 Participants and data collection

The participants in the study were the Western Province amateur cricket team, made up of 15 players and 2 coaches. The players and coaches completed an initial set of three questionnaires, with two being exclusively for the players and one for the coaches, consisting of questions about their socio-cultural backgrounds, their mother tongue and their preference for either first language (L1) or second language (L2) use. Semi-structured interviews were also used in order to gain further insight into personal information shared by the players and coaches alike. The questions posed in the semi-structured interviews varied according to the individual, based on their mother tongue, L1/L2 proficiency and their social and cultural backgrounds. The research was conducted after a training session and also during a post-training gym session, while the players and coaches had some free time and could be interviewed individually. The coaches and players agreed to completing the questionnaires and participating in the interview schedules after training sessions during their leisure time rather than while training.

### 1.6 Thesis layout

The thesis explains in chronological order the way in which the study was undertaken. Chapter 1 is a general outline of what is to proceed in the following chapters, as well as setting the contextual background and providing the research questions that the study aims to answer. Chapter 2 discusses the relevant literature, focusing on intercultural communication that is used in the analysis of the data. This includes the various barriers to intercultural communication as well as relevant strategies to overcome those barriers. Chapter 3 presents the research design and the theoretical framework. This chapter provides a more in-depth description of the context of the study, as well as the participants involved in the study. The theoretical framework also explains how the theory of community of practice is applicable to the study. Furthermore, chapter 3 also explains possible concerns that could be encountered in gathering the data.

Chapter 4 is the actual presentation and analysis of the data in which all findings are made and conclusions are drawn. Finally, in chapter 5 the entire study is summarised and conclusions are made according to the findings, as presented in chapter 4, as well as the literature used.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### 2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the literature that has informed the study and that has enabled the identification of an appropriate framework to examine how individuals in a South African amateur provincial team are able to overcome, or exploit, their sociocultural and linguistic differences in order to form a unified and successful team. The review starts with a brief discussion of the broad field of sociolinguistics, as support for the view that language can be seen as both an individual and social possession. This is followed by a discussion of the study of intercultural communication and how it can influence team cohesion both linguistically and culturally. Gudykunst (2003) is used in outlining intercultural communication theories that focus on effective outcomes, accommodation or adaptation, identity management and communication networks. These theories are used to characterise possible methods for identifying the positive aspects that diversity can bring to a sports team dynamic and environment. Although the aim of the thesis is to uncover and promote the positive aspects of diversity within a team environment, mention is also made of intercultural communication barriers that may be present. Jandt (2004) identifies various barriers that are associated with intercultural (mis)communication and that, by extension, may affect a sports team dynamic and environment. Following the discussion of intercultural communication theories and barriers to intercultural communication, the link between intercultural communication and its effects on a sports team, in relation to team culture, diversity and cohesion, will be discussed.

### 2.2 Sociolinguistics

The study of sociolinguistics encompasses all aspects of language variation and its significance in social contexts. Language is described as both an individual and social possession and

sociolinguistics focuses on the “language use with or among a group of people” (Wardhaugh, 2002: 116). The use of linguistic characteristics help individuals differentiate their personal and group identities from others; while sociolinguistics makes use of social, cultural, political and ethnic characteristics to differentiate these identities.

The concept of the group is an essential aspect of sociolinguistics, in that a general identity can be formed. A group is defined as “people who group together for one or more reasons: social, religious, political, cultural, familial, etc.” (Wardhaugh, 2002: 116). Groups are made up of various individuals each unique with complex identity (identities), and it is therefore important to avoid stereotyping<sup>6</sup> as the individual may not exhibit the identity of the group. The ‘speech community’ as a group is defined by Labov (1972b in Wardhaugh, 2002, 118): as follows: “the speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluated behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage”. A speech community is therefore not restricted to either linguistic or sociolinguistic characteristics, but incorporates both in defining the group and observing the group’s behaviour. Language variation experienced within a speech community forms part of a system because individuals share a set of social norms that are specific to the group. Therefore it allows individuals to belong to various speech communities at the same time, but will only allow for identification with a specific one in context.

### 2.3 Intercultural communication

Before the study of intercultural communication can be discussed, a definition of culture needs to be agreed upon. The term ‘culture’ is used by individuals who attach various definitions to

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<sup>6</sup> Stereotypes function as a barrier to intercultural communication, see section 2.3.1.4

it based on the context in which they find themselves in. Each context differs and “every culture has its own worldview; its own thinking of activity, time, and human nature; its own way of perceiving self; and its own system of social organisation” (Jandt, 1998: 30). Culture is therefore seen as a fluid concept in an ever-changing environment, and is learned through observation, imitation and lessons passed on from previous generations (Samovar and Porter, 2012: 8).

Understanding and developing methods to prevent confusing and hostile intercultural interactions is of utmost importance in today’s world, due to globalisation, immigration patterns and new forms of technology. These constantly changing global patterns place individuals in culturally different situations and with culturally different individuals who are constantly in contact with each other. It is therefore important that intercultural communication be understood so that, socially and professionally, individuals are able lead successful lives.

The understanding and development of various methods are applicable to both post-apartheid South Africa in general and the sports team environment in particular. Post-apartheid South Africa, as a developing nation, has seen an influx of interest from global markets. These global interests and markets have created new opportunities which have led to a rise in globalisation, immigration and infrastructure development. The development of South Africa has impacted on sports teams in that globally more opportunities are available for coaches, players and teams as a whole. The desegregation and globalisation of sport has also led to players from diverse backgrounds forming teams, at local, national and international level, and this diversity can create barriers with regards to language and culture.

Jandt (1998: 36) defines intercultural communication simply as “face-to-face interactions among people of diverse cultures”. Collier and Thomas (in Jandt, 1998: 37) define intercultural communication as “communication between persons who identify themselves as distinct from

each other in a cultural sense”. These two definitions take into consideration the difficulties with and the potential barriers to communication among individuals differing in context and who do not share similar symbols.

### 2.3.1 Barriers to intercultural communication

Barriers to intercultural communication are caused by the lack of understanding and misinterpretation of certain acts of language use, behaviour and cultural differences. The barriers can lead to confusion and conflict, which may ultimately lead to the termination of communication (Jandt, 2004: 74). The following sections present various factors which act as stumbling blocks and impede communication: Anxiety, Assuming similarity instead of difference, Ethnocentrism, Stereotypes, Prejudice and Racism.

These various factors are especially relevant to the study in that a team is made up of individuals who differ linguistically and socio-culturally, and in order to create a positive team environment these factors need to be nullified, or else on- and off-field interactions and performances will be affected. These factors will always be present in initial interactions and it is up to the team culture and environment to accommodate the individuals’ unique identities while making them comfortable in the environment, so that conflict can be avoided.

#### 2.3.1.1 Anxiety

High anxiety functions as a barrier to intercultural communication, and develops out of the feeling of not knowing what is expected of you (Jandt, 2004: 74). The fear of the unknown is most noticeable in the context of being ‘new’ in or to environments. A higher level of anxiety causes emphasis to be placed on emotive feelings, rather than that of the occurring communication in which an individual may find him/herself, which may further contribute to high levels of anxiety. Anxiety will be further discussed in section 2.3 as part of the

Anxiety/Uncertainty Management theory which emphasises the notion of the ‘stranger’ (Gudykunst, 1988 in Gudykunst, 2003:169). Simmel (1908/1950 in Gudykunst, 2003: 169) defines the notion of the ‘stranger’ as “individuals who are present in the situation but not part of the in-group”.

#### 2.3.1.2 Assuming similarity instead of difference

In the assumption of similarity, one forgets that each culture is different and unique (Jandt, 2004: 75). The assumption of similarity is usually made when no present information is known about a ‘foreign’ culture and the easiest option is to assume that there are no differences. Along with the assumption of similarity, there is also “the assumption of difference instead of similarity”, which offers the inverse, in that an individual assumes that there are always differences and no similarities between two cultures. Jandt (2004: 75) states that “it’s better to assume nothing. It’s better to ask”. This statement encourages an individual to gain valuable knowledge and insight into how to approach various situations with various individuals, without assuming similarity or difference.

The assumption of similarity is particularly relevant to the study as ‘dominant’ cultures might be inclined to assume that the basic values of their culture are universal. This is particular assumption is detrimental to the team environment and team dynamic where players have many cultural perspectives and backgrounds, while vying toward a common goal. The ‘dominant’ cultures may also assume difference which may also be detrimental to the team environment and team dynamic. These assumptions affect inter-group communication in that confusion and conflict may arise from the inconsistencies of opinions and then may eventually lead to a hostile team environment.

### 2.3.1.3 Ethnocentrism

The term ‘ethnocentrism’ is defined by Sumner (1906 in Neulip, 2012: 5) as “the technical name for [the] view of things in which one’s own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it”. Ethnocentrism therefore functions as an intercultural communication barrier due to a superiority complex held by individuals over other cultures. In Jandt (2004: 76), ethnocentrism is described as “negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one’s own culture”. This is similar to Sumner’s definition, as it identifies an individual using their own culture as the ‘ideal’ cultural construction in comparisons. The identification of ethnocentrism in both Jandt (2004) and Neulip (2012) gives rise to further forms of the barrier in “cultural relativism” and “cultural nearsightedness”. ‘Cultural relativism’ maintains that before judgment can be passed, understanding in context is necessary, and in doing so “we recognize the arbitrary nature of our own cultures behaviours and be willing to re-examine them by learning about behaviours in other cultures” (Cohen, 1998 in Jandt, 2004: 78). On the opposite end ‘cultural nearsightedness’ is the disregard for one’s own culture as well as neglecting other cultures (Jandt, 2004: 78).

### 2.3.1.4 Stereotypes, Prejudice and Racism

‘Stereotypes’, ‘Prejudice’ and ‘Racism’ are terms that are related to one another as they all refer to making judgements about individuals based on group membership. Stereotypes refer to “judgements made on the basis of group membership” (Jandt, 2004, 94). Stereotypes carry the possibility of negative or positive connotations, based on observed or believed group membership. Jandt (2004: 96) mentions that stereotypes are harmful because they impede communication in at least four ways: (1) they cause us to assume that a widely held belief is true when it may not be, (2) continued use of the stereotype reinforces the belief, (3) they cause us to assume that a widely held belief is true of any one individual, and (4) it can become a

self-fulfilling prophecy. Prejudice refers to “the irrational dislike, suspicion, or hatred of a particular group, race, religion or sexual orientation” (Rothernberg, 1992 in Jandt, 2004: 98). Prejudice, unlike stereotypes, does not accommodate any positive connotations, and individuals are not viewed on their merit if they belong to the group in question. Racism also involves prejudice in that it is the dislike of individuals of a different race. Racism involves the superiority complex held by individuals who ‘assume’ racial power over supposedly ‘minority’ races. In these cases no consideration for similar practices or beliefs are allowed due to race (Jandt, 2004).

## 2.4 Intercultural communication theories

Intercultural communication theories are a critical element in establishing grounds on which intercultural miscommunication can be avoided. There are various theories that can be divided into five categories: (1) theories focusing on effective outcomes, (2) theories focusing on accommodation or adaption, (3) theories focusing on identity negotiation or management, (4) theories focusing on communication networks and (5) theories focusing on acculturation and adjustment (Gudykunst, 2003: 168). In this thesis only certain adapted theories are applicable to the case study and maintain relevance with the desired aims and outcomes. These theories are discussed in the following subsections.

### 2.4.1 Theories focusing on effective outcomes

#### 2.4.1.1 Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory

The AUM theory is best described as the explanation of “interrelationships among uncertainty, anxiety, mindfulness and communication effectiveness and their influence on intercultural communication” (Neulip, 2012: 2). The explanation provided by Neulip (2012) incorporates all the facets that cause the AUM theory to be used as an effective tool not only to manage but

also reduce uncertainty and anxiety in initial intercultural communication encounters. As anxiety is one of the barriers that influence intercultural communication, Simmel's (1950) notion of the 'stranger' is also applicable in the theory, in that individuals may be present in the situation, but not part of the ingroup, and is described by Gudykunst (1991, 1998 in Neulip, 2012: 2) as "someone who is physically near and conceptually distant simultaneously".

The AUM theory takes into account the influence cultural factors and group memberships may have in communication, as well as the choice individuals have in their ways of communicating when mindful. The avoidance of either extreme subjectivist or extreme objectivist positions allow any individual to be a stranger to an initial encounter. The choice individuals have influences the mindfulness of behaviour, as it moderates the influence of their anxiety and uncertainty management on their communication effectiveness (Gudykunst, 2003: 169). Mindfulness influences the AUM theory in that it helps interactants to reduce and manage anxiety and uncertainty, which will result in effective communication. Along with mindfulness, each culture has various thresholds for anxiety and uncertainty. The amount of anxiety and uncertainty is based on the maximum and minimum thresholds an individual experiences. The maximum threshold is the "highest amount of uncertainty or anxiety individuals can experience and still believe they can predict a stranger's attitudes, beliefs, values and so on and remain comfortable communicating" (Neulip, 2012: 3). The minimum threshold "is the lowest amount of uncertainty a person can experience before becoming unmotivated or overconfident about predicting the stranger's behaviour about interacting" (Neulip, 2012: 3). To communicate effectively an individual needs to operate in between the parameters and not exceed the maximum or go below the minimum, otherwise the communication effectiveness will become compromised.

The AUM theory defines how effective communication can be achieved, and that anxiety and uncertainty are the basic causes of ineffective communication. The main facets of anxiety and

uncertainty carry within them variables such as empathising and attraction to strangers, which are filtered through effective communication management.

#### 2.4.1.2 Effective Group Decision Making

The theory of effective group decision making is proposed by Oetzel (1995 in Gudykunst, 2003), and is concerned with effective decision making in intercultural groups. The theory is based on the Vigilant Interaction Theory (VIT) proposed by Hirokawa & Rost (1992) in which “group interaction affects decision making in performance by directly shaping the quality of vigilance (or critical thinking) that lends to a final group choice” (Gudykunst, 2003:171). This definition is a statement of the fact that the way groups talk and think about problems, options and consequences result directly in the quality of their final choices. “A group’s final decision is a result of ‘interrelated sub-decisions’” (Hirokawa and Rost (1992 in Gudykunst, 2003, 171).

Oetzel (1995) identifies 14 propositions (P), which contain both variables of individual and intergroup opinions, and independent and interdependent opinions. According to P1 if members of homogeneous groups activate independent self construals, they emphasise task outcomes; while if they activate interdependent self construals, they emphasise relational outcomes. According to P2 and P4, member contributions tend to be more equal in homogenous groups and members are more committed to the group than are members in heterogeneous groups. According to P3, P5 and P6 members of homogeneous groups who activate independent self construals are less likely to reach consensus and will have more conflict and manage it less cooperatively than members of homogeneous groups who activate interdependent self construals. According to P7, when most members activate interdependent self construals, in contrast, they tend to use avoiding, compromising, or obliging conflict strategies. According to P8, groups that use cooperative styles to manage conflict make more effective decisions than groups that use competing or avoiding styles. According to P9, groups

in which members activate personal identities make better decisions than groups in which members activate social identities. According to P10, P11 and P12, the more equal member contributions and the more group members are committed to the group and its decision, the more effective the decisions. According to P13, consensus decisions are more effective than majority or compromise decisions. Finally, according to P14, groups that understand the problem, establish 'good' criteria, develop many alternatives, and examine the positive/negative consequences of the alternatives make more effective decisions than those that do not (Oetzel, 1995 in Gudykunst, 2003: 171).

Propositions 10-13 are of particular relevance to the study in "that the more equal member contributions and the more group members are committed to the group and its decision, the more effective the decision" and "consensus decisions are more effective than majority or compromise decisions" (Oetzel, 1995 in Gudykunst, 2003:171). These propositions explain how communication in a group can be maintained and dealt with effectively, by adapting a more democratic style of communicating and problem solving. The featured propositions above, of a more democratic style, give rise to the fourteenth proposition, which allows groups to identify many alternatives to problem solving, "...develop many alternatives, and examine the positive/negative consequences of the alternatives make more effective decisions than those that do not" (Gudykunst, 2003, 171). These alternatives in intercultural groups are essential in that they allow for various opinions from different backgrounds to be gathered and a common idea to be formed that best suits all the members involved.

## 2.4.2 Theories focusing on accommodation or adaption

### 2.4.2.1 Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT)

CAT was developed in the 1970's to "describe and explain aspects of the way people modify their communication according to situational, personal or even interactional needs" (Williams,

1999:152). The theory does not only deal with the modification of communication behaviour, it also “examines attitudes, motives and communication strategies that shape communicative interaction” (Ayoko, et al., 2002). The definitions proposed underline the view that individuals try to achieve specific goals when entering certain interactions, whether it be interpersonal or intergroup. The attitudes, motives and communication strategies are fixed in an individual when entering an interaction, and in turn affect and shape the course of discourse. These ‘brought along’ dispositions specifically influence “speech behaviours, language use, and subsequent responses alter as they negotiate meaning during interaction” (Ayoko, et al., 2002: 167). The ‘brought along’ dispositions, may also change depending on the context, as in order to gain acceptance or approval, an individual may convert to the counterpart’s dialect, accent, language structure, speech rate, etc. The idea of ‘brought along’ dispositions is better defined as convergence and divergence, which developed out of the speech accommodation theory (SAT) proposed by Giles and Smith (1979 in Gudykunst, 2003). SAT proposes that “speakers use linguistic strategies to gain approval or to show distinctiveness in their interactions with others” (Gudykunst, 2003: 172). Convergence and divergence, as well as speech maintenance, form the main strategies of SAT. Convergence occurs when speech and communication patterns are made similar to that of the other interlocutors, as co-operation in interpersonal encounters. Divergence occurs when people emphasize their differences. Speech maintenance does not involve either convergence or divergence as it remains cross-culturally constant.

In this study, four main components of CAT will be included: (1) sociohistorical context, (2) accommodative orientation, (3) immediate situation, and (4) evaluation and future intentions. The sociohistorical context of the interaction involves the relationships between groups and the social norms regarding the contact. The sociohistorical approach allows for past experiences to be used as a benchmark to indicate how relations could be done in situations that include cultural variability. Accommodative orientation is the tendency to perceive encounters with

outgroup members in interpersonal, intergroup terms or a combination of the two (Gudykunst, 2003: 172). There are three aspects to accommodative orientation: (1) interpersonal factors, which are the factors significant to the individual, (2) intergroup factors, which is the perception of the ingroup toward an outgroup and, (3) initial orientations, which is the context that defines future interactions. The immediate situation approach is categorised by five interrelated aspects: (1) sociopsychological state, which refers to the “communicator’s interpersonal or intergroup orientation in the situation” (Gudykunst, 2003: 172), (2) goals and addressee focus, which refer to the needs and motivations of the interactions, (3) sociolinguistic strategies, which are the various strategies used in order to communicate during the immediate situation, (4) behaviour and tactics, which are the types of behaviour that are employed to communicate with the interactant in the context, and (5) labelling and attributions, which refers to how an individual perceives others and gives them various identities. The final component is the evaluation and future intentions, which “focuses on communicators perceptions of their interlocutors’ behaviour in the interactions” (Gudykunst, 2003: 173-174). Individuals first need to evaluate interlocutors in a positive light before deciding on future intentions to maintain the interaction. These interactions are not only specific to the individual, but also to the group in which the individual is in.

CAT is an appropriate theory for the study as it provides both an individual and group perspective in accommodating and adapting. It also takes into account various contexts of the individual and group, and the influences they may have in conforming and adapting to various contexts.

### 2.4.3 Theories focusing on identity negotiation or management

#### 2.4.3.1 Cultural Identity

The formation of an intercultural group is highly dependent on the influences and management of various cultural identities. The introduction of cultural identities into an intercultural group can either let the interaction progress or if not negotiated appropriately terminate it. This theory is seen as an ‘interpretive’ one, as it assesses how cultural identities are managed in intercultural interactions. The theory as framed by Collier and Thomas (1988 in Gudykunst, 2003) contains six assumptions, five axioms, and one theorem. The assumptions consider that individuals have multiple identities which they negotiate in various contexts, and that intercultural communication can only occur when there are different cultural identities present. The management of intercultural communication requires competence on behalf of the interactants in which they are required to follow the appropriate rules. The development of intercultural communication competence involves negotiating “mutual meanings, rules and positive outcomes” (Collier and Thomas, 1988 in Gudykunst, 2003: 178). The cultural identities vary as each individual may feel more or less attached to their identity and display it as part of their being.

The axioms, described by Collier and Thomas (1988 in Gudykunst, 2003), emphasise that differences, as well as intercultural communication competence, allow for greater intercultural contact. Gudykunst (2003:178) states that “the more individuals have intercultural communication competence, the better they are able to develop and maintain intercultural relationships”. This statement is relevant to the theorem which entails that the more cultural identities involved the more important they are relative to other identities and in that sense create more intercultural contact.

Cultural identity is therefore essential in the study as it identifies the necessary negotiation and management of identities within a group, emphasising that intercultural communication competence is essential to maintain relations and negotiate group rules to affect positive outcomes.

### 2.5 Intercultural communication and sports team perspectives

Intercultural communication plays an important role in the creation and development of a 'team'. A team consists of diverse individuals who come and work together toward a specific outcome. Each individual brings their own unique cultural identity to the team environment, which may either act as a barrier or as a positive contribution towards the team dynamic and the set goals.

The development of a successful sports team is therefore reliant on the various theories of intercultural communication. These theories help to uncover possible strategies to solve the potential barriers which may occur within the team environment due to individual diversity. Sports teams are interesting from a sociolinguistic perspective as each member is unique with regards to his/her personal linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds, which may affect the team dynamic differently. As each member is unique so too are their personal intercultural barriers, which may influence their behaviour and reactions to certain group rules and behaviours.

The theories and barriers that encompass intercultural communication are important to understand to develop a successful sports team. The theories help uncover possible strategies to eliminate the barriers. The chapter further explains sport specific perspectives with regards to intercultural communication.

### 2.5.1 Sports team culture, cohesion and roles

The culture of a sports team is determined and affected by the cohesion that the group of individuals possess. Lewin (1943 in Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012: 747) proposes force field analysis as a framework for examining factors that influence situations in which there are ‘helping forces’ which drive movement toward a goal or ‘hindering forces’ which block movement toward a goal. Cohesion in sport teams is also defined by Festinger, Schacter and Back (1950 in Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012: 747) as a “field of binding social forces, which act on members to stay in the group”. The definitions both agree that groups possessing strong unifying forces typically stick together over time, whereas groups that lack strong bonds usually disintegrate. Langfred (1998 in Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012: 748) suggests that although cohesion helps in the production of strong unifying bonds, it is also a ‘double edged sword’ in that cohesion may assist in controlling group members who strongly value group and individual productivity, or it may be counterproductive in groups which do not place high value on productivity.

A successful sports team is characterised by a collaborative spirit which stimulates learning, continuous improvement and ultimately task accomplishment, however lack of cohesion and possible areas of conflict may affect all the vital aspects of creating a successful team. In a team of diverse individuals areas of conflict may include issues regarding team goals, roles, conflicting team membership or team protocol. These possible conflicting issues stem from team members’ sociocultural backgrounds, where individuals bring along their own personal backgrounds, actions and behaviours. It is therefore essential as a coach to understand players’ skills sets, preferences, moods and habits to create a synchronised response and to enhance collective performance. In creating a positive team culture, as a coach it is important to know what is happening within the team, as negativity among individuals may spread and allow for intimidation, bullying, racism or violence. The monitoring of rituals should also be done with

care as although seemingly harmless, they may be demeaning, threatening or not in the best interest of players and teams (Curry, 2013).

Team culture also stems from individuals who are influenced by 'pop' culture. Pop culture is defined as "cultural activities or commercial products reflecting, suited to, or aimed at the tastes of the general masses of people" (Collins, 2012). The messages received by individuals' differentiate and are carried over into the team environment which influences and affects the team's culture. Pop culture is made up of three different constructs: (1) technology, (2) television and moviefacs and (3) fashion. Although there are barriers in which these constructs may cause conflict in team culture, there are also positive aspects which may develop a successful team and a unified team culture. Technology can be used as a tool to build focus and refocus techniques, goal setting, communication, cues and performance under pressure. These tasks can create healthy competition which has the potential for a positive learning experience for the individual and the team. Television and movies link to imagery that provide a context for motivation and goal setting. These contexts may teach individuals team building, culture and race relations. Fashion can be used to build team culture and camaraderie by particular athletic trends which can be seen as a vehicle to teach the use of rewards for motivation, focus, refocus and positive self-talk. The use of the three constructs by Collins (2012), along with the five strategies proposed by Thompson (2012 in Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012), namely, (1) help team members build a collective identity, (2) make it easy for team members to be close together, (3) focus on similarities among team members, (4) put a positive spin on the team's performance and (5) challenge the team, creates a positive perspective for team culture to flourish, and in the creation of a successful team. The barriers mentioned can be overcome by the various strategies, to develop a positive team culture as well as successful team.

### 2.5.2 The effects of diversity on sport teams

The concept of diversity involves the respect, acceptance and understanding that each individual is unique, however due to the high degree of globalisation, individuals may find it hard to deal with all the differences within a team. The rise of globalisation may cause individuals to no longer share common cultures which may ultimately affect the quality of team process. South Africa's multicultural society is loaded with various cultures, however most share the same nationality, namely that of a South African. Diversity in a South African context is still governed by the three distinct types of team diversity as mentioned in Brandes et al., (2009:227): (1) separation, (2) variety and (3) disparity. Separation measures the number of different opinions and positions on a certain topic within the team; variety accounts for team member differences within a certain category (knowledge or experience); and disparity reflects uniformity in the distribution of a team's possession of a certain good (Brandes et al., 2009: 227). These distinct types of diversity reflect how individuals influence the team that they belong to and how their 'brought along' ideas can influence a team's perspective and performance.

The Lazear (1999a) model in Brandes et al., 2009: 230) provides a theoretical framework for the potential gains and costs of cultural diversity on team performance. The gains of cultural diversity is on the introduction of additional culturally inherent skills that can enhance team performance, while the costs are mainly associated with inefficiencies caused by communication and interaction problems. These inefficiencies, as the result of language barriers and difference of perceptions of value systems and norms, might negatively impact and influence the dimensions of team processes (Brandes et al., 2009: 230). Inefficiencies in culturally diverse teams are not only restricted to communication barriers, but also racial differences (Ely et al., 2012). As sport still tends to maintain dominant ideologies and power structures, racial minority team members may encounter prejudicial stereotypes about their

competences, which may lead to avoiding communication with the group. Only when assumed to be 'safe' will they engage in communicating with team members, which may lead to the enhancement of team performance.

Essentially, on-field performances are to a large extent driven by individual players, however the intuitive communication is the result of intensive player interaction during training and meetings off the field. The off-field communication helps with the achievement of cultural diversity through the management of the culture within the team. The management helps in understanding and respecting the differences of cultures (individualistic and collectivistic) which can encourage culturally diverse participation and improved team culture (Hanlon & Coleman, 2006:81).

## 2.6 Summary

This chapter provided an outline of some of the theories that encompass intercultural communication. The chapter made reference to the theories that are focused on achieving effective intercultural communication while also making mention of the variables that may act as barriers to intercultural communication. The chapter also made mention of the sociolinguistic component of an individual's personal unique sociocultural background and how it may affect their communication during initial interaction. The context of a sports team is mentioned in light of intercultural communication and the influence of the various theories and barriers. Intercultural communication within the sports team environment plays an essential part as the sum of the team is made up of diverse individuals, so therefore understanding and providing contextual strategies may help in preventing possible barriers.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### 3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 provides a brief description of the context of the research and an account of the research design and theoretical framework used for this study. The context of the research involves those participants that make up the community of practice of the Western Province Amateur cricket team. As pointed out in the first chapter, the aim of the study is to examine the various aspects culturally diverse individuals bring to a team environment by using various intercultural strategies. The first two sections of this chapter contain information about the participants and their context. This is followed by a description of the research methodology and the instruments used and procedures followed to elicit the data. Two brief sections examining ethical considerations and the data analysis approach then follow. Finally, the theoretical framework of the study, namely community of practice, is presented.

### 3.2 Description of context

The context of the study is a multicultural and multilingual, post-apartheid South Africa. As previously mentioned in chapter 1, background knowledge is essential to understand the context of a diverse country as well as a sports team. The Western Province Amateur Cricket team is based in the Western Cape, in which English is used as the preferred lingua franca due to its global and economic importance. The preference for English as a lingua franca is not shared by all, as there are still impoverished areas, for example, which have been affected by apartheid. These apartheid affected areas are dominated by a certain demographic with which certain languages and cultures are associated.

As a sports team in the post-apartheid era, diversity is a major factor in creating commonality and cohesion among team members. Diversity is determined by various factors such as cultural

background and the linguistic repertoires of individuals who make up a team. Diversity issues can be detrimental to a team, such as in the cases when difference of cultural background and linguistic repertoire leads to a difference of behaviour, rituals, thoughts and language understanding in opposition to that of the expected team behaviour and which affects cohesion. However, diversity can also be positive and the diversity of cultural backgrounds and linguistic repertoires can be seen to be influencing a team environment and dynamic by introducing different ideas, behavioural patterns and linguistic variation which can contribute to commonality and cohesion.

The Western Province Amateur cricket team is comprised of individuals who have various cultural backgrounds and are either bi- or multilingual. The team shares a common lingua franca of English, while the languages of Afrikaans and isiXhosa are also present. The use of Afrikaans and isiXhosa generally occurs between individuals who share a common knowledge and understanding of the languages. In many conversational encounters, there is the use of code switching and language mixing, depending on the individuals present. This study will examine how these differing cultural backgrounds and language repertoires have created a unified team, which shares a common understanding of particular practices and language as well as a mutual respect for the differences of practices and languages.

### 3.3 Participants

The Western Province Amateur cricket team is made up of semi-professional cricketers. For the purpose of the study a total of 17 members of the team participated, two of them being the coaches and 15 being players. Of the total of 17 participants, 15 stated they were bilingual. All the participants in the study have completed their basic schooling requirements (grade 12) at respected schools, and some have or are still in the process of completing various

undergraduate degrees, diplomas or certificates at various institutions in Cape Town or via correspondence from other institutions in South Africa.

In order to conduct this study, the questionnaires were distributed and interviews were held after a training session and during a gym session, while the coaches and players had free time. This was the best suited time for the coaches and players as it didn't interrupt cricket training sessions. The participants were selected according to whether they volunteered to complete the questionnaires and to be interviewed. Of the 17 players and coaches who completed the questionnaires, eight of the players and both coaches participated in follow up interviews. The selection of participants for the interviews was determined by their linguistic profile.

### 3.4 Qualitative research

Qualitative research is characterised by its aims which relate to understanding some aspects of social life, and its methods which generate words, rather than numbers. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining “culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours, and social contexts of particular populations” (Mack et al., 2005: 1). This research method is especially applicable to the study in that it provides information about the ‘human’ side of an issue and identifies the role of factors, such as social norms, ethnicity and religion, in the research issue (Mack et al., 2005). The present study involves the use of questionnaires, which attempt to uncover individuals’ personal characteristics, as well as semi-structured interviews, which elicit participants’ opinions. Semi-structured interviews involve open-ended questions which can be flexible as the interview progresses. The purpose of this method is therefore to allow researchers to gather in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons for such behaviour within the context they are in.

### 3.5 Data collection

#### 3.5.1 Questionnaire data

Two questionnaires were used (cf. Appendix A and B) to collect data from both players and coaching staff. The first questionnaire was structured to elicit background information from the players and was divided into three parts (1) personal information, (2) language usage (L1 and L2), and (3) formal language education and language use in team environment. The questionnaire also concluded with a table in which participants were asked to rate their language competence in terms of English, Afrikaans and any other language an individual might possess in their repertoire. The table used was scaled on a rating system in which letters were used to rate language competence. 'L' is low, 'I' is intermediate, 'A' is advanced and 'NN' is near native. The aim of the background questionnaire was to assist the researcher in determining how players' backgrounds may influence their interactions within the team environment.

The second questionnaire was specifically designed for coaches, and was divided into two parts (1) general and language information (questionnaire), and (2) feedback questions on player performances (interview schedule). The questionnaire therefore incorporated both the gathering of general information and the interview schedule containing the questions that the coaches were asked to answer. The questions posed in the interview related to how coaches experience giving feedback to players and what language they use in doing so. The aim of the coaches' questionnaire/interview schedule was to determine the coaches' role in achieving rapport with fellow coaches and players.

### 3.5.2 Interview data

Semi-structured interviews are characterised by verbal interchanges aimed at eliciting information, which takes on a conversational nature as they are more flexible than questionnaires (Jones, 2013). Semi-structured interviews are more concerned with the complexity of human behaviour, opinions and emotions, and not the verification of absolute truths. These complexities are especially relevant to uncovering the personal characteristics and opinions as mentioned in section 3.4. Semi-structured interviews allow for complicated questions, and for the answers to be presented as narrative accounts. The interview schedules (cf. Appendix C and D) were used to structure the interviews with the players in order to examine their communication relationships with the coach as well as their fellow team mates.

The first interview schedule was designed for the interviews with players and elicited data on their communication relationship with the coach. The questions posed aimed to uncover the particular communication strategies a player uses with the coaches and how he would ideally like to be spoken to, with regards to a particular language or languages. The interview schedule posed questions which may resolve conflicting communication barriers and allowed the player to step into the role of the coach as a strategy in overcoming barriers.

The second interview schedule was also designed for the players, however it focused on player interactions. The focus on player interaction in the interview schedule was aimed at enabling the researcher to uncover particular interactions of players who may be similar or different in terms of background, both culturally and linguistically. The interview schedule also aimed to elicit the individual player's personal thought patterns regarding culturally different individual's perceptions of them. The player to player interactions are important in understanding individual conceptions of cultural diversity within the team and the perceptions that are associated with them.

### 3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance for the study was acquired through the completion of a Departmental Ethics Screening Committee (DESC) checklist. Permission for undertaking the study was provided by asking the relevant management and coaching staff. Participants gave informed consent to participate in the research after the questionnaire and interview procedures were explained by the researcher. In order to maintain anonymity, participants were assigned pseudonyms to mark their completed questionnaires.

### 3.7 Data analysis

The data was analysed by giving an overall descriptive statistical representation of the survey information, and then by a more qualitative approach for the interviews with the selected participants. The method of thematic analysis (TA) was used to identify the recurrent themes by means of: data reduction, data display and conclusion-drawing and verification, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984).

The data reduction process (the process involving selecting, focusing, abstracting and transforming the raw data) is part of the analysis process that “sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified” (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 24). Data display involves the format in which the data is presented, while conclusion-drawing is the process where meaning is drawn from the displayed data.

Cameron (2001 in Jones, 2013: 91) “argues that researching talk is not an end in itself, but a means of studying other aspects of peoples’ lives; therefore the data are not merely seen as participants’ talk, but as discourse, which can in turn reveal certain insights about the world and the people in it”.

As with qualitative research in general, analysing discourse using TA does not investigate absolute truths, but rather personal opinions of the participants. It does not yield statistical results and nor can the responses be reproduced or tested. However it does yield insights to the relationship of language and social order, individuals' interaction with society, personal opinions and beliefs of self-identification (cf. Jones, 2013: 91). The use of TA as analysis method seems to be best suited to the study in that it attempts to highlight selected data that speak to the original questions of the thesis and aims to uncover the opinions and beliefs of the participants and how their membership within the team environment is viewed.

### 3.8 Theoretical framework

#### 3.8.1 Community of Practice

The term 'community of practice' (CofP) was first introduced and defined by Lave and Wenger (1991 in Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999) as:

an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of the mutual endeavour. As a social construct, a CofP is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages.

The concept of a CofP can be applied to various contexts, and theorists have adapted and modified the definition to suit their particular studies. In Aubry et al., (2011) the definition of a CofP is constructed by defining 'community' and 'practice' separately. A community is defined as "a group of people with common characteristics or interests living together within a larger society", and a practice is defined as "the continuous exercise of a profession". These

definitions encompass the ideals of mutualism and the amalgamation of individuals toward a specific shared goal. It is therefore suggested that the concept of a CofP is a dynamic, rich and complex one.

Wenger (1998 in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999) identifies three fundamental dimensions of a CofP: (1) mutual engagement, (2) joint enterprise, and (3) shared repertoire.

- *Mutual Engagement.* Members share an understanding of how their community works. Understanding is maintained by regular interaction, in which interactants are in intensive pairs or small groups.
- *Joint Enterprise.* The enterprise refers to the shared processes in which members participate. The complex process requires a relationship of mutual accountability among members that become part of the community of practice. The practice of the community is therefore reflected by the members' own understanding of what is important as such communities develop around things that matter to people.
- *Shared Repertoire.* Over time, the joint pursuit of an enterprise results in a shared repertoire in which common resources are used in negotiating meaning in specific contexts e.g. specialised terminology, linguistic routines, pictures, regular meals and gestures.

The progressive nature of a CofP determines individual membership and roles within the CofP. Core members and peripheral members are determined on the basis of how successfully an individual has acquired the shared repertoire, or assimilated the goal(s) of the joint enterprise, or established patterns with other members (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999).

Learning is an essential process of becoming a member of a CofP. A CofP requires learned appropriateness, which may be beneficial toward an individual's membership status within the CofP. According to Aubry et al. (2011), Lave and Wenger (1991) originally used the concept

of a CofP to refer to a theory of learning to describe a specific type of social learning among group members. The application of theory was based on craft apprenticeships of earlier societies in which they believed in ‘learning by doing’. The introduction of situated learning developed out of the earlier forms of apprenticeship, in which Lave and Wenger (in Aubry et al., 2011: 44) “proposed the concept of situated learning as a legitimate peripheral participation within the perspective of social practice”. Situated learning focuses on the lived world experience of an individual in on-going social practices, where the process of acquiring knowledgeable skills is subsumed in processes of changing identity in and through membership. An individual is therefore regarded as a practitioner, involved both as a member and an agent of activity within a community. Davies (2005: 565 in Jones, 2013: 50), describes legitimate peripheral participation as allowing learners to participate in a limited way in actual practice, burdening them only with a partial amount of responsibility, and then gradually giving them more to increase their participation. The learners are therefore allowed to make mistakes and learn from skilled members. As learners in a CofP, Wenger (1998b in Jones, 2013: 51) identifies three modes of belonging as a social learning group: (1) Engagement, (2) Imagination, and (3) Alignment.

- *Engagement*. Doing things together.
- *Imagination*. Constructing an image of oneself, of the community, and the world.
- *Alignment*. Coordinating perspectives, interpretations and actions.

The concept of ‘learning’ is therefore vital in distinguishing membership roles as well identifying necessary conditions for membership to be granted within a CofP. The situated learning as well as peripheral participation within a CofP are conditions required to experience the CofP as well as learn the necessary appropriate behaviour and actions to progress in membership status.

### 3.8.2 Contrasting CofP with other theoretical frameworks

The notion of a CofP can be contrasted with the theoretical frameworks of *speech community* and *social identity theory* in linguistic studies. CofP involves the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence, which focuses on what members do and their language structure, discourse and interaction patterns (Holmes & Meyerhoff 1999: 174).

A *speech community* is defined as “any human aggregate characterised by regular and frequent interaction by mean of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant difference in language usage” (Gumperz, 1968: 381 in Patrick, 2008: 588-589). Labov (1972: 121 in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999: 178) defines a speech community as a shared set of norms, “where these norms are observed in overt evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variations”. Although there are similarities between a speech community and CofP, a speech community is defined externally and the lack of shared goals and practices is evident. A speech community is also characterised by shared set norms, with little focus placed on the individual or group identities.

The *social identity theory* is based on an individuals’ “(a) affiliation to a particular group identity that is salient at that moment in the interaction, and (b) their interpretation of the relationship of one’s ingroup to salient outgroups” (Tajfel, 1978: 44 in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999: 177). The CofP is a better suited linguistic framework in that social identity theory is defined by weak ties among people who have limited contact with each other and quantity rather than quality of interaction, whereas a CofP is defined by the nature and quality of contact between members.

The core of CofP resides in the importance of doing things that reinforce membership. The importance of doing places emphasis on social action. CofP has yielded “new insights into the

ways in which language and other behaviour index social identity and patterns of variation” (Davies, 2005: 577).

### 3.8.3 CofP in sports teams

The study of a CofP in sports teams takes its foundation from Wenger’s social theory of learning which emphasises learning as social participation. Social participation focuses on the reciprocal nature of the interactions between the social context and individuals; not only are meanings developed but identities are also formed as individuals interact with each other, around a practice, within a community (Culver et al., 2009: 366). The social participation of team mates is an essential component in developing a cohesive unit, that shares certain meanings and behaviours that are appropriate to the specific CofP.

Wenger’s three dimensions of (1) mutual engagement, (2) joint enterprise, and (3) shared repertoire, underlie the development of membership within a sports team CofP. Culver et al. (2009: 366) state that “a member of a CofP develops knowledge and identity through mutual engagement in a joint enterprise, as meanings are negotiated and developed around tools of practice, and becomes accountable to other members of the community. Through this process a CofP is formed that has a shared repertoire including certain values, beliefs, ways of talking and ways of doing things”. Sport teams, like any CofP, have their own particular rules, values and customs by which members are expected to abide by and follow. Therefore the three mentioned dimensions are applicable in that individuals only become members of the team once learned behaviour and shared ideas, beliefs, values and ways of talking are acquired.

Leadership within a sport team CofP is especially important, in that not only do they facilitate early stages of community development, but also help sustain the community through the natural changes in practice and members. Although in sport, a coach’s CofP is rarely present because the competitive nature of sport serves as a constraint to coaches sharing their

knowledge. This factor however does not affect a coach's influence over the team that he/she is coaching, in which a CofP needs to be established among all those involved members.

Strong leadership is described by three types of CofP: (1) informal, loosely organised, grass-root structures; (2) supported, with some degree of organisational sponsorship and more clearly focused on developing new knowledge; and (3) highly motivated, aligned with strategic imperatives that significantly contribute to an organisation's performance (Saint-Onge and Wallace in Culver et al., 2009: 376). These three types of leadership and organisational support are essential in nurturing CofP's and for continuing community success. Due to the semi-professional nature of the team under study, types (2) and (3) are most relevant, in that there are expectations placed on the team to succeed by higher powers such as sponsors or the wider institutions of the association.

A CofP is seen as an integral part of daily lives, and can be applied to various contexts, such as in a sports team environment. Membership of a sport team is determined by the three dimensions mentioned by Wenger, however the importance of a coach's role in forming and maintaining the CofP is crucial for longevity and cohesion.

### 3.9 Summary

In this chapter, an outline was provided of the context within which the study took place. The description of the context explained the language use in South Africa and within the Western Province Amateur Cricket team, post-apartheid. A description of the participants was also presented in which the linguistic and general backgrounds of the participants were mentioned. The chapter also explained the methods with which the research was conducted. The use of qualitative methods of questionnaires and structured interviews were used to capture the required data of the participants. The data analysis methods were then discussed with mention being made to the relevance of TA for the study. Finally, the chapter discussed the theoretical

framework of Community of Practice (CofP) which is used for situating the data in the study.

The theoretical component of CofP is explained in terms of the study and its effects on sports teams. In the next chapter the data will be presented and analysed.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the data collected will be described and analysed with a view towards answering the research questions proposed in chapter one, specifically by commenting on the intercultural and language barriers that exist between players and coaches in a sports team and how the differences may contribute to a positive team dynamic and environment.

### 4.2 Data collected by means of background questionnaires

This section describes the data that was obtained from the coaches and players through the use of background questionnaires. The information provided by the participants provides insight into the age, level of education, personal history, as well as the linguistic repertoires, of the two coaches and 15 players.

#### 4.2.1 Biographical and sociolinguistic data of coaches and players

The questionnaires elicited biographical data from the two coaches, namely their age, place of birth, gender and the time spent in the position. The coaches, both male (C1 and C2), were aged 50 and 30 respectively, and were both born in Cape Town. C1 had been in the position for two years while C2 had been in the position for four.

The sociolinguistic data elicited from the coaches included their schooling history, their history of language use at home and how long they have been exposed to their L2. The coaches both maintained that English is their L1, although C1 comes from a home in which both parents spoke Afrikaans as an L1 and he was only formally taught in English at college, after being taught in Afrikaans throughout primary and high school. C2 was raised and formally taught in English, but has been exposed to Afrikaans as an L2 for his entire life.

The terms 'mother tongue' and 'L1' are often used interchangeably, with the thought that an individual's L1 is their mother tongue, however it is not always the case in that an individual may shift from their mother tongue to a different L1 due to the preference of individual. C1 stated that he grew up in an Afrikaans speaking household where both his parents spoke Afrikaans. He also did his schooling in Afrikaans and only adopted English as a L1 during his tertiary education. Although he was exposed to English all his life he always considered Afrikaans to be his mother tongue because he grew up with the language, was taught in it and it was his parent's mother tongue, however as he became more involved in his career he shifted to English as his L1 and now views Afrikaans as his L2.

Similarly the questionnaires elicited biographical data of the players, namely their ages, place of birth and their gender. There were three players aged 20, five were aged 23, two were aged 25, three were aged 26 and one each was aged 27 and 31. The gender make-up of the team is all male as it is the men's Western Province Amateur Cricket team. There were only two players that differed in provincial origin, with both being from the Eastern Cape, however they both relocated when young and have completed all their schooling in Cape Town. All the other team members originate from the Western Cape.

The sociolinguistic data elicited from the players included their L1, L2, schooling history and language use at home. Nine of the players consider English as their L1, while four consider Afrikaans and two consider isiXhosa as their L1. Of the nine players who consider English as their L1, seven use Afrikaans as their L2, while one considers Sotho as his L2 and the other has no L2, as he did all his schooling in England. The L1 Afrikaans speaking players, as well as the L1 isiXhosa speaking players, consider English to be their L2. All the players have had formal education in English; however the players that consider Afrikaans to be their L1 have also had (some of their) formal education in Afrikaans. All the players except one use their L1

as a means to communicate at home. Table 4.1 below presents an overview of the participants' linguistic repertoires.

Participant*	Eng L1	Eng L2	Afr L1	Afr L2	Xhosa L1	Xhosa L2	Other L1	Other L2
1	✓			✓				
2	✓			✓				
3	✓							✓
4	✓			✓				
5	✓			✓				
6		✓	✓					
7	✓			✓				
8	✓			✓				
9		✓			✓			
10	✓			✓				
11		✓	✓					
12		✓	✓					
13	✓							
14	✓			✓				
15		✓			✓			
16	✓			✓				
17		✓	✓					
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 4.1: Coaches and players L1 and L2

\*Note: participants 1 and 2 are the coaching staff

#### 4.2.2 Proficiency of coaches and players in English

‘Language proficiency’ is the ability of an individual to use a language for a variety of purposes, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. Briere (1971: 385) defines proficiency as “the degree of competence or capability in a given language demonstrated at a given point in time”. Language proficiency is therefore judged by an individual’s ability to use language for real purposes in particular contexts.

In the questionnaire, participants were requested to rate their language proficiency on a scale which rated their reading, writing, speaking, listening and overall competence. The scale ratings were given as letters which rated an individual’s competence from poor to excellent. The ratings were as follows: L = Low (poor), I = Intermediate (good), A = Advanced (very good), and NN = Near Native (excellent).

In the Western Province Amateur Cricket team environment English is the agreed upon lingua franca, in that all 17 participants indicated they were competent in English and communicate formally with one another in the language. 10 of the participants regarded their reading ability as “NN (excellent)”, while seven rated their reading ability as “A (very good)”. With regard to writing, seven participants rated their ability as “NN (excellent)”, six rated their ability as “A (very good)”, while four rated their ability to write as “I (good)”. With regard to speaking 10 participants rated their ability as “NN (excellent)” and seven rated their ability as “A (very good)”. With regards to listening, 12 of the 17 participants said their ability is “NN (excellent)” and five said their ability is “A (very good)”. All of the participants indicated that they have been exposed to English in formal education and use the language everywhere, all the time. Some of the participants who indicated that English is their L2, use and communicate in their L1 at home or at work, but even then they switch to English at certain times. The common use of English in the team environment is especially important in that it prevents

miscommunication and creates a general understanding among all when tackling tasks on and off the field, which may lead to an improved team culture and team environment.

#### 4.2.3 Proficiency of coaches and players in languages other than English

Afrikaans is the language with the highest proficiency that featured most prominently among the participants after English. 16 of the 17 participants said that they were proficient in Afrikaans, with the exception being one participant who had moved to England when he was young. Afrikaans is known by the 16 participants due to formal education in which Afrikaans was a compulsory school subject. As noted in the previous section, Afrikaans is either the L1 or L2 of 13 of the participants, and of the remaining four participants it is an additional third (L3) or fourth language for three of them. In terms of reading, four participants rated their ability as “NN (excellent)”, while four rated their ability as “A (very good)”, eight rated their ability as “I (good)” and only one said his ability was “L (poor)”. With regards to writing three participants said their ability was “NN (excellent)”, three said it was “A (very good)”, nine said it was “I (good)” and two said it was very “L (poor)”. With regards to speaking five participants said they had “NN (excellent)” ability, while one said their ability was “A (very good)”, seven said they were “I (good)” and three participants said their ability was “L (poor)”. Five out of the 17 participants said that their listening ability was “NN (excellent)” and another five said it was “A (very good)”, six participants said their ability was “I (good)” and only one participant said their ability was very “L (poor)”. Although Afrikaans is shared by the majority of the participants, one participant who said that Sotho is his L2 and isiXhosa his L3, said his linguistic proficiency and competence in the language is “L (poor)” because he never uses it within the team environment or at home and during his schooling years the subject did not receive high priority.

This secondary dominance of Afrikaans dates back to the apartheid era when Afrikaans and English were the only languages regarded as official by the government. In fact, during apartheid, Afrikaans was made a compulsory medium of instruction in secondary schools under Bantu Education (Kamwangamalu 2007). Despite the use of English as the common lingua franca in post-apartheid South Africa, Afrikaans remains a dominant language.

IsiXhosa is the third official language of the Western Cape, and in some schools isiXhosa is taught as an optional additional language. In response to the questionnaire, 13 out of the 17 participants said their proficiency in isiXhosa is “L (poor)”, and again the same participant who has no Afrikaans proficiency due to spending most of his childhood abroad did not indicate any isiXhosa proficiency. Of the three participants that said they were proficient in isiXhosa, two said that it is their L1 and the other said it was his L3, with Sotho being his L2. The two L1 isiXhosa speaking participants showed “NN (excellent)” proficiency for all reading, writing, speaking and listening abilities, whereas the L3 isiXhosa speaking participant said he was “A (very good)” in reading, “I (good)” in writing, and “NN (excellent)” in speaking and listening. The optional status of isiXhosa during formal education could be the cause of the “L (poor)” proficiency levels of the 13 participants, in that they chose not to learn the language.

A special mention is made of the one participant who indicated that English is his L1, Sotho his L2 and isiXhosa his L3. He stated that he classifies Sotho as his mother tongue due to the fact that it is his father’s L1, however he also stated that he uses isiXhosa when he is at home because it is his mother’s L1 and in Cape Town isiXhosa is more predominant in black communities. He stated that although he hardly speaks Sotho, he still classifies it as his L2 due to his father’s inclination to speak the language. He says that English is the language that he uses to communicate with everyone else and it makes his life easier with regards with which language to use and to avoid miscommunication. He has adopted English as his L1 as he uses

it most often in his everyday life and has been formally educated in the language from primary school through to tertiary education.

#### 4.3 Data collected by means of interviews

The purpose of the interviews was to examine firstly how the coaches feel about communicating cross-culturally and what language they use to communicate in. It also aimed to determine how coaches respond to both positive and negative behaviours which may arise, and which may disrupt the team environment or create an improved one. The players' interviews aimed to determine their feelings about communicating with the coaches as well as with fellow team mates. The interviews posed questions to the individuals about their language preferences when receiving good or bad feedback and how they feel about communicating cross-culturally. The interviews also tried to find out what players actually think about diversity in a team and whether different languages and cultures actually make a difference to the team culture and environment. They were also given the licence to act as a coach and were asked how they would go about handling positive and negative behaviours.

Linguistic competence is an important factor in both the conducting of interviews as well as the communication between participants. Akhmanova (1971: 454) defines linguistic competence "merely as the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language" and states that the knowledge of a language is measured by the "performance" or the way a person uses it when he or she speaks. The use of English as a lingua franca within the team environment is developed out of commonality; however it is not the L1 of all participants, so therefore the 'performance' of participants speaking other L1s may be affected and could possibly lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication. The 'performance' of participants is especially important between coach-player, player-coach and player-player interactions in that misunderstanding and miscommunications can be detrimental to the team's cohesiveness.

For the study data from interviews with three L1 English players, three L1 Afrikaans players, two L1 isiXhosa players and both coaches will be analysed. Of the three selected L1 English players whose data will be analysed, one player had no L2, while the other two had an “I (good)” proficiency level in Afrikaans as their L2. Of the three L1 Afrikaans players whose data will be analysed, one stated that they have “NN (near native)” proficiency and the other two stated that they have a “A (good)” overall proficiency level of English. Data from the interviews with the two L1 isiXhosa speakers will also be analysed as representative of a third perspective. Finally I will also make special reference to the participant who views English as his L1, and Sotho and isiXhosa as his L2 and L3 respectively. These participants were therefore purposefully selected on the basis of their linguistic profiles.

#### 4.3.1 Coaches interview data

The interviews with the coaches aimed at determining how coaches give feedback on performances and how they interact with the players as a team and as individuals. The coaches will be labelled as Coach A and Coach B in identifying specific answers.

Coach A, maintained that English is his L1 while Afrikaans is his L2. He grew up in an Afrikaans speaking household where both his parents spoke Afrikaans as a L1 and also underwent formal education in Afrikaans, however he still chose to adopt English as his L1 as it is more universal in the cricketing and business circles. In the team environment he uses predominantly English with the players, however with some players who he knows understand and speak Afrikaans he will switch and mix the two languages. Coach A, said that he only gives both positive and negative feedback in formal English to all the players regardless of their language preferences as it allows him to explain himself better. He does not believe that language and cultural differences can influence effective discussions nor do they cause

miscommunications with the players. He insists that communication is a two-way street and because of that an understanding must be achieved regardless of language and culture.

Coach B, said that English was his L1 and Afrikaans was his L2, as he was raised with English and only spoke English at home. He was formally educated in English, but was taught Afrikaans as a subject. He only uses English with the players as he feels most comfortable doing so and feels that it's the best way he can get his point across both in positive and negative instances. Coach B, like Coach A, does not believe that language and culture affect effective communication. He believes that as coach it is important to find common ground so that no miscommunication is possible. He feels that he has achieved this with all the players and therefore does not view language and cultural differences as a possible barrier to intercultural communication.

Both the coaches share similar beliefs with regard to language and cultural differences within a team environment, even though they vary in L2 ability. They believe firmly in that the team comes first and that positive behaviour must be encouraged and negative behaviour must be dealt with immediately and privately in a language that the players are most proficient in. The coaches' are both overly confident in their views, and is a reflection of the previously mentioned theory of the assumptions of similarity. According to their views they assume that no individual is greater than the team and that there is a fixed method in dealing with each member by stripping away all personal identities, so that consistency is present among all culture and language variables.

#### 4.3.2 Player to coach communication interview data

The first interview schedule was designed to elicit the players' opinions of and personal preferences during interaction with the coaches. The interview aimed to find out what language preferences the player has in communicating with the coaches, whether it is in general

conversation or when positive or negative feedback is given. The interview also aimed to determine whether or not a player believes that language and culture playing a role in effective communication or miscommunication and misunderstanding. The players are labelled A-F, to differentiate between responses.

Player A said that he has no L2 because he moved to England when he was younger and has a “NN (excellent)” proficiency in his English L1. He only spoke to and received feedback back from the coaches in English. He does believe that language and culture can affect effective communication as “different cultures need to be accommodated in terms of their particular comfort zones”. He also believes that misunderstandings can occur between players and coaches, however not so much culturally but more in relation to language barriers. He says that if he were the coach, he would make sure all communication would be conducted in formal English to reduce any miscommunication and then set strict barriers to prevent negative behaviour.

Player B indicated that English was his L1 and Afrikaans was his L2 even though it was at an “I (good)” proficiency level. When communicating with the coach he said that they mainly use English, however they do switch to Afrikaans in certain instances, but it is not for too long and does not happen too often. Player B said that he only receives feedback in English because it is his L1 and he can understand and implement exactly what has been said. When asked if language and culture can affect effective communication, he said yes, as “different cultures have different accents which make it hard to understand sometimes”. He also believes that language more than culture can cause miscommunication between players and coaches. When asked if he were the coach, he said that developing a team culture and language is important to prevent any miscommunications and in that way he would encourage the positive behaviour “as it may rub-off on the others” and for a player that displays negative behaviour he would

“have a word in private as his actions are affecting the team and team members, and he should be more considerate and take more responsibility for his actions”.

Player C said that English was his L1 and Afrikaans was his L2 and that it was at an “I (good)” proficiency level only because of schooling. He only uses English to communicate, and although he understands Afrikaans, he never speaks the language even when spoken to by an L1 Afrikaans speaker. When receiving feedback from the coach he makes sure that only English is used, so that he can understand exactly what is said. He too, like the other L1 English speakers, does believe that language and culture can affect effective communication. He says “different cultures do things differently and speak differently which can cause difficulty in understanding”. He agrees that due to different languages and cultures miscommunication can occur between players and coaches, due to their distinct differences.

Player D, although he maintained that he had an “NN (excellent)” understanding of both English and Afrikaans, indicated that Afrikaans is his L1 and English his L2. He views Afrikaans as his L1, because it is the language he grew up with and it is the language he continues to speak when at home. His English “NN (excellent)” proficiency comes from being educated in a school where English was the most prominent language and in tertiary education where material and lectures were only conducted in English. During discussions with coaches he mainly uses English, but with a coach who he knows has an “A (very good)” to “NN (excellent)” Afrikaans proficiency he will switch to Afrikaans and even mix the two languages. When receiving feedback from coaches he prefers the use of English for both positive and negative input as he feels as if there is a softer gentler tone attached to it, unlike Afrikaans which he ties to his home language. He says that language and culture does affect effective communication because “sentence structures vary and the way things are said may have hidden meanings” as well as culture “varies because people do things and act differently”. He also believes that miscommunication can occur between players and coaches, but more because of

language rather than culture, because “it is easier to overcome a person’s cultural factors than learn or understand a foreign language”. As a coach he feels that a common language and culture is the most important way in promoting and encouraging positive behaviour and preventing negative behaviour as a player will therefore not have any excuses by blaming misunderstandings.

Player E, said he is an L1 Afrikaans speaker and an L2 English speaker with an “A (very good)” proficiency level. He said that he mostly communicates in English, but uses a lot of Afrikaans too if the coach understands. If the coach is not fluent in Afrikaans but can understand, he says that often the coach will speak English and he will be able to understand while he speaks Afrikaans and the coach is able to understand. Player E receives both positive and negative feedback in English because it is what the coaches are most comfortable with and it is the most prominent language in the team. He feels however that ideally he would like to be given the feedback in Afrikaans so that he can understand better. When asked about whether language and culture can affect effective communication and cause miscommunication between players and coaches, he said “yes, language rather culture, because language understandings play a huge role in player management and relationships”. As a coach he would prefer that players are able to manage themselves so that it makes his role easier in identifying and encouraging positive behaviour and also putting a stop to negative behaviour with ultimatums.

Player F said that he is L1 Afrikaans and L2 English with an “A (very good)” proficiency level due to formal education. He says that he uses both English and Afrikaans with the coaches depending on situations and depending on the coaches’ proficiency in Afrikaans. He believes that language affects effective communication more than culture as he referred to himself saying that “I myself am an Afrikaans first language speaker and sometimes the coach and I misunderstand each other”. He also believes that language and culture can cause miscommunication between players and coaches but he says that “it depends more on situations

and what is trying to be communicated, rather than it happening all the time”. When asked about being the coach he said “that it is a tough a job and I am not too sure how I would do it, but I would pull the player aside and encourage him to continue the good work, but address the issues that are causing the team to be negatively influenced in a manner and language that we both feel will be comfortable”.

Player G said that isiXhosa was his L1 and English was his L2 in which he has an “A (very good)” proficiency. He said that he experienced all of his schooling in English and only uses isiXhosa when he is at home and communicating with his parents and immediate family members. Due to the coaches not knowing or understanding isiXhosa he is forced to speak in English, but he says that he feels comfortable in communicating in this language. When receiving feedback only English is used, however sometimes he feels that he would best understand in isiXhosa. When asked whether language and culture affects effective communication and causes miscommunication between players and coaches he responded quickly and firmly, saying “yes, in my experiences I have come across people who don’t always understand what I am trying to say due to the way I say things and the way I act based on my culture. It is sometimes frustrating not be understood”. When asked if he were the coach what he would do, he immediately responded by saying “I would make sure that everyone is first accustomed with each other’s language and culture before worrying about positive and negative behaviour. Then with regards to positive behaviour he would encourage the player in a manner that they both understand and agree upon, and with regards to negative behaviour he would pull the player aside and lay down the rules of the team”.

Player H said he was an L1 isiXhosa speaker and L2 English with an “A (very good)” proficiency. He, like player H, also only speaks to the coaches in English because they do not understand isiXhosa. He too agrees that language more than culture can affect effective communication in that lack of understanding in a language is a major contributor to

relationships. As far as miscommunication between a player and coach, he believes that language is the major factor in causing miscommunication. As a coach he said “positive behaviour will be encouraged but if there is any negativity the player will be reprimanded in a way that he understands clearly”.

Player I is of particular interest in that he views English to be his L1, Sotho his L2 and isiXhosa his L3, all equally with an “A (very good)” proficiency. He regards English as his L1, because he was formally educated in this language and he uses it every day in social situations. Sotho is his chosen L2 because it is his father’s L1, however he doesn’t speak it at home. He considers isiXhosa to be his L3 because he uses it every day at home to communicate to his immediate family members and other members of his community. He only speaks in English to his coaches to avoid miscommunications and he prefers to receive feedback in English. He doesn’t believe that language or culture can affect effective communication because “there are ways which I have learnt to understand and communicate properly so I think that there shouldn’t be any problems”. He also doesn’t believe that miscommunication between the player and coach will be the result of language and culture but more from a cricketing perspective. When asked what he would do as a coach he said that “common grounds are the most important ways to prevent miscommunication and therefore I would encourage the positive behaviour by praising the playing, but at the same time I would speak to the player in private in a formal harsh manner so that the negative behaviour would stop immediately”.

From this data we can see that the selected participants with English as an L1 and Afrikaans as an L2 prefer to be spoken to English, and, although one does switch occasionally to Afrikaans, both communicate in English and receive feedback from coaches in English so that it is easier for them to understand exactly what is said. The L1 Afrikaans participants with English as an L2 all said that they mainly use English when communicating with coaches, but do switch to Afrikaans when they know the coach has sufficient proficiency. When receiving feedback code

switching does occur, but English is more dominant in the discussions, however two participants feel that feedback should be given to them in Afrikaans, while the other participant feels that feedback in English is more subtle and doesn't make him feel like he is at home. The L1 isiXhosa participants with English as an L2 both noted that they only communicate and receive feedback in English because the coaches are not able to speak or understand isiXhosa. The participant who only had English as an L1 and no L2 could only communicate in English, as well as the participant with English as a L1, but Sotho as a L2 and isiXhosa as L3. The latter participant believes that using English avoids miscommunication and because the coaches are not capable of speaking the other languages. All but one of the participants interviewed believe that language and culture do affect communication and can lead to miscommunication between the player and coach. They agree that language rather than culture has a greater influence in miscommunication. The participant that identified English as his L1, Sotho as his L2 and isiXhosa as his L3 believes that culture and language do not affect effective communication or miscommunication as he believes that there are always ways to create a mutual understanding among all team members and language and culture can't be used as an excuse.

#### 4.3.3 Player to player communication interview data

The second interview schedule was designed to elicit the players' opinions on and personal preferences during interactions with fellow team mates. The interview questions aimed to find out what players' language preferences and uses are with other team mates and whether they feel that language and culture can influence effective team dynamics on and off the field. The interviews also aimed to find out whether inability to communicate would lead to avoidance and how individuals think they are perceived by others. The interview schedule also created a scenario which would allow the participants to voice their opinions on what they think would create an ideal team dynamic and environment in which there would be no misunderstandings.

Personal feedback was also a focus of the interviews in that the questions aimed to determine whether players help other players during interactions with coaches and other players.

Player A maintained that he only spoke English and that if he was spoken to in a different language he felt uncomfortable. He does not believe that language and culture can influence effective team dynamics during on and off field interactions. He said that when he was unable to communicate with another player he would avoid communication to avoid “awkward situations”. When asked whether he thinks culturally different individuals perceive him differently he said “they perceive me differently, because I went to England when I was younger so therefore I don’t really speak Afrikaans. I would think of it as more negative than a positive.” When asked if he could play an influential role in creating a dynamic and environment where there were no misunderstandings, he came up with the idea of making sure that the team environment is healthy. Concerning his role in the team he does not feel the need to help players with clarifying coaches’ instructions nor does he feel the need to help players in their interactions with other players.

Player B said that he mainly spoke English to other players, and although he occasionally switched to Afrikaans, he felt comfortable if it were the other participant’s L1. He does believe that language and culture can influence effective team dynamics on and off the field, in that players may not understand the coaches' and captain's orders. When asked about avoidance due to inability to communicate, he said “I try and avoid the person because I know I won’t be able to communicate properly”. He feels that other players perceive him differently both in a positive and negative light depending on their different cultural perspectives. When asked how he would create an environment where there are no misunderstandings he said “create groups and every week conduct different exercises, and in that way you get to know each other and learn team work”. In the team he fulfills a role in helping both clarify coaches’ instructions and

player to player communication by explaining things simply in the team language, namely English.

Player C said that although he does understand Afrikaans, he chooses to only speak English with his team mates and does not switch between the languages. He believes that language is more of a barrier than culture in on and off field team dynamics, “the language barriers on and off the field lead to various language specific individuals sticking together to remain in their comfort zones”. Player C avoids situations with individuals with whom he can’t communicate because he believes that both involved won’t understand and there will be limited topics of conversation. When asked if he thought that culturally different individuals perceive him differently, he said “yes, but I am not sure and it could be either positively or negatively or even both”. If he played an influential role he said that he “would have training sessions in which each culture is discussed and then try to create a single team culture”. When asked about his role in helping communicate information he said that he does help in clarifying player-coach instructions by trying to explain it as simply as possible, but he does not help in player-player interactions.

Player D said that when communicating with fellow team mates he mainly used English, but because of his Afrikaans L1 he said that he does switch and even mix the two languages. The main use of English and his Afrikaans L1 makes him comfortable when dealing with team mates who have a different L1 bar isiXhosa. He believes that misunderstanding of language and culture can lead to the breakdown of effective on and off field team dynamics. Like previous players, he also tends to avoid individuals with whom he can’t communicate to avoid awkward situations. He feels that culturally different individuals do perceive him differently, but he reckons that because he feels respected in the team he feels that it is only positively. When asked how what he would do to create a team environment where there were no misunderstandings he said “I would seek to understand rather than be understood”, by which

he meant that he would find out about all the cultures and then create a team culture rather than forcing individuals into something that might not be in their best interest. He said that in the team environment he helps players in their interactions with coaches as well as other players by finding a common ground in languages in which he has a “NN (excellent)” proficiency in.

Player E said that he mainly uses English with his team mates however he switches to Afrikaans often as it is his L1. He feels comfortable in switching over to English because he uses it so often and it is the teams formal language of communicating he says it feels “normal and natural”. Player E says “I feel what works for me personally is that you try and find common grounds with everyone and then use the team culture as the base of relationships”. He answered “no” to whether language and culture influence effective team dynamics, and pointed out that inability to communicate shouldn’t lead to avoidance and culturally different individuals shouldn’t perceive you differently. He felt that openness, the finding of language commonality and the sharing of different cultural rituals would create an ideal dynamic and environment to stop misunderstandings and avoidance among players. When asked about his role in the team he said that he helps players in communicating and clarifying instructions between coaches and other players, by using his proficiency in both English and Afrikaans to get the message across as simply as possible.

Player F, like the other Afrikaans L1 speakers, said that he mainly speaks English to other team mates within the team environment, however he does switch to Afrikaans often. As English is the predominant language within the team he is comfortable in switching to his L2 and regards it as “normal”. He stated that if spoken to isiXhosa then he would be “completely out of his comfort zone because he doesn’t understand a word”. He believes that language and culture do not influence on and off field effective team dynamics as long as there is a good team spirit and a mutual understanding among all. He does however believe that the inability to communicate with another player does lead to avoidance because “understanding can be

tricky”. He does not think that he is perceived differently by culturally different individuals. When asked what he would do if he could create an ideal team environment where there is no miscommunication he said “I think as long as you encourage good team spirit and understanding the rest will sort itself out”. He personally does not help in player-coach clarification and player-player communication.

Player G maintained that he only speaks English, unless it is with another isiXhosa speaking person, then he will switch. When asked about his level of comfort in switching he said “if it is any other language but English and isiXhosa, then I feel very uncomfortable and do not really understand”. He agrees that language and culture can influence effective on and off field dynamics, in that misunderstandings can cause certain cliques within the team and affect the team dynamic. He also says that he avoids communicating with individuals with whom he can’t communicate because he does not want to make a fool of himself. Player G, said that “yes, people perceive me differently, but in a more positive manner because of African culture”. If he were in a position to create an ideal team environment he said he would gather as much information about all cultures and then present it at training sessions. In the team environment he said that he does help both player-coach and player-player clarification because of the language barriers that are present in isiXhosa to English speaker and English to isiXhosa speaker communication.

Player H, like Player G, has isiXhosa as a L1, but mainly communicates in English, unless he is in the company of a fellow isiXhosa speaking person. He does not feel comfortable when spoken to in Afrikaans, but is at ease when spoken to English and even more so when spoken to in isiXhosa. He too believes that language and culture can influence effective team dynamics as it “can cause divisions within teams”. He said that he tends to avoid individuals with whom he can’t communicate because of the limited knowledge he may have which may result in limited conversation before it gets awkward. He too like Player G has agreed that culturally

different individuals perceive him differently, but in a positive manner because of his African culture. He said “because I am African I feel that the team doesn’t completely understand my traditions and language, but I would think more positively because they try to understand and accept my traditions and language”. When asked how he would go about creating an ideal team environment he said “I would strip away individual cultures and focus on having a team culture”. With regards to his role in the team he does not help with player-coach clarifications but he does help with player-player clarifications due to the common language of isiXhosa.

Player I said that he mainly spoke English in the team environment and although his L2 is Sotho, he speaks in isiXhosa when around other members who are able to speak the language. He is not comfortable when spoken to in Afrikaans as he does not understand, but is equally comfortable in both English and isiXhosa. When asked whether language and culture can influence effective team dynamics he said “yes sometimes, because not all players in my team understand my culture”. He does not avoid situations with individuals with whom he is unable to communicate, he says “everyone is equal in a team and I don’t let any barriers affect my relationships with other players so even if we don’t speak the same languages I will find a way to communicate with them”. When asked what he would do if he could create an ideal team environment he said “I would just try to make everyone learn each other’s culture and in that way we will be able to get along well”. As a player in the team he does not help with player-coach clarifications, but he does help with player-player clarifications in which an isiXhosa participant is involved.

The players who said English was their L1 and Afrikaans was their L2, both mainly used English with other team mates. While one said that he occasionally switches to Afrikaans and feels comfortable when Afrikaans is spoken as an L1, the other said he prefers to use English and never switches and does not feel comfortable communicating in Afrikaans. Both of the participants agreed that if they are unable to communicate with an individual they tend to avoid

them to prevent communication problems and stepping out of their comfort zones. Both the participants also agreed that culturally different individuals do perceive them differently in both positive and negative ways. One of the participants said that he helps both player-coach and player-player interactions in trying to clarify instructions, while the other participant said he only helps with player-coach clarification.

The three L1 Afrikaans/L2 English speakers all agreed that they use mainly English in the team environment, but they do switch to Afrikaans often during conversations. They also feel comfortable in communicating in English with an L1 English speaking person and described it as “normal and natural”. One participant agreed that language and communication does influence effective team dynamics and two disagreed and said no. The same applied for their thoughts on whether culturally different individuals perceive them differently; one said yes and the two said no. However when it came to avoidance of individuals with whom they cannot communicate two agreed, while the other disagreed and said no. Two of the participants also said that they help both player-coach and player-player clarification and the other one said he does not help at all.

The L1 isiXhosa/L2 English speakers both shared similar views on all the questions in that they both mainly speak English, but use isiXhosa when there are individuals around who are capable of speaking the language. They are both equally comfortable when spoken to in English, but are completely out of their comfort zone when spoken to in Afrikaans. They both agreed that language and culture can influence effective team dynamics, they both avoid situations in which they are unable to communicate with another team mate and they both agree that they are positively perceived due to their African culture by individuals who are culturally different. The participants differed in their helping of clarifying instructions in that one helped both player-coach and player-player interactions and one helped only with player-player interactions. The English/Sotho/isiXhosa multilingual participant maintained that he only uses

English and isiXhosa, and feels uncomfortable when Afrikaans is used. He believes that on certain occasions language and culture can influence effective team dynamics and that he is perceived positively. He indicated he doesn't avoid situations when he is unable to communicate with another team mate, and he only helps in clarification with player-player interactions. Finally, the monolingual English participant said that he only speaks English and only feels comfortable with English. He said that language and culture does not influence effective team dynamics but agreed that he avoids situations when he is unable to communicate with another team mate. He believes that he is perceived differently in a more negative way by culturally different individuals due to his lack of knowledge of an L2. He also does not help in any interactions between player-coach and player-player.

#### 4.4 Data analysis

This section will consider the data described in sections 4.2 and 4.3 above and examine how the uses of biographic and sociolinguistic data may account for the community of practice created by the Western Province Amateur Cricket team.

The Western Province Amateur Cricket team maintains English as the lingua franca and the primary means of formal communication among all the individuals. The participants used for the study all stated from a personal and subjective point of view that they had a "A (very good)" to "NN (excellent)" level of proficiency in the language whether it be their L1 or L2. This dominance of English is both a colonial legacy and a result of the fact that today, English is seen as the language of money, status, business etc. and is chosen as medium of education across South Africa. The choice of English is for practical communicative reasons in both South Africa and globally. The use of English as the common lingua franca in the country is seen on signage, consumer products and is even used by different mother tongue speaking individuals who have high ranking status when making public speeches. In the Western

Province Amateur Cricket team English is the shared repertoire which contributes to the construction of the CofP of the team.

The biographic data questionnaire aimed to elicit the age and place of birth of participants, which helps in placing the participants' thoughts and opinions into context. The biographical data help in placing participants in different time frames in South Africa's apartheid and pre-democratic era. Many of the participants were born before the inception of democracy and in many ways have had to experience some of the division that was in South Africa at the time. The sociolinguistic questionnaire, which aimed to elicit data on home language history, schooling history and exposure to L2, was also relevant to the South African historical context. The incorporation of biographical and sociolinguistic data allows the division that was in South Africa during the apartheid era and, to some extent, pre-democratic era to be seen in specific languages that were used in specific areas at the time. This is evident in the study, for example, in that isiXhosa L1 speakers do not show any real proficiency in Afrikaans, due to the way they were brought up and the areas in which they were brought up in. However formal education forced those L1 isiXhosa speakers to learn Afrikaans, whereas isiXhosa was only offered as an optional subject to those L1 English and Afrikaans speakers. The data therefore shows how biographic and sociolinguistic data may affect the team environment due to the participants various experiences in the South African context.

English as a lingua franca is represented by the all of the selected participants who said they could speak and understand English at a level of proficiency in which they felt comfortable. The L1 Afrikaans participants all agreed that they mostly speak English in the team environment, but however do switch to their L1 when they are aware of the other participants level of Afrikaans proficiency. The L1 isiXhosa participants, and the participant who indicated isiXhosa is his L3, all agreed that they only speak English in the team environment, but when they are among isiXhosa speaking participants they do speak isiXhosa. The selected

participants are testament to South Africa's multicultural nation in that nine are bilingual, one multilingual and one monolingual. The exception of the monolingual participant is due to his upbringing in England.

The use of English as a lingua franca in the team allows for a better understanding among all of the participants and it creates a sense of 'oneness' and unity among all the members, however, as stated by five of the participants, language and also culture can affect effective communication, team dynamics and miscommunication. The five participants who said that language and culture does affect effective communication and team dynamics agreed that misunderstanding can lead to the breakdown of the team dynamic and can create cliques and division among the members. The six participants who said that language and culture do not affect effective communication and team dynamics, agreed that as long as there is a common team spirit and understanding among all that individual's languages and cultures need not affect effective communication and team dynamics.

These differences of opinion among the selected the participants are subtle and do not create major rifts among team mates and affect the team dynamic drastically, however the uniting of difference is what creates a CofP as discussed in chapter three. The selected participants form part of the Western Province Amateur Cricket team's CofP in which they come together around "mutual engagement"(Lave and Wenger 1991 in Holmes and Meyerhoff, 1999), and in which they have to conform to the rules of the team. The individual differences that all the participants possess may act as barriers, as five of the selected participants said, or they may not affect effective communication and the team dynamic at all, as six of the selected participants said.

#### 4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the data collected was analysed and interpreted in relation to the three research questions proposed at the beginning of this thesis. The use of background questionnaires and

interview schedules among the selected participants elicited biographic and sociolinguistic data. The biographic and sociolinguistic data elicited gave insight to the participants personal history and their views of the effect language and culture may have in influencing the team dynamic, environment, culture and atmosphere. The information obtained confirmed that English is the common lingua franca among all the participants and that the use of a single language within a team environment helps to create a team identity and a CofP in which everyone understands what is being communicated. The selected participants had mixed views in that five said that language and culture do act as barriers to effective communication and six maintained that they do not. Although there were mixed responses, the coaches and players alike said that they still feel a part of the teams CofP, due to certain commonalities that are specific to the team. The finding of commonality among coaches and players is evident in that the team has been successful on and off the field over the past season in winning the Provincial three-day competition, which is testament to the fact that individual differences can affect a team positively and can breed a unique team culture, which can lead to success on and off the field.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will conclude with a brief summary and overview of the study as well as a final assessment of the outcomes that were achieved in the study. I will also make recommendations for further research into the study of sport teams and the effect culturally and linguistically different individuals may have on the team dynamics, culture and environment.

### 5.2 Summary of the study

The objective of the study has been to reflect on whether language and cultural differences can affect a team dynamic. In the process, the study elicited biographic and sociolinguistic data from coaches and members of the Western Province amateur cricket team by means of questionnaires and interviews. The biographic information elicited consisted of participants' age, gender and place of birth, while the sociolinguistic data elicited consisted of L1 preferences, home language history and schooling history. The interview schedules posed questions which elicited personal views and opinions with regards to the effects that language and culture may have on effective communication and the team's CofP. The study has examined the elicited information in a positive perspective, but has also mentioned barriers to intercultural communication that may affect the team environment and team dynamic.

From the data gathered through the questionnaires and interviews, it is clear that the team lingua franca is English and that all the participants are predominantly multi-/bilingual, with the exception of one participant who is monolingual. Along with the sociolinguistic data gathered, participants' estimation of their language proficiency was also elicited with participants rating themselves from "NN (excellent)" to "L (poor or non-existent)" in their L1 and L2.

The interviews posed questions that elicited personal accounts of participants' opinions on whether language and culture may affect effective communication and influence the team dynamic. The interviews also elicited participants' preferences for the language in which they want to be spoken to and in which they prefer to receive feedback from coaches. The data analysis, which has been descriptive, interpretative and explanatory, has shown the various domains of language use within the team and the participants' perceived language proficiencies as well as their views of the cultural influences of the coaches and players.

The study was conducted within the Western Province amateur cricket team environment after a training session over a limited period of time. The outcomes of the investigation confirm that although language and cultural barriers do exist within the team environment, the individual diversity of language and culture can indeed have a positive effect on team dynamics and the creation of a unified, specific CofP can result in improved team culture and environment both on and off the field.

### 5.3 Assessment of study

The primary aim of this study was to find out whether or not linguistically and culturally different individuals are able to form part of a sports team and influence the team dynamic in a positive and unique way, in which all members are able to communicate successfully. In conducting the study various barriers are mentioned that can act as stumbling blocks to effective communication and effective team atmosphere, however this study focused more on the participants' responses, outlining their preferences and how they would act in the creation of a positive team dynamic and environment.

For this study the theoretical framework of CofP was used. The use of CofP in the study showed that only through mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire between and among the participants can a successful on and off field team dynamic, environment and culture

be created. Along with this theoretical framework the use of qualitative research methods was used in order to elicit biographic and sociolinguistic data as well as personal preferences and opinions.

The assessment of the data collected highlighted the linguistic repertoires and language proficiencies of the coaches and players alike and it showed that commonality was found in the use of English as the lingua franca of the team. The selected participants revealed proficiency in other languages which showed their multi-/bilingual capabilities, with only one case of a participant who was monolingual and only proficient in English, the team's lingua franca. The collected data also showed personal preferences with regards to communicating within the team and how a player would ideally like to receive positive and negative feedback by coaches.

In answering the three research questions as proposed in chapter one:

1. The players and coaches alike feel that they are a part of the CofP of the Western Province amateur team, because they are able to communicate openly and freely with each other and they all understand the common goals that have been placed upon them.
2. The coaches and players are very open and honest with each other, and with the help of English as the common lingua franca, it is possible to communicate a common goal of a good team environment, culture and atmosphere.
3. There was a mixed consensus in that some participants believed that language and culture didn't affect effective communication, but those who believed said that language rather than culture is more of a barrier, and therefore the understanding of a specific language and finding a common language in the Western Province amateur team allows

the team to construct an identity that is unique which only members would understand within a CofP.

The study has therefore taken into consideration the barriers that may be associated with intercultural communication, and how individual biographic and sociolinguistic data may affect personal preferences and opinions in the sports team environment. These considerations show relevant issues that may affect effective team communication, environment, culture and atmosphere, however from the conducted study it is shown that individual differences can create a team dynamic that is unique and positive. The findings indicated that all participants are comfortable in the lingua franca of the team and it allows all members to feel part of the CofP. The use of a lingua franca has allowed all the members to communicate freely and openly as well as understand clearly. The mixed consensus among participants with regards to the effect language and culture may have on effective communication is a clear sign of individual difference of cultural and linguistic background. The participants who agreed, stated that language rather than culture acts a barrier toward influencing effective communication. The study has therefore clearly shown that the Western Province amateur team is held together by a language in which all members are able understand and communicate freely and openly, while culturally and linguistically different members can interact and conform to the rules, ideal, beliefs and objectives of the team. This indicates that culturally and linguistically different individuals are able to contribute toward a successful on and off field team culture, environment and atmosphere in which a unique CofP can be created in order to accommodate all members.

#### 5.4 Research difficulties

The main difficulty of the study was associated with time constraints, in that the questionnaires took up valuable time during and after training sessions. The player questionnaires and

interviews consisted of three in total and the participants thought of them as a bit tedious. The questions asked were straight forward; however they did not elicit as much in depth data from the participants as was hoped.

### 5.5 Recommendations for future research

As for future recommendations I would suggest the research to be conducted in more than one province and in more than one semi-professional sporting code. The research conducted for this thesis was only based in the Western Cape and only made use of the Western Province amateur cricket team.

South Africa's diversity is wide spread in that specific cultural and language groups originate from and tend to settle in various provinces. This phenomenon can affect the research results, in that L1 and L2 languages may differ as well as differing opinions based on biographic and sociocultural data. The use of various provinces will be helpful in determining whether or not culture and language may affect effective team cohesion in specific areas.

The use of different sporting codes can also affect the results in that different team sports may attract a different demographic and in that sense the team dynamic alters. The use of different sport codes may be useful in the future so that specific studies can be conducted for specific sporting codes which will allow for different results to be produced and then eventually compared.

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**APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Pseudonym:** \_\_\_\_\_

**For research by Muneer Alexander**

**MA in Intercultural Communications**

**Department of General Linguistics, Stellenbosch University**

**All information on this questionnaire will remain confidential.**

**A. Personal Information**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of birth: City \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

If you were not born in South Africa, how long have you been living here? \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Education: Highest qualification obtained: Grade .....

University/ College degree/ Diploma

Cricketing history: Highest level of cricket played \_\_\_\_\_

**B. First Language (mother tongue)**

What do you consider to be your first language? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the first language of: your mother? \_\_\_\_\_

your father? \_\_\_\_\_

Which language(s) did you speak at home as a child?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is your first language the language with which you are the most comfortable?

- Yes
- No

If you answered "NO" to the question above, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Second Language:**

What is your second language? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long have you been exposed to this language?

\_\_\_\_\_

For how long have you received instruction in this language? \_\_\_\_\_

Approximately how many hours a week do you use your second language?

\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Education and Language Use**

Which language(s) were you formally educated in? Where (i.e city – country)?

	<b>Language</b>	<b>City/Country</b>
<b>Primary School</b>		
<b>High School</b>		
<b>College</b>		
<b>University</b>		
<b>Team Environment</b>		

Which language(s) do you use:

at home: \_\_\_\_\_

at work: \_\_\_\_\_

in social situations: \_\_\_\_\_

in the team environment: \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Team environment (cricket team)**

What language does your coach use when talking to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel comfortable communicating in this language?

\_\_\_\_\_

Which language do you use when talking to your coach?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

Which language would you like to use predominantly in the team environment?

---

Why?

---

**Please rate your linguistic ability in the following languages: English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa, and any other languages that you know (please specify).**

Please use the following abbreviations:

**L** = low (poor)

**I** = intermediate (good)

**A** = advanced (very good)

**NN** = near native (excellent)

<b>Language</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Afrikaans</b>	<b>isiXhosa</b>	<b>Other:</b> _____	<b>Other:</b> _____
<b>Reading</b>					
<b>Writing</b>					
<b>Speaking</b>					
<b>Listening</b>					
<b>Overall Competence</b>					

## APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (COACHES)

### General Information:

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Position in the team: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of years in current position: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

### Language Information:

7. First language: \_\_\_\_\_
8. First language of mother: \_\_\_\_\_
9. First language of father: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Is your first language the language you are most comfortable with? \_\_\_\_\_
11. If "NO", please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Second language: \_\_\_\_\_
13. How long have you been exposed to your second language: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Which language(s) were you formally educated in?
  - Primary school -
  - High school -
  - College -
  - University -

15. Language predominantly used in the team environment: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Language predominantly used with fellow coaches/managers: \_\_\_\_\_
17. Language predominantly used with players: \_\_\_\_\_
18. Language predominantly used at home: \_\_\_\_\_
19. Language predominantly used in social situations: \_\_\_\_\_

**Feedback on performance (structured interview):**

20. Briefly explain how you give players feedback on their performances/ gave feedback in the past?
21. How would you give negative feedback (i.e. feedback on aspects of the player's performance that can be improved)?
22. How do you handle giving positive feedback (i.e. feedback on aspects of the player's performance that are satisfactory)?
23. How do you experience such feedback discussion with players?
24. What kind of responses do you get from players when giving them feedback on their performance?
25. If the player you are communicating with is a first language speaker of another language, do you discuss his performance in his first language or in yours?
26. Do you ever switch between languages during discussions?
27. Which factors do you think contribute to a successful discussion? And to an unsuccessful one?

28. Do you think that language and culture can influence how effective communication is during such discussions?
29. If yes, how do you think language and/or culture influence the effectiveness of communication?
30. Do you think that misunderstandings sometimes occur between the coach and the player during such discussions?
31. If yes, do you think that this may be due to the coach and the player speaking different first languages/ coming from different cultures?
32. How would you address the following issues while providing feedback on performance?

The player is:

- Highly enthusiastic
- Very innovative with regards to problem solving
- Always well presented, and
- Has a good relationship with his fellow team mates

However, he:

- Often over-indulges in social chitchat during practice hours,
- Has a nasty habit of missing practice
- Frequently under-performs

## **APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (PLAYERS TO COACHES)**

**(Each player will complete a language background questionnaire)**

1. In which language do you and your coach communicate when discussing your performance? Do you sometimes switch between languages during such discussions?
2. How do you feel when you are receiving feedback on your performance?
3. How do you respond to positive feedback, for example, when a coach compliments you on the efficient way you are practicing or praises/ compliments you for your on field performances?
4. How do you respond to negative feedback, for example, when a coach tells you that he is unhappy with the way you are practicing and with your on field performances, and they expect more from you?
5. How would you ideally want a coach to give negative feedback?
6. Which factors do you think contribute to a successful discussion about performance? And to an unsuccessful one?
7. Do you think that language and culture can influence how effective communication is during such discussions?
8. If yes, how do you think language and/ or culture influence the effectiveness of communication?
9. Do you think that misunderstandings sometimes occur between the coach and player during such discussions?
10. If yes, do you think that this may be due to the coach and the player speaking different first languages/ coming from different cultures?

11. Imagine for a moment that you are the coach. How would you address the following issues while providing feedback on performance to a player?

The player is:

- Highly enthusiastic,
- Very innovative with regards to problem solving,
- Always well presented, and
- Has a good relationship with fellow team mates.

However, he:

- Often over-indulges in social chit-chat during practice hours,
- Has a nasty habit of missing practices
- Frequently under-performs.

## **APPENDIX D: PLAYER TO PLAYER COMMUNICATION INTERVIEW**

**(In addition to the language background questionnaire that each player will complete)**

1. In which language do you and your fellow team mates mainly communicate in? Do you sometimes switch between languages?
2. When communicating with a team-mate that has a different first language to yours? Are you comfortable and able to switch to a second language of common ground?
3. Do you think language and culture can influence how effective team dynamics are during on field and off field interactions?
4. If yes, how do you think language and/or culture influences the team dynamics?
5. Do you feel that if you are unable to communicate with another team-mate it leads to avoidance?
6. If yes, why?
7. Do you think culturally-different individuals perceive you differently?
8. If yes, why? And in what manner (positive or negative)?
9. If you could play an influential role in creating a team dynamic and environment where there were no misunderstandings due to language and culture, what would you do and how would you go about doing it?
10. As a player communicating with another player, are there ever times when you need to help in clarifying the coaches instructions, due to language and cultural barriers?
11. If yes, how do you do so? And how are you able to understand what your fellow team-mates needs?