



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**Intercultural communication and conflict resolution: The case of
Darfur**

by

Miss Lebogang Mphahlele

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTERS IN SECURITY STUDIES

in the

Department of Political Sciences

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Cori Wielenga

September 2021

DECLARATION

I, Lebogang Mphahlele, declare that this mini-dissertation is my own unaided work, both in conception and execution. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Security Studies in the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

Lebogang Mphahlele

Pretoria, September 2021

ETHICS STATEMENT

I, Lebogang Mphahlele, have obtained, for this research, the applicable research ethics approval and declare that I have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for researchers and the Policy Guidelines for responsible research.

ABSTRACT

The cultural turn in the social sciences has highlighted the importance of understanding the cultural aspects of phenomena being studied in various disciplines because it serves to provide more nuance and depth to discourse and debates. Intercultural communication theory further provides arguments for the importance of considering culture when facilitating communication between multiple cultures because of the complexities that culture adds to the dynamics in mediation. In tandem, decolonial perspectives debate the need to decentralise western/Eurocentric knowledge and practices in mediation, and to construct mediation from context-specific knowledge that will contribute to the effectiveness and appropriateness of the process, especially in cases on intercultural communication and mediation. The Abuja 2005 mediation process on the Darfur conflict provides an illustration of the importance of cultural consideration and of moving away from 'universal' ideas in mediation. The research will use an interpretivist paradigm, following a qualitative approach, and interviews will be conducted as the primary form of data collection.

CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
ETHICS STATEMENT	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
CONTENTS	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Questions, Aims and Objectives	2
1.3 Literature Overview	3
1.4 Intercultural communication and mediation in Darfur	4
1.5 Conceptual Framework	6
1.5.1 Intercultural communication.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5.2 Translation in mediation.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5.3 Mediation	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5.4 Third-Party mediation	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5.5 Decoloniality	9
1.6 Research Methodology	10
1.6.1 Research Design	10
1.6.2 Research Paradigm	11
1.6.3 Case Study and Unit of Analysis	12
1.6.4 Data Collection	13
1.6.5 Data Analysis.....	14
1.7 Ethical Considerations	14
1.8 Chapter Outline	15
1.9 Conclusion	15

Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	17
2.1 Introduction	17
2.2 A decolonial perspective on mediation.....	17
2.3 Culture and communication	19
2.3.1 How knowledge systems shape intercultural communication & mediation 20	
2.4 Language and communication	23
2.5 Mediation	24
2.5.1 Third-party mediation.....	25
2.5.2 Cultural competence in intercultural mediation	27
2.6 Conclusion	28
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework.....	30
3.1 Introduction	30
3.2 Theorising conflict resolution and mediation	31
3.3 The cultural turn in international relations	32
3.4 Intercultural communication theory	33
3.4.1 Culture	34
3.4.2 Communication.....	37
3.4.3 Intercultural communication competence	38
3.5 Decolonial theory	38
3.6 Conclusion	40
Chapter 4: The case of the 2005 Darfur mediation process	41
4.1 Introduction	41
4.2 The Darfur conflict.....	41
4.3 The Abuja mediation process of 2005.....	42
4.3.1 The actors involved	42
4.3.2 Issues faced in the proceedings	43

4.4	Conclusion	45
Chapter 5: Data Analysis.....		46
5.1	Introduction	46
5.2	Data findings and analysis	46
5.2.1	The role of time and trust building in intercultural communication	47
5.2.2	The role of translation in intercultural communication.....	50
5.2.3	The role of language in communication in mediation.....	52
5.2.4	The role of culture in intercultural communication in mediation	54
5.2.5	The role of trust in intercultural communication in mediation	58
5.3	Conclusion	60
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations		62
6.1	Introduction	62
6.2	Summary of the previous chapters.....	62
6.3	Key findings.....	64
6.3.1	Lessons from the Darfur case.....	64
6.3.2	On the use of language in intercultural mediation.....	65
6.3.3	On time, trust, and ownership in intercultural mediation	66
6.4	Limitations	67
6.5	Recommendations	67
6.6	Further work	68
6.7	Conclusion	68
Bibliography		70
APPENDIX 1: Letter of Permission		84
APPENDIX 2: Consent Form		85
APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....		86

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

War and conflict have been a characteristic feature of the world since the beginning of time. Various international actors, including states, have had to grapple with the task of mediation and conflict resolution to bring an end to conflict. As the nature of conflict has changed, mediation and conflict resolution practices have had to adapt to address the challenges in hand. The topic of intercultural communication is an integral concept in the literature on conflict resolution, especially in mediation. This is an important concept to consider when analysing the process of mediation as communication has the potential to undermine or support the entire mediation process. Understanding cultural nuances and understandings of what constitutes a state of peace or war is critical when attempts to broker peace are made (LeBaron 2003). Intercultural communication is also important in allowing for sustainable peace, as agreements will then have content based on culturally and contextually based knowledge around peace and conflict, as understood by those affected by and engaged in the conflict.

The idea of intercultural communication is often mentioned in the literature, but there is seldom a thorough discussion on it. More attention needs to be given to intercultural communication in mediation. The nuance that culture brings to communication and the way in which meaning is created and interpreted from communication (written and spoken) are important to consider when undertaking a process of mediation (Carter & Watts 2016: 310, 311; Lucke & Rigaut 2002). The central question this study asks is: with reference to the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, what was the effect of language barriers and translation on intercultural communication in the mediation process? This research uses the case study of the mediation of the Darfur conflict, which started in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2005 and ended with the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in May 2006 (Netabay 2009). The research will use an interpretivist paradigm, following a qualitative approach, and interviews will be conducted as the primary form of data collection.

This chapter will be divided into multiple sections that discuss the following: First, a discussion of the research questions, aims and objectives, which is followed by a literature overview. This will be followed by a discussion of the important concepts

used in this study. There will then be a detailing of the research methodology adopted for this study. Subsequently, there is a discussion of the data analysis approach for the study, which is followed by a brief discussion of the ethical considerations for this study. Penultimately, there will be a section outlining the chapters in the dissertation, followed by a conclusion.

1.2 Research Questions, Aims and Objectives

The research makes the argument that differences in languages and cultural communication hinder mediation and conflict resolution processes. Differences exist in how different cultures interpret communications and attribute contextually different meanings to discussions or writings in the mediation process. An inability to overcome or address such cultural barriers to communication creates difficulties in coming to a resolution between conflicting parties. More research needs to be undertaken to understand how, in what ways and for what reasons language barriers and issues in communication effect a mediation process.

The research question this study asks is as follows: with reference to the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, in what ways did language barriers and translation in intercultural communication play a role in the mediation process? The sub-questions are:

- a) How did the aspects of culture and language manifest themselves in the 2005 Abuja mediation process?
- b) Why is the language used in mediation processes of importance to the outcome of the mediation process?
- c) In what ways does a western¹ approach to mediation influence the aspects of culture and language in a mediation process?

A research aim is the purpose statement of a study, and a research objective is a statement highlighting the focus issues of the study (Thomas & Hodges 2010: 38). The aim indicates the primary goal of research and is therefore presented as a general statement (Thomas & Hodges 2010: 39). The objectives are specific

¹ A Western approach to mediation as understood here refers to the use of the Harvard style (Mason 2007: 5).

statements following the research aim that highlight the specific issues being studied (Thomas & Hodges 2010: 39).

The research aim of this research paper is: to assess the role of culture and language in intercultural communication and the 2005 Abuja mediation process.

The objective is: To assess how the language used in the 2005 Abuja mediation informed the mediation process in brokering lasting peace.

1.3 Literature Overview

The following literature review will look into the literature that grapples with the idea of communication and the role it plays in mediation and conflict resolution. This will be done to establish the gaps in the literature in the communication–conflict resolution nexus.

The debates in the academic literature that grapple with conflict resolution and communication mostly address the various biases – whether gender-based, cultural, cognitive or other (Coleman et al. 2014: xii) – that affect effective communication between the various stakeholders in the conflict resolution process (Savun 2008: 25). These stakeholders can include military groups, the state, or individuals (Jankurova & Kazansky 2015).

The literature focuses on the use of third-party mediators as the preferred means of communication between conflicting groups (Bercovitch & Lee 2003). According to Savun (2008: 25), communication in the conflict resolution process focuses on the role of the mediator to build consensus between disputants. The author further looks into the influence that mediator biases have on the success or failure of the conflict resolution process. Savun (2008) does investigate the impact of a mediator in the conflict resolution process. There is, however, no specific examination of how intercultural communication and cultural biases could affect the process of mediation.

Several scholars add to the literature by arguing that communication in conflicts needs to happen through means of mediation by third parties (Maurer 2013: 419). They justify this by arguing that those engaging in the conflict are unable to

effectively communicate with each other due to the irreconcilable differences that initially incited the conflict (Savun 2008: 25; Maurer 2013: 419).

Although scholars like Johnson and Berrett (2011: 1) highlight the need to consider the level of complexity that culture brings to all mediums of communication, the idea of intercultural communication is superficially discussed. The scholars further highlight how the assumption that values are similar across cultures can negatively affect conflict resolution. This is because, based on such assumptions, certain behaviours and manners of engagement are expected and, in a case where the assumptions are wrong, the outcome of the conflict resolution process is negatively impacted upon (Johnson & Berrett 2011: 2).

The little available literature that does talk about intercultural communication acknowledges the importance of it in enabling effective and appropriate communication across cultures (Karadeli 2018: 305). The discussion on intercultural communication is broad and related to international security, and deals with how the interconnectedness of the contemporary world calls for recognition of culture in communication to achieve security in a diverse world (Karadeli 2018: 307).

In the process of peacebuilding, collaboration between the government, the mediators and conflicting parties is recommended (Nwanko & Nzelibe 1990). Some scholars, however, propose collaboration without considering the possible challenges of intercultural communication between the stakeholders involved in the mediation process (Ricigliano 2003: 445; Nwanko & Nzelibe 1990; Yalem 1971: 263).

1.4 Intercultural communication and mediation in Darfur

This study uses the case of the mediation of the conflict in Sudan as a case study. The region has experienced intractable conflict and various mediation attempts were made that failed to end the conflict. In this context, exploring whether the role of intercultural communication contributed to the failure of the different mediation proceedings becomes relevant.

Sudan has over 600 indigenous ethnic groups that engage with each other in 400 different native languages (Khan et al. 2018: 77). The conflict in Darfur occurred as strides were being made in mediating peace between North and South Sudan. The

conflict has its origins in tensions between black Africans and Arab Muslim leadership (Khan et al 2018: 76). The black African rebel groups, known as the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), started the rebellion through attacks against the government in Jebel Marra (ACAPS 2017: 2; Khan et al 2018: 76; Nathan 2009: 496). The rebel groups' demands were for better infrastructure in the Darfur region, an end to economic disparity between Arabs and black Africans, and a more representative national government. To quell the rebellion, government forces were sent to retaliate against the initial attacks and the Janjaweed² militia was used to combat the rebel groups. The conflict has been ongoing since 2003 (BBC 2013; ACAPS 2017: 2).

There have been multiple attempts made at brokering peace in Darfur, but none of these have been successful (Netabay 2009). These efforts include the N'Djamena peace negotiations (September 2003 and April 2004), the Addis Ababa peace negotiations (May 2004), the Abuja peace negotiations (August 2004-May 2006), and the Sirte peace negotiations (October 2007) (Netabay 2009).

There are various factors that have influenced the failure of the mediation efforts to broker peace in Darfur. These include a lack of trust between the warring parties and flaws in the mediation process (Netabay 2009). Specifically relating to flaws in the mediation process, is the issue of intercultural communication. For example, in the 2004 N'Djamena peace negotiations in Darfur, mediators could not communicate in English or Arabic – the primary languages of communication in Sudan (Netabay 2009). The process of translation in the mediation process was slow and resulted in there being different copies of the agreement, which served to undermine the process (Netabay 2009).

It is important to note that, even with the involvement of Africans in the various peace negotiations, peace was not brokered. This shows that what constitutes an 'African context'/'African understanding' of peace is not monolithic. The cultures and

² The Janjaweed militia are a militia group comprising nomadic Arabs that have long had tensions with the non-Arab farmers who come from ethnic groups that make up the SLM/A and JEM (Koerner 2004).

languages specific to those engaged in conflict need to be understood to make strides in the mediation towards brokering sustainable peace.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

It is important to clarify the main concepts used in a study to prevent uncertainty arising around their meanings (Brynard et al. 2014: 30). The following sections clarify the terms and concepts used in this study to ensure that a uniform understanding is formed. The concepts include mediation, translation in mediation, intercultural communication, third-party mediation, and decoloniality. Intercultural communication presents issues to the mediation process that have the potential to undermine the entirety of the process. These issues relate to difficulties with translating meaning across lingual, cultural and contextual differences and the possible biases of third parties posing challenges to the process.

1.5.1 *Mediation*

According Bercovitch (1991: 3), mediation is a tool used by actors in the international arena, including states, to manage and resolve conflict. It is a phenomenon that exists in multiple disciplines and is primarily characterised by the presence of a third-party entering into talks with disputing parties as an unbiased party to help facilitate a ceasefire (Bercovitch 1991: 3).

Mediation plays a central role in conflict prevention and resolution (Duursma 2014: 81). It consists of interlinked phases, which include the following: the interactions before mediation, the actual process of mediation, the chosen approach of mediation, and the outcomes generated by the processes (Duursma 2014: 81, 82). It requires consensus from all the parties involved in a conflict to even enter into processes of mediation (Duursma 2014: 83).

One of the purposes of mediation is to dispel perceptions held about opposing parties by engaging with them to uncover the reality beyond perceptions (Mason 2007: 7). It is important to the process of mediation that behaviours are differentiated from people and that the processes are understood separately, but not removed, from the content (Mason 2007: 8).

The success of a mediation process is based on various factors, which include the following: the power relationship between parties, the type of conflict, the timing of mediation efforts, and the legitimacy and reputation of the mediator (Mason 2007: 8, 9).

1.5.2 *Third-party mediation*

Bercovitch and Lee (2003: 2) define third-party mediation as the assistance granted by impartial individuals or groups to conflicting parties in order to aid in resolving their conflict. The authors also highlight the point that third-party mediators offer non-violent and non-binding intervention in the process of mediation (Bercovitch & Lee 2003: 2; Gartner 2014: 274). Third-party mediators reflect non-coercive consensus as a necessary prerequisite to conflict resolution (Gartner 2014: 271, 272).

The presence of a third-party mediator in the process of mediation increases the likelihood of the process concluding with a peace agreement because their presence allows opposing parties to be more committed to the process, as there is less fear of being exploited (Duursma 2014: 82 85; Svensson 2007: 179). This trust in the third party is dependent on how the third party is perceived by the disputants, and their reputation in mediation influences this (Duursma 2014: 85). The third-party mediator's motivation and capabilities are important to the process (Duursma 2014: 86).

There are times, moreover, where biased mediators make it easier for opposing parties to commit to mediation and conflict resolution processes by supporting the weakening side, as this lessens their fear of being exploited in the terms of a peace settlement (Svensson 2007: 177).

The presence of third-party mediators is not always positive. This is because there is no guarantee that opposing parties will adhere to peace agreements made in the presence of the third party (Duursma 2014: 92). Furthermore, the objectivity of third parties is not always guaranteed (Duursma 2014: 95).

1.5.3 *Translation in mediation*

Conflict often occurs between groups that have differences in language, ethnicity, and cultural identities. These differences inform how individuals perceive the environment they find themselves in. When conflict occurs between combatants who communicate in different languages, there is a need for translation in the mediation process to ensure that all affected parties understand the negotiation proceedings. The roles of translators in the process are crucial, as they are not merely reproducing texts, speeches, and discussion in a different language (Liddicoat 2016b: 349; Köksal & Yürük 2020: 328, 329). They have the responsibility of rearticulating intentions and meanings from one cultural context to another, without losing the intended meaning of the initial communication (Liddicoat 2016b: 347; Minaj 2017: 101).

The translator is a vessel of communication, across linguistic and cultural barriers (Liddicoat 2016b: 347; Minaj 2017: 102). They provide meaning to a message for a group that does not understand the initial language of communication. Accordingly, it is important that translators consider various culturally based interpretations of the meanings of the concepts used in the mediation process to avoid misunderstandings and to achieve success in the mediation process (Liddicoat 2016b: 348, Minaj 201: 103).

The people translating mediation proceedings may sometimes have a cultural understanding that differs from the context that they find themselves in, and this needs to be considered when translating communications across cultures and languages (Liddicoat 2016b: 350).

1.5.4 *Intercultural communication*

The concept of intercultural communication is widely researched in the discipline of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, but not in Security Studies. This research will draw from the literature in the former discipline, and apply this to the field of Security Studies.

The concept of intercultural communication looks at how culture impacts upon the communication process and the outcomes of interactions between different cultural groups (Jankurova & Kazansky 2015, Link Inc. 2017). The focus of intercultural communication is on examining how individuals speak, listen and act in interactions (Ndegwa 2016: 19; Aneas & Sandín 2009: 2).

The concept highlights the idea of communication as being a social construction; thus, meaning and knowledge are informed by a social and cultural perspective (Aneas & Sandín 2009: 1). Culture contributes to the differences in how individuals or groups receive or send messages (Laurig 2011: 234). It is important to understand the culture of the person communicating with you before interpreting the communication because culture informs this communication (Hall & Whyte 1960: 6; Laurig 2011: 234). Different states have either a low-context or high-context culture, where varying importance is placed on implied and non-verbal communication, and this should inform how communication flows (Rogers et al. 2002: 17).

1.5.5 *Decoloniality*

This concept is of relevance to this study because it questions the ideas of universality in western knowledge and aids in questioning the appropriateness of western styles of mediation in intercultural settings. Western knowledge here refers to the dominant knowledge systems of Western Europe and North America that have shaped world systems, including through colonialism. Decoloniality involves ideas and practices that relate to delinking and deconstructing the complex power structures of coloniality in the political, economic, military, epistemic and cultural sense (Gu 2020: 597; Cloete & Auriacombe 2019: 2). The purpose of decolonial thought is to highlight the need to dismantle the power matrices and epistemes that contribute to the reproduction of colonial ideas in modernity (Mpofu 2017: 1; Silva et al. 2021: 1). The ideas of decoloniality champion for marginalised voices to be included in the centre of discourses (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 23; Mpofu 2017: 4). Decolonial perspectives look for new ways to theorise, based on subjective experience, and decoloniality pushes for a decentralisation of Western/Eurocentric perspectives (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 24; Silva et al. 2021: 2).

Mediation practices have a history that spans across the ages (Bercovitch 1991: 3). Some of the ideas that influence mediation approaches were developed in the Global North and still influence the practice of mediation presently. The relevance of decoloniality in this case is to shed light on the existence of ideas and perspectives that exist in the margins due to the dominance of the Western approaches that have prominence in the international arena. Acknowledging the need for intercultural communication in mediation cases in contexts of cultural diversity challenges the Western approaches to mediation by allowing marginalised voices and contextually based understandings and meanings to contribute to the mediation process. The need for and use of translators in intercultural communication in mediation challenges the need to impose the use of English in mediation context where this is not the *lingua franca* and aligns with the ideas of decolonising the mediation process by allowing marginalised languages to become central in the process.

1.6 Research Methodology

The use of an appropriate research methodology is crucial for the success of a study. Ensuring the correct application of research methods will yield research outcomes that provide relevant, reliable and unbiased data that answer the research problem stated initially by the study (Khan 2011: 2). This section will outline the research methodology adopted in this study.

1.6.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research design because the variables being studied (mediation and intercultural communication) do not have numerical values that are measurable phenomena (Leedy & Ormrod 2013: 24). The primary methods used are qualitative, as it is a study in the social sciences that investigates concepts like intercultural communication and mediation in conflict resolution. The advantage of a qualitative method for this study is that it allows for interpretation of the social and cultural factors/contexts that impact on the mediation phenomena (Leedy & Ormrod 2013: 24).

1.6.2 Research Paradigm

Research methodologies are based on the philosophical assumptions of researchers (Leedy & Ormrod 2013: 25). These assumptions make up the research paradigm that determines the perspective that a researcher forms when viewing the phenomena being studied, as well as having an impact on the choice of research methodologies that their study will employ (Given 2008: 592, Babbie 2007: 31).

Common research paradigms include positivism, interpretivism, and constructivism (Leedy and Ormrod 2013: 26; Given 2008: 873; Blaikie 2010: 96). This study uses an interpretivist paradigm that aims to develop verifiable knowledge of meaning(s) constructed through social interaction (Blaikie 2010: 99). Qualitative methods are favoured in interpretivist studies. Interpretivism makes the argument that individuals understand and process knowledge through experience (Schwandt 1998: 221). It also highlights the importance of the social context in helping to understand human behaviour (Schwandt 1998: 221). The point made is that the world needs to be understood from the vantage point of those who have lived the experience (Schwandt 1998: 221).

This perspective posits a need to understand an actor's definition of the experience he or she has lived (Schwandt 1998: 221). The theory highlights the need to take into consideration situation-specific meanings as the means to understand the matters under investigation (Schwandt 1998: 221). For instance, the language used and actions are taken in a specific situation need to be considered in order to read meanings into the actions (Schwandt 1998: 222). The focus of interpretivism is on understanding, rather than just explaining, social phenomena (Schwandt 1998: 223).

This theory states that people act in a situation, based on their interpretation of it (Pham 2018: 3). The theory adopts a relativist view on reality where multiple interpretations of a single phenomenon can exist at once (Pham 2018: 3; Ryan 2018: 49). The theory allows researchers to investigate concepts and uncover deeper meanings of the concepts with all the complexities that arise in the specific context of the research inquiry (Pham 2018: 3). This theory allows for a diversity in perspective, it challenges the idea of universal understanding of concepts in mediation and conflict resolution, and it propagates the importance of social and cultural context in understanding phenomena (Pham 2018: 3).

The theory assists in research as it allows researchers to study phenomena that are not observable (Pham 2018: 4; Bevir & Hall 2020: 164). Phenomena should be understood from within and not explained from the outside (Bevir & Hall 2020: 164). The theory looks at how meanings shape actions, and tries to understand how this occurs (Ansell 2016: 3, 14). Interpretivism highlights the idea of knowledge as being subject-, culturally, and historically based (Ryan 2018: 48).

A branch of interpretivism with a perspective helpful to this study is that of pragmatist interpretivism. The concern here is in making efforts to understand how individuals draw inferences in particular social contexts about the situation at hand, and about the motives and intentions of others (Ansell 2016: 86). From pragmatism, the theory borrows the nuance of looking at language as a shaper of meaning, and the idea of communication and dialogue as the means of creating understanding to achieve development and cooperation (Ansell 2016: 86). This perspective highlights the point that meaning is created through dialogue, and also acknowledges that the plurality of social perspectives poses challenges in communication (Ansell 2016: 86).

1.6.3 Case Study and Unit of Analysis

A case study is a research approach where a phenomenon is studied to gain a deeper understanding about it (Given 2008: 68). There are various types of case studies and this study will be using an exploratory case study where a particular case study is chosen to observe a unit of analysis. (Blaikie 2010: 190). In this study, the case study is the mediation process that took place in 2005 in Abuja, Nigeria, which resulted in the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement. This study will focus on this case study because, although this agreement was signed, it failed to broker sustainable peace. Questions arise as to whether problems in communication were a contributing factor for this failure.

The unit of analysis is the 'who' or 'what' that is being studied (Babbie 2007: 94). Individuals, organisations, groups, social interactions, and social artefacts are examples of units of analysis. This study will be making use of social interactions as a unit of analysis (Babbie 2007: 97). This is because the study is not focusing on the individual actors in the conflict and consequently on the mediation. The focus is rather on the mediation process itself and how it is impacted upon by intercultural communication. The unit of analysis will comprise the mediation process and

intercultural communication. Specific attention will be given to how these two variables assist in brokering sustainable peace. Because this study is interpretivist, the benefit of a case study is to help contribute to theoretical discourse on intercultural communication and mediation.

Those present at the Abuja, Nigeria, mediation in 2005 were: Salim Ahmed Salim for the African Union (AU), Robert Zoellick for the US, other AU mediation representatives, and foreign officials that operated in Abuja. Witnesses to the agreement were from Nigeria, Libya, the US, the UK, the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the Arab league, Egypt, Canada, Norway, and the Netherlands (Nathan 2009: 498). It is from this round of mediation that the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was established (Nathan 2009: 498).

1.6.4 Data Collection

Data used in a research project can be categorised as either primary or secondary data (Brynard et al. 2014: 38). The data collection methods used are an important part of research, as they can affect the credibility and validity of the study (Given 2008: 193). The data collection methods employed in this study comprise both primary and secondary research, i.e. interviews and desktop research. Various forms of literature, including books, journal articles, peace agreements and online sources, are reviewed. This is done to understand how intercultural communication affects the success of a mediation process.

A. Interviews

Interviews in qualitative research are flexible and 'non-directive' (Jamshed 2014: 87; Edwards & Holland 2013: 3). This research plans to utilise semi-structured interviews, using open-ended questions to cover various topics of relevance to the research (Niewenhuis 2007: 87; Qu & Dumay 2011: 247). These interviews are valuable to this research as they enable the researcher to obtain descriptive information and more insight into the interviewee's knowledge (Qu & Dumay 2011: 243). This study aims to conduct four interviews, three of which will be with individuals who were broadly involved in mediation processes and one with a direct experience in the Darfur mediation process. The interviews will be conducted online. The three interviews with interviewees who were not directly involved in Darfur

nevertheless hold a deep knowledge of the context, as well as the challenges faced in communication during mediation processes that are very similar to that of Darfur.

B. Sampling

A research sample is a sample of a wider population that possess the characteristics relevant to information needed for a study, as it is not possible to study the whole population (Kumar 2011: 398). This research will make use of non-probability purposive sampling because the individuals chosen for interviews are purposefully chosen, based on the view that they will provide information valuable to the study because the interviewees took part in the mediation proceedings (Leedy & Ormrod 2013: 152; Kumar 2011: 389).

1.6.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the phase in research constituted by the search and arrangement of research data collected in order to get a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Wong 2008: 14). This could be in the form of categorising data and analysing for patterns to derive some meaning from the data collected (Wong 2008: 14).

This study makes use of a content analysis to analyse the data collected. A content analysis is a method used to analyse the content and meaning of data, where the data collected is reviewed to assess the construction of the texts, the way in which meanings are formed, and as to what constitutes these meanings (Given 2008: 865). A content analysis is good for analysing content that come from various cultural settings because it focuses on the philosophical and cultural assumptions that the data is based on (Given 2008: 865; Fürsich 2018). This type of analysis is beneficial to this study as the cultural assumptions of those involved in the mediation can influence the way in which peace agreements are constructed, as well as the meanings to be given to the content. Having an understanding of these aspects could assist in understanding the failure in brokering sustainable peace in Darfur.

1.7 Ethical Considerations

It is important for the researcher that a safe environment be created to allow participants to express themselves freely (Farrimond 2013: 26, 27, 30; Punch 1994:

92). It should be ensured that participants are informed of the objectives and outcomes of the research by getting written consent to participate from them (Punch 1994: 90, 92; Bricki & Green 2002: 5). The research should also protect the confidentiality of participants (Punch 1994: 92; Farrimond 2013: 133). This study makes use of interviews and will ensure that these are kept confidential. Participants participate voluntarily, based on principles of informed consent, and are informed that they may withdraw at any point. Desktop research is conducted on materials that are made publicly available, and the requirements for avoiding plagiarism are to be considered when working with these.

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 introduces the research and outlines the rationale for the research, the research problem, research question, and aims and objectives, as well as providing the research methodology and a brief literature overview.

Chapter 2 is a literature review that goes deeper into discussing the extant literature on intercultural communication and the concepts used in this study.

Chapter 3 sets out the theoretical framework that focuses on intercultural communication theory to frame the perspective of this study.

Chapter 4 provides a discussion on the case study of the research, which briefly describes the conflict and explores the Abuja 2005 mediation that is the unit of analysis of the study.

Chapter 5 is the data analysis chapter, where the data collected in the interviews is reported and analysed.

Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation and synthesises the impact of the research. It assesses whether language and cultural barriers impact upon the mediation process.

1.9 Conclusion

This research explores the process of mediation, looking specifically at the mediation attempts made in Darfur, by using an interpretivist's perspective. A focus is placed on the concept of intercultural communication in mediation in order to help ascertain the possible effects that culture and language have on the success of a mediation

process in brokering a long-lasting peace. The assumption made is that language and culture affect effective communication in mediation proceedings, as well as the understanding of the content and outcomes of mediation. Bearing this in mind, the research explores whether this relationship between language, culture and communication affects the success of the mediation proceedings at brokering long-lasting peace.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The focus of inquiry in this study is placed on intercultural communication in mediation, which is examined through using a case study of the 2005 mediation that resulted in the signing of the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement. The concepts of language and culture are central to the research inquiry. Accordingly, the focus of this chapter is to discuss the extant literature on these concepts and to highlight how they relate to intercultural communication and mediation, and to achieving the outcome of sustainable peace.

The chapter outline is as follows. First, there is a discussion on mediation from a decolonial perspective to highlight the need to include multiple perspectives of mediation in order to find the best-suited model for specific cases. This is followed by a brief discussion on culture and communication as the central aspect of intercultural communication, and this is followed by a subsection on how knowledge systems shape intercultural communication. In addition to this, there is a section that discusses language and communication in relation to mediation in culturally diverse environments. The penultimate section discusses mediation and includes subsections that look at bias in third-party mediation and the contribution of cultural competence to the process of mediation. The final section is a conclusion to the chapter.

2.2 A decolonial perspective on mediation

Coloniality impacts on global power structures and epistemological designs, and decoloniality highlights the asymmetries in the power structures that are sustained through education and the persisting colonial power matrices in the world (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 11; Mignolo 2009: 161). The three concepts that make up the basis of decolonial thought are the following: the coloniality of power, the coloniality of knowledge, and the coloniality of being (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 11; Mignolo 2009: 171). When looking at power, the investigation focuses on how global political power structures were constructed and how this contributes to the continued

marginalisation of the Global South (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 11). When looking at knowledge, the focus is on uncovering the epistemological issues that exist around who generates knowledge and why they do so, as well as uncovering the role played by knowledge in spreading imperialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 11; Mignolo 2009: 161). Coloniality of being is concerned with the objectification and commodification of non-white bodies, and the marginalisation of their humanness and reality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 12).

Decoloniality focuses on undoing the power relations and knowledge structures that contribute to the continuation of the marginalisation of the Global South (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 14; R'boul 2020: 5). The Global South here can be defined as the multiple localities and multiple experiences rooted in the idea of these people and spaces being marginalised from mainstream knowledge creation and power matrices (Shome 2019: 203).

Decoloniality denotes the ideas of acknowledging and redressing the impact of the colonial remnants that exist and still impact on the order of things after the colonial era (Zondi 2017: 106; Grosfoguel 2011: 5). Decolonial perspectives address the issue of coloniality that is overlooked in Eurocentric perspectives (Zondi 2017: 107). The colonial impacts on state structures in the Global South need to be addressed in order to achieve sustainable peace (Zondi 2017: 107).

In relation to mediation, a decolonial approach includes analysing the process in a way that considers the colonial continuities in the paradigms underlying how the process is engaged with and the inherited peaceful state model that is the goal at the end of mediation (Zondi 2017: 106; Mignolo 2009: 160).

It is assumed in decolonial literature on peacebuilding and mediation that peace will not last until the colonial impacts on state structures and society are addressed (Zondi 2017: 107). In addition to this, the centrality of western epistemology impedes the rise of marginalised epistemes (Grosfoguel 2011: 4). What decolonial thinking does is to challenge the idea that there is a universal way of thinking about global phenomena and to advocate for the inclusion of Global South epistemes that are beneficial to broadening perspectives and providing alternative viewpoints (Grosfoguel 2011: 5).

The decolonial perspective is relevant to mediation in intercultural contexts, as it allows individuals to question and analyse the knowledge hierarchies and power matrices at play in specific cases, and to address these accordingly when designing the mediation for optimal outcomes (Faißt 2019). The idea of decolonising highlights the need for multiple perspectives, and not a singular universal perspective, on conflict resolution and mediation (Faißt 2019; Tlostanova 2020: 167). The goal is not to include and incorporate marginalised perspectives, but rather to have these perspectives be the basis for engagement in cases where they are more fit (Faißt 2019).

Decolonising intercultural mediation would include allowing all participants to exist in the identities and cultures they created, and recognising that all parties are autonomous in the process (Sánchez & Martínez 2017: 357). Decolonial thinking allows individuals to construct their own interpretations of reality and to decide how to act upon it (Tlostanova 2020: 165). A decolonial approach provides explanation from specific vantage points and acknowledges the subjective nature of how reality is created and experienced (Tlostanova 2020: 169).

2.3 Culture and communication

The definition of culture is a contested one. Bercovitch and Foulkes (2012: 27) defined it as a complex framework constructed by individuals in social groups that is used to provide meaning. It is this mindset that provides the distinction between groups, and it is learned from the environment that an individual finds themselves in (Hofstede et al. 2010: 6). There are core (religious belief, shared history, language, and ethnic background) and peripheral (age, gender, and geography) aspects of a culture that are important to consider in mediation, as there is variation between the two aspects, across cultures (Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012: 29).

Culture is a fundamental element of social life and practices in a community, as it guides how humans interact and relate to another (Guilherme 2019: 1; Piotrowska 2015: 12, 13). Culture informs how individuals or groups communicate and how they grow and generate knowledge and norms (Piotrowska 2015: 13; Rabiah 2012: 7). Culture informs how people view and engage in conflict, and it also guides how groups go about solving conflicts (Piotrowska 2015: 13; Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012: 29). The cultural frameworks developed by various cultural groups ought to give

peacebuilders a blueprint of the most effective way to go about achieving peace in specific cultural contexts (Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012: 30; Piotrowska 2015: 13). It is important to take note of this, as imposing conflict resolution frameworks from a different culture on a different cultural context may result in worsening tensions rather than relieving them (Piotrowska 2015: 13).

Communication is complex in contexts of cultural, ethnic, class, political and gender diversity (Barasa et al. 2016: 80). Many communication practices are based on an understanding of effective communication that is derived from Western ideas that assume universality in communication styles across varying contexts. This points to a need for a deconstruction of the dominance of western culture in mediation communication so as to reinvent and include culturally diverse frameworks that provide contextually appropriate conditions for conducive and successful mediation processes (Guilherme 2019: 1,6). A more nuanced approach is necessary for progress to be made in the mediation process, especially when cultural differences are very apparent (Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012: 33).

Theory on culture and communication associate culture with a national identity that is either individualistic or collectivist (Brownlie 2017: 34). The contributions made by theorists on culture and communication are discussed in more depth in the theoretical framework chapter of this study. The idea of 'small culture', made popular by Adrian Holiday (discussed in Brownlie 2017), is especially useful to this study because it proposes the idea of developing a culture specific to the mediation process at hand (Brownlie 2017: 34). This thinking acknowledges that culture is evolving, and so it is important to develop mediation processes around the changing behavioural norms and understandings (Brownlie 2017: 44). Although some of the behaviour in small cultures is influenced by the larger community norms, it is developed through interactions in the small mediation group (Brownlie 2017: 45).

2.3.1 *How knowledge systems shape intercultural communication and mediation*

There is a growing interest in recognising the cultural aspect of communication in mediation. It has been argued in the literature that mediation processes, which have operated within a Western understanding of communication, assume an idea of universality in understanding when a 'common' language is used to communicate;

the common language most often being English (Guilherme 2019: 11; R'boul 2020: 2). The 'universal' understanding of communication is argued to be based on Eurocentric epistemology (Guilherme 2019: 9). However, scholars like Guilherme (2019: 9) suggest that, although the idea of intercultural communication calls for a questioning of the Eurocentric basis for understanding and engaging in communication, it does not call for completely doing away with these ideas.

Intercultural communication is an integral part of the mediation process because the mediation approaches chosen inform the communication styles adopted in the proceedings. Various approaches to mediation exist. According to Mason (2007: 4, 5), the mainstream Western approaches to mediation mostly used to solve international conflicts after the Cold War include the Harvard approach and the Human Needs approach. The Harvard approach is an individualist and result-focused mediation approach that focuses on what the parties involved want and why they want it, and then through negotiation aims to achieve a mutually agreed upon solution (Mason 2007: 5). Human Needs approaches are relationship focused and aim to resolve root causes of conflict, and recognise that if the needs of the conflicting parties are not met, sustainable peace cannot be achieved (Mason 2007: 5).

The increase in the complexity of the dynamics in conflict impact upon the level of success achieved through these mediation styles (Mason 2007: 7, 12). These mediation styles are critiqued for being able to reach a mutual agreement at the time of mediation, while not making provision for the case that the terms agreed upon may not be mutual in the future (Duursma 2014: 91). In addition to this, the literature suggests that the terms agreed upon in the mediation may not be representative of the reality where the conflict is occurring, and the uncertainty surrounding this builds tensions that spur on continued fighting (Duursma 2014: 92).

The literature on mediation further explains western forms of mediation as being based on interest and problem solving, where the issue is assumed to be a clash of different interests and that a solution is possible only when mediation is entered into with a problem-solving mindset (Bagshaw 2015: 190). This perspective on mediation was critiqued for being too individualistic and for neglecting collective interest and the social context of conflict, and for thus not being conducive to achieving

sustainable peace (Bagshaw 2015: 190). Whereas Western approaches to mediation are individualistic, non-Western perspectives are collectivistic (Pedersen 2007: 3). From an African perspective, mediation is a collaborative effort where the roles played by international and African actors are equitable and complementary (Govender & Ngandu 2010: 4). It is recognised that there is a need for flexible strategies that will appropriately respond to various contexts (Govender & Ngandu 2010: 17). The principles of mediation from an African outlook include impartiality, consensus, ownership, and inclusivity (Govender & Ngandu 2010: 17; Ajayi & Buhari 2014: 154). The process should also be non-threatening and based on trust and cooperation (Govender & Ngandu 2010: 17). The existence of power dynamics between actors in intervention is recognised by questioning which actors will take the lead in mediation, and there is also an acknowledgement that gender equality is necessary, specifically focusing on a greater inclusion of women in mediation (Govender & Ngandu 2010: 4, 27).

The concept of conflict transformation is growing increasingly in popularity, as a lens that mediators need to use in interventions and, from such a perspective, the focus is not only on resolving conflict between combatants, but also on addressing issues of structural change in order to achieve lasting peace (Bagshaw 2015: 195). Many scholars have identified a need to move away from the Western-dominant epistemology of intercultural communication (R'boul 2020: 1; Calafell 2020: 412). These scholars highlight a need to include underrepresented perspectives from the Global South because the omission to include these voices brings into question the ability of underrepresented groups to generate knowledge, and undermines the credibility of their contributions to the mediation process (R'boul 2020: 1, 2; Demeter 2020: 4). When Western ideas and knowledge on intercultural communication are more dominant, it places them in a position of superiority in situations where communication between cultures takes place (Demeter 2020: 3; Calafell 2020: 412). The inclusion of the Global South in the intercultural communication knowledge discourse is necessary, although R'boul (2020: 2) argues that scholars should not fall into the trap of viewing a voice from the Global South as monolithic – there are multiple ‘Others’ that make up the Global South.

The contribution of the Global South should not be viewed as an alternative to Western knowledge on intercultural communication, as this connotes a superiority of

Western knowledge and sets a precedence that the Western way of conducting interactions between cultures will lead to success over others (R'boul 2020: 2, Demeter 2020: 5).

An important aspect added to the discussion in the literature is that 'Western' mediation is diverse because the way in which the EU, the UN, NGOs and other international organisations engage in mediation derives from different perspectives and with different strategies. Thus, although the term 'Western' refers to the collection of the perspectives, it is important to recognise that the West is not a monolith (Richmond et al, 2011: 452, 454).

2.4 Language and communication

Language has various functions, including instrumental, interactional, heuristic, and regulatory functions. Its instrumental function is to influence a setting to achieve specific outcomes. Its interactional function is to sustain relationships and maintain effective communication. Its heuristic function is to gain knowledge (Rabiah 2012: 5). Its regulatory function serves as the means to control and engage in conversation (Rabiah 2012: 5). This regulatory function alludes to the idea of power concerning the chosen language of engagement. For example, the primary language used in a mediation process sets the tone of power and indicates who has control of the setting, because those who have command of the primary language used have authority in handling the setting (Rabiah 2012: 6).

Language is the medium of engagement in the mediation process, and dialogue cannot commence without the use of language that is appropriate and accepted by all parties involved (Barasa et al. 2016: 75, 78). It is because of this that more efforts need to be made to understand the implications of the language(s) used in the mediation process, and how it impacts on the effectiveness of the communication and the outcome of the process (Barasa et al. 2016: 79).

The language that one uses can be regarded as an indicator of belonging to a specific identity and culture. Identities are constructed through language, and language is implicated in the dynamics of power relations (Rabiah 2012: 5). Language can be used as a divisive tool. For example, between English and non-English speakers in a space where English is used as the primary language, non-

English speakers are at the mercy of those who understand English, as they cannot form or express their own understanding and meaning of the communication. It is important, however, to acknowledge that the presence of translators in mediation is procured for the specific linguistic needs to facilitate better communication and prevent language from being a barrier (Buarquob 2019: 74). According to Barasa et al. (2016:80), 'Language is the means in which power is appropriated, distributed and negotiated'. Because of this, it is important to take note of how communication occurs when the language used is not common among all participants in a mediation process (Barasa et al. 2016: 90). Mediation cannot occur without the use of language; hence, language can become a tool of power and dominance that is used to impart specific ideas that are rooted in specific ideologies (Barasa et al. 2016: 75, 76).

Language can be the cause of conflict and the solution to it. Through language, various interpretations of reality can be communicated, and it is thus important to understand the identity and culture of the language to understand the contextually accurate meaning of the message being communicated (Rabiah 2012: 4; Durant 2002: 1). The choice to impose English as the language of mediation when third parties enter the mediation process affects the mediation process, especially in cases where the parties at war are not native English speakers (Barasa et al. 2016: 76).

2.5 Mediation

The mediation process facilitates negotiation and thus needs to be sensitive to cultural norms, in this case around communication, to be effective (Fisher 2001: 1). New realities continue to exist; thus, the art of mediation needs to adapt to these changes to ensure appropriateness in an intervention (Da Rocha 2019: 101). The signing of a peace agreement does not guarantee that the peace brokered at the point of signing will be sustained long thereafter, and this is evident in the Darfur case, seeing that multiple rounds of mediation resulted in the signing of a peace agreement, yet the conflict has endured (Nathan 2007: 507,508).

This leads us to investigate areas that need addressing to achieve results from the process that are more effective. There are various areas to examine, including signatory intentions (will to honour commitment and decision-making under duress),

agreement implementation, and other external factors such as resistance from those not included in the peace process (Moore 2004). This study probes an investigation into the mediation process, looking specifically at the communication throughout the process, especially the elements of culture and language, and the effects they have on comprehension and internalisation of the content of the proceedings for the various parties partaking in the mediation proceedings.

The intercultural aspect of the conflict is important to consider in the mediation process, as one's culture brings forward different perceptions on the reality of one's lived experience of the conflict, and this will affect how one chooses to interact in the mediation proceedings (Mahan & Mahuna 2017: 11). Diversity exists both in how conflicts start and how they end, and with the dawn of globalisation, there is an increasing need to learn how people from other cultures engage in matters of conflict resolution to ensure the efficacy of interventions (Mahan & Mahuna 2017: 11). The outcome of the mediation process depends on how the process is carried out while duly considering the social, political, cultural and economic context in which the intervention occurs (Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012: 27).

Western methods of mediation have dominated interventions for years, and with changes in the nature of conflict, there is a need for change in how conflict is resolved (Bagshaw 2015: 187). Mediators need to recognise their cultural centredness, and consider power dynamics by highlighting the influence that Western discourse has in intervention, to better serve affected parties in the process, using a perspective of conflict transformation, and operating in a context of human rights and social justice (Bagshaw 2015: 187).

2.5.1 *Third-party mediation*

Third parties assist in mediation by facilitating communication and negotiations between disputing parties, instead of a higher body imposing a solution without the inclusion of those affected in a conflict (Henderson 2020). The ultimate goal of third-party mediation is to reach outcomes in the mediation process that are equitable and contribute to overall harmony and positive social change at the micro- and macro-levels of society (Fisher 2001: 25). Communication and cultural competence are crucial to the success of a mediation process (Henderson 2020).

An important aspect of third-party mediation worth noting is that of the power and influence the mediators can wield over the process and its outcomes (Fisher 2001: 18). Some degree of power is necessary, but it must be acknowledged that the amount of power the third parties wield will affect the communication culture of the process (Fisher 2001: 19; Vuković 2014: 67). Are they arbitrators who impose external ideas on the situation, or do they merely facilitate communication between disputing parties and provide a neutral ground for the combatants to reach a mutual agreement (Fisher 2001: 1,19)? The type of power that a third party has should be duly considered in relation to the type of conflict and the cultural context they might intervene in, as this will determine their usefulness in reaching a sustainable resolution (Fisher 2001: 2, 6). Seeking to solely halt conflict through coercive means does not necessarily address the underlying issues of social change that need to occur through a more communication-based approach (Fisher 2001: 3, 7, 19; Vuković 2014: 68).

The idea of conflict transformation is important for addressing power asymmetries in the mediation process, thereby ensuring conducive and constructive communication. By doing this, the combatants are enabled to engage to construct an ideal structure (social, political and economic) that marries the ideas of positive peace and justice in a way that is sustainable beyond the presence of mediators (Fisher 2001: 3).

There are ethical and moral responsibilities that third parties must undertake for ensuring that mediators have a cultural competence to engage in contexts that are culturally, socially and ethnically different, and then effectively facilitate communication without escalating tensions (Fisher 2001: 7, 20). Mediators should consider the nature of the conflict, the individual perceptions of those involved in the conflict about the reality of it, and the differences that exist between these perceptions (Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012: 41, Vuković 2014: 71).

Traditionally, negotiation by a third party is understood to be a universal way to address the conflict between disputing parties and, over time, the need to develop culture- and context-appropriate variations of negotiation and mediation styles was acknowledged (Fisher 2001: 1). More flexible and adaptable approaches are required of third-party mediators because the traditional 'one-size fits all' approach is limited when it comes to addressing case-specific subjective and complex demands

and conditions that can impact on effective communication and de-escalate tensions in the mediation process (Fisher 2001: 13). Third-party intervention needs to take on a multidimensional character to effectively address the complexities that culture brings into the conflict and, by extension, the mediation process (Da Rocha 2019: 101).

Impartiality and neutrality are important principles that third-party mediators are expected to adhere to in order to uphold the integrity and credibility of the mediation process and its outcomes (Henderson 2020, Mahan & Mahuna 2017: 11). However, the idea of neutrality of the mediator is questioned, and it is suggested that they are seldom unbiased as they have something to gain from the ultimate agreements being reached in the mediation process (Fisher 2001: 20). The point is also highlighted that impartiality and neutrality can lead to mediators ignoring cultural complexities and perpetuating the power asymmetries carried in mediation discourse (Bagshaw 2015: 191).

At times, bias works in favour of achieving resolution in mediation because biased mediators are seen to balance power asymmetries (Svensson 2007: 178). Parties that find themselves in the weaker position feel more comfortable entering and engaging in the mediation process when they perceive the mediator to favour their interests, and this contributes to less hostility and resistance in the mediation process (Svensson 2007: 178). Bias in mediation may also assist in mitigating issues of doubt of commitment to the process and its outcomes because parties will believe that their interests are well recognised and protected (Svensson 2007: 181). Contrastingly, if bias is perceived in favour of the opposing party by those involved in mediation, this can lead to a reluctance to cooperate and a lack of confidence in the process (Melber & Saunders 2007: 90).

2.5.2 *Cultural competence in intercultural mediation*

The desired outcome of mediation is a peace agreement between the warring parties that will foster a peace that is sustainable in the long term. The idea of cultural intelligence, in this case, is important, specifically as it relates to communication between cultures (both verbal and non-verbal communication). Being able to read and understand bodily cues and the context of communication can assist in getting to the intended meaning of communication, which helps to reduce assumption

making and reading meaning into communications based on personal biases and socialisation (Fisher 2001: 18).

Third-party mediators mostly come from cultures that are different from those of the combatants, who are usually also from different cultures (Fisher 2001: 18). Culture is a prevalent aspect of human interaction (Fisher 2001: 18). It impacts on human behaviour, and having limited knowledge of cultures (and their norms) often leads to misreading and misunderstood communication and meanings (Fisher 2001: 18). Cultural sensitivity is crucial on the part of third-party mediators, as they should have a grasp of the communication norms of their own cultures and those of the cultures of the people they are entering into mediation on behalf of, so as to avoid applying blanket solution approaches to conflict (Da Rocha 2019: 103, Mahan & Mahuna 2017: 13, Pedersen 2007: 2).

Culture power dynamics (dominant versus oppressed) are important to note. Third-party mediators usually come from a dominant (Western) culture to deal with oppressed (Global South) cultures; thus, it is important to not impose the norms of the dominant culture on the oppressed, as this will serve to escalate rather than remedy tensions (Fisher 2001: 18). Cultural analysis is important to prevent such imposition from happening (Fisher 2001: 18, Davidheiser 2004: 292).

The inclusion of cultural dialogue at the grassroots level in the mediation process will benefit the mediation process, as it will foster the development of safe spaces that can be integrated into the process to aid effective communication and contribute to successful and sustainable outcomes (Da Rocha 2019: 101). It is important to note that, even with recognising differences in cultures and finding shared values across cultures, the ways in which these values are practised differ, and so finding similarities in culture is not always a common ground that arises from positive engagement (Pedersen 2007: 1).

2.6 Conclusion

The literature discussed above, although not exhaustive, highlights the relationships that exist between concepts and how they translate into practice. What can be taken from this is that, with the evolution of time and the global changes that occur as a

result, the ideas around these concepts need to be more inclusive of new complexities to appropriately address the issues in hand.

The world is ever changing and, in line with this, the perspectives and theoretical lenses used to interpret various realities need to evolve and be accommodative to these changes. Decolonial thinking shows the need for a shift from universalising about phenomena in international relations, and encourages a decentralisation of dominant epistemologies to make space for multiple marginalised knowledge systems. This is especially useful in cases of intercultural communication, as it allows for the development of mediation processes that are appropriate to specific cultural settings, based on the epistemic understanding of those involved.

As shown in the discussion on knowledge systems, the existing mediation styles have yielded only short-term success due to limitations in addressing context-specific aspects in some mediation environments. This furthers the need to have context-specific designs of mediation processes, especially in cases of cultural diversity and where language poses a barrier to effective communication.

The discussion on mediation, third parties and bias highlighted the need for cultural competence in cases of intercultural mediation for all parties involved. Bias can contribute either to the success or to the failure of the mediation, and a third-party mediator needs to have the aptitude and competence to wield bias in favour of a more favourable outcome. Cultural competence highlights the need to be culturally aware and sensitive to nuances in communication, across cultures.

All the discussion set out in this literature review bolsters the argument of this study, that language and cultural communication in mediation play a role in the mediation process that can either hinder or contribute to its success.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

The topic of mediation is an integral part of conflict resolution. With the changing nature of conflict in the 21st century and the persistence of conflict in parts of the world, it is necessary to engage in more meaningful ways with conflict intervention, broadly, and mediation, specifically, to achieve sustainable peace. The cultural turn in the social sciences in the 1990s highlighted the need to recognise the cultural dynamics present in conflict and advocated for the need to give cultural factors due attention in the conflict resolution process. One of the insights arising out of the cultural turn is that mediation processes that have been able to effectively settle conflicts in some contexts should not be taken as the blueprint to successfully reach a resolution in an environment with different cultural realities. New perspectives are necessary to understand the cultural nuances in communication (both verbal and non-verbal) that are context- and culture-specific when conducting a mediation process that is to be effective in all situations.

This research explores the dynamics of culture in mediation, looking specifically at intercultural communication in mediation and how the factors of language, translation and culture influence the outcome of mediation in an intercultural context. This chapter will look at intercultural mediation theory and establish that as the lens for this study. The first section will focus on theorising conflict resolution and mediation from a realist perspective, which helps us to see the ways in which realism forefronts issues of 'interest' in the resolution of conflicts, but ignores the role played by factors such as culture. This will be followed by a section discussing the cultural turn in social sciences that underpins the prevalence of intercultural communication theory. The section thereafter is a discussion of the literature on intercultural communication theory, which includes subsections on the theory and its views on culture, communication, and intercultural communication competence. The penultimate section is a discussion on decolonial theory as it relates to this study and contributes to data analysis. The final section is a conclusion of the chapter's content.

3.2 Theorising conflict resolution and mediation

From a realist perspective, conflict resolution would be necessary only if the conflict threatens the national security of a state and if the threats endanger state institutions and their territory (Jehangir 2012). Applying this understanding to intervention through mediation, states will only engage if the conflict affects their territory, integrity and national security, and they will do so arbitrarily with the only goal being to end what is disrupting the intervening party's interests. This approach does not lend itself to taking the time to learn nuances that exist in a new cultural context in order to effectively address the conflict because the goal is alleviating threats to the interests of the intervening party, and not settling the conflict in the best way for all those involved.

Since the end of the cold war, there has been a rise in international interventions in conflicts to establish peace (Autesserre 2011: 1). Along with this, the number of intervening organisations, at both the international and regional levels, has also multiplied (Autesserre 2011: 1). In the process of conflict resolution, the practices chosen when engaging with intervention (mediation, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, etc.) have primarily been underpinned by liberal and rational thinking, as these perspectives are the most prominent in international relations (Autesserre 2011: 1, Meiser 2018). In addition to this, many international institutions and the norms guiding behaviour in the international arena are founded on liberal thinking (Meiser 2018). It is under the guide of this theory and its values that organisations such as the UN engage with issues of intervention and mediation in conflicts (Barnett 1997: 529, Gavrilu 2013). Rational thinking highlights the point that vested interests and material capacity are factors that determine the strategies of intervention (Autesserre 2011: 1). The challenge here is that, basing intervention on material capacity and vested interest, neglects the presence of phenomena such as culture and religion in conflict and the effect these phenomena can have on aiding or hampering the mediation process (Autesserre 2011: 1).

The multitude of international and regional organisations that engage in peace interventions have varying approaches that they deem as effective for achieving peace (Autesserre 2011: 9). Some organisations intervene by using top-down approaches, and others choose bottom-up approaches (Autesserre 2011: 9,

Richmond et al. 2011: 449). All the intervention styles have their limitations in successfully achieving peace, and although from the dominant liberal and rational thinking perspectives there is no acknowledgement of culture in the conflict resolution process, it can be assumed that the existence and choice of different intervention styles by different organisations implies the existence of different contextual realities that inform those choices.

3.3 The cultural turn in international relations

In the 1990s, there was what is known as a cultural turn in the social sciences. Scholars more and more recognised the need to establish deeper understandings of culture and the role it plays in various areas of international relations (Van Veeren 2009; Lawson 2006: 17). What the cultural turn has done is to highlight how 'culture-blind' the discipline of international relations was before the turn (Valbjorn 2008: 56). Although diversity was recognised in the international arena, little had been done to examine the role of culture in the processes of the discipline (Valbjorn 2008: 57). The view of culture was guided by liberal thinking, where the goal was to establish a common human nature to achieve peaceful cooperation, and this resulted in a generic view of a global culture where different groups are unified by a set of common values (Valbjorn 2008: 58). The focus before the cultural turn was on matters around power, and the belief was that power trumped all, including culture (Valbjorn 2008: 58).

The cultural turn highlighted the point that international interactions occur in culture-specific contexts and emphasised that international relations are fundamentally intercultural relations (Valbjorn 2008: 62; Iriye 1979: 115). Although the cultural turn deepened and broadened the discipline, the contentious nature of the definition of 'culture' left cultural approaches lacking in academic rigour. This was due to a lack of understanding of the concept of culture and how it impacts on human behaviour, as well as the tendency of these approaches to overly rely on the culture factor when studying phenomena (Jackson 2008: 155, 156; Oliveira et al. 2018: 574). This has meant that more research in this area needs to be undertaken in a range of applications, including, for example, mediation. The cultural turn does not imply a discarding of extant approaches, as they all still provide meaningful use in studying phenomena in international relations (Oliveira et al. 2018: 574).

3.4 Intercultural communication theory

Intercultural communication is fundamentally communication that takes place across cultures (Issa et al. 2015: 4). There are multiple reasons that explain the necessity of intercultural communication. It assists in developing cultural sensitivity and understanding of one's culture and those of others, and it provides individuals with the ability to look beyond themselves, fosters tolerance, and allows individuals to engage in intercultural interactions with the ability to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and mistrust that can cause conflict (Issa et al. 2015: 6; Cheng 2017: 4). The two primary views on the need for intercultural communication perspectives are that individuals need to be flexible and tolerant when engaging with other cultures, and that they should engage in reasoned and critical thinking when faced with communicating in intercultural situations (Dasli 2012: 95). The focus in intercultural communication is placed on training individuals how to communicate across cultures (Lopez-Rocha & Arevalo-Guerrero 2014: 534). An important consideration made, however, is that culture is not always the culprit for misunderstandings in communication in intercultural interactions (Lopez-Rocha & Arevalo-Guerrero 2014: 534).

According to Issa et al. (2015: 10), there are critical, interpretive, and social science approaches under which intercultural communication theory has proliferated, but this study will look only at the theories falling under the interpretivist approach. This choice is made because of the view of these approaches that culture is created through communication and the approach of understanding phenomena from the context in which they exist, while steering clear from generalising views of culture and communication (Issa et al. 2015: 14; Lopez-Rocha & Arevalo-Guerrero 2014: 533). Interpretivist intercultural communication theories aim to understand the cultural context and to use that understanding to explain human behaviour, even the elements that are not seen (Lopez-Rocha & Arevalo-Guerrero 2014: 533; Busch 2009: 29, 30).

Intercultural interactions are effective where communication is constructive, and this is only possible in cases where all the participants in the interactions have a level of respect and empathy for the cultures of others, and possess large measures of adaptability (Reza 2009: 146). Scholars who ascribe to the ideas of intercultural

communication theory recognise that proper and effective intercultural communication is possible when participants in intercultural interactions enter into them with intentions of mutual cultural understanding and benevolence (Reza 2009: 146). The literature on intercultural communication encourages mediators to acknowledge their own cultural experiences because having a grasp and deep understanding of that will allow them to critically engage with and better understand how the cultural experiences of the other parties inform their behaviour in mediation (Dasli 2012: 97). Doing this allows mediators to shed the divisive perception of 'Us vs Them' based on culture, and allows for tolerance and flexibility in communication (Dasli 2012: 97).

Translation is an integral part of intercultural communication in mediation because meaning is transferred and communicated through translators in intercultural interactions (Liddicoat 2016a: 354). The cultural turn in social sciences highlighted the role of the translator not only as a mediator between languages, but also as a culture bridge (Liddicoat 2016a: 354). It is no longer sufficient for translators to just translate between languages; their role is to transfer meaning that is expressed through communication along with the implicit contextual expressions (Liddicoat 2016a: 355).

3.4.1 Culture

Studying conflict and conflict resolution is already difficult and adding the aspect of cultural differences increases the complexity (Fisher-Yoshida 2005: 1). An individual's perception of the conflict is framed by the participant's cultural experience, and this experience will determine their willingness to engage in conflict resolution (Fisher-Yoshida 2005: 3). Many scholars in intercultural communication advocate for the conceptualisation of culture as meaning-construction and highlight the need to acknowledge that power dynamics need to be considered as part of the context in communication (Hamaidia et al. 2018: 120).

Various theorists have made attempts at coining a definition for the concept of 'culture'. A notable contribution made by Hall (1959: 51), which will be used to guide the perspective of this study, is that "culture in its entirety is a form of communication". In this definition, Hall (1959: 61) suggests that culture is learned and is thus teachable, and this aspect is important to note for this study because in

cases of intercultural communication in mediation, learning about how different cultures communicate can contribute to fostering understanding throughout the mediation process. This scholar further highlights the point that culture has multiple dimensions and that it is relative (Hall 1959: 218). With the aspect of cultural relativity, the scholar emphasises that, in communication, individuals need to be able to equate an experience viewed from one culture to an equitable experience viewed from another culture (Hall 1959: 218).

There are opposing views on the importance of culture in communication in mediation. Scholars like Avruch (1998: 42) argue that the impact that culture has on communication, and the mediation process generally, is contextual. Avruch (1998: 20) argues that culture is dynamic and derived from the experiences of the individual in specific contexts. The contention that exists in the literature on the contents of the definition of culture poses the challenge to the mediator of either overstating or neglecting the role it plays in conflict and conflict resolution (Brigg & Muller 2009: 121; Avruch 2003: 364).

Culture and communication are concepts that are intricately linked because culture is learned and transferred through communication (Issa et al. 2015: 2). Looking at culture as a contextual experience is helpful in conflict resolution for assisting participants to understand their behaviour and that of others (Avruch 2003: 355). Cultural identities can affirm belonging, while explicitly or implicitly affirming the exclusion of those who do not belong to that identity, and this highlights the divisive aspect of culture that can negatively impact upon mediation (Avruch 2003: 357).

Culture acts as a filter that determines one's perception of their reality, and this filter is influenced by multiple aspects of a person's identity (Fisher-Yoshida 2005: 4). The aspects that influence this filter need to be studied in cases where they impede communication and understanding across cultures (Fisher-Yoshida 2005: 4; Wright 2000: 28). Learning about these filters allows mediators to design a mediation process that best serves the interests of all parties accordingly (Busch 2009: 15).

A. Cultural dimensions

Multiple cultures exist and they are placed under broad categories, based on values and beliefs that are similar across the cultures. What is important to note when categorising cultures is that, although cultures can exist under the same broad

category, it does not imply homogeneity, and that miscommunication and misunderstanding can occur between cultures under the same category (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 12). The distinction between the broad categories is, however, necessary for highlighting the relevance of acknowledging cultural differences in mediation in order to mitigate the negative impact of miscommunication across cultures (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 12).

The categories found in the literature on intercultural communication include differentiation between individualist and collectivist cultures, and high-context and low-context cultures (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 12). Individualists prioritise the needs of the individual, value individual autonomy, and maintain a loose social organisation (Wright 2000: 28; Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 13). Individual freedom is important in these cultures, and conflict is viewed as a natural result of human interactions (Wright 2000: 30; Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 13). Challenging authority and creating one's own opinion is encouraged in such cultures and emphasis is placed on rationality (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 13). Relationships are created when they serve the interests of the individual and, in conflict resolution, the interests of the individual take precedence (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 13).

Collectivist cultures prioritise the interests of the community over those of the individual, and view their existence as interdependent to the group they belong in (Wright 2000: 29; Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 13). The values of cooperation and respect are placed high, and maintaining harmony and solidarity in their group is important (Wright 2000: 29). Such cultures view conflict as a threat to harmony and aim to avoid it at all costs (Wright 2000: 30). Social organisation in such cultures is hierarchical and authority is determined by birth and not by merit (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 13). Relationships between individuals are deemed important and, to maintain peace in the community, communication in collectivist cultures is indirect and heavily dependent on non-verbal communication (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 14).

Communication in high-context cultures is heavily dependent on reading the environment and body language as verbal communication is limited (Cheng 2017: 2). When replying to communication, people in these cultures may be evasive when responding to avoid conflict (Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 16). In contrast, low-context cultures are more expressive, direct and confrontational when communicating

(Cheng 2017: 2; Lucke & Rigaut 2002: 15). There is a high reliance on verbal communication in low-context cultures that, at times, leads to individuals from such cultures ignoring the nuances added to communication by non-verbal communication (Mahan & Mahuna 2017: 12).

The different values and communication styles that characterise different cultures influence how people from these cultures view mediation, what types of mediators they would prefer, and what type of mediation they would prefer. The parties who acknowledge this can assist with designing a mediation process that will yield the best outcomes (Wright 2000: 32).

3.4.2 Communication

Multiple definitions of communication exist, but the essence maintained across all of these is that the concept denotes aspects of meaning transfer and creation between two or more entities (Issa et al. 2015: 4). Individuals entering into communication with others do so from a personal experience and share this perspective in the communication process (Issa et al. 2015: 3). Communication within and between states is a pervasive issue. Complexities exist with communication within one culture, and these multiply in cases of intercultural interactions because more breaks in communication occur during cultural transfers (Reza 2009: 146). For effective intercultural communication to occur, it is necessary for all the parties who will be involved in the intercultural interactions to familiarise themselves with the communication norms of their cultures and those of the others involved (Reza 2009: 146). It is important to know the effects that the social, political, and economic environments have on culture, and how these translate into human behaviour (Reza 2009: 146).

Lack of knowledge on intercultural communication impedes conflict resolution in intercultural conflict because instances occur where certain parties impose their culture and power on others, and this serves to escalate tensions, rather than aid the achievement of resolution (Reza 2009: 147). Mistakes occur in intercultural communication due to misuse of words and expressions, as well as a lack of empathy and willingness to adapt to the new cultural reality presented by intercultural interactions (Reza 2009: 147). The presence of cultural prejudices impedes intercultural communication, and this signifies the importance of considering

the factor of culture in conflict resolution, as these prejudices can present challenges during mediation (Reza 2009: 147). Perceptions of power distance between cultures and fear of the culture perceived to be superior imposing their culture on others in intercultural interactions impede communication and relationship building between the parties involved in conflict resolution (Reza 2009: 147).

3.4.3 *Intercultural communication competence*

Communication styles differ across cultures, based on multiple facets that are identified in communication theory (Cheng 2017: 2). This requires individuals to learn to engage with reality from the viewpoints of others by developing an intercultural communication competence (Chen & Starosta 2008: 215). Intercultural communication competence is especially important for ensuring effectiveness and appropriateness in intercultural communication (Chen & Starosta 2008: 216). Effectiveness is represented in the intended outcome of the communication being achieved, and appropriateness is represented where individuals can recognise contextual limitations to communication and operate accordingly to prevent these from impacting on communication (Chen & Starosta 2008: 217, 218). Six competencies fall under intercultural communication competence that contribute to ensuring effective and appropriate communication across cultures: fundamental competence – adapting to new environments to achieve intended goals; social competence – having skills like empathy and critical thinking; interpersonal competence – related to the aforementioned competences but focusing on the ability to control the environment to achieve intended outcomes in specific communication conditions; linguistic competence – being able to use language properly; communicative competence – having knowledge of a language and being able to execute the language knowledge properly; and, relational competence – being able to develop a relationship to communicate effectively (Chen & Starosta 2008: 219). Developing intercultural communication competence in individuals increases their adaptability in varying communication contexts (Chen & Starosta 2008: 220).

3.5 Decolonial theory

As was discussed in Chapter 2, decolonial theorists make contributions to theorising and knowledge creation by highlighting the limitations of Eurocentrism (Mignolo

2011: 45). Decolonial thinking emphasises the need to deconstruct hegemonic epistemes and reconstruct multiple frameworks of knowledge (Guilherme 2019: 1; Bhabra 2014: 116). Scholars of decolonial theory make a case for the necessity of epistemological diversity through the inclusion of marginalised voices in intellectual and social spaces (Guilherme 2019: 2).

Decolonial theory makes the argument for marginalised scholars and ideas to be recognised and accepted as legitimate, which will thereby enrich knowledge creation and academic discourse (Fleuri & Fleuri 2017: 11). The literature makes the argument that it is necessary for the decolonisation of knowledge systems to occur in order to make a space for conducive intercultural communication where experiences and meanings are to be exchanged (Mignolo 2011: 48). Decolonial scholars want to move away from the European understandings of social phenomena as the universal standard because they generalise and homogenise experiences and perspectives that actually vary (Bhabra 2014: 118). The literature highlights the need to acknowledge that other sources of knowledge exist, and that the content and concepts in social sciences have a geographic history that needs to be recognised (Bhabra 2014: 119).

Decolonial theorists provide renderings of the world that are different from those imposed by the persistence of coloniality (Davis 2018: 3). Scholars recognise the coloniality of globalisation as a universalising agent that aims to merge the world into one, and fails to recognise the differences that still persist across societies and cultures (Davis 2018: 9). Guilherme (2019: 3) suggests that increased globalisation does not necessarily translate into a fusion of multiple cultures into one global culture. Furthermore, when looking at the idea of culture, decolonial perspectives highlight the need to deconstruct the idea of universality in thought and knowledge about culture to make way for ideas from marginalised voices (Fleuri & Fleuri 2017: 8; Davis 2018: 12). This will allow for a space where intercultural interactions enrich all those involved in the interactions (Fleuri & Fleuri 2017: 16).

The focus of decolonial thinking, as it is used in this study, is on issues of knowledge and how coloniality informs the way in which individuals create meaning and understanding, together with the need to remove colonial impositions on indigenous thinking to allow for new centres of knowledge creation (Mendoza 2020: 56). The

idea is carried over on how different cultures engage in communication and the need for all the differing experiences to be acknowledged in the mediation process.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to establish the relevance of intercultural communication theory as a theoretical lens for this study. Theory plays a crucial role in assisting scholars to make sense of the data and information they engage with. The choice of theory in this study is fitting to this research because of the ideas it holds important around culture and communication in environments of cultural diversity. This theory will be used to analyse the data collected in this study because the focus in data collection was to interview individuals who had experience with mediation in intercultural conflict situations. The theory will help underline the areas where culture played a role in communication, and assist in understanding whether culture should really be given much attention when looking at designing mediation processes in cases with cultural diversity.

In addition to this, the decolonial perspective adds to the theoretical framework of the study as it uncovers the epistemic foundations that need to be acknowledged. This requires understanding how culture and communication occur across cultures and how the marginalised present in mediation need to be heard. Furthermore, their lived experiences need to be recognised without imposing 'universal' prescriptions on the process.

From the content of this chapter, it can be seen that culture is understood differently across societies, and this informs how humans behave and communicate. Cultural realities differ and the importance of highlighting the existence of cultural nuance in communication across cultures can provide the parties in mediation with a new skill set to use in the conflict resolution process that will hopefully yield long-lasting peace post-mediation.

Chapter 4: The case of the 2005 Darfur mediation process

4.1 Introduction

The Darfur region of Sudan has been plagued with conflict for almost two decades (Kleinfeld & Amin 2021). Multiple interventions and peacekeeping missions have been made to broker peace in the region, but the conflict persists (Kleinfeld & Amin 2021). This region makes for a good case study for this research, as multiple cultures are present in the conflict and, with the multiple mediation rounds that have failed to broker lasting peace, it presents the opportunity to examine the role of intercultural communication in mediation and the contribution this has in brokering lasting peace.

To the end of gaining an understanding of the conflict and the 2005 mediation process that this study focuses on, this chapter will start with a brief discussion of the Darfur conflict. The following section will discuss the mediation rounds in Abuja in 2005 that resulted in the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement. Finally, there will be a conclusion to the chapter.

4.2 The Darfur conflict

The conflict started in February 2003 between the Islamic national government and the major rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) (Lanz 2008b: 79; Netabay 2009). The conflict started with an insurgency that triggered a harsh reaction from the Sudanese government (Netabay 2009; Nathan 2006a: 21). The government armed and supported the Janjaweed militia to reduce civilian support for the rebels (Nathan 2006a: 21; Netabay 2009). The Janjaweed militia are a militia group comprising nomadic Arabs that have long had tensions with the non-Arab farmers who come from ethnic groups that make up the SLM/A and JEM (Koerner 2004).

The conflict initially revolved around issues of environmental degradation and competition over resources (Young & Osman 2006: 11). As the conflict proceeded, the underlying tensions from the country's history of ethnic marginalisation and manipulation by the government fuelled the continuing conflict (Young & Osman

2006: 10). The proxy war between the governments of Sudan, Eritrea, Chad, and Libya added to intensifying the conflict (Young & Osman 2006: 11; Lanz 2008b: 79).

4.3 The Abuja mediation process of 2005

4.3.1 *The actors involved*

Several rounds of mediation took place between September 2003 and October 2007 with the AU playing a central role of co-mediator with the Chadian government in facilitating the mediation process and reaching a ceasefire. The mediation process that this research is interested in took place after the N'Djamena Agreement of 2003, which helped the conflicting parties to reach a ceasefire (Lanz 2008b: 79; Netabay 2009).

The 2005 Abuja mediation that took place after the N'Djamena Agreement, formally called the Inter-Sudanese Talks on Darfur, were co-facilitated by Chad and the African Union from June 2005, and reached a conclusion in May 2006 (Lanz 2008b: 78; Netabay 2009). The choice of the AU as co-mediator was motivated by several reasons, according to Lanz (2008b). First was the success of the previous mediation process that resulted in a ceasefire agreement. Second was the Sudanese government's desire to prevent Western interference in the conflict through the UN. Third was the desire of the AU to be established as conflict manager on the continent (Lanz 2008b: 80). The mediation was done in such a way that the mediators were meant to guide the process and draft the agreement, and leave the negotiation up to the parties (Lanz 2008b: 80).

The initial rounds of the Abuja 2005 mediation were entered into with the Sudanese government, JEM and the SLM/A, and it was supported by the US, the UK and the UN, along with other international actors (Nathan 2006a: 21; Lanz 2008b: 78). However, as the final rounds of mediation drew nearer, the SLM/A rebel group divided into two factions – one led by Minni Minawi of the Zaghawa ethnic group, and the other led by Abdel Wahid from the Fur ethnic group (Lanz 2008b: 78; De Waal 2017: 189).

Furthermore, the mediators formed the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) to include the civil society of Darfur in the mediation outcome implementation process (Lanz 2008b: 82). The civil society members who were

chosen to assist during the mediation rounds were perceived to not be fully representative of the society, and the communication channels for them to contribute to the negotiation were said to be ineffective (Lanz 2008b: 82; Lanz 2008a: 216, 217).

4.3.2 Issues faced in the proceedings

A. Fragmentation in rebel groups

The split in the SLM/A caused a decline in the patience of the mediating parties and the Western countries that were funding the mediation and providing political backing, and this resulted in the AU setting a deadline of 30 April 2006 for the conclusion of the mediation process (Nathan 2006a: 24, Lanz 2008a: 216).

The Sudanese government and the Minawi faction signed the agreement, but the faction led by Wahid and the JEM refused to accept the agreement (Lanz 2008a: 216; The Crisis Group 2006). The provisions of the agreement maintained that all parties would be able to pursue their political objectives and have a chance to gain power and establish government through democratic processes (Africa 2006: 327). The principle underpinning power-sharing in the DPA was compromised, though, because the mediators were unable to convince the government to hand over majority power. The compromise was to create the position of a Regional Authority with six subdivisions in the Presidency to give the rebel movements equal opportunity for representation (Africa 2006: 328).

For wealth sharing, the Fiscal and Financial Allocation Monitoring Commission was set up to facilitate the transfer of money from government to states; money was allocated to the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund and for the compensation of victims of the conflict through the Compensation Commission that was to be set up (Africa 2006: 330).

The JEM held the opinion that the issues of wealth and power sharing were not appropriately addressed, and there was a general distrust of the Sudanese government among the rebel groups (The Crisis Group 2006; UNSC 2008: 4; De Waal 2017: 191). The division that happened in the groups negatively impacted on the mediation because it caused a lack of cohesion and delays in the negotiations because of a lack of preparedness in the factions (UNSC 2008: 4; De Waal 2017:

189). The mutual distrust between the parties involved in the mediation also created difficulties with confidence building in the process, and this was fuelled further by a centre vs. periphery divide present in the negotiations where the government negotiators took centre stage (De Waal 2006; Nathan 2006b: 50).

After the official conclusion of the mediation, some AU delegates stayed behind to try to convince the parties who did not sign the agreement to get on board, but the attempts were unsuccessful because the Sudanese government would not accommodate the demands of the parties insofar as they related to power-sharing and compensation (UNSC 2008: 3; Lanz 2008b: 81).

B. The imposition of deadlines

The agreement drafted by the mediators was given to the parties five days before the deadline, and in this time, the US and other European countries came to Abuja to convince the parties to sign the agreement (Nathan 2006a: 23; Lanz 2008b: 81). An element of coercion can be seen here through the use of threats and inducements by the Western countries, and this undermined the credibility of the process and undermined the ability of the parties to claim ownership of the process and to show commitment to implementing the outcomes (Nathan 2006a: 23, 26). Imposing deadlines in mediation affects the ability to broker lasting peace as it undermines the mediator's credibility and that of the process (Nathan 2006a: 23; Lanz 2008b: 78). Deadlines also lend themselves to manipulative mediation that is outcome focused and disregards the quality of the process and the content of the agreement, and this leads to a loss of ownership of the process, which impedes the implementation of the mediation outcomes (Lanz 2008a: 216). The deadline did not give the parties enough time to understand the agreement and to directly negotiate its contents before signing (Lanz 2008b: 80). The deadlines impeded on the communication process because, as is discussed in chapter 5 having sufficient time is essential to ensuring understanding across cultures.

C. The broader environment

The context in which a mediation occurs affects the process (Lanz 2008a: 217). In this case, the deterioration of relations between Chad and Sudan in 2006 negatively impacted upon the mediation dynamics, as the Chadian government were a key

player in the mediation (Lanz 2008b: 78). In addition to this, the mediators had trouble with finding ways in which to address the issues posed by the Janjaweed militia, as they could not include them in the official peace talks. This was because they were armed by the government to thwart the efforts of the insurgents (De Waal 2017: 189, Lanz 2008b: 79).

The pressures and deadlines imposed by external actors made it difficult for the mediators to establish any strategies, and this led to a sacrifice of quality in the mediation process for speed (De Waal 2017: 191; Nathan 2006b: 50). Time was a constraint in the mediation process due to external pressures from the funders of the peace talks, and this hampered the quality of the mediation in the areas of building trust and confidence (De Waal 2006; Nathan 2006b: 50).

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to discuss the case study of the research. What was established in here is that, due to the deadlines imposed in the mediation, the drafted agreement was presented as a final draft, with little negotiation, and there was limited time for contributions to be made by the parties to the agreement. The imposition of deadlines by financial donors negatively impacted on the mediation, as it took away the opportunity for all the parties to fully engage with and understand the content of the agreement. The deadline diplomacy also negatively impacted on the aspect of ownership when it came to commitment to the process and the implementation of its outcomes. The time constraints imposed had an overall negative effect on the negotiations and the mediation process in its entirety because they diluted the quality of the process, which resulted in a domino effect of the content of the agreement being contested and the eventual inefficacy of the agreement in brokering lasting peace. The imposition of deadlines highlights the lack of consideration of the aspect of culture in the mediation because in a case where intercultural communication is necessary, the importance of time to reach a clear understanding for all involved needs to be considered.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this study is to provide an analysis of the role that language, culture and communication play in the success or failure of mediation in achieving sustainable peace in culturally diverse conflict situations. In this chapter, the focus is placed on presenting and analysing the data collected from the interviews that were conducted with various interviewees who had personal experiences with mediation in contexts of cultural diversity.

The analysis of the data will be done by making use of the content analysis and thematic analysis approach. This approach is adopted here because it can be used to interpret meaning from the content of the data collected (Hsieh & Shannon 2005: 1277). It also helps with gaining an understanding of the themes and concepts that recur across the interviews and helps with placing the content and themes within the overarching theoretical framework of the study (Hsieh & Shannon 2005: 1279).

The chapter will detail the outcomes from the interviews so as to derive an answer to the primary research questions of the study and to contribute to the argument made by this study. The sections of the chapter that follow will be organised in accordance with the themes identified in the replies given by the interviewees to questions that were set out in the data collection instrument, which is attached as Appendix 3. The first section will recount the experiences of the various interviewees with mediation in intercultural settings so as to place their contributions in the study. In the subsequent sub-sections, there will be discussions and analyses of the aspects of the role of the mediator, translation, language, culture and trust in intercultural communication and mediation. Finally, there will be a concluding section.

5.2 Data findings and analysis

The interviewees who were selected to take part in this study were chosen through purposive sampling, based on the inclusion criterion that they have had direct mediation experience in conflict cases where there is language and cultural diversity between the combating parties and the mediators. There were four interviewees in total and their experiences are as follows.

Interviewee A has had a long career in mediation and is currently involved in community mediation and dialogue in the Rakhine province of Myanmar, where ethnic ‘cleansing’ has been perpetrated against the Muslim minority called the Rohingya. A consortium of NGOs requested assistance from the interviewee and some colleagues to become involved in the building of a process of dialogue and discourse at a community level across the Rakhine province (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021).

Interviewee B has a long history in mediation that dates back to experiences in African National Congress caucuses. The interviewee has also had experience in the North Yemen conflict, which sheds light on multiple aspects of this study. In North Yemen, multiple ethnic groups exist; those to the north are largely Shia, while those more to toward the centre are largely Sunni. Although both ethnic groups use the same language, they are culturally different and groups have different allegiances to the establishment of a democratic system, which had an impact on the process of mediation (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021).

Interviewee C entered the mediation space in the 1980s which was a time in South Africa that was riddled with conflict and violence. In these situations, the interviewee developed expertise in skills of communication and listening needed in mediation (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). The interviewee now mediates in the Western Cape province of South Africa, between farm owners with Afrikaans backgrounds and farmworkers from Lesotho, where intercultural communication plays a critical role (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

Interviewee D has had a long career in academia and mediation. The interviewee was involved as a delegate of the African Union team that was present at the mediation proceedings for the intractable conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2005, where rebel movements were fighting over issues related to resource-sharing and governance (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

5.2.1 *The role of time and trust building in intercultural communication*

To assist in facilitating mediation, *Interviewee A* was involved in the key parts of creating fora for community-based dialogue, which are called Committees for

Sustainable Peace and Development (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021). The committees are made up of 20 to 30 people, 40% of whom are women. Also included in the committee are credible local leaders who are based in the community and are known for their willingness to reach out to other groups to engage in resolving tensions (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021). In order to further ensure representation and inclusivity, aside from having a quota for women, it is required that all ethnicities be represented in the committee and that both older and younger individuals make up part of the committee (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021).

Literature on mediation has shown that the credibility of the mediator is important in achieving the success of the mediation process. Neutrality or impartiality is a core principle of mediation, and it is this aspect, along with those of consensus, self-determination and confidentiality, that bring legitimacy to the process of mediation (Izumi 2010: 75, 76; Carter & Watts 2016: 301). The importance of neutrality is that it creates conditions for dialogue and communication where, without judgement, grievances can be aired and where consensus can be constructed mutually (Izumi 2010: 76; United Nations 2012: 10). The belief of the participants in a mediator's neutrality also contributes to building trust in the mediation process and in the mediator (Izumi 2010: 76). The willingness of participants to fully engage and contribute positively to the process and final decision-making can be affected, if it is perceived that the mediator favours one side (Barsky 2000: 86). Engaging in the mediation process and communicating with parties who have a similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds can influence the choice to set aside the need for an impartial third party (Barsky 2000: 86). In the case of Darfur, the mediators were an AU delegation comprised of unbiased mediators with no vested interests with the parties involved in the conflict. The issues faced were more related to cultural and linguistic challenges of building trust across language barriers through translation than those of bias (Personal Interview, Pretoria -Online, 26/05/2021).

Interviewee A illustrated how the case of insider mediation was used to facilitate effective communication in the community through the committees:

“By then working with these 30 people extensively, training them over like weeks and months – 80, 100 hours of, you know, training [...];

you begin to create a hub inside the community that can talk directly to both sides without necessarily bring the larger communities together. So, the communication is within these committees that meet like once a month, maybe twice a month under the facilitation of our team of local facilitators. And then they further certain things that they want to do in the community to build better trust and social cohesion.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021).

With the case of insider mediation as adopted in the case of *Interviewee A*, the trust is built through familiarity, and developing shared principles, values and personal relationships with the mediating party, rather than through a perceived neutrality of a mediator. This could contribute to reducing the time taken to build trust and foster effective communication in the community, as compared with building trust with outsiders from a different culture and ethnic background, which can take time due to confusion and misunderstandings that may occur when communicating (Barsky 2000: 86; Wehr & Lederach 2004: 374). Trust is a crucial component in any case where the intent is to resolve a conflict (Stimec & Poitras 2009: 318). To develop trust in the mediation process and the mediator, extensive communication and relationship building between the parties and the mediator needs to occur. However, the time it takes for this to happen differs and depends on the perceptions of mediator impartiality, the familiarity between the parties involved, and whether there is enough commitment made by all parties involved to not only listen, but to fully understand, one another (Stimec & Poitras 2009: 319, 320; United Nations 2012: 9).

Relating to the issue of time and developing trust, is the issue of language in intercultural communication. Extra efforts need to be made to ensure meaning and understanding, across languages, in the mediation process and to acknowledge the time it adds to the duration of the mediation process (Carter & Watts 2016: 311). *Interviewee A* points to this when talking about language and communication in mediation:

“There is a long time to try and sort out the differences between people and clarify understanding through Burmese. But we also now have brought onboard people that speak both Rohingya and

Arakanese so that that can deepen our understanding.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021).

What can also be ascertained from the statement made by *Interviewee A* is the need to draw from multiple languages to achieve a deeper level of understanding of the content of the mediation process and the causes of contention between the parties (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021). Although Burmese is a language commonly spoken across the different cultures in the Rakhine province, there are individuals from differing ethnic groupings that communicate and understand Rohingya and Arakanese better, and making provision for these languages in the community fora allows for better communication and understanding for all present (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 24/05/2021).

5.2.2 *The role of translation in intercultural communication*

Cultural interchange happens in spaces where individuals can understand the language being used to communicate in, but where there are multiple languages being used, this is difficult (Weaver 1955: 15). The role of translators and interpreters in intercultural communication is that of bridging the cultural and linguistic gap between parties (Köksal & Yürük 2020: 329). The primary aim in translation is to transpose the key ideas and meanings in the same way as they are intended in the initial communication (Dweik 2013: 47; Weaver 1955: 20). The literature emphasises the importance of providing context when translating (Dweik 2013: 55).

When the study interviewees were probed about translators and interpreters and their contribution to the intercultural mediation process, they highlighted issues around the quality of translations, challenges related to the translation of technical terms, and the qualifications and cultural experience of the translators/interpreters (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021). *Interviewee B* engaged with the question by saying:

“We had educated people from a similar background. I'll tell you why educated and I'll give you one example. You see, in the Arab language, or the Arab traditions, the notion of reconciliation is a concept that's not understood - it does not exist. These are tribal people. There's a notion of victor vanquished, there isn't a notion of

what reconciliation is all about. So if you don't have an understanding of that, how can you talk of constitutional solutions? Because the very basis of that understanding has to be addressed" (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021).

In highlighting the importance for translators and interpreters to consider cultural and context-specific meanings of concepts, *Interviewee C* also added:

"It is a culture that is driven by retribution. So, when you talk about reconciliation; when you talk about transitional justice; they have different understandings... With a translator, what we're looking for is someone who is not only interpreting the spoken word but also give context and meaning to the nuances. So, the quality of the interpreter is absolutely crucial. It must be someone who has a cultural understanding" (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021).

The translation literature suggests that there are various factors, such as language variables, content and text difficulty, that affect the quality of translations (Brislin 1970: 185, 191). Translators need to have translator competence, which means that they need to not only know the languages, but need to also have the ability to provide the intercultural, thematic and contextual nuances of a communication (Cameneva & Stoianova 2014: 107,108). *Interviewee D* highlighted issues that arise in translation as they relate to technical terms used in the mediation process, as well as the chosen mode of translation:

"The whole mediation was done through simultaneous translation. And simultaneous translation leads to mistakes that are hugely important [...] If you're doing translation 80% is not good enough. Because 80% could mean that you lose two verbs or two nouns in a sentence or paragraph and you have not understood it." (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

The Interviewee added:

"And related to that, we would use technical terms in the Security Commission like the rebels must gather in assembly areas. And the translators will say, we don't know what assembly areas mean. We

don't know how to translate the term. So, the one problem that arose here was just a plain literal translation of a text with technical accuracy.”(Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

What can be taken from this is that translation is not an exact science, and this can cause misunderstandings and confusion in cases where intercultural communication is necessary for mediation (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). More effort is required when mediating across language barriers and between different cultures, because it is in the process of translation where meaning is created (Kapsaskis 2012: 102).

5.2.3 *The role of language in communication in mediation*

At all phases of the mediation process, the mediator and the participants must achieve meaningful levels of understanding of the content in the discussions, as this will affect the quality of the process and its outcomes (Carter & Watts 2016: 301). Language and interpretation play a central role in ensuring effective communication where content is translated from one language to another, while keeping the integrity of the intended meanings of all communications (Carter & Watts 2016: 301). *Interviewee D* emphasised the basic importance of language in mediation by saying:

“Language is hugely important in mediation to make sure that we're all talking on the same page, literally and figuratively.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

Language is important to mediation because, to uphold the central tenets of self-determination, impartiality and confidentiality in mediation, participants need to understand each other (Carter & Watts 2016: 309). There is no way to concede to the process and its outcomes if participants cannot understand one another (Carter & Watts 2016: 309). The language chosen to facilitate mediation can pose a challenge in the process and in reaching a mutually agreed-upon outcome, and this is highlighted by the experience of *Interviewee C*:

“Language is an obstacle, because if you have to talk about the things that make you angry and that frustrate you, and so on, and you can't express that in your own language, you're at a disadvantage.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

The idea of language as an obstacle in intercultural communication in mediation was also pointed out by *Interviewee D*, and here the highlight was on the difficulties with the translation of idioms and metaphors that are language- and culture-specific:

“You can't tell a joke that's been translated, you can't make an ironic comment because the risk is that you're going to get confusion. You can't use idioms. We use idioms when we talk all the time. The problem is that the translator may translate the idiom literally, rather than idiomatically. So, that's the second way in which the culture was relevant and impeded progress in the mediation.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

Translation needs to be seen primarily as a means of intercultural communication and the literature on translation points out the inherent link between language and culture (Liu 2012: 2357; Köksal & Yürük 2020: 327). The lexical differences in languages highlight features and activities that have cultural importance to those communicating in that language (Liu 2012: 2357). Due to the close link between culture and language, the idea of biculturalism is of higher importance than bilingualism for translators because the translation of cultural meanings for words is crucial to getting the intended message across (Liu 2012: 2358; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi 2015: 167). The quality of translation is based on cultural understanding, more than it is on knowing the language (Liu 2012: 2358; Almadhoun 2020: 3). The translation literature suggests that cultural differences directly affect understanding and expression in intercultural communication (Liu 2012: 2358; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi 2015: 173).

Interviewee B added to the discussion on language in mediation and highlighted the importance of considering the aspect of culture and identity by saying:

“The language used was absolutely important because language is linked to identity. And identity, in particular in tribal communities in the context that I've given; it is of paramount importance.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021).

According to Carter and Watts (2016: 310), language in intercultural communication is the mediator between the multiple cultural and individual dimensions of identity. The language used in mediation affects the participants' power to advocate for

themselves and the level at which they contribute to decision-making (Carter & Watts 2016: 310). This aspect was highlighted in *Interviewee D's* statement regarding decision-making about the final peace agreement made in the mediation they were involved in:

“We couldn't speak Arabic as the mediators and when we produced the draft of the Darfur peace agreement, it took a week for that to be translated into Arabic. The government pointed out (since they could speak both languages), that there were numerous technical errors, so we ended up with two different agreements. The Arabic text was different from the English text. And then the chief mediator said ‘the definitive official version is the English version’, meaning we're imposing an English version on the rebels who don't speak English.”
(Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

Here, *Interviewee D* highlights a possible consideration for the failure of peace agreements in achieving sustainable peace because of the differing peace agreements that existed in the two different languages and could lead to two different understandings of the content (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). As discussed regarding the theoretical framework, power dynamics affect how cultures coexist and interact, and here it plays out with the English speakers imposing their language and understandings on the Arabic speakers. The imposition of English as being the way forward in this case, where the other participants were Arabic speakers, highlights the concern brought up in decolonial thinking of universalising knowledge under Eurocentric epistemes, and this marginalises the experience and contributions of the Arabic speakers in the mediation (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

5.2.4 The role of culture in intercultural communication in mediation

There are different views on the appropriate ways by which to communicate across cultures, and considering this fact when initiating an intercultural mediation process can contribute to the success of the process (Shonk 2020). The idea of developing cultural competence and cultural sensitivity among the parties involved in mediation is important for making sure that the cultural subtleties in communication are recognised (Cheng 2017: 1; Hoffman & Triantafillou 2014: 239). The presence of

multiple cultures in the negotiation process adds new complexities to the process, and if these are not considered in the designing of the mediation process, it can result in misunderstandings and the eventual failure to reach a consensus at the end of the process (Anderson & Knight 2017: 2; Hoffman & Triantafillou 2014: 229).

The cultural disparities that are found in cases of intercultural mediation present the challenge that the parties involved in the process will view the same information presented to them from different perspectives, and this will affect the understanding of what is being communicated during mediation (Anderson & Knight 2017: 4; Hoffman & Triantafillou 2014: 238; Cheng 2017: 1). *Interviewee D* highlighted this fact when talking about the role of culture in intercultural mediation:

“Culture matters in the sense that how we understand dialogue, reconciliation, negotiation, justice, compromise, differs from one culture to the other in ways that are very hard to discern if you're not studying this carefully, in an in-depth way.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

Interviewee D further added:

“Culture matters enormously. And culture matters in lots of different ways. Culture has different many different dimensions. [...] Everybody has culture, but we assume when we mediate – the AU, the UN, that we are mediating in a culture neutral fashion, or a culture universal fashion.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

Here the interviewee highlighted how the assumption of culture neutrality on the part of mediators can negatively impact on the success of the process (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). When the participants in a mediation all make efforts to understand the cultural perspectives of others involved, and all those involved can contribute to the designing and smooth running of the mediation process, it can be a more fruitful experience (Anderson & Knight 2017: 5). The danger lies in making assumptions of cultural neutrality and not engaging with the cultural realities that are present. *Interviewee B* depicts this when saying:

"Mediators make assumptions and lack empathy for what actually exists because you come with a template that you impose. And then you have a tick box exercise. You need to allow for the organic development of value systems" (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021).

Another important aspect to acknowledge is that culture exists in the form of organisational culture, and that also needs to be considered because the mediators come from institutions with cultures, and so do the disputing parties (Shonk 2020). *Interviewee D* underlines the fact that organisational culture matters in mediation when saying:

"In the mediation for Darfur, the government have an organisational culture, which is in the nature of any government - hierarchical, rational, meaning it's a product of deliberative decision making" (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

They then contrast this to the rebel culture, saying:

"The rebel culture is completely different because they're not a cohesive organisation. It's fragmented. The leadership is fluid [...] The rebel culture was one of fragmentation, of alliances, of incoherent decision making, erratic, driven by fear of government, anger. So that affected the mediation dynamic" (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

The differences that exist in the organisational cultures relate to the individual cultures of the participants, and these aspects need to be attended to when designing a mediation process where multiple cultures need to be considered (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). *Interviewee D* draws attention to this point, stating:

"How does culture matter in this conflict? The answer is going to differ from one conflict to the next. You have to ask the question: How does culture matter in this case? And what are the implications for me in designing my mediation process?" (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

What is highlighted in this statement is the need to move away from the assumption of universality when engaging in mediation, and to move towards engaging with mediation processes in a case-to-case approach (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). Cultures differ and the challenges they present to the mediation process are not homogenous, and this should have implications for the process of designing a mediation process (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

The literature on culture in mediation does acknowledge the role it plays in whether individuals or groups choose to engage in mediation, but it does caution against making generalisations and overstating the role of culture in the outcomes of the process and the actions taken thereafter (Inman et al 2014: 690). *Interviewee C* also cautions against the overreliance on culture and language as the culprit for challenges in the mediation process, and reiterates the importance of cultural sensitivity when dealing with cultural differences in mediation, saying:

“I think culture and language are issues that complicate mediation, but they are not the most dangerous, or the most important aspects of communication. What I often found, is that the moment when language or culture became an issue in the mediation itself, it was often because there was a lack of trust [...] So often, I think intercultural misunderstandings are things that you can easily work through when you have a sensitivity for them. But often, these things are connected and get linked to deeper distrust issues. And then the cultural differences and the language differences become an excuse to cover up for more substantial things.” (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

Although culture and language play an important role in intercultural communication and mediation, an overreliance on these aspects as scapegoats for the challenges faced in the mediation process can lead to the creation of blind spots to other factors that contribute to failure or success in the mediation process, such as trust (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021). This is also an issue highlighted in intercultural communication where it is emphasised that assuming universality in communication across cultures poses challenges to intercultural communication because multiple communication cultures exist and bring differing cultural dynamics

to communication. However, it also cautions against overvaluing culture as the answer to questions on difficulties in intercultural communication, as this removes focus from other factors being given enough attention (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021).

5.2.5 *The role of trust in intercultural communication in mediation*

From the interviews done, it was apparent that, although culture and language affect multiple aspects of intercultural communication in mediation, other factors need to be considered as well. For communication to occur with the least amount of hostility possible, there is a need for the formation of relationships between all the parties present in the mediation process (Schuler 2017: 41). There is a need to build trust and manage perceptions of the power dynamics between mediators and disputing parties (Schuler 2017: 37; Arvanitis 2014: 15). The aspect of trust is especially important when the ultimate goal is to achieve sustainable reconciliation (Kappmeier & Mercy 2019: 527). *Interviewee D* highlights this aspect of trust as necessary, but also underscores the role that translation plays in hampering this aspect in mediation:

“Mediators need to build a relationship of trust with all the parties.
You can't build empathy and trust through simultaneous translation.”
(Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 26/05/2021)

Although communicating occurs across cultural and linguistic barriers, the importance of the participation of the disputing parties needs to be emphasised, as it encourages ownership of the process and its outcomes, and trust is necessary to effectively manage relations and facilitate communication (Arvanitis 2014: 15; Kelman 2005: 640). In cases of protracted conflicts, it is difficult to establish trust between the disputing parties because the norm is mutual distrust (Kelman 2005: 640; Kappmeier & Mercy 2019: 526). In cases like this, the responsibility lies with the mediator to act as a bridge over the gap of distrust by always upholding the principle of confidentiality in mediation (Kelman 2005: 646).

The level of trust between groups in intercultural communication not only predicts the relationship and level of communication between participants during mediation, but is also an outcome of good intercultural communication in the process (Kappmeier &

Mercy 2019: 526). The mediator should create a space where the mistrust is acknowledged, and the grievances relating to that should be addressed in order to move forward (Blackstock 2001: 16). Building trust is important because a preserved distrust, based on memories of the conflict, fuels further conflict between disputing groups (Kappmeier & Mercy 2019: 526).

Trust impacts on intercultural communication because, when trust is low, there is a reluctance to engage, and when engagement does happen, it is defensive and does not serve the purpose of reaching a resolution (Wood 2009: 1). When trying to build trust, aspects about culture, like whether the culture is low-context or high context, or individualistic or collectivist, should be considered to facilitate communication in a way that fosters trust and prevents participants from unwittingly offending or misunderstanding one another (Popa 2014). *Interviewee B* highlights the impact a lack of trust has on the mediation process:

"There was a lack of appreciation of common values. There was a lack of confidence in the process. There is a focus on the content and the product, but nobody looks at the credibility of the process. [...] the inclusivity was required in bringing people in creating credibility of the process so that you would then have ownership of the product."
(Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021)

The interviewee further adds:

"The inclusivity is the easy part. The ownership and the building of trust have to be associated with the empathy of what the values of the different parties are. We could be talking at cross purposes, and even at the risk of sounding insulting, or condescending if you don't have empathy for what's going on the other side." (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021)

Here, the interviewee highlights the point that the idea of inclusivity can be a means to create agency and trust in the process and, ultimately, in the outcomes of the process (Personal Interview, Pretoria – Online, 25/05/2021). For the disputing parties to engage in a meaningful way in the mediation process, there is a need to incrementally build trust between the parties (Kappmeier & Mercy 2019: 526). Trust is an essential requirement for maintaining sustainable peace because, if there is no

trust between the disputing groups about each other's intentions and behaviour, conflict can resurface post-mediation (Blackstock 2001: 9; Landau & Landau 1997: 97; Kelman 2005: 640). The issue of trust highlighted here resonates with issues highlighted in intercultural communication theory relating to cultural sensitivity. To be able to recognise the importance of trust in achieving the primary outcome of sustainable peace in mediation, the parties involved need to have intercultural communication competence and cultural sensitivity to engage each other in culturally appropriate ways to foster the building of trust (Cheng 2017: 4; Issa et al. 2015: 6).

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter analysed the key concepts of the study, intercultural communication and mediation, based on the perspectives of interviewees who have had direct involvement in cases of mediation where cultural diversity was a factor. The accounts given by the interviewees revealed that there is a role that is played by culture in forming how communication occurs in cases of intercultural mediation. A key discovery that was highlighted was the aspect of trust in assisting with achieving sustainable peace and reconciliation. This is an important factor to consider in the case of Darfur, where conflict has endured, despite multiple attempts at mediation. The presence of multiple cultures, and thus different communication styles, was acknowledged in the process, but the challenges posed by translation to the process of building relationships and trust between participants in the mediation can be highlighted as constituting the reason for the failure to achieve sustainable peace post-mediation.

From the findings and analysis set out in this chapter, it can be seen that the presence of mediators is important for facilitating communication between cultures in mediations and for them to equip themselves to engage with the various possible cultural complexities that they might encounter. However, it is also important for the disputing parties in the mediation to engage with the cultural issues to reach a place of trusting in the process and in the participants' intentions and commitment to take agency in fulfilling the outcomes. The mediator engages in the context of conflict for the period of mediation and leaves thereafter. The active engagement of the disputing parties is important for enabling them to take ownership of the process and

its outcomes, and for them to be able to commit to agreements and sustain the peace reached through the agreements, long after the mediators have left.

Assuming universality of culture in mediation will no longer suffice. As the cultural turn has signified, culture matters. Parties involved in mediation need to actively engage with increasing their awareness and sensitivity to the cultural nuances brought to communication by others, and with developing the tolerance and competence to thrive and effectively communicate interculturality. It is in doing this that better and long-lasting resolutions can be achieved in cases of intercultural communication. In addition to this, taking into account the decolonial perspective of steering clear of imposing 'universal' understandings/meanings of concepts, and making way for all voices/experiences to be heard in the process, can be beneficial to success in the process, as the participants will feel heard and be more inclined to participate when their contribution is treated as important.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The central argument of this study posits that culture matters in communication and mediation, and more so in cases where the parties have different cultural backgrounds. The importance of culture and communication was emphasised in the theoretical framework chapter of the study. Here, the discussions highlight the differences that exist in communication between individualist and collectivist cultures, and these are important considerations to take into account, as they affect how the mediation process will roll out. The research aimed to highlight the differences that exist in order to further challenge the idea that it is appropriate to use universal mediation styles across cultures. This challenge is made because these styles do not yield success in all contexts, because they do not take into consideration the communication and language differences that exist across cultures, and how these manifest and create unique experiences in mediation.

This study aimed to uncover the impact of intercultural communication in the mediation process. To achieve this, the chapters above engaged with the literature on intercultural communication, mediation, and conflict resolution. This concluding chapter will start with providing a brief summary of the previous chapters. Subsequently, there will be a reflection on the key findings of the study that look at the concepts of culture, language and intercultural communication in intercultural mediation. This will be followed by subsections on the limitations of the study, the recommendations made based on this study, and the areas for further work that were not covered by this study. Finally, there will be a conclusion section.

6.2 Summary of the previous chapters

This study consists of six chapters, the first five of which set out to place the research in the realm of conflict resolution and add to the literature on intercultural communication in mediation. Chapter 1, the introductory chapter, provided a brief literature overview, together with descriptions of the research methodology and the conceptual framework. It is in that chapter where the context and content of the study were clarified. The concept of intercultural communication was briefly discussed and conceptualised as it relates to the case study of Darfur. Furthermore,

a brief conceptual framework explained the concepts of mediation, translation, and intercultural communication as the key concepts of this study.

Chapter 2 of the study comprised a literature review that aimed to clarify the gap, which this study intends to fill, in the existing literature on intercultural communication and mediation. The discussion on mediation provided a decolonial perspective on the matter to assist in emphasising the needs to address the limitations of using 'universal' processes in contexts of variable cultural realities. In addition to this, the effect of knowledge systems on shaping the processes of intercultural communication was discussed. The aspects of culture, language and communication were further explored to highlight the challenges that they add to the mediation process by adding complexities to the dynamics in mediation. The concepts of mediation in literature were explored, and third-party mediation was further highlighted for the role it plays in intercultural communication in mediation. This chapter also looked at cultural competence and the contribution that such a skill has in aiding intercultural communication in mediation.

Chapter 3 set out a discussion of the case study that is used as the unit of analysis for the research. The chapter provided a brief discussion on the Darfur conflict and explored the Abuja 2005 mediation process to highlight the issues with that mediation process.

Chapter 4 set out a theoretical framework that establishes intercultural communication theory and decolonial theory as the lens that this study would use to analyse the data collected in the interviews. The chapter highlighted the cultural turn in the social sciences that prompted theorists to acknowledge culture as an important factor in understanding various issues in the discipline. The aspect of culture adds complexities to the dynamics of communication in mediation, and the chosen theories recognise the need to make contextually appropriate provisions when designing mediation processes and when engaging with individuals of different cultures in mediation. The differences in culture and nuances in communication were discussed, and the aspect of the epistemologies used as the basis for designing and engaging in mediation were questioned through the decolonial lens.

The objective of Chapter 5 was to document the outcomes of the interviews, and analysed these within the theoretical framework that was established in the previous

chapter. The accounts of the interviewees highlighted the various aspects that are of importance to intercultural communication in mediation. The aspects that were highlighted included the time needed to build trust, the importance of having quality translation/translators, the choice of language and the effect it has on communication, and the role of culture in intercultural communication. The conclusion deduced here was that there is the need for conducting context-specific mediation that accounts for the various factors that affect intercultural communication.

This chapter is the concluding chapter, and it will provide recommendations relating to intercultural communication in mediation. It will also highlight areas that should be looked into in future research, being areas that this research was not able to cover.

6.3 Key findings

This study sought to look into the role that language plays in intercultural communication in mediation. The interviews conducted in the study indicated that culture, language and translation factors play a central role in facilitating effective communication and in achieving long-lasting peace. In addition to this, the aspects of time, trust and ownership were ascertained as being equally important.

6.3.1 *Lessons from the Darfur case*

The central argument of this study posits that intercultural communication matters in mediation and secondary to this is that western styles of mediation, which are deemed to be the universal standard, are limited in brokering lasting peace in intercultural contexts due to them prioritising communication styles that do not take culture into consideration. This was evident in the Abuja 2005 mediation of the Darfur conflict. The salience of the focus on outcomes and disregard for participant contributions to the peace agreement is that western styles of mediation do not value relational aspects. The subsequent failures to obtain signatures from all participants and to implement the agreement post-mediation further highlight the limited success of mediation styles that are, notwithstanding, seen as comprising the 'universal' standard.

What is uncovered here is the decolonial argument on the need to 'dehegemonise' Western/Eurocentric knowledge and ways of engaging in mediation, and to construct newer ways of engaging in conflict resolution and mediation that are context specific. In the case in point, this would have required a more nuanced approach to be taken, where participants engaged in increasing their cultural awareness, competence and sensitivity to understand the appropriate strategies that would be necessary to ensure effective communication across all cultures present in the mediation. This could have allowed the parties to see the dangers inherent in imposing deadlines and focusing on reaching a conclusion, and how these negatively affect building trust and confidence in the process. These dangers would then be seen to affect the credibility of the mediators and, in the end, to result in the participants' refusal to sign the agreement, take ownership, and commit to implementing the outcomes.

Acknowledging culture in intercultural communication and mediation, as was shown in the data analysis chapter, serves to foster building trust and confidence in the process and between participants, and to cultivate commitment from the parties to implement the outcomes. On a deeper level, and as it relates to decolonial thought, acknowledging culture signifies an acknowledgement of an experience outside of your own as being valid and of value to the process, and this fosters an understanding among the participants that facilitates effective communication, based on respect of culture.

Acknowledging other cultures would signify that the idea of 'universality' is being delinked from the mediation. The cultural turn, highlighting the need to acknowledge culture in communication and mediation, is an important development that coincides with the decolonial ideas about including marginalised voices and ideas at the centre of discourse. The acknowledgement of culture and marginalised experiences allows for a more flexible perspective to be formed on what can work in mediation and allows for the consideration of the multiple avenues available to engage in mediation.

6.3.2 *On the use of language in intercultural mediation*

When engaging in mediation in Darfur, the primary language used was English, with translators being present. English is the language that reached Africa through colonisation, and the use of it in mediation process is a product of pervasive coloniality. The dominance of English in mediation is detrimental to the process

because, as was uncovered in the data analysis chapter, the language used in mediation is important as it is the tool that transfers meaning and understanding, and is meant to ensure understanding throughout the mediation process. Thus, the language used is important if it is expected for the parties to commit to the outcomes of the mediation and broker lasting peace.

It is through the use of language and fostering understanding between parties, that trust can be built. It is made more difficult to build relationships where the parties are unable to communicate directly and have to rely on translators for this communication. Relations are an important factor in building trust in collectivist cultures, and being unable to do that in the case of Darfur contributed to difficulties in communication and disagreements on the content of the final peace agreement.

6.3.3 *On time, trust, and ownership in intercultural mediation*

The aspects of time, trust, and ownership came up multiple times in the data analysis chapter. The reoccurrence of these factors highlighted the primary challenge that western styles of mediation pose to brokering lasting peace in intercultural contexts. As discussed in the literature review chapter, the Harvard style of mediation (the western style predominantly used in international mediation) is individualist and outcomes focused, and places low importance on relational aspects in mediation. In the case study, this focus on reaching an agreement (getting the DPA signed) negatively impacted on the ability to have clear communication and to build trust and confidence in the process. Additionally, the pressure from western donors funding the mediation pushed the mediators to use deadlines (a form of coercion and manipulation) to reach an outcome that, in the long term, failed to achieve sustainable peace. Again, this shows the limitations of the 'universal' mediation styles of engaging in mediation across culturally different contexts, and further supports the research argument on the importance of culture in intercultural communication and mediation.

Furthermore, as shown by the statements of the qualified mediators in the study interviews, time is important to mediation in intercultural settings. It is when cultural competence and sensitivity are at play that mediation is designed in a way that time is respected as an asset for achieving better outcomes. The interviews showed that culture is important in mediation, as it manifests in language barriers and

communication styles that need to be considered when designing a mediation process. Once the parties in mediation are cognisant of the role that cultures plays in mediation, there comes a realisation of the importance of not rushing the mediation just to sign an agreement. Culture becomes an integral part of building trust and confidence in intercultural communication and mediation, and it requires the time that is not regarded in western styles of mediation. It is here that decolonial thought helps with the argument of decentralising western ideas and constructing mediation based on context-based experience.

6.4 Limitations

The limitations faced when conducting the study involved the difficulty in accessing people who were directly involved in the 2005 Abuja mediation rounds that resulted in the signing of the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement, the primary case study of the research. This challenge led to the interviewing of delegates who have had experience with mediation in intercultural settings, as this allowed for the main concepts of the study to still be investigated.

6.5 Recommendations

The case study of mediation regarding Darfur was chosen because it required multiple mediation rounds, and because the mediation failed to achieve lasting peace, even after the signing of a peace agreement. It was also a case where the existence of multiple cultures was clear, as were the language barriers between the parties involved in the mediation process of 2005 in Abuja. This was made apparent by *Interviewee D* in the data analysis chapter. What the researcher wanted to uncover from the interviews were the cultural and lingual aspects in mediation and how not considering the nuances carried in verbal and written communications across cultural and language barriers contribute to the failure of achieving lasting peace, after mediation. Although these factors do not carry the sole responsibility for the failure in sustaining peace, they do contribute significantly to understanding the nature of the commitment of the involved parties to the outcomes of the mediation process.

6.6 Further work

The focus of this study was on the mediation process itself, and a particular perspective was focused on the mediator as the designer and facilitator of the process, and thus on their methods as being the reasons for success or failure in the process. The focus of the study was on the cultural and language aspects in mediation, looking at the mediator's culture as the imposed culture, and on making a call for the inclusion of the cultures of the participants in the process. Further research needs to be done on the participants' cultures as constituting the determinant of success and lasting peace, post-mediation. This is because the mediator facilitates the mediation until an agreement is met, but it is up to the participants to implement and abide by the outcomes. The role of the participants' culture on the achievement of lasting peace in intercultural mediation needs to be studied further.

6.7 Conclusion

What this study has contributed to the literature on mediation is to further highlight the need for cultural perspectives to be taken into account, not only in academic debates in intercultural mediation, but also in the practice of mediation. This study calls for context and culturally specific ideas to be included in, and for the implementation of decolonial constructions of, mediation processes so as to better ensure the effectiveness, appropriateness, and success of intercultural communication in mediation to achieve lasting peace, post-mediation. This research emphasises the need for collaborative efforts to be made in mediation, rather than the imposition of the 'universal' Western/Eurocentric ways of mediation that have failed to ensure lasting peace, as is seen in the case study of Darfur.

The necessity to allow for time needed to build trust and confidence in the process to promote ownership of the outcomes is important. Noting the language and cultural barriers that exist in intercultural settings can positively contribute to how the mediation process is designed for promoting effective intercultural communication and ensure the intended meaning of communication is transferred. This can translate to reaching peace agreements, owned by all parties, where the participants commit to sustaining peace, long after the mediation process is completed.

Bibliography

- ACAPS. 2017. Sudan: Conflict in Darfur. *ACAPS Briefing Note: Darfur Conflict*, 1-5.
- Africa, J. 2006. Explaining the Darfur Peace Agreement. *Review of African Political Economy*, 33(108): 327-332.
- Ajayi, A.T. & Buhari, L.O. 2014. Methods of conflict resolution in African traditional society. *African Research Review*, 33: 138-157.
- Almadhoun, I. 2020. *The cultural interference in translating idioms and proverbs from English to Arabic*. The Islamic University - Gaza.
- Anderson, D.Q. & Knight, D. 2017. Managing the inter-cultural dimensions of a mediation effectively: A proposed pre-mediation intake instrument. *Australasian Dispute Resolution Journal*, 28 (2): 89-97.
- Aneas, M.S. & Sandín, M.P. 2009. Intercultural and cross-cultural communication research: Some reflections about culture and qualitative methods. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 10(1): 1-19.
- Ansell, C. 2016. Pragmatist interpretivism. In *Routledge handbook of interpretive political science*, edited by M. Bevir and R.A.W Rhodes. Oxon: Routledge.
- Arvanitis, E. 2014. Reframing intercultural mediation. In *Intercultural mediation in Europe: Narrative of professional transformation*, edited by E. Arvanitis and A. Kameas. Illinois: Common Ground Publishing LLC.
- Autesserre, S. 2011. Constructing peace. *Critique Internationale*, 52: 1-9.
- Avruch, K. 1998. *Culture and conflict resolution*. Washington: Institute of Peace.
- Avruch, K. 2003. Type I and Type II errors in culturally sensitive conflict resolution practice. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 20(3): 351-372.
- Babbie, E. 2007. *The Practice of Social Research*. United States: Thomson Wadsworth.

- Bagshaw, D. 2015. Mediation in the world today: Opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Mediation and Applied Conflict Analysis*, 2(1): 187-200.
- Barasa, M.N., Khasandi-Telewa, V.I. & Ndambuki, J. 2016. The role of language in peacebuilding: The case of the 2008 Kenyan coalition government. *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, 6(2): 74-93.
- Barnett, M.N. 1997. Bringing in the new world order: Liberalism, legitimacy, and the United Nations. *World Politics*, 49(4): 526-551.
- Barsky, A.E. 2000. Cross-cultural issues in community mediation: Perspectives for Israel. *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 12(3/4): 83-94.
- BBC. 2013. Darfur conflict: Sudan's bloody stalemate. Internet: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22336600>. Access: 03/07/2020.
- Bercovitch, J. 1991. International Mediation. *Journal of Peace Research*, 28(1): 3-6.
- Bercovitch, J. & Foulkes, J. 2012. Cross-cultural effects in conflict management: Examining the nature and relationship between culture and international mediation. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 12(1): 25-47.
- Bercovitch, J. and Lee, S. 2003. Mediating international conflicts: Examining the effectiveness of directive strategies. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 8(1): 1 - 17.
- Bevir, M. & Hall, I. 2020. The English school and the classical approach: Between modernism and interpretivism. *Journal of International Political Theory*, 16(2): 153-170.
- Bhambra, G.K. 2014. Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues. *Postcolonial Studies*, 17(2): 115-121.
- Blackstock, M.D. 2001. Where is the trust? Using trust-based mediation for first nations dispute resolution. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 19(1): 9-30.
- Blaikie, N. 2010. *Designing Social Research*. United Kingdom and United States: Polity Press.

Bricki, N. and Green, J. 2007. *A Guide to Using Qualitative Research Methodology*. Medecin Sans Frontieres.

Brigg, M. & Muller, K. 2009. Conceptualising culture in conflict resolution. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 30(2): 121-140.

Brislin, R.W. 1970. Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 1(3): 185-216.

Brownlie, S. 2017. Mediation through an intercultural communication lens. *Mediation Theory and Practice*, 2(1): 34-53.

Brynard, D.J., Hanekom, S.X. & Brynard, P.A. 2014. *Introduction to research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Buarquob, I.A.S. 2019. Language barrier to effective communication. *Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana*, 24(6): 64-76.

Busch, D. 2009. How does culture affect conflict mediation? Disentangling concepts from theory and practice. In *International and regional perspective on cross-cultural mediation*, edited by D. Busch, C. Mayer and C.M. Boness. Germany: Peter Lang.

Calafell, B.M. 2020. The critical performative turn in intercultural communication. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 49(5): 410-415.

Cameneva, Z. & Stoianova, I. 2014. Multilingual competence as a necessity in the process of translation. *Intertext*, 1(2): 106-112.

Carter, A. & Watts, S. 2016. The role of language interpretation in providing a quality mediation. *Contemporary Adia Arbitration Journal*, 9: 301-316.

Chen, G. & Starosta, W.J. 2008. Intercultural communication competence: A synthesis. In *The global intercultural communication reader*, edited by M.K. Asante, Y. Miike and J. Yin. New York: Routledge.

Cheng, T.K. 2017. Developing skills to address cultural issues in arbitration and mediation. *Dispute Resolution Journal*, 72(3): 1-8.

Cloete, F. & Auriacombe, C. 2019. Revisiting decoloniality for more effective research and evaluation. *African Evaluation Journal*, 7(1): 1-10.

Coleman, P.T, Deutsch, M. & Marcus, C.M. 2014. *The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Da Rocha, J.P. 2019. The changing nature of international mediation. *Global Policy*, 10(2): 101-107.

Dasli, M. 2012. Theorizations of intercultural communication. In *Critical and intercultural theory and language pedagogy*, edited by G.S. Levine and A. Phipps. Boston: Heinle.

Davidheiser, M. 2004. The role of culture in conflict mediation: Toubabs and Gambians cannot be the same. Internet: http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/UFE0005520/davidheiser_m.pdf. Access: 17/04/2021.

Davis, B.P. 2018. Globalization/Coloniality: A decolonial definition and diagnosis. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 8(4): 1-20.

De Waal, A. 2006. Darfur peace agreement: So near, so far. Internet: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/darfur_talks_3950jsp/. Access: 28/08/2021.

De Waal, A. 2017. Peace and the security sector in Sudan, 2002-11. *African Security Review*, 26(2): 180-198.

Demeter, M. 2020. Power relations in global knowledge production. A cultural/critical approach. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 15(1): 1-17.

Durant, A. 2002. 'Culture' and 'communication' in intercultural communication. *European Journal of English*, 13(2): 147-162.

Duursma, A. 2014. A current literature review of international mediation. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 25(1): 81-98.

Dweik, B. 2013. Problems encountered in translating cultural expression from Arabic into English. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 3(5): 47-60.

Edwards, R. & Holland, J. 2013. *What is qualitative interviewing?* London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Faißt, R. 2019. Decolonizing mediation: Exploring questions of knowledge and power shaping African mediation. Internet: <https://kujenga->

amani.ssrc.org/2019/01/29/decolonizing-mediation-exploring-questions-of-knowledge-and-power-shaping-african-mediation/. Access: 28/07/2021.

Farrimond, H. 2013. *Doing Ethical Research*. Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire.

Fisher, R.J. 2001. *Berghof handbook for conflict transformation: Methods of third-party intervention*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.

Fisher-Yoshida, B. 2005. Reframing conflict: Intercultural conflict as potential transformation. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 8: 1-16.

Fleuri, R.M. & Fleuri, L.J. 2017. Learning from Brazilian indigenous peoples: Towards a decolonial education. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 47(1): 8-18.

Fürsich, E. 2018. Textual analysis and communication. Internet: <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756841/obo-9780199756841-0216.xml#>. Accessed: 05/08/2020.

Gartner, S. 2014. Third-Party mediation of interstate conflicts: Actors, strategies, selection, and bias. *Arbitration Law Review*, 6(13): 268 - 294.

Gavrila, M.A. 2013. Liberal and realist considerations of UN effectiveness. Internet: <https://www.e-ir.info/2013/05/02/liberal-and-realist-considerations-of-un-effectiveness/>. Access: 28/05/2021.

Given, L.M. 2008. *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of qualitative research methods*. SAGE Publications.

Govender, K. & Ngandu, Y. 2010. *Towards enhancing the capacity of the African Union in mediation*. South Africa: ACCORD.

Grosfoguel, R. 2011. Decolonizing post-colonial studies and paradigms of political-economy" Transmodernity, decolonial thinking, and global coloniality. *Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(1): 1-37.

Gu, M.D. 2020. What is 'decoloniality'? A postcolonial critique. *Postcolonial Studies*, 23(4): 596-600.

Guilherme, M. 2019. The critical and decolonial quest for intercultural epistemologies and discourses. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 14(1): 1-13.

Hall, E.T. & Whyte, W.F. 1960. Intercultural communication: A guide to men of action. *Human Organization*, 19(1): 5-12.

Hall, E.T. 1959. *The silent language*. New York: Doubleday & Company Inc.

Hamaidia, L., Methven, S. & Woodin, J. 2018. Translation spaces: Parallel shifts in translation and intercultural communication studies and their significance for the international development field. *Translation Spaces*, 7(1): 119-142.

Henderson, I. 2020. Mediation in peacekeeping. Internet: <https://www.accord.org.za/lessons/mediation-in-peacekeeping/>. Access: 17/04/2021.

Hoffman, D.A. & Triantafillou, K. 2014. Cultural and diversity issues in mediation and negotiation. In *The Massachusetts General Hospital textbook on diversity and cultural sensitivity in mental health*, edited by R. Parekh. New York: Springer Science and Business Media.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. & Minkov, M. 2010. *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hsieh, H. & Shannon, S.E. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15 (9): 1277-1288.

Inman, M., Kishi, R., Wilkenfeld, J., Gelfand, M. & Salmon, E. 2014. Cultural influences on mediation in international crises. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58(4): 685-712

Iriye, A. 1979. Culture and power: International relations as intercultural relations. *Diplomatic History*, 3(2): 115-128.

Issa, A.A., Ali-Garga, F.Z. & Yunusa, M. 2015. *Explain the meaning and theories of intercultural communication and how it promotes peace among countries of the world*. Bayero University.

Izumi, C.L. 2010. Implicit bias and the illusion of mediator neutrality. *Washington University Journal of Law & Policy*, 37(71): 71-155.

Jackson, P. 2008. Pierre Bourdieu, the 'cultural turn' and the practice of international history. *Review of International Studies*, 34(1): 155-181.

Jamshed, S. 2014. Qualitative research method-interviewing and observation. *Journal of Basic and Clinical Pharmacy*, 5(4): 87-88.

Jankurova, A. & Kazansky, R. 2015. Intercultural conflicts within international relations. *SGEM 2015 International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on Social Sciences and Arts*, 1-8.

Jehangir, H. 2012. Realism, liberalism and the possibilities of peace. Internet: <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/02/19/realism-liberalism-and-the-possibilities-of-peace/>. Access: 18/05/2021.

Johnson, J.L. & Berrett, M.T. 2011. Cultural topography: A new research tool for intelligence analysis. *Journal of the American Intelligence Professional*, 55(2): 1 - 22.

Kappmeier, M. & Mercy, A. 2019. The long road from cold war to warm peace: Building shared collective memory through trust. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 7(1): 525–555.

Kapsaskis, D. 2012. Translation, necessity, vulnerability: An interview with Michael Cronin. *Synthesis*, 4: 100-107.

Karadeli, A.S. 2018. Intercultural communication as an asset for ensuring international security. *International Conference RCIC'18 – Redefining Community in Intercultural Context*, 305-310.

Kelman, H.C. 2005. Building trust among enemies: The central challenge for international conflict resolution. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29: 639-650.

Khan, A.M., Rahim, N. & Khan, S.A. 2018. Darfur conflict beyond ethnic division: a politico-economic perspective. *Global Political Review*, 3(2): 75-83.

Khan, J.A. 2011. *Research Methodology*. New Delhi: APH Publishing.

Kleinfeld, P. & Amin, M. 2021. What's behind the rising violence in Sudan's Darfur? Internet: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2021/4/8/whats-behind-the-rising-violence-in-sudans-darfur>. Access: 26/08/2021.

- Koerner, B. 2004. Who are the Janjaweed? Internet: <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2004/07/who-are-the-janjaweed.html>. Access: 26/08/2021.
- Köksal, O & Yürük, N. 2020. The role of the translator in intercultural communication. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 12(1): 327-338.
- Kumar, R. 2011. Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Landau, D. & Landau, S. 1997. Confidence-building measures in mediation. *Mediation Quarterly*, 15(2): 97-103.
- Lanz, D. 2008a. Complicating Darfur. *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, 32(1): 213-219.
- Lanz, D. 2008b. Sudan/Darfur, Abuja negotiations and the DPA. In *Unpacking the mystery of mediation in African peace processes*. Zurich: Swisspeace.
- Laurig, J. 2011. Intercultural organizational communication: The social organizing of interaction in international encounters. *Journal of Business Communications*, 48(3): 231-255.
- Lawson, S. 2006. World politics and the cultural turn. In *Culture and context in world politics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- LeBaron, M. 2003. Culture and conflict. Internet: https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/culture_conflict. Accessed: 18/09/2020.
- Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. 2013. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.
- Liddicoat, A.J. 2016a. Intercultural mediation, intercultural communication and translation. *Perspectives*, 24(3): 354-364.
- Liddicoat, A.J. 2016b. Translation as intercultural mediation: setting the scene. *Perspectives*, 24(3): 347-353.
- Link Inc. 2017. Intercultural communication and conflict resolution. Internet: <http://link-inc.eu/online-center/handbook/intercultural-communication-conflict-resolution/>. Access: 20/02/2020.

- Liu, D. 2012. Translation and culture: Translating idioms between English and Chinese from a cultural perspective. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(11): 2357-2362.
- Lopez-Rocha, S. & Arevalo-Guerrero, E. 2014. Intercultural communication discourse. In *The Routledge handbook of Hispanic applied linguistics*, edited by M. Lacorte. New York: Routledge.
- Lucke, K. & Rigaut, A. 2002. Cultural issues in international mediation. *EU as Mediator*, 1-45.
- Mahan, L.N. & Mahuna, J.M. 2017. Bridging the divide: cross-cultural mediation. *Journal of the Phi Beta Delta Honour Society for International Scholars*, 7(1): 11-22.
- Mason, S.A. 2007. *Mediation and facilitation in peace processes* Zurich: International Relations and Security Network.
- Maurer, D. 2013. Military mediation and military justice? Conjectures on repairing unit cohesion in the wake of relational misconduct. *The Ohio State Journal on Dispute Resolution*, 28(2): 419 - 490.
- Meiser, J.W. 2018. Introducing liberalism in international relations. Internet: <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/02/18/introducing-liberalism-in-international-relations-theory/>. Access: 01/02/2021.
- Melber, H. & Saunders, C. 2007. Conflict mediation in decolonisation: Namibia's transition to independence. *Afrika Spectrum: Deutsche Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsbezogene Afrikaforschung*, 42(1): 73-94.
- Mendoza, B. 2020. Decolonial theories in comparison. *Journal of World Philosophies*, 5: 43-60.
- Mignolo, W.D. 2009. Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26(7-8): 159-181.
- Mignolo, W.D. 2011. Epistemic disobedience and the decolonial option: A manifesto. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(2): 41-66.

- Minaj, L.S. 2017. Intercultural translation and communication. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(1): 99-106.
- Moore, C. 2004. The mediation process: Practical strategies for resolving conflict. Internet: <https://www.beyondintractability.org/bksum/moore-mediation>. Access: 17/04/2021.
- Mpofu, W. 2017. Decoloniality as a travelling theory: Or what decoloniality is not. Internet: <https://wiser.wits.ac.za/system/files/seminar/Mpofu2017.pdf>. Access: 29/08/2021.
- Nathan, L. 2006a. No ownership, no peace: The Darfur peace agreement. *Working Paper – Crisis States Research Centre*, 5(2): 21-40.
- Nathan, L. 2006b. Failings of the DPA. *Accord*, 18: 50.
- Nathan, L. 2007. The failure of the Darfur mediation. *Ethnopolitics*, 6(4): 495-511.
- Nathan, L. 2009. The failure of the Darfur mediation. *Ethnopolitics*, 6(4): 494-511.
- Ndegwa, M.M. 2016. Intercultural communication in conflict management: a case study of the Karamoja cluster. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. United States University – Africa.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. 2013. Why Decoloniality in the 21st century. *The Thinker*, 48: 10-15.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. 2015. Decoloniality in Africa: A continuing search for a new world order. *The Australasian Review of African Studies*, 36(2): 22-50.
- Netabay, N. 2009. The Darfur peace process: Understanding the obstacles to success. Internet: <https://www.beyondintractability.org/casestudy/netabay-darfur>. Access: 19/06/2020.
- Niewenhuis, J. 2007. Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. In *First Steps in Research*, edited by K. Maree. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Nwanko, R.L.N. & Nzelibe, C.G. 1990. Communication and conflict management in African development. *Journal of Black Studies*, 20(3): 253 - 266.
- Oliveira, P.A., Cardoso, B. & Finney, P. 2018. The cultural turn and beyond in international history. *The International History Review*, 40(3): 573-575.

Pedersen, P.B. 2007. The cultural context of peacemaking. In *Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology for the 21st century*, edited by D.J. Christie, R.V. Wagner. & D.A. Winter. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Pham, L.T.M. 2018. A review of key paradigms: positivism, interpretivism and critical inquiry. Internet: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324486854_A_Review_of_key_paradigms_positivism_interpretivism_and_critical_inquiry. Access: 01/06/2021.

Piotrowska, D. 2015. The value of culture in peacebuilding: Examples from Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen and Nepal. Internet: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1359&context=cc_etds_theses. Access: 28/03/2021.

Popa, C.L. 2014. Experience of trust and distrust in intercultural encounters Internet: <http://www.journalstudiesanthropology.ro/en/experiences-of-trust-and-distrust-in-intercultural-encounters/a36/>. Access: 19/07/2021.

Punch, M. 1994. Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research, in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. Sage Publications: London.

Qu, S.Q. & Dumay, J. 2011. The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 8(3): 238-264.

Rabiah, S. 2012. Language as a tool for communication and cultural reality discloser. Internet: <https://osf.io/preprints/inarxiv/nw94m/>. Access: 28/03/2021.

R'boul, H. 2020. Postcolonial interventions in intercultural communication knowledge: Meta-cultural ontologies, decolonial knowledges and epistemological polylogue. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 1-19.

Reza, N. 2009. Problems of effective cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution. *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture*, 15/16(4/1): 146-150.

Richmond, O., Bjorkdahl, A. & Kappler, S. 2011. The emerging EU peacebuilding framework: confirming or transcending liberal peacebuilding. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 24(3): 449-469.

- Ricigliano, R. 2003. Networks of effective action: Implementing an integrated approach to peacebuilding. *Security Dialogue*, 34(4): 445 - 462.
- Rogers, E.M., Hart, W.B. & Miike, Y. 2002. Edward T. Hall and the history of intercultural communication: The United States and Japan. *Keio Communication Review*, 24(3): 3-26.
- Ryan, G. 2018. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse Researcher*, 25(4): 41-49.
- Sánchez, R. M. & Martínez, A.I. 2017. Challenges of intercultural mediation form decolonized and collaborative work through experiences in Spain and Mesoamerica. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 237: 354-359.
- Savun, B. 2008. Information, bias, and mediation. *International Studies*, 52(1): 25 - 47.
- Schuler, S. 2017. *Intercultural mediation at work*. Susanne Schuler Ebook: Bookboon.
- Schwandt, T.A. 1998. Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues*, edited by N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Shirinzadeh, S.A. & Mahadi, T.S.T. 2015. Translators and cultural mediators in transmitting cultural differences. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 205: 167-174.
- Shome, R. 2019. Thinking culture and cultural studies – from/of the Global South. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 16(3): 196-218.
- Shonk, K. 2020. How to resolve cultural conflict: Overcoming cultural barriers at the negotiation table – Avoid cultural conflict by avoiding stereotypes when negotiating across cultures. Internet: <https://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/conflict-resolution/a-cross-cultural-negotiation-example-how-to-overcome-cultural-barriers/>. Access: 18/07/2021.

Silva, J.M., Fernández, J.S. & Nguyen, A. 2021. "And now we resist": Three testimonios on the importance of decoloniality within psychology. *Journal of Social Issues*, 1-25.

Stimec, A. & Poitras, J. 2009. Building trust with parties: Are mediators overdoing it? *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 26(3): 317-331.

Svensson, I. 2007. Bargaining, bias and peace brokers: How rebels commit to peace. *Journal of Peace Research*, 44(2): 177-194.

The Crisis Group. 2006. Darfur's fragile peace agreement. Internet: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan/darfurs-fragile-peace-agreement>. Access: 26/08/2021.

Thomas, D.R. & Hodges, I.D. 2010. *Designing and Planning Your Research Project: Core Skills for Social and Health Researchers*. London: SAGE Publications

Tlostanova, M. 2020. The postcolonial condition, the decolonial option and the post-socialist intervention. In *Postcolonialism cross-examined: Multidirectional perspectives on imperial and colonial pasts and neocolonial present*, edited by M. Albrecht. Oxon: Routledge.

United Nations Security Council. 2008. 5922nd meeting. Internet: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Sudan%20SPV5922.pdf>. Access: 26/08/2021.

United Nations. 2012. *United Nations: Guidance for effective mediation*. New York: United Nations.

Valbjorn, M. 2008. Before, during and after the cultural turn: A 'Baedeker' to IR's cultural journey. *International Review of Sociology*, 18(1): 55-82.

Van Veen, E.S. 2009. The 'cultural turn' in international relations: Making sense of world politics. Internet: <https://www.e-ir.info/2009/05/10/the-%E2%80%99cultural-turn%E2%80%99-in-international-relations-making-sense-of-world-politics/>. Access: 20/07/2021.

Vuković, S. 2014. /international mediation as a distinct form of conflict management. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 25(1): 61-80.

Weaver, W. 1955. Translation. In *Machine translation of languages*, edited by W.N. Locke and A.D. Booth. New York: John Wiley.

Wehr, P. & Lederach, J.P. 2004. Mediating conflict in Central America. In *Intercultural Communication*, edited by F.E. Jandt. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Wong, L.P. 2008. Data analysis in qualitative research: A brief guide to using NVivo. *Malaysian Family Physician*, 3(1): 14-20.

Wood, G. 2009. Building trust in mediation. *Dispute Resolution Magazine*, 16: 1.

Wright, W.A. 2000. Cultural issues in mediation: A practical guide to individualist and collectivist paradigms. *Asian Dispute Review*, 2(1): 28-32.

Yalem, R.J. 1971. Controlled communication and conflict resolution. *Journal of Peace Research*, 8(3/4): 263 - 272.

Young, H. & Osman, A.M. 2006. Challenges to peace and recovery in Darfur. *Briefing Paper – Feinstein International Center*, 1-46.

Zondi, S. 2017. African Union approaches to peacebuilding: Efforts at shifting the continent towards decolonial peace. *African Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 17(1): 105-131.

APPENDIX 1: Letter of Permission



Faculty of Humanities

Department of Political Sciences

October 2020

To whom it may concern

RE: Letter of Permission to Conduct Interviews for Masters Research

You are herewith invited to partake in an academic research study conducted by Lebogang Mphahlele, Masters student from the University of Pretoria. The research is on the role of intercultural communication in mediation in Darfur, Sudan.

If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed about this topic. The interviews will take place over Zoom and at a time that will suit you; also, it will not take longer than an hour. I will take notes and record the interview through Zoom as well. You do not have to participate in this research if you do not want to, and you will not be affected in any way if you decide not to take part. If you decide to participate, but you change your mind later, you can withdraw your participation at any time. Your identity will be protected. Only my supervisor (as signed below) and I will know your real name, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis.

In my research report and in any other academic communication, your pseudonym will be used, and no other identifying information will be given, unless you prefer otherwise. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidentiality purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored in University Pretoria, Department of Political Sciences according to the policy requirements.

If you agree to take part in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me on phone or email.

Kind regards,

Lebogang Mphahlele

Dr. Cori Wielenga

.....
Masters Candidate

Department of Political Sciences

University of Pretoria

+27 72 349 5824

lebogangmphahlele3@gmail.com

.....
Senior Lecturer

Department of Political Sciences

University of Pretoria

+27 12 420 4486

cori.wielenga@up.ac.za

APPENDIX 2: Consent Form



Faculty of Humanities

Department of Political Sciences

October 2020

I, _____ (your name), agree / do not agree (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research project titled: Intercultural communication and conflict resolution. I understand that I will be interviewed about this topic for approximately one hour over Zoom and that the interview will be recorded.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- Voluntary participation in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- Informed consent, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- Safety in participation; put differently, that people should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind.
- Privacy, meaning that the confidentiality and anonymity of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- Trust, which implies that human respondents will not be responding to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

I, the Undersigned, have read the above and I understand the nature and objectives of the research project as well as my potential role in it and I understand that the research findings will eventually be placed in the public domain. I voluntarily consent to participate in all discussions, to give my expert opinion and to provide details and to provide details about my life history, keeping in mind that I have a right to withdraw from the project at any stage. I also grant the researcher the right to use my contribution to the research project in completing this project as well as other projects that may emerge in the future.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The impact of language barriers and translation on intercultural communication in mediation in Darfur, Sudan

Time of interview: _____ Duration: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____ Pseudonym: _____

Interviewee: _____

Male/Female: _____

.....

Interview questions:

- a) Please briefly describe the process of mediation in Darfur 2006 and your involvement in it.
- b) What was the communication like between the mediating parties and the disputing parties?
- c) What was the language of communication during the mediation proceedings? Do you think the choice of language affected communication and how the mediation process unfolded?
- d) Were there any translators/interpreters present? If yes, were they locals of a similar cultural background as the combatants or were they a third-party that know the local language?
- e) Do you think the conflicting parties were sufficiently included in the mediation process and the drafting of the peace agreement?
- f) In your opinion, could more have been done to ensure that all parties (especially the combatants) had a clear understanding of the contents of the final peace agreement? Could more have been done to ensure that cultural understandings of what was being communicated were better articulated to leave less information open to interpretation?

- g) How long was the mediation process in Darfur, 2006? If any delays did occur, were they related to issues of communication between parties present at the proceedings?
- h) Is there anything you would like to add?