

## **The Role of Intercultural Communication Skills in Cultural Transformation for Student**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this paper is to describe the role of intercultural communication skills in cultural transformation for students. This paper uses a qualitative approach. The data analysis technique used is qualitative descriptive analysis. Culture has a huge influence on verbal language. Even culture also influences encoding and decoding in the communication process. In addition, culture also affects the structure of individual thought processes and non-verbal behavior. Intercultural communication is influenced by differences regarding the individual itself which includes individual personality, age and even physical appearance. Then it takes appropriate skills in conducting communication with different cultures so as not to cause disputes. So intercultural communication skill has a significant role in cultural transforming cultures for learners. This will foster love and motivation for students towards ancestral culture that does not deviate from Islamic law so it needs to be preserved. Even students also need to get teaching about intercultural communication skills thus able to accept and apply such expertise as the next generation of the nations.

**Keywords:** *Intercultural Communication Skills, Cultural Transformation, Student*

### **INTRODUCTION**

As the development of technology in the current era of globalization is very easy for humans to be able to communicate between humans with one another. Communication between cultures is no exception. Intercultural communication skills will affect our communication skills not only at home, but at school, in the workplace, even wherever we are. The more intense our communication is, our communication skills must also increase. So that we have the ability or competent in communicating between cultures so that we have the ability to overcome problems that will arise including the anxiety that arises when communicating with interlocutors who have different cultures (Moulita: 2019). According to Liliweri intercultural communication is interpersonal communication carried out by communicators with communicants who have different cultures (Ridwan: 2016). The ability of intercultural communication is the ability to carry out various abilities of effective and appropriate communication behaviors, which can integrate one culture with another culture or various identities in different cultural environments (Chen and Strarosta: 1996). Even today, intercultural communication is a hot topic of discussion. The ability that must be possessed by a communicator when communicating with communicants or interlocutors of different cultures must have skills so that undesirable things can be minimized and disputes can be avoided. When unable or not having expertise, it can lead to disputes. Disputes usually begin with anxiety and uncertainty, then disputes arise. This is because culture is not often used as an excuse as a barrier when communicating. But actually between culture and communication there are links that can not be separated.

## **Components in Communication**

In everyday life, humans certainly need communication. Whether it's to talk directly through mobile phones, write letters and even sign language and other forms of communication. Communication can also be defined with everything that happens every time someone responds to the behavior or former behavior of others (Porter & Samovar: 2010). This means that communication can occur when someone interacts with others and that person responds so that an exchange of knowledge, ideas, concepts, thoughts and even emotions between individuals occurs. Communication between two or more people can occur intentionally or unintentionally. When communication is done intentionally, meaningful messages or intentions will occur. Examples such as conversation, writing letters and even books. The communication made is intentional communication. And in communication that is done accidentally when we can convey a message to others even when we do not intend to do so. So it can be interpreted that communication refers to the process when communication takes place. The components in communication include the message sender, message, encoding, channel or communication media, decoding, message recipient, feedback, context, interference and effect. The communicator's way of conveying information to its target, so that a similar meaning or message can be created is what is meant by the communication process. The goal is to establish a very effective communication. A number of stages in this process are interpreting, encoding, sending, traveling, receiving, reversing, and interpreting.

### **Encoding dan Decoding**

The ongoing communication requires a process. So that the message to be conveyed by the communicator can be received and interpreted properly by the communicant. The process is encoding and decoding. Encoding is the process of coding a message carried out by a communicator that requires the selection of the right method or method so that the recipient of the message receives the message either consciously or not. People who encode and send messages and meanings in the research literature are called encoders or senders. While decoding is the process when someone receives a message signal from the encoder and translates the signal into a meaningful message. Communication occurs not only in one direction. When the communicator encodes and the communicant decodes, that is where the communication process occurs with complexity, and almost the process is so fast. In fact, sometimes the time occurs overlapping even almost simultaneously. So when talking about communication, the encoding and decoding process becomes a very interesting discussion.

### **Culture and Communication Process**

Culture is a developing way of life, which is shared by a group of people and will be passed on to the next generation of the group. Culture can be formed from a variety of complex elements, including religious and political systems, customs, tools, language, buildings, clothing and works of art. Culture with communication is an inseparable thing, like a coin that has two sides, it is communication and culture that fills the sides of the coin. Both can not be separated because they affect each other. We can understand communication as a form of relationship and delivery of information between individuals or groups. Communication will connect individuals with each other so that information transfer occurs. For example when A and B who have different cultural backgrounds do communication but what is conveyed by A to B can be received by B well even to the point where there is a change in behavior then it is certain that the prevailing communication between A and B has occurred good communication between the two. While culture shows the results of creations, thoughts, feelings, and initiatives that are complex and include various aspects of life such as beliefs, knowledge, habits, and so forth. What you believe, what you think is good or wrong, how you live your life is a form of culture. For example the culture of the Minang people

where the bloodline is taken from the mother's side while the Javanese culture actually takes the bloodline from the father's side.

The relationship between culture and communication, among others, namely: 1) influence each other, culture is influenced by communication and vice versa communication is also affected by culture. Just look at how we can easily guess someone's home area from the way he communicates. For example the Batak tribe that communicates using Indonesian, from the accent when speaking, it can be guessed that the origin of the tribe is the Batak tribe, even though it has mingled with other tribes. It means that culture seems to influence the communication process; 2) communication as a means of introducing culture to a wider domain, culture and communication have an important role in introducing a culture to a broader domain. With this a culture can be known by other people of different cultures. Without communication, how can we introduce our culture to other groups with different cultures; 3) communication will help preserve a culture, with the introduction of a culture into a broader domain will also maintain the preservation of that culture. There will be more people who know and are interested in learning it. Not infrequently a culture must be extinct and disappear because it is less well known so that when its citizens are unable to adapt then the culture is extinct or lost. The relationship between culture and communication to 4) culture is a means for people to learn communication, cultural differences between one person and another encourage people to communicate with each other. How do they understand each other and recognize different cultures starting from the way of life, philosophy of life, language, and so on; 5) culture determines patterns and ways of communicating, Different cultures will create different communication patterns so that you can easily know a person's culture by the way he communicates. Both personal communication patterns and communication patterns in the community. Starting from the language used, accent, and so forth; 6) communication as a means to adjust to other cultures, communication is also closely related to culture which acts as a means to adjust to other cultures. Through communication we can get to know and adapt to people of different cultures. How to say hello, what is considered polite and what is not, and so forth.

Based on this description, the link between culture and the communication process is seen because the two cannot be separated and influence each other. Culture determines how communication while communication becomes a means to introduce, pass down and preserve culture. Besides communication also becomes a means to get to know other cultures. Even when communication is hampered due to cultural differences so as a communicator or communicant must know the strategy to overcome these obstacles. As for ways to overcome barriers to pre-intercultural communication, among others, as follows: 1) Improve and enhance cross-cultural competencies, the first way to overcome barriers to cross-cultural communication is to improve and enhance cross-cultural competencies. Cross-cultural competence itself is defined as the ability to participate in a series of communication activities. This ability can be in the form of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This competency is based on three things, namely sensitivity or sensitivity, ability, and awareness. This competency needs to be developed in the context of cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural business communication. The way to do this is by training and deepening cross-cultural knowledge, attending language training, and encouraging mutually beneficial policies; 2) Avoiding assumptions and judgments, the next way to overcome barriers to cross-cultural communication is to avoid as many assumptions and judgments as possible. In a sense, we should not assume that others will act in the same way or apply the same values and beliefs or use the same language and symbols. In addition, we should also avoid giving judgments without knowing or understanding what is happening. For example, when someone acts differently, we should not rush to conclude that the way the person is doing is wrong or incorrect. Usually such assumptions or judgments arise due to the development of ethnocentrism and stereotypes in the self which often become barriers to cross-cultural communication.

Strategy 3) Sensitive, in addition to avoiding assumptions and assessments of other people's cultures, another way to overcome barriers to cross-cultural communication is to develop attitudes sensitive to differences. The trick is to learn everything from the people we meet, especially related to the culture and sub-culture of the people we meet before entering into a communication situation. For this reason, it helps us try to spend a little time learning about other people's cultures rather than forcing ourselves to communicate with others with different cultural backgrounds but we don't have any understanding at all about the culture of the other person. If this happens, misunderstandings can easily occur, 4) Recognizing and valuing differences, cross-cultural communication barriers can also be overcome, one of which is by acknowledging and valuing differences. This is very important because basically every human being is created differently. No one is able to reject when and where he was born, the religion professed, cultural background, and so forth. Such differences should be used as an excuse to continue to build good relations and not as a reason to judge others; 5) Impati, as a part of interpersonal sensitivity and social competence, empathy is defined as the ability of a person to realize and understand the perceptions and feelings of others, and convey that understanding in the form of an accepting response. In a cultural context, empathy is defined as the desire to place ourselves in the culture world of other people who are different and to experience what other people experience. Empathy is developed in several ways such as paying attention, communicative empathy, or learning to accept differences. Developing an attitude of empathy is another way to overcome barriers to cross-cultural communication because with empathy we can learn to accept and appreciate the differences that exist; 6) Active listening, one of the memorable communication techniques or techniques in wise communication is active listening. Active listening is also one of the most important activities in cross-cultural communication as well as a requirement that we can develop empathy. By listening actively, we can understand and appreciate existing cultural differences so that misunderstandings can be reduced.

Strategy 7) Supportive, the next way to overcome barriers to cross-cultural communication is to be supportive. Supportive here related to supportive communication behavior. Supportive behavior such as empathy can encourage effective cross-cultural communication processes. Conversely, defensive behavior tends to bring cross-cultural communication processes toward ineffectiveness; 8) Motivation to communicate, motivation to communicate is also one way to overcome barriers to cross-cultural communication. As humans, in general we are very motivated to interact with people who are physically and emotionally close. Likewise in the context of cross-cultural communication. This motivation to communicate is necessary because it is a form of effort to understand other people's experiences that are not part of our lives. In addition, the existence of this motivation can also improve our ability to communicate with others, show or show our interests to others, talk and understand others, and provide assistance to others; 9) Understanding one's own culture, the way to overcome barriers to communication across cultures is to understand one's own culture. By understanding our own culture, we can easily communicate the values, perceptions, and attitudes we profess to others. The impact is that other people will easily communicate the values, perceptions, and attitudes they profess to create understanding and avoid misunderstanding.

The 10th strategy) Flexible, another way is to develop flexibility in communication. Communication competency experts believe that one understanding of communication competence is the ability to adjust communication behavior with other people and the environment. This is to facilitate us to communicate with others and obtain the desired information; 11) Using and encouraging descriptive feedback, effective feedback can encourage smooth adaptation processes which are important in cross-cultural communication. Everyone involved in the cross-cultural communication process should have the willingness to receive feedback and show supportive behavior. The feedback given should be direct, immediate, honest, specific, and clear; 12) Open communication channels, another way to overcome cross-cultural communication barriers is to

open communication channels. In a sense, we must be able to be patient during the process of interaction so that mutual understanding can be achieved; 13) Managing conflicts, the last way to overcome cross-cultural communication barriers is to manage existing conflicts. The conflict in question is related to conflicting values or different beliefs. When faced with this situation, we must be able to manage these differences or clashes well and without offending others.

### **The Role of Intercultural Communication Capabilities in Cultural Transformation for Students**

Communication is needed by everyone to be able to express their hearts or feelings to others, convey messages or intent with the aim that the recipient of the message to do something like what it conveys. For that qualified ability is needed to be able to communicate well and get maximum results. Even more so when communicating with someone who has a different culture from us. Because with different cultures so when they do not have the same understanding will be able to cause disputes. The whole process of intercultural communication is always related to context (Lieberman and Gamst: 2015). Cultural literate communication includes many variables including 1) the background of people who interact or communicate (ethnic minorities / races, religions, immigrants, business travelers; 2) the context of interaction (travel / study abroad); 3) sociodemographic side (work and education) and similarity (linguistic or cultural); 4) aspects of the duration of the interaction. In terms of the ability of cross-cultural communication will affect the effectiveness and conformity with the objectives will result in the desired cross-cultural adaptation, which is to change one's behavior due to the environment and suitability namely the conditions of the atmosphere such as self-esteem, stress and self-confidence that accompany the adjustment.

Individuals who are competent or have the ability in communication between cultures must have capacities such as knowing and mastering the cultural values of themselves and others, showing positive feelings, respecting, even accepting cultural differences and being able to behave appropriately and appropriately in the context of interaction interculturalism (Chen: 2014). Even when interacting with other people of different cultures, they must be sensitive to the feelings and thoughts of others, express respect and be positive and non-judgmental. In essence, he must have confidence, be able to take initiative, calm down in times of anxiety and ambiguity, and not be rigid. Individuals are technically or professionally capable. Regarding communication skills between cultures, Wiseman explained that as a union of knowledge, skills and motivation needed to interact effectively and in accordance with individuals from different cultures (Penbek, Yurdakul, & Cerit: 2009). In addition, Kim also summarized into a hypothesis that intercultural communication competence is the result of adaptability, namely the ability of a person to adapt some of the old ways or customs of a culture, where he will learn and adapt to new customs, and can creatively find ways to regulate the dynamics of cultural differences or intimacy, intergroup style, and control over pressure (Williams: 2005). He also said that there are three dimensions related to the concept of intercultural communication competence, including: 1) the cognitive dimension, namely the mechanism of interpretation of a person or structure that gives meaning to a message, 2) the affective dimension, which refers to one's motivation or desire to bridge culture different, and 3) behavioral dimensions, is the ability of a person to be flexible and smart in using cognitive and affective skills they have. Another source also mentioned that the components of intercultural communication are divided into two groups, namely the individual component consisting of motivation, knowledge, attitude, behavior, and contextual components (Martin & Nakayama: 2007).

## **METHOD**

The writing of this article uses the literature study method with a qualitative approach. Descriptive research can be interpreted as a problem-solving procedure that is investigated by describing or describing the state of the subject or object of research (a person, institution, society, etc.) at this time based on facts that appear or as they are (Nawawi: 2003). The main sources of writing are books, theses, journals and research related to the role of intercultural communication skills in cultural transformation of students.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Communication can be done effectively if each component is ready to carry out the communication. It is necessary to be able to minimize all possibilities that are not expected. Readiness of each component of communication will also affect the course of the communication process. The intercultural competence or skills of the informants can be described cognitively, namely how the knowledge and stereotypes possessed by the informants, especially about the ethnicity and religion of others. A person's culture will affect the communication process and even the results that will be achieved after the communication takes place. So for that between communicant and communicator must mutually understand at least their own culture before communicating with other people of different cultures. Thus will open up the horizons of thought and insight so that communication can take place properly. But in reality it also needs to be observed that whether the younger generation as the successor of the previous culture already knows or knows its own culture and the culture of others. This needs to be understood to be easy and very helpful when cultural transformation is made to students. And the solution that the writer offers is to provide motivation related to the ability to communicate with other people who have different cultures and also recognize the diversity of cultures that exist in Indonesia.

## **CONCLUSION**

The level of skill is best according to the proposed concept and the informant has awareness or knowledge about one's own culture and others, high self-concept, open-mindedness, non-judgmental of others, and able to display social relaxation, interaction management, and social skills in establishing intercultural interactions. While individuals who lack all the elements of skill, for example self-disclosure, tend to find it rather difficult to make friends, because of lack of self-confidence.

The most important thing is that communicators must have an understanding of intercultural differences, have the ability to overcome existing obstacles, and want to use these skills. Thus, intercultural communication can take place properly. Between culture and the communication process because the two cannot be separated and influence each other. Culture determines how communication while communication becomes a means to introduce, pass down, and preserve culture. Besides communication also becomes a means to get to know other cultures even as a means to carry out cultural transformation to the next generation.

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