

The Barrier on Intercultural Communication of South Thailand Students in Medan

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ABSTRACT

South Thailand Students who are studying in Medan face some barriers in intercultural communication. As we know that communication and interaction are the main factor on the successful of learning process and building good relations in the society. The present research objective is to analyze the barriers on intercultural communication and how to solve the barriers incurred. This research apply Anxiety or Uncertainty Management Theory (AUM) and the methodology employed is qualitative method by searching, analyzing and making interpretation of the data found that consist of documents, interview process and observations. The informants are South Thailand Students who are studying in Medan. The results findings showed that the barriers of intercultural communication that South Thailand Students face were perception, language and motivation. The main barrier of these students to make an interaction in society is language factor and in the learning process at the university.

Keywords: *barrier on intercultural communication, south thailand, students, uncertainty management theory*

INTRODUCTION

The culture was considered as an interesting concept. Formally culture is defined as knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, meaning, hierarchy, religion, time, roles, relations, the concept of the universe, material objects and belongings that are obtained by such a large groups of people from generation to generation through both individual and groups. Culture appears in language patterns, activities and behavior that serve as models for adaptation and communication styles that allow people to live in a society of a particular geographic environment (Mulyana, 2014 : 18)

The existence of South Thailand students embraces almost every area of Indonesia that started from Java. The South Thailand Students are certainly facing the difference of cultures such as language and behavior. In Medan, which is located in Pasar Merah, Medan Area, some students of South Thailand ethnic stayed since 1992, which most of them majored in Islamic study. Intercultural communication developed to establish good relations was applied to build a social relationship and get actively involved in the organization at university.

The different intercultural communication processes certainly incurred a tune of barriers. These barriers should be managed properly to avoid an intercultural conflict. The situations and conditions that the South Thailand students face in Medan attract the writer's attention to observe this case deeply by researching how they blend themselves in the dominant culture, read on the barriers that occurred and how to accomplish it. Therefore, the authors conduct an in-depth observation about the existence of South Thailand ethnic students in Medan.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze how the barriers to intercultural communication faced by South Thailand ethnic students in the city of Medan.
2. To analyze how South Thailand ethnic students in the city of Medan resolve barriers to intercultural communication

Intercultural Communication

Culture is the unique lifestyle of a certain group of people. Culture is not something that is owned by some people and is not owned by some others. Culture is owned by all humans and thus culture should be a unifying factor. Humans create their culture or the social environment as an adaptation to their physical and biological environment. Individuals are very inclined to accept and believe what their culture says. They are influenced by the customs and knowledge of the communities in which they live and are raised, regardless of how valid the validity of this cultural input and inculcation is in themselves. (Lubis, 2014)

Intercultural communication is communication that occurs between people from different cultures, namely between people who have different cultural beliefs, values and ways of behaving (Devito, 2011: 535). Intercultural communication has its roots in the language (especially sociolinguistics), sociology, cultural anthropology, and psychology. Of the four disciplines, psychology is the main reference discipline of intercultural communication, especially cross-cultural psychology.

Communication and culture are two sides of a coin that are inseparable and influence each other. Culture not only determines who talks with whom, about what and how communication takes place, but culture also determines how people encode messages, the meaning they have for messages and the conditions for sending, paying attention and interpreting messages. The entire treasury of human behavior is very dependent on the culture in which humans were raised. Consequently, culture is the basis of communication. If the culture is diverse, then also the various communication practices (Mulyana & Rachmat, 2010: 20)

Interaction is a type of action that occurs when two or more objects affect or have an effect on one another. Effective intercultural interaction depends very much on intercultural communication. This concept also explains that the purpose of intercultural communication will be achieved if the form of intercultural relations reflects the conscious efforts of the communication participants to renew the relationship between the communicator and the communicant (Nora & Lubis. 2019)

Barriers on Intercultural Communication

Communication barriers in intercultural communication have the shape of an iceberg that is immersed in water. Where communication barriers are divided into two that are above water (above waterline) and under water (below waterline). The factors of intercultural communication obstacles that are under water (below waterline) are the factors that shape a person's behavior or attitude, such obstacles are quite difficult to see or pay attention to. These types of obstacles are perceptions, norms, stereotypes, business philosophy, rules, networks, values, and subcultures groups.). While there are 9 (nine) types of intercultural communication barriers that are above water (above waterline). Such communication barriers are easier to see because many of these barriers are physical (Lubis, 2018: 5)

These obstacles are:

1. Physical (Physical) Barriers to this kind of communication come from the constraints of time, the environment, personal needs, and also the physical media.

2. Culture (Cultural) These obstacles come from different ethnicities, religions, and also the social differences that exist between one culture with another.
3. Perception (Perceptual) This type of obstacle arises because everyone has different perceptions about a thing. So to interpret something every culture will have different thoughts.
4. Motivational. Such obstacles are related to the level of motivation of the listener, the intention is whether the listener who receives the message wants to receive the message or whether the listener is lazy and does not have motivation so that it can become a barrier to communication.
5. Experience (Experiential). Experiential is a type of obstacle that occurs because every individual does not have the same life experience so that each individual has different perceptions and concepts in seeing things.
6. Emotions (Emotional). This relates to personal emotions or feelings of the listener. When the listener's emotions are bad, the communication barriers that occur will be even greater and harder to pass.
7. Language (Linguistic). The following communication barriers occur if the sender of the message (sender) and receiver of the message (receiver) use different languages or use words that are not understood by the recipient of the message.
8. Nonverbal. Nonverbal barriers are communication barriers that are not words but can be barriers to communication. An example is the angry face made by the recipient of the message (receiver) when the sender of the message (sender) communicates. Angry faces made can be a barrier to communication because it is possible that the sender of the message will feel not optimal or afraid to send messages to the recipient of the message.
9. Competition (Competition). Such obstacles arise when the recipient of the message is doing other activities while listening. An example is receiving a cell phone while driving, because it does 2 (two) activities at a time so the recipient of the message will not listen to the message conveyed through his cell phone to the fullest.

The event of communication barriers makes us wonder, confused, or shocked when we know the behavior of people from other cultures. Interaction and mingling with people from other cultures or living in other cultures helps us not only understand their culture, but also our own culture. Difficulty communicating, not only difficulty understanding their language that we do not master, but also value systems, behavior and so forth. Even communication failures often lead to misunderstandings, losses or havoc. This is often found in interacting with different nations (Kholil, Mailin & Siregar, 2017).

Anxiety / Uncertainty Management (AUM) Theory

This theory, published by William Gudykunst, focuses on cultural differences in groups and strangers. He intends that his theory can be used in all situations where there is a difference between doubt and fear. He uses the term effective communication to minimize the processes of understanding. Gudykunst believes that anxiety and uncertainty are the basic causes of communication failures in inter-group situations. This theory pays attention to how individuals monitor their environment, how individuals regulate themselves and others through interaction (Morissan, 2013: 204).

METHOD

1. Research Method

The research method of this research is qualitative research by searching, analyzing and making interpretation of data found through the results of documents, interviews, and

observations. The data that has been collected is checked for validity through the validity of the data in the form of trust. The data analysis technique is to reduce, present, and make conclusions from the results of research

2. Data Collection Techniques

a. In-Depth Interview Technique

An in-depth interview is a technique of collecting data or information that researchers do to informants both formally and informally, by giving some questions to the informant. The interviews were conducted by the author to obtain information about what are the barriers to communication between Thai and South Thailand ethnic students living in the city of Medan, as well as how to overcome these obstacles. The characteristics that are required to become informants or informants in this study are South Thailand ethnic students who have lived in Medan for more than 2 years.

b. Observation Techniques

Observation or observation is a technique in collecting data or information about something that will be studied empirically. This technique is used to see the object of research studies here regarding South Thailand Students in the City of Medan and see cultural barriers. The researcher made an open observation at the research location, how the relationship between South Thailand Students with the local community and how interactions with friends on campus and the obstacles that were caused.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After conducting field research through an interview process with two Thai South Thailand students in Medan City, researchers can see what obstacles are experienced by South Thailand Students while studying in Medan City. As for the perceived obstacles such as perception, motivation, and language.

Perception

Before studying in Medan, the perception of South Thailand Students towards the people of Medan was friendly and gentle. The perception was obtained after they read information about the city of Medan from the internet. But after studying in Medan and interacting with the people of Medan City, their perceptions changed. Their perception of the people of Medan City is rough and hard. This perception arises because the Medan City people in speaking often use high-pitched tones that give the impression of being angry. As said by a South Thailand student "I used to think the Medan people were friendly and gentle because before coming here I was reading Medan City information from the internet, but after I was here it turned out that the person was loud and rude". (Abdul Kareem). Persepi has an unfavorable impression on the people of Medan City. Surely it will be an obstacle in intercultural communication. The rough and harsh impression made South Thailand Students afraid to interact with the people of Medan and became an obstacle to an effective process of communication between cultures.

Language

Language differences are the biggest communication barrier South Thailand Students feel because in interacting with the surrounding community and campus environment they must use Indonesian while they only have Malay language skills. Communication barriers in terms of language are felt differently - For South Thailand Students who are just studying in Medan, their Indonesian language skills are not good or very passive, whereas for students who have long studied in the field of Indonesian language skills are quite good. A case that was conveyed by our informant "I for a year and a half did not understand Indonesian, I understood Indonesian because it was

assisted by my senior brother's contracted. Likewise, on campus, I was helped by my classmates to explain what the lecturer said. But now I understand Indonesian quite well”(Mubarok)

Language is a barrier to intercultural communication that is still felt by South Thailand Students studying in Medan. Their lack of understanding of the Indonesian language has hampered interaction and communication with the surrounding community and the campus environment. A lack of confidence to interact with others arises because of the lack of mastering Indonesian. However, they can overcome language barriers with their willingness to learn Indonesian through senior rented friends and campus friends. With their increased ability to speak Indonesian, it certainly will reduce the barriers of intercultural communication they experience.

Motivation

Motivation or enthusiasm to interact with the Medan City community is certainly influenced by the perception and ability of the Indonesian language. Medan City community perception is harsh and harsh in speaking certainly makes South Thailand Students limit their communication, they assume that the people of Medan City are always angry when they speak so making them afraid to communicate with the local community or friends on campus. They only communicate as needed to people who are already known as campus friends and the community around the environment, and they tend to close themselves from new people. Also, their ability to speak in Indonesian makes them less confident to interact with the community and friends on campus.

Barriers to intercultural communication that occur in South Thailand students will certainly hamper the learning process on campus and social interaction with the community. An understanding of the characteristics of hard and rough terrain city people will certainly make them more open to interacting with Medan city communities. Their perception of the people of Medan City certainly creates limits on interaction and communication which lead to a closed attitude. The need for intense communication with the community to produce positive perceptions. The ability to master the Indonesian language must also be done by South Thailand Students if they do not understand Indonesian the communication process will not be realized. The aim of gaining knowledge in Medan will not be obtained if the Indonesian language is not understood by Thai students. Another impact of not understanding Indonesian is the lack of motivation to interact with the surrounding community and the campus environment. Motivation or enthusiasm for interacting is also needed when the learning process is on campus. The enthusiasm to ask lecturers.

CONCLUSION

1. South Thailand students who are in the city of Medan have barriers to intercultural communication such as perception, language, and motivation. Thai students' perceptions of the Medan City community are rough and loud, because in speaking using a high voice tone, the impression of being grumpy is inherent in the Medan City community, making South Thailand Students afraid to interact. Language is a good part of intercultural communication barriers, the lack of understanding of South Thailand Students towards the Indonesian language is a barrier to the learning process on campus and interaction with the community. The poor perception of the people of Medan and the lack of understanding in the use of the Indonesian language are not good motivation or enthusiasm for interaction for Thai students. Fear accompanied by a lack of confidence makes obstacles in the process of effective communication. will certainly increase students' knowledge. The barriers to intercultural communication that occur can be reduced by changing positive perceptions of the mayor of Medan City, the willingness to learn Indonesian and the motivation to interact and be open to the people of Medan City.
2. To overcome this barriers, South Thailand students in Medan City have various ways for communication to be effective. The perception of the people of Medan City is rough and

hard in being handled by only communicating as necessary to campus friends and the surrounding community, also, they learn to understand the character of the Medan City community. The language barrier South Thailand Students face by always learning to hone Indonesian language skills with senior brothers as housemate and classmates on campus. Poor motivation to interact with the Medan City community in sikapi by understanding the character of the Medan City community and understanding the Indonesian language so that the high enthusiasm for interacting with the Medan City community and increasing confidence to interact with the surrounding community and friends on campus.

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