

Intercultural Communication Understanding

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ABSTRACT

Language and cultural misinterpretations can be avoided by increasing our understanding of other people and cultures. Intercultural Communication is used to describe the wide range of communication processes and problems that naturally appear within an organization or social context made up of individuals from different religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. Intercultural communication is sometimes used synonymously with cross-cultural communication. This research aims to share information across different cultures and social groups. With increased tourism, international business, students studying overseas, and increasing awareness of indigenous minority cultures there is concern to foster better communication among different cultural ethnics. In this present paper, it seeks to understand how people from different countries and cultures act, communicate and perceive the world around them.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Culture, Communication

Introduction

Intercultural communication is a form of communication that aims to share information across different cultures and social groups. It is used to describe the wide range of communication processes and problems that naturally appear within an organization or social context made up of individuals from different religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. Intercultural communication is sometimes used synonymously with cross-cultural communication. In this sense it seeks to understand how people from different countries and cultures act, communicate and perceive the world around them. Many people in intercultural business communication argue that culture determines how individuals encode messages, what medium they choose for transmitting them, and the way messages are interpreted.

In a border sense, intercultural communication encompasses cross cultural communication, international communication, development communication, and intercultural communication's narrower referent, intercultural communication proper. With regard to intercultural communication proper, it studies situations where people from different cultural backgrounds interact. Aside from language, intercultural communication focuses on social attributes, thought patterns, and the cultures of different groups of people. It also involves understanding the different cultures, languages and customs of people from other countries.

Intercultural communication plays a role in social sciences such as anthropology, cultural studies, linguistics, psychology and communication studies. Intercultural communication is also referred to as the base for international businesses. There are several cross-cultural service providers around how can assist with the development of intercultural communication skills. Research is a major part of the development of intercultural communication skills.

In intercultural communication has problems that usually comes from message transmission. In communication between people of the same culture, the person who

receives the message interprets it based on values, beliefs, and expectations for behavior similar to those of the person who sent the message. When this happens, the way the message is interpreted by the receiver is likely to be fairly similar to what the speaker intended. However, when the receiver of the person is from a different culture, the receiver uses information from his or her culture to interpret the message. The message that the receiver interprets may be very different from what the speaker intended. Attribution is the process in which people look for an explanation of another person's behavior. When someone does not understand another, he/she usually blames the confusion on the other's "stupidity, deceit, or craziness".

Effective communication depends on the informal understandings among the parties involved that are based on the trust developed between them. When trust exists, there is implicit understanding within communication, cultural differences may be overlooked, and problems can be dealt with more easily. The meaning of trust and how it is developed and communicated vary across societies. Similarly, some cultures have a greater propensity to be trusting than others.

Nonverbal communication is behavior that communicates without words-though it often may be accompanied by words. Minor variations in body language, speech rhythms, and punctuality often cause mistrust and misperception of the situation among cross-cultural parties. Kinesics behavior is communication through body movement-e.g., posture, gestures, facial expressions and eye contact. The meaning of such behavior varies across countries. Oculistics are a form of kinesics that includes eye contact and the use of the eyes to convey messages. Proxemics concern the influence of proximity and space on communication (e.g., in terms of office layout). For example, space communicates power in the US and Germany.

Paralanguage refers to how something is said, rather than the content of what is said – e.g., rate of speech, tone and inflection of voice, other noises, laughing, yawning and silence. Object language or material culture refers to how we communicate through material artifacts- e.g., architecture, office design and furniture, clothing, cars, cosmetics and time. In monochronic cultures, time is experienced linearly and as something to be spent, saved, made up, or wasted. Time orders life, and people tend to concentrate on one thing at a time. In polychronic cultures, people tolerate many things happening simultaneously and emphasize involvement with people. In these cultures, people may be highly distractible, focus on several things at once, and change plans often.

In intercultural communication, there is a management and the important points to consider: Develop cultural sensitivity, anticipate the meaning the receiver will get, careful encoding, use words, pictures, and gestures, avoid slang, idioms, regional sayings, selective transmission, build relationships, face to face if possible. Careful decoding of feedback, get feedback from multiple parties, improve listening and observation skills, and follow-up actions.

In intercultural communication also has facilitation that there is a connection between a person's personality traits and the ability to adapt to the host-country's environment-including the ability to communicate within that environment. Two key personality traits are openness and resilience. Openness includes traits such as tolerance for ambiguity, extrovertedness and open-mindedness. Resilience includes having an internal locus of control, persistence, tolerance for ambiguity, and resourcefulness.

These factors, combined with the person's cultural and racial identity and level of preparedness for change, comprise that person's potential for adaptation.

Intercultural communication is competence when it accomplishes the objectives in a manner that is appropriate to the context and relationship. Intercultural communication thus needs to bridge the dichotomy between appropriateness and effectiveness: appropriateness is valued rules, norms, and expectations of the relationship are not violated significantly. While effectiveness is valued goals or rewards (relative to costs and alternatives) are accomplished and competent communication is an interaction that is seen as effective in achieving certain rewarding objectives in a way that is also related to the context in which the situation occurs. In other words, it is a conversation with an achievable goal that is used at an appropriate time/location.

Intercultural communication can be linked with identity, which means the competent communicator is the person who can affirm others' avowed identities. As well as goal attainment is also a focus within intercultural competence and it involves the communicator to convey a sense of communication appropriateness and effectiveness in diverse cultural contexts.

Ethnocentrism plays a role in intercultural communication. The capacity to avoid ethnocentrism is the foundation of intercultural communication competence. Ethnocentrism is the inclination to view one's own group as natural and correct, and all others as aberrant. People must be aware that to engage and fix intercultural communication there is no easy solution and there is not only one way to do so. Listed below are some of the components of intercultural competence. Context: A judgement that a person is competent is made in both a relational and situational context. This means that competence is not defined as a single attribute, meaning someone could be very strong in one section and only moderately good in another. Situationally speaking competence can be defined differently for different cultures. For example eye contact shows competence in western cultures whereas, Asian cultures find too much eye contact disrespectful.

Appropriateness means that your behaviors are acceptable and proper for the expectations of any given culture. Effectiveness: the behaviors that lead to the desired outcome being achieved. Knowledge: this has to do with the vast information you have to have on the person's culture that you are interacting with. This is important so you can interpret meanings and understand culture-general and culture-specific knowledge. Motivations: this has to do with emotional associations as they communicate intercultural. Feelings which are your reactions to thoughts and experiences have to do with motivation. Intentions are thoughts that guide your choices, it is a goal or plan that directs your behavior. These two things play a part in motivation.

Basic tools for improving intercultural communication competence: display of interest: showing respect and positive regard for the other person. Orientation of knowledge: terms people use to explain themselves and their perception of the world. Empathy: behaving in ways that shows you understand the world as others do. Interaction management: a skill in which you regulate conversations. Task role behavior: initiate ideas that encourage problem solving activities. Relational role behavior: interpersonal harmony and mediation. Tolerance for ambiguity: The ability to react to new situations with little discomfort. Interaction posture: responding to others in descriptive, non-judgmental ways.

Intercultural communication has verbal communication. Verbal communication encompasses any form of communication involving words, spoken, written or signed. The conversation we have with our coworker at lunch, the morning news or the sports page we read in the morning even the text message you send to your spouse telling him to pick up some milk is a form of verbal communication. Our ability to communicate with a language that is based on an organized system of words, rather than merely sounds, is what sets us apart from lower species. Not only do we have language, but we also have the technology that enables us to communicate with one another no matter the physical distance.

There are several examples of verbal communication in intercultural communication that we know in order to facilitate us in understanding the application of oral communication that exists in intercultural communication. Verbal communication is a common thing to come and not something unfamiliar. Verbal communication allows the process of communication directly to others. Challenges will occur when there are two people with different communication cultures interacting with each other. This will trigger the emergence of the communication process that is in it.

Here are some forms of verbal communication that exist in cross-cultural communication. In more detail we can understand in advance the concept of verbal communication concepts and the concept of intercultural communication. Consider the following example: Intonation in Speaking: Intonation of speech is one example that can be observed in oral communication in cross-cultural communication. We can see how the intonation of people varies when talking. Let's say that people from the Javanese tribe usually tend to speak with a weaker intonation when compared with the Batak tribe.

Content of Talking: The speech content is also an example of this oral communication. For example, a group of people from a particular culture may be more interested in discussing their culture than by listening to other people or other interesting things around them. Cross-cultural communication barriers may appear here. Time of Talking: The timing of this conversation is related to when the conversation will occur. For example, there are certain cultures that require that young people pay more attention to the elderly. However, some are freeing people whenever they want to talk can express it.

Speed of speech: Speed in speaking is also an example of verbal communication in cross-cultural communication. The speed of speaking is of course different from one another. This can be understood as a difference that is significant and quite influential. Therefore, we can begin to understand what are the factors of this speed of speech. Speaking Style: The style of speech is also something we can look at when this cross-cultural interaction takes place. One's character will display the characteristics of the culture that he carries. This is a matter of course we can pay attention related to the pattern in everyday communication. Language: Language also of course becomes a difference in cross-cultural communication when viewed from the aspect of verbal communication. Language differences can sometimes be a constraint so that it takes some kind of interpreter or interpreter from this language. The function of verbal communication may be hampered by language barriers.

Contact: Contact is more focused on what things are noticed in the event of an interaction. This we can see especially when we understand someone. Through this contact, the process of cross-cultural communication will bring a distinct reflection of

the cultural characteristics brought by a person. An attention element will also appear here. The way to hearing: The last is related to how to hear. Actually this is also related to the contact earlier. Basically, the feedback given can be a sign that others are well listening to the content of the talk through oral communication that is being done in the context of the communication. Some of the examples above are certainly the concept in general. Intercultural communication is something that is familiar and can be found in everyday.

Methods

Method of the research used in this research is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Method qualitative research is based on the subjective paradigm that believes that individuals interpret on the phenomenon or event experienced and see it. Qualitative research aims to maintain shape and fill in human behavior and analyze its qualities, not change become quantitative entities. (Mulyana, 2012). In this study, collection data is done using observation and interviews. Observations were made for see the activities and learning process carried out. In-depth interviews were conducted for collecting data in the form of information from foreign tourists and local residents.

Results and Analysis

Relations of Local People and Tourist

The newcomers who settled in the place new ones tend to experience a stir culture or culture shock. Culture shock is a related disease with the job or position suffered people who suddenly move or transferred to overseas or another place.

Immigrants will usually take off the culture and blend with local people with culture the new one. Next is the separation model. There are two types of separation. First, newcomers separate themselves from maintain its culture and avoid interaction with groups other. Second is the segregation model, where dominant community that separates with other people in a group.

Discussion

In general, foreigner claim not having problems means deep interact with the local people of Serdang Bedagai. Even so, it is not problem due to cultural differences and habits between himself from Europe with local communities with culture east. According to the informant, that interaction occur between foreign tourists and Local residents usually occur when tourists need a place to live or lodging, eating and drinking in restaurants, buy daily needs, activities tour guide to transportation. As long as tourists stay on the Serdang Bedagai Hotel, almost impossible for tourists do not interact with local people of Serdang Bedagai.

The informant exemplifies ethics local community in using right and left hand when giving something to someone else. For informants who have Western culture, nothing difference between left and right hand including when giving something to others. But for the people of Serdang Bedagai, it is very much concerned. It's impolite to give by left hand to someone else. Another thing that is of concern the informant is a clothing problem. For foreign tourists who are used to use customized clothing with the weather. When the weather is hot, they are usually using minimal clothing when feel hot, they do not mean to impolite. But for local people, it can invite various response.

In addition, the informant also admitted until now they still have obstacles communication in interacting with the residents of Serdang Bedagai. But it can be

overcome by learning Indonesian and often communicate with local residents. According to the informant, understanding language becomes one of the keys main for foreigner if you want mingle with the local community. Customizing culture and habits easier to do if you understand language used by local people. Even though you feel at home and feel can adapt to culture and community in Serdang Bedagai, informants claimed to still continue to maintain his habits so far. For example, in the case of breakfast. Informant still maintain their habits eat bread like he did in country of origin. As well as clothing, when the weather is hot, the informant claimed to like using clothes simple and open, though sometimes things it is often considered rude by people other. Furthermore, related to food, informants claimed to have adapted with the taste of local food. Spicy taste which used to be a deep obstacle eating food in this area, now no longer a problem.

From the local community side, interaction between local residents and foreigner generally colored with differences culture and language. Though sometimes cause misunderstanding, up to currently it can still be overcome because it is between tourists and local residents as if already committed to each other respect each other's culture. Foreigner not long ago come for example, trying to get closer yourself with local people by saying hello residents use language words Indonesia like "How are you?", "Good morning "and so on. Whereas the one long settled or who have been many times to Serdang Bedagai will be more many speak Indonesian when talk with local people.

Conclusion

Intercultural communication is not something the new one. Since the beginning of civilization, when first humans form groups tribe, intercultural relations occur every time times people from one tribe meet with members of the tribe others and find that they are different. Differences in culture, language and daily habits become obstacles main in interaction between citizens and foreign tourists. However, understanding and use of local languages and intensive communication is the way good to overcome differences culture between foreign tourists and local residents, in this case is that happened in the Serdang Bedagai tourist area.

References

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