

# Ponte

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## THE CHANGING COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORAL ON STUDENT OF KARO ETHNIC IN YOGYAKARTA

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### Abstract

This research paper was proposed to investigate the behavioral medication as a result of interethnic interaction between Karo and Javanese who complete their study in Yogyakarta, which is known as the student's city. The researcher identified positive effect in acculturation for corresponding interethnic relation will be possibly constructed in Indonesia if we all willing to tolerate facing the diversity. This was a descriptive qualitative research; data collected through interview, observation and literature study. Research subjects composed of students of Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University and participated in Batak Christian-Protestant Church (GBKP). Data collecting technique that used were unstructured –observation, in-depth interview, document study and ethnography. The results took from the pattern of behavioral modification on a student of Batak-Karo student following stay in Yogyakarta and adapted Yogyakarta environment. The study found social relationship between Batak Karo and Javanese ethnic in Yogyakarta, it was seen from a social interaction relationship between those two ethnics didn't arise many conflicts. People around Karo student's neighborhood, can be easily influenced student's thought pattern and attitude to do the change little by little and unwittingly it would enter their mind to be able to adapt with new environment. The behavioral modification on student of Karo ethnic who stay in Yogyakarta for study produce the acculturation. The acculturation of Karo students and Javanese cultural in Yogyakarta encourage sympathy and empathy attitude in daily life. Those sympathy attitude is something that needed by our nation to create social harmony.

**Keywords:** *changing communication behavioral, ethnic identity, karo*

### Introduction

Indonesia is a rich country composed of diverse cultures, ethnic and religious and mediated by social interaction. This complexity is influencing the relation among ethnics. Abdullah (2001) suggested three bases determined interethnic in Indonesia. First base is socio-political inequality between one ethnic over another. Second base is imposed mono-political policy over plural/heterogeneous society. Third base is law or traditional norm and credibility of a local figure as a result government intervention. Behavioral modification cannot be assumed as negative constantly; ethnic diversity could also provide positive value such as acculturation.

The result research was studied acculturation as presented by the student of Batak Karo who accomplishes their study in Yogyakarta Special Province. Thus social integration among them can be created. The interethnic relation is crucial as it increasingly emerges in discourse, particularly the inter-culture relations which gradually effecting each other of Karo' student within communication and daily behaviors in Yogyakarta. The student from Karo ethnic generally had a loud voice, as their native style, individual behaviour and likely express their opinion straightly. As they decided to accomplish study in of Yogyakarta, they gradually to

adapt local culture. As it is well known that Yogyakarta people have soft voice and tone of communication, and mannerly socialize.

Lestari, Puji and Siti Fatonah (2012), in their research, explain that ethnic Karo modification in Yogyakarta was resulted from the interaction between Karo and other ethnics. This modification can be observed from the internalization of Karo culture and Javanese culture. Both were using Indonesia as communication means however, assimilation takes place within Javanese with manner behave and friendly attitude.

This research studied on behavioral modification as presented by the student of Batak-Karo ethnic in Yogyakarta in order to create acculturation. The researcher identified positive effect in acculturation for corresponding interethnic relation will be possibly constructed in Indonesia if we all willing to tolerate facing the diversity. The research question was what kind of behavioral modification took place on the student of Karo ethnic who stay in Yogyakarta? The present research was sought to describe the behavioral modification on student of Karo ethnic who stays in Yogyakarta for study.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Theory of symbolic interaction**

Theory of symbolic interaction stated that people are triggered to act according to meaning presented by other, object and event. These meanings contained within used language during communicating with another and oneself. Language allows people to develop their sense of self and interact with other in a neighborhood (West and turner, 2008: 98). LaRossa and Reitz (1993) argued that one of the assumptions of this theory in individual develop their self-concept through interaction with other, which it stated that people are constructing their sense of self through connection with other.

The individual does not born with self-concept, but they learn their self through interaction. Symbolic interaction explained that this is a prolonged process throughout children learned about language and ability to give respond and internalized gained feedback. This theory also describes assumption on people and group affected by the social and cultural process. It is stated social norms were restrict people behavioral. This stated that individual choose his or her preposiosi behavior to refer to it the surrounding according to the valid norm. Another assumption is social structure is produced through social interaction; it stated that perception of social structure is never transformed and that individual can modify the social situation. It takes place as a culture has rooted in a particular social structure, thus in this situation when an individual entering to a new social structure, (s)he can be modified the existing social structure.

### **2. Cultural Identity**

Fong in Samovar and Porter (2002 : 184) argued that culture and identity in learning interethnic relation is crucial for the classified race and ethnic identity. He also stated that communication identification is a system in symbolic verbal and nonverbal behaviors with attaching meaning and being shared within the group with join tradition, heritage and norms.

Samovar and Porter in the same book further quoted Ting Toomey which said that Identity in a group or culture is dynamic in nature and may alter contextually overtime as result modernity. Ting-Toomey stated that people achieved and develop their identity through interaction in

within their cultural group. As they progress, identity process took place within the closest environment such family and other cultural socialization and individual development.

A unique individual characteristics as well as diverse cultural characteristic are enriching the Indonesian culture and the way individual see their self. Markus and Nakayama (Samovar and Porter, 2002:192), people with the different culture has different perception about self and others and bound between them. For example, one grow in individualistic culture such America and Europe exhibit their uniqueness against other; however, those who groes in collectivistic culture will likely emphasizing their sense of belonging in particular groups and in the relations with others.

From the theoretical perspective, Phinney (Samovar and Portyer, 2002:1999) proposing three stages model to comprehend identity development and modification. This model focuses on the process of young people building their identities which consist of three stages:

#### 2.1 The First stage (unknown identity)

This stage is indicated by lack of exploration of ethnicity. In this stage the individual seem less interest to explore or presents their identity; (s)he likely to place border against the neighborhood. For the member of minority culture, their uninterested and unwillingness source from intention to hide their ethnic identity in sought for identifying majority culture; in another word, minority culture place majority culture as their reference in identify the minority culture itself.

#### 2.2 The Second stage (look for ethnic identity)

This is begun as one put interest to recognize and learn about their culture. Progress from one stage to another is driven by the stimulus. Discriminating self-culture will lead adjustment by minority ethnic to identify and present their culture. This may rise to believe that minority had all disadvantage for its member. Interest in ethnic identity may emerge during participating in the cultural event, to culture class or other events that stimulate awareness on their cultural heritance.

#### 2.3 The Third stages (ethnic achievement)

This final stage is achieved as one has clear and determined comprehension of their cultural identity. For members of minority this commonly achieved by the ability to effectively cope the discrimination and negative stereotype. Identity achievement also provides self-esteem and reward on self. In this stage, one has clear relize their culture, and this may more prominent on the discriminated minority by the majority culture. This ethnic achievement rose self-confident in his/her culture.

In the process of communication and interacting with other people, we may in and out from with different kinds of identities each one of them may use different type of communicative behavior in line to presented identity and background. Within inter-culture encounter, people will have various expectations regarding identity and presented communication style may cause discomfort, misunderstanding, and conflict; or contrary may support each other. Imahori and Cupach assumed that one cultural identity is the basic element in inter-culture communication (Samovar and Porter, 2002: 199).

Collier also suggested that in order to be able to communicate effectively within the inter-culture situation, cultural identity and communication manner must align to identity and

exhibited the style of opposite parties. In situation communication manner is diverse among communicators, they may reciprocally be adapted, adjusting their self and place (Samovar and Porter, 2022:200).

### 3. Interaction Theory

This theory saw personality as a result of inter-affecting between numerous biological potency or inclination and experience of an individual which lead to, a more serious study regarding individual uniqueness in a cultural tradition. This also leads to more focus study on the probability of universal pattern of “human natures” that channeled, expressed and valued uniquely regarding their living culture (Keesing, M. Roger, 1999:95).

The theory which mentioned previously is related with study that held about communication between two culture, they were Karo students who stayed in Yogyakarta and majority of resident as Javanese. Indirectly, both of the cultures, especially Karo as migrant culture must capable to adapt with Javanese culture in Yogyakarta. Either in term of communication, nature or character, daily action, way of talk, or traditions which obeyed by Javanese society. In theory of symbolic interaction has relevance with symbols that changed when Karo’s people lived in Yogyakarta then they experienced cultural internalization. There was symbol modification when adaptation process occurred.

### Methodology

The method of data collection which used this study was descriptive qualitative data in the form of written and oral words. which is based on the literary study and field data (Dewi, Iva, 2017:183). Research location to get the informant(s) are students from Atma Jaya University Yogyakarta and the interview was taking place in the campus and Christian Church Karo Ethnic which known as, GBKP (*Gereja Batak Karo Protestant*).

Data collecting technique that used were:

1. Unstructured observation : to get description about how did the interaction that experienced by Batak Karo’s people in their daily life. Data type which obtained was primary data.
2. In-depth interview : to re-check information that obtained through unstructured observation so that data which collected became more reliable. In-depth interview is an activity to find information in the study with asking-and-answering deeply. In-depth interview is very useful for qualitative research because the researcher can have better understanding about problems in the study. This allowed researchers to explore deeper and act as a good listener. Researcher get the information from Karo ethnic, and the information did not come solely from yes-no-questions, but from questions such as why and how is the social life of Karo ethnic itself? How about culture and language that happen? Is there any change for Karo ethnic itself? In this term, the researcher tried to get the guideline to become ethnic group so that they can tell by themselves about what happened. Data finding that being analyzed were ostensible behavior, objects that affected way to adapt, talk, language, cultural tradition. Afterward it was being analyzed by engaging supportive factors which believed inserting self-information.
3. Document study : to strengthen data analysis with the use of the document that contained the number of Batak Karo Student in Yogyakarta. Photo illustrated the picture of Batak Karo’s people in Yogyakarta in the past and present. The data type that collected were secondary data.

4. Ethnography : to get the point of view and perspective that owned by Batak Karo's people so that became more capable in understanding identity change process that occurred. Data type that collected were secondary data.

The data obtained including : person's basic identity such as name, date of birth, place of birth, present domicile, the period of stay in Yogyakarta, languages which use actively , reason stay in Yogyakarta, around identity –willing to called Javanese or Batak Karo's people? What is the reason? Do they want to study Yogyakarta Javanese culture? What is the reason? Are they still do special ritual of Batak Karo? Are they willing to devolve Batak Karo tradition to their younger brothers/sisters? Do they want to come back to their originating place after graduate?

### **Result**

The result of the study that has been held discovered the fact that the way they talk to people around them has been significantly. The change was observed because the way they talk became smoother now. It also can be proved when we held interview dialogue to collect data, their way of talk when they answered our questions is quite delicate. It also affected their intonation aspect. Intonation when they talked became softer and lower in tone, contrary before they have arrived here, they tend to speak with strong intonation like an angry person. Those things above, made us changed our mind about Karo ethnic that we knew before because as we know generally that Batak ethnic society especially Batak Karo tend to talk insolent and to the point.

Other changes that ostensible and easy to see is the change regarding the language that they use. After a certain period live in Yogyakarta, they understand and knew how to speak in the Javanese, started with its pronouncing, voice intonation, word stressing or letter and meaning from the Javanese language. They admitted that sometimes they brought by ambience to spoke the Javanese too. Some the Javanese language that they often said was "*nengdi koe?*", "*wes mangan?*", "*piye tugasmu dab?*", "*sek tho, enteni aku*". Those words sound simple and it was implanted easily in their minds.

Last change from communication aspects was ostensible changes from delivery message aspect. Previously, Karo ethnic society was an individual that tends to never cut wisdom teeth to deliver something in their minds. They express and deliver everything in their mind spontaneous and never thought about the effect of their words towards someone else's feeling. But after they stay in Yogyakarta for some time, today they are become more selective in words choosing to delivered, so that the things that they say didn't hurt other's feeling.

### **Discussion**

This research on ethnic identity is different from the research on ethnic identity previously conducted by Epstein & Heizler (2015)<sup>4</sup> which discusses ethnic identity in the economic and political sectors. The result showed if the political strength of the minority group increases relative to the majority group, the ethnic identity with the source society will increase.

The research from Pamela, Luciana & Nadine (2017) at<sup>2</sup> ut difference cultural structure and behavior students in the lea<sup>2</sup>ing process. The result is culture determines to a great extent, learning and teaching styles. Culture is mediated through a social structure. In general, culture refers to the ways in which different groups of people organize their daily lives within national or ethnic groups, urban neighborhoods, companies and professions, and other settings. Culture includes what people actually do and what they believe. Culture

influences greatly how we see the world, how we try to understand it and how we communicate with each other.

The other researches that has been conducted on ethnic identity in North Sumatera were done by Setiawan & Siahaan (2017). The result of that study show is the composition of the population of North Sumatra based on ethnic (region/district), namely: Java 33.4%, Tapanuli Toba 25.62%, Mandailing 11.27%, Nias 6.36%, Malay 5.86%, Karo 5.09% , Other tribe 3.29%, Chinese 2.71%, Minang 2.66%, Simalungun 2.04%, Aceh 0.97%, and Pakpak 0.73%. During this time, the people of North Sumatera can be said to live in harmony amid differences. This is the hallmark of North Sumatera with multicultural without any dominant culture.

This research discussed specifically the ethnic identity Karo individual(s) in Yogyakarta. Through studies that have been held about attitude, character, or behavioral modification of Karo students in Yogyakarta, it was found some attitude modification. Generally, it happened when they do communication process, including some aspects such as a: way of talking, the tone of talking, language, way to deliver the message.

Explanation about some changes that occurred in communication then there are changes that they experienced in term of attitude, including: Karo students become more friendly and decent towards others, lenient in term of the way they speak to other, selective in choosing friends, relax and less hurried, calm or quiet and less selfish, they became more capable to adapt with their situation and more patient because Javanese society is quiet and patient.

The influence of Javanese Food and cultural aspects also started to affect their thought and attitude. Overall, they were are easy to accept and adapt with Yogyakarta's food that dominates with the sweet taste. They feel very comfortable to stay in Yogyakarta because the living cost in Yogyakarta is relatively cheap, and many strategic dwellings with sufficient facilities and affordable price. They thought that culture in Yogyakarta is very amazing and beautiful, a lot of new cultures that they knew after they lived and study at Yogyakarta. They knew not only the original culture from Yogyakarta, but also other culture such as Waisak which held in Borobudur, made them enjoying other culture except Karo and Javanese.

### **Conclusion**

The study found social relationship between Batak Karo and Javanese ethnic in Yogyakarta looks good enough in many things, it was seen from the social interaction relationship between those two ethnics didn't arise many conflicts. Theory of symbolic interaction which explain that an individual is triggered to act according to the meaning presented by other, object and event. And it become real because of the result of the study on the student of Batak Karo. When Karo student in Yogyakarta received meaning based on the event that occurred there is a symbol modification in their behavior that is they able to adapt to Javanese cultural symbols in Yogyakarta (language symbol, special food, clothes, etc).

People around Karo student's neighborhood, can be easily influenced student's thought pattern and attitude to do the change little by little and unwittingly it would enter their mind in order to be able to adapt with the new environment. The modification that commonly easy to happen to an individual or a group is about culture. Different culture society experienced modification

because of effective communication and direct contact for a long time, but it might not be intercultural mixing thoroughly, that was usually called acculturation. Acculturation process whether it's easy or difficult depending on individual or group's acceptance, being tolerant and having socialization in their new place of living. Those modifications were not negative if they are capable to balance between each culture. Acculturation sometimes can make the development of new culture because of interesting unification between so many cultures on Indonesia.

Acculturation can minimize the difference that occurred in social interaction in society, considering a numerous conflicts of inter-ethnic that occurred in some regions in Indonesia became a barrier to the occurrence of tolerance. Acculturation of Karo students and Javanese cultural in Yogyakarta encourage sympathy and empathy attitude in daily life. That sympathy attitude is something that needed by our nation to create social harmony.

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