



Intercultural Communication of Nusantara Module Students at Slamet Riyadi University

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine intercultural communication between students of the Nusantara Module Independent Student Exchange (PMM) at Slamet Riyadi University due to cultural differences. This study uses qualitative research using case studies. Data obtained by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results showed that there was good communication and interaction between PMM students at Slamet Riyadi University. This interaction creates a sense of mutual tolerance and respect for one another in the city of Solo. The main language used is Indonesian, but it is also supported by the languages of each region, which, of course, learn from one another. The differences that exist actually make students more compact and familiar.

INTRODUCTION

The State of Indonesia has a diversity of religions, beliefs, cultures, races, ethnic groups, and languages but still adheres to the Indonesian nation's motto, namely *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which means that although we are different, Indonesia is still one. The diversity and differences that are owned by Indonesia become the wealth and beauty of the Indonesian nation, which is maintained, so that it becomes a force in realizing the unity and unity of the Indonesian nation. This *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* certainly has a very important role in unifying the Indonesian nation, whose people are very diverse in both religion, race, ethnicity, belief, and culture spread throughout the archipelago, so that *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* must be maintained for the integrity of the Indonesian nation.

The Merdeka Student Exchange is one of eight MBKM programs. The Merdeka Student Exchange is a domestic student exchange that sends students to study at universities throughout Indonesia. The Merdeka Student Exchange aims to develop students' leadership abilities and skills to make friends with people of diverse backgrounds to increase unity and nationalism. The Nusantara Module is a series of PMM activities focused on creating a comprehensive understanding of diversity, inspiration, reflection, and social contribution. Students are selected from various universities in Indonesia. This is intended to maximize the meeting space between students, increase understanding, and deposit the meaning of tolerance. These activities aim to introduce the rich culture of the archipelago, which originates from various groups, ethnicities, races, religions, and beliefs. So that the archipelago module program also develops student leadership abilities and soft skills so that they are able to blend in with various backgrounds to increase the value of unity and nationalism by exploring the diversity of Indonesian culture through learning the Nusantara Module.

Slamet Riyadi University, Surakarta, which is one of the campuses in Surakarta, is the campus that accepts inbound students in the independent archipelago module student exchange program in Surakarta. Slamet Riyadi University will accept PMM Nusantara Module students in 2021 offline, for a total of 25 students. In the PMM Nusantara Module, there are 25 students who come from outside the island of Java to stay approximately 2 months in Surakarta to take part in a student exchange program at Slamet Riyadi University in Surakarta and visit cultural objects in the city of Surakarta. These students come from various regions in Indonesia, such as Aceh, West Kalimantan, North Kalimantan, East Nusa Tenggara, Lampung, Medan, Bali, and others. All of these students live in separate guest houses, both women's and men's guest houses. Because they have lived together for about 2 months, of course they have to adjust to one another because they have very different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

With this diverse cultural diversity, of course, students are expected to get to know and adapt to each other. The process of good cultural communication is certainly influenced by good communication as well. But sometimes the communication is not always effective and harmonious. This was felt by some students of the Nusantara module when they first met in person because they felt awkward when communicating with one another because maybe they had different cultural backgrounds, different languages, and different meanings and understandings from each other, so good communication between them was needed. one with another. But this obstacle could be minimized because two months earlier they had met in the online archipelago module lecture, so the differences that occur when offline now are not so rigid. The author will discuss this research on how intercultural students in this archipelago module communicate and interact in Surakarta, so that intercultural communication runs dynamically and harmoniously.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Every human being cannot be separated from the process of interaction and communication in his daily life. Every activity carried out is very dependent on communication. Humans, as social beings, always build their interactions with fellow human beings, so communication is the main tool as a means. Gerbner (1964), in Santoso and Setiansah (2010), suggests that communication is social interaction through symbols and message content. Meanwhile, according to Anderson (1959) in Santoso, Setiansah (2010) also explains that communication is a process by which we understand and are understood by others dynamically, continuously changing depending on the related situation. Communication is the priority in social life. Communication is a process of interaction to exchange information that aims to influence the attitudes and behaviors of other people (Koesomowidjojo, 2021).

According to Karim (2015 in Nurhadi, Mujiyanto, and Angeline (2022), there are five individual reasons for talking to other people, including: (1) Individuals talk to other people to relate how the individual is involved and how the need for energy (2) Individuals speak because of commitments related to relationships, (3) Individuals talk about relationships because of involvement, namely being involved together both quantitatively and qualitatively in conversations, dialogues, and experiences. (4) Individuals talk about relationships in terms of manipulation, namely how to supervise each other. (5) Individuals talk about relationships in terms of considering and paying attention.

Intercultural communication provides an understanding of the process of communication that occurs between people who have different cultures, such as race, ethnicity, religion, belief, and language. According to Mulyana, Rakhmat (2009) suggests that culture is communication, and communication is culture. Communication and culture have a reciprocal relationship; how does culture affect communication and vice versa? Communication also influences culture, so it needs understanding because different cultural backgrounds will affect how to communicate. According to Saputra (2019), intercultural communication is communication between people of different cultures. Intercultural

communication is also interpreted as a process of exchanging thoughts and meanings between people of different cultures, so that communication occurs between people of different nations, groups, races, or languages. Heryadi and Silvana, 2013 in Saputra (2019).

Indonesian as a unifying tool for the nation and a means of communication and interaction The use of Indonesian as an effort to preserve the Indonesian language is emphasized to improve Indonesian language skills as a modern means of communication in a pluralistic society. Integration supports cultural diversity and cultural values, so that integration creates harmonious relations between groups, both majority and minority groups, so as to achieve a balance of cultural preservation. So it is necessary to understand the dynamics of diversity integration between one group and another. Of course, this requires the support of the government to conceptualize and implement integration policies. Diversity and integration present great opportunities for social and human development but also bring significant challenges. Relations between national groups in a country can be characterized by social strength and increasingly complex integration in a pluralistic society (Shafdar, Mahali, and Scott, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method using case studies. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. According to Sugiyono (2016), the data collection strategy is to identify the problem under study when the researcher understands more deeply about the source, while documentation, according to Sugiyono (2018), is a way of obtaining data and information in the form of books, archives, notes, graphs, and images in the form of information or reports that support research. While determining informants, researchers used a purposive sampling technique by determining respondents who met the criteria and had the knowledge needed for research. The validity of the data used by the author is determined by a triangulation of sources and methods to determine the truth of the data collected and understand the findings under investigation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Offline PMM Nusantara Module has 25 students who are divided into 2 classes, each consisting of 13 students and 12 students. This research was conducted in one class containing 12 students. Initial observations were made by the author when all PMM students gathered in the archipelago module lecture process to visit cultural tourism objects in Solo. This lecture introduces and explains the cultural diversity of the city of Solo for PMM students. Apart from during lectures, there are other communications, such as during joint visits at night. Observations explain that the use of language in each region is different when communicating, so that the message conveyed by the communicator is different from the message received by the communicant. Language barriers or language styles exist because each region has a different culture, giving rise to different meanings that result in misunderstandings in communication. To

anticipate this, it is necessary to know the character of the other person to talk to in order to avoid misunderstandings when communicating.

Communication as a means of interaction between students with one another so that they can communicate with each other properly. In addition to observation, there are several respondents who were interviewed by the author to produce valid data. According to the respondents who were interviewed, Indonesian was the language that was often used by all PMM students because it was easy to understand and communicated faster. Indonesian also has a role as a connecting tool between regions and between cultures, so that Indonesian is a means of communication between one and another without worrying about the differences in the language of each region. Therefore, Indonesian is often used by students so as to create harmony in communicating with one another. But besides the Indonesian language used by students, there are several students who use their respective regional languages. In fact, using each other's regional languages sometimes encounters perceptual barriers, but this actually creates excitement, familiarity, and comfort with one another. For example, "asshole," which means great for students from East Nusa Tenggara, will change when applied in the city of Solo..

PMM students who come from various regions in Indonesia, although they have different customs and cultures, can interact with one another. Students, during lectures or living together in the guess house, continue to foster a sense of mutual respect and respect for one another's culture. In associating, they do not distinguish their regional origins, even though they consist of various regions, so that the adaptation and interaction of students with one another are well established. Intercultural communication at the Independent Student Exchange (PMM) shows human values like mutual cooperation, tolerance, mutual respect, and tolerance for one another, even though sometimes there are misunderstandings that can be resolved properly. This is in accordance with what was stated by Fisher and Aubrey (1986) in Saputra (2019), which states that such activities on campus mingle with friends who have different cultural backgrounds.

Intercultural communication basically refers to the reality of cultural diversity in society, each of which certainly has ethics and ways of different communication patterns, namely communicator to communicant, where there is a message and feedback occurs. PMM students together visit cultural tourism objects in the city of Solo, such as the palace, Sangiran museum, Keris museum, Pasar Besar as a cultural heritage, watch ketoprak together, and others as lecture activities. Besides that, PMM students often spend time together to eat together at every opportunity for this event to be an event of the intensity of togetherness and cohesiveness. There are many activities and often time spent together, which creates a sense of kinship and cohesiveness, so it is found that there is an agreement on a new language in daily interactions within the group as the daily language to create a sense of familiarity with one another. The new findings found that during the association in the city of Solo, these students gave birth to a new language that was mutually agreed upon to establish familiarity with one another, namely the "Wii" language, a language that was mutually agreed upon

to create a sense of comfort. In addition, this new language creates cohesiveness among students.

In addition to the "Wii" language, there is non-verbal communication that is learned and practiced by PMM students in the city of Solo, such as bowing their heads to older people, shaking hands, holding hands, embracing, and patting the shoulder when a friend has a problem. Other interactions carried out by students include joking together, giving each other guesses, exchanging information, and learning together the meaning of language in each respective region, so that this can foster a sense of familiarity between one and another. Every activity that is carried out always ends with the word "wii," which means cool or good. This language is used to provide mutual motivation between students and one another, thus giving a sense of enthusiasm and confidence. The urgency of this research is a social reality regarding the need for communication and cultural interaction among PMM students of the archipelago module in Surakarta because Slamet Riyadi University is one of the campuses as a tertiary institution receiving the independent student exchange (PMM) archipelago module.

The description above explains that these differences actually become reinforcements among PMM students. Differences that must be grateful for and maintained because these differences will be beautiful and colorful. Even though Indonesia is very rich in diversity, we still maintain tolerant behavior among people to increase national unity because we are one in diversity. Diversity is basically strength, but strength exists when there is a harmonious relationship; there is humanity in it, and it always fosters a culture of tolerance. For the sake of peace and progress in our country, namely Indonesia, above differences, because we are diverse, because we are one, Tolerance is very closely related to peace, so we are asked to listen to each other, understand, and reduce unnecessary debates. The differences we have teach us to live in harmony through tolerance. By understanding the differences, of course, we become sensitive, understand the importance of tolerance, and appreciate differences. The truth is that tolerance is real. Mutual respect overrides differences; the majority joins the minority and fosters a sense of tolerance between religious communities. Behind different backgrounds, we create a harmonious life. The explanation above explains that archipelago module students who live in Surakarta are able to build good relationships with one another even though they have different backgrounds. Based on the interviews with them, there were no major problems that caused the conflict. Here the author also only explains how intercultural communication between PMM students in the archipelago module at Slamet Riyadi University.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The independent student exchange for the archipelago module consists of various ethnicities, races, religions, and different cultures but can still interact well between students. Indonesian is the language that is often used by students, but some students use regional languages. Differences from diversity become a force to foster a sense of interaction and tolerance. So that cultural communication is felt to be important at this time. The differences actually create familiarity and cohesiveness between students, so that a new language appears that is mutually agreed upon to foster familiarity with one another, namely the language "Wii," which means cool or good as a sign of motivating one friend to another.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Hopefully this research will be useful and refined in future research on intercultural communication by discussing aspects other than interaction and adaptation or researching the activities of the archipelago module, which are very diverse and provide benefits.

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