STUDY ON SYMBOLIC MEANING INTERACTION ON ETHNIC DIFFERENCE IN INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION AMONG NEW SETTLER INHABITAT IN YOGYAKARTA

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Abstract

Indonesia consist of many tribes which have variety of difference culture, Thus, Indonesian is usually called as multiethnic tribe. Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) noticed Indonesia has 1128 tribes with 746 local dialects which spread in 13.000 islands from Sabang to Merauke in 2011. Yogyakarta is usually called as mini Indonesia. Various comers both domestic also foreigner go into Yogyakarta. Therefore, this observation would see how's individual with variety of ethincal background and interaction experiences gave the meaning of ethnical difference. This research used Symbolic Interaction. Theory, Identity Theory, Social Identity Theory and Communication Theory of Identity. Present research establish with sets of interview and observation on newcomers in Yogyakarta those are Batak, Sunda, NTT, Papua and China ethnics. The result described that : Indentity based on tribes ethnic is the most powerfull indentity compared to identity based on another ethnic. Ethnic identity formed powerful in family and environment which is teach certain values. New comer ethnic identity in Yogyakarta is more powerful because they live in new comer communities in same ethnic. New comers in Yogyakarta got meaning ethnic difference dominantly, i.e. as nation uniqueness and properties which is differentiate Indonesian from others. However, this situation makes Indonesia troubled with inter-ethnic conflict. New comers in Yogyakarta which is came from various ethnic being felt discriminatively yet. They are new comers from ethnic which is extremely different from physical, instance: skin color, hair type and physical posture. No one of new comers in Yogyakarta which is relatively similar with most ethnic or tribe in Indonesia feels discriminative. New Comers in Yogyakarta appraise that majority domination ethnic is Javanese which is dominate in economy and administration aspect.
Keywords: *intercultural communication, symbols, meaning, identity*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia consists of many tribes which have variety of difference culture. Thus, Indonesian is usually called as multiethnic tribe. Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) noticed Indonesia has 1128 tribes with 746 local dialects which spread in 13.000 islands from Sabang to Merauke in 2011.

In a row with advancement in educational, economy, transportation, communication, and regulation; interaction inter-ethnic become unaccomplished anymore in communication context called as inter-cultural communication or cross cultural communication. This advancement delinked geographic obstacles such distance, space and time.

Inter-ethnic contact is susceptible with conflict, both unreservedly also undiscovered. This is a result from common people would see and mean an object, event and value according to their self-cultural capacity. With the result of this arises ethnocentrism value, which only understood values (culture) that has kindness, rightness and superiority. Even will develop stereotype concept, which always beheld negative concerning values which owned by member of others ethnic (culture).

The result of ethnic prejudices which in extremely form is ethnic conflict as controversy, even warfare. This situation causes apprehension because would carry great disadvantage impact like case in Ambon, Poso and Sampit. Stories, experiences and mythology are more endanger cause can be communication media to structure inter-ethnic prejudice values. According to Lull (1998), these values can be *"memetics"* which is ready to be moved or reduplicated in humans mind. This assumption can be used to explain how individual understood ethnic prejudice.

Yogyakarta is usually called as mini Indonesia. Various comers both domestic also foreigner go into Yogyakarta particularly for studying. Therefore, this observation would see how's individual with variety of ethnical background and

interaction experiences gave the meaning of ethnical difference.

The meaning concerns ethnical difference is important to be known which Indonesia is the multiethnic country that susceptible with the conflict. All the human behavior would start from how a person gives the meaning their environments; material object, event and values. The result of the meaning would be value system which is rightness legality in every human action. Absolutely this rightness subjectively and relatively when confronted with the other value-systems which attributed to another human.

Individual meaning toward their environment happens in a long time. It doesn't self-supporting, but many factors influenced. One of the factors is interaction problem and communication with their environment from individual has cognition awareness, affection and conation. These experiences would accumulate which form uniquely and specifically individual (self).

Interaction and communication process always barter symbolic signs which has full of meaning. Every person would influence and was influenced by the others. Thus, nobody were free from the others influence, both personal also group. So the individual meaning towards their environment would depend on individual interaction and communication toward their

variety environment according to their-self intensity.

Many comers go into Yogyakarta make into inter-cultural communication which involves many ethnics unaccomplished anymore. Therefore, necessary to know for difference ethnical meanings, resistant, dominant, or neutral. Each situation certainly has different communication background and interaction.

Observation of Symbolic Interaction

One of topic consider meaning be in sociologist perspective. Meaning concept and interpretation in this perspective was known as symbolic interaction theories. In this theory, meaning was made and preserved by social interaction in social group. This important concept could be seen from premise explained by Barbara Ballis Bal in Littlejohn (1999 : 155-156) that : a) people makes decision and act appropriate to subjectively meaning from the situation which they faced; b) Social live consists of social processes; c) People understands their experience from the meaning which is found in primary group symbols; d) World consists of named social objects and the meaning was determined socially; e) People's act refers to subjective interpretation; f) Self-concept is a significant object and as another social object was defined by social interaction.

According to Blumer in Griffin (2000:34-37), there are three principles in symbolic interaction i.e. related to meaning, language and thought. People's act toward others or things depend on meaning which is given toward these people or things. In the context of symbolic interaction these meaning can't be self-supporting, but as the result from social interaction, which is values and convictions compatible each other. Meaning doesn't inherent in object, but meaning was negotiated by using of language. Finally, symbol interpreting by these individual was modified by individual thinking process. Symbolic interaction observed this thinking process as inner conservation. Mead called it as inner dialogue minding.

In principle symbolic interaction theory has two ideologies, i.e. Chicago School ideology which is interpretively and Lowa School ideology which is quantitatively. Considering explanation above, approach used in this observation is interpretive approach thereby this observation be done in Cichago School ideology approach. There are three important premises which is explained by Herbert Blumler concerning this Symbolic Interaction Thought. First, individual acts according to meaning towards faced social object. Second, meaning was managed, transformed, modified by social interaction.

Third, acts toward this meaning, can be done by interpretation and definition.

Thing needs attention is relationship among self-concept, social object and using of words. When abdi dalem (kingdom servant) interpreted toward certain social object instance Sundanese or Bataknese figure, to get image of how this individual interpreted and got mean, a researcher observed from life of sphere this individual. Each has different interpretation was determined by how this individual defined their self toward interpretation object. A student has interpretation definition and range which is different with a seller, the rising generation has interpretation definition and range which is different with old generation.

Review about Ethnic

Firstly the term of ethnic come from Greece, that is "*ethnichos*" that means a cluster of idolates or infidels. In that growth the term is used to indicate a cluster that is fanatic with ideology. In a current context, the ethnic refers to ethnical classification based on particularly affiliation. According to Bath (1988) and Zastrow (1999) in the Liliweri (2003 : 335), ethnical is a set of human because of race, religion, nation derivation or even a combination of the them related to value and culture system.

Liliweri (2003 : 337) mentions the ethnical classification base can be horizontal and vertical. Ethnical classification horizontally based on : race, vernacular, mores, religion, and material culture. While it vertically based on : revenue, education, settlement, occupation, and social-political position. According to Martin and Nayakama (2008 : 92) the identity can be based on gender, sex, age, ethnical and race, religion, social class, and more.

There are 6 approaches to the ethnical plurality (Liliweri, 2003 : 338-340), as follow:

1. Historic approach

   Historic approach relies on inheritance history inscription of ethnical cluster. Each ethnical as if free to predict themself as big, respectable and marvelous so that they fell superior. They dominate the status and role in social, political, and economy area. They also make other ethnicals inferior in status and role.

2. Social culture approach

   The conflict of ethnical inter-cluster is a impact of freedom mobility on society. The society that more complex with every kinds of the problem makes the diversity of the ethnical classifications. Such condition is usually found in over population big cities.

3. Situational approach

Ethnicity is a situational problem because it happens on particularly time and place. This influences on ethnical behavior and manner. For example: settlement segregation, job ceiling, area governance, separation of social infrastructure utilization up to discrimination action based on ethnical that happen because of the state of emergency.

4. Psychodynamic approach

Ethnicity happens because there is a frustration ethnical cluster so that it is easy to prejudice about other ethnicals. Prejudice is always possessed by the person who is psychologically worry, closed, and intolerance to the difference and more.

5. Phenomenology approach

Ethnicity is determined by the impact of particularly individual factor that teaches people to act and think for others.

6. Object approach

Approach to case by case that rises a prejudice. For example the prejudice between black race versus white race, prejudice between Moslem and Christian and more.

The main problem of ethnical plurality is the appearance of ethnical prejudice. It is caused by:

1. Tendency of prejudice to our competitors, even more they come from other ethnicals.

2. Ethnocentrism, tends to affect a view that outer part of ethnical cluster is worse than inner part.

3. Appraising unknown people by stereotype, although it is not fully true, but constantly it becomes flexible appraisal base.

4. Tends to determine the social distance and discrimination between ethnical's outer and inner part.

5. Generalizing other clusters based on experience to several individu.

6. The demand of development progress; for example modernization, education, health, technology and science that demand the professional SDM qualification so it shifts a particularly ethnical cluster. (Liliweri, 2003 : 338).

Talking about ethnical problem can be separated from identity problem (ethnical). Identity is self-concept. identity is formed through communication process. It is developed by through difficult process, but through the complex process in a long era. Sometimes we not only have one identity, but multi identities that influenced by society and culture dynamically (Martin & Nakayama, 2008 : 87). Ethnical identity reflects a set of idea possessed by the part of ethnical cluster. This covers some dimensions : self-identity, knowledge about

ethnical culture (tradition, habit, behavior, value) and feeling as a ethnical part (Martin & Nakayama, 2008 : 97).

It means that the existence of our identities is not a simple process. Wheter other people underdtand us like we do. Identity will depend on with who we have a communication and what we talk about (*social conversation*) (Martin & Nakayama, 2008 : 87). Trough the *social conversation* began when the individu starts to experience space and time awareness, at that time the identitiy awareness starts to be formed. Of course start from awareness as a part of family to part of civilization ethnical (culture unity in wide range).

Ethnical identity has important role between ethnic political chess. Conflict (prejudice) can be apparent when there is a sharp difference between what we think about ourself and others think about us (Martin & Nakayama, 2008 : 92). If the discrepancy is related to the social facility distribution problem and political chance can be a fire in the chaff that can be a great and extended conflict at any time.

There are some theories that can explain the identity problem. First, Social Identity Theory (SIT). This theory focus on social formation as a product of social cathegory (Hogg, 1993; Hogg & Abrams, 1998; Turner, 1991) in L Hecht (2005: 257).

Their category social include ethnic, gender and social affiliation as part of social structure. Individual get involves in various categories and formed identities bases on membership in social category. Through this process society is being internalized by individual in form social identity as base social category. Social identity will bridges individual to society in form group membership impacting the trust, attitude and individual behavioral associated with member of other social group. Social Identity Theory put emphasis on social aspect than individual aspect whilst identity social emphasize individual between individual and society.

The second theory is Identity Theory (IT). As product of symbolic interaction, identity theory defined the relation between society and individual based on role, point to individual role when they posit particular position in particular social context (Schlenker, 1985; L Hech et.al., 2005:260). Individual role is social behavior pattern being expected and other demand bases on situation (Banton, 1965; L Hecth et.al., 2005:260).

Identity theory see self as communicate-able, but not the communication. In other word, identity theory see communication as one of actor in identity development and as identity expression instead of identity. Social

behavior definitely influence identity (Banton, 1965: L Hecht et.al., 2005:260).

The third theory is communication theory of identity (CTI) identity is put as subject study under psychology, sociology and anthropology. The focus are on individual aspect, roles, function, social and general of identity. CTI expand the study by integrate communication. This theory see identity in its communicative nature. Identity formed, maintain and modified in communicative process thus reflecting communication. Identity in turn is being played and exchanged in communication (L Hecht et.al., 2005:262).

Hecth et.al., (1993); L Hecht et.at., (2005:262) proposed two method which communication being internalized as identity. First, symbolic meaning of social phenomena is shaped and exchanged through social interaction. Identity is formed when relevant symbolic meaning performed and organized by individual in various situation by means social interaction (adopted from identity theory). Social interaction is internalized as identity as one shaped symbolic meaning and associated it into her/his-self. Second, as individual put her/his-self in identifiable social category, social interaction will validated or confirmed them (relevant or not). Categorization in social interaction facilitated individual to shape and modify their identity. Identity is manifestation of social interaction transferred in form expectation and motivations. Specific identity will present specific expectation and finally influence communication.

Review of Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication frequently exchanged with cross-cultural communication, interethnic communication, interracial and international communication. Intercultural; communication take place between differ nation, race, language, education level, social status or gender (Dedy Mulyana, 2001:v). Intercultural communication assumed that communicator and communicant had different cultural background, thus it is assumed between communicator and communication had different perception on presented communication messages.

Perception dissimilarity triggers miscommunication in communication process. Communication supposed to be produce mutual understanding between communicator and communicant, however it may resulted misunderstanding, prejudice, conflict and disagreement.

The most basic misunderstanding and often break is language perception. According to Martin and Nayakama (2004:197) language dissimilarity ranges on semantic, syntactic, pragmatic and phonetic. Semantic covers words meaning

in communication. For example, Javanese, Sunda and Bali had contrary-meaning word concerning good and bad. Syntactic covers words in grammatical. Pragmatic involve word position in daily used bases on context. Phonetic concern on word spelling which give differs word meaning.

Prejudice factor generally constantly attach on identity and stereotype in intercultural communication realm. Prejudice is negative behavior on group of cultural identity caused by lack or no experience at all. Stereotype is perceive other cultural identity refer to assumption widely shared in society which the validity is being questioned (Martin and Nakayama, 2004: 167-169).

Stereotype is not always present negative meaning, but also positive one. Negative stereotype positive stereotype can deliver negative impact caused by over-expectation on particular cultural entity; believe that particular group of entity able to perform of meet specific expectation.

Prejudice above cultural inter-identity can produce inter-perceive based on negative stereotype. Accumulated prejudice in long term and exist on extreme point will lead to conflict. Samuel P. Hntington et.al (1997:3) stated that conflict on our world is no longer concern with ideology or economy. A wide segmentation between people and the main cause of world conflict is culture. Nation-sate will remain being the

prime actor in world issue, however basic conflict of world political issue will break between nations and group from differs civilization, Huntington et.al., (1997:8) divided world civilization into eight: west, Confucius, Japan, Islam, Hindu, orthodox Slavic, Latin America and Africa.

DISCUSSION

Present research established with sets of interview and observation on newcomers in Yogyakarta those are Batak, Sunda, NTT, Papua and China ethnics. The result described below.

Intercultural communication is contact between one or more culture in communication term presented different cultural identity. Every subject has individual cultural or ethnic identity gained from each culture environment. The identity had strongly attached since the individual has exposed since in children-hood and constantly communication in its environment, particularly family environment. For example, "I am Papua from honorable family", "I am Batak who used to travel", " I am Chinese who fluent in trading" etc. such ethnic identity strongly attached on newcomer in Yogyakarta. Though they hanging around with various ethnic by remain keep their identity without discriminate other ethnic.

In such event, ethnic identity hold as pride, in fact it produce superiority above

other ethnics. This pride sense is a common as it constructed in years by interaction process and communication in each environment parallel to their cognitive development

This ethnic identity orientation stimulate newcomers to established ethnic-based organizations. Such organization managed their member orderly. It facilitate interaction and communication among their member. Each issue faced by a member will spread swiftly to other member to help deal with the issue.

Those organizations also facilitate their member to socialize with other instead of being exclusive. They open to interact and communicate to any one from other ethnic. Anyone who willing to get involve in social gathering he/she will openly accept. Newcomers do not discriminate ethnic-race in communication and interaction either among them or Yogyakarta native.

Discrimination treatment by Yogyakarta native mostly perceived on newcomer with physical far-differ and Yogyakarta inhabitant specifically. Extreme physical appearance such body posture, skin color, hair, lips made them perceive being discriminate. They are newcomer from east Indonesia.

Physical difference had made them perceived for being treating negatively. Rumors that widely accept in society is that individual from east Indonesia are rude,

drunker, and make racked. They are disagree that all get same judge. Some individual did such bad behavior, but it do not valid for all newcomer from same ethnic. Such negative stereotype truly disadvantage them.

Informants from Papua and East Southeast Nusa (NTT) sensed such negative prejudice when they look for house rental or room-rental. The owner state that the room are full while an information stated there may available room. After confirmed another source stated that the house refuse to accommodate 'east' ethnic.

Another informant from NTT also feel such discrimination in work term. His/her work contract was canceled one-sided since he/she is NTT. At that time a riot had just happen in Yogyakarta that involved students from NTT and native inhabitant in Tambak Bayan Yogyakarta. Other experience also informed by NTT ethnic who was work in private bank; one time she was transferred to Aceh which the majority is Moslem and differ physical appearance. She finally proposed resign since feel difficult to face discriminative treatment.

Another newcomer from China which different in physical appearance with other perceived have being discriminated. His/her slant-eye frequently became joke subject. The one of Chinese stereotype is niggard and business-oriented. However, the Chinese informant able to confront those in

easy manner, and do not feel any malice, emotional or inferior.

Newcomers in Yogyakarta with physical appearance rather similar do not sense any discrimination. They feel comfort and enjoy to live in Yogyakarta. They easily communicate and interact to anyone, either newcomer of native inhabitant. They feel well accepted.

Above stereotype remain often take place that involved differ ethnic. Either realizes or not ethnocentrism put out ethnicity higher than other presented in: beware, cautious, feel threaten and horrified and so on.

However, newcomers on Yogyakarta are originated from various ethnic have positive perspective on ethnic differentiate, though some of them perceived being subject of discrimination. Ethnic differentiate in Indonesia has richness and unique made Indonesia dissimilar to other nations; these all enrich Indonesia culture.

Ethnicity diversity is nation's richness, but also put Indonesia in vulnerable conflict situation bases race, religion and race. Some major cases had occurred such conflict between Madura and Dayak in Sampit, Kalimantan, conflict between Islam and Chistian in Maluku, which potential re-break till today and leaded to far serious. Another cases due to ethnic such newcomers under attacked in Aceh and Papua, rape suffered by Chinese during Mei riot in 1998 and many other.

Thus newcomer in Yogyakarta has different dominant perspective positively. Ethnic diversity is unique richness. Such understanding had embedded and growth in their environment. And they are teaches to be proud for being member of particular ethnic, and perceived diversity in positive and proportional manner. An informant from NTT explain he/she had used to see ethnicity differ, which his/her grandfather hold traditional religion, whilst his 12 children hold diverse religion, Moslem, Christian and some still hold local religion.

Generally perspective on ethnic different mostly influence by interaction and communication in their family. Newcomers which their family home-employed or having limited interaction with other mostly teach ethnocentrism, that their value is better. In contrast, those who their parent work in formal sector and sufficiently interact with other tend more cooperative with diversity.

Resistant the new comers in Yogyakarta are worried about negative impact from ethnic difference that makes Indonesia troubled toward inter-ethnic conflict. They regretted the domination or majority of ethnic who feels much better until laid down their own way that makes prejudice. The experiences of discriminative treatment strengthened these assumptions. This ethnical prejudice

called as objective approach, because prejudice came from recurrent case by case and accumulated in no limit time.

The new comers in Yogyakarta appraises Javanese is the most majority and dominate in administration, whereas the majority of religion is Islam. All this time looks that the president must be Javanese and Islam and it's said so. An informant from minority ethnic declares everyone who has capacity and capability must deserved opportunity without discern certain ethnical background, tribe or religion. This context can be understood as prejudice and discriminate in category of objective approach.The result of this observation also makes meaning viewpoint toward ethnical difference extremely. Image of new comers in Yogyakarta who beheld ethnical difference rigorously was found by closed observation and interview. They are students who stayed at dormitory as their central community.

Issues concerns conflict that involves ethnic developed rapidly and fiercely in dormitory environment. When dispute of different inter-ethnic occurs, they positioned each other in right side. Stories of interaction and communication delivers in to subject concerned in conflict always fire abhorrence toward ethnic which concerns in conflict with them. In case like this, solidarity of ethnic would toughen, even seniors who spread in various towns

come to solve the problem. This case usually happens in inter-ethnic comer, not native inhabitant in Yogyakarta.

CONCLUSION

According to the result and analysis of section before, this observation delivers conclusions:

First, identity based on tribes ethnic is the most powerful identity compared to identity based on another ethnic. Prides as member of certain ethnic become a pride in itself that sometimes make feels better than another ethnic. However might not be discriminated toward another ethnic.

Second, ethnic identity formed powerful in family and environment which is teach certain values. These values carried everywhere they will be in, involve when they migrated in area which the majority of tribe is different. These values delivered an enthusiasm in itself when lives in abroad.

Third, new comer ethnic identity in Yogyakarta is more powerful because they lived in new comer communities in same ethnic. Their emotional is powerful, more over when one of them getting problem. These communities will be interaction and communication tools for new comer in Yogyakarta which came from certain area.

Fourth, new comers in Yogyakarta got meaning the ethnic difference dominantly, i.e. as nation uniqueness and properties which is differentiate Indonesian

from others. However, this situation makes Indonesia troubled with inter-ethnic conflict. This conflict comes from inter-ethnic prejudice and negative labeling toward certain ethnic. This situation makes stereotype opinion toward certain ethnic or tribe, both negative and positive stereotype.

Fifth, new comers in Yogyakarta which is came from various ethnic being felt discriminatively yet. They are new comers from ethnic which is extremely different from physical, instance: skin color, hair type and physical posture. No one of new comers in Yogyakarta which is relatively similar with most ethnic or tribe in Indonesia feels discriminative.

Sixth, new comers in Yogyakarta appraises that majority domination ethnic is Javanese which is dominate in economy and administration aspect. However there is anyone who appraises this ethnic domination according to certain sector. Instance Javanese dominate in administration, Chinese and Padangnese dominate in commerce and Bataknese dominate in legal department.

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