

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AMONG INDONESIAN AND KOREAN STUDENTS THROUGH VOLUNTARY WORK PROGRAM IN SMART EKSELENSIA INDONESIA³

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Abstract

Intercultural communication is a communication process which consists of interpersonal interaction and interpersonal communication done by some people who have different cultural background (Liliweri, 2003, p.13). Some problems which inhibit intercultural communication process are physical, cultural, perceptual, motivational, experiential, linguistic, and non verbal (Chaney& Martin,2004 p.11-12). This paper purpose is to analyze the intercultural communication among Indonesian and Korean students during voluntary work in Smart Ekselensia Indonesia. There are 11 Korean senior high school students with 2 teachers and 1 nurse visited Indonesia from October 26th to November 2nd, 2011.

The results of the study shows that 83% of Indonesian students convinced that English helps them a lot while 65% mentioned they increase their motivation to learn English. There are 57% of the students improved their speaking skill, 52% improved their listening skill and 53% improved their grammar. On the contrary, their reading and writing are not significantly improved.

There are 64% always communicate orally with the volunteer while 69% sometimes use body language. 53% Indonesian students convinced that they have misunderstood Korean students' statement because only 68% of Indonesian students understood those Korean pronunciation. There are 37% of Indonesian students still communicate with Korean by email. Based on the interview, Indonesian students give positive opinion about this program and it should be hold once a year because they learn Korean culture indirectly through this program.

Keywords: *Intercultural Communication, intercultural communication problems, intercultural communication analyze*

Introduction

Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication is a communication process which consists of interpersonal interaction and interpersonal communication done by some people who have different cultural background (Liliweri, 2003, p.13). Some problems which inhibit intercultural communication process are physical, cultural, perceptual, motivational, experiential, linguistic, and non verbal (Chaney& Martin, 2004 p.11-12). Intercultural communication is defined as situated communication between individuals or groups of different linguistic and cultural origins. This is derived from the following fundamental definitions: communication is the active relationship established between people through language, and intercultural

means that this communicative relationship is between people of different cultures, where culture is the structured manifestation of human behaviour in social life within specific national and local contexts, e.g. political, linguistic, economic, institutional, and professional. Aldridge (2000) states that:

1. Culture is derived from communication;
2. People regulate and co-create culture during interaction; and
3. Language is culture's "glue".

It is therefore important to recognize that all communication is culturally biased, and that people of particular cultural backgrounds tend to have preferred communication styles. The functions of Intercultural Communication:

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1. Personal Function
Communication functions which are shown through communication attitude from an individual. There are 4 functions namely:
 - a. to express social identity
 - b. to state social integration
 - c. to broaden knowledge
 - d. to find a solution
2. Social Function
 - a. to supervise
 - b. to socialize the values
 - c. to entertain

The principal of intercultural communication:

1. Language relativity: people with different language have different point of view and way of thinking.
2. Language as culture reflection: the wider the cultural gap, the wider verbal and non verbal communication differences.
3. Decreasing uncertainty: the wider intercultural difference, the wider uncertainty and communication ambiguity.
4. Pre interaction and intercultural differences: Although there will be misconception but with intensive communication the differences will be decreased.
5. Maximize the interaction result. If the intercultural communication is positive then the communication will be continued.

Language

As mentioned previously language is “culture’s glue” and so it is worthwhile considering it further, especially since it is often overlooked in intercultural communication training. How language is used can reveal much about the unique features of a culture since it: “*holds us together as groups, differentiates us into groups, and also controls the way we shape concepts, how we think, how we perceive, and how we judge others*” (Chaney and Martin 2004 p86). Language has at least two main functions:

1. an information function and
2. a relationship function,

Both of which may be evident to varying degrees. For example, western cultures tend to emphasize the information function, whereas Japanese culture places greater importance on conveying subtle emotions and relationships (Mohan et al 2004).

Language as a barrier

Language barriers may often inhibit effective intercultural communication. According to Jandt (2001 p148), 5 main difficulties may arise when translating one language into another.

Table 1. Five (5) Main Difficulties May Arise When Translating One Language Into Another

Difficulty with	Explanation
Vocabulary equivalence	Languages that are different often lack words that are directly translatable.
Idiomatic equivalence	The English language is renowned for its variety of idioms. These can cause significant problems for a non-native English speaker since they do not have a literal meaning: - <i>It's crunch time</i> for students to enrol - <i>What's up with Mario?</i>
Grammatical-syntactical equivalence	The syntax (i.e. grammar) may be different and cause difficulties: - English has a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order whereas for other languages it may be SOV. - Some languages may not use verb tenses.
Experiential equivalence	An object or experience may exist in one culture but not in another, so this can cause translation difficulties.
Conceptual equivalence	Concepts related to what is real and good are not understood in the same way. In some cultures:- Corruption may not be seen as a morally wrong (even though it is still viewed as a crime).

Communication Barrier

A communication barrier is anything that is a barrier to the effective communication (Chaney & Martin, 2004, p. 11). Examples of barriers to intercultural communication is a case of head nods, where nods in the United States means that the person is understood, while in Japan, a nod of the head does not mean someone agrees it just means that the person is listening. With an understanding of the intercultural communication barriers of

communication (communication barrier) of this kind can go through.

Types of Barriers to Intercultural Communication

Barriers to communication (communication barrier) in intercultural communication (intercultural communication) has the form of an iceberg that sank in the water. Where there are communication

barriers that divided into the over-water (above waterline) and under water (below waterline). Factors of intercultural communication barriers that exist under the water (below waterline) are the factors that shape a person's behavior or attitude, such barriers are quite difficult to be seen or noticed. The types of such barriers are perceptions (Perceptions), norms (norms), stereotypes (stereotypes), the philosophy of business (business philosophy), rules (rules), network (networks), value (values), and the branch group (group subcultures).

While there are 9 (nine) types of intercultural communication barriers that are above the water (above waterline). Such communication barriers are easier to see because many of these barriers are physical form. These constraints are (Chaney & Martin, 2004, p. 11-12):

1. Physical (Physical)
Such communication barriers derived from the constraints of time, the environment, for ourselves, as well as physical media.
2. Cultural (Cultural)
These barriers come from different ethnic, religious, and social differences that exist between cultures with one another.
3. Perception (Perceptual)
These types of barriers emerge because everyone has different perceptions about a thing. So that to mean something every culture will have different ideas.
4. Motivation (Motivational)
Such barriers are related to the level of motivation of the listener, the point is whether the listener receives the message you want to accept the message or whether the listener is being lazy and unmotivated so it can be a communication barrier.
5. Experience (Experiential)
Experiential is the kind of obstacle that occurs because individuals do not have the same life experiences so that each individual has a perception and a different concept of seeing things.
6. Emotions (Emotional)
This is related to emotions or personal feelings of the listener. If the listener emotions are worse then the communication barriers that occur will be even bigger and harder to pass.
7. Language (Linguistic)
The following communication barriers that occur when the sender of the message (sender) and the recipient (receiver) using a different language or the use of words that

are not understood by the receiver of the message.

8. Nonverbal
Nonverbal communication barriers are barriers that do not form the words but can be a communication barrier. Examples are angry face made by the receiver of the message (receiver) when sending a message (sender) to communicate. Made angry faces may be a barrier to communication because it may just be the sender of the message was not optimal or afraid to send a message to the recipient of the message.
9. Competition (Competition)
Such barriers arise if the recipient is doing other activities while listening. An example is receiving cellular telephone while driving, as do 2 (two) activities as well as the recipient of the message will not listen to the message delivered by cell phone to the fullest.

Voluntary Work Program

SMART Ekselensia Indonesia is an accelerated free boarding school (junior and senior high school should be finished in 5 years). In 2012, Smart EI accepted the ninth batch. Every year Smart Ekselensia Indonesia admits 35 new students selected from throughout Indonesia. This school applied 5 values as the main character of the students, namely care, discipline, honest, polite and serious. The funding of this school is from society and corporate funding.

In 2011, Smart Ekselensia has an opportunity to cooperate with The Ministry of Youth and Sport Republic Indonesia and Korea Youth Work Agency (KYWA). As the implementation of this cooperation, there were some Korean students came and stayed at the school. Besides giving donation to repair football field, Korean students also do some volunteering work such as painting. The volunteering program had been running for about 8 days and had tightened the relationship among Indonesian and Korean students.

During this volunteering work both Indonesian and Korean students used English as the daily language but still they used gesture to explain some difficult words. After doing some hard work on the football field, the students continued the activity with exchanging culture. Starting with introducing Korean alphabet then continued with singing and dancing with Korean style. On the other sides, the Korean also learns some traditional songs and games from Indonesia. By exchanging culture there was intercultural communication happened on both sides.

Methodology

There were Korean senior high school students with 2 teachers and 1 nurse visited Indonesia from October 26th to November 2nd, 2011. The process of the direct communication among the volunteering program. The data of the research was taken in January 2012 at Smart Ekselensia Indonesia Senior High School, two months after the program in order to extend the time for indirect communication via social network. This paper purpose to analyze the intercultural communication among Indonesian and Korean students during voluntary work in Smart Ekselensia Indonesia.

The method of the study was questionnaire and interview method. The Indonesian students were given some questions that related with intercultural communication they have felt and done. There were 100 students of Smart Ekselensia filled in the questionnaire and they were chosen randomly. Determine sample size:

Slovin Formula: $n = \frac{N}{1 + NE^2}$, where

n = sample size = 99.24

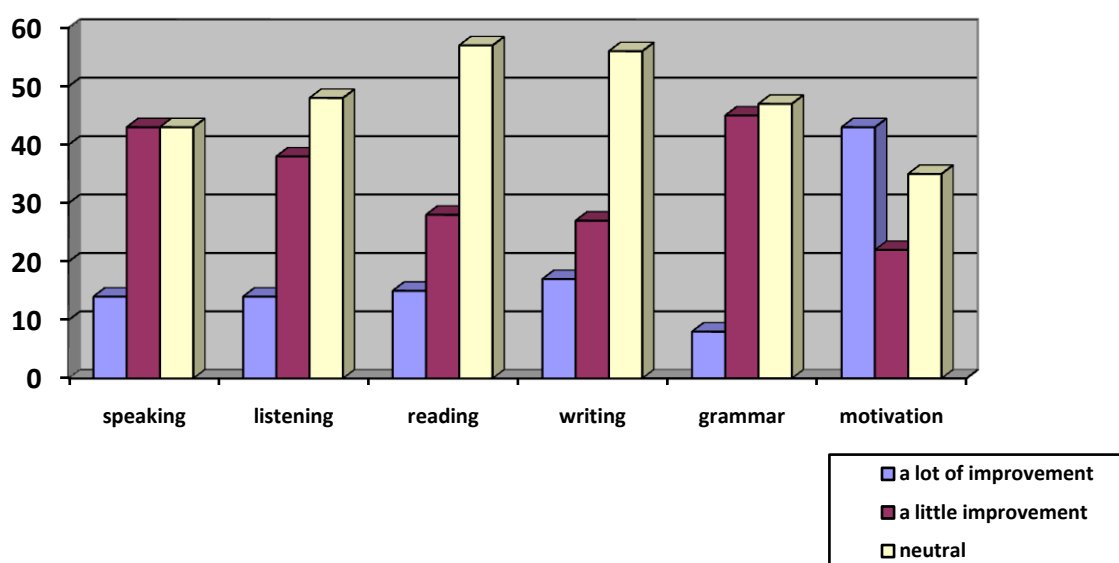
N = population size = 132

E = margin of error * desired = 0.05

Results and Discussions

Table 2. Table of Linguistic and Motivational Aspects

Improvement degree	speaking	listening	Reading	Writing	grammar	motivation
	(person)					
a lot of improvement	14	14	15	17	8	43
a little improvement	43	38	28	27	45	22
Neutral	43	48	57	56	47	35



Graph 1. Graphs of Linguistic and Motivational Aspects

Based on the first graph, we could conclude that this volunteer program improve Indonesian students' linguistic aspects. Since the verbal communication happen using English, there are some improvement on direct communication skills such as speaking and listening. Although some students chose to be neutral but 57% students have improved their speaking skills, 14% have improved a lot and 43% have improved a little. While 52%

students have improved their listening skills, 14% have improved a lot and 38% have improved a little.

On the other side, indirect communication such as reading and writing did not improve significantly. It was because the students did not interact using printing materials but with face to face communication.

However, 53% students have improved their grammar. 8% have improved a lot and 45% have improved a little. This result could be happened

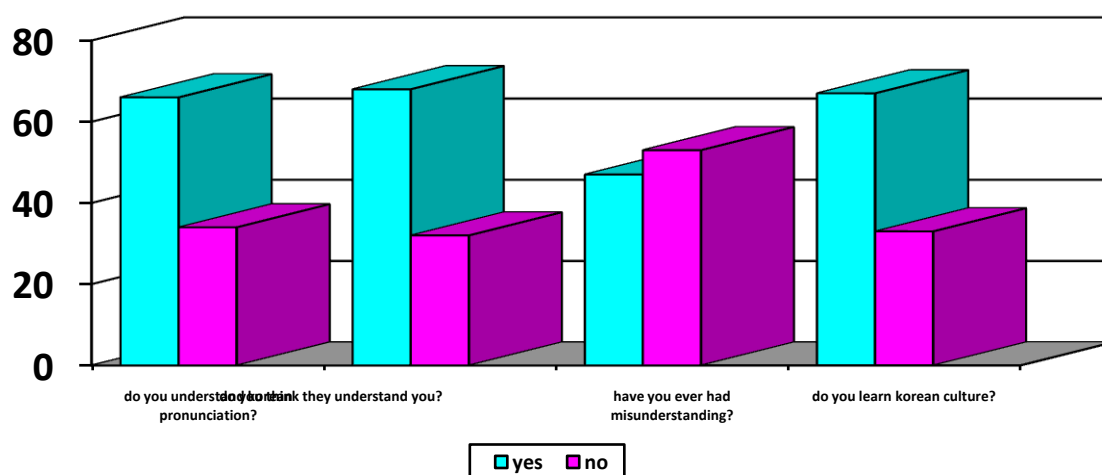
because of direct communication. Some of the Korean could speak English with good grammar and that influence Indonesian students' grammar understanding. Meanwhile, Indonesian students' motivation to learn English has raised significantly. There are 65% students increased their motivation to learn English while only 35% preferred to be neutral.

According to Spencer-Oatey (2006), language is a code or formal system that is visible. In relation with the fact above, the use of English by Korean volunteer has affected the use of English by Indonesian students. English has connected the information from Indonesian students to Korean and vice versa. It is also tighten the relationship among the students.

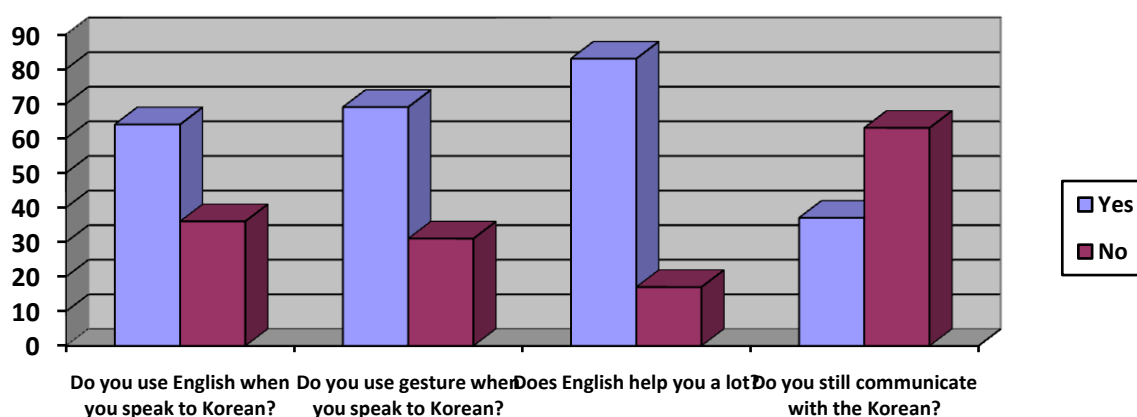
Moreover, according Janat (2001,p.48), grammatical synthetically equivalence, the syntax such as grammar, could be one of factor that cause difficulties when people has to translate their

language into another. Language that is different often lack words that are directly translatable is another difficult part. In accordance with this literature, it could be explained why some of the students chose to be neutral when they were asked about their linguistic aspect improvement.

Based on wikipedia, one of the principal of intercultural communication is language as the culture reflection. The wider culture differences, the wider communication differences both in language and non verbal language. As shown on the second graph, linguistic aspects in this case are pronunciation also affected cultural and perceptual aspects. More than 60% of Indonesian understood Korean students' pronunciation when they spoke English though Korean had their own dialect. Indonesian students also think that Korean understood their pronunciation although Indonesian also had different dialect.



Graph 2. Graphs of cultural and perceptual aspects



Graph 3. Graphs of Physical, non verbal, and experiential aspects

However, Indonesian students have had misunderstanding because they had different perceptual of a word or sentence. For example, based on the interview, one of Indonesian student thought that the Korean needs more water but the fact was that the Korean only wanted to thank for the water given. This misunderstanding happened

because in Indonesia if a guest said gratitude for some food or drinks then the guest will be given more food or drinks as expression of respecting the guest. Meanwhile the guest thought that the food and drinks was enough. This culture was a little bit different in Korea then the misunderstanding happened.

In relation with the example above, Indonesian students got positive example from Korean that Korean students are discipline, diligent and independent. Indonesian students also learn how to sing and dance with Korean style. Besides, Indonesian students drew traditional clothes and painted using Korean alphabet. With these activities, the personal function of intercultural communication which is adding knowledge has reachable.

Table 3. Table of cultural and perceptual aspects

Indicators	Yes	No
Do you understand Korean pronunciation?	66	34
Do you think they understand you?	68	32
Have you ever had misunderstanding?	47	53
Do you learn korean culture?	67	33

Table 4. Table of Physical, non verbal, and experiential aspects

Indicators	Yes	No
Do you use English when you speak to Korean?	64	36
Do you use gesture when you speak to Korean?	69	31
Does English help you a lot?	83	17
Do you still communicate with the Korean?	37	63

Beside the linguistic aspect, nonverbal, physical and experience aspects have relationship with intercultural communication. Although Indonesian students using English to communicate and it helped them a lot, the students still use gesture to make the communication run smoothly. Non verbal communication expresses the social identity such as races, tribes, and educational background.

The intercultural communication has happened resulting good interaction in form of follow up activities using internet. There are 37% Indonesian students still keep in touch with Korean through social network such as facebook and twitter. They made their own group and created daily conversation. Both sides still use English as the main language but they tend to learn their friends' language. It seemed that the students have tried to maximize the result of their interaction. They know that this intercultural communication is sometimes difficult but since they felt positive result from the communication then they still keep in touch and raise the communication.

Conclusions

- Intercultural communication is a communication process which consists of interpersonal interaction and interpersonal communication done by some people who have different cultural background.
- Language in this case English could be glue

or inhibit factor.

- This volunteer work program is good for intercultural communication because there is exchanging culture beside the voluntary work.

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Keterangan Penulis

Lisa Rosaline, S. Pt, lahir di Bogor, 11 April 1981. Lulusan Fakultas Peternakan, Program Studi Ilmu Nutrisi Ternak, Institut Pertanian Bogor ini adalah pengajar Bahasa Inggris di SMP SMART Ekselensia Indonesia. Beberapa prestasi yang pernah diraih di antaranya menjadi pemakalah seminar dan workshop internasional tahun 2009 dengan judul “Peer Assessment as an Alternative Assessment to Assess Student's Ability in Learning English”, The 56th TEFLIN International Conference, di Malang Jawa Timur; tahun 2010 dengan judul “Applying Whole Language Approach and Public Speaking Activity at SMART Ekselensia Senior High School”, The 57th TEFLIN International Conference, di Bandung, Jawa Barat; dan tahun 2011 dengan judul “Being A Great Teacher by Implementing Character Based Curriculum”, The 9th Asia TEFL International Conference di Seoul, Korea Selatan.