

## CROSS CULTURE UNDERSTANDING AS A SOURCE OF COMMUNICATION MATERIAL AT FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSE IN MALANG RAYA

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### *Abstract*

*Cross culture understanding is really needed for communication in this globalization area as no country denies interaction with other country. As different country, it shows different language used that has own culture so it is necessary to learn cross culture understanding in order not to have misunderstanding as proper expression in one culture may be considered contrary in another culture. As cross culture understanding is important in communication, it is used as a source of teaching English for communication that is really suitable with the needs of the students to communicate with foreigner although they are different levels of study, department as well as region. The purpose of this research are to describe the cross culture understanding used as material for teaching English for communication in language for communication and the meaning in foreign language course in Malang Raya. Descriptive qualitative research is used. As it is known the number of teachers a lot it will take purposive sampling so the subject is the teachers at foreign language course. The instruments used are interview and observation as well as questionnaire. The finding shows that cross culture understanding for communication is found for greeting and daily activity that shows its culture while the meaning is quite different among foreign languages and Indonesia. Some of them show the meaning is almost the same but the others are contradiction.*

**Keywords:** *cross culture understanding, communication, foreign language course*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This era is called globalization. Consequently no country denies interaction with the other country as it is known borderless age as the rapid development of sophisticated technology so travelling is needed as there is a great hunger to see the “other” that travelling makes one know the others as a proverb in Indonesia says “tidakkenalmakatidaksayang”. That is why it is needed to mean to interaction that is language. Because of importance of language people need to learn for communication but also to study its culture that is why they learn English at Foreign Language Course in Malang Raya that consists of Bat city Malang district and Malang city as there are a lot of schools and universities in private and state institutions.

Language is a tool for communication. It has characteristic, patterns and also function as well as its culture also accompanies its language. It means that learning foreign language also learns its culture so it is necessary to learn in order not to have misunderstanding as proper communication in one culture may be seen contrary in another culture as “ You’ve put on weight” in Africa means you look healthy and prosperous. It is great compliment but in America it is an insult (Hybels & Richard, 2004:23) and also gesture or the body language which vary from culture to culture. Sometimes the same gestures can mean different things in different countries as Y. Reisinger (1997:129-130) stated below:

“The reason for interaction difficulties is that when tourists (traveller) and hosts (native people) interact socially in their own culture they know which behaviour is proper and which is wrong. They behave in a way accepted by their respective cultures. They accept proper and reject wrong behaviour. Those who are engaged in socially unacceptable behaviour are considered as ill-mannered. Those who are engaged in socially acceptable behaviour are considered as well-mannered. But when tourists and native people interact with someone from another culture, they do not know what behaviour is proper and what is wrong. The

behaviour which is seen as proper in one culture is not always seen the same way in another culture”.

Relating to the same gestures can mean different things in different countries, Winardi(2005:270) gives example as thumbs up which is the gesture of praise in many countries, is considered a rude gesture in Australia. Bulgarian says ‘no’ by nodding their head, and says ‘yes’ by shaking the head side to side. Americans shake hand when they meet new people while Japanese bows to each other; Arabic kiss each other on the cheek. People think and handle things differently and it is interesting to explore the differences. That is it is needed to learn cross culture understanding in communication on foreign language course in Malang Raya as it is really needed that someone faces misunderstanding of the other language in communication will be considered as impolite one as the consequently gets cultural shock.

Preventing misunderstanding of cross culture understanding, CCU is used as a source of communication material in English at foreign language course in Malang Raya as teaching learning material is one of the very crucial elements that has to exist to conduct in teaching learning activities (Harsono: 2007). Therefore the aims of this research are to dig out cross culture understanding and its meaning found in communication at foreign language course in Malang Raya.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are Material and Cross Culture Understanding to elaborate. Here is the explanation below:

### **Material**

In teaching learning is needed a material. Material means anything which is used to help to teach language learners. Materials can be in the form of a textbook, a workbook, a cassette, a CD-ROM, a video, photocopied handout, a newspaper, a paragraph written on a whiteboard or anything which presents or informs about the language being learned (Tomlinson, 1998:xi). Further he states that material means anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language (linguistic, visual, auditory or kinesthetic). These materials can be presented in print, live performance, on cassettes, CD-ROM, DVD or in the internet. These material is instructional, experiential, elicitive or exploratory. The material is instructional when it provides exposure to the language in use, elicitive when it stimulate language use, and exploratory when it seeks discoveries about language use in natural settings.

The basic principle of material according to Tomlinson (1998:7-21) in Harsono for the teaching of language are:

- a. Materials should achieve impact.
- b. Materials should help learners to feel at ease.
- c. Materials should help learners to develop confidence.
- d. What is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful.
- e. Materials should require the points being taught.
- f. Learners must be ready to acquire the points being taught.
- g. Materials should expose the learners to language in authentic use.
- h. The learners’ attention should be drawn to linguistic features of the input.
- i. Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes.
- j. Material should take into account that positive effects of instruction are usually delayed.
- k. Materials should take into account that learners differ in affective attitudes.
- l. Materials should permit a silent period at the beginning of instruction.
- m. Materials should maximize learning potential by encouraging intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement which stimulates both right and left brain activities.
- n. Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice.
- o. Materials should provide opportunities for outcome feedback.

### **Cross Culture Understanding**

One of the materials in teaching learning is cross culture understanding. Cross culture understanding is abbreviated by CCU. It is a study to bridge two different cultures from different countries (Intan, 2010). Similar with this, CCU simply refers to the basic ability of people within business to recognize, interpret correctly, react to people, incidences or situation that are open to misunderstanding due to cultural differences ([www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-service/articles/cross-cultural-understanding.htm](http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-service/articles/cross-cultural-understanding.htm)) while according to Lingtech, cross culture understanding is concerned with understanding people from different cultural backgrounds in order to be able to do business with them, work with them, or possibly move to and function in their countries. In brief, **Cross Cultural Understanding** means understanding the culture of the target people so that we can reconstruct our attitudes and world views; consequently, we become more tolerate and more generous toward strange ways that may be shown by the target language people.

The purpose of learning CCU is to get understanding of different cultures and custom This knowledge is intended to study abroad, working even just for travelling to know custom done in that area. The function of CCU is to avoid misunderstanding and cultural shock (Intan, 2010) whereas another source says that the importance of understanding other culture will avoid misunderstanding and make inappropriate value judgments. Therefore, at the end we are not considered that our culture is better than other cultures. Culture refers to all aspect of life in a community. It involves ways of doing things, ways of expressing themselves, ways of looking at thing, what things they should value and what is expected from and what they may expect from others ([www.lingtech.com/media](http://www.lingtech.com/media)).

Based on the explanation above, cross culture understanding leads to comparison culture between one's own culture and the other. The other culture could be culture in one's country or another culture that is commonly called *foreigner* culture as well as *the other*. In comparing the culture is needed appreciation as it will be found out that there is absolutely differences and similarities. It makes one should know one's own culture before comparing the other culture or while comparing the other culture, one should think how about her or his culture as one does not realize her or his culture. This happens as doing everything as custom is one's culture. By comparing the culture one will know the good and bad sides of her or his culture, further it is called one's identity.

Ignoring cross culture understanding creates shock culture. One of shock culture is language shock as every language has its system and culture.

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

Research metod consists of research design, population and sample, instrument, data collection and analysis.

#### **Research Design**

This research employs descriptive qualitative research design because the researcher describes cross culture understanding for communication on foreign language course in Malang Raya especially cross culture understanding for communication and the meaning on foreign language course in Malang Raya.

#### **Population and sample**

The population of this research is the teachers of foreign language course in Malang Raya while the sample is the teachers in KBA UMM. As the total number of population is a lot so the sampling is taken purposively. The reason is KBA UMM is a course that has 7 foreign languages in Malang and it is not known the total of teachers, time of teaching foreign language is not like university as semester, having short time to learn as it is going to use. The research is done in 2014 and 2015 from September 2014 up May 2015.

#### **Research Instrument**

To collect the data are needed instrument that are interview and questionnaire. Unstructured Interview is done to the English teachers of foreign language while observation is done in the process of teaching foreign language course.

**Data Collection**

The data are mainly taken from the result of questionnaire and interview. There are some steps applied in collecting the data. They are:

1. Conducting observation to know the cross culture understanding
2. Interviewing the teachers of foreign language course.
3. Integrating the data taken from the questionnaire and interview.

**Data Analysis**

The procedure of analysing the data was following the procedures below:

1. Tabulating data from interview and observation
2. Coding the data
3. Analysing the data to find out the answer of the statement of the problems.
4. Writing the result of the research descriptively.
5. Drawing conclusion.

**4. DISCUSSION**

The finding elaborates two things; those are the cross culture understanding in communication and its meaning. It elaborates one by one.

**Cross Culture Understanding in Communication**

Based on the observation done in teaching learning process on foreign language course, it is not always found the cross culture understanding used in communication as it is taught based on the topic but it is dig out from interview and questionnaire as follows:

Based on interview and questionnaire are found 17 cross culture understanding in communication in English as table below:

Table 1. Cross Culture Understanding

No	Cross culture understanding
a.	<i>How do you do?</i>
b.	<i>What is your name?</i>
c.	<i>Thank you</i>
d.	<i>Good night</i>
e.	<i>Wash my hand</i>
f.	<i>Have a business</i>
g.	<i>Don't mention it</i>
h.	<i>Make up your mind,</i>
i.	<i>Stay in touch</i>
j.	<i>It is about time</i>
k.	<i>Go Dutch</i>
l.	<i>Down to earth</i>
m.	<i>Get to the point</i>
n.	<i>Would you do me a favor?</i>
o.	<i>Supper</i>
p.	<i>I am afraid I can't</i>
q.	<i>Stay tune</i>

Table above shows there are 17 cross culture understanding found in communication at foreign language in elementary level. *How do you do?* is expressed for greeting for first meeting whereas *What is your name?* is used to ask name while *Thank you* is the expression used in receiving something and *Good night* is expressed to leave, *Wash my hand* is asking permission, *Have a business* is used to do something, *Don't mention it* is the expression to respond the kindness, *Make up your mind* is the expression to ask to decide, *Stay in touch* expresses connection, *It is about time* is expression to show the ending, *Go Dutch* is used to make a share, *Down to earth* is giving suggestion, *Get to the point* is used to make a suggestion, *Would you do me a favour?* is the expression to ask, *Supper* is talking about food, *I am afraid I can't* is the expression of apologising, *Stay tune* is used to ask,

### The meaning of cross culture understanding in communication

The meaning here means the meaning based on Indonesia as the researcher as Indonesian so it explains the usage in western and in Indonesia. Here is the explanation:

The meaning of English Cross Culture Understanding is below:

1. *How do you do?* There is no appropriate word in Indonesia, it is almost similar with *how are you/* or in *Apa kabar?* expression in Indonesia. It is usually used in the first meeting only and the answer is the same “How do you do?”
2. *What is your name?* The word *what* refers to thing while asking someone should be question of *who* in Indonesia.
3. *Thank you.* It is the same with *terimakasih* in Indonesia but it could be acceptance or refusal offering. It is used to receive something so one will give response by saying “thank you”. It is given appreciation for something has been received and refusing something or offering something
4. *Good night* means good bye or have a nice sleeping. It is a greeting but for parting. It is similar in Indonesia to say “Good evening” for “Selamat malam”.
5. *Wash my hand* is polite way to say to go to toilet as Indonesia expression is “go to back”. *Back* refers something is not clean and not orderly so that is why it is hidden by using the word “in the back”.
6. *Have a business* means having something to do. *Business* in Indonesia means project related to profit, money so when one has a business indicates money. In fact, *have a business* means having something to do in English.
7. *Don't mention it* is similar with you are welcome. It is a little bit informal one. It is used when one gets favor, she or he will respond by saying it as one does not feel not bother or what she or he has done is just something small thing so it is not necessary to give respond “you are welcome”.
8. *Make up your mind* means make a decision. It is used when one asks for a long time to get decision that is caused of confused or still considering the other factor.
9. *Stay in touch* is similar with stay connected. It is used to ask someone to still have communication or connecting each other.
10. *It is about time* is the synonym of *finally*. It is used to know the ending of event or something.
11. *Go Dutch* means paying by ourselves. It is used for looking the food or something and there is no one for treating the others so everyone should pay by her or himself.
12. *Down to earth* means be realistic or don't imagine unnecessary thing. It is used to give advice to someone who is not realistic.
13. *Get to the point* means tell the most important thing. It is used to ask one to tell directly the point, not going around. It is similar with “to the point please”.
14. *Would you do me a favor?* means asking someone to do something. It is polite one than “Help me please”.
15. *Supper* means light dinner served in early *evening*. Indonesia does not have this thing as *makan malam* could be early or late evening.
16. *I am afraid I can't* means I am sorry to tell that I can't ... This expression is more polite one to say *I can't*. This is the expression to refuse invitation or doing something.
17. *Stay tune* means do not change the channel. It is commonly used host or broadcaster in television or radio to the audience or listener to stay in their program

### Discussion

As it is known that language is a mean of communication, people want to use it especially in globalization era that is characterized of borderless. That is the reason people learn language in foreign language course as they have got major subject except language.

Learning foreign language could not be separated with its culture as every language has own culture so every learner should also learn its culture as one is considered appropriate in one culture but it is not appropriate in other culture. That is why cross culture understanding is needed.

Cross culture understanding is one of materials in teaching learning for communication on foreign language course in Malang Raya. This material is appropriate with Tomlinson (1998:7-21 in Harsono) that what is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful It in line

with the result of research that the dominant reason of learners in Kursus Bahasa Asing in University of Muhammadiyah Malang learn English is to increase the ability of speaking (Hartiningsih, 2013).

One example of cross culture understanding found in English communication is *Good night*. It is right language used in parting in the night in Indonesia but it has different meaning *Have a nice sleeping*. It creates a problem when one or the guest comes to one's house in the evening by saying *Good night* as the host or hostess answers *Good night* by closing the door. It makes misunderstanding how the guest is not allowed to enter the house moreover the host or hostess closes the door. It leads prejudice later conflict. This could be avoided if one learns its language culture in English.

As a source of English for communication material at foreign language course, cross culture understanding makes the learners self confidence in speaking as it deals with real situation as Tomlinson (1998:7-21) said that materials should expose the learners to language in authentic use.

As every foreign language has its own culture, it also has the meaning but the meaning of the language expression could be different usage. This is the reason the learner and the teacher of foreign language course should be aware about it. By practice one will learn cross culture understanding that avoid shock culture especially language shock.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Cross culture understanding for communication is found for greeting and daily activity that shows its culture. This is useful and authentic material for learning communication while the meaning is quite different among foreign languages and Indonesia. Some of them show the meaning that is almost the same but the others are contradiction.

Based on the finding of this research, it is suggested to:

1. The teachers of foreign language course should be aware of cross culture understanding and apply it in teaching learning foreign language and explain it in order the learners understand it, not having cultural shock especially language shock.
2. The learners of foreign language course should also learn its culture in order not having culture shock or language shock when use foreign language in communication especially with foreigners.

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