

## **Intercultural Communication Between Bataknese Students and Sundanese Students at Padjadjaran University**

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### **Abstrak**

Komunikasi Antarbudaya tak terelakkan ketika memasuki kelangsungan kehidupan mahasiswa. Dari berbagai etnis mahasiswa berkumpul di satu tempat untuk menimba ilmu di Universitas. Universitas Padjadjaran adalah salah satu universitas yang diminati oleh masyarakat Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana komunikasi antarbudaya mahasiswa etnis Sunda dan mahasiswa etnis Batak di Universitas Padjadjaran. Teori yang digunakan penelitian ini adalah proses komunikasi antarbudaya dan hambatan komunikasi antarbudaya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Fenomenologi. Subjek pada penelitian ini 2 mahasiswa etnis Sunda dan 2 mahasiswa etnis sunda dari Universitas Padjadjaran dan objek penelitian ini adalah bagaimana proses komunikasi antarbudaya dan apa saja hambatan saat komunikasi antar budaya. Penelitian ini menggunakan teknik pengumpulan, wawancara mendalam semi struktur. Hasil penelitian ini memperlihatkan bahwa komunikasi antarbudaya bahasa adalah suatu hal yang penting bagi proses kominikasi antarbudaya diakrenakan bahasa itu sendiri jugalah menjadi hambatan ketika melakukan komunikasi antarbudaya yang dimana mahasiswa etnis Sunda kesulitan mengenai bahasa Batak sebaliknya juga, mahasiswa etnis Batak kesulitan mengenai bahasa sunda.

**Kata Kunci:** Komunikasi, Komunikasi Antarbudaya, Mahasiswa Etnis Sunda, Mahasiswa Etnis Batak

### **Abstract**

*Intercultural communication is inevitable when entering the continuity of student life. Students from various ethnicities gather in one place to gain knowledge at the University. Padjadjaran University is one of the most popular universities in Indonesia. This study aims to determine how the intercultural communication between Sundanese and Batak ethnic students at Padjadjaran University. The theory used in this research is the process of intercultural communication and barriers to intercultural communication. This study uses a qualitative method. This study uses a phenomenological approach. The subjects in this study were 2 ethnic Sundanese students and 2 ethnic Sundanese students*

*from Padjadjaran University and the object of this research was how the process of intercultural communication was and what were the barriers to intercultural communication. This study uses a collection technique, semi-structured in-depth interview. The results of this study show that intercultural communication of language is an important thing for the process of intercultural communication because the language itself is also an obstacle when conducting intercultural communication where students of ethnic Sundanese have difficulty regarding the Batak language on the other hand, ethnic Batak students have difficulties regarding the Sundanese language.*

**Keywords:** *Communication, Intercultural Communication, Sundanese Ethnic Students, Batak Ethnic Students*

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country that has a wide expanse of territory surrounded by the sea. With the vast area of the Indonesian sea causing distances between regions, therefore Indonesia which has become the fifth in largest archipelagos in the world (Periona, 2018). which automatically with differences in geographical location causes all Indonesian people to be widely spread in the archipelago.

It features the vast territory of Indonesia, which varies from region to region in many aspects such as language, accent and culture. As Arnold (1971) described culture as "the study of perfection," culture itself has its own uniqueness, a combination of advanced culture and activities that help people maintain their moral and intellectual perfection. and expression (in contrast to local char and popular culture, which includes opera, opera, and the activities and expressions of ordinary people.

The Bataknese have a unique way of life. One of the uniqueness of the Batak ethnic group is that they are really willing to leave their region to another city to improve their skills (Putri, 2021). Parents usually allow their children to leave their hometown and find a new life in another city. The reason why parents always allow is because when a child grows up in another city, the habit has a big impact on the Batak ethnic population in each city in Indonesia, and having another city raises the grade of the family. is. A unique feature of the Batak ethnic group is its heavy accent that sets it apart from other ethnic groups. Batak accents are often seen as rude, so many people who hear the accent think of Bataknese as being rude. In contrast, people with coarse accents are not necessarily rude. The harsh accent inherent in the Bataknese themselves symbolizes the firmness or perseverance of their personality in the field of work and struggle (Sinaga, 2017).

In contrast, the Sundanese are very different from the Bataknese. The Sundanese generally occupy the western part of Javanese as the center of origin of the Sundanese. According to the Sundanese, they generally do not

move from one place to another for development or leave their hometown because they love their hometown. Some think that the city most people visit for development is Java itself, so you don't have to go far to develop other areas, but your hometown will develop for the better. (Salsabila, 2020).). Sunda's ethnicity itself is gentle, shy, and has a distinctive character known for its love of smiling at others. When talking to Sundanese, the way they speak tends to be smooth and soft, which impresses me as a very polite person. In many cases, there is a difference between what they say and what they think, but it can be said that what they think is different from what they say in conversation. This is done to maintain and prevent disputes between interlocutors (Sumbung, 2014).

When someone wants to emigrate, they often choose a suitable location according to the criteria someone wants. Bandung is one of all regions in Indonesia and one of the most popular cities for students to study. Out-of-town students are interested in studying in Bandung city because of the many prestigious universities such as Padjadjaran University, Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesian University of Education, and Telkom University (Nasution, 2016). When different people with different backgrounds come together in one area, the word campus becomes a means of connecting cultures and ethnicities.

The subjects of this study were Batak students from North Sumatra and Sundanese students from West Java at Padjadjaran University. Padjadjaran University was selected as a research center not only as a national university, but also as one of the campuses with the most bachelor's programs, one of Indonesia's national universities, and ranked third in 194-degree programs. Because it has been (Kaldera News, 2021). Padjadjaran University was selected for study because it is one of the largest universities in the region with a city of Sunda ethnic origin and the name Padjadjaran is closely related to the history of the Sunda ethnic community (Aku Pintar, 2022). Things that often impact intercultural interactions can be rooted in language or assumptions. Thus, with the above explanation, the author wishes to examine the cross-cultural communication between Batak students and Sunda students at Padjadjaran University.

There have been many similar studies, such as Widaningrum (2015) also researching the same object as this research, namely Intercultural Communication but does not focus on just two ethnicities but rather on how Ethnic Batak students with ethnic diversity exist within the University of Telkom University. Meanwhile, Sumbung (2014) investigated the same object, namely the Analysis of Intercultural Communication of Batak and Sundanese Ethnic Students, but from Telkom University and also focused on speech events. From previous studies, there have been many researches on intercultural communication conducted at Telkom University, but no one has researched at Padjadjaran University. So, this research becomes an urgency why it should be done. therefore, this research takes the title "Intercultural

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### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Intercultural Communication**

According to Dedy & Jalaluddin (2001) Intercultural communication is the origin of human nature which depends on the environment in which it grows. The existence of a diverse culture will also have an impact on various communication activities.

From this statement, Liliweri (2001) to understand the study of intercultural communication, several assumptions need to be considered:

1. In intercultural communication contains content and interpersonal relations.
2. Personal style affects interpersonal communication.
3. Intercultural communication begins with the basic assumption that there are differences in perception between communicators and communicants
4. The goal of intercultural communication is intercultural effectiveness that reduces the level of uncertainty.
5. Culture centred communication

#### **Intercultural Communication Process**

In the section on intercultural communication above, the ways in which humans communicate include language style, nonverbal, and so on. The ways humans communicate is a communication process carried out by humans. The following are several elements of the process of intercultural communication (Liliweri, 2001):

1. Communicator. The communicator is the party who initiates the communication process to the communicant.
2. Communicant. The communicant is the person who receives the message conveyed by the communicator.
3. Message or Symbol. Each message contains thoughts, ideas or ideas and feelings in the form of symbols.
4. Media. Media is a connector through which messages or symbols pass
5. Effect or Feedback. With the message conveyed, in the process it is expected that there will be a reaction or response from the communicant and this is called feedback.
6. Atmosphere. Atmosphere is one of the three important factors in intercultural communication (time, place, and atmosphere).
7. Disturbance. Disturbance is usually associated with impeding the reception of the message and the source of the message.

## Intercultural Communication Barriers

The effectiveness of an intercultural communication, one of which will greatly depend on how much communication barriers occur. In every communication activity, it is certain that there will be various obstacles. Barriers in any communication activity will certainly affect the effectiveness of the communication process.

Meanwhile, Ridwan (2016) says that there are 4 (four) reasons that barriers Intercultural Communication. These barriers are (Ridwan, 2016): 1. Different kinds of communication purposes. Differences in reasons and motivations for communicating, in the context of intercultural communication this often causes problems; 2. Ethnocentrism tends to look down on other groups and view their group as better than other groups; 3. Lack of empathy, this is caused by several things including difficulty focusing on others, focusing more on oneself, having a stereotypical view of culture, lack of knowledge of the group; 4. Withdrawing or avoiding meetings that should have taken place.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used in this research is qualitative research. The word qualitative implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not rigorously studied or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency (Denzin, 2009). Qualitative research is research that uses a natural background, with the intention of interpreting phenomena that occur and is carried out using various existing methods (Satori, 2011).

In this qualitative research, the researcher uses the phenomenological approach. Phenomenology comes from the Greek word *phainomenon* which means to appear. *Phainomenon* refers to something that is visible. Phenomena can also be interpreted as facts that are realized, and enter into human understanding. In this regard, phenomenology reflects direct human experience. Conscious experience becomes the starting point in the discussion of phenomenology. An awareness of experience is defined as a state that gives a first-person point of view of experience.

The research uses hermeneutic phenomenology which according to Creswell (2007) is a study that aims to describe the phenomenon of a person's life experience and interpret the story or writing (text) of one's life experience. Furthermore, hermeneutic phenomenology focuses on the relationship between an event/experience/phenomena and individuals (Textural), and how a concept or understanding can be obtained from that relationship (Structural).

The informants selected by the researchers are:

**Table 1 Informants**

No.	Name	Ethnicity	Major	Informant
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1.	Dewi Ari Shiwase Meliala	Bataknese Students	Law major Class of 2019	Main Informant 1
2.	Tommy Rade Tua Sihombing	Bataknese Students	Digital Business Department Class of 2020	Main Informant 2
3.	Qisthy Muhammad Rasyid	Sundanese Students	Government Administration Department Class of 2018	Main Informant 3
4.	Feriany Athala Firdaus	Sundanese Students	Fisheries Department Class of 2018	Main Informant 4

Source: Researcher, 2021

## RESULT

After conducting in-depth interviews with four informants, the coding has been made by categorizing the textural and structural descriptions based on what they experience and made:

### 1. Qisthy Muhammad Rasyid

Textural Description:

- a. I met Batak ethnic students usually at Padjadjaran University.
- b. I met an older brother of a Batak ethnic student from North Sumatra.
- c. I have difficulty communicating verbally through social media with ethnic Batak students.
- d. I have difficulty when they use their local language.
- e. I need more time to get to know Batak ethnic students.
- f. I as a Sundanese often gather with friends to deepen the relationship of other friends.
- g. I often meet Batak ethnic students because of college assignments or work from organizations.
- h. 1. When I talk to ethnic Batak students, they usually have a high intonation.

Structural Description:

- a. I was surprised when I first talked to ethnic Batak students because of their loud voices.
- b. When I first met Batak ethnic students, I felt awkward when I talked to them.
- c. I feel closer to my senior, because the cat has a Sundanese-like personality.
- d. I feel confused when ethnic Batak students speak their traditional language.

- e. I feel it is more effective to communicate verbally than in writing when communicating with ethnic Batak students.
- f. I find it difficult to adapt to Batak ethnic students.
- g. I have to be emotional when communicating with ethnic Batak students.
- h. I feel that Batak ethnic students are easily provoked emotionally or easily angry when communicating with them. Batak ethnic students are easily provoked emotionally or easily angry when communicating with them.
- i. I feel happy when I help Batak ethnic students when I feel confused with Sundanese language or Sundanese accent

## 2. Feriany Athala Firdaus

### Textural Description:

- a. The first time I met a Batak ethnic student, I was a major friend.
- b. I often meet Batak ethnic students in class or in the canteen.
- c. I interact with ethnic Batak students only to make friends
- d. I met with senior Batak ethnic students in the maderisation.
- e. I don't have much conversation with senior Batak ethnic students.
- f. I find it difficult when they slip up if ethnic Batak students use their local language.
- g. It didn't take me long to become more familiar with ethnic Batak students.
- h. I often ask what is unique about the Batak ethnic student culture.
- i. When I communicate with ethnic Batak students, I only communicate on campus through social media applications.

### Structural Description:

- a. I find it exciting when I talk to ethnic Batak students.
- b. I feel shy when communicating with senior Batak ethnic students.
- c. I feel that senior Batak ethnic students are fiercer than their juniors.
- d. I feel confused when Batak ethnic students use their language.
- e. I feel that I can easily adapt to students of different ethnicities.
- f. I'm curious what the cultural differences between Sundanese and Bataknese.
- g. I find it more exciting when I meet face to face rather than communicating via chat.

## 3. Dewi Ari Shiwase Meliala

### Textural Description:

- a. I meet ethnic Sundanese students usually in class, campus, and also in organizations.

- b. I sometimes like to slip my accent when talking to ethnic Sundanese students.
- c. When I talk to senior Bandung ethnic students, I try to maintain good manners.
- d. When I talk to senior Sundanese ethnic students, I also pay close attention to my speech
- e. It didn't take me long to get to know the Sundanese ethnic students
- f. I often meet with Sundanese ethnic students due to college assignments, academic competitions, and in organizations.
- g. I learned some Sundanese vocabulary from a Sundanese ethnic student.
- h. When I talk to students of Sundanese ethnicity, they like to use Sundanese or mixed with Indonesian.
- i. When I talk to Sundanese students, they don't know how to translate some Sundanese words into Indonesian.
- j. When I talk to ethnic Sundanese students, they like to talk convoluted or like to digress.
- k. Before the pandemic I met face-to-face more often to talk, but during the pandemic I used chat applications more often

#### Structural Description:

- a. When I communicate with ethnic Sundanese students, I feel carried away by the atmosphere they create.
- b. I feel they are softer and also calmer.
- c. I feel that the ethnic Sundanese students are emotional when I speak with my regional accent because the ethnic Sundanese students think I am angry.
- d. I feel shy or respectful because of the culture that is taught
- e. I feel that the Sundanese language is important because when we use the subtle Sundanese language it seems polite to senior Sundanese ethnic students
- f. I feel that ethnic Sundanese students are open or easy to get along with anyone
- g. I feel confused when ethnic Sundanese students use Sundanese language
- h. I feel when Sundanese ethnic students keep their feelings because they are afraid that I will offend them.
- i. I feel more fun when I talk to ethnic Sundanese students face to face instead of using a chat application because I can immediately see their expressions.

#### 4. Tommy Rade Tua Sihombing

##### Textural Description:

- a. I met ethnic Sundanese students around campus.
- b. I met senior Sundanese ethnic students around campus with organizational interests.



- c. I changed my accent to blend in
- d. I need more time to be more familiar with ethnic Sundanese students.
- e. I learned some manners that must be considered when talking to Sundanese from Sundanese ethnic students.
- f. When I talk to Sundanese ethnic students, they tend to go round and round in communicating.
- g. I don't understand Sundanese students often speak Sundanese because they are dominant around campus.

#### Structural Description:

- a. I find it difficult because of the Sundanese language which I do not know and which is convoluted when speaking.
- b. I learned some Sundanese manners because of the dominance of West Java, namely Sundanese ethnicity and to appreciate Sundanese culture more.
- c. I find it difficult when adapting to Sundanese ethnic students.
- d. I feel I have to change my regional accent when I want to be more familiar with Sundanese ethnic students
- e. I feel afraid if there is a misperception because I use my accent when talking to students of ethnic Sundanese.
- f. I feel that senior Sundanese ethnic students have a gentle character but I also feel shy towards seniors
- g. I feel that the Sundanese ethnic students have a gentle demeanour.

#### **Intercultural Communication Process**

When talking to Sundanese students to make it easier to adapt to them, Dewi often slips into language and accents from the Batak culture where she speaks with high intonation. Regarding the language of Batak ethnic students experienced by Dewi and Tommy because the dominant campus environment uses Sundanese language and accents, they often find it difficult to digest what Sundanese students say, which is more significant in using Sundanese language. In terms of messages and symbols on both sides themselves experiencing difficulties but in terms of difficulties it can be said that the difficulties experienced by ethnic Sundanese students are lighter because the Sundanese ethnicity is dominant on campus so that the use of language that is often used is Sundanese but often, they find friends several times they are ethnic Batak students as well as several Batak languages which makes Rasyid and Feriany not understand what they are saying. The difficulties experienced by Batak students are more difficult because the language commonly used by Sundanese ethnic students is Sundanese, also Sundanese in their circle is more dominant so that it often happens that Dewi and Tommy do not understand what is conveyed by Sundanese ethnic students.

On the other hand, what happened to the Batak ethnic students experienced by Dewi and Tommy could be said to communicate face-to-face

and use electronics in a balanced way due to the pandemic conditions, what Dewi felt had time to feel lectured on campus so that she met face-to-face with ethnic Sundanese students and after the pandemic Dewi was more dominant. In terms of effects and feedback, Sundanese ethnic students have differences where Feriany himself feels it doesn't take long to get familiar with or be able to adapt to Batak ethnic students but turns to Rasyid who takes a long time to adapt to Batak ethnic students. Just as experienced by ethnic Sundanese students, ethnic Batak students also have differences where Dewi does not find it difficult when adapting to ethnic Sundanese students while Tommy himself is like Rasyid which takes a lot of time to become more familiar between ethnic Sundanese students and ethnic Batak students. In terms of interference, Sundanese and Batak ethnic students have the same language disorder, Feriany himself admits that it is difficult when Batak ethnic students speak or slip a few words from the Batak language as well as Rasyid, but Rasyid himself has a disorder in which Rasyid must be able to control his emotions when speaking with ethnic Batak students who tend to speak with high intonation.

### **Intercultural Communication Barriers**

At the time of intercultural communication barriers between Sundanese and Batak ethnic students have in common which is the language, where the Sundanese ethnic students feel confused with the Batak language as well as the Batak ethnic students who find it difficult. experienced by Raysid, Feriany, Dewi, and Tommy. The obstacles felt by Rasyid himself were surprised because of the intonation of ethnic Batak students when speaking and when they first met, they felt awkward, to become a closer relationship it took quite a long time. When talking to ethnic Batak students it was easy to provoke emotions, and not only language However, when communicating with ethnic Batak students using chat applications, it is often difficult to interpret their messages so that they are better verbally. The obstacles experienced by Dewi and Tommy are similar in that they have to change their accents and learn some Sundanese vocabulary to easily socialize with Sundanese ethnic students, where they pay more attention to their accents for fear of miscommunication with Sundanese ethnic students.

### **CONCLUSION**

From this study it can be concluded that in intercultural communication, language and accents are very influential for both parties and the biggest obstacle in this study is the language of each ethnicity where Sundanese ethnic students have difficulty understanding Batak language and Batak ethnic students have difficulty understanding Sundanese language, but not only language difficulties were experienced but the accent of ethnic Batak students also had to be changed so as not to cause conflict and make it easier for ethnic Batak students to adapt to ethnic Sundanese students.

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