

Indonesian Students' Awareness of Verbal and Non-Verbal Intercultural Differences at the Global Workplace

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari makalah ini adalah untuk menggambarkan kesadaran siswa Indonesia tentang perbedaan budaya yang terjadi di tempat kerja secara global. Para siswa mengikuti 600 menit kursus Komunikasi Antar Budaya dalam enam minggu. Penelitian ini melibatkan 36 mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Departemen. Mereka mengisi kuesioner tentang kesadaran budaya sebanyak 12 pertanyaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa memiliki kesadaran verbal dan nonverbal yang tepat terkait dengan perbedaan antar budaya di ruang global. Hasil penelitian ini didukung oleh pernyataan Hanvey (1979) yang menyatakan bahwa level siswa terbanyak pada level tiga. Mereka sadar akan ciri-ciri budaya yang signifikan dan halus yang sangat kontras dengan ciri khas seseorang tetapi dapat dipahami secara kognitif. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa peneliti selanjutnya dapat menggali lebih banyak perspektif tidak hanya dari siswa tetapi juga dari pekerjaan lain. Selain itu, instrumen lain seperti wawancara atau observasi juga dapat diterapkan pada penelitian selanjutnya untuk mendapatkan informasi lebih lanjut.

Kata kunci: *Kesadaran Budaya, Perbedaan Budaya, Komunikasi Antar Budaya*

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to describe Indonesian students' awareness about cultural differences happens in the global workplace. The students followed 600 minutes of Intercultural Communication course in six weeks. The research involved 36 students of English Education Department, who filled out 12 questions of questionnaire

about cultural awareness. The result showed that most students had proper verbal and nonverbal awareness related with the intercultural differences at the global space. The result was supported by Hanvey (1979) statement who stated that the level of most students at level three. They were aware of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own but can be understood cognitively. This research suggests that the next researcher can dig more perspective not only from students but also from other occupations. Besides that, another instrument like interview or participant observation also can be applied to get more information.

Keywords: Cultural Awareness, Cultural Differences, Intercultural Communication

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INTRODUCTION

Intercultural awareness is one of important aspects in intercultural communication. In this globalization era, people from different countries with different cultural backgrounds often meet and interact in different contexts, such as in business context, education context, and tourism context.

Intercultural awareness can be defined as an understanding of one's own and others' cultures that affect how people think and behave (Chen and Starosta, 1996). Specifically, Hanvey (1979) proposed global perspective idea which becomes the framework for intercultural awareness. According to Hanvey (1979), a global perspective consists of certain modes of thought, sensitivities, intellectual skills, and explanatory capacities, which is a combination of many things and any person

may be rich in certain elements while relatively lacking in others. Hanvey (1979) also elaborates four levels of intercultural awareness: (1) awareness of superficial or visible cultural traits, such as isolated facts or stereotypes; (2) awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own and interpreted as unbelievable and irrational; (3) awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own but can be understood cognitively; (4) awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider.

The levels of intercultural awareness proposed by Hanvey (1979) can be seen clearly in table 1 below:

Table 1. Level of Intercultural Awareness (Hanvey, 1979)

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION OF INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS
1	Awareness of superficial or visible cultural traits, such as isolated facts or stereotypes
2	Awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own and interpreted as unbelievable and irrational
3	Awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own but can be understood cognitively
4	Awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider.

In the context of English language teaching (ELT), Scelye (1975) proposed some practical teaching principles in enhancing students' intercultural awareness, namely: (1) Acquiring cultural knowledge through language learning; (2) Making cultural behavior an important part of class; (3) Letting student have the capacity of occupying their social economic status; (4) A better understanding of native culture and target culture; (5) Making students know that people's behavior was affected by culture.

The principles of enhancing students' intercultural awareness proposed by Scelye (1975) can be seen comprehensively in table 2 below:

Table 2. Principles of Enhancing Students' Intercultural Awareness

NO	PRINCIPLES OF ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS
1	Acquiring cultural knowledge through language learning;
2	Making cultural behavior an important part of class
3	Letting student have the capacity of occupying their social economic status
4	Making students know that people's behavior was affected by culture.

In English Department of IKIP Siliwangi, students are assigned to take *Intercultural Communication* subject which has two credit hours. The textbook used is *Intercultural Communication* written by Patey. After 600 minutes (six weeks) of learning *Intercultural Communication*, students then were given questionnaire to assess their intercultural awareness.

Based on the background of the research above, the writers would like to know whether students of IKIP siliwangi have already possessed intercultural awareness after taking *intercultural communication* subject for six weeks. then, the result of the survey will describe the present condition of students' intercultural awareness.

METHOD

Research Design

This present study employed a qualitative design with descriptive research method. This method was chosen due to the research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Knupfer & McLellan,1996). Qualitative research methods are used to examine questions that can best be answered by verbally describing how participants in a study perceive and interpret various aspect of their environment (Crowl, 1996).

Qualitative research provides opportunities for researchers to study social phenomena in relation to people's everyday lives. Through a process of data interpretation, qualitative research provides information about what, why and how a phenomenon in a society happens. This is in line with what Denzin and Lincoln (2005) say that qualitative research also involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. Yin (1994) also elaborates that employing qualitative method provides researchers with opportunities to represent the views and perspectives of the people/participants in a study.

Research Site

This research was conducted in English Education Program of IKIP Siliwangi. As has been mentioned earlier, 36 students of the first year of the English Department in

IKIP Siliwangi are assigned to take *Intercultural Communication subject* which has two credit hours as compulsory subject.

Participants

There were 36 students were involved in this research. They are students of the first year 2018. The age is between 17-22 years old. They have not studied *Intercultural Communication* subject before, except in IKIP Siliwangi. All of them joined the *Intercultural Communication* subject for 6 (six) weeks (600 minutes). The detail percentage of participant is summarized in the figure below.

Table 3. Profiles of Participants

STUDENTS	N	AGE
Female	28	17-22 years old
Male	8	17-20 years old
TOTAL	36	

Procedure

The research was conducted in two steps. The first step was teaching learning process of *Intercultural Communication* course which lasted for six weeks (600 minutes). Then, after the course was over, the students were given a set of questionnaire about intercultural awareness. The questionnaire consists of twelve questions related to the aspects of cultural differences in several contexts. Six questions were about intercultural difference of verbal communication and three questions were about intercultural differences of nonverbal communication. The format of the questionnaire can be seen in table 4 below:

After collecting the data, the writers went through the step of data analysis. Based on Burns (2000), the purpose of analyzing the data is to find meaning in the data and this is done by systematically arranging and presenting the information. It has to be organized so that comparisons, contrasts, and insights can be made and demonstrated. Specifically, thematic analysis was used in analyzing the data. Boyatzis (1998) elaborates thematic analysis as a strategy in qualitative research to analyze information in a

systematic way in order to make the data understandable. It organizes and describes the data in detail according to emergent themes. In doing thematic analysis, the researcher used the phases by Braun and Clarke (2006) as the guidance.

The first step in the process of data analysis was organizing the data. This step involved categorizing the data gained from the questionnaire. After categorizing the data, the next procedure was labeling the data based on the data sources. The next step is analytic procedure by repeatedly reading the result of the questionnaire.

The next step was coding. Creswell (2009) states that coding process is to make sense out of data, divide it into text or image segment, label the segments with codes, examine codes for overlap and redundancy and collapse these codes into broad themes. In this study, coding was intended to identify certain ideas in the data that represented the same meanings. Finally, the data were categorized into the aspects related to students' intercultural awareness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research analyzed the students' perception of verbal and nonverbal awareness related with intercultural differences at workplace. In this study, students were asked 12 (twelve) open ended questions where they were freely to choose yes or no with the reason of their answer. The data from questionnaire were obtained through researcher's guidance during the section. The data would be described in paragraph based on the statement.

Table 4. Question Number One

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
1.	I know when to use first names and surnames in communication	41,67%	58,33%

Based on the table above, the students' answers were divided into two kinds, namely yes or no. Students, who stated yes as the statement, is smaller than no. It was shown by

the percentage of students who agree with the statement around 41,67% (15 students) while students who said no around 58,33% (21 students). There were some reasons why the students stated agree or disagree. They disagreed with two general reasons. The reasons were if someone did not have surname, the interlocutor will not use it in communication. Then, most people only used first name in their communication. Besides that, around forty percent students used their first name when they knew well each other. Then, the surname also used in a formal situation.

Table 5. Question Number Two

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
2.	I know what professional tootles to use in communication	80,16%	19,44%

The table above showed that students who answered yes is bigger than no. The total percentage which stated yes is 80,16% of 31 students. Then, 19,44% shows students who answered no. Based on the question about whether the students know or not professional tootles to use in communication, students gave their own reasons. They knew the professional tootles when using ms. or mr. in formal situation. Then, it was used when they put respect to older people and different degree or position. After that, the knowledge appeared when knowing attitudes and politeness. Some of students said no. It means that they never knew how and when to use it in communication.

Table 6. Question Number Three

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
3.	I should anticipate different communication style to be used	94,44%	5,56%

Based on the table above, the students' answers were divided into two kinds, namely yes or no. Students, who stated yes as the statement, is bigger than no. It was shown by

the percentage of students who agree with the statement around 94,44% of 36 students while students who said no around 5,56%. There are some reasons why the students stated agree or disagree. They disagreed with two reasons. The first reason is students anticipate different communication style to be used when people showing attitude and politeness to the others. Then, most people used different style of communication to respect older people.

Table 7. Question Number Four

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
4.	I should anticipate different attitudes about towards small-talk	66,62%	33,33%

The table above showed that students who answered yes is a half bigger than no. The total percentage which stated yes is 66,62% of 36 students. Then, 33,33% showed students who answered no. Based on the question about the anticipation of different attitudes related with small talk, students gave their own reasons. They think that small talks is used when people has relation. Then, it is used when people need something from others. After that, it is applied to eliminate awkwardness. Some of students said no. They stated that small talk is wasting time in communication. It is better if people do not go around the bush and stick to the point. Besides that, some people feel nervous and shy when they talk with other interlocutors. The last, they do not know how to implement small talk in conversation.

Table 8. Question Number Five

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
5.	I should anticipate different attitudes about the acceptability of asking personal questions	75%	25%

Based on the table above, the students' answers were divided into two kinds, namely yes or no. Students, who stated yes as the statement, is bigger than no. It was showed by the percentage of students who agree with the statement around 75% of 36 students while students who said no around 25%. There are some reasons why the students stated agree or disagree. They disagreed with two reasons. The first reason is students anticipate different attitudes about acceptability of asking personal questions to keep interlocutor's feeling during the conversation. Then, it is sometimes sensitive questions when people asked about age, weight, and religion. Besides agreement, some of students also put their disagreement with the question. They never asked personal questions to the interlocutors.

Table 9. Question Number Six

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
6.	I should anticipate different attitude towards the acceptability of humor and emotion in communication	80,56%	19,44%

Based on the table above, the students' answers were divided into two kinds, namely yes or no. Students, who stated yes as the statement, is bigger than no. It was showed by the percentage of students who agree with the statement around 80,56% of 36 students while students who said no around 19,44%. There are some reasons why the students stated agree or disagree. The reason was humor and emotion emerged depending on situation of the interlocutor in communication.

Table 10. Question Number Seven

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
7.	I should anticipate different attitudes toward the acceptability of interrupting in communication	66,67%	33,33%

The table above showed that students who answered yes is bigger than no. The total percentage which stated yes is 66,67% of 36 students. Then, 33,33% showed students who answered no. Based on the question about the anticipation of different attitudes related with acceptability of interrupting in communication, students gave their own reasons. They said permission before interrupt other people conversation and let the people to finish their argumentation or sharing ideas. Besides that, some students did not accustom to interrupt someone.

Table 11. Question Number Eight

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
8.	I should expect differences in the level of acceptable eye contact in communication	97,22%	2,78%

The table above showed that students who answered yes is almost 100% than no. The total percentage which stated yes is 97,22% of 36 students. Then, 2,78% showed students who answered no. Based on the question about people should expect differences in the level of acceptable eye contact in communication, students gave their own reasons. They said that eye contact is important to respect each other. It was used to show that interlocutor focus on topic and show politeness. In addition, it can show that the speaker has a good relationship with interlocutor. Some of students said no. They stated that sometimes people feel not confidence when talking by using direct eye contact.

Table 12. Question Number Nine

No	Question	Answer (Yes/No) with Description	
		Yes	No
9.	I know that I should avoid any particular gestures in communication	97,22%	2,78%

Based on the table above, the students' answers were divided into two kinds, namely yes or no. Students, who stated yes as the statement, is bigger than no. It was shown by the percentage of students who agree with the statement around 97,22% of 36 students while students who said no around 2,78%. There are some reasons why the students stated agree or disagree. The reason of agreement is they thought gestures important to show politeness. Then, gestures can give impact to make interlocutor easy to understand the explanation.

Table 13. Question Number Ten

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
10.	I should anticipate differences in the way my counterparts use touch in communication	50%	50%

The table above showed that students, who answered yes, a half than no. The total percentage which stated yes is 50% of 36 students. Then, another 50% showed students who answered no. Based on the question about people should anticipate differences in the way my counterparts use touch in communication, students gave their own reasons. They said that if they know each other, they did physical contact or respond. Another student stated that someone will be offended when doing touch in communication. They felt uncomfortable and impolite.

Table 14. Question Number Eleven

No	Question	Answer	
		Yes	No
11.	I know that several body-language are taboo in communication	66,67%	33,33%

Based on the table above, the students' answers were divided into two kinds, namely yes or no. Students, who stated yes as the statement, is bigger than no. It was shown by the percentage of students who agree with the statement around 66,67% of 36 students while students who said no around 33,33%. There are some reasons why the students stated agree or disagree. The reason of agreement is they think body language showed politeness during make a conversation.

Table 15. Question Number Twelve

No	Question	Answer (Yes/No) with Description	
		Yes	No
12.	I should expect differences in what is thought of as appropriate "personal space" in communication	94,44%	5,56%

The table above showed that students, who answered yes, a half than no. The total percentage which stated yes is 94,44% of 36 students. Then, 5,56% showed students who answered no. Based on the question about people should expect differences in what is thought of as appropriate "personal space" in communication, students gave their own reasons. They said that personal space should emerge if people do conversation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of questionnaire, most students were already familiar with verbal and nonverbal intercultural differences. It was supported by Chen & Charosta (1996), they stated that people who has good intercultural awareness affects their way to think and behave to other people. It can be seen from twelve questions more than fifty percent questions were answered by yes with their reasons. The questions were divided into two sections or categories. They are six questions were about intercultural difference of verbal communication and three questions were about intercultural differences of nonverbal communication.

Students' responses also showed that they already aware with global perspective around their surroundings. The example can be seen through their sensitivity of small talks, communication style, attitude, and eye contact. As Hanvey's (1979) elaboration, person can be rich of explanation and knowledge of global perspective such as intellectual skills, sensitivity, and thought. On the point of that, the results can be wrapped up based on level of intercultural communication awareness from Hanvey (1979), the level of most students at level three. They were aware of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own but can be understood cognitively.

Regarding to the finding and discussion of the research, it is suggested that the next researcher can dig more perspective not only from students but also from other occupations. Besides that, another instrument like interview or participant observation also can be applied to get more information.

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