

Conference Paper

Cross-Cultural Communication in the Teaching Process at SDN 18 Parhorasan in Samosir

Euis Amalia, Lenny Bey B, and Rahmad Husein Napitupulu

UNIMED, Medan, Indonesia

ORCID:

Euis Amalia: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0700-1669>

Abstract

This research examines cross-cultural communication between teachers and students who could not speak English well at SDN 18 Parhorasan in Samosir. There were 17 participants, who were grade five students in elementary school. The students had different social backgrounds and so found speaking English difficult. They were used to using their *Batak* dialect when they tried to speak English. The pronunciation seemed to be a joke for them. The researchers investigated the cultural and language barriers in communication among the teachers and students when they learn English in the class. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative method. The findings highlighted the barriers in expression, intonations and sentences. 50% of the barriers were cultural and 50% were language.

Keywords: cross-culture, communication barrier, language barrier

Corresponding Author:

Euis Amalia

euisamaliaa@gmail.com

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1. Introduction

Communication is very important in human beings. In order, to connect with the other people, to express the idea, to make a request, to deliver a lesson in the class good communication is needed. However, dealing with communication we have to consider the source, media, content, and receiver. The quality of communication is measured from the understanding of the receiver of the information itself. If the receivers could not receive the message clearly, then communication could not run well.

Communication is the process or act of transmitting a message from a sender to a receiver, through a channel and with the interference of noise. It means that communication is a way how people can share and also get messages. Knowing the communication runs well, the speaker should have the same background, so the communication can connect to the both of participants. A speaker is a person who

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delivers the information, while the listener is a person who receives the information from the speaker. So, they cannot be separated.

The backgrounds of the speaker and listener are very important to create communication. The background comes from culture, language, and country. It determines that the communication will occur between listener and speaker. It is impossible to communicate with different people who have different social and cultural backgrounds.

Culture is created from the habits of people from some areas. It develops the mindset of people who live in that area. Culture also can affect communication by geographical, social, and chronological points. Culture also makes their language convey their opinion about something. Culture will support their language. Some people sometimes do not receive the other culture that comes to their area to prevent their culture from a loss. In reality, people cannot miss their culture. Culture has its language. It is proven by their habits who bring their language everywhere. When he or she wants to communicate with other people of different languages and cultures they will have difficulty understanding the language. They have to use the local language to convey something. It applies to the local people who live in different areas. They have to try using a foreign language, while it will be difficult for them. This shows there is a barrier of communication among the speaker and listener.

Cultures have variations in the ways of thinking, rules of speaking, social values, and pragmatic principles. Therefore, the topics in the cultural barrier between people coming from different cultures have a different perspective on communication. The most common problem arising from cultural barriers is miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Culture is one of the factors in communication barriers during the teaching-learning process in the classroom context. When there is a different culture, there must be a communication barrier. It can be seen from the problem that is related to different ways of thinking, seeing, hearing, and interpreting the world. These differences can cause cross-cultural miscommunication because a person or people from one culture do not receive or understand the intended message from people from a different culture. The greater the cultural differences, the greater the barriers of communication are. Language and culture are fulfilled to each other. Therefore, the relationship between language and culture is very significant for the language teaching process. To understand the role of culture in language learning, the application of socio-cultural theories is required, more than cognitive theories.

In this case, the students who live in Samosir cannot use English well, while *Samosir* is a famous resor visited by foreign people that have different cultures with the local

people. It is proven by their pronunciation which affects their dialect. They cannot avoid using *Batak* dialect. This also happens among teachers and students at *SDN. 18 Parhorasan* in *Samosir*. The students who have a different background with English are difficult to speak English well.

2. Literature Review

Cross-cultural communication refers to direct and indirect communication and interplay across different cultures. It has been globalized as an issue in the world. Effective cross-cultural communication focuses on overcoming cultural differences across nationality, religion, borders, culture, and behavior. According to Jant (2004: 39), cross-cultural phenomena generally refer to reflection phenomena across culture. Thus, a cross-cultural study of women's roles in society would reflect what women do in various cultures. Learning cross-culture is not as easy as we see. It needs more comprehension to understand the culture, so we know the value of culture itself. The application of culture gets the result if society shows positive feedback. If there is no positive feedback, the application is failed. Therefore, the development of culture will get some benefits to people who only know their own cultures and vice versa.

Communication is the main skill people should have with different professions or occupations, especially for teachers, the relationship between teachers and students in communication in the classroom. The communication runs effectively when we use a variety of modes; it can be shown from the spoken, and visual points of students who learn a different way to convey the message among teacher-student or student-student. Body language and other non-verbal cues are important modes of communication, and we can take advantage from these to promote a positive classroom environment. The qualities for a positive relationship can be varying to set a learning experience approachable and inviting the student's interest to learn. When a teacher and students have a good way in communication with each other, they will respect each other, then the students will show interest to study in the classroom. So, communication is the basic factor in the teaching-learning process. Keyton (2011) states, that it is necessary that the process of communication is understood mutually by the teacher and the student to make the teaching-learning process effective and to avoid misunderstanding when they communicate.

Effective communication occurs when messages are not changed during the communication process and communication has a purpose for which it was planned or

designed. It means when the communication has the same purpose so the communication can be more effective. However, when it is not achieved, some factors should be explained clearly why communication will be ineffective. As we see that the knowledge is basic of the teachers which are used as a source of effective classroom interaction. It is caused by, if the source (teacher) does not have equal information about the audience (students), the interaction will not be effective (Rani, 2016). Then she says that, if the teacher's demonstration, disgust, and unattributed action during communication with the students happen, students will certainly become afraid, withdrawing from participating in-class activities, and eventually be unwilling to interact with the teacher. Johnson (2000) describes that the teacher's language is distinct. He says teachers' voice should reach the students who sit at the back of the class. The teacher should speak slowly and emphasize the important points and make the students understand the teacher's point, and then the teacher should simplify the language according to the level of students and wait at least three seconds before asking a new question, clarifying or giving a student right to speak. It means that the teacher should clarify information that the teacher shares with the students before giving a chance to interact with students.

Corballis (2002) examines some of the emotional, psychological, practical, and social factors that form barriers to communication. He concludes that dialogue between pupils and teachers form a vital part of classroom communication and effective small group activities are important in empowering pupils. It can be concluded that all theories support education for all. This means that every communication has its barrier, but we have to solve it to achieve communication effectively in the classroom.

3. Research Method

This study is conducted by using descriptive with the qualitative method purposed to find out language communication barriers. Qualitative research is related to assisting in describing the common elements of the various forms of qualitative methods. Nazir (2014:43) states that descriptive qualitative is one used to make description of situation, event, or accumulated basic data. It means this research does not intend to find a new theory but to find new evidence through the truth of a certain theory. In this study, the objects are students and teachers at grade five of elementary school. The analysis of this study is supported by the references of library research. This method is carried out by selecting the theories, sources, from relevant books and journals supporting the analysis of cross-cultural communication.

The data are collected from sentences from the dialogues between students and teachers of grade V students at *SDN.18.Parhorasan* in *Samosir* from the video recording. The researchers choose *SDN.18 Parhorasan* because it is one of the schools which has a thick culture so they feel so hard to communicate with a new way as we know that their communication is based on their language around their environment so when they communicate with a new way they think it is a strange thing for them.

Ary, et.al. (2010) states that data analysis in qualitative research is a time-consuming and difficult process because typically the researcher faces massive amounts of field notes, interview transcripts, audio recordings, video data, reflections, or information from documents, all of which must be examined and interpreted. The analysis involves reducing and organizing the data, synthesizing, searching for significant patterns, and discovering what is important. The researcher must organize what he or she has seen, heard, and read and try to make sense of it to create explanations, developing theories, or posing new questions. The data source of this research is taken from a teacher and seventeen students of five grade students at *SDN.18 Parhorasan* in *Samosir*. The school is located in *Pangururan, Samosir North Sumatera*.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Result

There are seventeen students consisting of 11 boys, six girls, and a teacher. After that, the researchers first identify the types of students and teacher's language in cross-cultural communication especially in communication barriers which could be seen from the video. The researchers write the sentences of students said by the teacher and this is used to identify the barriers based on Smith (2013).

Their communication is affected by cross-cultural communication happened when they communicate in a new way with a foreign language that they never use before. It seems strange and difficult for them. The communication will not be more effective when they used different ways to convey the message or most of them should use a new way to communicate, by the case the barrier will happen in the communication. The most barrier we could find in this study is "Physical Barriers", then Language Barriers, after that Perceptual Barriers. Smith (2013) says that Physical Barriers is; easy to spot, doors that are closed, walls that are erected, and distance between people all work against the goal of effective communication. So the parameter is between teacher and students who cannot use a new language to interact with each other because it still

strange for them and it is affected by their own culture which is used as their daily communication. The parameter occurs within a person's mind, especially students who have a thought, that is a strange thing for them.

4.2. Discussion

A variety of cross-cultural communication problems can arise in school, and it is important that teachers could not blame the student or the student's family or culture directly. Problems often result from misunderstandings or value conflicts between teachers and students who have different-culture based communication rules. This is based on analysis of research data in finding the cross-cultural communication in the teaching-learning process in the classroom of grade five-eight students at SDN.18 *Parhorasan* in *Samosir* showing that it cannot be applied in the classroom because they have their own language used as their habitual language to communicate and they never used a new way to interact with each other, as Larsson et, all (1998) argue that as members of a certain society, people have to learn their language because it can show their cultural background. Moreover, people with a different cultural background seem to have a prevalent manner, fashion, or style in which they use their language. It means that they interact by their language which has a new way to convey the message then the communication is effective, but when it is against cross-cultural communication among of them in the class, the communication cannot be effective because there are some factors, such as communication barrier which can be seen from the investigation of students at *SDN.18 Parhorasan* in *Samosir*. They could not use the language because it still new or strange, and also never use the language to interact people around, so the barriers occurred too in the teaching-learning process and it can make misunderstanding among them when they communicated using the new language. Based on the research it shows that cross-cultural communication could not be applied.

There are two barriers found here: cultural barriers and language barriers, amount to 10 for each

This is seen from the video:

1. *Ehh..bukka..bukka (00.03).*

Jadela...bukka..jadela (00.19)

Pola mabukka jadela (00.20)

Ageh tahe (00.21)

Here the student wants to say “open the window” but some of the students shout in *Batak* language to help their friends translating the sentence

- This is a cultural barrier. The parameter is a societal culture. It shows their own culture by using the *Batak* language. Societal culture creates a dialect of language. Here, their culture is a thick, and they cannot miss their culture when they learn English. So they try to translate every sentence into *Batak* language first, after that they do the action.

2. Klohis yo buk! (00.09)

Oupen de window (00.17)

Sit don (00.38).

Here, the student wants to give a command to his friend, “close your book!” in English.

- This is a language barrier. The parameter is: self-inherent. It shows that the pronunciation of their language is still bad. It comes from themselves, and it happens because of their habits of using *Batak* in their daily activities. The background of the students is *Batak* so they have difficulty speaking English.

TABLE 1: The Percentage of Types of Language Communication Barriers of Students and Teacher

No.		Total	Percentage
1.	Cultural Barriers	10	50.00%
2.	Language Barriers	10	50.00%
Total		20	100%

From the table above, there are cultural barriers of (50.00%), and Language Barriers (50.00 %). From the parameters we have based on Smith’s theory, we find that 50.00 % of students of grade five at *SDN. 18 Parhorasan* face barriers to do English conversation in the learning process. The students have used *Batak* language in their class, even they know they are learning English. Then, the rest of 50.00% of students also face language barriers. For the parameter, language is self-inherent that comes from within themselves. Having different languages from other people is one of the problems to communicate in speaking English. The last is 16,7% of students of grade eight students face perceptive barriers, where they go into a situation thinking that the teacher is talking of things they cannot understand.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research, the researchers conclude that cross-cultural communication shows the variations of language or culture in communication; it means that from the data, this type of communication cannot be applied because the students only know their language which affected by their culture, so it is hard for them to interact with each other. On the other hand the barriers come from different cultures.

Two barriers are there in this research. They are cultural barriers and language barriers. From cultural barriers (50.00%) it is proven that natural cultures cannot be substituted by the new culture. And from language barriers (50.00%) it is shown that someone coming from a certain culture cannot easily accept a new one.

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