ADAPTASI BUDAYA KOMUNIKASI PADA MAHASISWA ASING (STUDI FENOMENOLOGI MAHASISWA ASING UNIVERSITAS TELKOM)

COMMUNICATION CULTURE ADAPTATION TO FOREIGN STUDENTS (PHENOMENOLOGY STUDY OF FOREIGN STUDENTS AT TELKOM UNIVERSITY)

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ABSTRAK

Budaya merupakan konsep fundamental yang dimiliki oleh setiap orang. Melalui budaya, semua orang tahu bagaimana hidup untuk bertahan hidup dan belajar banyak hal. Mulai dari bagaimana individu bergaul, proses belajar, adaptasi, berbicara, membangun hubungan, dan berperilaku. Adanya keragaman budaya tidak menutup kemungkinan terjadinya proses adaptasi budaya. Guncangan budaya merupakan sesuatu yang selalu hadir dan hampir pasti terjadi dalam adaptasi budaya. Gegar budaya sendiri merupakan gejala sosial berupa kesulitan, kecemasan, yang disebabkan oleh proses adaptasi budaya yang dilakukan, dan ini terjadi pada seorang pendatang ketika pindah ke daerah, negara, dan budaya baru. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui fenomena proses adaptasi yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa asing pendatang di Indonesia khususnya di Telkom University, Bandung. Metode yang digunakan adalah fenomenologi kualitatif dengan menggunakan paradigma kualitatif interpretatif. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini dengan melakukan wawancara dan observasi. Dari hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan, proses adaptasi setiap migran berbeda-beda, dan cara mereka menghadapi gegar budaya yang terjadi berbeda satu sama lain. Namun dengan adaptasi yang baik, dukungan dari teman, dosen, awal sebelum pindah tempat, serta pemikiran dan tujuan awal yang kuat, setiap mahasiswa asing dapat mengatasi proses adaptasi dan geger budaya selama proses pembelajaran di Indonesia khususnya di Telkom University, Bandung.

Kata kunci: Proses Adaptasi, Mahasiswa Asing, Fenomenologi Kualitatif

ABSTRACT

Culture is a fundamental concept that is owned by everyone. Through culture, everyone knows how to live to survive and learn many things. Starting from how individuals get along, learning process, adaptation, speaking, building

relationships, and behaving. The existence of cultural diversity does not rule out the process of cultural adaptation. Culture shock is something that is always present and almost certain to occur in cultural adaptation. Culture shock itself is a social symptom in the form of difficulties, anxiety, caused by the process of cultural adaptation that is carried out, and this happens to an immigrant when moving to a new region, country and culture. The purpose of this study was to determine the phenomenon of the adaptation process by foreign student migrants in Indonesia, especially at Telkom University, Bandung. The method used is qualitative phenomenology using a qualitative interpretative paradigm. Data collection techniques used in this study by conducting interviews and observations. From the results of the research that has been done, the adaptation process of each migrant is different, and the way they deal with the culture shock that occurs is different from one another. However, with good adaptation, support from friends, lecturers, preparation before moving, as well as strong initial thoughts and goals, every foreign student can overcome the adaptation process and culture shock during the learning process in Indonesia, especially at Telkom University, Bandung.

Key words : Adaptation Process, Foreign Students, Qualitative Phenomenology

1. INTRODUCTION

Differences in culture and communication methods often become obstacles in the adaptation process of individuals in a new environment. The difficulty in dealing with adaptation to a new culture can usually be seen when the culture of origin has significant differences, such as in terms of geography (Soemantri, 2019). For example, when a student from Medan has to receive education in Bandung, there must be cultural values that are respected by students from Medan through a process of adaptation. The problem of cultural adaptation itself is often the cause of culture shock where according to Oberg (1960 in Ward, et.al 2001) it is explained that culture shock describes a negative psychological state.

Adaptation difficulties experienced by each individual when they have to settle in a new environment can also trigger depression, even for overseas students, for example, the perceived difficulty of adapting can make it difficult to complete studies. The problems experienced regarding the adaptation of communication culture itself are very interesting to study because of the many obstacles that occur in cultural adaptation itself. According to Kim (2001), cultural adaptation is an interactive process that develops through the communication activities of individual immigrants with their new socio-cultural environment. In addition, communication is also one of the important things to be able to adapt to culture in a new environment.

Previous studies on cultural adaptation have been carried out, especially in the scope of research objects that are still in the same geographic area or in other words only different ethnicities, such as research conducted by Simatupang, et al. (2015) with the title Communication Style and Cultural Adaptation of Batak Students in Yogyakarta, where in his research it was stated that in the adaptation process the most important thing is openness and acceptance so that there will also be an openness from within which raises the desire to learn a new culture and will slowly create a sense of comfort.

Another research conducted by Field., Et al. (2018) entitled the Adaptation Process for Overseas Students in the face of Cultural Concern shows that overseas students adapt because they experience a cultural shock. The adaptations they do do not happen instantly and the key is there must be openness and motivation so that the adaptation process can be passed smoothly. The more the cultural background is similar, it is assumed that the easier the cultural adaptation process will be passed.

Soemantri's (2019) research on Cultural Adaptation of Indonesian Students in Australia shows that Indonesian students studying in Australia carry out an adaptation process consisting of adaptation and growth. Meanwhile, the cultural adaptation factors found were enculturation, acculturation, deculturation, and assimilation. Indonesian students also make accommodation based on experience so that they can adjust to their interlocutors and selectively converge in communicating. In this case, it cannot be denied that the challenge that must be faced by someone in entering a new culture is how to adapt to the culture itself plus the communication that must be done especially if someone comes from a foreign country.

The adaptation of the communication culture experienced by foreign students in a new environment is interesting to research, considering that the challenges that must be faced are of course greater than those of overseas students who only have different ethnicities because apart from perceived cultural differences, the communication used is also different. Furthermore, the large number of foreign students studying at Telkom University is one of the reasons researchers conducted this research. Based on data obtained through the Telkom University website regarding the draft strategic plan, it is explained that the number of foreign students at Telkom University is 0.3% of the total numberof Telkom University students. This indicates that as much as 0.3% of foreign students at Telkom University, of course, must go through an adaptation process in taking their education.

1. BASIC THEORY

2.1 Uncertainty Reduction Theory

This theory was put forward by Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese (1975) in Gudykunst et.al (2003) and assumes the importance of interaction because the purpose of communication is to reduce uncertainty about our interlocutors. The essence of Uncertainty Reduction theory is to reduce uncertainty between strangers when they first meet and have a conversation. According to Berger and Calabrese, when strangers first meet, they will increase their ability to be able to predict what other people will do and what we will do to the other person. Prediction can be defined as the ability to predict possible behavior choices from the possible options available to oneself or to a relationship partner. Explanation is an attempt to interpret the meaning given by a stranger based on past experiences. This theory states that there are two types of uncertainty in the first encounter, namely cognitive uncertainty and behavioral uncertainty. Cognitive uncertainty is the level of uncertainty associated with beliefs and attitudes. Behavioral uncertainty refers to the extent of predictable behavior in a given situation.

There are two processes in reducing uncertainty, namely proactive and retroactive. Proactive uncertaintyreduction occurs when a person thinks before communicating with others. For example, when we see a stranger at theterminal, we then think of inviting the stranger to meet and compile what we will say when we meet that person. This

is done to reduce our uncertainty about the strangers we meet. A reduction in retroactive uncertainty occurs when explaining post-encounter behavior. For example, when we and the stranger who met at the terminal have become acquainted, we then think about whether the stranger likes us, or is happy to meet us, or whether he wants to meet and talk to us again, and so on.

2.2 Cultural Adaptation Process

Adaptation is described as a three-stage process by Kim (2001: 42), namely stress-adaptation growth. In the initial process when entering a new environment, newcomers will experience stress. This then will motivate someone to adapt to a new environment or the host environment to restore balance. Furthermore, the adaptation process can be achieved through acculturation and deculturation. Finally, there is a growth process where there will be ups and downs of the stress-adaptation process. Stages of Cultural Adaptation Kim (2001: 60) found two stages of adaptation, namely cultural adaptation and crosscultural adaptation. First, cultural adaptation is the basic process of communication, namely the presence of a messenger, medium and message receiver. This basic process will bring about encoding and decoding. This occurs when individuals move to a new environment. There is a process of sending messages by local residents in the new environment that can be understood by individual immigrants and is known as enculturation. This enculturation usually occurs at the time of socialization. Second, Cross-Cultural Adaptation which includes three important things, namely acculturation, deculturation, and assimilation.

According to Kim (2001: 65) the acculturation process occurs when newcomers who have gone through the socialization process can begin to interact with a new culture or culture foreign to the newcomer. As time goes by, the newcomer begins to know the new culture and chooses to follow the culture he has lived in, but the previous cultural patterns also still influence the adaptation process. Deculturation occurs when previous cultural patterns still influence. The changes in acculturation affect the psychological and social behavior of the newcomers with new identities, norms and cultural values. This is then considered to trigger resistance to new cultures, so that it is not impossible for immigrants to isolate themselves from the local population. In the adaptation process, it must be understood that something changes and something doesn't change. Even so, Gudykunts and Kim (2003: 275) state that the possibility of individuals to change the environment is very small. This is due to the dominance of the local population's culture so that it will control their daily life and force the newcomers to adjust. The third thing in the adaptation process is assimilation where newcomers are considered capable of minimizing the old culture so that when they are in a new environment they look like the indigenous people they live in.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The method in this research is a qualitative method. Qualitative method is research that aims to explain a certain phenomenon in depth by using data collection, and it is difficult to measure it statistically. The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive study. Researchers use this method because researchers try to describe and produce information about a phenomenon systematically and as it is. In this research use the Phenomenology method. The used of this method used to understand about how people do an experience and the meaning of that experience for him.

4. RESULT OF DISCUSSION

Uncertainty Reduction Theory explain that the essence of Uncertainty Reduction theory is to reduce uncertainty between strangers when they first meet and have a conversation. According to Berger and Calabrese, when strangers first meet, they will increase their ability to be able to predict what other people will do and what we will do to the other person. Prediction can be defined as the ability to predict possible behavior choices from the possible options available to oneself or to a relationship partner. And for the 4 informant that is foreign student at Telkom University have a problem while adapting, which is communication/language, culture, people characters, and the weather. Where In the findings of this study, the process of adapting the communication culture felt by the informants included several phases, namely the preparation phase, the honeymoon phase, the frustration phase, the readjustment phase and the resolution phase. That purpose to reduce the problem of uncertainty in processing of adaptation.
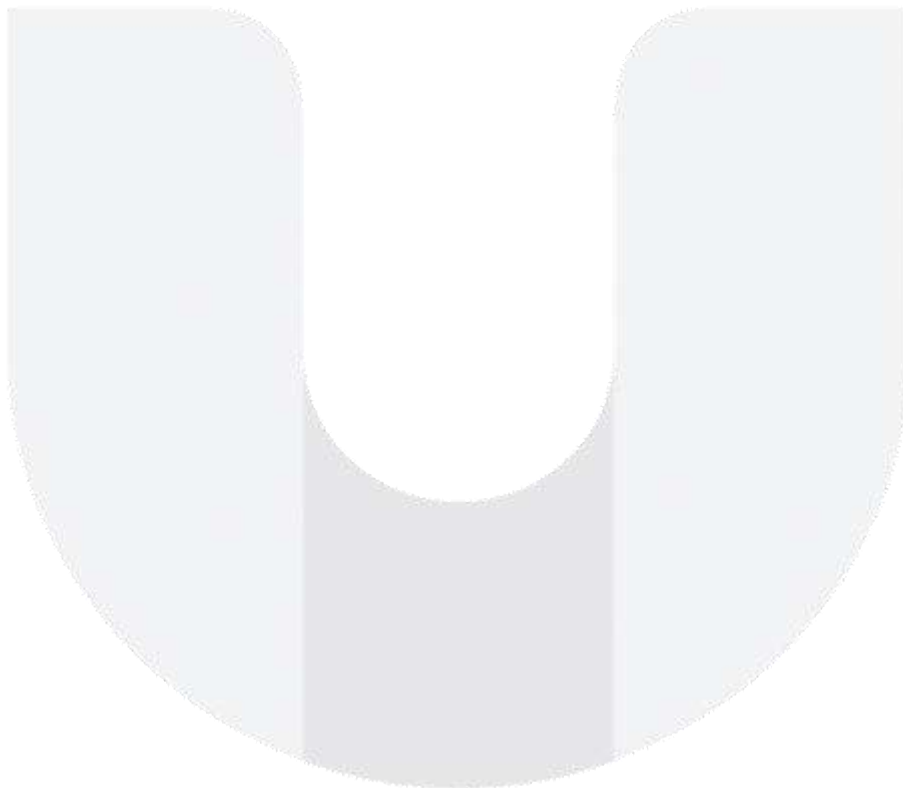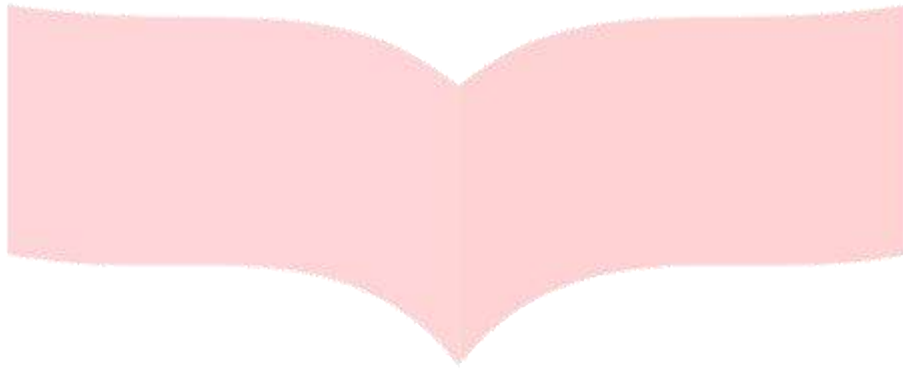
After the entire series of adaptation processes were passed by all informants, it can be concluded that broadly speaking, the informants in this study were able to go through the adaptation process by going through the phases mentioned above. The phases passed by all informants have similarities in terms of the frustration phase, the three informants feel that support from the environment greatly affects their adaptation process, and 1 informant feels the need to return everything to their respective motivations so that can go through the adaptation process well. The adaptation process that the informants went through was certainly not an easy matter, they even had to go through each phase for 3-4 months and go through the entire phase, at the latest 1 year. In each of these phases, they also go through an adjustment process in communicating, adapting, dealing with culture shock and making peace with the situation until finally they can conclude that what they experience and feel is part of their journey and adaptation process.

5. CONCLUSION

In this study, it can be concluded that in the communication culture adaptation process, every foreign student experiences phases related to communication, adaptation and language problems. The phases they go through include the preparation phase, which is the preparation phase before foreign students leave for Indonesia by collecting information about the character of people, weather, food and culture in Indonesia. Furthermore, foreign students go through the honeymoon phase, where in this phase foreign students feel happy and comfortable and what they experience while in Indonesia is in accordance with their expectations during the preparation phase. However, over time, many things turned out to be not according to their expectations, initially in the preparation phase they only collected information about the character of people, weather, food and culture. But some of them also prepare physical and financial.

When they are in the frustration phase, they realize that in order to achieve their goal of completing their studies on time, they must re-adjust. This readjustment process enters the readjustment phase, where in this phase foreign students re-learn the adaptation process that they must go through with the help of friends and lecturers. In this phase, they also have to recall their initial motivation in order to survive and go through the whole process of adapting well. Finally, after they have gone through the readjustment phase, they enter the resolution phase, where

they feel that there are many who support them in the adaptation process, a dynamic environment, cooperative people are very helpful so that they can conclude what solutions they must implement to stay survive during the adaptation process, which is to stay relaxed through everything, believe that what they are going through will be beneficial for them, and never give up.

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