Cross-Culture Analysis: Cultural Adaptation and Nonverbal Communication in Non-Native English-Speaking Countries

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Abstract

The objectives of the research were (1) to discover which mode of nonverbal communication did visitors most frequently use to communicate with non-native English-speakers countries and vice versa, (2) to know which mode of nonverbal communication did the visitors most rarely use to adapt to non-native English-speakers countries and vice versa, (3) to describe non-native English-speakers'culture when the visitors used nonverbal communication with them. The method of the research was descriptive. The research used content validity. The subjects of the research were 54 people taken from the second semester of Batam Center students of University of Riau Kepulauan majoring in English Education Department consisted of 28 students; 5 non-native English-speakers countries (European one) and 21 online respondents of 204.666 members of Backpacker International public group site. The data were collected through observation and interview then analyzed by SPSS 24 version on the base of Little John's modes of nonverbal communication (2009). The results of the research were (1) 74.1% (kinesics/body language) was the most frequently used; (2) 75.9% (haptics/touch) was the most rarely used; (3) 180 degree of space when Nns met the visitor for the first time (proxemics/space), Nns barely used the touch unless for specific reason (haptics/touch);often used eye contact when focused on something, punctual (chronemics/time), flat face tended to be cold and rarely used gestures if not necessary (kinesics/body language), in the center city, women were more fashionable, average body liked their height got many benefits (physical environment-appearance). Like all Euroepan, Nns tended to speak faster and not clear enough (paralanguage/vocalics). In brief, the faster visitors could adapt to them the faster NNs opened themselves to the visitors.

Keywords: cross-culture, cultural adaptation, nonverbal communication

INTRODUCTION

"*Dare to live then dare to survive!*" It is undeniable that life is not as easy as it looks. Some people already get used to with their "safe" environment. Their mind sometimes stopped them from moving out of their stagnant life. No matter how hectic their life are, they

will always find various illogical reasons just to justify their mind that it is the right thing to do for them. They already set their mind and put themselves into what they called "their identity". Even if they meet new environment, they will reject the changing as it is totally different from what they experience. As a result, some obstacles will push them to adapt whether they like or not to the new culture. On the other hand, other people who faced these everyday challenges and new experiences in their life already prepared for that.

Communication might be the only way to make people get what they really want in life and get succeed with that. To reach their purpose, not only a proper language will take its role but also the message of it. Bowden (2010:2) said that human communication consists of a source of transmitting a message (using body or voice, writing or some other method) to a receiver (someone else) in order to achieve an intended result. For the most part, human communication is a multichannel affair operating on verbal and non-verbal levels. Regardless of the society, it is not only how people talk and what they say but also how they present themselves to others that seems to make a difference as to how thay are perceived (Salzmann et al (2012:74). In line with that, Mokhtari (2013:86-87) proposed the construction of the model of analysis of communication in the following scheme:
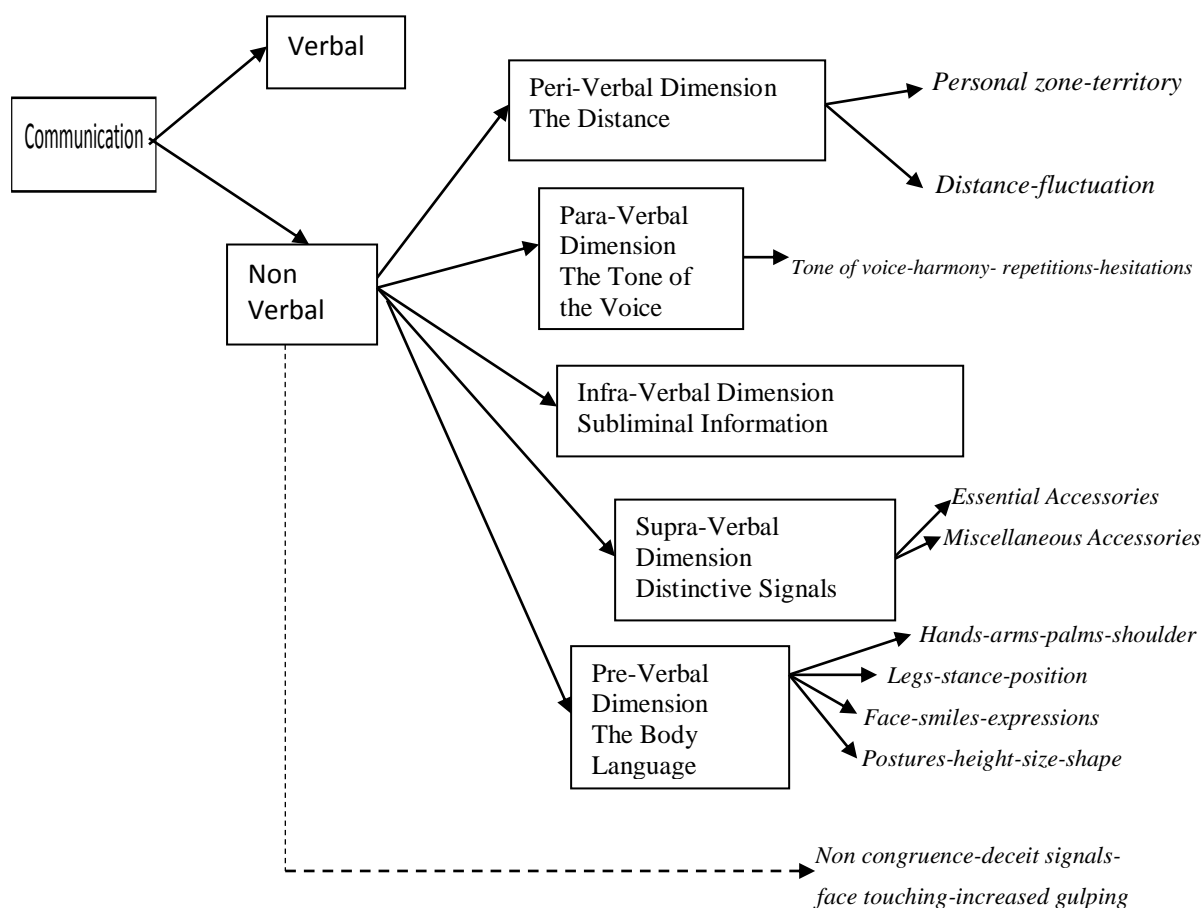
COMMUNICATION IS SYMBOLIC

The main reason communication is symbolics that there is no direct mind-to-mind contact between people. Someone cannot access the internal thoughts and feelings of other human beings; he or she can only infer what they are experiencing by what he or she sees and hears. He or she makes these inferences from a single word, from silence, from long speeches, from simple head nods, and from glances in his or her direction or away from him or her. In other words, because people cannot directly access the internal thoughts of another person, they must rely on and interpret the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols to represent those thoughts. Although the inability to have direct mind-to-mind contact is universal, the methods used to adjust to this limitation are culturally based (Samovar et al., 2010:16-17).

Contextual Nature of Communication

Samovar et al. (2010:18-19) stated there were some elements associated with the contextual nature of communication such as:

(1) Cultural Context

This framework governs all the other environments since it includes learned behaviors and rules that the participants bring to a communication event. For example: If someone were raised in a culture in which people touch each other as a greeting, and out of politeness during an introduction, he or she touched a woman from a non-touch culture, he or she may have accidentally violated the rules of a particular cultural context.

(2) Environmental Context

Nearly all cultures, for example, have religious buildings, but the rules for behavior in those buildings are culturally based.

(3) Occasion

It encounters also controls the behavior of the participants. For example, an Irish wake calls for lively music, dancing, and a great deal of merriment.

(4) Time

Every communication event takes place on a time-space continuum, and the amount of time alloted, whether it is for social conversation or a formal speech, affects that event. Cultures as well as people use time to communicate.

(5) Number of People

Cultures also respond to changes in number. For example, people in Japan find small-group interaction much to their liking, yet they often feel extremely uncomfortable when they have to give a formal public speech.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (NVC)

Salzmann et al. (2012:73) said that the term nonverbal communication, taken literally, refers to the transmission of signals accomplished by means other than spoken or written words. Used broadly, the term includes bodily gestures, facial expressions, spacing, touch, and smell, as well as whistle, smoke-signal, and drum "languages", and such optional vocal effects as those that accompany spoken utterances and can be considered apart from actual words. Nonverbal communication plays an important role in everyday interactions with different people they meet. The human body so incredibly versatile that it can send thousands of nonverbal messages. When when one encounters people, he or she looks first at their face to see if their expression reflects what they are saying. Then, he or she listens to the tone of their voice to check if there are any indications of the emotions involved, and finally, he or she listens to the spokem words to get the actual meaning. Generally, people make judgements about the nature and behavior of persons based on their nonverbal and visual cues rather than on their verbal communication (Little John et al. , 2009:690).

Modes of Nonverbal Communication

There are seven modes of nonverbal communication based on ***Encyclopedia of communication theory*** (2009: 692-694). They are:

1. ***Proxemics***

    The term *territoriality* is still used in the study of proxemics to explain human behavior regarding personal space. There are four territory: (1) *Primary territory*, (2) *Secondary territory*, (3) *Public territory* and (4) *Interaction territory*.

2. ***Haptics***

    It is the study of touching behavior in nonverbal communication. Touches that can be defined as communication include *handshakes, holding hands, kissing (cheek, lips, hand), back slapping, a pat on the shoulder and brishing an arm.* Touching of oneself during communication may include *licking, picking, holding, and scratching*. These behaviors are referred to as adaptor and may send messages that reveal the intentions or feelings of a communicator.

3. ***Oculesics***

It is the study of the role of eyes in nonverbal communication. Eye contact can indicate *interest, attention and involvement*. Gaze comprises the actions of *looking while talking, looking while listening, amount of gaze, and frequency of glances, patterns of fixation, pupil dilation and blink rate.*

4. *Chronemics*

It is the use of time. People notions of time, how they use it, the timing of events, their emotional responses to time, and even the length of their pauses contribute to the communicative effect of time.

5. *Kinesics*

It is popularly known as body language. Kinesics behaviors include *mutual gaze, smiling, facial warmth or pleasantness, childlike behaviors, direct body orientation, and the like.*

6. *Physical-Environment-Appearance*

Environmental factors such as *furniture, architectural style, interior decorating, lighting conditions, colors, temperature, noise, and music affect the behavior of communicators during interactions.* Environmental conditions can alter the choices of words or actions that communicators use to accomplish their communicative objective.

7. *Paralanguage*

Paralanguage (sometimes called vocalics) is the study of nonverbal cues of the voice. It consists of several features. Vocal quality is the characteristics tonal quality of the voice, based on such factors as *resonance, articulation, lip control, and rhythm control. Intensity, tempo, pitch, fluency and vocal patterns are the important dimensions of vocalics.*

LANGUAGE IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION INTERACTIONS

According to Samovar et al. (2010:233-238), there are three different settings where language is a particularly important issue:

1. Interpersonal Interactions

When individuals from different cultures engage in communication, it is very likely that one or more will not be using their native language. Unless those speaking

a second language are fluent or near fluent, there is an extremely high potential for miscommunication. Therefore, if ones are using their own language while interacting with a non-native speaker, there are several considerations they should attend to in order to reduce the potential for miscommunication. They are **(1) Mindfulness**—In any intercultural communication interaction, it is especially important that people be *mindful*. Being mindful also involves being aware that using a second language is much more physically and cognitively demanding than speaking one's native language, **(2) Speech rate**—Ones should speak a bit more slowly and distinctly than they normally do until they can ascertain the other person's level of language competence, **(3) Vocabulary**—Ones should avoid professional vocabulary, technical words, and acronyms until they are sure that the other person has the requisite second-language ability, **(4) Monitor Nonverbal Feedback**—In an intercultural situation, ones need to be aware of cultural differences in nonverbal cues. At the same time, ones should not expect a second-language speaker to exhibit the nonverbals to which you are accustomed, **(5) Checking**—In this manner, ones take responsibility for the conversation and avoid any potential for embarrassing the other person. Another means of checking is to write a few words of the message ones are trying to convey.

2. Interpretation and Translation

When working in a professional context, such as international relations or business, "translation" is taken to mean working with written messages. "Interpretation," on the other hand, indicates changing oral or signed messages from one language to another. The presence of either earphones or an interpreter indicates what type of translation is being done—*consecutive or simultaneous*.

3. Intercultural Marriage

To achieve effective effective communication in a cross-cultural marriage, the couple must deal with the problem of multiple languages. Power imbalances can arise from the ability of only one spouse to speak the language of the couple's country of residence. In these situations, the non-speaker may be forced to become overly reliant on the mate, which can affect self-esteem and identity. On the other hand, dealing with the many adversities can bring a cross-cultural couple closer together, resulting in a greater intimacy. Additionally, sharing each other's cultures—becoming

bicultural—will likely broaden perspectives and create a richness that is difficult to realize when living in a single culture.

Traveller' Motives in a Journey

There are seven motives that trigger people to do travel (Tourism Intelligence International, 2008:43-66). They are (1) Shopping, (2) Sightseeing, (3) Status-Seeking, (4) Visiting Relatives and Frriends, (5) Experience New Culture, (6) Visa Requirements, and (7) Keen for Green. Meanwhile, Bristow (2016:78) said that travel was part of an extensive system of social markers that identified individuals in terms of class, ethnicity and politics, and that often served as remarkably fraught indicators of status or its absence.

CROSS-CULTURE ADAPTATION

In Kim's cross-cultural adaptation theory (2008) in Encyclopedia of communication theory (2009:243) stated that the theory framed by three boundary conditions: (1) The strangers have had a primary socialization in one culture or subculture and have moved into a different and unfamiliar culture (or subculture), (2) they are at least minimally dependent on the host environment for meeting their personal and social needs, and (3) they are regularly engaged in firsthand communication experiences with that environment.

In this communication framework, strangers' communication activities are grouped in two basic, interdependent categories: **(1) (intra)** *personal communication* or the internal mental activities that occur within individuals, disposing and preparing them to act and react in certain ways in actual social situations; *and (2)* **social communication** that takes place whenever they participate in face-to-face or mediated forms of interactions with other people (Little John et al. , 2009:244). There are three key environmental conditions affecting the stranger's adaptation process (Little John et al. , 2009:245): **(1) Host Receptivity**—refers to the degree to which a given environment is structurally and psychologically accessible and open to strangers, **(2) Host Conformity Pressure**—The extent to which the environment challenges strangers to act in accordance with its language and cultural norms, varies as well as across societies and communities, **(3) Ethnic Group Strength**—Large and active communities offer their members informational, emotional, and material support systems.

METHODOLOGY

The method of the research was descriptive research. The main focus of descriptive research is on description, rather than examining relationships or associations. It attempts systematically to describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or program, or provides information about, say, the living conditions of a community, or describes attitudes towards an issue (Kumar, 2011:334). The subjects of the research were taken from the second semester of Batam Center students of University of Riau Kepulauan majoring in English Education Department consisted of 28 students; 5 Non Native English-speakers countries (European one) and 21 online respondents of 204.666 members of Backpacker International public group site. Given (2008:597-598) said that participants are also referred to as subjects, respondents, interviewees, focus group members, informants, and so on. The data were collected through observation and interview. Observation is the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site (Cresswell, 2012: 213). In this observation, there were two roles were applied (1) role of a participant observer—an observational role adopted by a researcher when she took part in activities in the setting she observed. In this case, to gather information from non-native English speakers countries directly; (2) role of a nonparticipant observer—an observer who visited a site and recorded notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants. It was done to obtain the information from the second semester Batam Centre students of English Education Department of University of Riau Kepulauan. While in interviews, the researcher gave three questions related to cultural's adaptation, nonverbal communication and non-native English-speaking countries to respondents in a backpacker international public group in an online site. This interview was categorized as focus group interviews. Focus group interviews can be used to collect shared understanding from several individuals as well as to get views from specific people (Cresswell, 2012:218). Content validity was used in that case. This type of validity concerns whether or not the actual content of the item on a test "makes sense" in terms of the construct being measured (James, 2010:132).

RESULTS

The results of the research were: (1) 74.1% (kinesics/body language) was the most frequently used, followed by physical-environment-appearance (66.7%),

oculesics/eyescontact (59.3%), chronemics/tone (44.4%), paralanguage/vocalics/voice cues (42.6%), proxemic/space (31.5%) and heptics/touch (24.1%); (2) 75.9% (haptics/touch) was the most rarely used, followed by proxemic/space (68.5%), paralanguage/vocalics/voice cues (57.4%), chronemics/tone (55.6%),oculesics/eye contact (40.7%), physical-environment-appearance (33.3%), kinesics/body language (25.9%); (3) 180 degree of space when introduced themselves (Nns) to the visitor if one another met for the first time, the space tended to be reduced when the frequency of meeting increased (proxemics/space);In haptics/touch, Non-native English-speakers' (Nns) made handshaking and hug in just special case when they already considered the visitors as part of their family. They hugged or handshake hand only for the first occassion, too much behavior like kissing the palm of hand for younger people to older one would be considered as exaggerated one; oculesics/eye contacts often used when Non-native English-speakers' (Nns) tried to grasp the visitor's message when they did not understand the language. For Nns, chronemics/time was the punctual one. In coldest countries though summer, Non-native English-speakers' (Nns) face were flat (had no expression) especially when they walked outside, got more even tense when they drove and when listened to the visitors'speech. They barely used gestures to point something to make it clear. In some cases such as in shoes or dress stores, if the shopkeeper saw the visitor had the similarity with them in ethnics or religion then, they used their gestures to help the visitor to understand rather than the shopkeeper who had no similarity. They chose to avoid. In this case, the visitors must be more active in using gestures though Non-native English-speakers (Nns) did not understand the language at all (kinesics/bodylanguage). For the first time, if Non-native English-speakers (Nns) saw that the visitors were outsiders, they looked on the visitors from bottom to top when the visitors did not see them. Especially when the visitors were in the mall, the differences between the performance, height, skin color would make the visitors looked like the real "foreigners". Meanwhile, when Non-native English-speakers (Nns) talked, their speech tempo was faster and not so louder for casual conversation while with themselves their voice could get higher. The sound resembled the quarrel while they did not (paralanguage/vocalics).

For non-native English-speakers countries who could not speak or understand English language at all, they preferred the visitors were much more active in talking to them though it was hard to convey what the visitors meant to them, they actually welcomed the visitors especially if the visitors showed respect and gave warm smile that neutralized the

clumsy situation. There was such a situation that the researcher observed when she met non-native English-speakers countries. They would give a warm welcome hug to the person who they knew at the first time they met them, but for the next meeting, if the visitors initiated to hug again whenever they met, non native English speakers considered it as an overreacted behavior. For some Indonesian people, it was normal for younger people if they kissed the palm of the oldest ones as a sign of respect and love eveytime they met or went to somewhere while in non-native English-speakers countries, they did not get used to with that. For them, it was enough by shaking hand only. Keeping the space when non-native English-speakers countries met the visitors for the first time was normal for them while for Indonesian people, it categorized as something wrong with them. In the center of the city, the local people tended to show their identity through fashion. They wore fur miniskirts in spite of the cold weather and harsh wind because their appearance was the important one. While in suburban areas, they tended to wear the clothes that easily to be worn as in winter season, they rarely changed the clothes. They would wear same clothes for three days and it was not odor at all. On the contrary, in tropical weather like Indonesia, if they wear same clothes and do not take a shower for whole day then their body surely produce a very "unique" perfume and it will work to make people stay away from them if they do not want to be disturbed by other people. Meanwhile, for the second semester students, they tended to consider culture and nonverbal communication universal. Some of them only knew basic of nonverbal communication such as eye contact, the hand gestures and made a space in certain situation like in their workfield. Some of them recognized several well-known of nonverbal ones like the status shown by gold bracelets in India women and other gestures from popular countries that visited most by tourists like Japan, India and South Korea.

DISCUSSION

From the results, it was found that nonverbal communication frequently used by people when they were in the countries where the local people there could not speak English as a foreign language. There some countries where the local people have high nationalism and are proud of their country. In other words, it is advisable for travelers or visitors who come to their country to learn the local language, otherwise it will be hard for travelers or visitors who will stay there longer as English is not their language though it is international language. Thus, if the travelers or visitors just count on English language and some restricted

of nonverbal communication without trying to adapt with the their culture, how the local people communicate and live, surely it will be hard for them. For example: The scholarship students who want to study abroad must learn at least the basic language but English as they will stay there longer as basically some non-native English-speaking countries have their own requirements for people from other countries who decide to live there even for temporal as they must pass the proficiency test that commonly it consists of basic language from listening, writing, reading until speaking tests plus they will face also the interview session. In case, they are failed then they must take that test again, otherwise, they cannot live there. In conclusion, learning nonverbal communication is the same as learning a new language and culture. Generally speaking, not all nonverbal communication can be used in every countries. Some countries have their own system of nonverbal communication. However it is better for people who want to go abroad to take a short course or at least a little bit study about the culture, the language, local people where they want to visit. By doing that, not only new experiences people will get but it also can shape their mind in order to be more open-minded and see something from different perspectives that will bring the positive results for themselves such as they will learn to respect people, to adapt and filter the good side from that.

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