

STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION ACCOMMODATION FROM DIFFERENT REGION IN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Putri Rahmadani

English Literature Study Program, Universitas Negeri Surabaya
putri.21005@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan dan menganalisis proses akomodasi komunikasi yang dilalui oleh mahasiswa yang berasal dari daerah yang berbeda ketika pertama kali bertemu dan berkomunikasi dengan mahasiswa asli Surabaya. Ketika mahasiswa dari luar daerah memulai studi mereka di perguruan tinggi yang jauh dari tempat tinggal mereka, mereka sering menghadapi kesulitan untuk menyesuaikan diri dengan konteks sosial dan budaya yang baru. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif untuk mengumpulkan data dengan melakukan wawancara mendalam dengan mahasiswa perantau yang telah melalui pengalaman tersebut. Menurut temuan penelitian ini, mahasiswa dari berbagai daerah mengalami banyak hambatan komunikasi selama kontak dan interaksi pertama mereka dengan mahasiswa Surabaya. Masalah-masalah ini termasuk perbedaan dialek dan aksen, perbedaan dalam penggunaan bahasa non-verbal, dan nilai-nilai budaya dan tradisi yang mempengaruhi komunikasi interpersonal. Penelitian ini akan menggunakan Teori Akomodasi Komunikasi (Communication Accommodation Theory/CAT) dari Giles. Menurut CAT, individu menyesuaikan pola komunikasi mereka untuk menyesuaikan atau menyimpang dari norma-norma bicara orang-orang yang berinteraksi dengan mereka. Teori ini memberikan kerangka kerja yang komprehensif untuk menganalisis akomodasi komunikasi di berbagai bidang. Temuan dari penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang dinamika komunikasi lintas budaya di lingkungan akademis. Temuan ini dapat digunakan untuk membangun program dukungan untuk membantu mahasiswa luar daerah beradaptasi dengan baik di lingkungan baru mereka. Penulis memilih untuk menganalisis topik ini karena penulis adalah orang yang berasal dari daerah yang berbeda yang sedang menempuh pendidikan di Surabaya, dan penulis juga telah melalui proses penyesuaian komunikasi dan pada awalnya kesulitan dengan hal tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Akomodasi Komunikasi, Komunikasi Lintas Budaya, Multikulturalisme

Abstract

This study aims to explain and analyze the communication accommodation process that students go through from different regions when they first meet and converse with Surabaya native students. When out-of-region students begin their studies at a college far from their home, they frequently confront difficulties adjusting to a new social and cultural context. This study takes a qualitative approach to data collection by conducting in-depth interviews with out-of-region students who have gone through the experience. According to this study's findings, students from different regions suffer many communication obstacles during their first contact and interactions with Surabaya students. These problems include dialect and accent variances, disparities in nonverbal language use, and cultural values and traditions that affect interpersonal communication. This study will use Giles' theory of Communication Accommodation (CAT). According to CAT, individuals adjust their communication patterns to conform to or deviate from the speech norms of the people with whom they interact. This theory provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing communication accommodation in different areas. The findings of this study provide insights into the dynamics of cross-cultural communication in academic environments. They can be used to build support programs to help out-of-region students adapt well to their new environment. The author chose to analyze this topic because the author is a person from a different region studying in Surabaya, and the author has also gone through the communication adjustment process and initially struggled with it.

Keywords: Communication Accommodation, Cross Cultural Communication, Multiculturalism

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential process in everyday life, especially in education. Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) is a theory of intergroup and interpersonal communication that emphasizes the importance of both components in predicting and comprehending intergroup interactions (Gallois and Giles, 2015). According to De Vito (1997:233), during this stage, the individual will decide whether to continue this relationship. This makes the introductory stage an essential stage in a relationship between individuals and is a stage that becomes the gateway in a relationship between individuals.

Indonesia is a country with much diversity, which means there are differences in culture, language, and perspective in its society (Fatmawati, 2021). Given the diversity in Indonesia, communication is one of the essential aspects that all people must do to establish relationships with other communities. When students with diverse regional and cultural backgrounds gather in a classroom, these differences can affect how students communicate with each other. One of the factors that can affect communication between students is accommodation. For students with different regional backgrounds, accommodation can be necessary to create an inclusive and supportive environment, as students with different regional backgrounds may have different languages, accents, or communication styles (Widharyanto & Binawan, 2020). For example, students from urban areas may be used to a more formal and structured language, while those from rural areas may use to a more relaxed and informal language. With these differences, students from different regions must adjust their language style or communication behavior with people from other regions so that communication goes well. By creating good communication, students can feel valued and comfortable communicating with each other.

Several research studies have been carried out to analyze how people from different regions meet and make accommodations. Guanabara et al. (n.d.) Examines the forms of communication accommodation and the obstacles that arise when an individual of Javanese ethnicity with Batak ethnicity interacts on introductions. Javanese and Batak ethnicities use convergence communication, where individuals try to equalize communication behavior with their interlocutors during communication. Similarly, Jazeri and Nurhayati (2019) describe and elaborate on IAIN Tulungagung students' accommodation communication forms. In conclusion, this study reveals two forms of communication accommodation carried out by Pattani students; first, convergence is done when students try to level up

communication behavior, the second, speech partner divergence to maintain student identity when communicating with Javanese students. The difference between previous research and this research is that the previous research study was conducted on a scale of formality between people of ethnicity. In contrast, this research focuses on students from different regions and gathers in the English department of Unesa.

This study was made to understand better how accommodation in communication theory can affect communication between students with different regional backgrounds in Unesa's English Department. This study aims to identify differences in communication styles between students with different regional backgrounds, what are the barriers that arise when individuals from different regional groups interact at the introduction stage, and what are the obstacles that arise during communication that takes place.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Communication Accommodation Theory

Elhami (2020) states that Communication Accommodation Theory is a conceptual framework that studies how individuals change their communication style to harmonize with their interlocutors. This article elaborates on how communication accommodation theory has been applied in various contexts, such as intercultural interactions, the relationship between speakers with speech impairment, and communication in organizational contexts. The findings of this study show how communication accommodation theory can help understand communication dynamics in various situations. According to this theory, there are two basic strategies in communication accommodation: convergence and divergence. Convergence occurs when individuals adjust their communication style to be like others. Convergence reinforces likeness to others and creates feelings of unity and acceptance.

In contrast, divergence occurs when individuals deliberately maintain a communication style different from the interlocutor. Divergence is used to demonstrate a unique social identity, assert differences, or maintain social distance between individuals. Communication Accommodation Theory provides a rich framework for analyzing and understanding communication dynamics in various interpersonal contexts.

2.2 Individuals from the region have barriers when interacting at the introduction stage

The findings reveal that various barriers arise during the introduction and communication process, such as language barriers or style, communication differences, stereotypes, and cultural misunderstandings. Previous

research shows that participants also experienced difficulties adjusting their communication style to the Javanese/Batak way of communicating. Other barriers include differences in the meaning of words, phrases, and non-verbal cues. In addition, some participants experienced cultural clashes when dealing with issues related to gender hierarchy and social norms. Guanabara et al. (n.d.) also offer insightful information on the obstacles that people from various regions or ethnic groups encounter when they communicate and engage in first-contact. This study highlights the importance of communication accommodation and intercultural communication competence in promoting mutual understanding and reducing communication barriers.

2.3 The obstacles during the interaction

This study, which focuses on the experiences of Pattani students, who are from the southern part of Thailand, and Javanese students, who are from Indonesia, at IAIN Tulungagung, explores the challenges that arise during cross-cultural communication and how different communication theories can help improve intercultural relationships and enrich the ways of communicating among people of different cultures. The results of previous studies reveal some barriers that arise during cross-cultural communication, such as language barriers, differences in cultural values and beliefs, and lack of knowledge about each other's cultural backgrounds. The researchers Jazeri & Nurhayati (2019) also found that Pattani and Javanese students made communication accommodations by using various strategies, such as simplifying language using non-verbal sign language and adapting their communication style to the preferred way of communication with others.

METHOD

The authors of this study used qualitative research. Jazeri & Nurhayati (2019) qualitative research is revealing and developing a particular picture of important events. A descriptive method was used to design this research. According to Guanabara et al. (n.d.), a thorough examination of the various facets of a phenomenon and its interconnections is necessary for descriptive research. The author of this paper also used the participant observation method for this research. The author collected data through interviews and participant observation of students from different cultural backgrounds and regions. The author is also a student from a different region from these participants. She is a student from English Literature 2021, Surabaya State University, and because the author is in class A, the author is observing Class "Sasing 2021 A". The author interacts with the students daily, and the data

are taken from daily conversations and interviews with students from different regions.

RESULT

4.1 Communication styles between students from different regional backgrounds

This study will analyse communication styles between students from different regional backgrounds. Communication between students from different regional backgrounds can be influenced by various factors such as culture, language, and different communication habits. Of the informants who have been interviewed, they all have very different language styles. As informant 3, Rahma Ani tends to have a communication style emphasizing body movements and solid facial expressions. She uses a strong accent so that other friends are often confused when communicating. Another informant with a very different communication style is the fourth informant, DW; she tends to have a more subtle and relaxed communication style. Students from outside Surabaya tend to use more polite language and avoid confrontation because maybe they consider the feelings of others and try to maintain harmony in their communication.

4.2 Barriers that arise when communication takes place

Communication accommodation is one of the main factors that can support effective intercultural interaction. Many students in the Sasing 2021 A class come from different regional backgrounds. The author interviewed 6 students who came from outside Surabaya. The study results found that the communication accommodation actions of Sasing Unesa students could have run smoothly. Many failures and even feelings of alienation are often experienced by Sasing Unesa students, especially in the early stages of introduction. The informants admitted that, at first, they felt less confident in their speech and language. As revealed in the interview results of informant 1, said that *"pemilihan bahasa sedikit menjadi penghambat komunikasi, teman-teman dari daerah khususnya Surabaya dan Sidoarjo, cenderung menggunakan bahasa Indonesia dengan campuran bahasa jawa, sehingga ketika berkomunikasi sedikit merasa aneh jika lawan bicara menggunakan bahasa indonesia, kemudian disisi lain menjawabnya menggunakan bahasa jawa. selanjutnya ketika teman dari luar daerah dengan perbedaan dialect membuat saya kerap kali berpikir ulang apa maksud dari ucapan mereka, namun, hal ini bukan masalah yang besar karena mereka tetap menggunakan bahasa jawa sehingga dapat sedikitnya menangkap maksud mereka walau memerlukan sedikit waktu."* (language choice is a barrier to communicate among friends from different regions, especially Surabaya and Sidoarjo. they tend to use Indonesian with a mixture of Javanese, so it seems a little strange if the person you are talking to uses Indonesian, then on the

other hand answers using Javanese. Furthermore, when friends from outside the region with different dialects make me often think twice about what they mean by what they say, however, this is not a big problem because they still use Javanese so I can catch their intention even though make me thinking a bit longer to understand what my friend say. (Interview January 30, 2022)

What informant 1 experienced was also experienced by other students, the difficulty of communicating with students from other regions when they first became new students made Nz and RA confused to understand they words. NZ said:

NZ: *"aku asli semarang. Walaupun sama2 jawa tuh ternyata bahasa Jawa Tengah sama Jawa Timur itu beda. Ga jarang juga jadi miskon kalo lagi ngomong sama temen2 yg dr Surabaya kebanyakan dari kosa kata dan logatnya yang bedaa contoh yg beda tuh kayak misal kata "mari" di Surabaya itu kan artinya "selesai" sedangkan di Semarang tuh artinya "sembuh". Jadi pernah pas aku tanya ke temenku yg baru sembuh, gini "kowe wes mari to? kok wes budal sekolah?" dia bingung nanyain tugas apa dikira tuh kek aku tanya tugasnya udh selesai apa belum soalnya kan "mari" di Surabaya artinya selesai kan."* (I'm originally from Semarang. Even though they are both Javanese, it turns out that the languages of Central Java and East Java are different. It's not uncommon to feel confused when talking to friends who are from Surabaya, most of them have different vocabulary and accents, for example, the word "mari" in Surabaya means "finished" while in Semarang it means "recovered". So once when I asked a friend of mine who had just recovered, something like this, "How come we's let's go to school?" he was confused and asked what he thought he was doing, but I asked whether his work had been finished or not, because "let's" in Surabaya means finished, right?) (Interview January 30, 2022)

The same opinion was also conveyed by other informants, RA also said: *"sebagai mahasiswa yang berasal dari kota Bojonegoro, saya menghadapi beberapa hambatan dalam berinteraksi dengan teman-teman dari surabaya maupun luar surabaya. salah satu hambatan utama yg saya alami adalah perbedaan logat dan dialek antara bojonegoro dengan surabaya. logat dan pengucapan yang berbeda awalnya menyulitkan pemahaman dan komunikasi saya. berikutnya perbedaan kosakata juga menjadi kendala, karena istilah atau kata-kata yang biasa digunakan di Bojonegoro mungkin tidak familiar bagi teman-teman saya yg ada di Surabaya. selain itu, perbedaan budaya dan kebiasaan juga menyebabkan sedikit ketidaknyamanan pada awalnya, Surabaya cenderung terkesan blak blak an dan beberapa kosa kata tersebut terasa tidak sopan ketika berada di daerah asal saya, setiap daerah memiliki norma sosial dan kebiasaan yang berbeda. namun seiring dengan berjalannya waktu, dengan adanya komunikasi yang baik hambatan-hambatan ini dapat saya atasi."* ("As a student from the city of Bojonegoro, I face several obstacles in interacting

with friends from Surabaya and outside Surabaya. One of the main obstacles I experienced was the difference in accent and dialect between Bojonegoro and Surabaya. Different accents and pronunciations initially made it difficult for me to understand and communicate. Next, the difference in vocabulary is also an obstacle, because the terms or words commonly used in Bojonegoro may not be familiar to my friends in Surabaya. Apart from that, the differences in culture and habits also caused a bit of discomfort at first, Surabaya tends to seem blunt and some of the vocabulary felt rude when I was in my hometown, each region has different social norms and customs. However, over time, with good communication, I was able to overcome these obstacles.") (Interview January 30, 2022)

The fourth informant expressed a nearly same viewpoint when she said that while it was challenging to initially understand languages from another student, with some adaption he had made, he had grown accustomed to it. HN said:

HN: *"Aku bingung sama kata-kata yang mereka pake, soalnya kadang kata-kata yang mereka pakai aku belum pernah denger di tempatku, waktu pertama kali ketemu teman-teman aku bingung banget sama bahasa mereka, soalnya dari segi logat dan kecepatan ngomongnya beda banget, kata-kata nya juga beda. Tapi akhir-akhir ini udah terbiasa."* ("I'm confused by the words they use, because sometimes I've never heard the words they use in my place, when I first met my friends I was really confused by their language, because in terms of accent and speaking speed it's really different, the words are also different. But lately I've got used to it.")

Unlike the other informants, SN said that the vocabulary in Javanese is almost the same but also has different meanings, but it is not an obstacle for her. SN: *"iya ada, sebenarnya bahasanya hampir sama yaitu sama sama bhs jawa namun ada beberapa kosa kata yang berbeda yang saya tidak tau artinya karena berbeda dengan bahasa jawa yang saya gunakan sehari hari. untuk logat dan nada jelas berbeda namun hal itu tidak menjadi kendala"* (Yes, there is, actually the language is almost the same, namely the Javanese language, but there is some different vocabulary which I don't know the meaning because the words are different from the words that I use every day. The accent and tone are clearly different but this is not the matter (interview January 30, 2022)

Another informant, chose to be silent when interacting with friends from outside the region because the language is very different, she also said she experienced culture shock because the tone of the Surabaya people's speech tends to be higher than that of the western East Javanese. The following are the results of the interview with the 4th informant DW. DW said:

DW: "karena basic saya yang berasal dari Jawa Timur bagian barat atau berada di perbatasan Jateng waktu awal saya masuk kuliah saya sangat susah berinteraksi dengan teman-teman, teman yg berada dari SBY dan sekitarnya karena menurut saya logat bicara dan kosa katanya sangat asing di telinga saya. jadi ketika kumpul saya hanya diam dan mencoba memahami apa yang mereka obrolkan. jujur saya terkena culture shock dengan cara bicara mereka, karena teman-teman saya ngobrol dengan nada bicara yang tinggi seperti orang marah dan juga mengucapkan kata-kata yang masih dianggap tabu di daerah saya. sering juga saya tidak paham dengan apa yang mereka bicarakan karena itu adalah kosa kata yang tidak ada di daerah saya sehingga saya harus bertanya apa arti dari kosa kata tersebut agar saya paham saat diajak ngobrol lagi. tetapi lama kelamaan setelah saya sering berasama teman-teman saya tersebut, saya bisa beradaptasi dan memahami apa yang mereka bicarakan walaupun kadang saya harus bertanya kembali apa maksud yang mereka bicarakan." ("Because my basic background is from the western part of East Java or on the border of Central Java. When I first entered college, it was very difficult for me to interact with friends, friends who were from SBY and surrounding areas because I thought their accent and vocabulary were very foreign to my ears. . So when they get together I just stay quiet and try to understand what they are talking about. Honestly, I was affected by culture shock by the way they spoke, because my friends chatted in a high tone like angry people and also said words that were still considered taboo in my area. Often I don't understand what they are talking about because it is vocabulary that doesn't exist in my area so I have to ask what the vocabulary means so that I understand when they are asked to chat again. But over time, after I was with my friends a lot, I was able to adapt and understand what they were talking about, even though sometimes I had to ask again what they meant." (Interview January 30, 2022)

DISCUSSION

The findings here show that building social intimacy between students from outside the region and Surabaya native students is the main trigger for the decision of Sasing Unesa students to make communication accommodations. This phenomenon is in line with Rochayanti (2012), which asserts that when individuals from different cultures are involved in communication, the original language will not be used. This means there is a process of adjustment or adaptation. Furthermore, if one uses one's language in interactions with people of different cultures, then there will be considerations that must be had to reduce the potential for communication failure in using dialects and local languages. Of course, these migrants will have more considerations and cautions than when they use their local language. At the beginning of the introduction, they chose to be silent or listen to the conversation, and often they also asked some words that were still unfamiliar to them.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the main reason for students from outside the region to perform communication accommodation actions on students from other regions or Surabaya is the reason for social acceptance. Although they initially struggle with adapting, students from different regions eventually try to do so even though they must think while speaking. The feeling of awkwardness and failure to communicate at the beginning of personal encounters spurs students from different regions to make communication accommodations with native Surabaya students. Second, in intercultural communication accommodation, migrants from different regions tend to practice communication convergence with native Surabaya students by building social familiarity and imitating the communication behavior of native Surabaya students. In the context of this communication convergence, students from different regions are willing to "abandon" their habits related to communication behavior typical of native people from their region. This research is helpful as reference material for the community when they want to carry out intercultural interaction or communication. That intercultural communication that considers and accommodates the interlocutor will ensure effective cultural communication.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Dragojevic, M., Gasiorek, J., & Giles, H. (2016). Communication Accommodation Theory Historical backdrop and basic concepts. *The International Encyclopedia of Interpersonal Communication*, 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118540190.wbeic0006>
- Elhami, A. (2020). Communication Accommodation Theory: A Brief Review of the Literature. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 04(05), 192–200.
<https://doi.org/10.36348/jaep.2020.v04i05.002>
- Fatmawati, E. (2021). Strategies to grow a proud attitude towards Indonesian cultural diversity. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 5(S1), 810–820.
<https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v5ns1.1465>
- Gallois, C., & Giles, H. (2015). Communication Accommodation Theory. *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction*, 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118611463.wbielsi066>
- Giles, H., Coupland, N., & Coupland, J. (2010). Accommodation theory: Communication, context, and consequence. In *Contexts of Accommodation*.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511663673.001>

- Izard, C. E. (1990). Facial Expressions and the Regulation of Emotions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(3), 487–498. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.58.3.487>
- Jazeri, M., & Nurhayati, D. A. W. (2019). Cross-Cultural Communication: Communication Accommodation Experiences of Pattani Students with Javanese Students at IAIN Tulungagung. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 4(3), 379. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v4i3.339>
- Morgan, T., Soliz, J., Minniear, M., & Bergquist, G. (2020). Communication Accommodation and Identity Gaps as Predictors of Relational Solidarity in Interfaith Family Relationships. *Communication Reports*, 33(1), 41–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08934215.2019.1692052>
- Qun, W., Syihabuddin, S., Mulyati, Y., & Damaianti, V. S. (2018). Perceiving and Dealing With Culture Shock: the Study of Chinese Indonesian-Language Students. *International Journal of Education*, 11(1), 18. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ije.v11i1.12390>
- Rochayanti, C. (2012). Intercultural Communication Accommodation in Interethnic Family. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 2, 43–54.
- Rogerson, A. M., & Rossetto, L. C. (2018). Accommodating Student Diversity and Different Learning Backgrounds. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 47(5), 411–420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17475759.2018.1475293>
- Widharyanto, B., & Binawan, H. (2020). Learning style and language learning strategies of students from various ethnics in Indonesia. *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 39(2), 480–492. <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v39i2.28173>
- Wu, H., Garza, E., & Guzman, N. (2015). International Student's Challenge and Adjustment to College. *Education Research International*, 2015, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2015/202753>