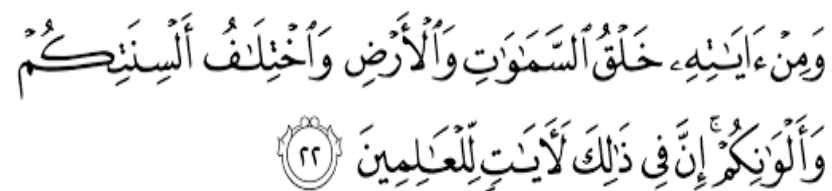


CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Nowadays, the world is characterized by growing number of contacts resulting in communication between people with different language, accent, and cultural background. As explained in QS Ar-rum verse 22:



“And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge. (QS Ar-Rum:22)”

The correlation between QS Ar-rum verse 22 and this research is Allah has created us from various ethnic groups and various languages. Everyone can communicate with each other and understand cultural differences. It makes everyone not to misunderstand. So, if everyone can adapt when they have intercultural communication problems, they can understand about cultural differences.

Eginli cited in Kim (2005) said “Intercultural communication is the communication that occurs on the basis of the different knowledge and experiences of people that is from different cultures or subcultures” (p. 33).

This communication takes place because of contacts within the areas of business, science, education, cooperation, etc.

This intercultural communication could have been in the cooperation, for the example is exchange student program. The students studying in different countries and student exchange programs began to draw attention with globalization. At this point, intercultural contact has gained significance. It is quite possible that a person may have some communication problems when that person communicated with somebody from other culture and especially when that person starts living in another culture.

Indonesian government provides study abroad programs for who want to get a lot of experience and knowledge about intercultural communication. Study in other countries is a great opportunity because it possible to learn various cultures. However, into a new culture also can bring a frustrated, emotional stress, and the problem communication.

There are some problems or barriers that exchange students must face, such as stereotype, language barrier, and culture shock. Lack of ability to adapt to different host culture can cause culture shock, stress, and homesickness which can lead to the desire of a person to immediately return to his/her hometown.

The exchange students must adapt with culture where they get education. Intercultural adaptation strategies are needed to overcome problems or barriers in intercultural communication relations. There are

some adaptation strategies can be done, such as empathy, develop communication flexibility, make a personal relationship with the host, study the culture of the host and our own, participate in cultural activities. According to Eginli cited in Halsberger (2005) “Intercultural adaptation occurs by reduction of the uncertainty that a person feels and developing an understanding of the new culture as a result of living in that culture and having social interactions” (p. 33).

The biggest problem for the exchange students is language. Students face language problems (speaking, comprehension, writing etc.) because language of education in higher education institutions is English (Some countries use their native language as language of education). Most of the students face expression and understanding problems because English is not their native language even though they can speak English (Malakloluntu and Selan, 2011, p. 884).

One of the exchange students from the Japan had difficulty communicating while in Banjarmasin. According to him, there are cultural differences that make it difficult for him to communicate with people around, moreover he feels anxious because he has not learned the culture from people in Banjarmasin.

The Researcher will describe about the experienced by foreign students who have lived temporarily in Indonesia. They are studying as exchange students in Banjarmasin, South Borneo. The Researcher took the sample from foreign students who are coming from different country. An

example of this research to adapt with different cultural background, experienced by a Japanese and Dutch student.

Based on the background, the researcher is interested to conduct a research about the barriers of intercultural communication with the title “INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS FACED BY EXCHANGE STUDENTS IN BANJARMASIN”

B. Research Question

1. What are the intercultural communication problems/barriers faced by exchange students when they get education in Banjarmasin?
2. How do the exchange students adapt to the intercultural communication problem when they get education in Banjarmasin?

C. Objective of Study

1. To explain what are the intercultural communication problems/barriers faced by exchange students when they get education in Banjarmasin
2. To know how do the exchange students adapt to the intercultural communication problem when they get education in Banjarmasin

D. Significance of Study

1. Theoretical

The finding of this research is expected to be a source for the next Researcher who want to conduct a research in the same field, hopefully this research could give a good information and reference for the future research.

2. Practical

In this research, it is very expected that students to know what they have to do when they get intercultural communication problems/barriers and how they adapt to new culture.

E. Definition of Key Terms

1. Intercultural: Intercultural communication can be interpreted as a communication relationship with different cultural background.
2. Communication Problems: Communication problems refers to misunderstandings and misinterpretation of other people's meanings while talking.
3. Exchange Students: Exchange students is a high school-aged person who travels abroad to live for study in a new country as part of a scholarly exchange program.
4. AFS: AFS is an inclusive community of global citizens: students, families and volunteers determined to build bridges between cultures.