

CROSS CULTURAL CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE (SUNDA-INGGRIS DAN SUNDA-TIONGHOA)

Evi Novianti¹, Priyo Subekti²

1,2Prodi Hubungan Masyarakat, Universitas Padjadjaran

evi.novianti@unpad.ac.id¹; priyo.subekti@gmail.com²

A B S T R A C T

Globalization and technological advances have helped humans to more easily interact with people who have different cultures. This can make it easier to communicate with everyone. The difference in distance and time is not an obstacle to narrow the interactions between citizens. The ease of communicating that can affect individual activities to build the economy, politics and culture as well as be able to establish a bond that leads to marriage between citizens.

Marriages between citizens who are then referred to as a marriage of mixed (interracial marriage), the event will be based on marriage is by a variety of differences, ranging from culture, habits and languages.

In the household of ethnic difference needed a language that can be understood by each pair of different languages. Different languages can result in small and large conflicts, for that adjustment needs to be done so that the expectations of each partner could be fulfilled. Ethnic difference in marriage there are consequences that must be considered, namely, the voice of disagreement either from parents or extended family. This is due to the existence of differences both from the culture, mindset, habit or Outlook on life. One of the weddings, that adjustment factor adjustment to family, a man or woman who married not only married her partner, but also with the family of his wife.

KEYWORDS : cross cultural communication, ethnic difference, marriage, social conflict

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and technology development had help human to interact with the different cultures. It ease human communication among different persons. The long distance and time is not a problem anymore to interact between people in nation. The simplicity of communcation could influence the individual to conduct economic, politic, and culutral relation, and thus different nation relationship is possibly happen. The marriage between different native or it could be stated as interracial marriage, is a marriage with different backgrounds, from the culutral, habit and language.

These differences is required to compatible with each other to form the new belief system among the family. This process is frequently emerge the tension among the family members. Marrigae as stated by the R. Verderber and K. Verderber (1998: 382) is categorized as the intimate relation, or in term of couple relation. The marriage is a peak of intimate relatoin from the fine approach. Otherwise, there are no ideal marriage type.

Anna Fitzpatrick (Littlejohn, 2002: 253) stated that the marriage is characterized by the couple method in space, time and energy methods to express the feeling, power and marriage philosophy.

According to Cohen (Hariyono, 1993: 102) is interracial marriage defined as the marriage of individuals from different ethnics or could be stated as amalgamation. Amalgamation is an event of husband and wife from different ethnic, has purpose to form a household (family) based on affection and legally documented in certain ritual. According to Hariyono (1993: 17) interracial marriage is a peak asimilation, or could be stated as marriage asimiliation. Marriage asimilation creates understanding between soul, personality, character and attitude of two persons (different gender) with different etnique background. Everything happened and possessed by the each couple, with different background and accepted as forever living mates in a form of one household.

Dugan Romano (1988) in his research stated the inter etnique marriage or inter cultural and identify four category of inter ethnic, there are: obedience, compromise, elimination and consensus. The obedience type means the couple are accepting each culture. These types are revealed through numerous inter cultural marriage, and mostly succeed. The second types called compromise is contain negative meaning. It is because one of the partner would sacrifice their interests and principles for their partner. The elimination type defined as the inter cultural marriage without accepting their own cultural background, thus the couple is losing a culture. The last type, consensus includes the agreement between the intercultural marriage, and none of hidden values.

The significance of culture as personal background to communicate, Turnomo Rahardjo (2005: 70) revealed the factors as a cause of the uncertainty and anxiety among the intercultural meeting, or could be stated

as inter cultural communication. These factors are motivation, knowledge and capability. Lustig and Koester (2003: 105) perceived these factors a cultural competence. Cultural competence is depend on the knowledge, motivation, and action happened in a context with appropriate and effective message.

The motivation is related to the frame of sense, desire, need and encouragement associated as an anticipation or involment in inte cultural communication. The factors of anxiety, perceived social distance, ethnocentric and the prejudice could influence the communication decision with other individuals. If the fear, dislikenss, and anxiety are emerging, then the would be negative motivation, thus they would evade interaction with other persons. Otherwise, knowledge is related to the theory about conciousness or understanding required information and actions conducted to achieve the inter cultural communication.

Knowledgable communicator is require information about people, communication policy, context, normative expectation to interact with other culture individuals. The competence means the effective and appropriate attitude performance in communication context. The study about inter cultural marriage, according to Dodd (1988: 70), reveal the theme about inter cultural marriage effort to adjust the cultural and marriage problems.

Beulah Rohrlich (Dodd, 1998: 71) stated that the communication blended family is frequently emerging main issue. Thus, Rohrlich stated the adjustment alternatives:

1. One way adjustment: one of the partner adopt the culutral pattern from other one,
2. Alternative adjustment: in one event, the certain culture is applied and vice versa,
3. Midpoint compromise: both of the party accept position respectively as a way out,
4. The mixing adjustment: the combination of two culture is adapted,
5. Creative adjustment: both of the party decided to not adopt each culture but seeking new attitude patterns.

Dugan Romano (1988) is capable to identify the problems emerge from inter ethnique marriage, there are value problem, beverage taste, child raising method, friendship relation, financial, family relation, social class, religion, communication langauge, pressure adaptation, sick and suffering problem, and ethnocentrism. Most of the expert agreed with the definition of cultural expectation as a conflict background. Identifying cultural conflict would increase the awareness and self capability of communication.

There are numerous method to manage the cultural conflict (Dodd, 1998: 189 – 193). First, the communication to reduce the misunderstanding in a conflict. Second, utilize the leadership and communication models to manage conflict. Third, utilize methaphore to prevent the inter cultural

conflict. Fourth, the pro active system to prevent conflict. Fifth, the value understanding of each culture. Sixth, practice the empathy relationship.

Martin and Nakayama (2004: 372) stated, to understand the inter cultural conflict is very important and culture is closely related. The cultural difference is created conflict, thus cultural background and experience would influence the solution seeking method. According to the Wilmot and Hocker (Martin & Nakayama, 2004: 376 – 378) conflict could be seen as a chance of inappropriate purposes, values, hopes, processes or results between two or more individual and groups.

Conflict is a complicated process, but offer the chance to strengthen relation. Most of the person would not love conflict as a chance, but conflict would reveal the potential and positive aspects. Conflict as chance means a person acquire the new information about other person, spread the serious issues and improve the unity. A person with conflict is encouraged to creatively thinking in several steps away to create solution. In this process, conflict would be seen as a representation of re-negotiation between two parties. Some culture perceive conflict is not productive for a relationship (Martin & Nakayama, 2004: 378 – 380).

According to Rahim and Magner (Martin & Nakayama, 2004: 382 – 385), there are five models about conflict management: (1) dominating; (2) integrating; (3) compromising; (4) obliging; and (5) avoiding. The dominating type is reflecting the deep concern of oneself rather than the partner. The offered solution are win-lose orientation and desire pressure to win from the partner. The integrating type is concern about the oneself and the partner in very open situation. Both of the person exchange information in effort to acquire information accepted by both partner.

Compromising type is a conflict solution when one party achieve the depression state and deliver it to the partner. This type is mostly occurred when the individual lack of solution commitment, because of the pressure. The obliging oriented to the one party with deep concern of prolonging relationship. This is because of certain party doesn't feel responsible to concern and seeking conflict solution. The avoiding type is applied to the certain inferiority inside oneself and the partner. In certain culture. This method is resulted in harmonic relationship because there are almost no conflict occurred.

Continuous adaptation is required for marriage. It is not easy because of the obstacles in marriage are sacred and unite two different souls. Certainly for the different ethnical background marriage. In a marriage, not only deep affection and understanding between individual, but the willingness to accept the weaknesses and strengths of each partner with different background as a part of their personality.

The example of inter cultural marriage is acquired from our informant, she is Mrs. Anna from Indonesia, precisely Sundanese and Mr. Matthew from England. Second is Mrs. Umi from Indonesia, precisely Sundanese and Mr.

Teddy from China. They are selected as sources because of similar Sundanese ethnic and to reveal the living environment of both inter cultural marriage.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

amily from different ethnic interviewed in this research is Mr. Teddy and Mrs. Umi, as a parent of Communication Science Faculty student named Jessica Natania Wijaya. They are a Sundanese and Chinese couple. Chinese ethnic is taken from Mr. Teddy; otherwise Sundanese ethnic is taken from Mrs. Umi. Researcher conduct deep interview with this couple at 3 March 2017. This ethnically different couple has two daughters; the eldest is Catherine Marta Wijaya. Catherine is now 23 years old and her younger sister, Jessica Natania Wijaya is 20 years old.

Mrs. Umi told the researcher about the first time they met each other in 1990. She said the meeting was unplanned. Mr. Teddy opens a clothing store at Cihampelas, and Mrs. Umi live at the region. Because of that, they could meet each other and getting close. Early, they are problems in communication because Mr. Teddy only speaks in Hokian and formal Indonesian, and Mrs. Umi as Bandung citizen is spoken in Sundanese dialect. Phases and process had been passed; they get close without language barrier. Mrs. Umi gradually taught Sundanese to Mr. Teddy and vice versa. Mr. Teddy taught Mrs. Umi Hokian and formal Indonesian. Thus the language is not a barrier anymore. At 21 June 1991, both are bonded in marriage.

Mr. Umi was stated the different culture background for each of partner is not a problem for this husband-wife couple. They could accept each other culture as a husband and wife. Now, they have 2 daughters and each parent's culture was delivered to them. Though, Mrs. Umi stated that their culture is gradually disappearing from her family. Thus the dominant culture comes from their father. Since little, the daughters had been introduced to the Mr. Teddy's culture, e.g. the Imlek (Chinese New Year), including the Cap Go Meh, and New Year Pray. Imlek or usually called Chinese New Year is when the big family is gathering to eat, pray and share angpao. Cap Go Meh is held 15 days after Imlek, when Mr. Teddy and his family are visiting family's grave. The New Year Pray is held before Imlek, precisely at 7 or 10 day before the D Day. Before the pray, family usually creates gold money (fake money for the pray) and it would be burned. In this pray, the family would serve various beverages that had been a favorite for the deceased member of family. This ritual means the money and beverages would have been delivered to the deceased member of family. It shows the attention of the family to the deceased member, thus the money and beverages would delivered even they have been passed away. But, Mr. Umi is stated the ritual is just a respect to the culture, because it really influenced by their belief. Mrs. Umi also stated that they still go the church to pray as Christian.

Otherwise, there is no obstacle about culture in this family, though they have significant differences including language barrier, culture, and belief. Mrs. Umi stated that they accept everything different from Mr. Teddy, because she really likes his personality, regardless of cultural background.

Based on this interview, researcher concludes that the conflict could be resolved because of communication. Communication could straighten the miss-information among them. The miscommunication is happened because of different cultural background from each person, but Mrs. Umi could accept and follow the Mr. Teddy culture and vice versa. With this method, the culture is delivered to the children. The empathy from each individual eases the differences acceptance. Related to the Romano (1988) research, the inter-ethnic marriage is categorized as an obliging family. This marriage accepts each of partner's cultural background.

According to Rohrlich (Dodd, 1988: 71), the alternative in marriage adaptation in different ethnic family is one direction. One direction adaptation is happened because Mrs. Umi is adopting more of her partner culture. As it explained before, the cultural pattern of Mrs. Umi is almost disappear and not really emerging, thus the children is adopting more of father cultural background.

Matthew and Ana is one of the many couples with cultural marriage (Indonesia – foreign). For 17 years live in relationship and has three daughters (Chloe, Penelope, and Taylor Dabbs). Now, they live in Singapore for work, but they spent some times to return to England because England is their main home.

Ana Maria (Michelle Ana Dabbs) obtained abroad scholarship. She continues studies at South Korea and lives with her adoptive parents. Other than study, she gets a job there. Ana experience from school abroad made her used speak international language, English.

Otherwise, Ana found her soul mate when she works abroad. She met her husband, Matthew Dabbs from England, in 1998 and married at 2000. Ana doesn't have special motive to married with foreign native. This marriage is live happily because each family background liberates them to create their own decision. Their family accepts them as long as they happy.

The marital ceremony is held at two nations, Indonesia and England. In Indonesia, the family quarreled with Mrs Ana, because of ceremonial differences. Mrs. Ana wants more private reception but the family wants bigger reception with Manado and Sundanese ritual. The more private marital ceremony then held at Bali. In England, the English marital ceremony is held after Indonesia.

The marriage is not really smooth, but there is always a solution. Mrs. Ana with her experience abroad could communicate well with her husband in English. The couple needs to adapt each other in different cultural background, but Mrs. Ana said that her husband culture is very tolerance and open to the other culture, and it eases the couple adaptation.

The couple has three daughters. They create a decision to preserve the best from both of cultural background (east and west cultures). Mainly because their children are female, thus they need to create the culture in family.

For example, Mrs. Ana said that west culture is letting their children to create their own decision; they are independent to solve their own problems, rather than east culture that educate children with formal education influenced by the religion and culture. They need to be more compromise in solving problems and obtain the best from both cultures.

They communicate in English, and Mrs. Ana teach Indonesia to her husband and daughters. The local language of Manado and Sunda is not taught because Mrs. Ana is not really remembered the vocabularies, since 25 years she had left Indonesia.

Selain menerapkan budaya Indonesia dan Inggris, Tante Ana juga menerapkan sedikit budaya dari Korea Selatan karena hingga saat ini beliau masih berhubungan baik dengan orang tua angkatnya di Korea Selatan, hal itu juga terbukti dari makanan khas Korea Selatan yang menjadi salah satu menu makanan favorit di keluarganya.

The daughters is really appreciated both cultural background from their parents. They did not really caution about their background, because the culture preserved in a family is applied in love and affection to achieve harmonic family.

Mrs. Ana still has Indonesian passport but she would change her nationality with English, but didn't have time because of work. Otherwise, she planned their pension in England, because England is a place where they need to return.

Based on the interview above, we could describe that inter cultural marriage is not resulted in conflict; otherwise the families are live in harmony. Just like this Indonesian-English couple, the cultural differences were not create family conflict, but accepted as a form of cooperation in absorbing the differences.

Based on the Dugan Romano research about the inter-ethnic marriage, this Indonesian-English couple is an obliging type, proven in an interview that they live their marriage because of love and affection, thus the differences is not a problem to unite the couple. They highly tolerant and accepting each cultural background.

To handle the emerging conflicts, the couple utilized the integrating model (Rahim and Magner), this model deliver full attention to the self and partner in really open discussion. Both exchanging information to achieve a solution that accepted by each of them, e.g. house rules for their daughters. They blend each of cultural background (east and west) to achieve best from both. The mixing adjustment (Beulah Rohrllich) is applied by them, when the cultural backgrounds are adapted and applied as a house rules. Not just that, the couple are communicated openly in any topic (Anna Fitzpatrick).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research based on the explanation above, each of the family members in different ethnic background needs to understand the language spoken. Different language would emerge small or big conflict, thus it needs adaptation achieve the couple expectation. There are consequences in inter-ethnic marriage, the unapproved parents or bigger family. This is because of different culture, mindset, habit, or life vision. The family background adaptation is important because each persons in relationship is introduced a bigger family. 1) To achieve decision in inter-ethnic family, one way adjustment is needed to adopt one of the cultural backgrounds; 2) The dominant culture is Java rather than China or Japan, because they live in Indonesia.

SUGGESTION

According to the conclusion above, there is a suggestion for inter-ethnic marriage couple. The emerging problem of inter-ethnic marriage could be solved with these suggestions: 1) Trust, complement, and strengthen each other, thus the emerging problems would be solved nicely, 2) Respect for each partner, not just seek their cultural background, 3) Accept the strengths and weaknesses from the partner and family background, to preserve the unity, respect the cultural background of different ethnic and appreciate the differences, 4) Learn each language thus the miscommunication among the couple is not happen.

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