

Intercultural Communication Accommodation in Interethnic Family

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Abstract

Interethnic family is a family consisting of two different ethnics due to the legal unity of couple from different ethnic groups (Sundanese and non-Sundanese). Ethnic differences substitute different cultural background. The focus of this research is the condition in which culture can be accommodated by interethnic family. The aim of this research is to gain the picture of the attitudes of interethnic family in facing their different cultures. Symbolic Interaction Theory and Accommodation Theory are utilized to analyze the accomodated condition of intercultural family. Qualitative method is used in this research; data collecting is conducted through depth interview, involving 13 interethnic families. The families chosen are those which have child and reached 10 years of marriage. The result of the research shows that accommodated condition in interethnic family is the attitude of educating children and of getting acquainted with extended family. Open-mindednes in interethnic family includes the matters of children education, language used, children’s name, activities outside of school, school selection. Yet, for the children’s mate, interethnic families want their children to marry spouse from the same religion, no matter what their ethnics are. Social intercourse, especially with extended family, is considered as family recreation, studying cuisine, and introducing cultural elements to children. The involvement of wife in customary events is to support the husband’s position and to keep the relation to the husband’s extended family.

Introduction

Intercultural marriage is defined as the legal unity of couple from different culture. Not only intercultural couple enters a sequence of new life, but they also have to adjust with at least different cultural elements. Cultural difference requires spouses to understand each other and take each cultural values considered good for their children. Educating children with good values are the conditions that can be accommodated by the couple. Accommodation condition is the existence of open attitude from intercultural couple to accept differences, especially in terms of educating children and consorting with extended family. It means that the spouses do not insist to use their origin cultural elements as the reference to educate and take care of their children. The couple attempts to apply considered-good cultural elements in preparing the future of their children. Another condition is the social intercourse

with the extended family, either the wife’s or the husband’s family. It means that they are willing to participate in family agenda, such as *arisan* (regular social gathering whose members contribute to and take turns at winning an aggregate sum of money), family visit in Idul Fitri times, and customary events.

Accommodation is also commonly called adjustment and its core is the process of cooperation and tolerance (Garna, 1996, p.153). Accommodation occurs because of interpersonal or inter-group difference. Accommodation attitude respects difference, and raises cooperation. In the context of intercultural marriage, different cultural backgrounds meet; it needs accommodation to understand, cooperate, and conduct the process of convergence to make an agreement between spouses in order to reach a better purpose.

The meeting of two different people or group requires accommodation or the process of tolerance. It is interesting to scrutinize how intercultural couple cooperates or accommodates difference. The problem is how to understand different cultural background while cultural difference is reality to face. The success of marriage, according to Gudykunst and Kim (1992, p.210), depends on the ability of couple to adapt/ assimilate in running their marriage life. In intercultural marriage, commitment is necessary for those who are willing to live together with others from different cultural background.

The theory used in this writing is Symbolic Interaction Theory. The special characteristic of symbolic interaction theory is that humans translate and define their act (Ritzer, 1986: 61). Inter-individual interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, interpretations, or attempts to comprehend the intention of each act. In a simple way, Ritzer (1992: 62) described the theory as follows: individual or units of act consisting of certain people adjust or assimilate their act through the process of interpretation. For this theory, individual, interaction, and interpretation are three key terms in understanding social life. Applying this symbolic interaction concept means analyzing how intercultural couple in their household adapt and interpret the differences. Each individual in a marriage comes from different cultural group that it needs comprehension and translation of each spouse's act.

Act, in symbolic interaction view, covers all processes in human activity. Social life is formed through social interaction and inter-individual and inter-group communication, using symbols that can be understood through learning process. Intercultural communication is communication between people from different cultures. Accommodation, by Howard Giles and colleagues, is defined as "how and why we adjust our communication behavior toward others' act" (Littlejohn, 2008: 222). Furthermore, Giles and colleagues argued that communication actor imitates other's act. They called this act *convergence* and *divergence*. Communication actor needs to adjust when they are talking, whether it relates to manner of speech, dialect, or commu-

nication style in certain situation, in order to be accepted by others. In the process of communication, the adjustment is significant because it constitutes social identity—attachment, disgrace, and excommunication. Intercultural couple attempts to convergen in educating, taking care of, and parenting their children. It is done because the parents are aware that their family was built from two different cultures.

The problem formulated and that will be answered is in what condition the difference of cultural background can be accommodated by intercultural couple (Sundanese and non-Sundanese) in Bandung. The aim is to gain the picture of the attitude of intercultural couple in educating their children and the picture of social intercourse with extended family, either those from the wife's or the husband's.

Research Method

This research uses qualitative method. This method, as defined by Creswell (1998: 15) is as follows:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.

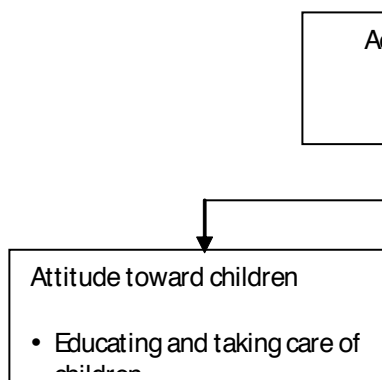
The primary tool the writer used is collecting field data from informants who had experienced social problems related to the research topic. This research used qualitative method with symbolic interaction approach, whose aim is to analyze "how actors 'define' situations in which they find themselves." Symbolic interaction approach assumes that human experience is mediated by interpretation (Moleong, 2008: 19). The characteristic of the couple analyzed is that one of the spouses comes from Sundanese and the other one is from other different ethnic. This couple has got married for at least 10 years. The reason to choose this is the previous research, which has proved that 10-year marriage con-

tains many experiences of adjustment to tell. However, the conflict occurred during the decade of marriage is also analyzed, as the introspection of the couple to solve problems. In addition, the couples included in this research are those who have children. The research aims to analyze the attitude of intercultural couple in educating and parenting their children. Besides, it also tries to look deep at the experience of maintaining intercultural couple with the extended family, either those from the wife’s or the husband’s. There are 13 intercultural couples that were interviewed.

THE RESULT OF RESEARCH AND THE DISCUSSION

American families, as told by Johnson (1986:477): “In American nuclear families, where child care is the responsibility of the wife alone, children tend to interact far more with mothers than with fathers”.

Educating and taking care of children in intercultural marriage is materialized through giving name, choosing school, participating in choosing activities, and determining spouse. The attitude of intercultural couple has no difference from one-cultural one. While in educating the children, the wife is trusted, in giving the children name, the husband is likely to be the determiner. However, in the interviewed couples, there is one wife who gave the name to her child without the interven-



Picture 1 Accommodation Condition in intercultural marriage

Educating and taking care of children
In educating the children from intercultural couple, the parents seem to be very open, trying not to force each desire to the children. Based on the research, the husbands deliver the task of educating children to the wives. The husbands consider their wives are wiser and firmer in educating and taking care of their children, just as this confession from husband of Sundanese-Bataknese couple: “I hand the education of children over my wife because I think my wife is wiser and firmer in educating the children.” This datum shows that one can trust wives to educate and take care of their children born from intercultural couple. The role of wife in educating children in Sundanese—non-Sundanese intercultural marriage is in parallel with the confession of many

tion of the husband. Here is her statement—a wife from Sundanese-Bataknese couple.

I have given birth twice; and no presence of my husband in both moments because he was out of town. But I always communicated with him through telephone. Right after giving birth, the hospital asked for the name of the new baby to process birth certificate. I named my child with what came to my mind in the moment the hospital asked for it. I did not include the clan’s name of my children’s husband. My parents in law in Medan sent names for my children but usually it came late. The birth certificate had been issued. My husband did not put into problems the

absence of clan's name in his children's last name.

What the wife did (not giving the clan's name in the children's last name), as presented in the above quotation, is a special case. In a special moment, an emergency one, the wife took a quick decision. Bataknese custom requires man to inherit his clan's name to his children. This requirement was not fulfilled by the wife. The husband had no problem with the wife's decision. Here is the explanation.

I have no problem with the absence of my clan in my children's birth certificates. However, when my children grew up, I told them their clan, and I told them which clans they cannot marry. I did that because I wondered that they would go to my village and fall in love with pretty girl whose clan is the same with my children's or whose clan is forbidden to marry. That would create a problem. In Bataknese culture, there is a regulation about marriage. There are clans that cannot be married by certain clans.

The husband shows his prudence by telling the clan of his children, though it was not attached to the children's last name. As a Bataknese, he is responsible for the future of his children. It is done, as the statement clearly says, to anticipate the marriage regulation in Bataknese culture. What was done by the husband is the form of responsibility and obedience as the member of Bataknese culture.

One other problem appears in intercultural couple is communication, or, especially, language. Intercultural couple faces the fact of different local languages; and they tend to use Bahasa Indonesia as the colloquial language. Bahasa Indonesia is a significant symbol, Mead (Ritzer. 2010:383) said.

A series of vocal gesture which tend to be significant symbols is *language*: symbols which represent meaning in the first individual's experience and which call a meaning within the second individual. When a gesture reaches that situation, it

is called what we name "language". Now it becomes significant symbols and remarks that meaning.

Mead's theory has another function, which is, enabling mental process. Next, Mead (Rizer, 2010: 384) stated that:

Significant symbols have more facilities for readjustment than nonsignificant gesture, because it encourages individual to have the same attitude to it...and enables him to adjust his behavior according to the attitude.

Significant symbols give greater advantages to adjustment and readjustment than that of nonsignificant gesture, because significant symbol move the same thing inside the individual...and enable individual to adjust his behavior and other's in the plane of attitude. In short, conscious or significant conversation gesture is more sufficient and effective to adjust in social act...than unconscious or nonsignificant conversation.

However, there are three couples (Sundanese-Bataknese; Sundanese-Minangkabau; Sundanese-Timor) who use Sundanese as colloquial language, both with the spouse or with children. The usage of this language also includes interchild call. The wife of Sundanese-Bataknese couple stated her rationalization.

I indeed form the habit of using Sundanese language, because of the environment. It is because my house is close to my extended family's house. In addition, my Bataknese husband has been fluent in speaking Sundanese language.

The response of the husband who is fluent in speaking Sundanese is here:

Since I arrived in Bandung I tried to learn Sundanese though the lowest stratum one. However, now I have been fluent in Sundanese, not only the lowest stratum, but also the highest one. Therefore, I speak in Sundanese with my children. The call to my son is also in Sundanese, like

“Aa”, not “abang”, a Batakese popular call. It is because we live near their grandpa-granma.”

Sundanese, as a cultural symbol, which is used by the people around the place this couple live, force them to make their children accustomed to speaking Sundanese. For comers or immigrants, Sundanese is a tool to self-adjust and comprehend the communication message from indigenous peoples. It means that someone uses Sundanese in order to be accepted by the environment. This is in parallel with Giles' Accommodation Theory which states that someone tries to converge.

Another open-minded attitude of intercultural couple to their children is in choosing the school for their children. What is important to them is that the children feel comfortable and can follow the lesson. Likewise, intercultural couple does not force the children to look for friends and activities. However, for the children's spouse, the couple has their hope. Most husbands free their children to choose their spouses, no matter ethnic the spouses come from; but they tend to force their children to marry the ones from the same religion. This is one example telling this fact, a statement from a husband from Sundanese-Manado couple.

I do not make a border for my children to date with anybody from any ethnic. In fact, my daughter is now making a date with a Minangkabau boy. For me, the boy is a Moslem. It is because I cannot tolerate non-Moslem spouse for my children.

The same tone is stated by a husband from Sundanese-Balinese couple.

I free my children to date with anybody from any ethnic; even my daughter is now making a date with a Lombok boy. I want my daughter to get a Moslem husband. If a Balinese man wants to marry my daughter, I will give permission if he becomes a Moslem. I'm not willing to have non-Moslem son-in-law.

The explicit meaning of the above statements is that husband do not mind to have their children marry with anybody from any ethnic but this anybody should be Moslem. For the children's spouse, intercultural couple is not open-minded. In other side, the wives want their children marry a Sundanese, just as told by this wife from Sundanese-Sampit couple:

As a mother coming from Sundanese, I eagerly want my children marry Sundanese. It is enough that I am the only one who married with someone from different ethnic. I think marrying someone from different ethnic causes many problems.

The same thing is expressed by a wife from Sundanese-Minangkabau couple.

I want to have a son/daughter in-law from Sundanese, not from other ethnics. But if my hope does not come true, I want my children marry Moslems.

The above wives' statements explicitly state that wives see intercultural marriage as creating many problems that they want to have son/daughter in-law from the same culture.

Intercultural couple, in educating and taking care of their children, tries to be open-minded. This open-mindedness encompasses school selection, colloquial language, and activities outside school. However, for the children's spouses, they are little closed, especially in the matter of religion. Intercultural couple wants their children to marry someone from the same religion; in this case, Islam. Meanwhile, the wives want the children to marry someone from the same culture because they think intercultural marriage as creating many problems.

In the matter of religion, those intercultural couples are doing convergence, i.e., converging in one religion, Islam. However, in the matter of ethnic, they do divergence; especially the wives who are eager to have their children marry Sundanese.

Keluarga luas, in Bahasa Indonesia, is a translation from *extended family*. Khairuddin (2002: 19) defined *extended family* as “a fam-

ily unit which consists of more than one generation and environment because it includes not only father, mother, and children.”

Extended family in East culture, including Indonesia, is a family relation where individual comes from. Extended family has an important role in Indonesian culture because their involvement in the children’s family is still needed. It is because Indonesia can be categorized as a collective culture which is oriented to old group (the family which gives birth), just as stated by Triandis in 1988 (Dayakisni and Yuniardi, 2004: 207) that:

...people in collective culture have bigger commitment to their originated group. They also identify themselves as uniting with their group, that the group becomes the united part of self-concept and self-identity.

Accommodative act of intercultural couple toward extended family is a social act in cultural dimension. The relation with that broader group is called collective-individualism culture. Triandis, in 1988 (Dayakisni and Yuniardi, 2004: 207-208) defined the difference of cultural dimension:

Generally, because of having few *outgroups*, people in collective culture have a bigger commitment to group they feel included to. . . they also identify themselves with their group, so that the group becomes a united part of their self-concept and self-identity. . . on the other hand, the members of individualistic culture does not need to relate their self-concept and self-identity to the group they are included to. They have weak commitment with their *ingroups* and it is easy for them to move from one *ingroup* to another.

It shows that the attitude toward extended family is a form of stronger commitment to a group. The form of the commitment is by accommodating family visit to the spouse’s extended family.

The moment of Idul Fitri is utilized by intercultural couple to go to their homeland and visit the extended family of the spouse outside Bandung. These activities can strengthen broth-

erhood with intercultural couple’s extended family. The Sundanese-Javanese, Sundanese-Palembang, and Sundanese-Minangkabau couples conduct these activities. This is the statement from the husband of Sundanese-Minangkabau couple:

Every *lebaran* (day of celebration at the end of fasting month) we go to my homeland, Pasaman. Besides visiting family, we consider it recreation. Our children love to take a bath in the village because the water is clear. We’d not find that clear water in Bandung. Usually, I also visit my relatives to give some money—my brothers and sisters do the same thing when going home. I also introduce my wife to the parents of children living with us in Bandung.

The visit is not only done for the sake of *lebaran*, but also to be a recreation and to introduce cultural elements to the wife and children. The following is the wife’s statement.

Every Idul Fitri we always go my husband’s homeland, Pasaman, West Sumatra. It is done because my parents have passed away and all my brothers and sisters live in Bandung so that I can meet them everytime. The visit is also a recreation for my husband who works in Bandung. Besides, I also get acquainted with the parents of children living with us in Bandung.

The wife can regularly visit the husband’s extended family because she has no parents anymore and all of his relatives live in Bandung, so that she can visit them everytime. This kind of visit is also conducted by Sundanese-Palembang couple, just as this following statement says.

Every Idul Fitri, all of us go to my husband’s homeland in Palembang. My parents live in Bandung that I can visit them everytime. When my husband and I lived in Jakarta, we visit our parents in rotation. After we live in Bandung, we always go to Palembang in *lebaran* day. I use this moment to learn to cook Palembang foods. They are delicious, and I always practice

cooking those foods in Bandung. I see my children love to go to Palembang. They get different milieu and learn their father's culture.

The visit is utilized by the wife to learn foods recipes and give different milieu to her children. It can be stated that *lebaran* visit is considered by the wife as learning and trying to comprehend the husband's culture.

Regular *lebaran* visit is also done by Sundanese-Javanese couple. They go to Blitar. Here is the husband's statement.

All of my family members certainly go to Blitar, the hometown of my wife. Since my mother passed away, we always go to Blitar in *lebaran*. Formerly, when my mother was still alive, we visited our parents in rotation; for example, this year celebrating *lebaran* in Bandung, and next year in Jawa Timur. Besides celebrating *lebaran*, I consider the visit as recreation for my children and introduction to my wife's extended family. There, I usually learn Javanese and try to habituate my tongue with Jawa Timur foods which always taste hot.

The visit done by this couple is different from the earlier couples. It is because in the later couple, the husband visits the wife's family. It is done because the husband's parents have passed away. When his parents were still alive, they, regularly and in rotation, visit their extended families every year.

Silaturahmi is also done by interethnic couples by conducting regular meeting either in Bandung or outside Bandung. It is usually done by Sundanese-Manado and Sundanese-Timor couples, just as stated by the wife of Sundanese-Manado couple.

My husband's extended family lives in Tasikmalaya. To tighten our relation, we hold monthly *arisan* and the place to hold is in turn. I join the events to get acquainted with my husband's extended family and learn Sundanese and Sundanese foods. Their relation is so close that they want to live near the fam-

ily. Out of five brothers, two people live outside Tasikmalaya (my husband in Bandung and my husband's old brother in Bogor). The rest live in Tasikmalaya. My husband's siblings and cousins participate in the *arisan*. I have no problem with the huge amount of the *arisan* participant because I think they are my family too. I, as a comer, have to accommodate my husband's family activity.

To participate in family *arisan* is, for the wife, to tighten relation of the husband's extended family and to learn anything about Sundanese culture. The wife also participates in the regular event because she thinks all of the participants are also her relatives.

The social intercourse with the extended family can also occur in customary events, especially for the couple in which the husband has a special status in his culture. There are three couples that experience this type of social intercourse. They are Sundanese-Batakese, Sundanese-Minangkabau, and Sundanese-Nias. Here is the statement from the wife in Sundanese-Batakese couple.

After giving birth, my husband asked me to go to his homeland. Having been there, my parents-in-law suggested that I had to be *customed*, in order to enter Batakese culture so that I could get a clan name. I follow the custom, the simple ceremony made for me; I did it as my respect to my husband's family and my husband's desire to make me, the one who came from outside Batakese, accepted as the member of Batakese culture. I did not mind to do that because I wanted to tighten the relation of my family to my husbands' extended family.

In addition to custom ceremony for the wife, there is another customary event the wife should attend, that is, when the husband's parents die in Karo land. The couple has to attend the ceremony. Here is the husband's statement about that.

In Batakese culture, a man who has got married has to attend death ceremony; yet, he is permitted to not attend marriage ceremony. When my father passed away, I have to come with my wife, while my wife had to work. Yet, I had to obey the rule. If I did not attend the ceremony, I would have been infamous in my village. For this consideration, my wife finally attended the ceremony and was involved in all custom activities.

Those two custom events are the tool to include someone outside the culture. Having been the member of the culture, someone has to obey the custom rules, such as attending the ceremony of father-in-law's death. It is not enough to understand the cultural difference; one has to conduct the demand of the custom. The following is the wife's response after followed the custom event.

I obeyed anything my husband's family wanted me to do, and fortunately my principal permitted me to go. In there, I danced in Batakese death ceremony completed with custom dress and death music. I just obeyed what the custom wanted me to do.

There is another couple in which the wife conducts custom activities due to the husband's position in the custom. In this case, the husband is custom head. The wife has special roles, one of which is to give advice to the husband's sister who married Nias man. Here is the statement given by the wife of Sundanese-Nias couple.

As a wife of a custom head, I had a special task, that is, to give advice to my sister-in-law who was about to marry Nias man. As the wife of the custom head, I got the first turn. When giving the advice, my husband's sister cried hard as if we would not meet again; in that moment, I wondered why she cried that hard. I asked about it to my mother-in-law. She said that in Nias culture, a woman who marries a Nias man cannot visit her parents and family anymore and becomes the part of his husband's extended fam-

ily. This custom made my sister-in-law sad. It was the last time she met her family and relatives. She may visit the relatives but may not stay even one night, and that visit may be conducted someday, some months later or when she is pregnant.

The meaning of the task is that the wife should be able to give a good advice to be a good wife for Nias man. This advice implies that to be a good wife for a Nias man, there are some rules to obey and some manners to conduct. However, the wife is grateful that not all Nias rules are forced to her. The wife thinks that her husband's extended family is wise enough that the husband does not force the wife from different ethnic to obey all the rules. The husband and his family attempt to respect the wife's culture because the couple's house is in the wife's territory.

The social intercourse with extended family is considered family recreation, learning food recipes, and introducing cultural elements to the children. Besides, there are some custom ceremony the wife should attend because of the husband's states in his culture. The wife's involvement in custom events aims to support the husband's position and to keep good relation with the husband's extended family.

The parent's open-mindedness in educating and taking care of children means that the couple does not force their desire to the children and that the couple thinks of the children's interest. This interethnic couple's attitude is in parallel with Soekanto's opinion (1992: 19), that "...in preparing the future of the children, it needs to be noted that the orientation should not be the parents entirely. The children should be given a chance to prepare themselves by their ways.

As the successor of the family, children need to be loved and their future needs to be well prepared. Their relation with their parents determines their future life, the time when the children grow mature and live amidst the people. For this reason, Soekanto's opinion should be noticed by the parents who wanted the good future of their children. "Future is the sequence of

present, while present comes from the past; former ideal parents built the base for the present's ideal" (1992: 11).

The beginning of man's life starts in family. The family is important for the children's development, the children as the successor of the family. As stated by Khiruddin (2002: 63), "Family is the first group who introduces cultural values to children; and in the family, the first interaction and discipline in social life are introduced." The same thing was stated by Samovar *et al.*, (2010: 65).

Family is responsible to form biological organism to human who has to spend his time with others; it is family who said hello to you when you left the pleasing womb ... family is the first social agent.

Next, DeGenova and Rice (Samovar *et al.* 2010: 65) stated that "Family is the prominent transmitter of knowledge, values, roles, and child's habit and implant the way of thinking and act, that they become habit."

Family has an important role in developing the children, especially in building personality. This, according to Khairuddin (2002: 49), is because family plays role in building the children's personality. Meanwhile, Charlotte Buhler (Khairuddin, 2002: 63) stated that process of socialization is "the process which helps individuals experience learning process and self-adjustment, how to live and how the group thinks." ST. Vembriarto (Khairuddin, 2002: 63) concluded that: (1) socialization process is learning process, i.e. accommodation process by which the individual holds, changes impulses, and takes the way of life or culture of his people; (2) in the socialization process, individual learns the habit, attitude, ideas, patterns, values and manner, and the standard of manner in the people where he lives; (3) all characteristics and qualifications learned in the process of socialization are arranged and developed as a united system in his personality. Newly born child has no personality; parents are responsible to shape his personality. It is in par with what was stated by Horton and Hunt (1999: 99-100).

A baby is born to this world as an egoistic small organism which requires all physical needs. Then, he becomes a man with attitude and values, like and dislike, purpose and intention, and reaction pattern. And depth concept about himself. Everybody gains all of that through a process called *socialization*.

Parents conduct socialization process in shaping the children's personality and act as socialization agent in the family. In this case, parents try to communicate socio-cultural message to their children. Sunarto (2000: 26) stated the importance of family, especially parents, as the agent of socialization.

In the early process of human life, the agents of socialization usually consist of parents and siblings. In the society in which the members live in extended family, the amount of agents of socialization is greater and the agents may consist of grandmother, grandfather, uncle, aunt, etc.

Parents usually try to be the model of their children. According to Soekanto (1992: 6), the characteristics of parents are those: (1) *Sa'benere* (logical), meaning that the parents can prove which one is right or wrong. For instance, the Batakese husband who lets the children know the clan and the spouses allowed in the clan; (2) *Sa'mestine* (act ethically), meaning that the parents act according to certain patterns, neither chaotic nor careless. The wife's decision to suggest her child to take D1 and not S1 as the standard, because D3 needs shorter time to finish and its graduates get job easier than of S1, is the example. This act was right because the child immediately got a job after graduated; (3) *Sa'penake*, means that when the the parents live happily; they may not cause unhappy life of other people. Parents make money to fulfill daily needs. In addition, the atmosphere of the house has to be homey. This might be seen in the couple of Minangkabau husband and Sundanese wife. The husband, who makes money regularly, suggests the children to be independent. Besides, the hus-

band suggests the wife to make homey atmosphere that the children stay long at home and to be open to the children.

What do the interethnic couples do to their children who were born in two different cultures? Intercultural parents try to deliver to the children the message of cultural elements. They hope that their different cultural elements can be accepted and comprehended by their children. This delivering message also aims to shape the children's personality. Family is very important in delivering cultural messages to the children, the successors who will face the future. The term *culture* has been defined by Horton and Hunt (1999: 85):

Culture is anything which is learnt and experienced socially by human society. Material culture is built from things made by human. Non-material culture consists of the pattern of behavior, norm, values, and social relation from a group of human.

Cultural message meant is like educating and taking care children. The example of cultural elements is the attitude of surviving of people outside Java combined with ethics in Sundanese. The introduction of cultural event to children aims to shape the children's personality so that they would be a tough (wo)man with good ethics. Besides, intercultural parents also try to ask their children to visit their homeland, at least once a year. In addition, they invite relatives to live in their house. By the existence of the relatives, intercultural communication occurs and cultural elements are delivered. Children may get acquainted with their parent's culture through their parents' relatives who have different culture. Children are also invited to visit the extended family of one of their parents. It is done to make children get acquainted with people from other cultures, not only from their cultures.

By cultural message, the parents try to communicate cultural elements to their children. They hope that their children can understand and judge the people of one of his parents positively. It is hoped that they do not stereotype different ethnics. This attempt is hoped to be able to ward off an ethnic stereotype. Children can get

acquainted with culture and its people by direct contact.

This parents' attempt to socialize do not stop here; they still have to introduce the children to the world outside home. Parents send the children to good school, the one that is appropriate with the children's ability. School is after-family place of socialization and it shapes the children's personality. School is an important social organization for the children's development, just as stated by Samovar and Porter (1982: 29).

School is another important social organization. Viewed from its definition and history, school is given great responsibility to inherit and maintain a culture. School is an important bridge which connect the past and also the future. School maintains culture by letting know its new members what has occurred, what is important, and what someone needs to know as a member of culture.

School is also responsible to introduce culture to its students, by teaching knowledge and giving space for children to interact with their peers. Robert Dreeben in 1968 (Sunarto, 2000: 26), argued that "What children learn in school-besides reading, writing, and calculating-is rules about independence, achievement, universalism, and specificity"

In school, children learn many things, not only cultural values but also how to be independence. After going to school, children have a space to develop themselves by doing activities outside school. By doing this, it is hoped that children interact with their peers so that they form a new social reality. Some of the activities are sports, arts, religious education, and organization.

What is done by intercultural parents is a form of open-mindedness, especially related to the development of their children. After trying to shape the children's personality, from home to school to outside school, the parents are still involved in the future of their children, i.e. by arranging matters of spouse. There is a tendency that interethnic parents do not mind to have their children marry spouse from different ethnic; they

demand the children to marry someone from the same religion, and in this case, Islam. In educating and taking care of children, interethnic parents are open-minded, as far as the deeds good for the children's interest. In the matter of spouse, the parent is rather closed. They cannot accept those outside Islam to be the spouses of their children.

The parents' awareness to educate and taking care of children living in two different cultures has to be prepared in order to gain a better future. The awareness to prepare this is started in home, i.e. by shaping the children's personality through cultural socialization. Here, parents play a role as socialization agent. Next, the parents bring the children to school to get knowledge and learn outside world. Children also have space to do activities outside school to exercise understanding social life with their peers. The parents' awareness to prepare the children's future in building household is their hope that the children marry someone from the same religion. Ethnical difference does not matter.

Weber's idea (social act), Mead's idea (taking the role of the other), and Schutz's idea (reciprocity of perspective), all gain their justification. Weber (Campbell, 1994: 204) stated that "it shows that one's behavior has awareness on what he is doing, which can be analyzed according to intentions, motives, and feelings as they experience." Mead (Johnson, 1986: 23) explained that "if individuals appraise their acts and life according to universal values or common humanistic condition, actually they play the role from that generalized other." Meanwhile, Schutz (Campbell, 1994: 236) asserted that "to survive, individual has to 'define' situation, that is, he has to determine or decide in what situation he is, what it's problem, and how he could try to achieve his purposes." In addition, Howard Giles' Accommodation Theory is proved because the couples tried to converge in educating, taking care, and parenting their children to get a better future. Interethnic couples tried to adjust with the spouse's culture and the condition that will be faced by their children.

The awareness of interethnic marriage in comprehending background differences strength-

ens Schutz's phenomenological theory about intersubjective social world; that is, interethnic couples have to share their spaces. Social world built by interethnic couple has to be shared with the extended family and society; the future world of the children should be prepared.

Conclusion

Sundanese—non-Sundanese couples are aware that children, as the successor of the family and extended family, have important values. These two groups are accommodated by interethnic couples; children's future is prepared by communicating the parents' cultural values, giving education in home, school, and outside school. Those places are social organization, the place of children's development. However, the family still tries to build social intercourse with the extended family. The parents prepare the children's social world and educate cultural values to the children by doing family visit in Idul Fitri times, *arisan*, and permitting relatives live in their houses. Intercultural communication in interethnic family may tighten inter-extended-family relation, because of the existence of collective activity. In addition, the couples do convergence toward their children's education without putting into matters their cultural differences. It's done for the better future.

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