Communication and Acculturation Process of the Baduy Tribe

Machyudin Agung Harahap[1], Susri Adeni[2]

[1]School of Communication. Universitas Pembangunan Negeri Veteran Jakarta, Jl. RS. Fatmawati Pondok Labu, Jakarta, Indonesia

[2]Department of Family and Consumen Sciences, IPB University, Jl. Raya Dramaga Bogor, West Java

ABSTRACT: Changes that occur in an area will affect the culture. This acculturation process, of course, involves communication. That is what happened to the Baduy Tribe, especially the *Baduy Luar* (Outer Baduy) who had merged with the foreign culture that had entered. Acculturation and changes that occur also cannot be separated from the role of existing leaders. This article discusses theoretically the concept of intercultural communication, especially cultural acculturation that occurs. It can be seen that the *Baduy Luar* (Outer Baduy) are more influenced and there are social changes and acculturation compared to the *Baduy Dalam* (Inner Baduy).

I. INTRODUCTION

The Baduy tribe located in the Banten area is one of the tribes in Indonesia that has its own culture and uniqueness. The Baduy tribe is divided into two, namely the *Baduy Luar* (outer Baduy) and the *Baduy Dalam* (inner Baduy). So that there is a cultural change that at least gives birth to a positive side for human civilization. But on the negative side, culture is one of them that gives birth to and triggers conflict. The results of the conflict should be managed or administered to produce a new culture in building a better human civilization.

The development of culture becomes an inseparable part of civilization and human life; where humans live side by side in a social system of society. So that one culture will meet another culture in the context of the exchange that occurs. This cultural exchange occurs because of the mobilization of humans from one region to another; which ultimately results in a meeting of immigrant cultures with indigenous cultures. Cultural exchange is also inseparable from the communication process. Peterson, Jensen and Rivers in Kim (Kim, 2000) said:

"Communication... is the carrier of the social process. It is a tool that humans have to organize, stabilize, and modify their social life... Social processes depend on the collection, exchange, and delivery of knowledge. In turn, knowledge depends on communication."

From the statement, it is clear that the exchange that occurs is due to communication. Cultural exchange also occurs because of communication. So from this cultural communication process, the acculturation process occurs. Acculturation is "a process carried out by immigrants to adapt to and acquire native culture, which ultimately leads to assimilation". Then Kim also added that, "assimilation is the highest degree of acculturation that is theoretically possible. For most immigrants, assimilation may be a lifelong goal"(Kim, 2000).

The quote clearly states that with mobilization and communication, it will lead to an acculturation process. If there is a match in the acculturation process, then assimilation will occur. However, on the other hand, if the culture of the newcomer or immigrant with the native is not compatible, then what happens is conflict.

Referring to the Baduy culture or ethnicity discussed in this study, basically the Baduy ethnicity has also experienced changes from time to time. The interesting thing about the Baduy tribe is that the *Baduy Luar*. Follows the influence and current of modernization while the *Baduy Dalam* maintains their customs, traditions and culture. This is what is being studied about how the process of communication and acculturation occurs so that significant changes occur in the *Baduy Luar* tribe and also "allows" changes in the *Baduy Dalam* and the role of leaders in the process of change. The changes in question are social and cultural changes as a result of changes that occur in their living environment, both the natural and physical environment and the social environment. This is then discussed in this article that the process of communication and the process of cultural exchange with acculturation entities can lead to assimilation or even conflict. This study will also discuss aspects of cross-cultural communication.

From the description above, the formulation of the problem in this article is what is the role of communication in the acculturation process? This article also discusses the role of communication in the process of acculturation of the Baduy tribe and the formulation of the problem also answers questions regarding acculturation as a medium for transforming community culture, the role of

leadership in the social system, the importance of language (verbal and nonverbal) in cross-cultural communication, the meaning of individualistic and collectivistic culture.

Acculturation as a Media for Transforming Community Culture

As previously discussed, the process of communication and culture will ultimately also lead to the process of acculturation when there is mobilization of people with different cultures. As the definition of acculturation, here there is a meeting of immigrant cultures with indigenous cultures which will then be assimilated or there will be a new culture or 'indigenous culture' that is renewed. This acculturation process cannot be separated from the identification, internalization of symbols, and patterns or cultural patterns that exist into renewed cultures (Kim, 2000). Where the acculturation process is "trial and error"; the point is that an immigrant in order to know and be known and interact with other people, then he will regulate himself in this regard. One example is the difference in the original habits of immigrants and indigenous people.

To facilitate the process of acculturation of an immigrant, the potential for acculturation is determined by several factors below (Kim, 2000): (1). The similarity of the immigrant's original culture with the native culture; (2). Age at the time of moving; (3). Differences in education; (4). Personality characteristics possessed by the immigrant; (5). General information about the native culture before immigrating The five things above, it is clear that acculturation is a medium for cultural transformation in a society; where immigrants then adapt and learn from the native culture. However, this process takes time and fast potential to acculturate as indicated by the factors mentioned above.

The Role of Leadership in Social Systems

The process of acculturation also occurs because of the communication process; where the role of leaders is very important. The values that exist in indigenous communities are perceived differently by immigrant communities. The social values of society here are the social system and social structure. The social system is in the form of rules that regulate the relationship of procedures in a society. While the social structure is described as the position or level of a person's position in society as a whole or social class in customs and culture. Leaders in society must be able to be the driving force of change for the better with acculturation. So the importance of communication in psychological, social and economic adjustment.

If it is viewed the example, the Baduy tribe is an interesting ethnic group to observe. The Baduy ethnic group is divided into the *Baduy Luar* and *Baduy Dalam*. The *Baduy Luar* tribe is easier to accept all changes that occur and they become very modern compared to the *Baduy Dalam*. It can be seen here that leaders play an important role in the process of change that occurs. If studied further, it can be said that the leaders of the *Baduy Dalam* hold their government and act as a filter for the occurrence of a good cultural renewal process.

The Importance of Language (Verbal and Nonverbal) in Cross-Cultural Communication

Language is important when communicating. Language is "an organized, generally agreed upon, learned symbol-symbol used to represent the experiences within a geographic or cultural community" (Samovar et al., 2010). So language is symbols that have been agreed upon together that show experiences in a geographic condition or cultural community. So speaking verbally is a process of thought patterns, how to speak that is related to perception. So as Wittgenstein said, that people will see the world differently if they also speak different languages (Samovar et al., 2010).

From the quote above, it is clear that language is part of communication and the process of acculturation is also part of the communication process. The form of human language is transmitted culturally or traditionally (culturally transmitted); for example, someone who is raised in an English-speaking family environment, then the child will master English as their mother tongue, regardless of the language of their biological parents (DeVito, 1997). So it is through language that people learn the values and behaviors of other cultures. In reality, the native language of immigrants is very different from the native language of the natives.

Then, verbal language is also inseparable from nonverbal language. Nonverbal language is related to gestures, facial expressions, eye contact and gaze, posture and movement, touching, dress, objects and artifacts. The functions of nonverbal communication are (1) to emphasize; (2) to complement; (3) to show contradiction; (4) to regulate; (5) to repeat; (6) to replace (DeVito, 1997). Using nonverbal language of course sometimes causes problems. Other communication problems that include nonverbal communication problems, such as differences in the use and arrangement of space, interpersonal distance, facial expressions, eye movements, other body movements, and perceptions about the importance of nonverbal behavior (Kim, 2000). So that every culture uses language as a medium to express the principles of teachings, values, and cultural norms (Liliweri, 2001).

Individualistic and collectivistic culture

In a society, there are individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Individualistic culture is a culture that emphasizes individual values, such as power and personal achievement. While collectivistic culture emphasizes more on shared values, such as cooperation and responsibility to the group (Fatehi et al., 2020).

Communication and Acculturation Process of the Baduy Tribe

II. METHODOLOGY

To answer the problems described, the method of writing this article is with literature study by analyzing theoretically the role of communication in the acculturation process. This literature study is carried out by collecting reading materials related to the topics and cases to be discussed in the form of books, journals and other readings related to the theme of the paper.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History of the Baduy Tribe

The term "Baduy" is a term given by outsiders to this community group, originating from the term used by Dutch researchers who seemed to equate them with the Arab Badawi group in the Middle East who are nomadic people. Another possibility is because of the Baduy River and Baduy Mountains in the northern part of the region. They themselves prefer to call themselves urang Kanekes or Kanekes people according to the name of their region, or a term that refers to the name of their village such as Urang Cibeo. The Baduy community is divided into two groups, namely the Outer Baduy tribe (*Baduy Luar*) who still accept the technology and lifestyle of the modern society around them, and the Inner Baduy tribe (*Baduy Dalam*) who still adhere to customs by rejecting technology and lifestyle (KebudayaanIndonesia.net, 2013; Setyaningrum, 2022).

Another version related to the history of the Inner Baduy tribe is from Dr. Van Tricht who visited Baduy in 1982, then he conducted research related to public health there. Van Tricht does not recognize both of the above opinions; he has his own opinion regarding the history of the Inner Baduy tribe and he said that the Baduy people have been there for a long time and are the original people there. According to Van Tricht, the Baduy people, especially the Inner Baduy tribe, have a nature that strongly rejects and cannot adopt outside culture (Aprianti et al., 2024; Setyaningrum, 2022).

In addition, according to him, the Inner Baduy community strongly maintains its culture. It is proven that the Inner Baduy tribe is still very strict in maintaining the culture of their ancestors. Van Tricht's opinion regarding the history of the Inner Baduy tribe is in line with the opinions of Danasasmita and Djatisunda. According to these two experts, at that time the king who ruled in the area around Baduy was Rakeyan Darmasiska, this king ordered the Baduy people who had lived there since ancient times to maintain *Kabuyutan* (a place of ancestor worship) and make the area a *Mandala* or sacred area. The community itself is known to have the *Sunda Wiwitan* belief (wiwitan means original or main) (Hadimulyo, 2019; Setyaningrum, 2022).

The Role of Communication and Acculturation (in the Baduy Tribe)

Humans cannot not communicate. This adage shows that silence is also a communication message. Especially when a culture meets another culture. The role of communication certainly cannot be separated from the process of cultural encounters. So that with communication, acculturation and assimilation will occur. This is also what happened to the Baduy tribe. The changes that occurred in the tribe cannot be separated from communication factors and other factors. It is also said that the acculturation process is much related to efforts to adapt to, and accept the dominant communication patterns and rules that exist in indigenous society (Aprianti et al., 2024; Millani et al., 2024; Pitriyani & Wilodati, 2024; Satria, 2024).

Baduy Community and Cultural Order

The Kanekes Village community is Baduy people based on research conducted by experts. The language they use is included in the category of Sundanese Banten dialect or Baduy sub-dialect which has special characteristics such as high accents in the sentence song and several types of sentence structures that are different from Sundanese *lulugu*. Then, according to Djatisunda (Wilodati, 2013), the Kanekes community consciously admits that what makes them distinctly different from other Sundanese communities outside Kanekes is only in the religious system. The Islamic religious system they adhere to is different from the religion in society in general (KebudayaanIndonesia.net, 2013).

Social Change in the Baduy Tribe

Change usually always occurs in the social system of society. This is also what happened to the Baduy tribe. These changes can be physical changes due to natural processes and changes in human life due to the dynamics of life itself. Changes that concern human life, or are related to the environment of life in the form of physical, natural and social are called social changes (Aprianti et al., 2024; Nurfalah et al., 2023; Wilodati, 2013).

As previously explained, changes in society occur due to communication and mobilization where economic factors influence the changes that occur. There are several factors that cause social change according to Riyanto (in Wilodati, 2013), namely causes that originate from within society itself and from outside society. Contributors to changes that originate from within society itself are (1) Increase or decrease in population; (2) Invention and new discoveries (discovery), both in the form of ideas and tools which then give birth to innovation (innovation); (3) Conflict in society; (4) Rebellion (revolution) occurs within society. Meanwhile, the causes that originate from outside the society concerned are (a) The physical natural environment around humans; (b) War with other countries; (c) The influence of the culture of other communities which can take the form of Acculturation (cultural contact), Assimilation (renewal of cultural elements), Diffusion (spread of cultural elements), Peaceful entry (penetration specific) and coercion.

Communication and Acculturation Process of the Baduy Tribe

As stated earlier that in the Baduy ethnic group there are two groups called Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy. The most fundamental difference between these two tribes is in implementing *Sialanguh* or customary rules during their implementation. If Inner Baduy still adheres to customs and implements customary rules well, on the contrary, it is not the case with their Outer Baduy. The Outer Baduy community has been contaminated by outside cultures other than Baduy. It can be said that there has been a social change in the Outer Baduy community. The use of electronic goods and soap is permitted by the traditional leader called *Jaro* to support activities in carrying out daily activities. In addition, Outer Baduy also accepts guests from outside Indonesia, they are allowed to visit and stay at one of the Outer Baduy residents' houses (Riky, 2013).

This reality shows that the process of acculturation and social change occurs due to the communication process; where opinion leaders also have an important influence and role in the process. As stated above, the Baduy tribal chief allows his people to use soap for the example. It is clear that there is a cultural fusion that used to be taboo to use soap, so now there is a change by using soap. But this only applies to the Outer Baduy tribe. It is not the same as the Inner Baduy who still play an important role in the sustainability of the culture and beliefs they adhere to, where the customary chief plays a very important role in their decision making. The customary chief becomes "aware" of the changes that occur due to cultural acculturation, but they are able to ward off the entry of these changes.

Then, the Inner Baduy tribe directly and openly opposes the entry of changes that occur from outside their tribe. As quoted from KebudayaanIndonesia.net, the Inner Baduy tribe rarely speaks (as needed) but is trustworthy, strong in Customary Law, not easily influenced, has strong but wise opinions; or in this case, their communication style is direct. Another thing that is clearly visible is that the Inner Baduy tribe is in terms of reactions to what is always seen is that the changes experienced by the Baduy community cannot be separated from the supervision of traditional leaders who always try to oppose all forms of change that occur and try to restore the life of the community in accordance with *Sialanguh* (tradition). In terms of perception of tasks and relationships, the Inner Baduy tribe prioritizes social relations in carrying out tasks.

The Inner Baduy tribe values cooperation with social orientation. Meanwhile, the Outer Baduy tribe has been 'contaminated' by outside culture which has caused the acculturation and assimilation of their culture. The Outer Baduy tribe is characterized by; dressed in all black, dark blue batik headbands, allowed to travel by vehicle, shifting cultivation, becoming farm laborers, easy to talk to but still influenced by customary law because they still have to obey and comply with customary law (Holilah & Heryatun, 2019; Mahendra et al., 2023; Mustomi, 2017). So it can be said that the Outer Baduy prioritize small talk, indirect communication style, prioritize negotiation through human relations.

The picture above shows how two ethnic groups in one tribe have very significant differences in accepting new cultural aspects that are developing. One tribe experiences changes or assimilation to the new culture that enters, but the other tribe continues to try to maintain all the customs and beliefs that have been adhered to so far. Here it can be seen that the acculturation process will be very long and slow, especially if it occurs in this tribe. However, so far it can be seen that the acculturation process is said not to have occurred.

CONCLUSIONS

The process of acculturation that occurs in a society and culture cannot be separated from the role of communication. The communication in question occurs through verbal and nonverbal language. Then, in the process of acculturation, opinion leaders have an important role as an extension in providing information to the community. Acculturation occurs because of openness to communication with 'people' outside their culture, this is the Outer Baduy. While the Inner Baduy closes the communication process and continues to refer to the prevailing culture or closes themselves off by limiting the entry of other cultures. Research on intercultural communication is still needed to see how the process of cultural exchange occurs in the Baduy tribe, especially with the access of the community and the sites or tourist attractions there

REFERENCES

1) Aprianti, S., Putri Indriyanti, A., Novianti Lestari, P., & Nur Fatihah, M. (2024). Perubahan Sosial Masyarakat Suku Baduy Luar sebagai Akibat Modernisasi. *El-Mujtama: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, *4*(3), 46–56. https://doi.org/10.47467/elmujtama.v4i3.1162
2) DeVito, J. A. (1997). *Komunikasi Antarmanusia*. Professional Books.
3) Fatehi, K., Priestley, J. L., & Taasoobshirazi, G. (2020). The expanded view of individualism and collectivism: One, two, or four dimensions? *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, *20*(1), 7–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470595820913077
4) Hadimulyo, C. (2019, February 2). Belajar "Hidup Benar" dari Masyarakat Baduy. *Program Studi Pendidikan Sosiologi*. https://pendidikan-sosiologi.fishipol.uny.ac.id/id/berita/belajar-hidup-benar-dari-masyarakat-baduy.html
5) Holilah, I., & Heryatun, Y. (2019). *KOMUNIKASI ANTARBUDAYA DAN KEARIFAN LOKAL: Eksistensi Masyarakat Baduy Menghadapi Agresi Modernitas*. LP2M UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SULTAN MAULANA HASANUDDIN BANTEN.

Communication and Acculturation Process of the Baduy Tribe

6) KebudayaanIndonesia.net. (2013). Suku Baduy Banten. *KebudayaanIndonesia.Net*.
http://kebudayaanindonesia.net/kebudayaan/1073/suku-baduy-banten

7) Kim, Y. Y. (2000). *Komunikasi dan Akulturasi*. Remaja Rosdakarya.

8) Liliweri, A. (2001). *Gatra-gatra Komunikasi Antarbudaya*. Pustaka Pelajar.

9) Mahendra, Y., Wulandari, G., & Lilis, L. (2023). PERUBAHAN SOSIAL BUDAYA SUKU BADUY LUAR: SEBUAH ANALISIS INTERAKSI ANTARA TRADISI DAN MODERNITAS. *Jurnal Anak Bangsa*, *2*(2), 215–225. https://doi.org/10.46306/jas.v2i2.41

10) Millani, A., Ramdana, A., Uzki, U., & Mulyanudin, M. (2024). Pengaruh Globalisasi terhadap Prilaku Sosial Masyarakat Baduy Luar: Studi Antropologi Budaya. *KALA MANCA: JURNAL PENDIDIKAN SEJARAH*, *12*(1), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.69744/kamaca.v12i1.317

11) Mustomi, O. (2017). Perubahan Tatanan Budaya Hukum pada Masyarakat Adat Suku Baduy Provinsi Banten. *Jurnal Penelitian Hukum De Jure*, *17*(3), 309. https://doi.org/10.30641/dejure.2017.V17.309-328

12) Nurfalah, L., Claresya, C. S. D., & Bidjaksono, M. B. (2023). Adaptasi masyarakat suku baduy luar terhadap perkembangan global berbasis kearifan lokal. *Journal of Socio-Cultural Sustainability and Resilience*, *1*(1). https://doi.org/10.61511/jscsr.v1i1.2023.182

13) Pitriyani & Wilodati. (2024). Seba Baduy: Komunikasi Antarbudaya dan Eksistensi Masyarakat Adat Kanekes. *Entita: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, *6*(1), 47–66. https://doi.org/10.19105/ejpis.v6i1.13527

14) Riky. (2013). *Suku Baduy, Bersinergi Dengan Alam Menjaga Aturan Adat*.

15) Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., & McDaniel, E. R. (2010). *Komunikasi Lintas Budaya* (7th ed.). Salemba Humanika.

16) Satria, R. D. A. D. (2024). KOMUNIKASI ANTARBUDAYA MASYARAKAT ADAT BADUY LUAR DENGAN MASYARAKAT LUAR ADAT BADUY DI BANTEN. *Jurnal komunikan*, *3*(1), 74–79. https://doi.org/10.30993/jurnalkomunikan.v3i1.393

17) Setyaningrum, P. (2022, Agustus). Mengenal Suku Baduy, dari Asal Usul hingga Tradisi. *Kompas.Com*. https://regional.kompas.com/read/2022/08/25/211002178/mengenal-suku-baduy-dari-asal-usul-hingga-tradisi?page=all.

18) Wilodati. (2013). Sistem Tatanan Masyarakat dan Kebudayaan Orang Baduy. *Jurnal Sistem Sosbud Baduy*. http://file.upi.edu/Direktori/FPIPS/M_K_D_U/196801141992032-WILODATI/jurnal_SISTEM_SOSBUD_BADUY.pdf