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## **Cross-Cultural Communication on Multi-Ethnic Society (Self-Concept Studies Students of the Earth Class and Ethnic Chinese in Expressing Themselves)**



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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aims to know and analyze self-concept in the interaction between students of the earth class of sons and ethnic Chinese in appreciating themselves. The self-concept possessed by ethnic Chinese, although positive, consciously and unconsciously, students seem to show a negative self-concept; as long as they show their self-concept, they want people to accept it. While appreciating themselves, the students of the earth class, the prince is more willing to show their concept of themselves, and they believe in themselves. They hope that there is a positive self-concept in the future so that ethnic interactions do not occur differences and conflicts between ethnicities in their friendships. This research uses qualitative research methods using symbolic self-concept and interactional theory. Data collection techniques with in-depth interviews and observations.

**KEYWORDS:** Self-Concept, Symbolic Interactional, Crosscultural Communication

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Indonesian nation is a multiethnic nation with vulnerable plurality with the potential for high conflicts, be it conflicts of interest, ideological conflicts, conflicts between classes and others. Indonesia is not only a country with a cluster of islands spread from Sabang to Merauke but is also occupied by a variety of different ethnicities. The country's motto, "Bhineka Tunggal Eka," shows how many ethnicities are scattered on this archipelago. Bhineka Tunggal Ika, which means different but one, is not just a motto but a symbol of ethnic diversity in Indonesia.

With the vast area of Indonesia and the number of islands in Indonesia, Indonesia has become a country with a very large population of both indigenous people and immigrants domiciled in Indonesia. Various discriminatory policies they received from the government. The mention of Indonesian citizens of descent in the identity card shows that the government does not consider ethnic Chinese to have the same rights as indigenous people as citizens. As a result, there is a stereotype of indigenous people as negative towards the Tionghua ethics people. These negative stereotypes arise not only because they have different physical traits but also because of different beliefs.

Discrimination occurs because they have different cultures. The government's efforts to unite the ethnic community with the indigenous people failed and had to be replaced. Every ethnicity is required to learn from other cultures without leaving the culture. Sindhunata (2006), ethnic Chinese in Indonesia are a group of sub-ethnic Chinese people consisting of Hakka, Hokkian, Hainan, Cantonese, Hokchia, and Tiochiu. Because Indonesians do not widely know these sub-ethnicities, they are all known as "Chinese people." This understanding of ethnic Chinese is what is the basis for this research. The roughly believed estimate of the number of Chinese-Indonesians today is between the range of 4% - 5% of the entire population of Indonesia (Turner & Allen, 2007).

The difference in the treatment of ethnic Chinese can also be seen in the interactions carried out by Bumi Putera and ethnic Chinese students from several campuses in Jakarta, especially on the Bunda Mulia campus; it is known that students can form their concepts by looking at the views and judgments of themselves and others through interactions and experiences of themselves or others. After forming their self-concept, students can appreciate the self-concept formed by family, friends and society.

The self-concept referred to and understood in this study is the difference in actualization and self-expression in each student who has a different ethnicity. Although these differences are often seen the same as when students interact, not being aware of their actualization and self-concept can affect a person's behavior in interacting. Students' differences in looking at themselves will be seen when they have a different sense of self when gathering or meeting each other. A term is often used to facilitate the study of self-concept in cross-cultural, namely the construction of the individual self and the collective self.

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### a. Individual Self

The individual self is a self that focuses on internal personal attributes such as individual abilities, intelligence, personality traits, and individual choices. The individual self is the self that is separate from others and the environment, or the independent self (independent construal of self). Individual cultures and self-design and select human history to not rely on other members or societies. According to individual self-constructs, humans are encouraged to build a separate self-concept from others, including the goal of success, which tends to lead more to the individual's self-goal.

### b. Collective Self

The collective self can be the opposite or opposite of the individual self. Cultures that emphasize the collective self have the characteristics of beings related to each other. The main task of the culture here is to create how the individual fulfills and maintains his attachment to other individuals. Individuals are required to conform to other people or groups in which they join the goal so that the individual can read and understand the thoughts of other people's feelings and sympathize so that the individual can play the role that the group has given them.

The normative task of the culture here is to encourage interdependence with each other. In collective self-construct, the value of success and self-esteem is if the individual can meet the community's needs and become an important part of the relationship with the community. Individuals focus on their attachment status and appreciation, and social responsibility.

Symbolic interaction theory refers to a concept originally developed by Mead and then continued by Blummer (1969). This theory looks at the social reality created by man himself through the interaction of meanings conveyed symbolically (Fachrul, 2015: 41). The theory of symbolic interaction has many important influences on the sociocultural tradition; therefore, this theory departs from the idea that social structures and meanings are created and maintained in social interaction (Morissan, 2015: 53).

Symbolic interactions seek to understand human behavior from the point of view of human subjects. This means that human behavior should be seen as a process that is formed and regulated, taking into account the expectations of others who are their interaction partners (Mulyana, 2003: 70). Mead's theory of symbolic interaction (Mulyana, 2010: 73-77) suggests that human meaning should be understood based on what they do. The fundamental concept is social action, which also considers hidden aspects of human behavior.

Mead took the three critical concepts necessary and influenced each other to devise a symbolic interaction theory. Thus, the human mind (mind) and social interaction (self/ self) are used to interpret and educate society (Fachrul, 2015: 47).

Mead explained that three other concept assumptions have a relationship with symbolic interactions, namely:

#### 1. Mind

The mind is not a thing but a process. It is nothing more than interacting with ourselves, and this ability develops in line with the self, which is essential to human life. (Littlejohn, Stephen W. 2009:235). The mind is the process of a person's conversation with himself, not found in the individual, and the mind is a social phenomenon. Thoughts arise and develop in social processes and are integral to social processes. Where social processes precede the mind, social processes are not products of the mind. So, the mind is also defined functionally rather than substantively. A special characteristic of the mind is the individual's ability to elicit one response and the overall communication response. (Ritzer, George, Douglas J Goodman 2004: 24). Mead argues that a person develops thoughts through interaction with others. So the thoughts of an individual will be different from other individuals.

#### 2. Self

Self is the ability to reflect on ourselves from the perspective of others. Mead believes that the self does not come from introspection or one's simple thoughts but rather from how others see us. Borrowing a concept derived from the sociologist Charles Cooley, Mead refers to it as a mirror of the self (looking-glass self), or our ability to see ourselves in reflection from the views of others. Mead's thoughts on this self-mirror imply the power that labels have over self-concept and behavior. Labels describe predictions of self-fulfillment, that is, personal expectations that influence behavior. When Mead theorized about the self, he observed that through language, people have the ability to be subjects and objects to themselves. As subjects, we act, and we observe ourselves acting like objects. Mead refers to the subject, self-acting as I, and the object or self-observing as Me. "I" is spontaneous, impulsive, and creative, while "Me" is more reflective and socially sensitive. Mead sees himself as a process that integrates "I" and "Me." According to Mead, the self is the ability to accept oneself as an object. The self is a special ability to be both a subject and an object. Self requires a social communication process between people (Fachrul, 2015: 48).

#### 3. Society

Mead argues that interaction occurs in a dynamic social structure of culture, society, etc. Individuals are born into an existing social context. Mead defines society as a network of social relations created by humans. Individuals engage in society through their chosen behaviors actively and voluntarily. Thus, society describes the connectedness of several behavioral devices that

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individuals constantly adjust. Society existed before the individual but was also created and formed by performing actions in line with others. (Forte, 2004).

Mead uses society to mean the relentless social processes that precede the mind and self. Society plays an important role in presenting what they intend to interact with others and the influence that interpretation of these symbols has on the behavior of parties involved in social interaction (Fachrul, 2015: 42-43).

### RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative (qualitative research). In this study, the meaning and process are more emphasized than the results of an activity.

Qualitative research methods such as those expressed by Bogdan and Taylor (L.J. Moleong, 2011: 4) is a research procedure that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words of the people and behaviors observed. In addition, qualitative research methods are a way to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes of belief, perceptions, and thoughts of people individually and in groups. Qualitative research uses observation, interviewing, content analysis, and other data collection methods to present the responses and behavior of subjects (Setyosari, 2012: 40). The author uses qualitative methods so that researchers can describe and analyze the interaction of students of the earth class and ethnic Chinese in appreciating themselves.

Data collection techniques in this study are in-depth interviews and observations. An interview is a conversation with specific intent. Two parties conducted the conversation, namely, the interviewer (interviewer) who asked the question and the interviewee (interviewee) who answered the question (Moleong, 2006: 186). Data collection uses in-depth interviews and observations to obtain information for research purposes through face-to-face Q&A between interviewers and informants or interviewees, with or without using interview guidelines (guide interviews), where interviewers and informants engage in relatively similar social lives (Sutopo, 2006: 72).

### DISCUSSION

Sociocultural approaches to communication theory demonstrate the way individuals understand meanings, norms, messages, and rules that interact in communication. The theories explore the world of interaction inhabited by humans, explaining that reality is not a set of arrangements outside the individual but is formed through the process of interaction within groups, communities, and cultures. Mead explained that three other concept assumptions have a relationship with symbolic interactions. Categorization of self-concept and interaction of Bumi Putera students in appreciating themselves, namely:

#### Self-Concept and Student Interaction of The Bumi Putera Group In Appreciating Himself.

SELF-CONCEPT	DISCUSSION	
Mind	View	Not distinguishing from each other, adapting to the campus environment, respecting and respecting different ethnic groups and ethnicities,
	Valuation	There are differences in the language, culture and nature of each individual.
	Obstacles	It is uniting ethnic and cultural differences, accepting other cultures' differences, one's courage to draw closer to other ethnicities, and individual prejudices before knowing other ethnicities and racists.
Self	Valuation	Confident, caring, reserved and positive thinking.
	Appreciate the Concept of Yourself	Responsible for the self-concept formed, respecting self-concept, showing and practicing to students or the community.
Society	Other people's views	Accept, do not mind the concept of self-formed, and appreciate the concept of self.

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Maintaining self-concept	Confident in the self-concept that has been formed and respects itself.
Future expectations about the interaction of different groups and ethnicities	Conflict and humiliation do not happen anymore; in the absence of racists, ethnic Chinese do not consider themselves special, do not look one eye, respect others and respect different ethnic cultures.

**1. Mind**

Most of the informants of the earth men's class students commented on how the earth men and ethnic Chinese groups interacted and the difficulties faced by the students of Etnia Bumi Putera. As it is known that many have occurred since long ago until now, inter-ethnic wars often occur both visible and invisible. The way of interaction carried out by the prince earth group with ethnic Chinese is not distinguishing from each other, adapting to the campus environment, respecting and respecting different ethnicities, especially ethnic Chinese. The difficulties experienced when interacting are differences in language, culture, and each individual's nature who is unwilling to accept different ethnicities.

Some students of the earth prince group answered about the obstacles that occur in interacting with other ethnicities, namely matching ethnic or cultural differences, accepting other cultural differences, self-courage to get closer to other ethnicities, individual prejudices before knowing other ethnicities, and narrow thinking, and the presence of racists. In addition, some students of the prince earth-class also commented on the differences that determine the earth group of sons and ethnic Chinese, namely the difference in articulation when speaking, the language used and physical characteristics such as skin color and eye shape.

Some informants of the earth prince class students comment on the understanding of self-concept and their understanding of self-concept. Informants say that the self is their view and self-understanding of themselves and the view of others also about themselves, and the self-concept obtained from self-experience and interacting with others. Every informant of the student class of the earth prince said that they already understood their self-concept.

As Mead expressed about the understanding of self-concept, "Self-concept is the individual's view of who the individual is. It can be obtained through the information that others give to the individual" (Mulyana, 2001: 7). Mead's understanding of self-concept above aligns with the researcher's understanding that self-concept is an individual's self-view obtained from interaction and experience. Self-concept is the individual's view of who the individual is, and it can be obtained through information given by others to the individual (Mulyana, 2001: 7).

Judging from the comments given by the informant of the earth class student son researcher concluded that the student Bumi Putera before interacting with different ethnicities with himself, especially ethnic Chinese, students sees and judges the person first and if he said that the person deserves to be friends with him.

In interaction, even students think that the interaction carried out by him will affect him or not and can form a concept of himself.

**2. Self**

Most informants of the students of the earth class prince commented on whether and how the students of the earth class of the son can form his concept, that is, they can form a self-concept even the self-concept is formed consciously and unconsciously, new students realize the formation process after knowing and thinking the understanding of self-concept.

The students of the earth prince group are mostly of a view of themselves, and the answers they give are almost all the same they are confident, pSaerauli, quiet, and think positively. Moreover, the self-concept formed is obtained from the learning process, experiences and interactions they do with family, friends, and society. The earth-class of appearance is not too important; they only prioritize comfort in interacting regardless of appearance.

Some informants of the prince's earth-class students also commented on how the students of the earth class can appreciate themselves, namely being responsible for the self-concept that has been formed, respecting the self-concept, showing the concept of self by practicing it to friends or others, believing in the concept of himself, and showing their appearance to everyone.

According to Hartoko and Rahmanto, "Etymologically, the symbol (symbol) comes from the Greek word "sym-ballein" which means to throw together an (object, deed) associated with an idea" (Hartoko & Rahmanto, 1998: 133). As revealed by Hartoko and Rahmanto above, this is in line with the results of researchers' understanding of student symbols in appreciating themselves.

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**3. Society**

All informants of the students of the Bumi Putera class commented on the views of friends, especially ethnic Chinese, towards the appreciation of the self-concept of the students of the earth prince class, namely friends, especially ethnic Chinese, accept, do not mind, and appreciate the self-concept that has been formed by the information of the students of the earth boy class. Most informants of the earth prince class students comment on how to maintain the self-concept that has been formed and not affected by his self-concept, namely believing in him that the self-concept is good and respecting himself.

Humans actively interpret their environment, change it when necessary, determine their way of life, and perform any action inexplicable (in Mulyana, 2001:35). As stated by Mulyana above, it is in line with researchers' understanding that students have the right to change and determine their concepts to get a better future. Most informants of the earth prince class students give hope for the future regarding the interplay of different ethnicities, namely conflict and humiliation do not happen again, the absence of racists, ethnic Chinese do not consider themselves special, do not look at each other, respect others and respect different ethnic cultures.

In addition, some informants also hope about the formation of student self-concept, namely being able to learn from experience and interaction, belief in themselves, respect and respect themselves.

In interacting, students will experience the process of their views or assessments and the assessment or assessment of others towards them. Students of the earth prince class know and understand their self-concept even they experience changes in their lives. In their view, appearance is not very important to them. The important thing is that they are comfortable and do not harm others.

In appreciating themselves, the students of the earth class prince are more willing to show their concept of themselves, and they believe in themselves. They hope to be positive in the future regarding the interplay of different ethnicities and no more ethnic conflicts. The formation of self-concept in the future, they hope that the self-concept that has been formed can be useful for the future.

Mead explained that three other concept assumptions have a relationship with symbolic interactions. Categorization of self-concept and interaction of ethnic Chinese students in appreciating themselves, namely,

**Self-Concept and Interaction of Ethnic Chinese Students in Appreciating Themselves.**

SELF-CONCEPT	DISCUSSION	
Mind	View	Learn to accept friends of the earth prince group, position comfortably in interacting, do not look at in terms of ethnicity or culture, and prioritize togetherness.
	Valuation	The presence of racists, narrow thinking, selfishness, language differences, cultural differences and negative perceptions of one of the parties
	Obstacles	Occupying the position of self when interacting, whether comfortable or not, language differences, adjusting to new environments, and selfish nature.
Self	Valuation	Confident, caring, reserved and positive thinking.
	Appreciate the Concept of Yourself	show confidence, and optimism, behave appropriately, show the concept of self that has been formed, care for, and be able to solve a problem.
Society	Other people's views	Friends, especially ethnic Chinese, accept, greatly appreciate self-concept, ordinary, do not mind, and appreciate the self-concept that has been formed.
	Maintaining self-concept	He was forming a good self-concept in the future, becoming a better person, appreciating his concept, not harming himself and believing in the self-concept that had been formed.
	Future expectations about the interaction of different groups and ethnicities	Can interact regardless of race, ethnicity and culture, trust and care for each other, respect and respect other ethnicities

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## 1. Mind

15 Based on the results of known research, most informants of ethnic Chinese students argue about the way ethnic Chinese and the earth-class of sons interact and the difficulties faced by Chinese Etnia students when interacting, namely learning to accept friends of the earth prince group, positioning comfortably in interacting, not looking at in terms of ethnicity or culture, prioritizing togetherness. The difficulties experienced when interacting are racists, narrow thinking, selfishness, language differences, cultural differences and negative perceptions of one party. In addition, some ethnic Chinese students also commented on the differences that determine the class of the earth prince and ethnic Chinese, namely differences in language that cause misunderstandings, speaking styles, tone of speech (some are rude, soft and fast) and culture.

When it comes to language and speech style, Berger (in Sobur 2004; 163) states that such symbols are the keys that allow us to open doors that mask our feelings of unconsciousness and belief through in-depth research, as Berger expressed above in line with what is understood by the author that language, articulation, culture is a social means to create a social relationship, where every student does not cover up feelings.

Informants of ethnic Chinese students answer the obstacles when interacting with different ethnicities, namely occupying a position when interacting whether comfortable or not, language differences, adjusting to new environments, and selfish nature. 6 This tradition focuses on forms of human interaction rather than individual characteristics or mental models. Interaction is the process and place of meaning, role, rules, and cultural values carried out (Morissan, 2015: 51). As revealed by Morissan above, it is following the understanding of researchers.

Some ethnic Chinese student informants argue about the understanding of self-concept and their understanding of self-concept, that self-concept is a way of looking at themselves and judging themselves and other people's assessment of the individual self through experiences and processes in interaction. Ethnic Chinese students say that they already understand the concept of themselves, and they can occupy what self-concept is good for them.

## 2. Self

Based on the study results, most informants of ethnic Chinese students argue that students of the earth prince group can form a concept of themselves, namely from interactions carried out with others, especially the prince earth group, taking calm knowledge of the world, and self-experience. Communication has a content function, which involves exchanging information about how individuals relate to others" (Mulyana, 2003: 5).

Informant ethnic Chinese students are mostly self-viewed, and the answers they give are almost all the same. They are confident, optimistic, curious, caring, and flexible. Moreover, the self-concept formed is obtained from the learning process, experiences and interactions they do with family, friends, and society. For ethnic Chinese, appearance is very important in interacting. One ethnic Chinese informant said appearance was important because individuals would first see a person's appearance when communicating with others.

Some ethnic Chinese student informants also commented on how ethnic Chinese students can appreciate themselves, namely by showing confidence, optimism, being appropriate, showing the self-concept that has been formed, caring, and being able to solve a problem.

According to Siswoyo (2007: 121), students can be defined as individuals who study at the college level, both public and private or at other institutions at universities. The self-concept of ethnic Chinese students is formed from interaction with other students at Bunda Mulia University. Students form their concepts from their information and experience, as expressed by Siswoyo and in line with the understanding of researchers that students are still studying at Bunda Mulia University and are still receiving knowledge and information. In appreciating the concept of themselves, students believe in the self-concept that has been formed.

## 3. Society

15 Based on the results of known research, all informants of ethnic Chinese students commented on the views of friends, especially the earth men's class, towards the appreciation of the self-concept of the students of the earth prince class, namely friends, especially ethnic Chinese accept, greatly appreciate the concept of self, ordinary, do not mind, and appreciate the self-concept that has been formed. Gordon I Zimmerman once said, "Individuals can divide communication into two broad categories. First, individuals communicate to complete tasks that are important to the individual's own needs, satisfy the individual's curiosity about the environment, and enjoy life. Individuals communicate to create and cultivate relationships with others. Thus, communication has a content function, which involves exchanging information about how an individual relates to others." (Mulyana, 2003:5).

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Based on the interview results, most informants of ethnic Chinese students provide hope for the future regarding different ethnic interactions, namely being able to interact regardless of race, ethnicity and culture, trust each other and respect and respect other ethnicities. In addition, they hope that the formation of self-concept can form a good self-concept in the future, become a better person, appreciate the concept of himself, not harm himself, and believe in the self-concept that has been formed.

Like the men's earth group, ethnic Chinese also experienced the same thing for the first time deciding to interact with the prince earth group. At first, they thought they could not interact with the earth prince group because of their fear of racism, the selfishness of the earth prince group, and not caring. However, after adjusting to the campus environment, they changed their thinking that the things they were worried about and feared were not necessarily happening. Moreover, the proof alone they are well received in the class of the earth sons. What is different between them is both positive and negative. However, some students perceive that they can accept it and feel comfortable interacting.

Each individual from ethnic Chinese prioritizes comfort in interacting. They assume that ethnic and cultural differences do not prevent them from interacting. Moreover, the obstacles and difficulties experienced can be resolved properly and not cause conflict. Ethnic Chinese students know about self-concept. They already understand their self-concept, so forming their self-concept can be taken from the interactions and experiences in their lives.

In appreciating themselves, ethnic Chinese students will show the self-concept they have formed. Moreover, of course, the self-concept formed is certainly positive consciously and although unconsciously, students will show a negative self-concept. As long as they show their self-concept, they say that society accepts their self-concept. Society does not reject the self-concept that students have formed. Society considers that as long as students do not disturb the community and adjust to the environment, they will accept their self-concept.

Ethnic Chinese students hope that ethnic interactions will not occur again and that each individual can accept differences. Self-concept is expected that ethnic Chinese students can form a good self-concept in the future and not harm themselves and be themselves.

According to Mike Featherstone (2001: 205). "Preoccupation with habituation of a lifestyle and stylistic self-awareness is not only found among the younger generation and the wealthy, consumer culture publicity confirms that individuals all have the opportunity to make self-improvement and self-expression regardless of age and class." According to Mike Featherstone, from the above quote, students have the opportunity to make self-improvement and self-expression, which is in line with researchers and informants of ethnic Chinese students who hope that students can improve themselves regardless of status and age.

### CONCLUSION

Bumi Putera Students interacting with different ethnicities, especially ethnic Chinese, do not look at ethnicity or culture. Although at first, the Bumi Putera group students were afraid to interact with ethnic Chinese because of racist thoughts. However, that thought can be eliminated, and students can adjust to the campus environment by accepting ethnically Chinese friends.

Bumi Putera Students interacting with different ethnicities, especially ethnic Chinese, do not look at ethnicity or culture. Although at first, the Bumi Putera group students were afraid to interact with ethnic Chinese because of racist thoughts. However, that thought can be eliminated, and students can adjust to the campus environment by accepting ethnically Chinese friends.

Bumi Putera Students already know and more or less have understood the positive self-concept. Even students form their concepts through interaction and experience that they have experienced both in family, friends and society. In appreciating the concept of himself, students of the Bumi Putera Group prefer to show the concept of self that has been formed by himself and, of course, the positive self-concept such as confidence, care, respect and respect. Moreover, that is a positive form of appreciation.

Ethnic Chinese students interacting with the Bumi Putera Group did not see cultural, ethnic and racial differences. They prefer comfort in making friends. However, some students at first could not accept the Bumi Putera Group because of selfishness and racism. However, like the Bumi Putera Group students who changed to accept because of his adjustment to the campus environment.

Lifestyle and appearance are important in interacting with ethnic Chinese students at Bunda Mulia University. They also interact with a person's lifestyle and appearance to adjust themselves and make the interaction more comfortable. Ethnic Chinese students understand and understand self-concept. They form the concept of themselves from their perspective and the judgment of others from the interactions and experiences that have been experienced by themselves and others. Their self-concept is more confident, conscientious, hardworking, caring, and appreciative.

Ethnic Chinese students appreciate their concept, and they prefer to show and practice it in the environment, especially in interacting with friends of the Bumi Putera Group. The self-concept intended to appreciate ethnic Chinese students is certainly positive for himself and does not harm others.



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