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No.	Pesenter	Material
1	Prof. Pudentia Maria Purenti Sri Sunarti, MA	Revitalisasi Budaya Melayu
2	Adolina V. Lefaan, S.Pd, M.Pd	Eksistensi TIFA dalam budaya etnik Mbaham-Matta Papua Barat
3	Slamet Wiyono	Batique Clothes Transaction in Malioboro Street
4	Heppy Leunard Lelapary, S.Pd, M.Pd	Representasi identitas masyarakat Maluku dalam komunikasi bahasa TANA
5	Farid Muhammad, S.Pd, MA	Struktur Mantra Sebagai Genre Bahasa Melayu
6	Prof. Dr. James T. Collins	Malay, World language: Its history and development
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10	Adriansyah Katili, M.Pd	Mendidik karakter bangsa melalui sastra
11	Ian Fooks	Peace Values in Indonesian Culture
12	Nonny Basalama	Critical Perspective of Hofstede's Classification of Indonesian Culture

Gorontalo, November 7, 2013

Nonny Basalama, MA., Ph.D
Ketua Panitia

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"Strengthening the Identity of Malay People through the
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Proceeding

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Pendahuluan

Dengan senantiasa bersyukur kehadirat Tuhan yang Maha Esa, karena hanya dengan kuasa-Nyalah kegiatan "The First International Conference on Malay Language and Culture" dapat terselenggara dengan baik. Kegiatan ini diselenggarakan oleh Fakultas Sastra dan Budaya Universitas Negeri Gorontalo bekerjasama dengan Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa Universitas Negeri Gorontalo.

Konferensi ini menghadirkan para ahli, peneliti, dosen, praktisi serta mahasiswa S1 baik program studi Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia maupun prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris serta mahasiswa S2 program studi bahasa di Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Konferensi ini pula menghadirkan beberapa narasumber diantaranya Prof. Dr. Nani Tuloli, Slamet Wiyono, Adriansyah Katili, S.S, M.Pd, Nonny Basalama, MA, Ph.D, Heppy Leunard Lelapary, S.Pd, M.Pd, Farid Muhamad, Dr. Harto Malik, M.Hum, Dr. Suleman Bouti, Ian Fooks. Keynote speaker juga yang sempat menyaji antara lain Prof. Pudentia Maria Purenti Sri Sunarti, MA dengan judul penyajiannya "Revitalisasi Budaya Melayu" dan Prof. Dr. James T. Collins dengan judul "Malay, World language: Its history and development" namun makalahnya belum dapat disajikan pada prosiding ini.

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Gorontalo, 2013

Panitia

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A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE OF HOFSTEDE'S CLASSIFICATION OF INDONESIAN CULTURE

Nonny Basalama
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Abstract

The discussion of culture and the shared characteristics attached to and with a society has become interesting to be brought into attention. Hofstede in his book 'Culture and Organization: Software of the Mind' (1980, 1991, 1994, 2001) classifies Indonesia as one of the Asian countries having four dimensions of cultural values which are contradictory to other western countries such as Australia, USA and Netherlands. However, this paper argues that Hofstede's classification of Indonesian culture tends to be simplistic and over generalisation. It would not be wise to attribute to Indonesians the same idiosyncrasies typical of certain cultures in Indonesia through Javanese culture which applied by Hofstede's to Indonesia population in general. In particular, this paper will examine Hofstede's four dimension of Indonesian culture, and then following by the discussion of why Hofstede' s classification of Indonesian culture which is critically argued to be simplistic defined.

Keywords: Critical perspective and Hofstede's dimension of Indonesian culture

Introduction

The definition and the conceptualization of the term culture itself can become problematic in the studies of social science due to the number of reasons. One of the reasons is the difficulty of pinpointing a precise definition of culture because there is a risk of simplistically interpreting the generalized behavior of a group, which Clarke and Otaky (2006:112) explain as "a static, synoptic thing". They further argue that "human capacity akin to our abilities to create and use language and other tools of the mind even though the particular forms it takes will inevitably be shaped by historical, cultural and social factors" (Clarke and Otaky 2006:120). Related to those conceptualization of culture, Hofstede in his book 'Culture and Organization: Software of the Mind' (1980, 1991, 1994, 2001)has classified Indonesia as one of the Asian countries having four dimensions of cultural values which are contradictory to other western countries such as Australia, USA, and Netherlands. However, this paper argues that Hofstede's classification of Indonesian culture tends to be simplistic and over generalisation. It would not be wise to attribute to Indonesians the same idiosyncrasies typical of certain cultures in Indonesia for example Javanese culture which is applied by Hofstede's to Indonesia population in general. In particular, this paper will examine Hofstede's four dimension of Indonesian culture, and then following by the discussion of why Hofstede' s classification of Indonesian culture which is critically argued to be simplistic defined.

Critical Perspectives on Hofstede's view of Indonesian culture

Geert Hofstede (1980, 1991, 1994, 2001) distinguishes the cultural values between a collectivist society and an individualist society in his foundational work on a range of countries, including Indonesia. Here are the four dimensions of cultural values conceptualized by Hofstede for Indonesian culture.

- Low individualism or collectivism vs. high individualism

- High power distance or authoritarian vs. low power distance or egalitarian

- Low uncertainty avoidance or tolerate uncertainty vs. high uncertainty avoidance or need certainty

- High masculinity vs. low masculinity

Each of these classifications has been summarised in Table 1 below.

Low Individualism	High Individualism
People belong to ingroups who look after them in exchange for loyalty	People look after themselves and immediate family
The emphasis is on "we" and belonging to groups	The emphasis is on "I" and individual's initiative and achievement
Particularistic, apply different value standards for members of ingroups and outgroups	Universalistic, apply the same value standard to all
Low Power Distance	**High Power Distance**
Believe power should be used only when it is legitimate and/or based on expertise Attention to myth of equality among superiors and subordinates	See power as a basic fact in society Superiors consider their subordinates to be different from themselves
Parents may value initiative and independence among (older) children Students relatively independent and anti-authoritarian	Parents value obedience in children Students value conformity and display authoritarian attitudes
See respect for individual and equality as directly linked to freedom	See tact, servitude and money as directly linked to freedom
Low Uncertainty Avoidance	**High Uncertainty Avoidance**
Tend to less public display of emotion, aggression, tension, reflecting lower levels of anxiety and stress	Tend to greater public displays of emotion, aggression, tension, reflecting higher levels of anxiety and stress
Less need for formal (written) rules	Greater need for formal rules
Higher tolerance of ambiguous situations and dissenting viewpoints	Less tolerance for people or groups with deviant ideas or behaviors
Accept creative potential of conflict Accept competition as public ideology	Avoid open conflict in public Disapprove of competition as public ideology
Low Masculinity	**High Masculinity**
Place value on people, quality of life and nurturance, service, interdependance	Place high values on things, power and assertiveness, performance, ambition, independence
Value overlapping gender roles Men as well as women may value what is small, weak, needy	Emphasise differentiated sex role Successful women copy masculine roles
View interpersonal relationships as central to life	View work as more central to life Accept work interference in private life

Table 1 - *From Hofstede 1991, adapted from Communication and Culture course materials given in semester 1, 1999. This classification is cited from Basalama 2001.*

Indonesia, according to Hofstede is classified as a collectivist, high power distance (HPD), low uncertainty avoidance and high masculinity culture. These four culture values are manifested in characteristics that people are taught are central to belonging to a group. The keyword is 'we' which is always emphasized over the individual and there are harmony values that have to be maintained. Authority is regarded highly in this society where it is taken for granted that some people have more power than others. Seeing power as a basic fact, people who are more superior will consider their subordinate to be different from themselves (hierarchically). They also tend to avoid displaying emotions in public. In Hofstede's perspective Indonesians emphasize the masculinity in their society and sex roles are highly differentiated.

Align with the conceptualization of high power distance, Hall (1976) proposes two terms, high-context communication and low-

context communication. High context communication is where most of the information is in either internalized in the person receiving the communication or indicated physically, for example, via body language, while very little is in the verbal part of the message (Hall 1976:79). Low context communication occurs when the majority of information in the message is transmitted verbally, or rather, conveyed strictly via the words in the message (Hall 1976:70). Hall defined cultures according to the forms of communication he observed. He noted that the majority of people in high context cultures observe high context methods of communication, while people in low context cultures preferred a low context mode of communication. This observation was supported by Levinson (1983) who clarified that "members of low-context, individualistic cultures tend to communicate using direct speech acts, while members of high-context, collectivist cultures tend to communicate using indirect speech acts". Having explained these all, it is interesting to note that the collectivist cultures that are classed by Hofstede as being high power distance are observed by Hall and supported by Levinson as being high context cultures.

Whilst it might be true that there are few of Indonesian communities reflect some values as what have defined by Hofstede above. For example Javanese culture, however these cannot be applied to throughout all cultural groups in Indonesia, and henceforth those Hofstede's classification above tend to be simplistic and over generalization. There are some reasons why I contendedthe Hofstede's classification of Indonesian culture. Firstly, considering Indonesian as the country which having multi languages and multi-cultureswhich therefore Indonesia is also called as pluralist county, it is not wise and plausible to over generalisation the Indonesian culture in that way. For example, the occurrence of the indirect ways of communication culture is strongly pronounced at Javanese culture, where it is considered very impolite for a daughter or a son to show their disagreement directly to what their parents want them to do or ask them to do although they themselves do not like to do so.

Consequently, this situation can create power distance between the parents and the children. For Javanese culture, keeping harmony values would be more likely to be maintained than showing their emotions into public. In Jogja for example (one of the well-known regionsin central part of Indonesia), these values of Hofstede are strongly felt and maintained by their people.

However, this situation probably cannot be similarly applied in other regions of Indonesia with their unique and specific culture in terms of communication. For example people in Batak and Manado who are well known as having direct way of communication are more likely to show their openly disagreement when faced the same situation as Javanese experience above. Although it is necessary to conduct empirical research to understand more about the issue of cultural communication across cultures in Indonesia, it is more likely to argue that Batak and Manado people are considered far more open and direct to show their emotions or even disagreement to something compared to other few cultural groups in Indonesiafor instance in Javanese cultures.

The second reason of why I argue the dimension of Hofstede's classification of Indonesia, it is caused by the conceptualization of culture itself. It is developed by my understanding that the notion of culture isdynamic, viable than something static or constant, and thus contrary to the Hofstede's classification. There is a risk of simplistically interpreting the generalized behavior of a group, which Clarke and Otaky (2006:112) explain as "a static, synoptic thing". They further argue that "human capacity akin to our abilities to create and use language and other tools of the mind even though the particular forms it takes will inevitably be shaped by historical, cultural and social factors" (Clarke and Otaky 2006:120). When describing lifestyles, moral codes, and communication exchanges within a group there is a danger of overgeneralizing and discounting individual variants and outliers within the group. A static description of a group's activities gives an inflexible view of a way of life that may not necessarily accurately reflect the constructed nature of the group, which may be far more

elastic with regard to internal variants, including subcultures which can be produced and created, and even adjusted by individuals (cited in Basalama 2010).

The other reason to be taken into consideration of why the notion of culture manifested through cultural values distinguished by Hofstede (1980, 1991, 1994, 2001) appear to be simplistic is the debate take place in literature regarding the classification. In his discussion, Hofstede distinguishes between a collectivist society and an individualist society in his foundational work on a range of countries, including Indonesia. Interestingly to note that although it has been cited approvingly, yet it is also roundly criticized for establishing empirical foundations for measuring national culture. The theories have been under challenges and criticism. Among the critics of Hofstede's theorization of national culture are McSweeney (2002), Clarke and Otaky (2006), McConaghy (2000) and Phillips (2007).

McSweeney (2002: 91), in particular, describes Hofstede's treatment of national culture as "implicit; core; systemically causal territorially unique; and shared." McSweeney points out that Hofstede was so convinced of the causal properties of culture that he described it as "software of the mind" (Hofstede cited in McSweeney 2002:91) implying that an individual was programmed by their culture to behave as their culture dictated. Similarly, Clarke and Otaky (2006); McConaghy (2000); and Phillips (2007) all criticize Hofstede's conceptualization of the notion of culture as static and essentialist. Whilst it might be true that when one talks about national identity, it would be useful to recognize that there are differences in ways of life, modes of acceptable conduct and values and these may be noticeable as varying between races and nations. However, to describe those differences as static and immutable, as Hofstede has done, is untenable (see also Basalama 2010's discussion on the notion of culture). Hofstede's (1980, 1994, 2001) conceptualization of culture seems to be stemmed from a 'top-down' approach whereas it is vital to recognise that the cultural values

live in a society including their mode of communication, their beliefs and expectation are not static, constant and uniformly shared by the member of the community. How people discursively construct and locate themselves in relation to various different influential factors face upon them can also be the case one might perform different cultural reaction. In addition, it appears that in his classification of Indonesian cultural dimensions, Hofstede failed to provide sufficient evidence for the wide range of Indonesian culture.

Conclusion

This paper has highlighted Hofstede's four dimension about Indonesian culture and examine why the classification offered by the highly scholar Geert Hofstede (1980, 1994, 2001) have been contended in regard to be simplistic and over generalization. I point out that considering Indonesia as the pluralist nation where facilitate multi languages and multi cultures, the conceptualisation of Hofstede need to be further critically examined in the way of how far those dimensions represent Indonesian culture and Indonesia people. As shown from the earlier discussion, that the conceptualization of culture itself is dynamic and not constant. One should be careful to interpret behavior of a group which may cause over generalisation through the culture. In acknowledging a nation's culture, a wide range of evidences is vital and critical to be brought into discussion in taking the position.

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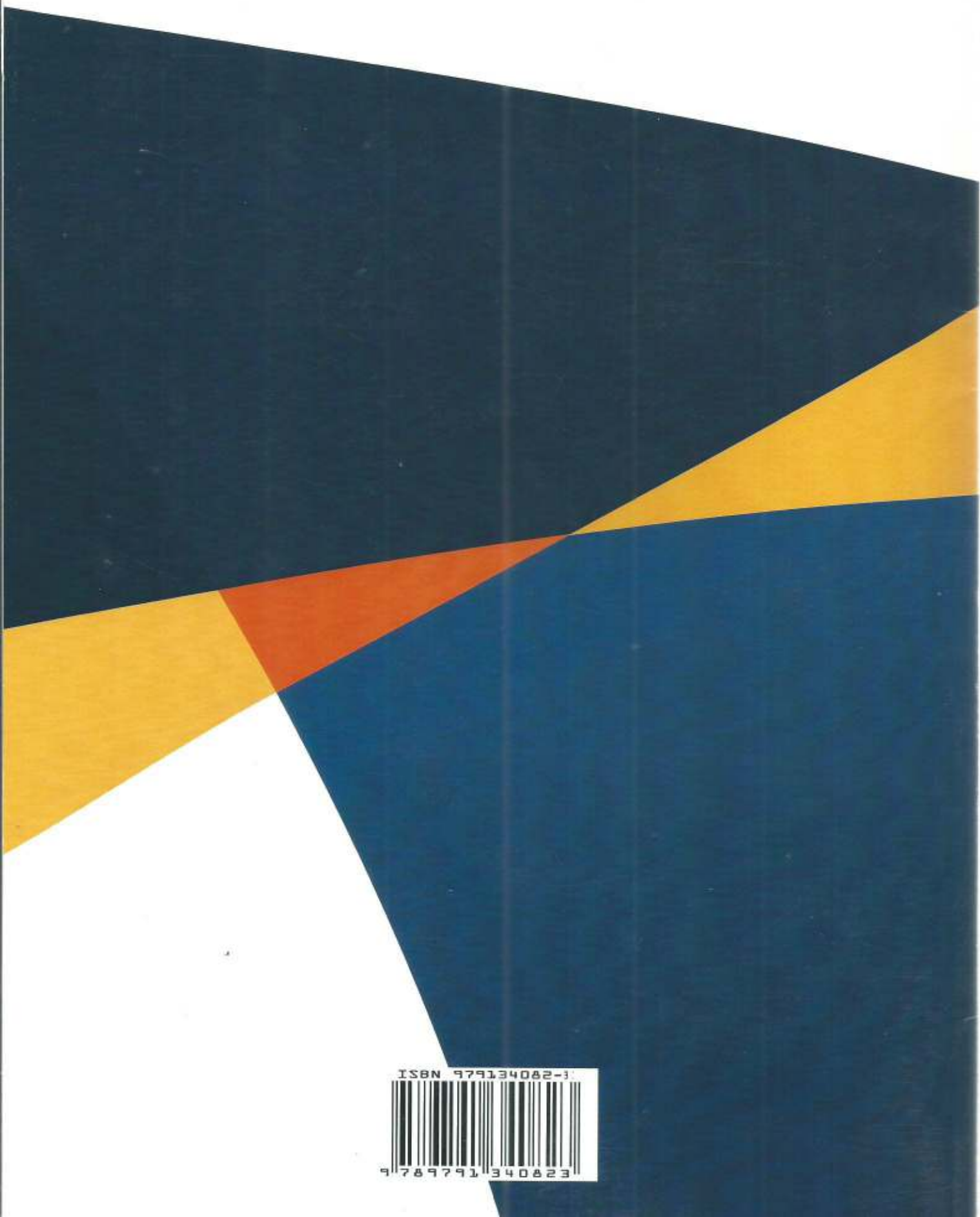
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