Intercultural Communication of Indian Cultural Dimensions Through Indonesian Secretary's Perspective

Yunita Budi Rahayu Silintowe & Annie Susanto

Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana
Jalan Diponegoro 52-60 Salatiga 50711
Email: yunita.silintowe@staff.uksw.edu

Abstract: *The purpose of this research is to analyze the business communication between Indonesian secretaries and expatriate leaders from India in multinational companies. It is a descriptive qualitative research, using interview and FGD. The findings of this reserach, according to Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions, shows that the Indian expatriate leaders and Indonesian secretaries have differences in two dimensions, Neutral-Emotional and Achievement-Ascription. If those cultural differences are ignored, they may be potential creating interference in the communication process.*

Keywords: *business communication, intercultural communication, Trompenaars' cultural dimensions*

Abstrak: *Tujuan riset ini adalah menganalisis komunikasi bisnis antara sekretaris Indonesia dan atasan dari India dalam perusahaan multinasional. Penelitian ini bersifat deskriptif kualitatif, melalui wawancara dan FGD. Temuan penelitian ini, merujuk pada tujuh dimensi dari Trompenaars, menunjukkan bahwa atasan dari India dan sekretaris dari Indonesia memperlihatkan perbedaan pada dua dimensi, yaitu dimensi Neutral-Emotional dan Achievement-Ascription. Jika perbedaan budaya tersebut diabaikan, maka hal tersebut berpotensi menyebabkan gangguan dalam proses komunikasi.*

Kata Kunci: *dimensi budaya Trompenaars, komunikasi antarbudaya, komunikasi bisnis*

Communication is something inevitable and inseparable from daily life since everyone always needs some information from others. A communication process starts with a sender having a certain idea to convey. Then it is transformed into a message which is sent through a certain media. The receiver of the message then decodes it and later sends feedback to the sender (Boove & Thill, 2008, p. 10 - 14). During such a process, noise or disturbance is inevitable. The impact is a different perception of the message. One possible cause for the noise is the differences between cultural backgrounds among those involved in the communication process.

Effective communication is needed more in business than in daily life. Spaho (2011, p. 390) states that practically, no organization can go on without an effective communication process. More and more staff realize that effective communication is a crucial part of their jobs since lots of tasks are based on team works within different functional groups. In doing such tasks, communication in the context of message

exchanges which involve verbal as well as non-verbal aspects is needed (Moll, 2012, p. 5; Martin & Nakayama, 2010, p. 268; Gibson, 2000, p. 27-30).

Communication and culture have a reciprocal relationship, just like the two sides of a coin. Culture is part of the behavior in communication, and later communication also defines, nurtures, develops, and inherits the culture. This is in line with Edward T. Hall's opinion (in Rogers, Hart, & Miike, 2002, p. 9) that culture is communication and communication is culture. On one side, communication is a kind of mechanism to socialize a society's norms and customs, either horizontally, from one society to another, or vertically, from one generation to the next (Lubis, 2002, p. 3). On the other side, culture itself is the norms or values which are considered suitable for certain groups.

Intercultural communication happens when someone is involved in a communication process with others from the different cultural background. Gibson (2000, p. 9) states that intercultural communication takes place when the sender and the receiver are from different cultures. Shoelhi (2015, p. 2) defines intercultural communication as the exchange of meaning through symbols done by two or more people from different cultural backgrounds. While Dadfar (2001) comprehends intercultural communication as a contextual and reciprocal process containing exchange, interpretation, and symbolism. Within such a process, inter-human differences are relatively significant

to enable different interpretation and expectation on what is considered as competent behavior in creating mutual understanding.

In this globalization era, where the scope of human interaction is getting wider, it is crucial to pay more attention in comprehending and overcoming challenges which are arising within intercultural communication (Crossman, Bordia, & Mills, 2010, p. 56-59). According to Ablonczy-Mihalyka (2009, p. 1), today's era of global business keeps on growing. Thus, communication among different nations is also increasing. This fact strengthens the needs for effective intercultural communication.

Intercultural business communication is seen as the communication within and between businesses, involving people from several different cultures, either in written or oral form (Chaney & Martin, 2007 in Sekkal, 2013, p. 44). This is in line with Varner's opinion (2000), that intercultural business communication is a unique construct, aiming at involving business aspect a different variable so that it is different from other intercultural communication process (in Cacciaguidi-Fahy & Cunningham, 2007, p. 135). In this context, a business could be either the organization or its activities.

When there is a wide gap between two or more cultures involving in a certain business communication process, the 'noise' will be bigger, and the potential of communication difficulties or problems is also greater (Gibson, 2000, p. 9).

Business people who actively involved in international business communication often have a communication problem or misunderstanding triggered by different cultural background (Niemeier, Campbell, & Dirven, 1998, p. 4). According to Mulyana (2015, p. 4), business communication failure in the global era is mainly due to difficulties in understanding communication ethics. This is caused by differences in cultural expectations felt by the business people involved. On the other hand, if the intercultural business communication skill is mastered well, high level of innovation, staff identification and commitment towards company objectives, will be reached (Hybels & Weaver II, 2009, p. 56-57).

However, learning to master business communication skill should not be done using a "tourist's point of view." In other words, it should not be done only by concerning the "outer part" or the "front side" of a certain culture. Instead, it should be done by comprehending why certain behavior happens and how cultural priorities occur within a business context (Varner, 2001 in Bharadwaj, 2013, p. 75).

In his book, "Riding the Waves," Trompenaars (in Balan & Vreja, 2013, p. 96) formulates seven cultural dimensions: Universalism-Particularism; Individualism-Communitarianism; Neutral-Emotional; Specific-Diffuse; Achievement-Ascription; Sequential-Synchronism and Internal Control-External Control. Based on the research done by Overgaard (2010) and Lindholm (2013) on the intercultural communication of Indian, here are the analysis based on Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions:

Table 1 Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions

Cultural Dimensions	Overgaard (2010)	Lindholm (2013)
Universalism VS Particularism	India is a fairly particularistic oriented culture.	India is considered a strong particularistic society.
Individualism VS Communitarianism	India is a communitarian culture.	India is considered a moderate to high collectivistic culture with very strong family values.
Neutral VS Emotional	-	People are open about happiness or sadness, problems, and joys, and tend to be surrounded by family or friends.
Specific VS Diffuse	India is a relatively diffuse culture.	India is a highly diffuse culture.
Achievement VS Ascription	Hindu cultures (including India) are more ascriptive oriented.	Most Indians value ascription because of the reliance or influence of the caste system.
Sequential VS Synchronism	India is a synchronic oriented culture.	Indians structure time synchronically and usually do several things at a time, allowing many things to take place simultaneously.
Internal Control VS External Control	India is a more outer-directed culture than, for instance, USA and Norway	Indians coincide in an externalist society and accommodate behavior in the situation.

Source: Overgaard (2010) & Lindholm (2013)

129

This research focuses on multinational companies owned by Indians, whose managerial levels are also headed by Indian expatriates, but the secretaries are Indonesian. According to the ex IBM Indonesia's CEO, Betti Alisjahbana, most Indian people have an international mindset. Whenever they are given a challenging job abroad, the answer is very likely to be a certain "yes." Actually, they are still not very sure how to accomplish such a challenging task, but surely they are willing to try hard (Sudarmadi, 2011, p. 1). Another encouraging factor in choosing this topic is that there are several companies in Central Java with Indian expatriates as the managers, but the secretaries are Indonesian. We are interested in analyzing the intercultural business communication between Indonesian secretaries and Indian expatriate managers in multinational companies.

METHODS

This is a qualitative research, which aims to comprehend the phenomenon undergone by the research object such as behavior, perception, motivation, and action. Such a phenomenon is then described, within a special and natural context, by using various natural methods (Moloeng, 2006, p. 6).

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is conducted in order to understand the cultural dimensions of both parties, as well as the intercultural communication between Indonesian secretaries and Indian expatriate leaders. This step involves several secretaries from various multinational companies. The next step is to sharpen the

findings on the application of the cultural dimensions, through in-depth interviews with the secretaries. Interview questions used in FGD and in-depth interviews are based on Trompenaars' cultural dimensions. The interviews are done through in-depth interviews, with or without using interview guidance list. During the interview, the interviewee is also asked for opinions and ideas, with the purpose of openly finding the problems (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 233-234). Both interviews and FGD are recorded using the digital audio recorder.

In this research, the informants are secretaries and Office Managements of multinational companies in Central Java. Secretaries and Office Managements are the company staffs who are often in contact with the expatriates, in this case, those from India. Central Java is chosen as the research location due to the fact that there are at least six multinational companies led by Indian expatriates.

The data analysis technique is descriptive-qualitative. It is a process of searching and compiling the data taken from the interviews, field research notes, and any other source of materials systematically so that it is easier to comprehend and be informed to other people (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 247-252). The data analysis technique involves four steps. Firstly, data collection, which is transcribing the recorded interview into details. Secondly, data reduction, including describing the subjects' identities, selecting main ideas, focusing on the main concerns, finding certain behavioral patterns shown by the informants through

the interviews. Thirdly, data display, which includes groupings and then presenting the data based on similarities. Fourthly, conclusion drawing using the data gathered from the informants.

FINDINGS

In doing daily tasks at work, the secretaries do not find any difficulties in communicating with the Indian expatriates since both can speak English. Most Indian expatriates are willing to learn the Indonesian language even though at first they only speak English.

> Speaking of communication, since the expats coming here are required to be able to speak Indonesian, at the beginning the communication is using English, errr... later on, they are getting more fluent in Indonesian, so there's no problem in communication. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, interview, 7 June 2017)

The secretaries think that Indian expatriates are hard workers and also economical. In doing their tasks, they always search for related information to the bottom line and meticulously pay attention to small details. Besides, Indian expatriates are smart and have strong memories.

> I see him as a smart person, so good in the calculation; he used to be in production so that he is really familiar with the production. He is aware of trivial things; he even realizes it when a spool of thread drops, he is able to catch such things. He knows that one lamp in the receptionist area doesn't work, he is aware of it when the people in the receptionist's do not even know about it. He is able to mingle with the others but is also smart in controlling his environment. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

When a staff can do his/her job better, the leader knows about it and appreciates it.

All jobs should be done well, and the leader recognizes certain people who have special skills or performance. (Widiya Astuti, Office Management, FGD, 11 May 2017)

> He is smart… he is so smart… errr... and sometimes I become so ashamed, I should be the one who can overcome the problems, but he acts as my reminder. He is so excellent at handling everything, he also has an extraordinary memory. Sometimes, he can still remember certain PO from the 2000s. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, interview, 7 June 2017)

Indian expatriates place themselves appropriately when communicating with others. They have different ways of communicating with the staffs and the production workers.

> He truly likes to know people; person X should be given this kind of attitude, person Y should be treated like this, towards the production employees he is more assertive, that's how to treat production employees. Thus, he is able to put himself into the appropriate position when communicating with other parties. (Widiya Astuti, Office Management, FGD, 11 May 2017)

In reality, without strict instruction, those production workers tend not to pay attention. Therefore, the expatriate leaders also expect the secretaries to be strict in communicating something to production workers.

Companies in Indonesia owned by Indian tend to have Indian leaders at all managerial levels, except Human Resource (HR) Manager. A local HR manager usually has a better understanding of local laws related to employment. This is important because most staffs and workers from middle to the low level are Indonesian.

Indonesian National Days are one of the cultural differences noticed by Indian

131

expatriates. They know the common big days such as *Lebaran*, Christmas, or New Year.

> Well...this is probably because of the differences between Indonesia and India. For example the national holidays, such as *Kesaktian Pancasila* Day yesterday, we have to explain why we have a holiday ... what national holiday is that? Such and such. so we have to be able to explain because there is no such celebration in India. There are more holidays in Indonesia than in India, so he often asks, what's the purpose of this holiday? (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, FGD, 7 June 2017)

When a problem arises, Indian expatriate leaders prefer to find out what is going on directly. When certain rumors spread, they will check from the bottom line first.

> Hmmmm...he often discusses with his subordinates. When the leader hears some new rumor, he will try to get some information from the subordinates. For example when there's a complaint from a buyer about the linings of certain dresses which is a little bit too big, then he will try to get some information from the subordinates why such thing happened. By doing so, the vice president is trying to mingle with the subordinates. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

> My boss usually gives me some tasks on a daily basis, so I have a kind of agenda book for my daily tasks. Well, every time the boss comes, I'll sit in front of him, and he will review yesterday's tasks. Whenever some tasks are not done yet, then they will be reviewed the next day. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, FGD, 7 June 2017)

Having a close relationship with those from lower levels, they remain respected very much by all employees.

Indian expatriate leaders prefer to have well-performed employees since they are hard workers. When an employee can perform better, they will appreciate it. They will notice those with special skills or performance.

However, they will appreciate a team's success as the whole team's performance. One of their principles is "*one team will succeed because of the members' support.*"

> The leader sees success as the result of the whole team's efforts. When there's a success in doing a project by a team, then it's the whole team's success. His principle is that teamwork can only be successful because of the support from other team members. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

Indian expatriate leaders are very careful in giving their opinions or reprimanding the secretaries. So, they do not directly show their anger to the secretaries. Instead, they tend to use winged words.

> The leader tends to be more cautious in revealing something. For example, "You shouldn't have shared this kind of information, I didn't directly correct your email so that the others will not consider you as doing something wrong," However, he also likes to discreetly quip so that he is more implicit in reprimanding. (Widiya Astuti, Office Management, FGD, 11 May 2017)

Indian expatriate leaders often ask the secretaries about problems at work, especially in their relationship with colleagues and subordinates. Indian expatriate leaders also expect the secretaries to help her subordinates or new staff who have difficulties in doing their tasks.

> He once advised me "Please be patient with the juniors" because he sometimes asks "how about the newcomer?" I answered him, yes sir, he is like this, and this, then he said "Don't be frustrated and be patient, okay?" I am never asked to be stern or fierce. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

However, in dealing with the production workers, the secretaries are supposed to be strict.

Indian expatriate leaders try to have a good relationship with their staff. They like to know other people and discuss with their subordinates so that they can understand the characters of their employees. In this case, they do not care about differences in social status. Indian expatriate leaders try not to create a gap with lower level workers. Some of them even share their problems in looking for a school for their kids or the difficulties they face because of their kid's sickness.

> That's right, whenever my boss enters the room he always greets us one by one. Once he walks into the room, he will say good morning to everyone in here. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, FGD, 7 June 2017)

> At work, the leader sees the job as an important thing. However, he considers it necessary to have harmony among and between one colleague and the others. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

In delegating jobs, Indian expatriate leaders tend to give them all at once. The secretaries are supposed to decide which task should be the top priority, usually the ones with urgent deadlines. Sometimes the secretaries should adjust her priority to the managers.

> The leader often delegates several tasks at the same time, or anytime he remembers about it. When suddenly he remembers about a certain task, he will directly assign it to me. The leader also doesn't directly inform the priority or which tasks should be done first. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

> Whenever he assigns some tasks, then all of them, a bunch of them, are given to me today, such as over-time report, over-haul report, maintenance cost, saving, etc... then I will write them all in my notes every day, and tomorrow he will ask me for the tasks he gave me yesterday. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, FGD, 7 June 2017)

Most companies have formal rules to regulate the employees. Surely most managerial leaders also prefer to have rules. However, Indian expatriate leaders are usually more flexible towards the existing regulations especially if the employee explains the reasons directly to the manager.

> As for the SOP, for sure he prefers the written ones so that everyone can read it. For example, when there's a new employee, then he/she can read it. When an employee needs to have a day off or go home earlier, he/she'd better inform it directly to the leader. By knowing the reason directly from that employee, he usually will give his permission. (Widiya Astuti, Office Management, FGD, 11 May 2017)

However, those Indian expatriate leaders are very discipline for every aspect of production.

> However, for example, the production workers, they have to pay attention to the existing rules. Such as, production workers are not allowed to bring some food to the production area, well then... the leader won't listen to any excuses, if you break the rule then you must get the consequences. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, FGD, 7 June 2017)

In making decisions, Indian expatriate leaders do not refer to the traditions in their home country. They follow current development in technology, such as using video conference, Skype, and IMO in communicating with other parties. They are also willing to get some feedbacks related to the newest development. So, updating production machines or upgrading the old computers are usually agreed. As for companies in the textile industry, they try to visit related exhibitions actively.

> Yes, he refers to the existing current technology, such as the ones related to maintenance

aspects that he knows very well, but when there are newer developments in machinery, he is willing to follow it, he's not rigid. (Linda Suksmawati, Maintenance Manager Secretary, FGD, 7 June 2017)

The leader has been following the developments in technology, by using video conference, Skype, IMO. The leader is willing to get some feedbacks related to the current development. (Noviatri Handayani, Vice President Secretary, FGD, 11 May 2017)

DISCUSSION

Intercultural communication is inevitable for secretaries working in multicultural companies. Such companies have employees and staffs from various cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communication processes involve perception, interpretation, and evaluation of someone's behavior. All of those three aspects depend on a particular person's cultural background. Later on, it will also impact on the organization that they have been in charge of (Silintowe & Pramudita, 2016, p. 157).

This research is focusing on intercultural communication in business, which occurs between Indonesian secretaries and Indian expatriate leaders. Indian expatriates are known for having an international mindset and are very tough at work (Sudarmadi, 2011). It is also important to remember that certain values and attitudes enable Indians who live in extreme poverty to understand and accept their lot in life, even if it is not easy to bear (RLN East Midlands, 2004).

We are focusing on intercultural communication done by Indian expatriates from the secretaries' point of view. The analysis is done through *Trompenaars'*

Cultural Dimensions. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner have formulated seven dimensions of culture (Liliweri, 2016, p. 163) which became the basis for us to do the analysis.

Indian Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions

Here is the discussion on Indian Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions based on the previous researches:

1. Particularism

According to Overgaard (2010, p. 17) "India is a fairly particularistic oriented culture," and Lindholm (2013, p. 23) stated more or less the same thing, "India is considered as a strong particularistic society." When communicating with a culture that is relationship oriented, it is important to remember the importance of trust in a business situation (Overgaard, 2010, p. 18). This type of culture is found in less developed societies, where people tend to give a lot of value to emotional aspects and sometimes may look at each other for decision making (Lindholm, 2013, p. 25). They like to make a decision based on how the situation is, as they feel each situation may require a different perspective. Indonesian secretaries also found such a situation, in which their Indian expatriate leaders are quite flexible with the existing rules. For example, when a certain employee needs to go home earlier or take a leave for certain reasons, they may explain their reasons, and then they are given the permission. In this case, the Indian expatriate leaders are trying to create a good relationship with their employees, while trying to balance it with the existing rules.

2. Communitarianism

India is a communitarian country (Balan & Vreja, 2013, p. 99). This emphasizes the fact that India is a consensus-oriented culture that gives priority to cooperation even though they are not capable of keeping the agreements made (Overgaard, 2010, p. 21); strong obedience towards the seniors, trusting each other during a negotiation, and slow decision making since it has to be done by the highest level of leaders (Lindholm, 2013, p. 26). As seen by Indonesian secretaries, Indian expatriate leaders appreciate their staff who have good performance. However, those leaders still acknowledge the success of the whole team's success. One of them has the principle that "*teamwork will be successful with the support of its members.*" This is in accordance with the study of Boopathi (2014) which reveals that a team's interest is being focused more than each individual's and this can be seen both in family life and organizational relationship.

3. Neutral

People are open about happiness or sadness, problems, and joys, and tend to be surrounded by family or friends. They are warm and personal (Lindholm, 2013, p. 28). Through this research, it is known that Indian expatriate leaders are very cautious in expressing their opinion or in reprimanding the secretaries. However, in certain cases especially in relation to production staff, they expect the secretaries to be stricter. So, behavior, etiquette, and approach may need to be modified depending on whom you are working with (Shira, 2010, p. 6).

4. Diffusion

India has a relatively diffuse culture (Balan & Vreja, 2013, p. 100). When doing business in India, it is important to build a good relationship with the Indians. Take time to get to know them and become friends with them when negotiating something; private life and work are inseparable (Overgaard, 2010, p. 23). Business relationships require an element of trust which places friendships on a greater level than a business contract (Lindholm, 2013, p. 27). This research unveils that Indian expatriates leaders like to discuss and mingle with their employees, even if they are of much lower level in the organization. Without any hesitation, Indian expatriate leaders greet their employees every morning. On the other hands, they also openly talk about their kids who are sick or about to enter an international school. In other words, those leaders are trying to build a friendly relationship with their subordinates at work.

5. Achievement

Hindu cultures (including that of India) tend to value ascription because of the reliance or influence of the caste system. Professional titles, age, degrees, and caste level are indicators of status. Friendship and kinship are more important than expertise. If someone is from a higher caste or has a better job title, he should be treated differently than one from a lower caste with another job title (Overgaard, 2010, p. 28; Lindholm, 2013, p. 29). This dimension is different from what Indonesian secretaries' experience. Indian expatriate leaders pay great attention to their employees'

achievements, regardless of their gender, age, connection, or inherited status. It is very likely that those Indian expatriate leaders ignore caste levels because they are now outside their home country. They even try to build a harmonious relationship with all employees regardless of their social status. This is in line with the research done by Bharadwaj (2013, p. 83) that transactional culture support people to step out of their culture and try to understand others' culture to be able to communicate in business. It creates the corporate culture that is different from any national culture.

6. Synchronism

Indians structure time synchronically and usually do several things at a time, allowing many things to take place simultaneously (Overgaard, 2010, p. 32). Time commitments are desirable rather than absolute. Plans are easily changed, they value the satisfactory completion of interaction with others. Promptness and punctuality depend on the type of relationship (Lindholm, 2013, p. 29). This is also done by Indian expatriate leaders who tend to give a huge amount of tasks, and it is the secretaries' job to sort them out and set priorities based on deadlines.

7. External Control

India is more outer-directed culture than, for instance, USA and Norway (Overgaard, 2010, p. 29). They seem to be afraid of offending those who work with them under the same company. Indians coincide in an externalist society and accommodate behavior with the situation (Lindholm, 2013, p. 30). In this dimension,

Indian expatriate leaders put forward the harmony with their environment; in this case among colleagues. As leaders, they try to dig for further information when problems happen at work. They also expect their secretaries to help new staff when he/she has problems in adapting to their new job. Thus, there have been big efforts to adapt to their external condition and work in harmony with their environment in order to reach the goal. There has been greater attention on the good relationship among each other than merely completing the tasks at work (Boopathi, 2014).

Indonesian Trompenaars' Cultural Dimension

This part analyses the culture of Indonesian people since the object of this research is Indonesian multinational companies. Doiteau (2013) explains that based on Trompenaars' Cultural Dimension, Indonesian people have the culture of particularism, communitarianism, emotional, diffusion, ascription, synchronism, and external control in the business. However, another literature review shows that Indonesian people have a neutral culture, especially those of Javanese ethnic. Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that Indonesian people have the following Trompenaars' Cultural Dimension:

1. Particularism

In "*Cambridge Handbook of Culture, Organizations, and Work*", Nardon and Steers (2009, p. 31) state that Indonesian people have the culture of particularism. Indonesian people tend to rely on certain people's influence instead of objective and abstract rules and regulations, as the social

control. This does not mean that they do not respect laws and official procedures, but those are only followed if they are strictly applied. Thus, business rules in Indonesia are applied while considering certain situations.

2. Communitarianism

Togetherness is very crucial for Indonesian people so that they tend to care about other people's feelings and wellness. Most ethnic groups in Indonesia have strong groups of relatives based on patrilineal or bilateral system (Mangundjaya, 2013, p. 62). It is important for Indonesian people to be a part of a certain community.

3. Neutral-Emotional

Javanese try to avoid open conflicts or have enemies (Mangundjaya, 2013, p. 62). That is why Javanese people do not express their emotion openly. However according to Doiteau (2013) certain Indonesian people, for example, Batak ethnic, can convey their opinion openly without any courtesy or "polite words."

4. Diffusion

Family life and work life are often inseparable. The relationship among employees is just like that of a family. There is the feeling of obligation to attend ritual and traditional ceremonies, such as marriage, 7-month pregnancy, and the most important one is burial ceremony, even though it is held on workdays and during working hours. Such a fact may cause a dilemma because Indonesian people prefer communal activities and family networking is very important for their emotional well-being (Irawanto, 2009, p. 44).

5. Ascription

In business, Indonesian people appreciate and respect ascribed status (Nardon & Steers, 2009, p. 31). For example, employee recruitment process may include closeness, relative and whole big family status in the society, as the considerations.

6. Synchronism

Indonesian people have a synchronic culture, where they tend to do more than one task at a time, the appointment is only approximate, and interruption on a certain schedule is considered normal. Stopping the activities at work to welcome visitors coming to their office is something normal for Indonesian people (Parhani, 2016, p. 20).

7. External Control

Most Indonesian employees expect their leaders not only as their manager but also protector, mentor, "father," and should also be responsible for them and their whole big family as well. For example, reducing the employees' working hours during Ramadhan month (so that they can have extra time to prepare the food for iftar) is considered as wasting time and less productive. However, most leaders prefer to emphasize their moral obligation rather than pursuing their role as a manager. On the other hands, the employees will later return their gratitude by showing obedience, respect, and recognition (Irawanto, 2009, p. 46).

Based on the discussion above, similarities, as well as differences of cultural dimensions in the context of intercultural communication, are depicted in the following Table2.

Table 2 Similarities and Differences in Indian and Indonesian Cultural Dimensions

Trompenaars' Cultural Dimension	Indian	Indonesian
Universalism VS Particularism	Particularism	Particularism
Individualism VS Communitarianism	Communitarianism	Communitarianism
Neutral VS Emotional	Neutral	Neutral – Emotional
Specific VS Diffuse	Diffusion	Diffusion
Achievement VS Ascription	Achievement	Ascription
Sequential VS Synchronism	Synchronism	Synchronism
Internal Control VS External Control	External Control	External Control

Source: primary data

The above table shows that India and Indonesia have intercultural communication dimensions which are similar to each other. However, it does not necessarily mean that the two cultures have no differences at all. Furthermore, the slightest difference may lead to interference and problems if both parties do not make a great effort in understanding each other.

CONCLUSION

The research result and analysis lead to the conclusion that Indian has the communication type of particularism, communitarianism, diffusion, neutral, achievement, synchronism, and outer-directed, based on Trompenaars' cultural dimensions. While the Indonesian has the communication type of particularism, communitarianism, diffusion, neutral-emotional, ascription, synchronism, and outer-directed.

The cultural difference is "neutral" dimension for Indian and "neutral and affective" for Indonesian. Indian expatriate leaders tend to be cautious in expressing their emotion while conveying their opinions on something or reprimanding someone. Indonesian secretaries have the culture of neutral and emotional, as the influence of certain sub-cultures. Certain sub-cultures in Indonesia are more neutral, while some others are quite expressive in showing their emotions.

Another difference is the "achievement" dimension for Indian and "ascription" for Indonesian. Originally, India has culture that values ascription, which is closely related to the caste system in there. However, when Indian expatriate leaders are stepping out of their home country, they are willing to step out of their original scope of culture in order to do some business. Thus, the company culture will be more prominent than the Indian's native culture. Such a practice is called transactional culture (Bharadwaj, 2013).

Both parties engaged in business communication in this research, either as the hosts or the expatriates, are geographically located in the same region called South Asia. Even though both are from a similar cultural cluster, they are expected to pay great attention to any cultural differences. The slightest cultural differences may have the potential to create a noise or communication interference and later may reduce communication effectivity for both parties. It is suggested for both parties to do the transactional culture practice (Bharadwaj, 2013) that is the

willingness to step out of one's native culture to have a better understanding of the company culture.

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