

Intercultural Communication Strategy of International Student Services Staff at Higher Education in Indonesia

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Abstract. Higher education institutions strive to maintain their competitive advantage over other universities by the existence of international students. International students have a positive impact on the academic performance of tertiary institutions. However, they risk experiencing various problems without integration between students, lecturers, administrative staff and the education system. College staff need to have cross-cultural awareness & cross-cultural understanding for the development of their professional services. This study aims to recognize and scrutinize the strategy of intercultural communication carried out by staffs for International Student Services in providing services to international students at a tertiary institution. Intercultural communication strategies are utilized to overcome language and cultural barriers. This communication strategy is essential for administrative staff at the forefront of academic and non-academic services when interacting with international students. The results of this study identified five key components of an intercultural communication development strategy to improve international student services: attitude, knowledge, emotional connection, communication skills, and critical cultural awareness. The strategy should involve friendly behaviour, patience, clear explanations, emotional closeness, persuasive communication, and cultural sensitivity. The improvement of intercultural communicative competence must focus on the following three domains: affective, cognitive, and skills.

Keywords: Communication Strategy, International Students, Internationalization, Intercultural Communication Strategy

1. Introduction

Internationalization has changed the world of higher education [1]. Internationalization is a novel, wide and distinct phenomenon. This issue is seen as a strategic notion and agenda for a university [2]. The demand for university to internationalize their academic practices indicates the process of globalization and rapid transformation, which contributes to the transformation of the current education system.

Internationalizing higher education involves incorporating academic institutions and all their stakeholders, equally faculty, non-academic staff, and students, into the dynamic realm of

globalization that is rapidly changing [3]. Higher education internationalization enhances academic quality, raises income sources, and produces cross-culturally sensitive graduates and staff. [4]. Discussions about the internationalization of tertiary institutions are centered on formal studies, participating in international lectures in an indirect or direct manner, international cooperation, academic programs, researches that study the abilities and thoughts of international students, foreign language programs, and multi-cultural communication [5].

In higher education, internationalization refers to the integration of international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the functions of teaching, research, and service activities. Yang (2002) says, "Internationalization means the awareness and operation of interactions within and between cultures through its teaching, research and service functions, with the ultimate goal of achieving mutual understanding across cultural boundaries." This definition implies a vital relationship between international and intercultural. These factors are essential aspects of the overall institutional approach to internationalization.

There is no doubt that universities have connected internationalization and cultures. This statement strongly relates to Knight's (1994) definition, which broadly instills an international and intercultural aspect into all activities in higher education life. Another area of importance is the professional improvement of staff in the area of intercultural awareness. It is vital in this setting because there is no place in college where people do not interrelate with individuals from other cultures.

To be globally competitive, many universities open their doors to international students. Their existence is a measure of internationalization level in a university. In addition, there are many other academic indicators.

The QS World University Rankings has published the top universities' yearly rankings globally since 2003. QS serves as a rating agency, evaluating the performance of universities worldwide. The Indonesian government utilizes this ranking as an official performance indicator to assess higher education institutions. The ranking framework QS employs is highly consistent, relying on six indicators to effectively gauge a tertiary institution's performance. These indicators include Academic Reputation, Employer Reputation, Faculty/Student Ratio, Citations per faculty, International Faculty Ratio, and International Student Ratio. Among these indicators, the presence of international students is one of the factors considered in the QS World University Ranking, making up 5% of the overall assessment. [7].

Briguglio stated that it is a 'weak' opinion if internationalization is only seen as a process of marketing and recruiting international students. Because apart from these two factors, there is also a need for unity on curriculum internationalization, international partnerships, transnational programs and other similar programs. Internationalization should be understood as an institutionalized "culture" in which all services, programs, research and teaching are united in all functions of the tertiary institution. The international curriculum is responsible for taking care of both students and faculty member. These activities are equally essential to provide learning process of local and international students, lecturers who teach students, and staff who provide academic and non-academic services to students about how to function in a global world. [8].

Rizvi & Walsh highlighted the weightiness of intercultural communication as a vital gauge of the prosperity of a higher education internationalization strategy. One possible way to determine

how universities conceptualize international curriculum ideas is to look at their proficient improvement programs to empower staff to delve diversity and intercultural relations [9]. Intercultural competence is a crucial objective of higher education internationalization because it demonstrates awareness and understanding of other people and culturally diverse situations and the presence of behaviours that promote productivity and effective communication between and across cultures [10].

Through internationalization, universities must embed international and intercultural perspectives into their structures and functions. Cross-cultural elements for staff include liaising with culturally diverse overseas institutional colleagues and students to share views and improve work environment encounters. For students, intercultural elements can enrich cross-cultural understanding for local and international students by empowering interaction.

Lixian Jin & Martin Cortazzi believe that all university (academic and administrative) staff and all local and international students must be aware of, appreciate, and expand their interaction practices with various cultural approaches and strategies to advance teaching and service. This intercultural awareness is an essential framework for improving the quality of the pedagogical aspects of internationalization in a university, encouraging college staff to continue to practice cross-cultural communication in intercultural life as global citizens so that students and staff have a global view through interactions inside and outside the classroom [11].

It cannot be denied that the main effect of the internationalization of higher education institutions is the increasing presence of international students. So the gap in this is the development of intercultural competency skills for all staff in providing academic and non-academic services to students. Universities need to prepare staff, both lecturers and administrative staff, for intercultural life on campus by increasing the awareness of these staff about different cultures in the teaching and learning climate.

International students bring a diverse dimension of global knowledge, social experience, and cultural and intellectual resources to benefit local students, faculty, administrative staff and local communities. Internationalization will raise the integration of international students and offer the potential for enhancing the international experience of domestic students and staff, both faculty and administrative staff, through the interaction of cultural diversity. As one of the main benefits of internationalization, which increases the international awareness of all students and improves the quality of teaching and learning, there is intercultural interaction in academic and non-academic activities in a university. This cultural aspect requires developing awareness and skills in intercultural communication (IC) for all stakeholders in higher education [11].

Universities in Indonesia implementing an internationalization policy have an Office of International Affairs with International Student Services as the vanguard of service to their international students. International students face many challenges when transitioning and adapting from their home countries to destination universities. International students often face five main problems: language difficulties, academic challenges, social and cultural differences, financial issues, and psychological stress [12]. Language is a significant challenge faced by international students. Weak language competence hinders students from understanding lecturers, and this might become an obstacle to social communication [13]. Aside from the language barrier, international students struggle with adapting to social rules, food habits,

hobbies, dress styles, and relations with people of different genders. These adjustments can be particularly challenging for them [14].

International Student Services helps international students overcome academic, cultural, immigration, legal and social challenges. International Student Services has a crucial impact on the overall success of international students. International Student Services are proven to improve adjustment skills, health and safety, cultural knowledge, and student satisfaction [15].

The linguistic and cultural differences of the international students create problems for higher education institutions in providing academic and non-academic services. To build internationalization capabilities, universities must have strong, culturally aware, culturally literate, and culturally sensitive staff [16]. It is important to have practical skills in communicating with individuals from different cultures because challenges in communication often arise from differences in language and culture. These differences can affect how we perceive and interpret things, and also lead to a lack of shared experiences and understanding. [17].

Vaccarino [16], states that being culturally competent is crucial for working effectively with culturally diverse people. Intercultural communication is a process of lifelong learning in a changing world in which individuals must continually negotiate their identities, identify solutions to new cultural problems, and interact and adapt to the complex and diverse changes and challenges of a multicultural world. Therefore, equipping university faculty member with cultural skills is very important and much needed in the current era.

Intercultural communication strategies are utilized to overcome language and cultural barriers. This strategy is crucial for administrative staff at the forefront of academic and non-academic services to interact with international students. This study explores the strategy of intercultural communication performed by International Student Services staff in providing services for international students at several universities in Indonesia. Hopefully, this research can be used to develop communication strategies to reduce conflict and miscommunication due to cultural differences in tertiary institutions due to the internationalization of university.

This study aims to recognize and analyze the strategy of intercultural communication utilized by staff for International Student Services in providing services to international students at a tertiary institution. Intercultural communication strategies are utilized to overcome language and cultural barriers. This communication strategy is essential for administrative staff at the forefront of academic and non-academic services when interacting with international students.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Intercultural Communication

Communication and culture are two diverse factors that cannot be isolated. These factors are based on different steps and strategies of human interaction inside certain social bunches [18]. Intercultural communication happens in conditions that demonstrate cultural differences, such as language, habits, values, and customs. Edward. T. Hall (1914-2009) is broadly considered the pioneer of intercultural communication. Edward. T. Hall, the American

anthropologist and cultural researcher that first coined the term intercultural communication in 1959 in his book *The Silent Language*. Hall's ideas of culture were progressive and completely transformed our understanding about culture itself [19]. While culture was once acknowledged to be a single pre-existing substance that impacted the way individuals lived, Hall identified that culture and human interactions were intertwined and reliant on each other. Hall recognized that humans impact culture and that each individual can belong to many cultures that often overlap. Despite this made discussions on culture unbelievably more complex, his discourse provided a more practical view of culture.

2.2 Intercultural Communication Strategy

The communication strategy is a determinant of the success or failure of an effective interaction, which has the following functions: (1) systematically disseminating informative, persuasive and instructive messages to obtain optimal results, and (2) bridging the "cultural gap" that destroys the value of the moment unchecked. It also combines communication planning and management to achieve interaction goals. Besides functioning as a directed interaction, the strategy also shows the tactical pattern of a communication process [20]. Moreover, the goals of Intercultural Communication are as follows: (1) understand cultural diversity that influence communication practices, (2) recognized interaction challenges, (3) overcome problems caused by cultural diversity, (4) raise verbal communication and nonverbal skills, and (5) empower effective communication [21].

Giles made observations of the following processes in communication accommodation strategies [22]:

1. **Convergence:** This is the initial step in Giles's communication theory, that is "a strategy by which individuals adapt to the behaviour of interactions with one another". It allows people to adjust speech rates, pauses, smiles, eye likes, and other verbal and nonverbal skills. When people meet, their perceptions are often based on the words or behaviour of other people. The process also relies on attraction, where individuals come together in conversation when the communicators are attracted to one another.
2. **Divergence:** Based on accommodation, Giles states that it is a strategy in which speakers often accentuate verbal and nonverbal differences among communicators. Unlike convergence, there is no attempt by communicators to show similarity. It is also a strategic process for people of different cultures to maintain their social identity. This shows that most communicators use this process based on different strengths or roles in the conversation. According to Cangara[23], a communication strategy is the finest combination of all interactive elements, such as communicators, messages, channels (media), recipients, and designed impacts (effects), to accomplish excellent communication objectives. Intercultural communication strategies are used to overcome language and cultural barriers [24].

2.3 Intercultural Communication Competence

Intercultural Communication Competence, now called ICC, has been described and understood in diverse ways. ICC can be broken down into the speaker's skills and attitudes concerning cross-cultural communication [25]. Byram recognized ICC as a term that includes

key components, including linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence, enabling individuals to interact with others from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds [26]. Similarly, Chen and Starosta [27] views ICC as the abilities and competencies of speakers, namely intercultural sensitivity (affective processes), intercultural awareness (cognitive processes), and intercultural dexterity (behavioural processes), which are essential for effective communication, effectively and appropriately in a culturally diverse society.

In summary, ICC is speakers' communication skills and attitudes towards other people from different linguistic and cultural background. The ICC Model Byram [26] is more suitable for this study. Based on Byram's ICC model, five essential competencies for developing intercultural communicative competence are (1) Attitudes, (2) Knowledge, (3) Skills of interpreting and relating, (4) Skills of discovery and interaction (5) Critical cultural awareness.

3. Methods

The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach following what was stated by Creswell (2018), that a qualitative approach is adopted when the research aims to investigate phenomena. Qualitative research sights to comprehend the interpretation of people's behaviour based on the point of view of the people themselves [29]. This research is categorized as phenomenological research, which describes an experience in an in-depth and reflective manner [30]. In the context of this research, the phenomenon being observed is the strategy of intercultural communication performed by staff in higher education institution in providing services for their international students. In this approach, the researcher produces a complex picture, analyzes words and utterances, describe details from the perspective of the informants', and carries out studies in natural ways. This research is appropriate if using a descriptive method, which follows the understanding of the descriptive method according to Nawawi (2013) which defines it as a problem-solving procedure that is investigated by describing or describing the condition of the subject or object of research (a person, institution, and community) This is based on facts that appear or as they are.

Data in this research are collected from primary sources in the field and secondary sources [32]. Data are collected by means of literature review, documentation, and interviews. Data collected by literature review are taken from scientific journals, books and the internet [33]. Interview techniques using in-depth interviews were carried out in depth. Interviews were conducted with 12 staffs for International Student Service from 5 universities in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the informants were selected through a purposive sampling where researchers chose suitable informants who understand about the conditions in providing services for international student.

Qualitative data is collected to enhance as well as highlight the findings from the previously obtained data. Researchers have conducted interviews and collected documentation to analyze the data in this study. The data were studied based on Miles and Huberman's interactive model, of which the stages involved are data reduction, presentation, and the conclusion of the study. [34].

4. Findings and Discussion

Based on interviews conducted with 12 (twelve) informants from 5 (five) universities in Indonesia. The author conducted interviews with international student service officers at each university. The informant profiles are as follows:

Table 1. Research Informants.

No	Code	University	Duties/Positions	Work Experience (years)
1.	P1	UNS	KNB Scholarship Manager	>10
2.	P2	UNS	International Student Admission	5
3.	P3	UNS	International Cooperation Manager	8
4.	P4	UNS	Immigration Administration	3
5.	P5	UNS	International Student Services	2
6.	P6	UNS	International Student Services	2
7.	P7	UNDIP	Student Mobility Coordinator	11
8.	P8	UNDIP	Stay Permit Specialist	3
9.	P9	UNAIR	International Program Development	4
10.	P10	UNAIR	International Program Development	3
11.	P11	UNNES	International Cooperation Manager	6
12.	P12	UMS	Resident Permit Administration	7

In this study, the authors used the Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) model [26] in the data collection process to answer research questions related to the strategies of cultural communication performed by International Student Service staff when providing services to

international students. Byram tries to explain the factors that can be used to develop intercultural communication where problems occur because of the many and vast cultural differences. Following what was expressed by Lustig and Koester [35] the point of cultural differences comes from interpersonal communication, which creates obstacles in interpersonal relations between people from different cultural backgrounds. Byram's ICC model states that five competencies are essential for developing intercultural communicative competence. The five competencies used for intercultural communication strategies in service to international students are as follows:

4.1 Intercultural Attitudes

The first competency is the attitude, consisting of curiosity, openness, and readiness to change perception about other customs and beliefs. Deardorff [36] makes the most basic and essential distinction. The ICC degree starts with attitude requirements, including respect, openness, curiosity and discovery. Meanwhile, Borghetti [37] emphasizes effective processes in developing cultural communication, such as empathy, flexibility, and adaptability.

The process of university services for international students is carried out online using the website, and some of them can also be done directly by coming to the university, making it easier for service officers and international students. Cultural differences that exist in each country result in misunderstandings or differences in interpretation. Communication that occurs in it cannot run smoothly. Intercultural communication carried out by international students has several attitudes in dealing with it.

"I try to be more assertive when communicating with students from other countries so that they do not go around like that, and for those from Europe, for example, I have to be more careful in matters such as international issues such as gender, and most of them are more sensitive to these issues", P2.

"Like those from Africa, for example, they are a bit fierce, but we have to be gentle because they come to our place, but from our migration regulations, we are rather strict so that we can be aware of maintaining the good name of UNDIP", P8.

In general, to provide university services to international students by using a website or application that makes it easier for staff and students to communicate. International student service staff try to understand the culture and provide attitudes according to the culture of each international student. However, when international students communicate with study programs, they need help understanding the wishes of international students. The strategy is to recognize the cultural background by showing friendly behavior so that international students feel comfortable with what the service staff conveys. International student services staff exercise their patience by tolerating all cultures and attitudes of international students. This strategy is the first attempt to understand their attitudes quickly and precisely. This level of self-awareness impacts attitudes because the object of cognition is how individuals reason, act, and recognize their boundaries [37]. This self-awareness can help build intercultural knowledge and skills which are important for effective and appropriate communication with people from different backgrounds. Barriers faced by some international students will affect intercultural knowledge, so service staff at the university use various ways to improve communication.

4.2 Intercultural Knowledge

The second competency is intercultural knowledge, namely information about one's social communities, products, and customs. Byram separates knowledge into two types, namely, conscious and unconscious. The first category is one that is present to some degree and can be more or less refined, and the second is knowledge about ideas and processes in interaction. Intercultural communication is only sometimes successful and often turns into stressful events [35]. Awareness of the culture being faced will overcome differences in perceptions and misinformation.

"Besides, I have to understand their culture; I have to empty my image of that country so that there is no expectation that all countries are the same, so that it does not become stereotyping", P6.

Understanding cultural knowledge is very important so as not to cause judgments about stereotypes about the country. The emergence of stereotyped knowledge of a country may produce bias and create misunderstandings when communicating.

"The use of communication in calling older people in Indonesian culture uses father or mas, but international students use you and me. Apart from that, some international students like to communicate using social media, WhatsApp or messenger; if it is urgent, they are reluctant to come to campus, this makes it less pleasing to academic staff", P12.

Unknowingly international students give a terrible impression, where cultural differences in Indonesia, known for their excellent manners in speech and behaviour, lead to misunderstandings in receiving information. International students who cannot use good and polite language will look like angry people, so university staff or lecturers are reluctant to respond to what they want. The strategy adopted by international student service staff is to explain slowly to international students to understand what students want following applicable regulations. Convey information to the point to international students so that communication is easier to understand.

Communication is carried out persuasively to influence international students in explaining various information in the campus environment and student residences. Byram [26] dan Borghetti [37] suggest that this knowledge should not be limited to cultural facts. However, it must also include knowledge of the cultural biases one brings to exchanges strongly influenced by one's experience and environment. Although the cultural biases of international students still need to be better understood, university staff and international students must continue to adapt.

"There are students who can know and understand, such as only confirming via WA text messages, or being able to meet in person to confirm, not demanding but just want to make sure that the steps are correct", P10.

"Some international students understand RT/RW. So they know that living in the neighbourhood, they cannot act selfish because they are being watched", P11.

Even though many international students already know Indonesia's culture and social norms regarding how they live and behave, International Student Service staff must still try to explain the social environment clearly.

4.3 Interpreting & Relating Skills

The third skill is interpreting & connecting skills. Interpreting and connecting skills are the ability to interpret information in different cultures and relate it to one's culture. The skills included are needed to acquire and process knowledge about other cultures and oneself [36]. International students cultivate their skills through information provided by university service staff or information from other sources—efforts made by the university to direct the academic needs of students during the learning process.

"We are trying to inform them in one forum for the orientation period, and the goal is that apart from being able to know their roles, they can also engage with their friends", P10.

"Academics establish a relationship by asking one by one problem related to college problems, at the end of the semester asking about college grades, so if there is a problem with the university or migration you have to ask", P11.

Establishing an emotional relationship with international students is expected to build closeness to facilitate communication and mutual understanding. However, if emotional closeness becomes a boomerang for academic service officers, the pattern of communication that is carried out can be emphasized. University service officers must explain in detail and be open to international students, from the start of the registration process, pick-up, place of residence, and lecture problems to the time of obtaining a certificate. University service officers not only accompany but answer all questions asked by international students openly because cultural differences are extreme if the interaction relationship is disrupted, and problems will result in a wrong perception of both the university and the students.

4.4 Discovery and interaction skills

The fourth skill is the skill of finding and interacting. This skill is the ability to obtain new knowledge from different cultures and employ that knowledge, attitudes, and skills in communication and interaction. With the number of problems that occur due to cultural differences, all service staff must be able to handle the problems that occur. These skills involve the ability to adapt and interact with other cultures. This stage is the phase of acceptance and rejection [26]. Students must be aware of all the information, rules and regulations that must be followed to avoid conflict and confusion. However, the challenges that often occur come from immigration services, starting from the financial process to arranging visas, where the problem-solving process cannot be carried out only by universities.

"Some international students often still argue that if they are told the consequences and consequences, they sometimes still do not believe it", P9.

"When they violate the rules, we will find out what they did wrong, and we will summon them to the office unofficially to meet with the head of KUI", P8.

Efforts were made to solve problems amicably where university service staff knew the reasons students committed violations and gave warnings that violations committed by these students could hinder their learning process. Persuasive or instructive communication strategies through verbal and nonverbal communication to influence international students to comply with established rules and interpersonal communication between university service officers and international students.

"Incidentally, at that time, I invited my fellow students to play badminton together, so there was a closeness. The distance previously wide between me, and international students has become closer. Communicating becomes easier", P5.

International student service staff carries out the formation of closeness with students as an effort to establish emotional closeness to build relationships. This friendly attitude is aimed at making communication run smoothly. International students will feel comfortable with the staff's services so that the information conveyed to international students can be received and understood.

4.5 Critical Cultural Awareness

To improve intercultural communication so that it goes well, university service staff must understand the cultural characteristics that each country has from international students. Providing a buddy or companion during student study to make students feel comfortable is the right way to improve effective communication with international students.

"Those from Southeast Asia are fine; those from Africa and the East have a slightly different character for their students. Meanwhile, they are well prepared independently from Europe for what they need when living in Indonesia", P9.

"I take a different approach for each international student. If we have to ask international students to comply with Indonesian socio-cultural rules and norms, I will use a firmer sentence. Sometimes I will use a slightly higher pitch. Meanwhile, with written language, I will use firm and formal sentences. By using punctuation marks that signify firmness! With cooperative international students, usually, the language will be smoother and more friendly", P4.

Understanding the characteristics of each country in communicating is a fundamental way to improve services. The communication process carried out to international students uses a variety of ways. Even with the use of tone with students with harsh characteristics, university service staff behave the same way. However, if students can understand and are friendly, the staff will be friendly. Not a few of the several international students started learning to use Javanese or speaking politely to older people. To foster cultural awareness, international students and university service staff need to adapt to cultural diversity. The strategy is undertaken to create critical cultural awareness by understanding the various cultural characteristics of each country so that the communication process will run well and be more easily understood.

Lastly, the fifth component is critical cultural awareness, referring to the the capacity to assess critically based on explicit criteria of perspectives, practices, and products in an individual's culture and that of others. [26]. In summary, Byram's ICC model is the most

comprehensive framework for evaluating ICC in various contexts, particularly in this research study.

Byram's model states that the success of an interaction can not only be assessed from the effective exchange of information and in terms of the maintenance and formation of human relations, which depend on attitude factors. An additional crucial element that individuals contribute to intercultural communication is their knowledge. Pursuant to Byram [26], knowledge is divided into two categories: knowledge about the social and cultural groups in their own country and similar knowledge about the other country. The second is knowledge about the interaction process at the individual and societal levels. That intercultural communicative competence (Intercultural Communicative Competence) has an affective domain (attitude), cognitive domain (knowledge) and skills domain.

Challenges in intercultural communication are because people have different perceptions and attitudes towards other people's languages and cultures, especially in linguistically and culturally diverse contexts [38]. International student services staff at a university must be culturally sensitive to communicate with international students because effective communication depends on multiple interpretations and understandings. Adequate intercultural communication competence is essential to overcome communication challenges because challenges between people with diverse language and cultural backgrounds usually stem from sociolinguistic and cultural differences that affect perception, interpretation, lack of shared experience and frames of reference [17].

Vivatananukul [39] categorizes three types of communicative barriers: cognitive, affective, and behavioural. Cognitive barriers are caused in communicative situations where the speaker does not understand the other person's language and is not aware of the appropriate language to use in terms of the intrinsic meaning of words and signs. Speakers usually need help with intercultural communicative problems when they translate from one language to another without changing the original meaning and by misusing language genres, such as uttering slang words in formal situations or speaking formally to close friends. Some people only sometimes recognize the complexities and intricacies of intercultural communication, leading to misinterpretation or translation failures. Second, affective barriers for instance negative attitudes, bias, prejudice, and stereotypes mostly cause perception freezing for speakers whose opinions, thoughts, and behaviours are problematic because they judge others based on race, gender, religion, physique, or skin. The colour at the start of communication can be misleading, inappropriate and discriminatory. Third, behavioural barriers stem from a lack of recognition of others' cultural backgrounds and their non-verbal cues, such as gestures, smiles, gestures, social distancing, and practices, which can limit and hinder effective communication. To acculturate oneself to a new cultural environment requires mutual understanding, a flexible mindset, and adaptability on the other person's part, especially at their first meeting.

Speakers' concern and prejudice of similarities rather than differences can worsen the gap of communication between cultures, leading to negative assumptions of each other, and resulting in ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is resulted from the negative perception of other cultures' aspects by one's cultural bases [40]. Stereotypes and prejudice also challenge intercultural communication because people judge someone based on shared values, beliefs, and images [40]. In conclusion, challenges in intercultural communication are supported by a mix of verbal and nonverbal cues.

To achieve effective intercultural communication, it is important that communicators possess adequate comprehension about their internal features including cognitive intelligence to process information, analyze the context of the communication, and manage knowledge wisely.

Besides, emotional intelligence is required for successful intercultural communication because the ability to manage one's own emotion and empathy for others will affect the effectiveness of the communication. When communicators are able to express their emotion according to the different contexts and values, their communication with people from different backgrounds will be more meaningful and balanced.

In addition, attitude plays an important role for the success of intercultural communication. The competence to know social norms, ethics, and communication codes in various cultural backgrounds will also help the communicators to avoid unwanted issues and misunderstanding.

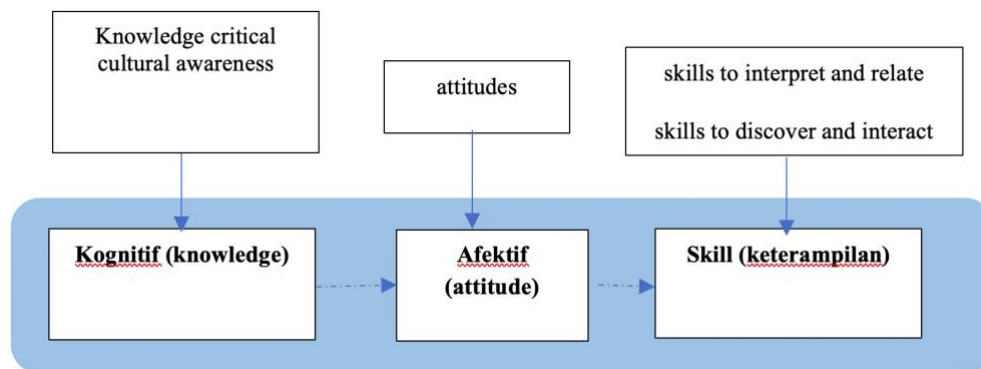


Fig. 1. Theoretical framework Intercultural Communication Strategy

Challenges in intercultural communication cannot be ignored, and therefore, awareness of internal features such as cognitive and emotional intelligence, and behavioral skills becomes highly relevant in formulating effective strategies. By understanding how these elements correlate and influence each other, communicators can create an environment that is inclusive and respectful of cultural diversity, and better strengthen intercultural relationships and collaboration [41].

5. Conclusion

Based on the research results, the conclusions that can be drawn from this study are that there are five components of an intercultural communication development strategy in improving international student services; the first is the attitude to recognize the cultural background by showing friendly behaviour so that they will feel comfortable with what the officers convey and practice patience by being tolerant with all cultures and attitudes of international students. Second, knowledge or knowledge that is carried out by university staff by explaining slowly to understand what they want following applicable regulations and to the point to students who have complex characteristics to understand. Third, establish an emotional relationship with international students to establish closeness so that they can solve existing problems. Fourth, the skills to find and interact with persuasive or instructive communication through verbal and nonverbal communication to influence international students to comply with established regulations and interpersonal communication between university service officers and international students. Fifth, critical cultural awareness creates an understanding of the characteristics of each country in communication, such as raising or lowering intonation and tone, so that the communication process will run well and be understood. Intercultural communication strategy has affective domains, cognitive domains, and skills domains.

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