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Istimrâriyyatuhumâ fî Afganistân**

Ghulam Mustafa Nukhba, Habiburrahman Rizapoor

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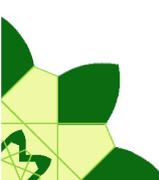


Table of Contents

Editorial Team

Table of Contents

Discrimination among Ethnic Minorities Groups in Singapore(77)

Imam Subchi, Siti Amsariah, Ahmad Bachmid

Effects of Motivation On Staff Performance and Job Satisfaction In The University of Ilorin Library.....(91)

T. J. Babatunde, O. Issa, U. A. Saliu, G. O. Babafemi, J. W. Abdulraheem, F. O. Otonekwu

Orcs Lives Matter: Representation of African Americans in Bright Film(105)

Shafira Ayuningtyas, Pita Merdeka

Reflective Versus Normative Thinking: Habitus Study on American and Indonesian Graduation Speech(119)

Aris Munandar

The Dynamics of Meranao Political Participation in Southern Philippines: An Analysis Using Milbrath's Hierarchy of Political Involvement.....(133)

Jamel R. Cayamodin

Awâmil Numuww al-Usuliyah wa at-Tatarruf wa Istimrâriyyatuhumâ fî Afganistân.....(151)

Ghulam Mustafa Nukhba, Habiburrahman Rizapoor

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Reflective Versus Normative Thinking: Habitus Study on American and Indonesian Graduation Speech

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Abstract

Graduation and the future are closely related. Graduation is the end of education and the beginning of the future. The ways to perceive these two things might vary due to the influence of cultural backgrounds. This study compares Indonesian and American graduates' perceptions about graduation and the future by looking at the verbal expressions used in their graduation speeches. Ten speeches by Indonesian graduates and ten speeches by American graduates were selected as data sources. The verbal expression data analysis combines linguistic theory (metaphor) and Bourdieu's social theory of Cultural Capital and Habitus. The results show that Indonesian and American graduates share nearly the same perceptions about graduation and the future; however, they have different expressions due to different cultural capital and habitus. American graduates express their perceptions reflectively, while Indonesian graduates do it normatively. It is concluded that American graduates' speeches reflect society's intellectuality expectations while Indonesian graduates' speeches reflect expectations for mannership.

Keywords: *graduation speech, American and Indonesian graduate, reflective thinking, normative thinking, Bourdieu' habitus*

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Introduction

Social experiences shape people's values which, in turn, affect attitudes and behaviors. People with higher levels of individualism tend to be more rational in their decision processing. In comparison, those with higher levels of collectivism tend to be more dependent and less likely to betray the interests of members of more central ingroups in favor of less central ingroups (LeFebvre and Franke, 2013). It is also observable in people's behavior toward free speech: that individualist cultures value individual self-expression and self-determination, and collectivist cultures value group harmony and conformity (Alvares & Kimmelmeier, 2018).

Indonesian society as part of a collectivist culture tends to ritualize formal speech, resulting in a monotonous pattern. Conforming to the ritualized formal speech pattern,

they generally pay more significant attention to the delivery (manner) than to the message significance (matter). On the contrary, American society as part of an individualistic culture emphasizes individual performance by giving more room for individuality and encouraging exploration of new ideas. Originality is valued more than imitation. As a result, the speech provides a stronger emphasis on the matter than on manner.

In a graduation ceremony, a graduation speech has its primary purpose of expressing happiness on completing the study. In general, the speaker acknowledges various parties' contributions to his/her achievements. Since graduation is the beginning of the next stage of life, a new life outside the campus - the working world, the speaker will also talk about the future. This article investigates how the graduation speeches in In Indonesia and America express graduation and the future regarding the cultural differences in the two countries. It focuses on the choice of linguistic expressions that reflect American and Indonesian graduates' perceptions about success (graduation) and the future to explain habitus influence on these perceptions further.

Habitus, according to Bourdieu (1998, p. 8), is “generative principles of distinct and distinctive practices (what [one] eats, how she eats) ... But habitus is also classificatory schemes, principles of classification, principles of vision and division, different tastes. They make distinctions between what is good and what is bad” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 8). Looking at the context of a graduation speech, we can see that shared specific principles govern speech content and delivery in a speech community. Therefore, it is possible to determine the custom and peculiarity related to the speech content and delivery. For example, suppose religion in a society is considered part of the public domain; a speaker will feel comfortable (even consider it necessary) to convey statements full of religious nuances (piety) in their speech. On the other hand, if a speaker deems religion part of the private domain, he will consider not conveying a statement with religious nuances. Thus, habitus is parallel with communicative competence (cf. Wardhaugh, 2014 “communicative competence”; Holmes, 2012 “sociolinguistic competence”).

An American graduation ceremony generally has at least three types of speech: president's address by university leaders, commencement speech by well-known figures, and valedictorian speech by graduate representative. Research topics related to the speech at the graduation ceremony have attracted researchers' attention from linguistics and communication science. Most of them center around the commencement speech, for instance, about the use of metaphorical expression (Ardhianto, 2018), about the values and the messages contained (Partch & Kinnier, 2011), and about the type of speech acts performed (Darpito, 2016). Ardianto (2018) finds that the speaker of commencement speech creates contextual meanings of the chosen metaphorical expressions. Partch and Kinnier (2011) identify the most frequent messages in descending order: Help Others, Do the Right Thing, Expand Your Horizons, Be True to Yourself, Never Give Up, Appreciate Diversity, Cherish Special Others, and Seek Balance. Darpito (2016) reveals four speech acts frequently performed in the commencement speech: representative, expressive, directive, and commissive. The linguistic phenomenon associated with Cultural Capital and Habitus (Bourdieu) has also attracted sociolinguistic researchers' attention. According to Salö (2018), “Bourdieu's thinking offers interesting inroads for theoretically solid investigations of language in social life “ (p. 524). He agrees with the critics who consider that sociolinguistics is “not able to relate the social with the linguistic” (p. 523), so it is necessary to consider the usefulness of Bourdieu's thought in linguistic research. Zorčić (2019) which I supplement when necessary with established concepts from sociolinguistics and social psychology. Bilingual schools are one of the last public spaces in the region where the use of Slovene is said to prevail, but even here it seems that Slovene is not the first choice of most pupils. We can conclude from

what the young people say about their language practices that the decisive elements for the formation of an individual's (language applies Bourdieu's *Theory of Practice* in examining the relationship between linguistic habitus, different capital, and the identity of bilingual youth in Corinthian society in Austria. This research combines the theory of language about metaphors and the social theory of Bourdieu about Culture Capital and Habitus.

This article reports research on different types of speech in the graduation ceremony, which is valedictorian speech. The research applies Bourdieu's Cultural Capital and Habitus to explain better the differences in linguistic expression choice that reflect Indonesian and American graduates' perception on graduation and the future.

The cultural environment shapes perceptions. In communication events, a speaker reflects his/her perception through the language used in verbal expressions that reflect personal views/beliefs on something. He/she may choose verbal expressions to express something through language explicitly or metaphorically. Metaphorical expressions (metaphor) in a communication event depend on the communication context (Kovecses, 2011, p. 26). Among the communication contexts are individual experiences that include the speaker's concerns, personal history, the nature and type of discourse to produce. Regarding the different cultures, there are very likely differences in metaphorical expressions about the same thing in American graduates' and Indonesian graduates' speeches.

Bourdieu claims that the cultural environment that influences one's views is "cultural capital." In his definition, cultural capital is a series of symbolic elements, including skills, tastes, ways of managing the body, clothing, manners, ownership of goods, and abilities. The embodiment of cultural capital into habits, skills, and attitudes ingrained in a person is called habitus (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 8).

Method

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data contained the success and future statements obtained from graduate representatives' speeches in American and Indonesian universities. There are twenty speeches, consisting of ten speeches of American graduates and ten speeches of Indonesian graduates. The data sources were selected purposively from speeches that could be accessed from the internet, considering the variety of universities in each country. The data were collected by tagging the statements about success (graduation) and the future. Subsequently, the data were grouped based on the topic's similarity and coded to help track their source. American graduates' speeches were coded with the letter S (Speech) and a serial number (from 1 to 10), and the university's name. For example, Speeches by graduates from Princeton University were coded: [S-4 Princeton]. Meanwhile, Indonesian graduates' Speeches were coded with the letter P (*Pidato*) followed by a serial number (from 1 to 10) and the university's name. For example, the speech of graduates from Bandung Institute of Technology is coded [P-8 ITB].

The initial stage of data analysis was linguistic analysis (a meaningful form of expression) to obtain a perception formula. An example of the perception formula is "graduation = responsibility." Further analysis was carried out by comparing speakers' perceptions of American culture and Indonesian culture to interpret the influence of habitus in each culture on selecting expressions that describe graduation and the future. The data analysis combines semantic theory (metaphor) and Bourdieu's cultural capital and habitus. In the analysis, the concept of "cultural capital" is applied to American and Indonesian graduates' backgrounds in the form of values or norms that universities uphold to shape their graduates' perceptions about graduation. The Bourdieu habitus concept is applied to the way graduates reflect on these perceptions through statements or verbal expressions in the graduation speeches by graduate representatives. The analysis results were presented in

a descriptive report

Results and Discussions

This part addresses two main points: the form of expression in the graduation speech and the perceptions of success and the future as reflected in the speech.

The form of expression used in the graduation speech

The variety of languages used in the graduation speeches in Indonesia and America show some differences. Graduation speeches in Indonesia use formal language style and a serious tone, while those in American use a less formal style, more relaxed, and occasionally interspersed with humor.

When delivering their ideas, Indonesian graduates use verbal expressions that are pompous but lack concreteness and specificity. The followings are some examples of bombastic phrases in expressing hopes for graduates' future contributions

"...mempelopori perubahan peradaban ke arah yang lebih baik demi kesejahteraan seluruh umat manusia." [P-1 UNPAD]

"... create the change of civilization for the better for the sake of the welfare of all humankind." [P-1 UNPAD]

"...menjadi alumni Universitas Padjadjaran yang berhati nurani dan berpikiran cemerlang untuk kebaikan bagi masyarakat dan zamannya." [P-1 UNPAD]

"...become Padjadjaran University alumni who have a conscience and brilliant mind for the good of the society and the era." [P-1 UNPAD]

"...memiliki kepedulian terhadap permasalahan yang dihadapi masyarakat, paham kondisi masyarakat, dan mampu menyusun langkah-langkah untuk mewujudkan kondisi masyarakat yang ideal dengan potensi yang ada." [P-7 IPMAFA]

"... have concerns about the people's problems, understand the condition of the society, and can organize the plan with the existing potentials to realize the ideal social situation." [P-7 IPMAFA]

"...mengamalkan ilmu kita guna kemanfaatan bagi sesama. Karena ilmu bukanlah untuk ilmu itu sendiri, namun untuk memberikan manfaat yang sebesar-besarnya bagi kehidupan manusia." [P-9 UGM]

"...implement our knowledge for the benefit of others. Because knowledge is not for the knowledge itself, but it is for the maximum benefits for human life." [P-9 UGM]

The phrases "change of civilization", "for the good of the era", "ideal social condition", and "maximum benefit" in each example above are impressive but have obscure meanings. Such phrases are examples of bureaucratese language, "overcomplicated language considered typical of bureaucrats" (Collins, n.d.). Bureaucratese language is often seen negatively as one kind of doublespeak, "language which pretends to communicate but really doesn't" (Lutz, 1988, p. 40).

Although American graduates' speeches also use bombastic words, they usually provide elaborations to make the ideas more explicit and more concrete. The followings show some of the examples.

"... we simultaneously prepare for *the next phase of our lives*. For some of us, that's graduate school; for others, it's climbing up the metaphorical ladder in our existing place of work or pursuing a new job opportunity, and still, for many of us, we remain steadfast in uncertainty." (S-1 PC)

"We are a community diverse in thought and background: the kind of terrain that is never easy to navigate. Take it from my own experience, as I have spent my whole life learning to walk through such terrains." (S-2 Duke]

Examples above show that American graduates' speeches do not leave big ideas without elaboration. The phrase "The Next phase of our life" first example gets an elaboration in the following sentence, which mentions several possibilities that the graduates will undergo, such as further study, pursuing a career or looking for job opportunities, or still being in uncertainty. Meanwhile, "a community that is *diverse in thought and background*" in the second example gets an elaboration by the speakers' personal experiences who have struggled to live in heterogeneous social life.

Perceptions of Success and the Future

The data analysis reveals that Indonesian and American graduates have several similarities and differences in perceiving success and the future. In general, American graduates express more diverse perceptions than their Indonesian counterparts.

The statements about graduation by American graduate representatives never mention directly the pride of being a "bachelor degree" holder, while Indonesian graduate representatives state it explicitly. It implies that a bachelor's degree has an essential meaning for Indonesian graduates. The prestige of holding a bachelor's degree can be related to the unevenly distributed opportunity for higher education in Indonesia. The number of Indonesians who study at universities is still deficient. According to Higher Education Statistics 2019, the total number of undergraduate students in Indonesia is less than 3% of the total population (Kemenristekdikti, 2019). The small number of people enjoying higher education is what most likely causes graduates to feel that they represent an elite group in Indonesia, the educated. In other words, higher education is perceived as a means of upward mobility, changing one's social status into a privileged group. In comparison, the U.S. offers a better opportunity for higher education: more than 5% of the population are enrolled at colleges and universities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Although most American still expect that higher education promotes social mobility (Haveman and Smeeding, 2006), real ability reflected by the schooling is given a very strong emphasis. It affects American graduate to have a stronger concern on competencies than just a degree obtained from their university studies.

Many statements in American graduates' speech perceive the future as mystery and uncertain. American culture, which emphasizes logic and order, shapes a society that always makes plans based on calculations or careful and logical predictions. However, our logic cannot predict the future, and for them, the unpredictable is a big concern. On the other hand, for Indonesians accustomed to making peace with uncertainty (relying on an attitude of "just living" God's provisions), the future does not cause anxiety. Therefore, the fate of the future is not an important thing to discuss.

Perceptions of American Graduates Success

The graduates generally believe that success (graduation) is the fruit of hard work during the study period (3-4 years) in college. Statements about graduation are about completing studies and obtaining a bachelor's degree and acquiring competencies that give new responsibilities. Through speeches, graduates at various universities in America perceive "success" (Graduation) as follows: completion of studies; mutual achievement; freedom; accumulated knowledge and skills; change for the better; the new beginning; and sadness.

Completion of studies

The following statements indicate graduation as the completion of the study.

“... to speak at this ceremony with the title of Valedictorian, I replied back that this is a humbling surprise and I am delighted to accept the honor. “[Sp-3 CU]

This statement does not directly refer to the study’s completion but the Valedictorian title that someone achieves at graduation. In America’s educational tradition, the Valedictorian’s title has long been used to designate an individual who has achieved the highest academic excellence. The primary consideration for selecting a college valedictorian should be the factor that establishes the student with the highest level of academic performance (Utah State University, 2021), which is not just the GPA but also various merit systems, including breadth of educational experience.

Graduation as a new beginning

The following statements indicate graduation as a new beginning.

“... we have accomplished many things, and this is only the beginning. “[Sp-8 ND]

“ the diplomas we receive today are as much a statement of our accomplishments as they are a directive for our futures. “[Sp-8 ND]

“ Today marks the beginning of your forever .” [Sp-1 PC]

The statements above indicate a close relationship between graduation and the future awaiting the graduates. Graduation and the start of the future are a continuum.

Graduation as achievement of competencies

The following statements show graduation as an achievement of competencies.

“ We have learned how to ask questions, be wrong, respect diverse perspectives and promote the conversation. We have learned how to learn. More important than intellectual tools, our time here has cultivated in us a curiosity for things unknown. “[Sp-8 ND]

“ One of the most valuable gifts of our undergraduate education is the opportunity to explore those subjects that inspire us to keep on learning. This passion for learning will last far beyond our years here. “[Sp-8 ND]

The statements above perceive graduation as competencies achievement through a series of learning processes. The competencies include curiosity and life-long learning skills, typical attributes of scientists.

Graduation as sadness

This perception is unusual among the typical depiction of graduation. It may sound paradox, but it is logical from the graduate’s point of view. Graduation is the end of the days when they created many beautiful memories, such as friendship and many other things impossible to repeat.

“Graduation is a type of pain, of leaving the relationships we built here, of things never be the same.” [S-9 Stanford]

Future:

The perceptions of graduates in America about the future vary, but they see it as uncertainty and opportunity in general. As a mystery, it is shown by choice of words/phrases “uncertain,” “uncertainty,” “unknown,” “unknowable,” “none of us really know.”

As an opportunity, it is indicated by choice of words/phrases “anything-is-possible quality of life,” “can take actions to shape it,” “a chance to pursue what we love,” “the breadth of opportunities.”

Below are two examples for the perception of the future as a mystery and as an opportunity.

“... the uncertainty of the future, we can either allow it to frighten us into inaction, or we can take action to shape it. [S -8 ND]

“... their voices are not as loud or powerful or influential as ours, so let’s not forget to listen for them. [S -2 Duke]

Although they deem the future as uncertain, American graduates believe that any individual has a total capacity to build the future as desired. The statements above indicate individuals’ freedom to do whatever they want for their future. Despite being a mystery, the future is livable with optimism, positive attitudes, and idealism.

Their statements about the future contain deep reflections of collective experience, not just superficial thoughts. The emphasis on logic is firm. As in other things, American society tends to be logical and believes in individuals’ hard work and a solid commitment to achieving whatever they want. The use of the modal auxiliary “can” assert confidence in one’s ability (self-potential), and the verbs carrying optimistic tones “take action,” “shape,” “pursue,” “believe,” and “trust” demonstrate assertiveness.

Perceptions of Indonesian Graduates

Success:

Indonesian graduates’ perceptions about graduation also vary, although not as diverse as their American counterparts. Indonesian graduates define graduation as follow:

Study completion

The following data exemplify the graduates’ statements that graduation is the completion of the study. The immediate reward for completing studies is the awarding of a bachelor’s degree.

“Gelar kesarjanaan merupakan sebuah representasi dari sebuah pencapaian pemahaman terhadap suatu disiplin ilmu.” [P-9 UGM]

“A bachelor’s degree is a representation of an achievement of understanding scientific discipline.” [P-9 UGM]

“...tanda telah menamatkan masa studinya di ITB.” [P-8 ITB]

“... a symbol of study completion at ITB.” [P-8 ITB]

“Moment wisuda ini merupakan salah satu tahapan proses belajar kehidupan yang telah berhasil kami lewati.” [P-5 UMB]

“This moment of graduation is one of the stages of the life learning process that we have passed successfully.” [P-5 UMB]

“bertambah tanggung jawab moral atas gelar yang disematkan bersamaan dengan nama kita. [P-7 IPMAFA]

“with the title written next to our name comes more moral responsibility. [P-7 IPMAFA]

Change/transformation

The following statements describe the graduates' transformation or change from an initially incapable individual (lack of confidence) to an able one (full of self-confidence).

"...bertransformasi menjadi insan yang memiliki intelektual dan wawasan yang luas." [P-5 UMB]

"... transforms into a person who has great intellectuality and insight." [P-5 UMB]

"Kami merasa percaya diri dengan modal integrasi keilmuan dan keislaman yang diberikan. Insya Allah, kami bisa menjadi profesional sesuai bidang keilmuan yang kami pelajari..." [P-2 UINJ]

"We feel confident with the capital of scientific and Islamic integration we got. God willing, we can become professionals according to the scientific fields we study..." [P-2 UINJ]

Mutual achievement

The graduates acknowledge that their success owes to the sacrifice of many parties. They express the acknowledgment explicitly through the phrase *"tidak terlepas dari..."* (translated as "was due in part to..."), or implicitly by expressing gratitude to the parties mentioned.

"...hadirnya kami di sini merupakan hasil kebaikan dari banyak pihak." [P-1 UNPAD]

"... our presence here is the result of the kindness of many parties." [P-1 UNPAD]

"...orang yang telah banyak membantu keberhasilan kami sampai saat ini" [P-1 UNPAD]

"... those who have helped so much in our success so far" [P-1 UNPAD]

"Segala hal yang kami peroleh hari ini tidak terlepas dari kerja keras, kesabaran, kasih sayang dan doa mereka." [P-5 UMB]

"Everything we got today was due in part to their hard work, patience, compassion, and prayers." [P-5 UMB]

"Terima kasih untuk seluruh pimpinan ITB, seluruh pimpinan sekolah/ fakultas, dosen-dosen, dan seluruh staff non akademik yang telah membantu dan memfasilitasi kami dalam mendalami keilmuan kami, dalam mencari potensi diri kami, dan merancang agar potensi tersebut dapat berbuah..." [P-8 ITB]

"Thank you to all ITB leaders, all school/faculty leaders, lecturers, and all non-academic staff who have helped and facilitated us in exploring our knowledge, in seeking our potential, and designing the potential to develop..." [P-8 ITB]

Challenge and responsibility

The graduates regard their graduation as a new responsibility and, at the same time, a challenge to give more to society. The statements (23), (24), and (25) reflect this perception.

"tantangan baru sekaligus amanah untuk mengabdikan diri kita kepada ibu pertiwi" [P-6 USD]

"a new challenge as well as a responsibility to devote ourselves to our motherland" [P-6 USD]

"mengamalkan ilmu kita guna kemanfaatan bagi sesama. Karena ilmu bukanlah untuk ilmu itu sendiri, namun untuk memberikan manfaat yang sebesar-besarnya bagi kehidupan manusia." [P-9 UGM]

"...implement our knowledge for the benefit of others. Because knowledge is not for the knowledge itself, but it is for the maximum benefits for human life." [P-9 UGM]

“Semua orang adalah intelektual, namun tidak semua orang memiliki fungsi intelektual. Fungsi itulah yang seharusnya kita ambil sebagai seorang sarjana, khususnya seorang Sarjana Hukum.” [P-9 UGM]

“All people are intellectuals, but not all people have the roles of intellectuals. As a graduate, especially a Bachelor of Laws, we must take those roles.” [P-9 UGM]

“Apakah lulusan-lulusan ITB telah menjadi panutan-panutan dalam masyarakat yang mampu menggerakkan masyarakat untuk mengatasi masalah yang dihadapinya?” [P-8 ITB]

“Have graduates of ITB become role models in the society who can empower the community to solve the problems they fight?” [P-8 ITB]

New beginnings

The Indonesian graduates perceive their graduation as a start of a new life phase.

“...kelulusan ini adalah awal dari kehidupan yang sesungguhnya...” [P-3 UP]

“... this graduation is the beginning of the true-life ...” [P-3 UP]

“...karena hari ini adalah awal dari perjuangan lain yang telah menanti di depan.” [P-5 UMB]

“... because today is the beginning of another battle waiting ahead of us.” [P-5 UMB]

Future:

Statements relating to “the future” are not always found in the speeches of Indonesian graduates. Generally, the speech’s content is more about graduation, including expressions of happiness for completing the study, gratitude/gratefulness to other parties who have supported the study’s success, and requests for blessings to apply the knowledge obtained. From the graduation speeches containing statements about the future, no statements perceived the future as mystery or uncertainty. All statements about the future describe the future as a responsibility to develop knowledge and apply it to benefit society and make the name of the alma mater proud. Therefore, this section presents only one category: the future as a period to implement knowledge and skills.

Implementation of knowledge and skills

“...Fakultas Hukum Universitas Gadjah Mada akan lebih bangga jika suatu saat kita dapat bermanfaat bagi rakyat Indonesia. Karena kita dididik dan ditempa disini untuk nantinya kembali kepada rakyat, Sang Pemilik Universitas Gadjah Mada yang sesungguhnya.” [P-9 UGM]

“... the Faculty of Law, Universitas Gadjah Mada would be proud if someday we can be useful for the people of Indonesia. Because we received education and grew here to eventually return to the society, the real owner of Universitas Gadjah Mada.” [P-9 UGM]

“setelah benar-benar lepas dan menyandang gelar kesarjanaan dapat berperan sebagai aktor intelektual di tengah –tengah masyarakat dengan membawa nama baik dan kehormatan Institut Pesantren Mathali’ul Falah” [P-7 IPMAFA]

“after completing and holding a bachelor’s degree, we can act as intellectuals in the society by bringing the good name and honor of the Mathali’ul Falah Islamic Boarding School.” [P-7 IPMAFA]

“Tanggung jawab sebagai mahasiswa barangkali memang telah usai, tapi tanggung jawab atas ilmu dan gelar yang kita miliki akan terus ada selama kita masih hidup.” [P-7 IPMAFA]

“The responsibility as a student may be over, but the responsibility for the knowledge and degrees that we have will continue as long as we are alive.” [P-7 IPMAFA]

“...seluruh ilmu tersebut masih kurang dan harus terus dikembangkan demi menjadi generasi bangsa harapan masyarakat.” [P-1 UNPAD]

“... all of this knowledge is still not enough and must keep growing to become the nation’s generation the people put their hope on.” [P-1 UNPAD]

The influence of habitus in the speeches

The statements about graduation and the future by American and Indonesian graduates demonstrate different ways of looking at their success and the future they are about to enter. We can find an explanation of why American and Indonesian graduates’ disclosure of perceptions is different by tracing each society’s habitus guided by Bourdieu’s Field and Habitus theory. For this contrastive study, Hymes’ social variables commonly observed in sociolinguistic studies: Setting, Participant, End, Act of sequence, Key, Instrument, Norms, and Genre (Wardough, 2014) are not able to provide a satisfactory explanation of the differences. For instance, Hymes’ description of Genre offers little explanation for the differences of the underlying patterns of expressions in various texts classified under the same genre. Hymes’s SPEAKING paradigm’s usefulness is more for identifying social variables but less for understanding the different linguistic realizations across culture despite the shared variables (Hymes, 1964)

The following part discusses the different ways of expressing perceptions. First, Indonesian graduates often use cliché. To acknowledge others’ contribution, they would say *“sulit rasanya mengungkapkan terima kasih kami melalui kata-kata”* (It is difficult to find words to express our gratitude), and to make an apology for any shortcoming in their speech, they would say *“tak ada gading yang tak retak”* (there is no ivory without a crack). Cliché is not necessarily negative. Haberer (2008, p. 147) argues that clichés can be a source of emotion and happiness in certain circumstances so that the cliché cannot be reduced to a mere manifestation of bad taste and wrong style. Apart from that, Indonesian graduates also tend to deliver general (abstract) ideas such as “useful for the country,” “devote themselves to others,” and “become the nation’s generation.”

On the other hand, American graduates are keen on using original words by telling their own stories or sharing their thought on a particular issue. They also convey specific (more concrete) ideas. Their tendency to use original words and embellish ideas with details indicates a high level of literacy. As Wang’s (2012) research findings show, reading and writing positively correlate with enriching original ideas with more information. Some examples of general ideas in Indonesian graduates’ speeches are as

“Banyak hal yang telah kami pelajari semasa kuliah, baik dalam menggali potensi diri maupun dalam hal bersosialisasi. Melalui berbagai kegiatan kami telah memperoleh banyak pengalaman yang dapat membawa kami semua dalam proses pendewasaan diri. Segala kebersamaan ini kami maknai sebagai proses untuk semakin mengabdikan diri kepada sesama dan untuk memuliakan Tuhan.” [P-6 USD]

“We have learned many things during college, both in exploring our potential and in socializing. Through various activities, we have gained a lot of experiences that can take us all in maturing ourselves. We interpret all this togetherness as a process to further devote ourselves to others and to glorify God.” [P-6 USD]

"...seluruh ilmu tersebut masih kurang dan harus terus dikembangkan demi menjadi generasi bangsa harapan masyarakat." [P-1 UNPAD]

"... all of this knowledge is still not enough and must keep growing to become the nation's generation the people put their hope on." [P-1 UNPAD]

"jadilah orang yang berguna bagi nusa dan bangsa" [P-6 USD]

"be people who are useful for the homeland and the nation" [P-6 USD]

The choice of expressions such as "exploring our potential," "socializing," "various activities," "a lot of experiences," "the process of maturing ourselves" may open too broad interpretation and make the speakers' real intentions not delivered. It is not clear what the maturation process is like and what activities are meant by various activities. There will likely be a gap between what the speaker means and what the listener understands.

Meanwhile, American graduates' speech chooses expressions with more specific meanings so that the messages/ideas are more likely to be understood accurately. The following statement is an example.

"In the archive, one traces the interstices between the firmament of reality—those dusty, sometimes-moldy scraps—and flights of imagination—what was the world like for those papers' authors? What did they see, hear, think? How did they understand the world? Missing from this exercise are those voices and stories that were never committed to paper, never shuffled into folders and slotted into boxes for curious students to come calling." [S-4 Princeton]

This statement above explains how someone holding a document archive will find the relationship between reality and imagination. Reality is described by physical archives that are dusty, and there may be mold spots. Meanwhile, imagination is explained reflectively through questions like "what were the times in the view of the document writers?", "What did they see, hear and feel? How do they make sense of the world? With concrete elaboration like this, listeners will understand the ideas delivered by speakers more accurately.

The characteristics of Indonesian and American graduation speeches in the above discussion highlight the distinction between normative (of Indonesian graduation speech) and reflective (of American graduation speech). Why are the speeches of American graduates more reflective, whereas Indonesian graduates tend to be normative?

"At its core, 'reflective thinking' is the notion of awareness of one's own knowledge, assumptions, and past experiences. Your past learning and experience provide the context for your thoughts and are therefore unique to you, but reflective thinking is a dynamic process that continues to develop and evolve as you learn and respond to new experiences, situations, events, or information. In practical terms, this is the process where you interpret and evaluate your experiences, check that they make 'sense' to you, create meaning, justify actions and solve problems, and it helps with your future planning..." (The Open University, n.d.)

The educational process in America instills a habit of thinking reflectively from an early age. The above quote (open edu) explains that what is considered necessary in America's educational culture is the process. It is the work of understanding and evaluating various experiences, ensuring that all these experiences are meaningful, and constructing meaning that becomes the basis for acting and solving problems and planning. Efforts to build reflective thinking skills are continuously carried out, such as learning models that optimize reflective thinking (see Van Es, 2006).

The education process in Indonesia has not enhanced students' reflective thinking skills. Learning is still *teacher-centered instruction*, not *interactive teaching*, and *team-based learning*, which sharpens *higher-order cognitive skills*, character development, and behavioral skills (see OECD & Asian Development Bank, 2020, p. 47). As a result, students tend to do *recalling* more, which are in the level of *low order thinking skills*. As can be seen from the following fragments of the graduates' speeches, the tendency to "repeat what has been heard" from other previous speeches was clear. The speakers did not give meaning to the expressions such as "*tindakan memelopori perubahan peradaban*"/"create changes in civilization" and "*berhati nurani dan berpikir cemerlang*"/"have a conscience and brilliant mind." Likely, listeners can only grasp the superficial meanings and gain no new insights.

"Orang-orang hebat yang mampu mengatasi persoalan di tengah-tengah masyarakat, sekaligus berani dalam bertindak untuk memelopori perubahan peradaban kearah yang lebih baik demi kesejahteraan seluruh umat manusia. Singkatnya adalah mari kita menjadi alumni Universitas Padjadjaran yang berhati nurani dan berpikiran cemerlang untuk kebaikan bagi masyarakat dan zamannya." (P-1 UNPAD)

"Great people who can solve society's problems and have the courage for action to create better civilization for the sake of all humankind's welfare. In short, let's become Universitas Padjadjaran alumni who have a conscience and brilliant mind for the good of society and the era." (P-1 UNPAD)

To sum up, the differences between Indonesian and American graduation speech as discussed in the previous parts are especially in its use of language style, choice of words, and delivery of ideas. Indonesian graduate speech generally shows a dominant use of formal style, prefers cliché over new words, delivers general (abstract) ideas, and exercises normative thinking. All in all, it advocates a decent manner of speech. Meanwhile, American graduation speech tends to use formal and casual styles, prefer original words, deliver specific (concrete) ideas, and exercise reflective thinking. All in all, it advocates intellectuality.

Conclusion

American and Indonesian graduates generally have similar perceptions of success (graduation) and the future. What distinguishes them is the way they are expressed owing to the different habitus. American students' habitus is reflective thinking, whereas Indonesian students' habitus is prominently normative thinking. The reflective thinking habitus makes American graduates produce more varied expressions of their views on graduation and the future, which generally reflect experiences and critical thinking on a particular issue. With elaborations to support an argument, their speech's statements carry more concrete ideas and offer new insights. Their speech content also provides a deeper awareness of one's potential and opportunities to contribute to public interests. Thus, the American graduation speeches prioritize the intellectuality/quality of speech content, while the normative thinking habitus makes Indonesian graduates produce less varied content. Indonesian graduates emphasize their speech function to express happiness and recognize other parties' contributions to their success. As a result, their speech content generally lacks critical thoughts on a specific issue and offers a less specific view of "the future." They do not regard "the future" as a formidable challenge to respond with the potential they nurture during college life, so the call for self engagement in the future sounds normative. All these conclude that Indonesian graduates' speeches advocate mannership and encourage one to be a grateful individual.

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إنسانيات

مجلة جامعية إسلامية إنسانية

Vol 5, Number 2, May 2021

Discrimination among Ethnic Minorities Groups in Singapore

Imam Subchi, Siti Amsariah, Ahmad Bachmid

**Effects of Motivation On Staff Performance and Job Satisfaction In
The University of Ilorin Library**

T. J. Babatunde, O. Issa, U. A. Saliu, G. O. Babafemi, J. W. Abdulraheem, F. O. Otonekwu

**Orcs Lives Matter: Representation of African Americans
in Bright Film**

Shafira Ayuningtyas, Pita Merdeka

**Reflective Versus Normative Thinking: Habitus Study on
American and Indonesian Graduation Speech**

Aris Munandar

**The Dynamics of Meranao Political Participation in Southern Philippines:
An Analysis Using Milbrath's Hierarchy of Political Involvement**

Jamel R. Cayamodin

**'Awâmil Numuww al-Uşûliyyah wa at-Taṭarruf wa
Istimrâriyyatuhumâ fî Afganistân**

Ghulam Mustafa Nukhba, Habiburrahman Rizapoor

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