

## Becoming Others and Othering Others: Cultural Shock in Architecture Anthropological Research

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### ABSTRACT

This study describes split identity as result of culture shock experienced by researchers on the field of study of architectural design who conducted anthropological research, where the study itself was located on researcher's origin that is Hasanuddin University (UNHAS). Researchers experienced shifting identities from being herself into someone different or to be estranged according to her own experience context in research process. While acting as an architect researcher sees her anthropologist self as different person or being estranged by architect society. When conducting a qualitative approach, researcher looked at herself who does not use quantitative approach to be estranged by engineering sciences community. And vice versa! This study is a series of studies conducted as a doctorate candidate in Anthropology Department UNHAS.

*Keywords: architect, anthropologist, culture, identity, other*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

As a doctorate candidate, the topic of my dissertation is about behavior of people associated with public toilets of Hasanuddin University. This research was conducted by an architect who was studying in the Anthropology Department. Problems of public toilet in Indonesia seems like an never ending problem. In every corner of Indonesia, it is extremely rare to find a clean and healthy public toilet. The architects generally assumed that the problem correlates to toilet interior design where studies were preoccupied with how to choose goods and materials such as sanitair, floor and wall tile installations or water and waste installations. Rarely do we hear architects who want to know how people are connected with the toilet by their interpretation of toilet. I have chosen research sites where I served as a lecturer, which is the Hasanuddin University. Here and there are more than 50 centers of public toilets used by approximately 30,000 people of UNHAS. Most of the centers of the toilet is not only shown as poorly maintained, but also disgusting.

Generally, people assume that researching in your origin place itself is always easier, because we would already know everything that will be investigated. Moreover, researching on the location of my own workplace, where does not only I become a lecturer who has served for 28 years at the Department of Architecture, but also as a senior architect who was involved in some of the designs that come into contact with the interests of the parties of UNHAS highest elite. Initially I also feel that the research process that I will do related to the behavior of people towards public toilets UNHAS will be relatively easier. In fact when I officially started the research, I apparently was stooping into fallacy instead. Digging deeper into the recesses of the study site of UNHAS had shown that I know very little of things around the neighborhood where I work and if was not careful, I could have gotten lost. Furthermore that is not any less important, the results of this study will be tested in the place I have studied, where everyone thought they knew what was going on here.

Another issue I faced was the internal situation myself, where during the process of my research experience I have faced identity divisions caused by varies of cultural shock. Identity is anything that all people or all groups (ethnic, racial, national) have, or should have, or are looking for. Identity can be owned without realizing it, but also can be found. Brubaker and Cooper state that collectively, the identity and uniformity limited similarity between members of the group, with clear boundaries that characterized and distinguished it from outside of the group identity[1].

About "Who am I" and the search of self is present in the sufi teachings of Mulla Nasruddin ignorance who were wandering in a foreign city. In order for Mulla to avoid forgetting his identity, his wife put up a sign of his name upon his neck. While sleeping at night, a clown took it and put a name tag on his chest. When Mulla woke up, he was surprised that the sign with his name was on the chest of a clown instead. Mulla said, "If you are me, then who am I?"

Mulla dilemma appears as something silly, but touching the core problems of human existence which is the relationship between self and other, and building identity. Accentuating personal uniqueness placed a person with the problem of self-conception, because self-definition is without reference to the similarity of culture or history. This gives a moment of confusion about who we really are and of our relationship with cultural heritage and social situation, which is expressed in everyday language as "identity crisis" and suggestion of virtue to "find ourselves," "to be in touch with our feelings, "and" self-expression. " Self is not only for view of the day[2].

In the process of research, my role had been swiftly changed so that it displays the identity changes. I am an architect lecturer and practitioner, who is currently researching and writing a

dissertation as an anthropologist. Here, my self holds the role as an architect and lecturer, while the role of the other is a researcher anthropologist. And vice versa! As to quote from Clifford states that any version of the other wherever found, also the construction of self[3].

The aim of research is how (1) to understand the processes which occur when there is shifting of researcher's culture from architect community culture to community culture anthropologist; (2) respecting the "we" difference to "them," to determine whether all of "us" have the same fundamental.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The research was implemented at the Campus UNHAS Tamalanrea Makassar within study period from March to November 2014. The study uses phenomenological, qualitative research approach, the foundation constructive paradigm, and ethnography. With phenomenology, researcher observed phenomenona appear around the research community activities as it was, with no prejudice. Researchers indulged into the world of meaning intepration and tried to understand and interpret all meanings of cultural activities of the participants' views.

Data generated from literature study, reflection, observation, structured and unstructured interviews with 30 participants from the community of exact sciences and social sciences. Analysis of the data meant to acquired meaning behind the phenomena or events experienced conducted regularly and as soon as possible on the same day when the incident occurred.

Strategy to find the meaning of phenomenas or events during the research process, carried out under the assumptions that each individual has a unique experience. Thus every individual way taken to look at the world is valid, and these views should be respected.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### A. *To be Inside of Anthropologist Community*

Being a student in the Department of Anthropology felt different with my knowledge base as an architect who is also a lecturer of architecture, providing a variety of considerable culture shock affecting my identity as a new member of the community of anthropologists. Adjustment in understanding of anthropology in terms of communication with the community of anthropologists could make me uncomfortable. When the topic of conversation touched on "etics", my memory was connected to the meaning of "ethics" associated with moral philosophy, and not necessarily connected to something that is connected with the construction of epistemology. I know that the term "etics" and "emics" built by language anthropologist Kenneth Pike that distinguishes "etics" is a cultural phenomenon in the view of researchers or people outside the owner culture, while "emics" is the view of the owner of the culture (local residents), but my mind is not necessarily out of the world "professional ethics", one of the subjects that I teach in the Department of Architecture[4][5][6]. When the topic of "Lévi-Strauss", my mind is connected to the meaning of the indigo color is used as a production company brand jeans Levi Strauss, and not directly to one of the leaders of structuralism theory[7][8][9]. In between discussions, I have to overcome panic by performing two different activities in one time, which is discussed and surfing the internet to access information in order to make haste adjustment.

Another culture shock, is of the fact that I am the only one doctorate candidate of Anthropology Department who not only do not have a basic knowledge of anthropology, but also do not have the basic of the social sciences. I tend to think, that community members see my presence just as a guest, and not as part of their community. I was the

"other", not as they are members of the "blue-blood" in the community of anthropologists. I feel that no matter how hard I have studied, I still would not be considered equivalent to those who actually are native anthropologists, those who are nobility in the community.

Oberg popularized the term culture shock as the anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. When entering different cultural settings, individuals identify themselves with their own group and the way to the extent that any critical comment is taken as an insult to individuals and groups[10].

According Oberg and Dutton, cultural shock has four stages, namely: (1) Honeymoon phase, when we discover a new culture that is alluring; (2) Reaction phase, when we react to these cultures, became angry and irrational, and create negative stereotypes about the culture; (3) Resignation phase, where we accept the situation and develop a wide variety of coping mechanisms (coping); and (4) Realization, phase, which we accept and understand that other cultures are not worse than the culture itself, but merely the product of a different history[11][10].

In the honeymoon phase, I find exciting things and knowledge about different peoples with the place and community where I come from. In reactional phase, helped me a little bit because of my liveliness during the period of 10-years in the group of university think tank, a place where people from different clumps of science work together in a university academic studies. The difference is no longer considered a stigma about who is more qualified, but on how those differences interact with each other. Thus, I can go directly to the realization phase, actively participate not only to understand how they make sense of their culture, but how I and they interact to construct a new culture together.

That is, I can still be myself, without being stuck in stereotypes as recommended by Oberg.

### B. Architect vs Anthropologist

While I researched, I as an architect and lecturer of Architecture also perform the role of active participants in the study area which is not just for this study, but also involved in the process of policy-making related to academic field and asset management UNHAS. Role as architect and lecturer put myself as person whom considered to have most knowledge about the truth regarding the public toilets in UNHAS. Architect held the role as an expert who asked for consideration of what is best in designing architectural works. In practice, an architect even often designed without needing to consult with their clients. Similarly, the role of a lecturer who also often felt to be most knowledgeable to what is needed by students, where students must accept whatever is given by the lecturers. Here, research subjects into the other or serve as the other. On the other hand, I am a member of the community residents of UNHAS (selves), which in practice duties and functions I used to see themselves and me as the same.

As an architect who became anthropology researcher, I found myself of becoming the other, who look at things from the viewpoint of the anthropologist as a research subject. Involvement identity as yourself and as others had have an influence on the course of the research process from how I see the problem, how I interact with the informant, how to understand the role of informants earnest as a conduit of information, how to receive their information, and narrate what they feel. Likewise with my informants who become participants. When they accepted me as an architect and lecturer, they often feel that I know best what they feel and want, so it requires a certain learning

techniques to facilitate the informants willing to share information from their point of view.

### C. Constructivism vs Positivism

Thomas Kuhn in his phenomenal book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, published in 1962 outlines that there would not be entirely correct way of looking at the universe, nothing can be named as the absolute truth either philosophically or scientifically. What is achieved depends upon the paradigm that we use to think about or look at the universe [12]. Capra defines a paradigm Kuhn as "a constellation of concepts, values, perceptions, and practices shared by a community, which forms the vision certain realities that are the basis of the way society organizes itself [13]. Therefore, in view of reality, a scientist must first assert paradigm position. as such, it can be determined how and who will test the accumulation of knowledge.

As a scientist, I adopted the view that: (1) The human consciousness is always in the process of searching, questioning its existence in this universe. At the same time humans also expects the universe to work according to their needs; (2) The universe is full of surprises, so that nothing can be ascertained. What is certain is uncertainty itself. Uncertainty that is encouraging the search of reality; (3) Man is part of a holistic system of his universe. Humans become part of the interdependent and connected to parts of the network of another universe. To create the harmony of the universe, human beings do not have a more privileged position than the other components of the universe. When one part of the universe in motion, all the other parts will soon adapt; and (4) Man with his intellect has the freedom to look and observe the universe in accordance with their own cultural context.

Humans have every rights to view this universe not in a similiar of views, and all rights to a

different view should be respected. Patton states that the constructivist researchers studying diverse realities constructed by the individual and the implications of the construction of their lives with others. In constructivism, each individual has a unique experience. Thus, studies with strategies like these suggested that every way of seeing taken by individuals in the world is valid, and the need for respect on their view [14].

In consideration above, I determined to be on the paradigm of constructivism. The consequences of such choices on paradigm of constructivism will be followed by the basic assumptions of truth in this study. From the ontology side, I viewed that the truth is not singular but plural. In terms of epistemology, I will approach the subjective nature, where the values professed to be influenced by my background as a lecturer of the Department of Architecture UNHAS are also involved in several tasks as practicing architect in Hasanuddin University, and background objects.

Constructivism I have adopted is very different from the view of positivism. Researchers with positivism paradigm are adherents of objectivity that sees the world as a giant machine lifeless and static, and subject to a set iron law. With reference to the metaphor of a watch, this paradigm adherents believe that the universe and all that no matter how complex phenomena can always be understood by straining it into the basic building blocks and look for interaction mechanism. Therefore, according to Amien and Capra, everything can be predicted because it follows a definite causal [15] & [13]. They assume that humans are separate instruments or not part of the natural environment.

Amien, Guba, and Lincoln state that for positivists, physical and socio-cultural universe is nothing more than a mechanical system that is subject to the laws of mathematics which is certain,

all things can be predicted quantitatively, so that does not leave the slightest room for qualitative considerations include mental and spiritual. Instead the researchers with constructivism paradigm who are adapting subjectivity. They assume that the phenomenon can only be understood in the context in which they studied. The findings in one context can not be generalized to the other. Problems and solutions can not generalize one state to another. Reality depends on the observer. Without the presence of observers, reality will not materialize[15][16].

#### **4. QUALITATIVE VS QUANTITATIVE**

My self position as a member of the Department of Architecture community greatly affected the quality of the research methods used in this study. In UNHAS, the field of architectural studies are in clumps of engineering sciences, where alumni bachelor's degree is in architectural engineering. Differences tradition in studies of exact sciences and social sciences are often focused on the issue of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

According Patton and Creswell, the distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is more often seen in a qualitative framework that is words, while quantitative are numbers, or the question of quantitative research where hypotheses used closed-ended questions, while qualitative interviews using open-ended questions [14] & [17].

Qualitative research is an approach to explore and understand the assumptions of meaning of individuals or groups to social problems or human. The procedure involves research questions and procedures evolve constantly. The data are usually collected in the setting of participants. Data was analyzed inductively, of particular themes to common themes. Quantitative research is an approach to objectively test the theory by examining the relationship variables. The entire variable can be

measured, usually on instruments, therefore the data transformed into numerals so it can be analyzed in statistical procedures. Theory test was being carried on deductively, to avoid bias, control alternative explanations, the findings that can be generalized and replicated. The use of words or narrative in qualitative research and figures on quantitative research is a consequence of the paradigm researchers of viewing the world.

In the world of the research community, the reality turned out to be of not the issues of research approaches rely on research paradigms. There are other things beyond the issue of standard research procedures. For the research community of engineering sciences, there is a general view that the type of qualitative research as a research approach that reflects the shortage of researchers mastery of statistics which became one of the requirements kind of quantitative research. Researchers who use qualitative methods tend to be regarded as an escape from the inability to examine the quantitative method. As a result, the process is not scientific research, become protracted, and unfocused.

Department of Architecture covers the fields of architectural design, architectural engineering, and architectural science. The field of architectural design that I have wrestled adapts traditional qualitative approach, while the architectural engineering, and architectural science has a tradition of quantitative approaches. Although clump sciences dominated by the subjectivity of architecture, Architecture Department, research shows the opposite, namely the dominance of quantitative approaches. This condition is actually rather surprising, until I had a discussion with some fellow researchers from my department. The researchers here assumes that research with qualitative approach takes a long time, not compactible with limited time required by the grantor agency funds research grants relatively very

short. In addition, the assessment team at the Faculty of Engineering proposals generally are the ones who embrace quantitative approach. Therefore, every researcher in the Architecture Department of the object of research requires a qualitative approach, will seek to follow the trend of the use of quantitative methods in order to get the ease when dealing with the assessment team that embraces the research proposal quantitative research. These views show that the choice of research approach for a researcher is strongly influenced by the context in which the researcher is, and not enough just based on the views of ontology, epistemology, methodology, or axiology alone as it is written in many books on.

Environmental conditions as mentioned above like it or not still affecting my identity as a researcher when discussing such issues with colleagues related to anthropological study of architecture. I feel that my colleagues from the clump of engineering sciences looked way of thinking and my work in conducting this study is a way that is not grandeur. Here the self role was a researcher with constructive paradigm, whereas those whom are positivism researcher is the other. On the other hand, my role is also serve as the other by them.

In contrast to the engineering sciences community who are proud of the type of quantitative research, social science community that I met on the contrary, not all feel kind of qualitative research is something to be proud of. Assuming that I came from the engineering sciences community with a strong quantitative methods, some of them suggested to me to at least use this type of research with mixed methods approaches, so that the impression of the quality of its researchers appear. For the community of the social sciences is a matter of pride when using this kind of research, because it proves the intellectual community in their ability to

master the science of statistics. Here, I was seen by members of the anthropologists community as the other.

The stigma that researchers who conduct quantitative research approach is to be more prideful than the researchers who conducted this qualitative approach by Bourdieu called social snobbery among the bourgeoisie. For him, the concept to demonstrate the typical person's status and put a different class or higher than those who do not have it, carried out by a person to show his class in society, is a game of distinction[18][19].

In the social world, system of power relations and symbolic system plays at difference of "taste" as the basis of social judgment. Activities reflect differences, where the actors make the distinction between "me" and "not me", "I" and "thou". With this distinction formed, we interact with fellow researchers. Therefore, the research community with grants held by researchers clump exact science, then they are the ones who have a chance of making the distinction between those communities with non-exact community clump. Here, researchers are using statistics being distinguished as more intelligent than those who do not use it.

## 5. CONSLUSION

While making decisions in the research process, researchers are faced not only on issues related to standard procedures of research, but also confronted with different contextual situations where the researcher is located. The fact that cultural differences are shown symbolically as researchers have made a difference in the quality of experience of various cultural shocks that generate a split identity. So that the integrity is maintained, required a strong will to realize and accept that the difference between my identity with research subjects, between me and the community clump engineering sciences, and between me and the IJEScA Vol.2, 1, May 2015 @2015 PPs-UNHAS

community anthropologist, in fact showed no difference in quality, but an equivalent diversity. Self did not put position is superior compared with other(s) and vice versa, and that culture truth is not universally valid, is always relative, and contextual.

Without awareness of the context of the location/space, equality, and connectedness, the researchers will present the judgment of the study subjects according to values, norms, and standards of research and not based on what is owned by the study subjects. As a researcher anthropologist who is also an architect, no longer just a person carrying out observation of a subject or cultural community, but also the people who participate actively as part of the cultural community. Me and them interact and participate together creating a new culture.

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