DOCTOR-PATIENT COMMUNICATION IN HIGH-CONTEXT SUNDANESE CULTURE, WEST JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract –

Some Indonesian doctors construct verbal and nonverbal messages uniquely when communicating with patients from high-context cultures. This research uses an interpretive perspective with a qualitative method. Key informants were five Sundanese specialists in Bandung who have become favorite doctors due to their "good" communication. Meanwhile, the patient informants were ten people, two patients treated by each of the five doctors. The study objective was to identify and reveal physicians' verbal and nonverbal communication techniques with patients in a high-context Indonesian culture. Data collection techniques were in-depth interviews and observations. The results showed that verbally the doctors used Sundanese language in their consultations with their patients. Nonverbal messages that included facial expressions, eye contact, hand gestures, and intonation were used to reinforce verbal messages. In certain situations, the doctors preferred nonverbal messages. The study concluded that doctors expressed verbal and nonverbal messages in such a way as to communicate with patients to create intimacy, family, trust, and empathy despite this resulting in time inefficiency.

Keywords – High Context Culture Preliminaries, Verbal and Nonverbal Messages, Diction, Empathy