

MORALITY IN COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DIGITAL NATIVE STUDENTS AND DIGITAL IMMIGRANT LECTURERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study examines the communication ethics between digital native students and digital immigrant lecturers in higher education. With the rapid advancement of digital technology, communication between these two groups is often influenced by generational differences. The study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing phenomenology and action research to explore the communication experiences and challenges of both parties. The results indicate that while there are gaps in communication styles and technological adaptation, ethical communication, based on respect, empathy, and understanding, is essential for fostering a positive academic environment. This research also suggests that action research can effectively improve communication practices by promoting awareness of ethical communication standards and bridging generational divides in higher education settings.

Keywords: Communication Ethics, Digital Native, Digital Immigrant, Higher Education, Phenomenology, Action Research, Generational Differences, Academic Environment, Ethical Communication.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has changed the way students interact with their professors. Kemajuan teknologi telah mengubah peran guru yang sebelumnya menjadi sumber utama ilmu pengetahuan bagi siswa. The development of information technology has a significant impact on the learning process and educational programs, giving rise to various methods such as e-learning and blended learning (Suryadi et al., 2021). Therefore, teachers are required to have the competence to create new innovations and creativity in delivering material or assigning tasks, so as to enhance students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning (Turmuzi et al., 2021). The use of social media such as WhatsApp also has the potential to support the optimization of the learning process.

In the era of globalization marked by technological and informational advancements, teachers are required to adapt to the times by utilizing various material sources, such as the internet, newspapers, and articles. In addition, teachers can utilize social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and BBM to assign tasks to students (ARASYIAH & Rohiat, 2020). Today's students, often referred to as digital natives, grow up in an environment filled with digital technology. On the other hand, lecturers, who are generally considered digital immigrants, face the transition from traditional teaching methods to digital-based ones. Therefore, it is important for lecturers to develop the ability to utilize technology in order to create engaging and effective learning experiences for students (Sari & Marlina, 2022).

Based on a survey conducted by the Higher Education Association, approximately 75% of students prefer using digital platforms for communication compared to face-to-face interactions (Asosiasi Pendidikan Tinggi, 2022) This situation poses a challenge in communication, as students tend to consider formal communication less relevant, while lecturers still prioritize communication ethics with a more traditional approach.

Ineffective communication has the potential to cause misunderstandings and negatively impact the quality of education. By utilizing social media, lecturers can establish better interactions with students, provide quick feedback, and monitor the progress of their learning process (Turmuzi et al., 2021).

Modern communication technology is no longer limited to large, heavy computers or wired telephones. One form of communication technology that remains popular among the public is the smartphone. During the COVID-19 pandemic, smartphone usage saw a significant increase in line with the need to interact and obtain information. Smartphones have become a solution that allows people to stay connected without being hindered by space, distance, or time. Various daily activities can now be carried out with the support of smartphones, such as working from home, remote learning, online shopping, and virtual communication (Rochmah & Purwanto, 2022).

The high demand for smartphones is influenced by their increasingly sophisticated capabilities, including better operating systems, high computing power, and clear screen resolutions. In addition, the flexibility of design and features tailored to user needs add their own appeal. The use of smartphones is not limited to adults or workers, but has also extended to children. Currently, many children have been facilitated and allowed to use smartphones by their parents (Endah Puspitasari, 2019) . This condition raises concerns, as uncontrolled smartphone use can have negative impacts.

Today, various types of smartphones have emerged, competing to win the hearts of consumers. Smartphones can no longer be considered luxury items, as manufacturers now offer affordable options with quality comparable to higher-priced models. The presence of smartphones is inseparable from internet connectivity, which enables people to easily access the latest information. Additionally, the availability of supporting applications on smartphones further enhances their functionality and usefulness.

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Nowadays, internet access is no longer a rare or difficult thing to find, as there are numerous ways to connect. Many providers offer affordable internet packages, and WiFi is widely available in various locations. Additionally, network quality has improved, with 4G widely accessible and even 5G connectivity available in some areas. As mentioned earlier, the public is increasingly able to access information not only because of the internet network but also through interesting applications available on the Play Store. Some popular applications in Indonesia are Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Twitter, and Tik Tok.

Users of communication technology are not only dominated by the upper-middle-class society, nor are they only dominated by teenagers, but also by the elderly. The widespread development of communication technology, one of which is the smartphone, has resulted in ease of access to this technology, without the hassle of worrying about its high price. Based on data from Hootsuite, a Canadian social media platform, reported by Cyberthreat.id, out of a total of 272.1 million Indonesian residents, internet users reach 175.4 million. Interestingly, the number of connected smartphones reached 338.2 million units, almost double the number of internet users. The distribution of internet users in Indonesia can be seen in the infographic below.



Figure 1. Overview of Information Technology Utilization in Indonesia

Based on the infographic above, it can be concluded that the largest internet users are in the age range of 35 to 44 years, accounting for 29%. And the lowest internet users are in the age range of 55 years and above, at 10%. The rapid development of information technology has an impact on various aspects of life. Not excluding the world of education. In university-level education, there have been many significant changes in the interaction between teachers and students. For example, assigning tasks to students can be done without face-to-face interaction. The same goes for completing assignments given by the lecturer, which can be done by sending them via email.

With the current rapid development of internet technology, the way humans think is also evolving alongside this technological advancement. In fact, there have been several shifts occurring in society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intercultural Communication Theory

In a rapidly changing world with boundless global connectivity, intergenerational communication and cultural differences have become increasingly complex and require thorough analysis. Recent studies indicate that variations in communication intensity and interaction patterns across generational groups are shaped by several factors, including advancements in information technology and shifts in cultural values driven by globalization (Sukriyatun, 2022).

The younger generation today is more likely to use digital communication platforms, such as social media, to interact with their peers (Widyaningrum, 2021). This contrasts with the previous generation, who typically communicated in person. The rapid development of communication technology over the past decade has significantly altered communication patterns, particularly among younger people (Zonyfar et al.,

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2022a). The disparity in digital media usage between the younger and older generations also influences the variation in communication intensity between these two groups.

The concepts of politeness, empathy, and ethics in communication often vary, particularly in how the younger generation uses social media to share information, express themselves, and build virtual communities, which may not always align with the perspectives of the older generation (Widyaningrum, 2021) However, the cultural differences in communication between generations also create opportunities for the exchange of knowledge, mutual understanding, and learning from one another.

Digital Native and Digital Immigrant

The life of digital natives, a generation born and raised in the digital era, has unique characteristics and communication habits that differ from previous generations. Digital technology has become an integral part of cultural practices and social interactions in their lives (Dwiarsianti, 2022) . The identity of digital natives is built through offline and online interactions, which shape the way they behave in communication and express themselves on social media (Syifa Sari Agustina, 2020).

One of the interesting phenomena of digital natives is their use of social media. Research shows that almost every child today is already using social media The presence of smartphones and increasingly easy internet access has opened new ways for digital natives to socialize and share information. However, the use of social media is not without its negative impacts. Children's psychomotor skills, such as drawing or singing, as well as their ability to adapt to lesson materials, can be disrupted due to reduced direct interaction and increased focus on social media use (Sinaga & Lumban Gaol, 2020).

In addition, the use of social media by digital natives also raises new issues related to children's privacy. Digital native parents, also known as "sharenting," tend to share information or content about their children on social media. This raises questions about the boundaries of children's privacy and the long-term impact of this practice (Dwiarsianti, 2022).

While digital natives grow up with the skills to use digital technology, their parents, referred to as digital immigrants, face their own challenges. Digital immigrants refer to the generation born before the digital era who had to adapt to technological developments later on. Digital native parents still struggle to learn the features of smartphones, while their children are already adept at editing videos and uploading them to YouTube. This gap creates a divide in understanding between digital natives and digital immigrants. In addressing the issue of social media use among children, digital immigrants need to possess adequate knowledge and skills to supervise, guide, and understand their children's digital communication practices.

Morality in Islam or Universal Perspective

Morality in Islam or Universal Perspective is a very important and interesting topic to discuss. Akhlak is likened to the face of Islam, reflected in its adherents. In Islam, ethics hold a high position, and the best ethics or morals are associated with the perfection of a Muslim's faith. Akhlak can be defined as an attitude or behavior that emerges reflexively as a representation of habits that have been ingrained and formed over a long period. Good morals will not only provide inner peace for everyone but also encourage someone to do good easily without hesitation (Ahsin & Sari, 2022). In order to cultivate noble character, moral education in schools becomes one of the most important parts of the Islamic education process (Basyar, 2020).

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The goal of Islamic education is the formation and cultivation of noble character. Through good morals, it is hoped that students or learners can achieve life goals that bring happiness. Education and the instillation of morals are one of the missions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW's da'wah (Rahmah et al., 2022) . In integrated PAI learning, students are not only limited to understanding and mastering the material but also to the existence of the implementation of those learning values both in and out of the classroom. This is to instill character in students who are virtuous and to make them aware that this is a duty of a Muslim, not just in the classroom or in society.

METHOD

Qualitative research methods with a phenomenological and action research approach. Qualitative research methods encompass various approaches aimed at deeply understanding social and human phenomena. Two approaches that are often used in qualitative research are phenomenology and action research. Here is an explanation of each of these approaches. Phenomenology is a research method that focuses on understanding an individual's subjective experience of a phenomenon. The goal is to accurately and deeply describe the meaning of those experiences. According to Creswell, phenomenological research aims to understand how people experience a phenomenon and provide a rich description of that experience.

Research informants are subjects who are interviewed or asked for information to provide the necessary data in the research. They have knowledge or experience relevant to the phenomenon being studied, thus helping the researcher in gathering accurate and in-depth information (Putri, 2022). By understanding the roles and types of informants in research, researchers can be more effective in collecting data and producing valid and beneficial findings.

The research informant in this study is Universitas Indraprasta PGRI Jakarta. Universitas Indraprasta PGRI Jakarta itself selected several individuals as primary informants, consisting of: First, the Vice Rector I for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Mr. (IA) is one of the lecturers who is also a student at Unindra, where during his time as an active student, he did not experience advancements in information technology. Second, the Chairman of the Student Executive Board (BEM) and the Chairman of the Student Representative Council (DPM) of Unindra, both of whom are still active until now. BEM serves as a bridge between students and the university, so BEM has the function of being a means for students to express their criticisms, suggestions, and aspirations to the university in order to achieve campus progress.

The Student Representative Council (DPM) is an institution within the campus that serves as the highest body overseeing and controlling the dynamics of organizational life and student aspirations on campus. Thus, the DPM is the supervisor of the BEM. In addition to the aforementioned informants, the researcher also selected informants to support the research data. The selection of informants was done randomly when the researcher was collecting data. Supporting informants for the research included several students.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is the most strategic step in research, because the main objective of research is to obtain data. Without knowing data collection techniques, researchers will not obtain data that meets the established data standards (Sugiyono, 2015). The data collection technique used is through interviews. An interview is a question-and-answer conversation between two people that is constructed to obtain data and information.

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RESULT and DISCUSSION

The Phenomenon of Student and Lecturer Communication

Effective communication between students and lecturers is an important component in the teaching and learning process at higher education institutions. Dialogic communication, which is communication based on mutual acceptance of each other's values, can encourage speakers to be assertive, calm, respectful, and open in conveying their ideas (Antony, 2022). Therefore, good communication between students and lecturers can help create a conducive learning environment and enhance students' learning motivation.

In the learning process, effective communication between lecturers and students can contribute to several things, such as the delivery of more standardized learning messages, more engaging learning, more interactive learning with the application of learning theories and psychological principles, learning time efficiency, and overall improvement in learning quality (Aghni, 2018). However, several factors can hinder effective communication between lecturers and students, such as the current situation and the phrasing of the lecturer's statements, which are not easily understood by students.

Cross-cultural communication has become an important aspect of academic interaction, especially in school or pesantren environments (Hasan Baharudin, 2022). The forms of interaction that occur can include storytelling, discussions, and joint activities. In this communication process, strong coordination and two-way communication between educators and learners are required (Jauharotur Rihlah et al., 2022). Dialogic communication based on the a priori internal acceptance of each other as values within themselves can encourage speakers to be assertive, calm, respectful, and open in conveying ideas.

Ethics in Communication

The application of moral values in communication between students of Universitas Indraprasta PGRI and lecturers. Good communication and interaction between lecturers and students are key to the success of the learning process in higher education (Hakim & Sarilah, 2021). School is an educational community that involves all subjects to contribute and develop each other.

Dialogic communication is a form of communication based on the internal a priori acceptance of each other as values within themselves. Dialogic communication encourages speakers to be assertive, calm, respectful, and open in conveying their ideas. Instructional communication in the classroom is very important for building students' learning motivation. Effective, quality communication based on moral values will support an optimal learning process. Strong two-way coordination and communication between lecturers and students are needed to optimize the stimulation of students' socio-emotional development.

Several factors that influence the success of lecturer-student communication are the situation and the wording of the sentences that are easy for students to understand. Thus, the application of dialogic communication based on moral values such as respect, openness, and assertiveness in instructional interactions in the classroom will greatly support the learning process in higher education.

Analysis of Action Research

The process of change implemented to improve ethical communication. The development of communication technology is directly related to society and shapes public discourse. Indonesian culture, which is a fusion of all national cultures, undergoes a long process of interaction and acculturation, resulting in the formation of a new culture. Technology helps and facilitates various aspects of human life and increases productivity, but

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it also causes problems or impacts on the culture itself (Yoga, 2019) . This triggers a level of change and shifts life patterns from those relying on direct communication to communication using media, moving local wisdom into a broader context of customs and culture.

Furthermore, there is a relationship between the number of social networks and the intensity of communication through social networks, and there is no difference in the intensity of communication through social networks between men and women (Widiantari & Herdiyanto, 2013).

The impact observed after the intervention was implemented, both from the students' and the lecturers' perspectives. In the implementation of the intervention, students experienced improvements in aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and skills in digital literacy and ethical use of social media. However, the role of all parties, including the government, academics, and society, is necessary in building a digitally literate and ethical society in online interactions (Yoga, 2019; Zonyfar et al., 2022b)

This research shows that the massive development of communication technology has brought changes to people's lives. This is in line with the view of social scientists that digital development has led various disciplines to adopt the term digital in their studies, including communication studies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the communication ethics between digital native students and digital immigrant lecturers are shaped by generational differences in technology use and communication styles. While digital natives are more accustomed to digital communication tools, digital immigrants may face challenges in adapting to these tools. Despite these differences, the application of ethical communication, which emphasizes respect, politeness, and empathy, plays a vital role in ensuring harmonious interactions. The use of action research has proven to be a valuable approach in improving communication practices, fostering a more respectful and effective academic relationship between students and lecturers. Future recommendations include the development of strategies to bridge the generational gap and promote better communication ethics in higher education institutions.

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